

MENTORING: RESOURCES FOR SCHOOL-BASED DEVELOPMENT

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Mentoring:

resources for school-based development

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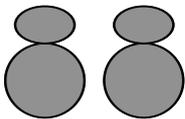
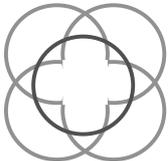
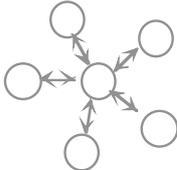
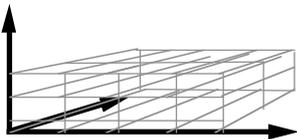
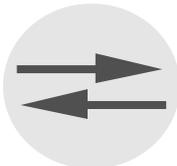
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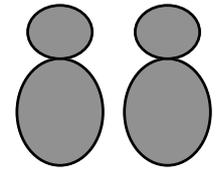
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Mentoring

What will you find in these resources?

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Mentoring

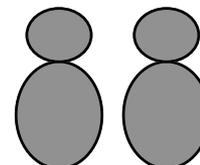
is:

- ✓ the process of helping another learn and enhance their professional role.

Mentoring is *not* being:

- ✗ a model, for newcomers to imitate in any simple fashion
- ✗ a bureaucrat, who merely processes information
- ✗ a management supervisor, who is 'responsible' for the learner
- ✗ a counsellor, whose main task is to follow the learner's agenda, including their personal agenda

Introduction



This brief introductory collection of resources has been written to support the development of mentoring in schools

A grateful acknowledgement

The writing of these materials would not have been possible without the assistance of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to the main author Chris Watkins at the Institute of Education, University of London. We value the support of the Foundation.

Who we are and how we see our role

Both authors have been involved in various new schemes for initial training of teachers: Articled Teachers, Licensed Teachers, Induction and support to newly qualified teachers, as well as being involved in moves toward more school-based PGCE. These experiences connect with other aspects of our work in the in-service training of teachers in areas such as guidance, tutoring, personal-social education and management.

In this collection we hope to convey useful ideas, frameworks, activities and processes which we have found effective in our work. These materials have been trialled in a range of settings with experienced and beginner teachers.

Why bother with these resources?

- because mentoring is an important dimension of school practice and has considerable potential for development
- because mentoring is relatively unsupported by resource materials at the moment
- because there is a potential for positive spin-off from mentoring in initial training to other aspects of professional development in school
- because we need to maintain and improve professional quality in the initial training of teachers

Important features

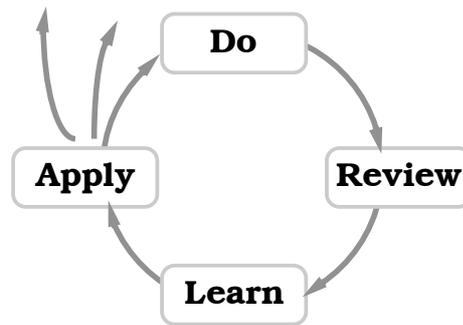
- these resources are not specific to a single scheme of initial teacher training
- they are useful for a range of roles, not merely those specifically labelled
- the materials were written with secondary schools in mind but have similar application in primary schools
- activity materials are photocopiable within the purchasing institution
- the central section of activity materials is published separately for beginner teachers to purchase

What are these resources addressing?

- school issues to be anticipated and managed in mentoring
- a framework for viewing teaching, the professional role of teachers, and the role of mentoring
- the knowledge and understanding required in mentoring
- issues for all the roles involved
- activities for observation -> investigation -> personal action
- active ideas concerning the skills and process of mentoring
- practices in the process of assessment and diagnosis

The style of these resources

These resources are based on a particular approach to professional learning, and the activities have been written to support a cycle of active learning as outlined in this model.



Contexts in which these resources might be used

The context in which we imagine these activities may be used could include:

- mentoring with a single beginner teacher
- mentoring with a small group of beginner teachers
- mentoring with beginner teachers from clusters of schools in an area

A starting reflection

When working with experienced teachers on initial training and on mentoring development, we find it fruitful to ask them to remember their own experiences of training as a teacher. These are not representative or analytic sometimes, and do not represent a full evaluation, but they do serve to remind us of common pitfalls.

For us authors, memories of our own training include:

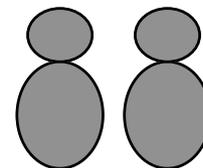
- declining to create 'lesson plans' under the traditional headings provided
- spending much time writing a reflective journal on the processes of lessons taught
- being referred to the external examiner
- being told 'I can see what you're trying to do but I don't think you'll do it'

We do not start with these comments in order to argue that initial training of teachers is useless, or to collude with those who do.

We start with these memories in the hope that you the reader will also remember and make use of your experience in identifying possible principles and pitfalls in the area we are addressing.

Section 1

Starting Points for Mentoring in Schools



Effective initial training of teachers, in our view, is characterised by:

- an active process of learning
- involvement of a number of parties
- the structured use of practical experience
- supporting the beginner teacher in reflecting on the job and their development into it
- a developmental process, linking the period of initial training to future professional development
- recognition that teaching is a complex professional activity

The above hallmarks characterise effective training wherever the learning is located, be it in school or out of school. We recognise an increase in the role played by schools in the initial training of teachers. This increase applies not only to the time spent by students in the school setting, but also to the role that schools play in selection, training, and assessment.

Perhaps because there is so much to learn in becoming a teacher, it can be the case that not much is learned at all, and periods of training become focused on diversionary matters. The initial training of teachers can be beset by rituals, mythologies and rites of a range of sorts.¹

These pitfalls may sometimes be avoided by keeping at the forefront the twin questions:



*Is the beginner teacher really learning?, and
Are the mentors (and the school) really learning?*

'Mentor' or Mentoring?

The term 'Mentor' has different meanings in different contexts. For the purpose of these resources we take the term to mean anyone who is involved in mentoring. In a school context, this is unlikely to involve just one person. The professional induction of teachers is a task which engages many. We aim not to use the term mentor in case it gives the impression that all the functions may be isolated in one individual.

Mentoring is the process of helping another learn and enhance their professional role.

It follows that our view of mentoring is **not** one of:

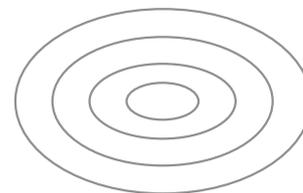
- being a model, for newcomers to imitate in any simple fashion
- being a bureaucrat, who merely processes information
- being a management supervisor, who is 'responsible' for the learner
- being a counsellor, whose main task is to follow the learner's agenda, including their personal agenda

The above points are equally important in the later professional development of teachers and reflect aspects of those organisations which can truly be called effective schools.

References

- ¹. Stones E (1989), **Ritual and Reality in Psychology and Teacher Education**, British Psychological Society

Section 2



Issues for the School to Anticipate and Manage

In this section we intend to examine some of the issues which a school will need to anticipate and manage in the development of mentoring.

Main themes include:

- some whole school issues page 3
- communication issues page 5
- challenges and conflicts page 7
- resources required for mentoring page 8
- management of the learning experience page 9
- multiple mentors page 11
- the school's learning from the experience page 12
- future issues such as recruitment and contracts page 13

Whole School Issues

Schools are social organisations which have their own 'feel' or ethos. It is important to recognise that the whole school ethos can support or undermine many aspects of professional development including that of mentoring.¹

Mentoring Development in any school will be affected by several factors, amongst them:



The ethos or culture of the organisation:

is it a culture which promotes staff communication and learning?

The style of management in the school:

is it by teams, by coercive power, by roles, by inclusion?

The degree of connectedness and communication in the organisation:

is communication open and wide, supported by the organisation, and resourced?

The view of professional development and teachers' learning:

is this seen as an essential aspect of school life? or a luxury, or a nuisance?

The view of initial teacher training and trainees:

is it seen as socializing people into school's ways, or as experimenting with new ways? ...?

Each of these elements may, or may not, contribute to an atmosphere supporting the opportunity for challenge, change and growth: in such circumstances the development of mentoring is likely to be positive.

In such an environment professional progression may be taken as a norm, there will be an expectation that practice can develop and that ideas can change through a process of study, discussion, demonstration and practice.

In such an organisation there may also be a reduction in the isolation which is often endemic to the lives of teachers.

You might like to consider some of these factors in your own school context and pose yourself the question:



Would you use your school as a site for learning to become a teacher?

Is there good quality of practice in professional learning and development?

Is there a growing whole-school approach to staff development at all levels - initial, in-service, etc?

Is the school effective in its support to processes of reflection and review?

Is the atmosphere in the school conducive to school-based training?

Are there receptive attitudes and willingness to support beginner teachers?

Are trainees received by colleagues in a welcoming and receptive way?

Can the school offer a range of experiences and organise a programme that includes variety for individual trainees?

Can the beginner teacher expect to receive support in different areas whilst training?

Is there a range of mentors available or is the school relying on relatively few individuals?

Is there suitable mentoring support and training?

Are any departments isolated from the rest of the school in either their management or thinking?

Are communication channels in the department and school clear and able to convey and collect information to support the training of beginner teachers?

Is there sufficient stability of staff? (even if you have high turnover is this managed effectively?)

Is there stability in the student intake? (if there is turbulence, is the school managing this and learning from this?)

Communication Issues

Communication is a key in almost any sort of learning: it will be needed at many levels and times during mentoring. The school can enhance effective communication by anticipating and clarifying what will need to be communicated, to whom and when, and then planning a method and means for each occasion.

Different phases may have different communication needs. We have divided the process into four time periods based on the school's time cycle for receiving teachers in training.

Before arrival

What the school conveys at this stage can give a first impression, even before the first visit. It can help to build up a picture about the school and about the people in it.

How might you convey a welcome and clearly outline the sort of reception the beginner teacher can expect? What initial information will you distribute? A school brochure might be available, but is it what you need? Will a letter be written? By whom?

What do you wish to know about the learner teacher?

What do they need to know about the pupils, the style of work, and so on?

On arrival

At the school the beginner teacher, colleagues and pupils need different information. You need to consider the networks in the school and link the beginner teacher into them as appropriate. These include the formal (departmental and staff meetings) but equally important are the informal arrangements like the rites for coffee and seating which may well exist in the staff room and could be the undoing of the uninitiated.

What experiences and strategies can you suggest to them so that they learn the culture of the organisation as fast as possible?

Introduction phase

How do you intend to introduce the beginner teacher to colleagues and pupils? Through a daily meeting or information sheet? The style of introduction and the type of language used can set a tone, and have impact on their role.

The beginner teacher is going to be a member of multiple teams and needs to define a role for themselves in each.

How will they be introduced to the organisation, its goals, policies, curriculum?

Main work phase

There is a need to anticipate and manage the exchange and flow of information between colleagues in the school as well as with partners outside.

During the main phase of training there is likely to be much communication: communicating needs, setting up learning experiences, reviews, developing targets, feeding back observations and accounts and so on. As more than one person is involved in the support of the learner teacher, each of these processes is likely to set off communication between members of the school, as well as between the school and the college.

Written assessment reports are addressed in a later section.

It is important to be clear about authorship of various communications, and to make information and its use clear and understandable. The beginner teacher should be clear about the circumstances under which it may be released at a later stage.

The beginner teacher may also go to experience another school - what information will you convey? Will it be mainly on paper, or will it be interpersonal? Will it include reports? Will it include more informal records, logs etc?

Exit phase

In preparing for exit, teachers in initial training will be seeking appointments in other schools. Who will agree to write references if asked? Who else will be consulted?

The following grid highlights some of the aspects that you might anticipate in communication. We have started to fill in some of the areas but you could customise the outline to suit your own case. In doing so give some thought to:

- the type of information you wish to convey and receive
- the method of communication you will use
- who is involved in the exchange
- the message that you want received

	Before arrival	On arrival	Introduction phase	Later phases
<i>School to beginner teacher</i>	School documentation Maps. Who to meet at initial stage	Contact information, Communication systems (pigeon holes, meetings)	Introductions to colleagues and pupils: how and when	Priorities, policies, How observation is handled
<i>Beginner teacher to school</i>	Past experiences Interests in teaching	Contact information Expectations	Aims/goals for learning	Perspective on the school, on progress and learning
<i>Members of school to each other</i>	Range of learning opportunities on offer	Which selection of opportunities for the induction phase	An agreed approach to the issues in introducing learners	Review of progress and of processes in supervision; exchanging practice
<i>School to college</i>	Logistics of numbers, timetables	Guidelines for the process	Setting up learning experiences	Reports, assessments

In communication, the issue of 'confidentiality' may sometimes arise. This usually indicates that confidence is lacking in some part of the communication system. It is

not effective to respond to this by making up hard and fast rules about professional communication. However it is very important to consider the degree of confidence which is being developed in the various aspects of communication, and to recognise that tensions may sometimes arise.

Issues for schools to anticipate and manage

Challenges and Conflicts

Significant learning can often be challenging, for all parties concerned.

Moreover, learning which is based on enquiry into teaching and school life may not feel comfortable to those who are unused to the experience.

Also, the presence of a beginner teacher in an existing set of relationships can highlight issues in those relationships and the organisation.

And especially when school life is under stress, the process of someone examining practice can trigger a range of reactions: anxiety, and (at worst) polarisation.

For all of the above reasons challenges and conflicts are not always attractive ideas! But they can prove constructive and creative. Much can hinge on what the word 'conflict' means for the people involved. We can be constructive about conflict, and increase our chances of side-stepping some of the pitfalls. Raising awareness about possible areas of conflict and clarifying roles can help.

We have tried to identify some of the possible conflict areas and have divided them into organisational conflicts and interpersonal conflicts. These often inter-relate.

Organisational Conflicts

Conflicts may arise over goals. Differences may exist between individuals, departments and the school over their contribution to the training of teachers:

'It's not what we're here for', 'It's all too disruptive', 'What would the parents say'.

There may be a view that 'student teachers take up too much time' or affect pupil behaviour negatively, and the department will suffer as a consequence of having students. These comments can be heard and indicate a need for further discussions.

Conflicts may arise over resources. The distribution and allocation of resources such as the use of time, money and colleagues which are all needed to support trainees could be seen by some parties in the school as better used elsewhere.

All of these underlying differences are potential conflict areas and need to be managed through open communication. There may be advantage in anticipating and clarifying some in advance, and making agreements before the experience demands.

For example on the issue of time:

Is there a school policy with regard to beginner teachers and:

planning & preparation time?

when /if they will be used for covering absence?

when/if ever will they be used for unsupervised class responsibility?

exam invigilation?

Interpersonal Conflicts

Trainees sometimes get 'owned' by individuals and departments - this can lead to possessiveness and taking sides in conflicts.

The beginner teacher may bring new ideas - is this likely to strike some particular staff as threatening?

Some staff may view beginner teachers romantically as the new generation who will create the changes which they never did - disappointment may breed tension.

Interpersonally, a large number of new relationships are being formed and there are likely to be tensions in some of them. Some of these are further addressed in Section 4.

The school has to acknowledge that a potential for conflict exists and be prepared to provide the time, space and resources needed for mediation and hopefully resolution.

Resources Required for Mentoring

Resources include time and its use, space and budget.

Anticipating the resource needs could lead to planned allocations.

Time

It is important that the school recognises time as a key resource and extra time is allocated to enable mentors to manage the process of mentoring. Below are some of the activities that are likely to be needed to provide adequate mentoring: you can then assess the time needed:

- the process of mentoring, meeting beginner teachers individually and in small groups
- communication between various mentors in the school
- release of yourself and other staff to observe, feedback
- planning and review of the programme
- networking
- negotiation between college and/or outside
- training other mentors

All of these activities require a level of commitment and extra time for mentors as well as beginner teachers.

Space

It is likely that space exists for some staff who have established roles within the school. Mentoring has particular requirements: somewhere that exchanges can take place undisturbed and preferably somewhere quiet.

For the beginner teacher who is unestablished and uninitiated, finding space may not be easy. Provision of a storage space for books, pigeon hole for messages and somewhere to work in relative comfort can make an important contribution to the way that beginner teachers perceive themselves and their standing within the school. Where will they sit and eat lunch? What are the "rules" for breaks and coffee? Will their chairs be placed outside the staff-room ? Hard to imagine but it has been known!

Budget

A budget is essential to recognise the extra demands placed on already stretched departmental and school resources.

The materials for those involved in mentoring should also be anticipated, this collection being only one of the materials you will need and develop to support the process of learning.

The budget will need to support all aspects of the beginner teachers' materials production for teaching: the use of the photocopier, sugar paper, card, etc.

The handling of this budget by the learner teachers can signal some professional autonomy and provide a useful learning of the art of control over scarce resources.

Management of the Learning Experience

The way that learning is managed may indicate the underlying model or approach which is being taken to Learning about Teaching.

We identify four (with apologies to anyone named Nellie)

'Sitting next to Nellie'

This is still common. It is founded on apprenticeship models of learning. Much energy can be invested in questions of 'placement' - this reflects a key question for this model: which Nellie to sit next to?

'Observing Nellie'

This is popular but does not always clarify what to observe. As one aspect it is important, but not sufficient as it cannot investigate the non-observable (people's goals, perceptions, etc), and may not address the question: what is the relation of observation to action?

'Enquiring about Nellie'

This has developed extensively in some areas. Again it might be important to consider which Nellies to enquire of, and there remains a question of what to do with the results?

'Trying out being your own Nellie'

This reminds us of action research models in which the beginner is supported in their own problem-solving in a structured way at an appropriate pace. Can be especially important when the beginner is 'itching to get their hands on a class'.



Can you identify any of the above four in use in your school - in the way colleagues view beginner teachers, and in the way that arrangements for their learning are made?

Limiting the learning

The learning experience of a beginner teacher can be impoverished by:

- offering them one model or approach to learning about teaching
- locating them within one section of school, usually the subject specific, disregarding other aspects of school life
- placing them in one area with little or no structured support in the belief that professional learning is about 'something rubbing off'

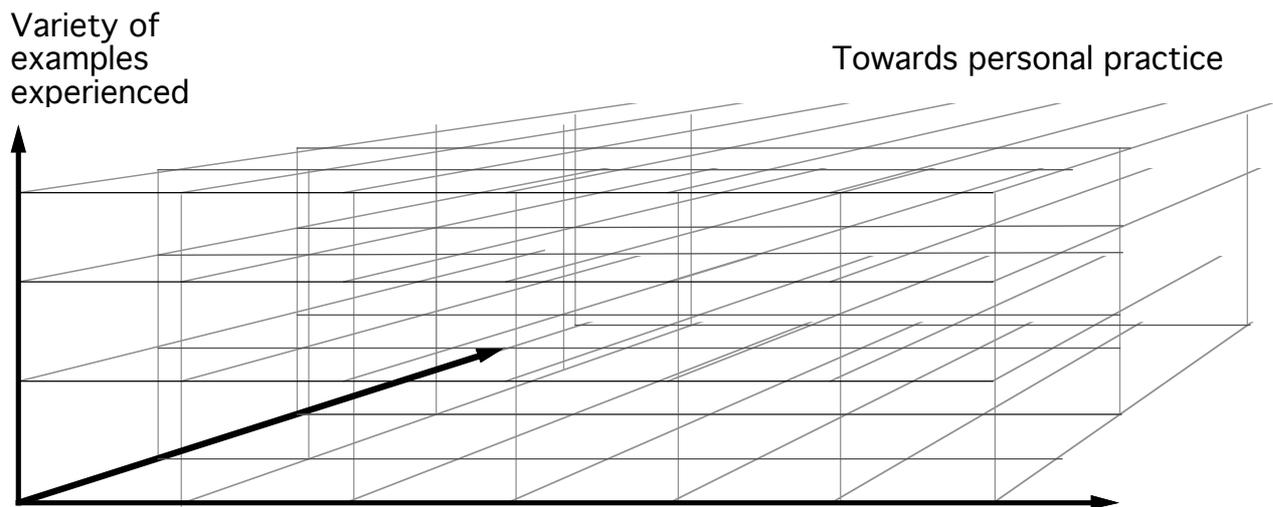
Towards a framework for learning

It is our belief that the beginner teacher needs a planned programme of learning activities in a framework which helps us to:

- conceptualise the range of learning activities a beginner teacher could usefully experience
- support the process of negotiating the particular activities which are most appropriate for a particular learner teacher at a given stage

The following framework (or scaffold) uses three dimensions, each of which is important to consider:

1. **range** of activities - not just classrooms but the full range of the teacher's professional repertoire
2. **development** towards personal practice - not just observation, but moving from observation to investigation and to action



The range of activities in the teacher's professional repertoire

3. **variety** - not just socializing the learner teacher into a single approach, but offering a range of experiences which are necessary to support contrasts and evaluation on which reflection depends

Figure: A notional framework to consider learning about teaching

Why These Dimensions?

Range

to recognise the fullness of the teacher's role, and to avoid devaluing the non-classroom aspects, thus including aspects such as talking with individual pupils, parental links, experiences outside the school, even in other schools

Toward personal practice

to give some purpose to observation and investigation, and to promote the application of learning

to encourage the process of professional development for their ensuing years

Variety

to observe and learn from different teaching approaches

to examine the different range of responses from different learners

to experiment with approaches and styles

What Follows From This?

- *Choice*

The beginner teachers' learning needs can be discussed, and choice may be managed with the learner - the single 'placement' is not the central issue.

- *Negotiation*

A beginner teacher's programme cannot be completely planned in advance; there is a need to accept differences between beginner teachers.

We need a structure to discuss what the learner feels they have presently achieved and what they feel confident about tackling next.

This then leads to negotiation of appropriate experiences, in a variety of situations across the range, possibly de-briefed by a variety of colleagues.

- *Progression*

This needs to be discussed and planned, not 'throwing someone in at the deep end' but small scale work first.

It is important to plan a progression: observation -> investigation -> personal action. These three steps are used in the activity materials of section 5.

Multiple Mentors

These resources do not focus on one person as mentor. Rather we start from the view that a number of people will become involved with the initial learning of a beginner teacher.

Thus we have adopted an approach which could support a whole school view of mentoring. In such a view parallels and links are made with further professional development in the school, and to other areas of supervision such as supportive appraisal. In various schools there are various role titles, such as Professional Tutor, Staff Development Organiser, Subject Supervisor and so on. This collection aims to address some of the processes common to all such roles.

To enable the beginner teacher to learn, one individual may coordinate the provision, retaining an overview of the process and being aware of the time line for development. Often it has been only this individual who has been called 'mentor'.

Such a coordinator is important, especially as beginners' learning needs to focus on issues outside the classroom and subject department. They need to be someone who:

- has and communicates a whole-school view
- is in a position of influence to arrange the overall profile of provision
- can support the process of mentoring carried through by others
- will keep some continuity and priority across years
- is well placed for communication and review

Therefore someone in a senior school position is required.

It is useful to imagine a team of mentors composed from different parts of the school not only to offer the widest possible experience to the beginner teacher, but also to exchange and develop practice in areas of initial training and beyond.

We should recognise that each person involved in mentoring has particular strengths abilities and qualities. If we make this recognition explicit and part of our planning, we may help to ensure that the beginner teacher is being offered a range of ways of learning.

It is known that experienced teachers use knowledge resources which:

- are near at hand, easy to access, and continuously available
- give rapid payoff
- are practical and extend repertoire
- have been devised by fellow practitioners or adapted locally
- are flexible and open to further adaptation
- contain an appeal to the idealistic core of practitioners through person contact rather than print or visual media².

If this also applies to beginner teachers, then the multiple mentors available to them are likely to be offering various aspects of the above: access, payoff, extension, creativeness, flexibility, ideals. Too much of a list for one person!

The above list reminds us that teachers involved in mentoring are, just as in teaching, exercising key interpersonal skills. Different mentors will do this in different ways, and a variety of ways may contribute to an effective overall profile.

The small proportion of teachers who do not wish to recognise the interpersonal nature of the task may provide less to the team and to the beginner teacher.

The School's Learning from the Experience



Learning may be two way. This is not always recognised, nor even always valued.

Schools may vary in the degree to which they recognise that they will learn from the experience of working with beginner teachers. This can be reflected in their reasons for having beginner teachers in the first place, and indeed in their reasons for having had them for the last number of years.

What Sort of School is Yours?



What is the underlying message of your organisation on this issue?³

Is it:

'we like having the young things around' (but we don't intend to change)

- the superficially accepting school?

'we do it because we're asked to'

- the non-learning school?

'we look forward to the work and to learning from them'

- the receptive school?

'they always get put here' (it's a habit)

- the passive consuming school?

'we don't want them in here'

- the entrenched school?

Many schools are interested to work with beginner teachers because they find one of the spin-offs is a contribution to the school's longer term learning. These themes are raised in Section 8.

But other schools show to beginner teachers evidence of their defences against the school learning. These may be shown in the management style, in their conformity to simple outcome models, and so on.

The key question which is raised through the interactions with learner teachers is:

Is this school a learning organisation?

Future Issues: Recruitment, Contracts ...

At the time of writing there are examples of difficulties which schools face in this area, and in the changing environment it could well be that further aspects of this area will need to be anticipated.

Presently, schools can experience tensions around the process of recruiting beginner teachers to the established staff. These occur when informal often unjustifiable messages have been conveyed to the beginner teacher who has been learning in the school. For example: 'I'm sure you'll be in a strong position for a job with us'. It seems important to beware unjustifiable informal messages beforehand, and for those who have formed an important professional relationship with the beginner teacher not to substitute it with false reassurance at a key moment of learning.

Schools are becoming the recruiters of learner teachers. They will need to anticipate issues such as:

- how to recruit; publicity and marketing
- how to describe the school and its learning offer - more than the general brochure - detail of its support and supervision offer
- how to develop publicly accountable criteria and methods for selection
- who to involve in the process
- how to examine applicants' learning profile so far
- what sort of contract of employment to offer
- how to assure quality at all stages and how to convey this to applicants

In such areas it is likely that an underlying question will recur: 'what are the school's reasons for recruiting?' Are they:

- to get teachers 'on approval'?
- to fill the gaps in the shortage subjects?
- to maintain its own likeness?
- to contribute to a learning profession?

The pace of school-based development may well be increased, with more beginner teachers working directly with schools. In the future the school may be seen as an accrediting body - what must it anticipate to become credible in this role? In order to demonstrate good practice as a publicly and professionally accountable body, the school will need to develop further procedures which will make further demands under each of the headings of this section: communications, conflicts, resources, management, and so on.

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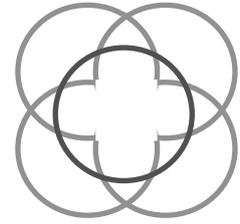
¹Joyce B and Showers B (1988), **Student Achievement through Staff Development**, Longman.

² Huberman M and Marsh C (1982), 'Towards an ecology of knowledge use in the classroom', **Curriculum Perspectives**, 2(2): 35 - 47.

³ developed from Joyce B, Hersh R and McKibbin M (1983), **The Structure of School Improvement**, Longman.

Section 3

Mentoring in Teaching: A Framework



What's the point of this section?

This section does not contain activities: it constructs the framework for the activities to be found in Sections 5 and 6.

In particular we develop a view of the knowledge and understanding which is required in the system to promote the learning of teaching. We do not conclude that all such knowledge and understanding needs to reside in *one* person labelled a mentor. Section 4 will examine some of the relationships and roles which are involved.

We do not cover the knowledge of subject content that teachers are deemed to need - this is not a main aspect of mentoring in the general sense which we adopt in this collection (although we are convinced that the development of content knowledge will be enhanced through similar processes).

What Does Mentoring Involve?

In helping another learn and enhance their professional role, mentoring is a highly skilled and professional activity which demands high level knowledge and skills. Mentoring does not 'produce' teachers through some simple process of modelling or telling.

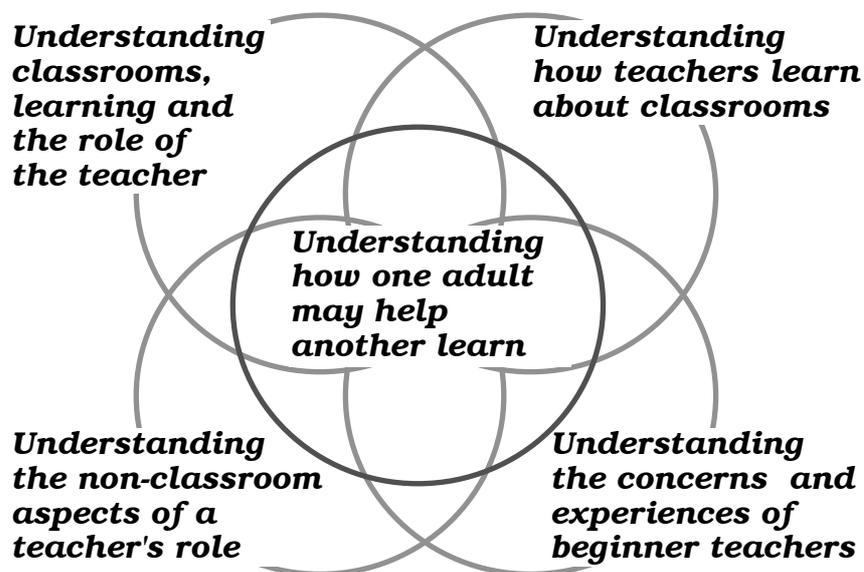
What does the learner teacher need to learn?

- how to understand and manage learning in classrooms
- how to understand and carry out the other aspects of their role
- how to develop their professional repertoire through reflection and action

How can someone else help in that learning process?

- by using what we know about experienced teachers' understandings of their classrooms
- by understanding the particular position of the beginner teacher
- by using what we know about skills and processes of supervision

We conceptualise the **knowledge and understanding required to facilitate someone learning to become a teacher** in the following broad areas:



Each of these elements will now be elaborated further.

Understanding Classrooms, Learning and the Role of the Teacher

This is clearly a central area for the development of the teacher, but we do not take for granted that experienced teachers involved in mentoring have an explicit set of understandings to work from. On many occasions experienced and skilled teachers are not practiced in explaining their practice.

In approaching our understanding of classrooms it is important to avoid casting premature attention on a teacher's 'personality' or personal style. This would leave out the key features of the classroom situation which impact on all participants: teachers, students and any other adults who may be present.

We need to understand and recognise the unique and complex features of the classroom setting.

Then it becomes possible to develop our understanding of teaching and teachers with a due regard for the context. In doing so we concur with Doyle:¹

'Classrooms are crowded and busy places in which groups of students who vary in interests and abilities must be organized and directed.

Moreover these groups assemble regularly for long periods of time to accomplish a wide variety of tasks.

Many events occur simultaneously, teachers must react often and immediately to circumstances, and the course of events is frequently unpredictable.

Teaching in such settings requires a highly developed ability to manage events.'

Thus we need an understanding of:

✦ Managing the Classroom Situation and Classroom Life

We may group the many features to consider into:

- physical setting
the way that the classroom setting influences behaviour, both in its physical features and in the messages which the classroom conveys
- social environment
the way in which interpersonal and group features of the classroom are handled, and the effects people have on each other
- psychological climate
the effect that being in a crowded, busy, multidimensional classroom has on its participants, and how this is handled

With an understanding of these elements it becomes possible to illuminate how teachers manage such a complex setting

But we have not yet addressed how learning occurs in classrooms. Within and beyond an understanding of the classroom it is necessary to further examine the role of the teacher, and how teachers turn the classroom environment into one which facilitates pupil learning.

Understandings of this area are not well developed, mainly because there is not an agreed science of pedagogy. Models of teaching are talked about but not in a rigorous or comprehensive fashion. Thus 'Teaching and Learning Styles' can be a heading under which the old polarisations of teaching recur; traditional/progressive, active/passive, etc. These do not offer an adequate understanding of classrooms and learning.

✦ Managing the Educational Environment

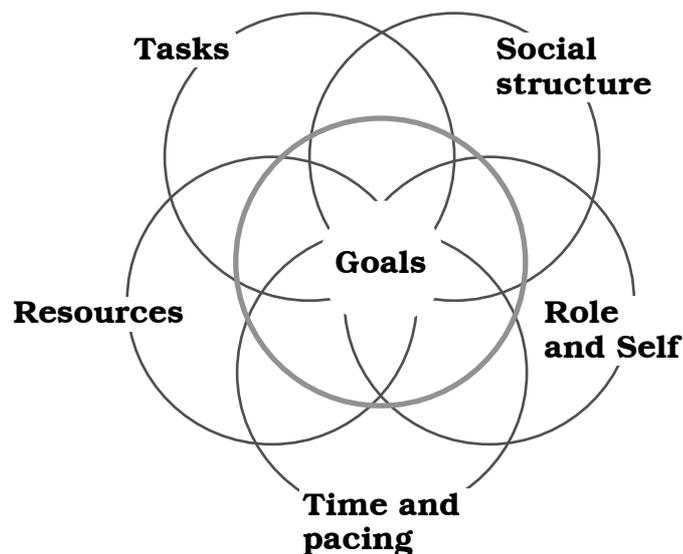
Classrooms as an educational environment and its structures:

We derive a set of headings for examining this aspect of classrooms by asking the fundamental question:

What does the teacher have at their disposal in the classroom with which to facilitate the learning of pupils?

In other words, what are the teachers' 'raw materials', different combinations of which are the teaching methods we sometimes mention.

We suggest five areas which interrelate to produce what we recognise as a lesson, each of which identifies an area of teachers' management:



It follows that we can examine the educational aspect of classroom management under these five areas, all in inter-relation and all dependent on the goals which have been chosen.

This may draw attention to the key pragmatics of teaching, and help to:

- analyse strategies teachers use
- analyse communication and interactions around learning tasks in the classroom
- analyse the process and structure of learning in classrooms, as well as
- explore the relationship between content goals and the way we manage the classroom

Teachers and planning

In the process of planning, teachers focus most on subject matter content and instructional processes: they focus least on objectives.² Beginner teachers often identify this and find it not credible to plan from objectives. It may be useful for them to plan on as many of the above headings as seem manageable and to add more considerations as confidence develops.

✦ Managing Individuals in Classrooms

It is possible, but not fruitful, to examine teachers' interactions with individual pupils from a perspective which ignores the context. Within the context of all of the above understandings of classrooms, it then becomes possible to examine:

- styles of communication with individuals
- ways of handling escalation and conflict

Understanding how Teachers Learn about Classrooms

It is possible to approach the beginner teacher's learning in a way which makes little or no use of what we understand about experienced teachers. This might be to create too much of a division between the two. Learning a professional role is something which is never finally completed, notwithstanding the special features which impinge on the beginner - see later in this section.

It is also important to understand influences on teachers' learning, so that both beginner and experienced teacher can try to overcome those influences which have negative effects. The complexity of classrooms is one factor in understanding what influences teachers' learning about classrooms. Others include features of the general context of teaching, and the organisational nature of schools.

Other factors which influence experienced teachers' learning and knowledge use³ may include:

<i>Context</i>	<i>School factors</i>	<i>Classroom setting</i>	<i>Knowledge use</i>	<i>Implications</i>
Government: frequent initiatives	Changeable 'inputs' Batch variability	Immediacy, busyness	Focus on short-term outcomes	Pragmatic/ instrumental focus
LEA: careerism multiple goals	Indeterminacy of outcomes	Multidimensionality Simultaneity	Lack of underlying order Intuitive judgment	Recipe knowledge Personal sources
Teacher training: brief sub-professional weak knowledge base	Isolation, functional independence	Unpredictability Personal involvement	Craft/artistic orientation Individualism, personal re-invention	Localised sources Value base
Personal: romantic temperament pragmatic				

This allows us to understand some of the things which characterise teachers:

- practically oriented professionals drawing chiefly on their own and their peers' experience to resolve problems or otherwise modify their teaching
- recipe collecting and exchanging, traded on the basis of 'what worked for me' and 'what feels right'
- more recourse to intuition and individual re-invention than other professionals

Many of the above influences are amenable to observation and investigation. It would seem important for the beginner teacher to start to do this, in order to be able to identify aspects which may influence her/his whole career, but which might be ameliorated in their worst effects.

It is possible to examine the way in which practising teachers learn about classrooms they manage. Characterisations of this process suggest that teachers learn through:

- extending their practical repertoire, adding new 'recipes'
- their own problem-solving
- selecting and adapting consonant with their ideals, their view of self
- using peers they choose as credible sources

and that they set out to learn

- following a range of triggers to review
these are often pupils, sometimes peers, rarely external agents
- following some other change in the school/organisation
new curriculum, new room, new pupils

It is also important for those working with beginner teachers to identify and understand what limits teachers' learning. For example:

- the busy-ness of teaching and the very few occasions for reflection: numerous management issues are raised as a result of addressing this
- pragmatics at extreme level: teachers saying 'I tried it once'
- perceptions of risk: what teachers predict will be risky and what they do not: whether risk and experiment is supported by the culture/ethos of the school
- peer pressures and influences amongst teachers: at worst some teachers may discourage others in valuing their continued learning
- limited goals; plateauing at a less-than-maximal level, and holding low expectations of oneself
- fixed judgements about or perceptions of pupils, their 'ability' 'motivation' and so on, which may serve to gloss over low expectations
- others setting the learning agenda or controlling the learning opportunities: possibly their 'managers' do this, or central government
- acceptance needs; the felt need to be accepted and not stand out
- view of self as a learner, reflecting earlier learning experiences, preferred style of motivation and responses to 'failure'
- other things in life; including major priorities and influences from family, personal history, and so on

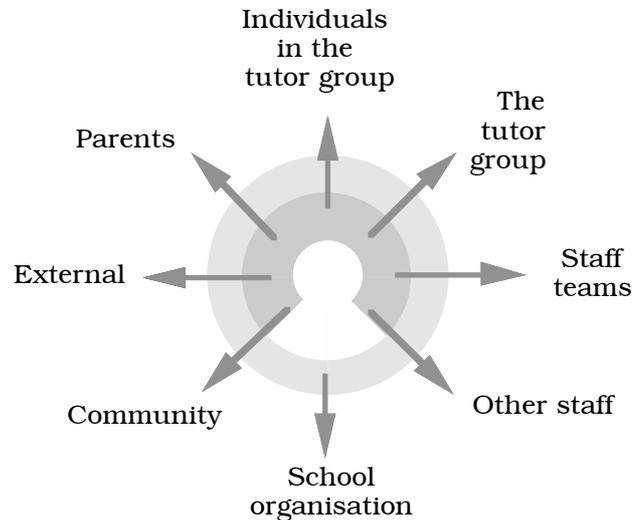
Deriving some of the above factors from observing and investigating the lives of practising teachers may make it easier for the same factors to be discussed as possible limits in the learning of a particular beginner teacher.

It may also bring out the importance of peer professional networks, and encourage the beginner teacher to be taking these seriously as they move towards their first appointment.

Understanding the Non-Classroom Aspects of the Teacher's Role

It is important to recognise the full range of relations in a teacher's professional role. To omit this area is to collude with a narrow view of teacher as solely a classroom manager, and may socialise the beginner teacher into one of the more destructive phenomena in teaching: the lone teacher in their lone classroom.

The teacher is at the heart of a complex 'role set', as suggested by the number of elements in the following diagram, which focuses on possible relations outside the classroom.



The 'role partners' suggested by the above diagram are derived by thinking through who a teacher may find themselves interacting with as part of their professional role. Additional examples could no doubt be included.

It is important that those working with the beginner teacher can bring a range of useful ideas to understand these elements, and important that the beginner teacher is involved in learning activities which are planned for range, variety and development in these aspects (see the selection in Section 5).

The elements summarised above are important for developing teachers' skills and understandings in the following areas:

The teacher and individuals in the tutor group

The teacher and the tutor group

- Reviewing subject progress, across subjects
- Observing, exploring changes in patterns of attendance, achievement, behaviour
- Understanding causes of success and failure
- Promoting achievement across subjects
- Recording achievement across the whole curriculum
- Offering guidance, on educational, vocational or personal matters
- Supporting individual action plans
- Promoting the development of understandings and skills for adult life including working life
- Managing action learning in groups, both tutor group and others
- Devising and adapting materials for use in work with a tutor group
- Handling particular issues such as evidence of abuse

The teacher and their staff teams

- Being a member of a department team, of a year/house team, or in increasing numbers of a year curriculum team.
- Communicating effectively with colleagues and working as part of a team
- Professional self-review and development in subject and pastoral aspects
- Understanding contributions to pupils' whole curriculum experience

The teacher's relations with other staff

- Making appropriate referrals in school
- Working with other teachers and non-teaching staff
- Contributing to a positive staff culture

The teacher in the school organisation

- Understanding the school - organisation, policies, curriculum, etc. and interpreting these to students
- Contributing to management
- Contributing to, interpreting and utilising whole school policies.
- Contributing to whole school review and curriculum planning
- Understanding the school organisational culture, management, etc.

The teacher and links with community

- Linking with and making use of the local community as a resource
- Understanding the local community and its impact on learners

The teacher and other 'external links'

- Understanding educational, training and welfare networks
- Being involved in appropriate referrals in wider welfare network

The teacher and parents

- Communicating effectively with parents, through written means, face to face meetings and parent consultations

It is also important that the beginner teacher be supported in understanding policy and professional development in the above areas. The experience of more than one school while training can provide important experiences and comparisons on such matters.

Given an understanding of these aspects of the teacher's role and the influences on them, it becomes possible to think about their own professional development. In other words, how is the beginner teacher planning to extend these understandings and skills as their career develops?

Understanding the Concerns and Experiences of Beginner Teachers

For anyone working with beginner teachers, it is important to recognise the particular concerns which may apply to them. This does not mean that we over-generalise about a group of differing people, but that we are aware of a number of possibilities.

Understanding the important developments which can take place during initial training of a teacher includes understanding the possible phases. A number of years ago, Fuller⁴ identified phases in the concerns of beginner teachers. These have stood the test of time, and distinguish starting points, early concerns and late concerns:

- From: Starting points:
 - who am I?
 - what am I doing here?
- To Early concerns:
 - classroom adequacy and control
 - subject/content adequacy
 - evaluation by supervisor
- To Late concerns:
 - pupils and their learning
 - curriculum
 - wider issues in school

This understanding of concerns while training may then link into understanding the later time-lines of development into first teaching, which have been characterised as follows:

- from survival to professional functioning
- from doing a teacher's job to seeing oneself as a teacher.⁵

The approach of thinking about concerns of beginner teachers is not a static one: it also allows all parties to engage in *developing* the concerns of the beginner teacher.

It is also important to understand the experience of being a beginner teacher, especially the unusual experience of being 'placed' in a school - an organisation which has history, a culture, and many shared understandings about the ways of working.

For the beginner teacher the key experience of being on placement may trigger:

Role problems

- what sort of authority do I have?
- what are the institutional expectations? how do I deal with them?
- how can I be accepted while carving out my own identity?

Analysis problems

- are people here behaving like they do because of roles or personalities?
- how do I respond to the cultural demands of the situation?
- how do I cope with my thinking that the problem is impossible?

Working problems

- how do I link up to the information flow?
- how do I manage this many contacts?

In amongst this experience, and partly generated by it, is the important process of the beginner teacher experiencing new levels of stress and tiredness, and finding their own ways of coping. For many beginner teachers the first experiences of managing classrooms are as exhausting as manual labour: recognising this and accommodating to suit are important aspects of learning.

When experienced teachers understand the concerns and experiences of beginners, this alone does not necessarily lead to easier working. For the experienced helper cannot suddenly make themselves independent of the processes which the beginner is undergoing. Thus it is important for the experienced teacher to have an analysis of the relations between beginner teachers and their various school supervisors and course tutors. With this, s/he may be able to maintain an appropriate distance on the matters of relationship. Relationship issues are especially highlighted over processes of assessment and feedback. The following section offers some ideas in analysing relationships and clarifying roles.

Overall the experienced teacher's view of the beginner's experience may be enhanced by recognising some underlying issues which centre around the beginner teacher's view of their identity as a learner and their affiliation to the various components of their experience. There is a major difference between working with a beginner who identifies with the school they are experiencing, and the beginner who identifies with university study - their views of what sort of learners they are could be substantially different. And again each of these may display difference from the beginner who identifies with some long-standing childhood experiences of their own schooling, for whom the notion of learning and unlearning is not a priority. Having some sense of these dynamics may be useful to the experienced teacher.

A final note on this subject:

A study in the North of England approximately 20 years ago⁶ asked students what kinds of behaviour were required for success on teaching practice:

Students saw school as a place which required them, if successful, to be realistic, practical, and conforming

At college they had to be independent, critical, and progressive

Do you think the same state of affairs would be found today?

Is it a problem?

What can be done about it?

Understanding How One Adult May Help Another Learn

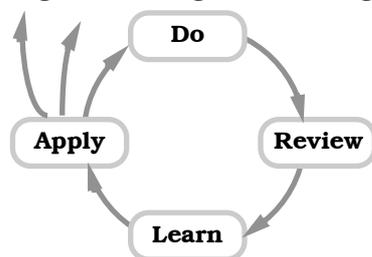
In this area of knowledge and skill, it is common to focus on interpersonal aspects. However, it would be a mistake to suggest that the interpersonal aspects are all. This mistake can be made, for example, by describing mentoring skills as counselling skills. We do not take this view: counselling is a process of helping where the helper mainly follows the agenda of the person being helped, whereas in mentoring the helping is targeted on a particular professional role. In the mentoring we are referring to here, the learning is about teaching.

We have found it useful to consider two dimensions of helping in the mentoring context: the task dimension and the skills dimension. Both are needed by those involved in mentoring in order to help the beginner's learning.

(a) The task dimension.

There are many tasks which seem to impinge on the beginner teacher: we give first priority to those tasks which promote learning.

Given what is known about effective professional learning⁷, we think about the tasks as promoting a learning cycle along the following lines⁸:



Someone involved in mentoring will be promoting this cycle through:

- setting up tasks which support action learning (see Section 6)
- promoting the four stages in other learning which occurs

Much reference is made to 'educating the reflective practitioner'. This is an idea we support for the sake of the individual learner, for the profession of teaching, and for pupils. But it is not always clear how this educating is to be achieved. It is useful to ask the question: 'What sort of tasks support and encourage the development of reflection?'

They may include:

- gathering information and observations. This can lead the learner to examine the way they observed, and may illuminate their own role in observing or in making sense of information
- giving accounts. This challenges the learner to make explicit their selection in creating the account - what aspects have they include and why? What aspects have been omitted and why?
- making comparisons and evaluations. Here the process of judgement is stimulated in order to be examined. Comparing two accounts of classrooms, for example, can encourage learners to examine the basis for their evaluation and comparison
- developing proposals. In this task, the learner needs to develop a reflective distance on the area of study, in order that proposals are really tuned to the situation, not just a personal preference.

A third aspect of the task dimension involves setting up tasks which support the beginner teacher's self evaluation, needs identification and progression. These are especially important as they make clear to the beginner their steps and progress - without such tasks, these experiences of success are at risk.

b) The skills dimension:

It does not make sense to forge a complete separation between tasks and skills. That would lead to a view of skills at a very abstract level.

Rather we have tried to describe the skills which enable the process of mentoring to proceed, and have provided some activities in Section 6.

The skills encompass such areas as:

- How to develop the climate
- Setting up your communication
- Ways of clarifying goals and expectations
- How to clarify your roles
- Ways of building the agenda
- Ways of supporting an action learner
- Helping target setting
- Ways of reviewing progress
- Supporting self-evaluation
- Keeping logs and diaries
- How to make feedback constructive
- Using others in mentoring

- Dealing with difficult issues
- Resolving conflicts
- Challenging
- Tackling dependency
- Spotting the blocks

Finally it is worth identifying some of the pitfalls which experienced teachers identify, and which may be anticipated in helping another learn:

- doing it all yourself
- over-organising, over-controlling
- presenting it as though it was all learnable in one year
- presenting it as though it was all agreed and clear to the experienced
- working with a dis-empowered learner
- interference from your own values
- the influence of the beginner's peers or the culture of the school against evaluation and continuing learning.

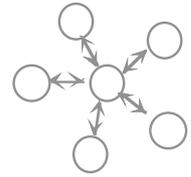
We aim that the following sections will provide support to all the issues raised in this one.

References

- ¹ Doyle W (1990), 'Classroom knowledge as a foundation for teaching', **Teachers College Record**, **91**: 347-60.
- ² Peterson P, Marx R and Clark C (1978), 'Teacher planning, teacher behaviour and student achievement', **American Educational Research Journal**, **15**: 417 - 432.
- ³ Huberman M and Marsh C (1982), 'Towards an ecology of knowledge use in the classroom', **Curriculum Perspectives**, **2**(2): 35 - 47.
- ⁴ Fuller F (1969), 'The concerns of teachers: a developmental conceptualization', **American Educational Research Journal**, **6**: 207-226.
- ⁵ Bullough RV, Knowles JG and Crow NA (1991), **Emerging As A Teacher**, London, Routledge.
- ⁶ Derrick, 1971, 'Teacher training and school practice'. **Educational Research**, **13**:2, 106-112
- ⁷ see Bolam R (1989), in Hopkins D (Ed.), **In-Service Training and Educational Development**, Croom Helm.
- ⁸ Dennison B and Kirk R (1990), **Do Review Learn Apply: a simple guide to experiential learning**, Blackwell.

Section 4

Relationships and Roles



What's the point of this section?

- to clarify the roles of key people, such as various mentors
- to develop the vision of each role and its relationship with others
- to identify issues and tensions in role development for each of the parties

Role clarification

A clear vision of what any role is supposed to be doing is a major factor in achieving feelings of success, in maximising effectiveness, and a helpful tool when evaluating the work. Defining a purpose or role is rarely undertaken, and this means that we often fall back on other beliefs and values that we have already defined, but which have not necessarily been examined. These can take the form of unrealistic injunctions on ourselves: perhaps you recognise some of the following and can add others:

In order to be a successful teacher I must...

- be totally competent (substitute knowledgeable, helpful, enthusiastic, innovative) at all times
- finish all of my work before I can relax
- be liked and/or respected by everyone

At best these injunctions produce a level of anxiety: at worst they lead to increased levels of stress, and dysfunction.¹

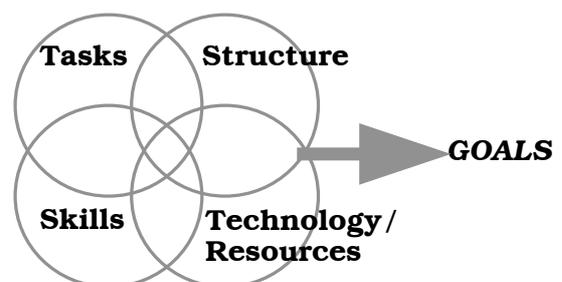
Clarifying roles is worth the time. It enables us to identify expectations and recognise that a role does not exist on its own, in isolation. A role is a set of interactions with others, often unspecified, and often influenced by history. A teacher newly involved in mentoring can find themselves hemmed in by the expectations which others have built up over time. A beginner teacher can walk into a school and be 'stepping into someone else's shoes' unaware of the previously defined boundaries and expectations. The result can be mis-perceptions and misunderstandings and 'stepping on toes'. This in itself is not necessarily a problem - it may be a constructive challenge which enhances learning, but it is worthwhile to be able to step back and analyse such occurrences.

Describing a role

It is important to get away from job descriptions which are composed of over-long lists of duties which no creative person would wish to undertake.

It is more productive to generate role descriptions which cover the key tasks, the position in a structure with others, the skills required, and the technology/resources to be supplied. All of these need to inter-relate effectively toward the achievement of key goals.

Drafting a role description using these five headings, and then discussing its content with the main role partners is likely to be a productive process



Creating a Role Map

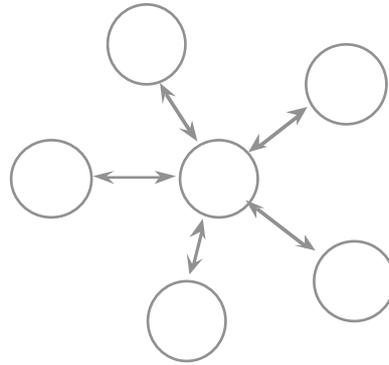
For anyone involved in mentoring, their role of has a number of potential role partners
This activity is to help you identify some of the issues you anticipate in the role relationships which are developing.

No role exists in isolation.

Roles consist of sets of behaviour and relations towards their various role partners.

You may usefully think of your role in mentoring as at the centre of a series of relations.

Draw out your own role map, with you at the centre and identify the major role partners, writing in their names on a diagram such as this.



Now choose the four role partners with whom you spend the most contact time in your mentoring role. Write their names in the boxes of the left hand column

Scan across the various other boxes in this grid, and jot down the thoughts you have about the various goals, difficulties and satisfactions you expect.

Role partner	Average contact per week	Main goals of contact	Anticipated difficulties	Anticipated satisfactions
1				
2				
3				
4				

This outline could form a basis for discussions and negotiations with your role partners.

Succeeding in your role

How do you know when you have achieved or been successful in your work? In other words how do you know when you have fulfilled your role?

Spend a few minutes thinking through the indicators you will use to help you be clear that your work in mentoring is going well. You may wish to think through each of the responsibilities and tasks you undertake for the main people you relate to.

Now note down those indicators that let you know you have been successful.

Role partner	Main tasks	Indicators of success
1.		
2.		
3.		

Identifying key areas and relationships can be used to pre-empt some difficulties and explore others. It may help to raise some of the questions and themes below.

Role tension or ambiguity



Do you and your role partners agree on what it is you should be doing?

Do you hold similar or different views on key areas of responsibility?

Do you all agree on what needs to be done first?

Are you clear about how you and others are assessing your performance?

If you are at the centre of conflicting expectations, this is described as 'role strain'. In the teaching profession role strain is sometimes handled in a somewhat destructive way - by the role-holder cutting themselves off from others. The need is for more communication, not less.

Role overload



Are the expectations of 'too much too soon'?

Would it be helpful to re-negotiate some basic priorities?

Are you able to delegate? 'Upwards' too?

Role development



Have you limited your expectations or assumptions about your role?

Have your role partners or other significant people got limited expectations?

When others interact with you and in the process convey their expectations, limited or otherwise, this is called 'role-sending'. It can be crippling if not identified and tackled, mainly by the other side of the coin 'role-making'. This is where you assert your view of what the role is for and what you expect of others.



Can you develop role relations with other partners and move into different professional areas?

Can you negotiate new areas for inclusion?

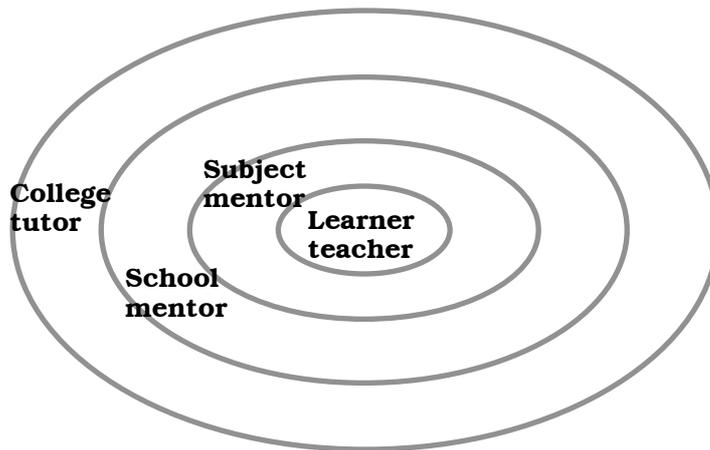
Have you planned in an occasion for reviewing role performance with your various role partners?

System Map

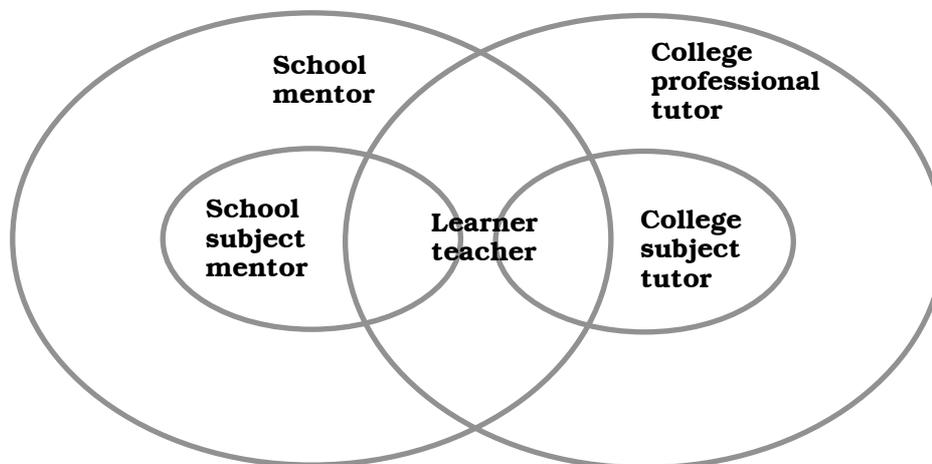
It is valuable at times to take one further step back from the roles people are playing, to think about each of the parties involved in helping the beginner teacher, and to analyse their various positions in the system together with the impact this may have.

In the particular case of the initial training of teachers, it can sometimes help clarify issues if we remember and locate the different people involved from different parts of the system.

There is more than one way of doing this. We could identify the 'system map' from various starting points. For example, one could start from the perspective of the learner teacher, and sketch something like this:



Or we could see the learner teacher at the intersection of two overlapping systems:

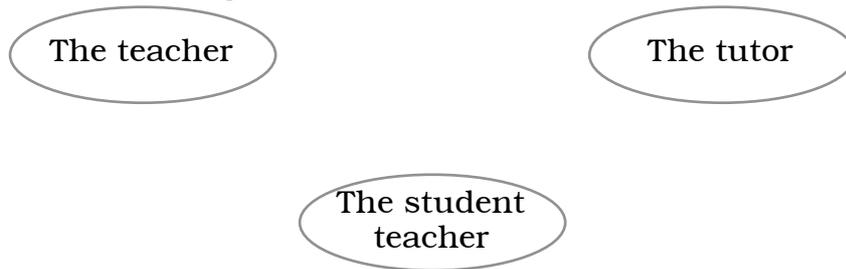


From any such diagram we could remind ourselves of who may be perceived as central, who 'inside' and 'outside', perceptions of one another, communication channels and so on. We can also start to speculate how the learner teacher may feel in the overall system: is it 'piggy in the middle'? or learner with a range of support? or learner in the soup?

Spend a few minutes drawing your own version of a system map, showing the key players and their various positions.

Relations between Teachers, Tutors and Student Teachers

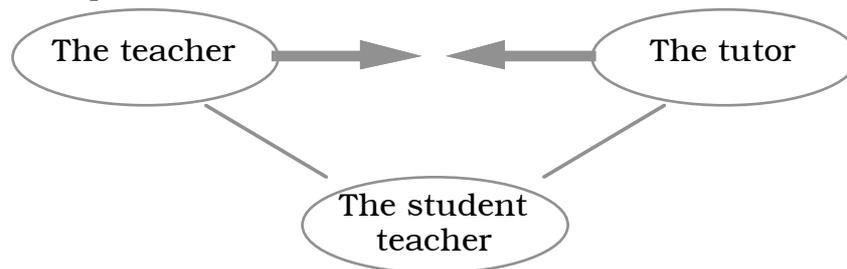
As a way in to this theme, it's useful to remind ourselves of some of the time-honoured stories about teacher training, in particular about:



When you put these three together, you may get some wonderful dynamics, some age-old games in teacher training.

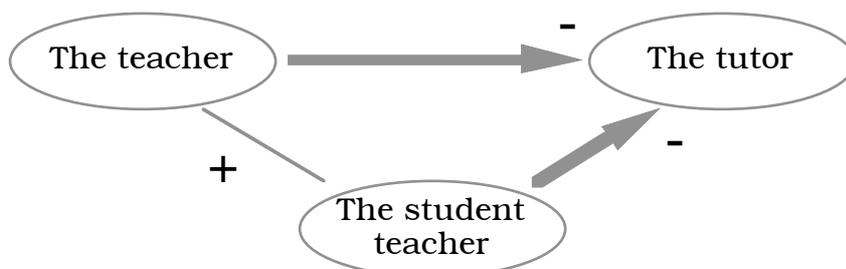
Here are some of the possibilities:

1.



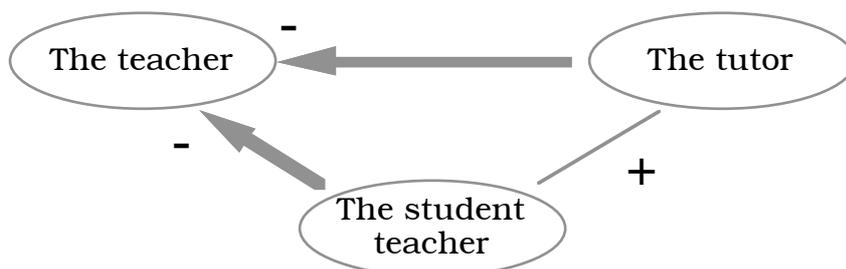
This portrays a situation when there's poor communication between the tutor and the teacher. When it happens all sorts of things can go wrong. Just as in a family which may get into this position, each of the 'adults' can end up blaming the 'child' for anything that goes wrong! The teacher or the tutor can fall into the trap of saying to the student teacher 'Don't listen to them: listen to me'. Or the student teacher can end up carrying messages of one to the other, in a form of 'They said you should ...'. On other occasions the student teacher might end up in the position like a child, who plays one off against the other, or alternatively keeps them both apart rather than suffer because of the poor communication.

2. The next example is one where people in the triangle **take sides**:



This portrays a game called 'Get the College': it's a situation where the teacher might be saying to the student 'That College is an ivory tower - they couldn't teach', and the student teacher might be saying to the tutor 'My supervisor in school is marvellous'. In this way a cosy relation or coalition between student teacher and teacher builds up, and it's not realistic - we should recognise it for the collusion it is.

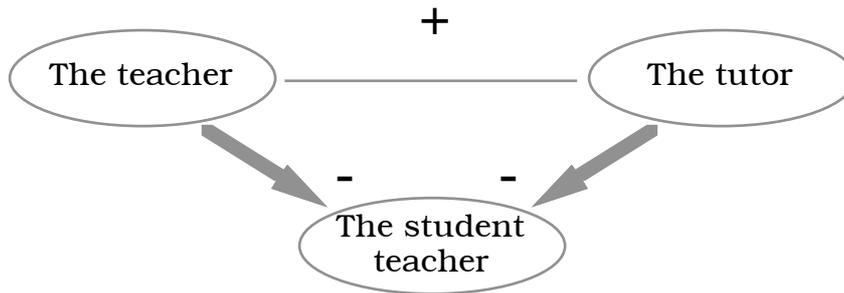
3. The mirror of the previous example is the game of 'Get the school':



Here the tutor might fall into saying to the student teacher 'We're sorry we had to put you in that school' and the student teacher says to the tutor 'They don't help me at that school'.

(like you do at college) - I wish the school was more like college'. Again, they're sharing a simple and unrealistic view of the world - that's collusion.

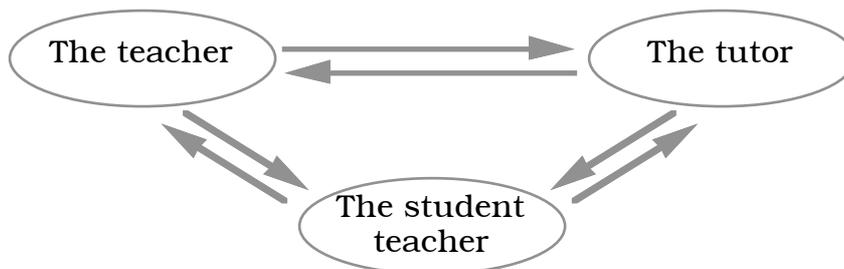
4. The last of the logical possibilities for taking sides in this triangle is one that would be the most unhealthy if it arose. It's 'Get the student':



Examples of this one are not common: it certainly is unhealthy because it's rather like parents ganging up on the child. The examples we've encountered have been when a beginner teacher was apparently failing, and this fact together with the reasons for the failure were felt threatening by school and college. They seem to correlate with those occasions when beginner teachers are treated as 'to be initiated', rather than adult learners.

But having introduced the idea of unhealthy triangles, that now allows us to be clear about the features of:

the healthy triangle



In this situation:

- a. people are clear about:
 - their different roles
 - their different perspectives
 - their different learning needs
- b. they communicate openly and frequently, and they treat each other as adults

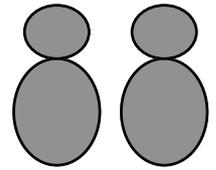
Perhaps these 'stories' remind us of the value of being explicit about roles and about role differences. The preceding activities may support that.

References

¹ Dunham J (1992), **Stress in Teaching**, Routledge.

Section 5

Learning about Teaching Activity Materials



This section offers a range of activities and tasks which may be used in mentoring.

The themes chosen have been derived from the framework in Section 2 and the view of mentoring in Section 3.

The context in which we imagine these activities may be used could include:

- mentoring with a single beginner teacher
- mentoring with a small group of beginner teachers
- mentoring with beginner teachers from clusters of schools in an area

What do these activities cover?

1. Starting points

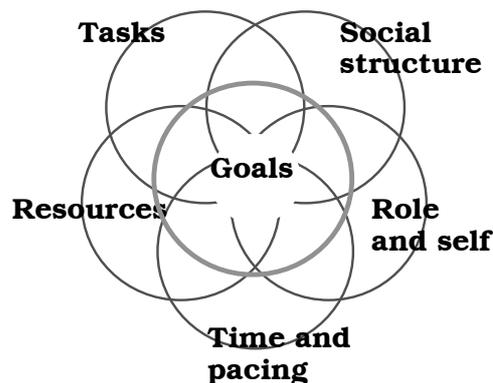
identifying needs

2. Teachers and classrooms

The classroom context and its properties

- physical setting
- social environment
- psychological climate

The classroom as an educational environment: its structures:

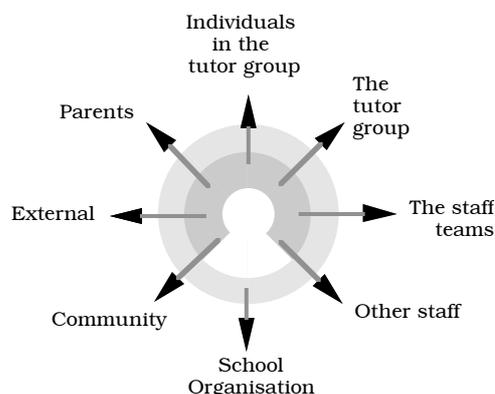


Teachers' planning and management

Learning about classrooms

- reflection tasks for beginner teachers
- investigations of experienced teachers

3. The teacher outside the subject classroom



Learning about the teacher outside the classroom

- reflections for beginner teachers on placements
- investigating the professional life of teachers

What do these activities not cover?

It will be clear from the broad contents, that there are many important aspects of teachers' roles which are not covered in this section. For example, teaching and pupils with special educational needs, the teacher's role in assessment, differentiated learning in the classroom, and so on. These as well as the teacher's 'subject' knowledge.

This pack should be treated as introductory and not complete.

Using, re-using and modifying these activities

Any resources which find their way into school and teaching become adapted and modified rather than adopted. This is appropriate, to fit to the context and the particular learning needs being addressed.

Make sure you modify these materials to suit your learning needs.

But make sure you do not modify them in a way that misses important learning. You can spot when you might be doing that, on some of the occasions when someone says 'That's not important' or 'We all know about that' or 'I've done that'. On some of these occasions you'll know that there's a bit of an underlying motive to avoid something which could be awkward or challenging or difficult.

A note regarding observation

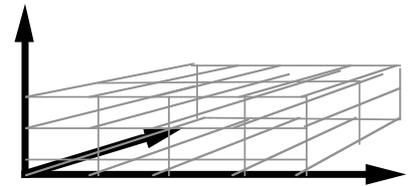
Observing classrooms can be a very deceptive activity. We hope that the activities help it become more focused and rigorous. Yet we are aware that this may still be 'scratching the surface'. Perhaps the most useful thing which comes from observation is the chance to discuss, compare, reflect. In this you are not aiming to arrive at fixed judgements of what you see, but checking the validity of any judgements. Robin Alexander makes this point about observers of the primary classroom:

Small wonder, too, that since it takes much longer than a fleeting visit to uncover the true nature and extent of children's classroom learning, some outsiders entering classrooms and being required by their position to comment may tend to fixate on the more obvious banalities: 'Nice display, the children seem to be busy, keep it up ...' The power differential then upgrades such banalities into 'objective' criteria for judging 'good practice', thus further distorting our sense of what in primary education really matters, and indeed what is real. We then end up with whole checklists of something called 'the environment of learning' rather than learning itself.¹

Alexander is of course referring to observers who are afforded high status. The authors of this pack have no wish to upgrade banalities of observation: rather, our hope is that well-focussed observation leads on to important reflection and investigation, the precursor of professional practice.

¹ Alexander R (1989), 'Core Subjects and Autumn Leaves: the National Curriculum and the Languages of Primary Education', **Education 3-13**, (March 1989): 3-8.

Starting Points Identifying Needs



Below is a summary of the materials/activities in this pack.

Scan over them and notice which ones attract you now.

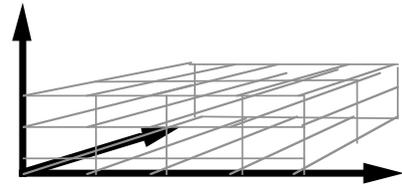
Discuss what you think each of them might be about, and start to develop some priorities for yourself.

Where are you now? on each heading, discuss whether you're most interested in observation or investigation, or whether you're ready for personal action. You might use the blank version of this grid which is given overleaf.

Look in more detail at some of the materials and develop a plan for the next half term.

	Observation	Investigation	Personal Action
<i>The subject classroom</i>			
<i>Classroom context, properties</i>			
Physical setting	p. 37, 38	p. 39	p. 40
Social environment	p. 41, 42	p. 43, 44	p. 45
Psychological climate	p. 46, 47, 48	p. 49, 50	p. 51, 52
<i>Educational context structures</i>			
Goals	p. 53, 54	p. 55, 56	p. 57
Tasks	p. 58	p. 59, 60	p. 61, 62
Social Structure	p. 63, 64	p. 65, 66	p. 67, 68
Timing and Pacing	p. 69, 70	p. 71, 72	p. 73, 74
Resources	p. 75, 76	p. 77, 78	p. 79
Teacher's Role	p. 80, 81, 82	p. 83, 84	p. 85, 86
Learning about classrooms - self	-	p. 87, 88	-
- others	-	p. 89, 90	-
<i>Outside the Subject Classroom</i>			
Teachers and individual pupils	p. 91, 92	p. 93, 94	p. 95, 96
Tutors and tutor groups	p. 97, 98	p. 99, 100	p. 101, 102
Teachers in teams	p. 103, 104	p. 105	p. 106
Teachers and other staff	p. 107	p. 108	p. 110
The school as an organisation	p. 111, 112	p. 113	p. 114
School and community	p. 115	p. 116	p. 117
School and other professionals	p. 119, 120	p. 121	p. 122
School and parents	p. 123, 124	p. 125	p. 126
Learning about the teacher outside the subject classroom		p. 127, 128	
Reviewing your progress		p. 129, 130	

Starting Points Identifying Needs



You could use this sheet at regular intervals to chart your progress.

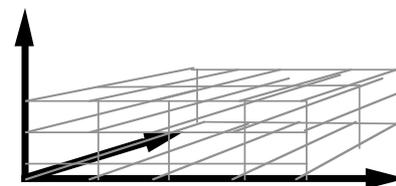
It can be used in at least two ways:

- (a) to record how confident you feel in each of the areas the materials support.
For this purpose you might use the small boxes to shade in how confident you feel about an area (shade in one, two or three boxes), and thus arrive at an overall picture which identifies your needs for the next stage
- (b) to record the number of observations, investigations or personal action activities you've undertaken for each of the areas. For this purpose you might use the small boxes to indicate each time you've completed one activity. Variety of experience is important in this sort of learning, and you might aim to complete at least two activities in each cell.

	Obse	Inves	Persc
The subject classroom			
<i>Classroom context, properties</i>			
Physical setting			
Social environment			
Psychological climate			
<i>Educational context, structures</i>			
Goals			
Tasks			
Social structure			
Timing and pacing			
Resources			
Teacher's Role			
Learning about classrooms - self			
- others			
Outside the subject classroom			
Teachers and individual pupils			
Tutors and tutor groups			
Teachers in teams			
Teachers and other staff			
The school as an organisation			
School and community			
School and other professionals			
School and parents			
Learning about the teacher outside the subject classroom			
Reviewing your progress			

Classroom Context: Physical Setting

An Observation Activity



Below are some possible headings for observing the main physical aspects of classrooms.

- Discuss what you take each to mean, and how you may find evidence for them

Placement of resources:

what are the key resources in this classroom?

where are they placed?

are they conveniently accessible?

Desk and student arrangement:

what is the seating arrangement?

what messages does this convey about

the roles of people in the classroom?

Physical aspects:

what degree and style of colour is there?¹

what can you observe about lighting,

heating, ...

how do the acoustics of this classroom

handle noise from outside, from

inside?

Display

what is on display in this classroom?

whose product is on display?

how old is it?

what messages are there about how it

was selected?

What *other signs of 'ownership'* are there in the physical aspects of this classroom?

Do

Now go to observe a classroom with these headings.

Make a drawing of the classroom

¹ Walden J (1991), 'Gender issues in classroom organisation and management' in McLaughlin C, Lodge C, and Watkins C (eds) **Gender and Pastoral Care**, Blackwell.

Review

From your observations, go through each of the headings:

- did the resource arrangement support particular achievements in this classroom?
- did the arrangement of resources create any noticeable difficulty?
- did the arrangement of desks/students prove helpful?
- were the physical aspects helpful or intrusive?
- did the display prove attractive?
- did it carry positive messages about learning and learners?

Learn

Compare the accounts of the physical setting in other classrooms: look for both similarities and differences in what you saw.

What key issues arise from this observation of the physical setting?

What do you think led to the classroom's physical setting being as it was?

What role did the teacher play in defining it?

What role did others play?

Apply

Were there any changes you would suggest?

What steps could you take?

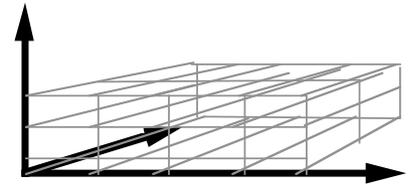
What steps could others take?

How would you investigate further any aspects which you see as important?

Other activities:

Find an occasion when classrooms are empty: observe a number using the headings above. What patterns of behaviour do you predict in these classrooms when they are inhabited with pupils and teachers? 'Settings have plans for their inhabitants'

Classroom Context: Physical Setting An Investigation Activity



Do

- Select a classroom you know
- Ask a number of students what they notice about physical aspects of that classroom:
 - the resources
 - the desk and chair arrangements
 - other physical aspects
 - display
 - signs of ownership
- Enquire:
 - what is important to them in the physical aspects,
 - what they feel works and what doesn't,
 - what improvements they would suggest.
- Ask the teacher:
 - What do they notice about the physical aspects of the classroom?
(placement of resources, desk and student arrangement, physical aspects, display, ownership)
 - What does s/he feel works well about this physical setting, what doesn't?
 - Does s/he feel in charge of the physical aspects of this environment?
 - Who else influences the physical setting in her/his view?
 - What experiments has s/he tried with aspects of the physical setting?

Review

Compare the findings you get from a number of teachers.

What similarities and differences do you note?

How would you account for similarities across the teachers you met?

How would you account for differences?

Learn

Identify five physical aspects of classrooms which significantly affect the behaviour

Identify the forces which encourage and those which discourage teachers in making active use of the physical aspects.

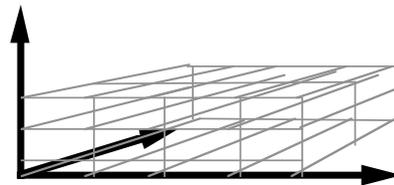
Many teachers seem very disempowered with regard to these aspects: they say the school-keeper or cleaner or fellow teachers wouldn't like a re-arrangement, or that it would take too long or make too much noise.

Are there any aspects of what you have observed about the physical aspects of classrooms which also say something about the school - its resources, its management, the presence or absence of these?

Apply

What proposals would you make for increasing the degree to which teachers manage the

Classroom Context: Physical Setting
Personal Action



Do

Sketch the physical aspects of a classroom you are presently managing:

Review

List here some of those aspects which you have identified as having an influence on the classroom and the behaviour within it:

Learn

What is working well, what not so well?
Identify any problems caused (at least in part) by the physical setting?

Apply

What could be done about these problems?

Take just one possible area, and identify the action you could take.

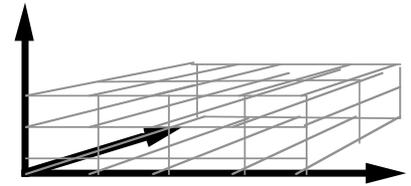
Plan when you will try out this action and how you will observe any effects.

Plan the review date when you will discuss the outcomes of your experiment.

With whom will you discuss the outcomes?

Classroom Context: Social Environment

An Observation Activity



Select a class/room or number of classrooms you have access to, and collect some observations along the following lines:

1. Personnel

How many adults are there in this setting? (include yourself)

How many learners are there in this setting? (include yourself!)

Are there any adult learners (other than you) in this setting?

What evidence of this social situation did you use to answer the above?

2. *Qualities of the social environment.* As you observe the classroom, and all the interaction that goes on in it, decide where you would place it on the following important aspects:

Power

Autocratic

One person generally exercises power over what everyone else does, without reference to them or to other sources

Democratic

What everyone does is generally discussed openly and decided collaboratively

Climate of expectations

High

Students expect one another to do their best

Low

Individuals expect to underachieve and may even feel pressured toward this

Helping

Cynical

People do not expect to give or receive help, or be involved in each other's learning

Collaborative

People expect themselves and others to make contributions to the process of their learning

Promoting self-reliance

High

This classroom moves people to self-reliance in their learning and their social relations

Low

This classroom leaves people dependent in their learning and their social relations.

Attitude to differences

Valued

Differences are accepted, valued and used to enhance learning

Rejected

Differences are not valued or used, and one style is promoted.

Style of communication

Open

Two-way dialogue characterises this classroom, and others' points of view are welcomed

Closed

Communication is mainly one-way and consists of unchallengeable statements.

Review

Did the personnel in this setting differ in any significant way from the typical 1 adult: 25 students?

If so, were there any noticeable differences in the classroom which you would attribute to this?

Bring together a number of observations of classrooms on these dimensions: what range of similarities and differences do you note on the headings:

Power

Climate of expectations

Helping

Promoting self-reliance

Attitude to differences

Style of communication

Learn

Identify in detail the contribution made by the teacher in establishing the sorts of social environments you have observed.

What other influences were there on the social climate which you noted?

from pupils:

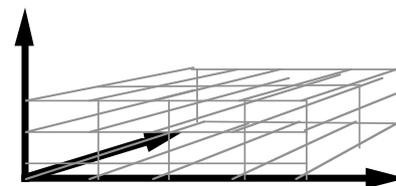
from the school context:

from broader context:

Apply

How would you now describe the sort of climate which you intend to establish in classrooms you manage?

Classroom Context: Social Environment An Investigation Activity



Do

Investigate other people's views of the environment you have observed. How would they describe what it feels like to be in this classroom? Keep in mind the headings you have already used to observe:

Power

Climate of expectations

Helping

Promoting self-reliance

Attitude to differences

Style of communication

What events and criteria are they using to make their judgement of this social environment?

What works about this social environment for them ? What doesn't work ?

What changes/improvements would they make?

What action have they taken in attempting to create, influence or improve this environment?

Review

Bring together the results of your investigation or investigations.

Spend some time examining the various results.

Look for:

any trends you notice across all the people whose views you investigated.

Are there:

any similarities amongst them about how they view the social environment?

any differences between them and their views of the social environment?

Did you find your personal views on the social environment were similar to those of the people you investigated? If so, which people?

Learn

What views have you developed about the social environments of classrooms, and the similarities/differences in peoples' views

Identify any hypotheses you are making under each of:

Power

Climate of expectations

Helping

Promoting self-reliance

Attitude to differences

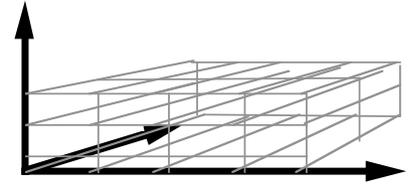
Style of communication

Did you find that the views of beginner teachers (including your own) were more similar to those of the pupils or to those of the teachers you investigated?

Apply

What are the important things which have emerged for you to incorporate into classrooms you're involved in in the future?

Classroom Context: Social Environment Personal Action



Choose one of the classrooms you are presently managing

Review

Think of the various aspects which create the social environment of that classroom:

- the personnel,
- the climate and these aspects:
 - Power
 - Climate of expectations
 - Helping
 - Promoting self-reliance
 - Attitude to differences
 - Style of communication.

Which of the above are proving positive in this classroom?

Which aspects are proving not so positive?

Learn

Identify one area in which you would like improvement to occur.

What aspects which create the social environment can you experiment with?

What examples have you seen or discussed which may help to create the climate you're seeking?

What difficulties do you anticipate in putting any of these into practice?

Apply

Discuss with a colleague any ideas for improving the social environment of that classroom in the area you've chosen.

Decide one manageable change.

Check: is it achievable? have you the resource to do it?

is it believable? is it realistic for the classroom you've identified?

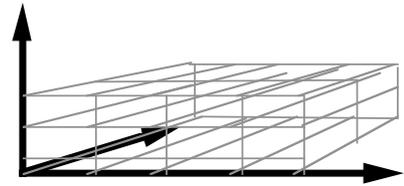
is it controllable? i.e. within your sphere of influence, not that of others.

is it measurable? will you know beyond doubt when you have done it?

Decide what you will take as evidence of the improvement you seek, and when you will

Classroom Context: Psychological Climate

An Observation Activity



• Classrooms are busy places

Teachers can be engaged in 1,000 interactions a day. This explains how tired beginner teachers feel when they first manage classrooms and how potentially stressful the job is. Events happen quickly and teachers make decisions quickly. There is not enough time to focus on all events in depth, so teachers develop routines for handling classrooms. In such an environment the timing and pacing of activities is very important.

Do

Decide what observations you can make of a classroom you have access to:

The number of interactions teachers are involved in.

Fast decisions made by the teacher?

Teacher's routines for handling?

Timing and pacing of activities?

Other aspects of coping with the busy-ness?

• Classrooms are public places

Teachers' and pupils' behaviours are highly visible to other members of the situation.

Teachers occasionally feel 'on stage'. They develop an approach which is both public and personal (beginner teachers are sometimes concerned about how public and how personal they will be). Teachers direct most of their performance to an audience at large, perhaps sub-groups of the class, and not so much towards each individual pupil. In such a public setting, teachers may act towards one pupil with the intention of affecting others in the audience.

Classrooms are also public in the sense that many members of the public take a view on classrooms. When these views differ, teachers experience role strain. Teachers sometimes cope with role strain by isolating their performance from view.

Do

Decide what observations you can make of a classroom you have access to:

Teacher's handling of the public situation and audience?

Teacher's handling the class as an audience?

Teachers influencing one in order to influence others?

Other aspects of coping with the public-ness?

• **Classroom events are multidimensional**

People in classrooms may have a wide variety of purposes, experiences, interests and goals. Personal and social aspects of pupils and teachers and their daily lives are always affecting classroom life.

Teaching and learning are but one dimension, the formally appointed one.

Teachers generally recognise, accept, and mediate this multidimensionality.

Sometimes they engage it explicitly in their classroom management (through references to what they're aware of going on elsewhere) and sometimes in their subject (through links to daily life).

Teachers manage events on a multiplicity of dimensions: knowing topic, distributing resources, managing groups, coping with responses to events, keeping records, etc.

Do

Decide what observations you can make of a classroom you have access to:

Ways in which the teacher recognises other dimensions?

Teacher's references to elsewhere?

Teachers' handling the multiple aspects of activities?

• **Classroom events are simultaneous**

The multiple events on so many dimensions do not occur in a step-by-step fashion, especially from the teacher's point of view. Teachers are generally managing more than one event at the same time.

Teachers exercise the skill (at least apparently) of being able to monitor more than one aspect at once - 'the eyes in the back of the head' phenomenon.

Teachers exercise a powerful choice as to which aspect to respond to and which aspect to ignore. The style of operating this choice can make the important difference between a 'smooth' teaching performance where a purposeful climate develops, and a 'lumpy' performance where the teacher seems controlled by events.

Do

Decide what observations you can make of a classroom you have access to:

Ways in which the teacher manages more than one event?

Teacher's skills of monitoring?

Teacher's skills of ignoring?

Teachers' handling the simultaneous aspects of events?

• **Classroom events are unpredictable**

No-one can predict classroom events with full accuracy. Disruption is easily generated by interruptions (external ones and internal ones).

Teachers generally become skilled in recognising and tolerating this unpredictability.

Yet teachers attempt to predict pupils' responses to work, pacing of work, and so on.

Routines in classroom life can be seen as one way of bringing predictability and reducing ambiguity. Still, teachers must tolerate high levels of ambiguity in classrooms.

Pupils also have strategies for coping with unpredictability: their enquiring of what teacher expects, searching for the answer teacher wants, requesting low-risk predictable tasks, and making teacher predictable through stereotype and labelling.

Do

Decide what observations you can make of a classroom you have access to:

Ways in which unpredicted events can disrupt classrooms?

Teacher's ways of coping with disruptions and unpredictability?

Examples of teachers predicting pupils' responses?

Ways in which routines make life predictable?

Pupils' strategies for making their life in classrooms predictable?

Review

Bring together a range of observations of classrooms using the structured headings above. What evidence do you have for these features of classrooms:

- Classrooms are busy places
- Classrooms are public places
- Classroom events are multidimensional
- Classroom events are simultaneous
- Classroom events are unpredictable

Then go on to examine what similarities and differences there are in teachers' ways of handling the classroom context under each of the statements.

These are major features of classrooms, and there is much which may be covered by them: you will no doubt have to be very structured in bringing together the observations, so that you are covering the potentially wide range but not becoming vague. Remember you are not looking for generalisations, but for examples which illuminate important features of classrooms.

Learn

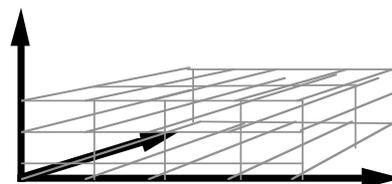
The main aspects of learning from these observations are intended to be:

- recognition of some of the features of classroom life
- observation of teachers' various ways of managing these

This is intended to give you a context in which to examine:

- how teachers may turn classrooms into educational contexts

Classroom Context: Psychological Climate ***An Investigation Activity***



This activity helps you to investigate teachers' views about the classroom.

It may not be an easy activity, as some of the ideas may not be the ones teachers themselves use at the moment.

Do

Select a classroom teacher whose handling of classrooms interests you or inspires you. Find some time to talk with them about managing classrooms.

Use the headings below, and the examples under each to prompt the discussion with the teacher you've chosen. Your aim is to unearth anything about how they view classrooms and how they perceive the management of classrooms.

- Classrooms are busy places
 - The number of interactions you're involved in.
 - Fast decisions you make
 - Your routines for handling the busy-ness of classrooms
 - Issues about the timing and pacing of activities
 - Other aspects of coping with the busy-ness?
- Classrooms are public places
 - Your handling of the public situation and audience
 - Your handling the class as an audience
 - Influencing one in order to influence others
 - Other aspects of coping with the public-ness?
- Classroom events are multidimensional
 - Ways in which you give recognition to other dimensions
 - Your references to elsewhere
 - Your handling the multiple aspects of activities
- Classroom events are simultaneous
 - Ways in which you manage more than one event
 - Your skills of monitoring
 - Your skills of ignoring
 - Your handling the simultaneous aspects of events?
- Classroom events are unpredictable
 - Ways in which unpredicted events have disrupted classrooms
 - Your ways of coping with disruptions and unpredictability
 - Your predictions of pupils' responses
 - Ways in which routines make life predictable.
 - Pupils' strategies for making their life in classrooms predictable

Review

Bring together the results from a number of investigations. No doubt they will contain a wide diversity of illuminating material, which will not be simple to organize. Under each of the five main headings, extract some of the things which teachers who interest you have said about managing classrooms.

Learn

There are clearly a whole host of possible learnings from what the teachers you talk with say about these themes. Perhaps they are

- particular perceptions or practices in these teachers' classrooms which you want to think about:

- differences between teachers and their management of the classroom situation, and how these differences relate to the different views they've shared with you:

- features of classrooms which impact on us all when we're managing those unique environments:

Try to ensure that you examine all three of the above aspects.

How do you respond to this quote from Corrie?¹

Much of the distinctive nature of the teachers' strategies for handling interaction in the classroom was derived from the nature of the context in which they worked,... both the immediate situation of the classroom itself and the organisational setting of the school. ... In general terms they appeared to have little or no influence on the construction of the timetable ..., the content of the curriculum, the formation of classes and the allocation of themselves and the pupils to the classes. Their scope for influencing the situation seemed in the main to be limited to the strategies they could devise for coping with the classes to which they were allocated and the classroom situations which they encountered.

Apply

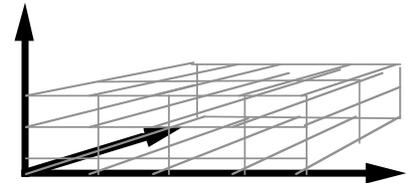
Discuss with others any of the perceptions or practices you've identified through this activity which you would wish to apply in classrooms you manage.

Think about the things which will help you apply them, and also anticipate the things which may work against you.

¹ Corrie M et al (1982), **Classroom Management Strategies**, Hodder & Stoughton.

Classroom Context: Psychological Climate

Personal Action



Do

Using some or all of the headings below, make some notes on the way you are presently managing classrooms, noting any general trends and any particular examples.

Do any of these headings raise important issues in your present approach?

- Classrooms are busy places

The number of interactions you're involved in.

Fast decisions you make?

Your routines for handling?

Timing and pacing of activities?

Other aspects of coping with the busy-ness?

- Classrooms are public places

Your handling of the public situation and audience?

Your handling the class as an audience?

Your influencing one in order to influence others?

Other aspects of coping with the public-ness?

- Classroom events are multidimensional

Ways in which you recognises other dimensions?

Your references to elsewhere?

Your handling the multiple aspects of activities

- Classroom events are simultaneous

Ways in which you manages more than one event?

Your skills of monitoring?

Your skills of ignoring?

Your handling the simultaneous aspects of events?

- Classroom events are unpredictable

Ways in which unpredicted events have disrupted classrooms

Your ways of coping with disruptions and unpredictability

Your predictions of pupils' responses

Ways in which routines make life predictable.

Pupils' strategies for making their life in classrooms predictable

Review

Look back over the areas, and identify some where you would like to make a change or an experiment.

Now choose one or two of these.

Learn

What is presently creating the pattern you wish to change? Are there factors associated with you, with others, with the situation? Identify these and note them.

What examples have you seen of your chosen aspect of managing classrooms being handled in the way you aim for? what aspects of this are appropriate to you and to your repertoire?

Apply

Identify the particular classroom in which you plan to make a change or an experiment.

Identify the particular change you are planning to make.

Identify the particular occasion when your experiment will commence.

Check: is it achievable? have you the resource to do it?

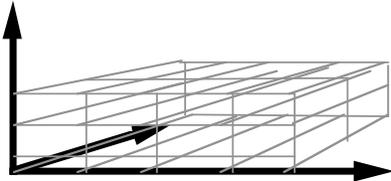
is it believable? is it realistic for the classroom you've identified?

is it controllable? i.e. within your sphere of influence, not that of others.

is it measurable? will you know beyond doubt when you have done it?

Decide what you will take as evidence of the improvement you seek, and when you will review the experiment.

Classrooms: Goals
An Observation Activity



Organise an observation of a classroom or classrooms, in which your main focus is to be looking for evidence of goals in a classroom.

1. In this classroom are there any written statements of the goals or the plans?
Are such statements on display?
Would you say they're short/medium or long-term statements?

- 1b. In this classroom are there any other visible signs of the goals or the plans?
such as evidence of work assignments?

If these signs are displays of outcomes, are they of this class' outcomes?

2. In this classroom are there any spoken statements of the goals or plans?
For example in teacher talk: note down any phrases you hear:-

- statements which link back to previous lessons

- statements which give an outline plan of this lesson

- statements which show how this lesson fits with future progress

- statements which explain the purpose of activities

- statements which suggest a motive for completing the activities

Review

Did the visible signs in the classroom help to convey goals?

Did the teacher's talk help to convey goals and purposes? in what way?

Did the teacher's talk hinder the idea of goals and purposes? in what way?

Learn

Would you say that this felt to be a purposeful classroom?

What evidence from your observations can you use to support this judgement:

Goal structures in a classroom can be:

- individualistic: students' attainment of a goal is unrelated to others' attainment
- competitive: students' attainment of a goal is dependent on the failure of others
- cooperative: students' attainment of a goal is dependent on the success of others

How would you characterise the goal structures in the classroom you observed?

Apply

What would you suggest for improvements in the clarity of goals and purposes in this classroom?

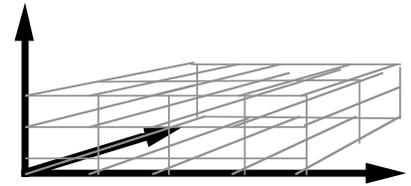
What statements of goals and purposes could you now imagine yourself practising for application in classrooms you manage?

What sorts of goal structures do you imagine yourself adopting?

- individualistic, competitive, cooperative?

Classrooms: Goals

An Investigation Activity



Do

Choose a lesson and teacher that you know, and develop an enquiry around the following themes:

- Form.* What are the teacher's plans - do they exist? where and in what form? are they in the teacher's planner? in the Department's records? and how do they relate to the plans which are in the teachers' heads?
- Focus.* What is the focus of the teacher's plans? is it content, activity, experiences, goals?
- Background.* Where did the goals arise from? were they influenced by term plans, exam syllabus, resources, preferences?
- Purposes.* What ideas about learning do the teacher's goals imply? are these explicit in setting the goals?

- Interview the teacher
 - How do they decide the goals?
 - What do they find helpful to them in this decision?
 - What do they find hinders them in that decision?
- What is pupil's knowledge of the overall plans of the classroom you have selected?
 - Where do they get their evidence of the plans?
 - from the classroom, from the teacher, from each other?
 - Is there a statement in the pupil's folder?
- Interview some pupils on themes such as:
 - How have they understood the purpose of today's lesson?
 - Do they understand how it connects to preceding and proceeding lessons?
 - How do they understand the purpose of this term's work?

Review

Collect up the results of a number of investigations.

What was the range of forms you found teachers' goals in?

Were there any trends or patterns in the focus of goals which teachers have for their classrooms?

What forces lead them to set these sort of goals rather than others which could be possible?

What are the main influences on teacher's goals?

What issues have you noticed in the communication of their goals?

Learn

Is this finding one which holds for the teachers you investigated? -

*In the process of planning, teachers focus most on subject matter content and instructional processes. they focus least on objectives.*¹

What do you think leads to this state of affairs?

Many teachers seem to keep their goals to themselves, although an increasing number find the usefulness of clear goal statements at the beginning of a lesson or activity.

What do you think leads to teacher reticence in communicating their goals?

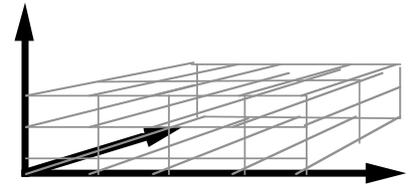
Apply

In developing your own management of classrooms so that it creates a purposeful atmosphere, you may need to consider the focus, selection and communication of appropriate goals.

From what you have observed of experienced teachers, which practices in these areas will you hope to build in to your repertoire, and which will you hope not to include?

¹Arends RI, 1991, **Learning to Teach**, McGraw-Hill.

Classrooms: Goals Personal Action



Do

Think about a classroom you are presently managing.

Review

Have you experimented with your specification of the goals you have for that classroom? What way of focusing your goals is working best for you?

Have you communicated the goals you have for that classroom?

through written form?

through display?

through spoken forms?

Which is presently proving the most successful?

Which the least?

Learn

Are you presently deciding objectives and planning from there?

Are you finding this time-consuming? useful?

Perhaps the findings on experienced teachers' planning have implications for you:

What do you think of this comment:

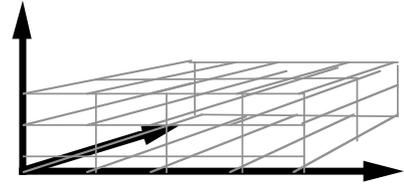
- ✪ implications [of research findings on experienced teachers] for the beginner teacher:
 - Starting with objectives.* Even though beginning teachers may be required to write lesson plans that begin with objectives, they should not feel guilty if their innate sense tells them to plan for content and instructional activities first and then come back to objectives. This is what experienced teachers do. ...
 - Experienced teachers as models.* The beginning teacher should also consider whether experienced teachers are good models to follow. It may be that the planning patterns of experienced teachers do not represent best planning practice.
 - Planning time.* The beginning teacher who is spending many hours planning for the next day's lessons can take heart from research which suggests that as teachers become more familiar with a topic and with its materials, they feel more comfortable and do less planning.¹

Apply

Select one aspect where your communication of goals is showing some success. In what way might this success be built upon?

¹ Arends RI, 1991, **Learning to Teach**, McGraw-Hill.

Classrooms: Tasks An Observation Activity



What are the tasks which actually go on in classrooms?

What is the balance or profile of the possible tasks?

Do

Identify a classroom to which you have access for observation, and prepare to carry out an observation on the following lines:

For one lesson, identify how many minutes the pupils were devoted to tasks under the following headings:

Activity	Time (mins)
Writing/Drawing	
Talking with teacher	
with pupils	
Listening to teacher	
to pupils	
Making	
Watching teacher	
resources	
Moving	
Other (specify)	
Total	

Review

Bring together observations from a number of classrooms. Are there any trends in the sorts of tasks you have observed going on? What similarities and differences were there between these classrooms?

Did you see any evidence of teachers using particular sorts of tasks for particular sorts of learning?

Learn

To what influences on teachers and classrooms do you attribute both the similarities and the differences you have observed in classroom tasks?

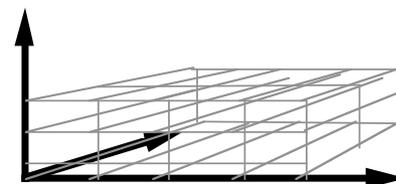
Obviously it is not possible to observe learning in any direct sense, But you may make some informed guesses. Take the three most prevalent activities observed in the lesson and identify what you think was being learned by pupil undertaking each.

Apply

What overall profile of tasks will you seek in classrooms you manage?

Classrooms: Tasks

An Investigation Activity



Effective schools are *demanding* places, where teachers expect and ensure high standards of work and behaviour; at the same time they are *responsive* to pupils, for the teachers are approachable and, since they value pupils, seek to *involve* them in the life and work of the school¹

What can be said about classroom tasks that are involving and demanding?

Do

1. Enquiry of pupils

Discuss your observation of classroom tasks with pupils from that class.

Make enquiries about their views on:

- which tasks are most involving?/ which least?
- which tasks are most enjoyable? which least?
- which tasks are most demanding?
- which tasks do they feel they learn most from?

Review

What trends did you notice in the pupils views?

What similarities were there and what differences?

Did the pupils you talked with hold similar views to those whom Gannaway² interviewed: Their order of preferences for forms of activity was:

1. Not being at school
2. Going out on school trips (new places preferred)
3. Film shows in school, or other 'events'
4. Classroom discussion
5. Listening to tapes in class
6. Reading in class
7. Writing in class

Learn

What task characteristics led to involving and demanding activities?

What leads to limits being placed on the involvingness and demandingness of classroom tasks?

sheer routine? teachers' feelings about control? teachers preferences for how much open-endedness they're prepared to handle?

Apply

What issues do you anticipate in making the tasks involving and demanding in the classrooms you will manage?

¹ Hargreaves D, 1990, 'Making schools more effective: the challenge to policy, practice and research', **Scottish Educational Review**, 22:1, 5 - 14.

² Gannaway M (1976). 'Making sense of school', in Stubbs M and Delamont S (Eds.), **Explorations in Classroom Observation**, Wiley.

Do

2. Enquiry of teachers.

Take an analysis of the tasks in one lesson.

Activity	Actual time (mins)	Teacher's ideal time
Writing/Drawing		
Talking with teacher		
with pupils		
Listening to teacher		
to pupils		
Making		
Watching teacher		
resources		
Moving		
Other (specify)		
Total		

Did the profile of activities match what they would have wanted?

If not, what else had affected the profile of activity?

Enquire of the teacher what led to them choosing those particular tasks for that particular lesson. What are the influences on their choice of tasks in a lesson?

Which were the strongest influences, which were the weakest? You have ten points to allocate to the following possible influences, to show their relative strengths: what will it be from your investigation?

Possible influence:	Strength (points from total of 10)
The goals for the lesson	...
The curriculum resources being used	...
The teacher's preference for some tasks	...
The amount of time there was for planning	...
The teacher's view of the pupils in the class	...
Other (specify)	...

Review

The forces on the tasks in the classroom and the influences on teachers' choice of tasks.

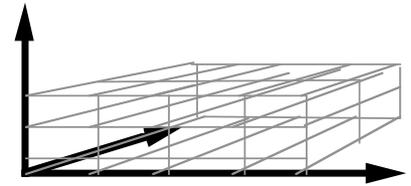
Learn

What are the strongest forces, and how do teachers manage themselves in the face of these?

Apply

What are the important things for you in your future profile of tasks in classrooms and the forces which may influence your choice?

Classrooms: Tasks Personal Action



Do

Take one of the classrooms you are presently managing.

- (i) Fill in in the left hand column of the following table to indicate the profile of activities you wish for in that lesson.
- (ii) Find a way of monitoring the actual profile of activities in the lesson as it takes place, and after the lesson fill in these observations in the right hand column of the table:

Activity	Intended time (mins)	Actual time (mins)
Writing/Drawing		
Talking with teacher		
with pupils		
Listening to teacher		
to pupils		
Making		
Watching teacher		
resources		
Moving		
Other (specify)		
Total		

Review

Compare the actual and intended profile of activities. Make some notes on the aspects which supported your plan and those which did not support it.

Learn

Do you now wish to modify the profile you planned?

What profile of tasks are appropriate to the sort of learning you intend to establish in this classroom ?

Apply

What extra features do you have to consider in order that the profile of tasks turns out as you plan?

Do

Select another classroom where you wish to examine and experiment with the profile of tasks.

Write down what you feel is an appropriate profile to achieve.

Anticipate the aspects which will support your aim and those which will work against it.

***Forces which help
me achieve this profile***



***Forces which hinder
me achieving this profile***



Issues about me

The students' history:

Culture of the class, subject, school:

Specify to yourself an occasion when you will plan a particular profile of tasks for a lesson, carry it through, and monitor it.

Review

Make some notes on what happened, and discuss these with a colleague.

Which aspects went according to plan, which didn't?

What extra light can your colleague throw on this experiment?

Learn

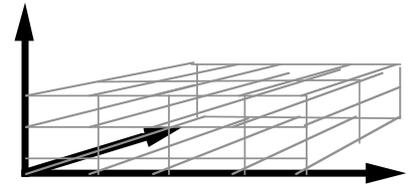
What extra forces (which you had not anticipated) were there in the picture?

Apply

How will you take the next step? With regard to the new forces you've learned about, what action can you take?

Classrooms: Social Structure

An Observation Activity



Below are four main headings for looking at aspects of groups in classrooms

Do

Discuss these aspects and prepare to observe a classroom or a number of classrooms with the headings below in mind.

1. Size of Groups

Are they mainly individual?

or pairings?

or fours to sixes?

or larger combinations?

Is there a variety at any one time? If so, what?

Does the size of groupings change over the period of the lesson?

What changes can you see and what rationales are offered?

2. Activities in the groups

(a) working in groups

are they physically grouped in the room, but engaged in individual activities?

(b) working as groups

are they grouped and working on a group activity?

(c) learning about groups

are they working on a group task and examining how the group is achieving it?

3. Composition of groups

Who has decided which pupils are in which group?

What seems to be the basis for this decision?

Do the groupings reflect sex, attainment, friendship, style, language, cultural aspects?

Is there any evidence that the composition of groups has been varied?

4. Management of groups

What has been observable about the management of groups:

on the part of the teacher?

through the task:

through setting up roles:

through the means of assessment:

on the part of the pupils?

through keeping the task in progress:

through negotiating the roles:

through checking on how its going:

Review

Bring together a number of accounts

What variety of groups did you observe?

Was there working in groups/working as groups/learning about groups?

How had group composition been decided?

Note any surprises you had during this observation

What interventions did the teacher make in the work of the groups, and what triggered them to intervene?

Learn

What factors do you think influenced:

the sizes of groups which you observed?

the activities in the groups?

the composition of groups?

the management of groups?

The social structure used in any classroom has to be matched with the design of the tasks, the goals and the role and skills of the pupils.

Identify three occasions when these features were well matched in your observations and three when they were not.

Apply

What aspects of social structure do you see as important for further investigation?

Devise three rules of thumb for yourself when considering the social structure you will use in a classroom

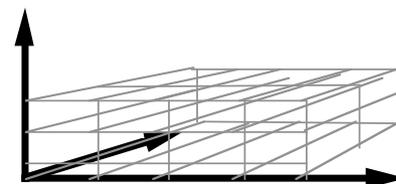
1.

2.

3.

Classrooms: Social Structure

An Investigation Activity



1. Pupils' views of social structure



Set up a discussion with a small group of pupils, during which you elicit their views on:

- the sizes of groups they experience
- the range and the variety of these through a day
- the criteria for group composition
- the rationale offered for group composition
- the help they're given to become skilled at working in groups

What changes/improvements would they make?

2. Teacher's view of the social structure



Set up a discussion with a teacher, during which you elicit their views on:

- the criteria for group composition
- the rationale
- the constraints they perceive on the social structure of the classroom

What other social structures have they tried?

- with what variations?
- with what effect?

What would they like to promote in terms of social structure, and what do they feel they need in order to achieve this?

3. Pupils' overall experience



Make arrangements to follow a pupil through a series of classes. Observe the pattern of social structures they experience, and the range of demands placed on them in these different settings.

What range and what variety does the pupil experience?

How much is the social structure explicitly referred to by teachers, and specific time given to reflect on how successful it is being?

Review

Have patterns emerged in the classrooms you have investigated in terms of:

- size of groups
- range and variety of groups
- criteria for composition
- rationale for composition
- reflection and help on the group's working

What would you suggest are the main forces which create the pattern you have identified?

What exceptions have you seen, and how are these to be explained?

Learn

Many teachers use small groups in the classroom, but many do not.

Helen Cowie and Jean Rudduck¹ identified four types of teachers on their views, practice and experience in the area of using groups:

★ *Non-users*

because of views about the subject, a focus on individuals, reluctance to make change, ideas about what examiners want, ideas about what colleagues think.

★ *Occasional users*

because of uncertainty, or a narrow view of group work.

★ *Divisive users*

only with some pupils or some subjects, because of views about pupil 'ability' or views about different areas of the curriculum.

★ *Committed users*

'I try to use group work at every level that I teach'

Did you see examples of all four of these 'types'?

Some teachers believe that working in groups has negative effects on achievement. The available research evidence suggests otherwise:

The theoretical support for co-operative endeavours appears to be borne out by the research evidence, which shows consistent improvements in achievement, and in social and affective areas.²

What would you imagine the response of the teachers you talked with would have been to this summary of research?

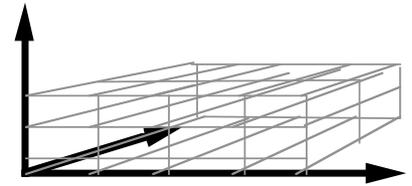
Apply

In your future career as a teacher, how will you ensure occasions to reflect on the social structure of classrooms you manage?

¹ Cowie H and Rudduck J, 1988, **Cooperative Group Work: an overview**, BP Educational Service, ISBN 0 86165 145 6

² Bennett N and Dunne E (1992), **Managing Classroom Groups**, Hemel Hempstead, Simon and Schuster.

Classrooms: Social Structure Personal Action



Do

Identify one classroom you are managing where you wish to experiment with the social structure.

Make a few notes on the present approach you use in that classroom.

Review

Which aspects of the social structure are going effectively?

Which are not so effective?

What changes would you like to see happen?

Learn

Check your **rationale** for wishing to modify the social structure:

Is it clear?

Is it any of these:

- to increase communication and engagement about a learning task
- to enhance the social processes which support learning
- to engage a range of ideas and perspectives
- to promote supportive working, including for learning
- to develop the use of communication skills
- to promote collaboration
- to encourage group problem-solving
- to enhance skills of identifying and making decisions?

Anticipate the various aspects which might help and hinder you in making this change:

**Forces which help
me change the social structure**



**Forces which hinder
me changing the social**



My preferences, feelings of risk

The students' previous experience

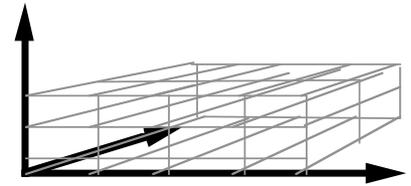
Culture of the class, school

Apply

- Prepare the way you will communicate the rationale to the pupils:
 - (i) when you introduce the change
 - (ii) at later stages when they ask 'why are we working like this?'
- Prepare the tasks available to support the change you are making.
- Prepare yourself, for what you can reasonably expect at the first occasion, and for the positive gains you will be looking out for.

Classrooms: Timing and Pacing

An Observation Activity



Lessons can be observed to pass through a number of phases.

Each phase may be identified by different informal classroom rules 'in play'.

Rules can be identified (in part) by what teachers say.

D⁰ Arrange to observe a classroom.

Record here¹ any examples of what the teacher says which indicates a rule being stated or a rule being broken. You might also record any examples of the teacher communicating this through non-verbal means.

1. Entry phase

- ✱ Talk
- ✱ Movement
- ✱ Time
- ✱ Teacher-pupil relationships
- ✱ Pupil-pupil relationships

.....

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2. Settling down phase

- ✱ Talk
- ✱ Movement
- ✱ Time
- ✱ Teacher-pupil relationships
- ✱ Pupil-pupil relationships

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3. Lesson proper

- ✱ Talk
- ✱ Movement
- ✱ Time
- ✱ Teacher-pupil relationships
- ✱ Pupil-pupil relationships

.....

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4. Clearing up phase

- ✱ Talk
- ✱ Movement
- ✱ Time
- ✱ Teacher-pupil relationships
- ✱ Pupil-pupil relationships

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5. Exit phase

- ✱ Talk
- ✱ Movement
- ✱ Time
- ✱ Teacher-pupil relationships
- ✱ Pupil-pupil relationships

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¹ developed from Hargreaves DH, Hestor and Mellor (1975), **Deviance in Classrooms**, Routledge Kegan Paul.

Review

Collect examples of the sorts of rules and routines which you saw teachers exercising which in turn decided the phases of the lesson.

More important than the content of classroom rules is sometimes the manner in which they are conveyed, especially at points of transition, when a phase (or sub-phase of a lesson) is changing, for example moving into groups, or changing the activity.

Make a note of some of the transitions you observed:

Attempts are sometimes made to convey a change of rule which lead to confusion, and therefore the chance of increased deviance being seen by the teacher:

For example: 'Right: we're going to stop that activity now and move on. By the way, does anyone know where Ellen is today?' [Kounin¹ terms this a 'dangle']

Or 'OK, stop the discussion now and make some notes on the main points. Keep to a limit of five main points. Oh did anyone discuss the idea of ...' [Kounin's 'flip-flop']

Did you see any evidence of 'dangles' or 'flip-flops'?

Also, teachers preface their statements of classroom rules (or rule changes) with an attention-getter, such as 'Right' and 'OK' in the examples above. Collect examples of the attention getters which you observed teachers using.

Were any particularly effective? If so, what explained this?

Were any particularly ineffective? If so, what explains this?

Learn

Experienced teachers may convey the rules of their classrooms in 'embedded' ways - a classic example is the teacher who (without looking up from what they're doing) says 'Someone's being silly', and two pupils at the back of the room stop what they were doing!

From this activity you may not have seen how the teacher had set up such meanings.

Beginner teachers have to do a lot of communicating to set up these shared meanings.

As you anticipate managing classrooms you may need to anticipate this conclusion²:

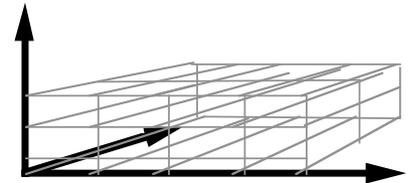
More effective managers:

- have more contact with students during the first few days and spent considerable time explaining rules and procedures
- have better instructional procedures, and make the 'first' academic activities enjoyable
- are sensitive to student needs and concerns during the first few days of school, specifically in gauging attention span, level of difficulty of lessons, and overall judgment of what to do
- exhibited better listening and affective skills

¹ Kounin JS (1976), **Discipline and Group Management in Classrooms**, Krieger.

² Emmer ET, et al (1980), 'Effective classroom management at the beginning of the school year', **Elementary School Journal**, 80: 219-231.

Classrooms: Timing and Pacing An Investigation Activity



Do

Set up an occasion to talk with a teacher about timing, pacing, routines, etc. Share with them the five broad themes outlined below, and focus on two or three.

1 Try to find their views on how they handle entry and settling down. What routines have they established? What others have they tried? How do they respond to the finding¹:

'Effective classroom managers:

- greet their students at the door, extending welcomes to build positive feeling
- train students to take [registers] read announcements, ...
- write instructions on the board ... so students can get started
- establish routines that communicate to students that serious work is about to begin'

Note down some of the responses you elicit.

2 Try to find their views on what timing they plan for. Collect their views in detail from a number of lessons.

How do they decide the number of activities to plan into a lesson?

Note down some of the rationales they give.

3 Try to elicit their thoughts on handling transitions between activities.

[See also the thoughts on this in the observation activity]

How do they respond to the view that effective teachers:

- make use of cues (such as 'five more minutes working in groups' 'three more contributions to this discussion' 'you should be about halfway by now') and
- make use of signposts ('the link between what we're moving onto and what you've just completed is ...' 'when we've worked on this in groups for ten minutes we'll bring the findings to the whole class' 'I'll be interrupting you again in five minutes' ...)

4 Do they have anything to say on their 'in-flight decisions' - times when their routines and or plans are changed in response to what is happening.

When do they make such decisions most? When do they make them least?

What else affects their feelings about changing plans?

Do they accelerate or decelerate a lesson? If so, how?

How do they decide? in response to what?

5 What views do they have about clearing-up and exit? What routines do they find effective? What others have they tried? How do they respond to the view that effective teachers:

- leave sufficient time to complete important closing activities
- give homework assignments early so possible confusions can be cleared up
- establish routine procedures for collecting work
- use early warning cues to alert students that end of class is approaching.

Review

Gather together views on as many of the above themes from as wide a range of teachers as possible.

Remember that these are key themes in classroom management and teachers are exercising complex decision-making and skill. Take care not to look for a single or simple conclusion.

Learn

What are the main ways in which teachers' handling of timing, pacing, rules and routines vary?

What comments did you collect about whether and how teachers vary their routines and timings?

In what ways do teachers evaluate the effectiveness of their routines and timings?

What sources do you think they have used to develop their present approach?

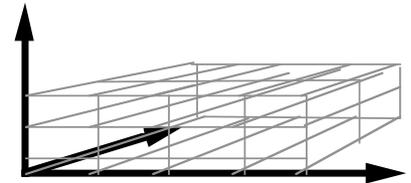
What influences could you see at work on their choice of routines and timings?

Apply

Start to think about the routine and timings you might be aiming to set up in classrooms you work in, and how these may appropriately differ and change.

Think about the teachers you have talked with. Do you consider there is any need for their routines and timings to be differently handled, differently evaluated, or gleaned from different sources than at present?

Classrooms: Timing and Pacing Personal Action



Do

Identify one classroom you're managing, where the timing and pacing are not to your satisfaction.

Make some notes on what usually happens to the timings.

Review

What is it you wish to be different in the lesson you have chosen?

Is it:

- handling the entry and settling down
- the number of activities you plan in a lesson
- handling transitions between activities, and using cues and signposts
- making 'in flight' decisions to change a plan
- having time at the end to discuss follow-up tasks
- handling the clearing up and exit?

Learn

Now that you have identified a specific area, what change of practice could you make? Refer back to the ideas in the previous two activities, and to the observations you have made.

Identify one idea which seems feasible and likely to succeed.

Apply

What will work against your proposed change?

**Things which work
towards the change**



**Things which work
against the change**



- Specify the particular lesson in which your experiment will start.
- Prepare how you will explain the new practice to the pupils.
- Plan in when and how you will evaluate the experiment

Below are some of the features of lessons which connect to issues of timing and pacing, and which teachers may plan.

Use the grid to:

- (i) evaluate how well you are presently handling these features
- (ii) decide whether any are worth developing in your practice
- (iii) prioritise a manageable number for some experiments.

	(i) present performance high low	(ii) worthy of development (tick to indicate)	(iii) priority for development (maximum three)
Handling the entry and settling down			
Giving clear starting instructions using the appropriate medium			
Explaining rules and procedures			
Conveying a purposeful message about working time and activity			
Planning appropriate number of activities in a lesson			
Appropriate difficulty level of activities			
Handling transitions between activities (not flip-flops or dangles)			
Getting attention to change activities			
Using cues and signposts to signal impending transitions			
Making 'in flight' decisions to change a plan			
Having time at the end to discuss follow-up tasks			
Handling the clearing up and exit			

Discuss your thoughts in this area with a colleague.

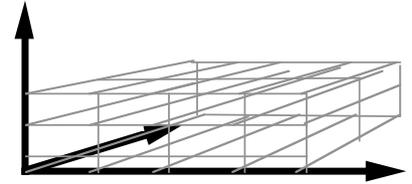
Develop a plan for experimenting with the areas you've chosen.

Which classes will you choose?

On which occasions?

How will you monitor what happens?

Classrooms: Resources An Observation Activity



It is a trap for any teacher to consider that they're the main resource for pupils' learning in a classroom. But the resources available are not always as effective as they could be. This observation focuses on the actual resources used, and then what can be noted about their origins.

Do

Arrange to observe a classroom and examine the resources which pupils use during that class.

1. Are they:

	Used by all pupils	Used by some pupils
Inside the classroom:		
Texts		
Tools		
Visions		
Raw materials		
People		
Technology		
Outside the classroom:		
Texts		
Tools		
Visions		
Raw materials		
People		
Technology		

Review

What is the origin of the resources you have observed in use?

- teacher produced or the 'home grown' variety?
- commercially produced?

No matter whether or not a 'curriculum' is devised nationally, the experience in different schools and classrooms is still potentially very different, and this includes the dimension of resources.

Compare and contrast some of the classrooms observed, in terms of the use of resources.

Learn

Were there any resources which appeared to particularly engage and motivate learners? What were these and why were they effective?

Were there any resources which appeared unable to engage and motivate learners? What were these and why were they so ineffective?

Are there any broad principles which emerge as to what resources are effective?

Apply

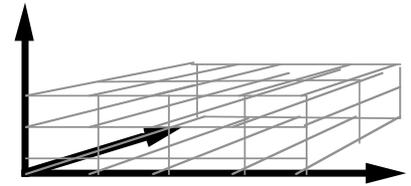
In the classrooms you observed, could the use of resources have been more effective in any way? If your answer is Yes, what would be needed for the use to change?

How do you anticipate your future use of resources, and your development of effective resources for a range of pupils?

Think about what might lead you to limit your use of an effective range of resources, and what might support you in this.

Classrooms: Resources

An Investigation Activity



Do

1. An investigation with pupils:

What resources do they say particularly engage and motivate them?

Inside the classroom: Texts: Tools: Visions: Raw materials: People: Technology

Outside the classroom: Texts: Tools: Visions: Raw materials: People: Technology

What do they suggest is the reason for this?

What resources do they say are particularly unable to engage and motivate them?

What do they suggest is the reason for this?

Do

2. An investigation with teachers:

What are the factors which have influenced the teachers' choice of resources to use?

Discuss with a teacher which are the strongest influences, which are the weakest?

If they had ten points to allocate to the following possible influences, to show their relative strengths, what would the allocation be?

Possible Influence:	Strength (points from total of 10)
The goals for the lesson	...
The tasks being set	...
The teacher's preference for some resources	...
The amount of time there was for planning	...
The teacher's view of the pupils in the class	...
Other (specify)	...

Discuss with them how they make sense of the overall picture they have described, their skills of managing in the face of it, and whether they would like the picture to be any different (if so in what way).

Do

3. An investigation with teachers:

Experienced teachers often have unobserved skills of management in:

- Selecting and creating resources
- Marshalling and booking resources
- Checking and monitoring resources

Find an occasion to discuss with a teacher any of their practices which help them under these three headings.

Review

From the above three investigation, look for:

1. a range of pupils' views on what resources are engaging and motivating
2. a range of teachers' views on the influences on their selection of resources, and how they handle this.
3. a range of teachers' views of their skills in managing resources.

Learn

Some research¹ suggests that teachers use sources which:

- * give rapid payoff
- * have been devised by fellow practitioners or adapted locally
- * are flexible and open to further adaptation
- * are near at hand, easy to access, and above all continuously available
- * contain an appeal to the teacher's ideals
- * have been learned about through personal contact rather than print

Did you find any evidence to confirm or disconfirm these points?

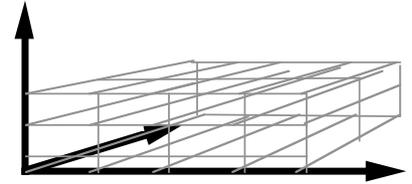
If you are finding a picture similar to that outlined above, how would you explain it?
Is there anything you would identify about teachers' professional lives and positions which may help understand this.

Apply

Anticipate how you may maintain a healthy use of a range of resources in your future classrooms, and how you may continue to learn and develop this use.

¹ Huberman M and Marsh C (1982), 'Towards an ecology of knowledge use in the classroom', **Curriculum Perspectives**, 2(2): 35 - 47.

Classrooms: Resources Personal Action



Do

Think about the range of resources that are available to you in your teaching, and the range you actually use. Under each of the headings below, indicate the extent of availability and use, and for each one note down some key examples.

	Available			Used		
	lo		hi	lo		hi
Inside the classroom:						
Texts						
Tools						
Visions						
Raw materials						
People:						
Technology						
Outside the classroom:						
Texts						
Tools						
Visions						
Raw materials						
People:						
Technology						

Review

For each heading compare the resources available to you and the ones you use. Are there differences?

Learn

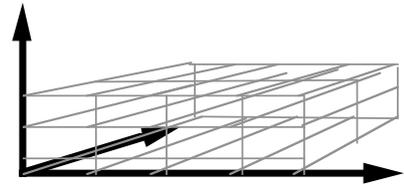
In any heading, are there obvious examples where you use less resources than available? if so, what would you suggest as the explanations of this?

Apply

Are there any resources whose use you feel you would wish to incorporate into your practice of teaching?

If so, specify them; identify with whom and for what purpose they are most appropriately used; select an occasion when you might try them out with a reasonable chance of success, and set yourself a clear goal with a target date.

Classrooms: Teacher's Role An Observation Activity



There are many ways of describing the teacher's role, some of them complex, some of them controversial, most of them difficult to observe in a reasonably direct way.

In this activity we suggest three important dimensions along which the teacher's role in a particular classroom may vary.

[Note: a role is an identifiable cluster of behaviours, played out with other people. Roles vary from situation to situation, so beware any false inferences about teachers' 'personalities' here]

Dimension 1: Teacher as Resource

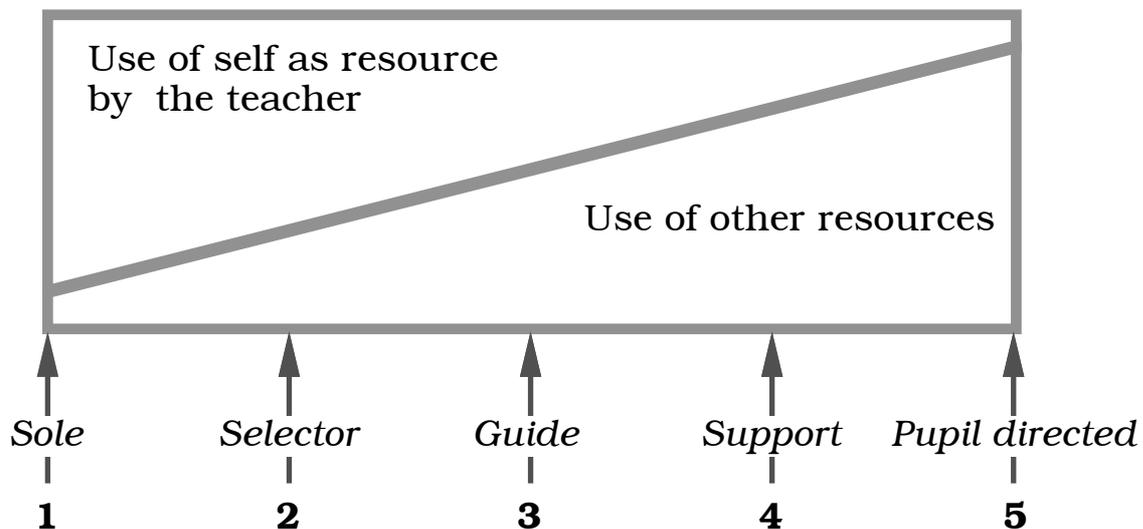
Dimension 2: Teacher as Authority

Dimension 3: Teacher as Communicator



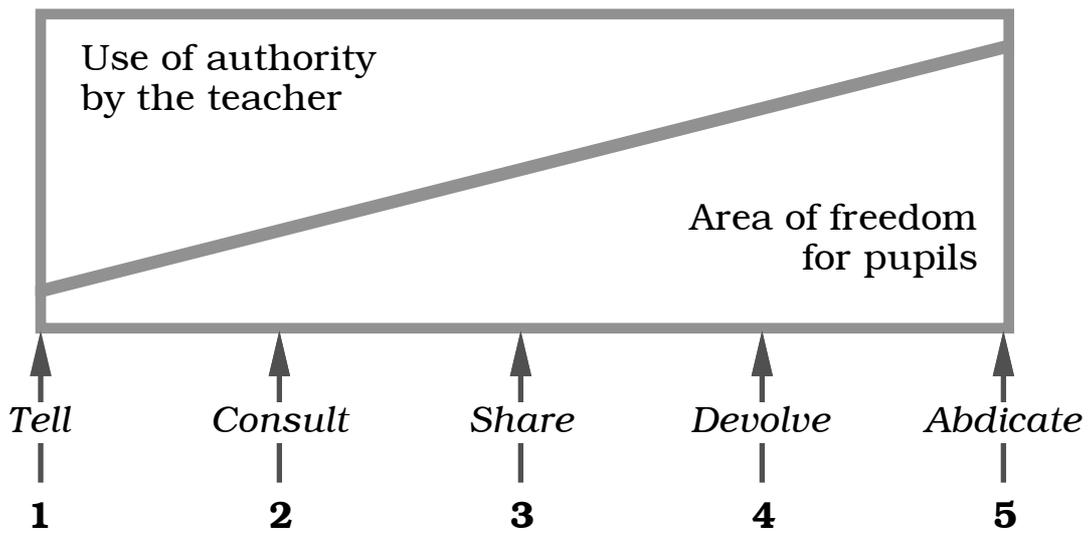
Look at each of the proposed dimensions, and discuss what you take each to mean. Prepare to observe a classroom with these dimensions of the teacher's role in mind.

Dimension 1: teacher as resource



1. Teacher acts as sole resource for pupil learning
2. Teacher is main resource and selects others
3. Teacher acts as signpost, mediator, and suggests options
4. Teacher supports pupils in developing their own resources and criteria
5. Pupils select resources, inc. on self-directed study

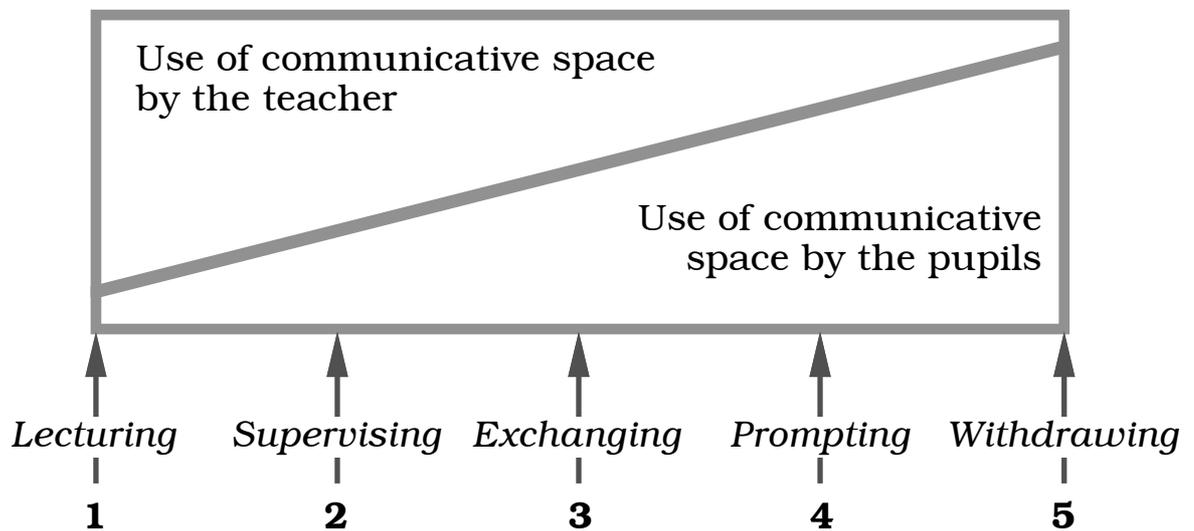
Dimension 2: teacher as authority



1. Teacher makes decision and announces it
2. Teacher presents ideas and invites questions
3. Teacher presents problem, gets suggestion, decides
4. Teacher defines limits, asks group to make decision
5. Pupils discuss and decide

[following Tannenbaum and Schmidt¹]

Dimension 3: Teacher as Communicator



1. Teacher takes up communicative space in one-way fashion
2. Teacher occupies majority communicative position, little engagement of pupils' view
3. Teacher and pupils involved in two-way exchange
4. Teacher occasionally intervenes in pupil communication
5. Pupils take up communicative space, teacher laissez-faire

¹ Tannenbaum R and Schmidt WH (1958), 'How to choose a leadership pattern', **Harvard Business Review**, 36(2).

Review

Bring together observations of a number of teachers and a number of lessons.

Try to identify examples along the full range of each dimension: teacher as resource, authority, communicator.

Are you able to locate examples from each end of the dimensions? if not, how do you explain this?

Learn

What view are you developing on the effectiveness of classrooms regarding these dimensions?

Indicate on these scales, the position where you would expect to locate effective classrooms:

Teacher as resource

Sole resource Pupil directed

Teacher as authority

Teacher telling Teacher abdicating

Teacher as communicator

Teacher lecturing Teacher withdrawn

Compare and contrast your views with those of a colleague who has also been observing with this framework.

Are there any important differences between you on the view of effectiveness you're developing?

Apply

In the classrooms you have observed, did anything about the way the teacher's role was exercised serve to reduce the effectiveness of the classroom?

If so, what do you think maintained the teacher's role this way?

What would it take for the particular role to change?

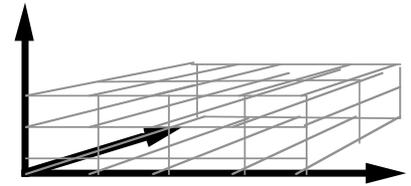
Thinking ahead to your own management of classrooms, where on each of the three dimensions above will you be wishing to exercise your role as teacher?

What do you anticipate which might hinder you exercising your role in the way you wish?

Is your preference for exercising your role in line with your view on what is effective?

If not, what changes do you think you might make to the way you play out the role? Make some detailed notes on your thoughts about this.

Classrooms: Teacher's Role An Investigation Activity

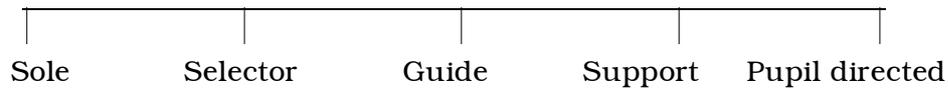


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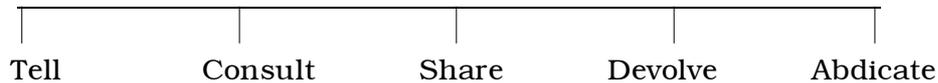
Make an arrangement to talk to some teachers you know. It would be an advantage if they were teachers whose classrooms you had observed in the observation activity for this theme.

Introduce them to the three dimensions describing aspects of the teacher's role, and what sense you have made of these dimensions.

Dimension 1: teacher as resource



Dimension 2: teacher as authority



Dimension 3: teacher as communicator



Ask the teacher you're talking with to identify one particular lesson, and then to describe their role as teacher in that lesson according to the three dimensions above. (N.B. Again, you are not seeking some global or overall judgement of this person - you are seeking their perspective on a particular occasion. Some of your respondents may say 'it all depends ...': in which case ask them to be specific, by collecting particular examples and the features that each depends on.)

For each description that your respondent gives of their role as teacher in a particular classroom, try also to collect what influences them in adopting the role they describe. Arrange these, if you can, into influences inside the classroom and influences outside the classroom.

Finally see if you can find out from your respondent whether they would want their role in that particular classroom to be any different from that which they have described. If they do wish it to be different, find out what they think would need to change for their role to change.

Review

Collect together a number of responses to the above enquiries.

In cases where you had observed the classroom, do the teachers' perspectives concur with your own? If not, how do you explain any differences?

Is there any trend you notice in the teachers' view of their role?

What do they see as the main factors affecting the role they adopt?

What do they think would need to change for them to adopt a preferred role?

Learn

Analyse the main features which influence the teacher's role as they see it:

<i>Outside the Classroom</i>		<i>Inside the Classroom</i>	
School aims		Goals adopted	
Curriculum and assessment		Tasks planned	
School culture		View of pupils & social structure	
Timetable		Time available and pacing	
Status of subject, teacher, ...		Resources available	
Other		Other	

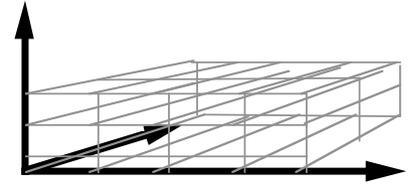
As a generalisation, do you think that teachers attribute their role performance more to features outside the classroom than those inside, or vice versa?

What effects do you think will follow from such an attribution?

Apply

Think about your ideals and your preference for the way you would want to exercise the role of teacher. What do you now anticipate which might affect your role performance: what new practices do you need to learn in order to carry off the role in the way you feel is appropriate and effective?

Classrooms: Teacher's Role Personal Action

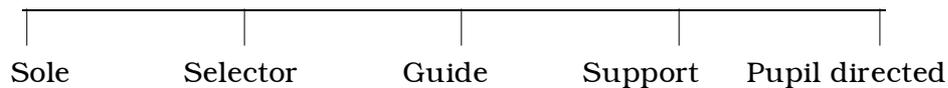


Do

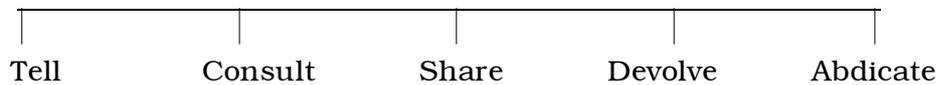
Think about the classrooms you're presently managing, and select one for this activity.

Think about the three dimensions describing aspects of the teacher's role, and what sense you have made of these dimensions.

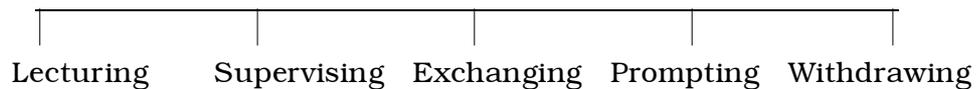
Dimension 1: teacher as resource



Dimension 2: teacher as authority



Dimension 3: teacher as communicator



Now describe your role as teacher in the selected lesson according to the three dimensions above (N.B. Again, you are not seeking some global or overall judgement of yourself - you are thinking about a particular context).

Review

Is the description you arrive at the description you would like it to be?

If so, you may be interested to investigate whether others see your teaching in that way (pupils in that lesson, a colleague observing, ...)

If the description you arrive at is different from the description you would like it to be, start to review the forces which influence your role performance in that classroom.

**Forces which help me
adopt the role I want**



**Forces which hinder me
adopting the role I want**



Aspects of me

Aspects of my students

Aspects of the class, school

Learn

Think about the forces you have identified, and any ways which you have seen or heard of teachers handling them.

Select aspects on which you can have some impact.

What alternative strategies could you adopt?

What would it take for you to make the change?

Apply

Choose *one* of the areas where you can have an impact.

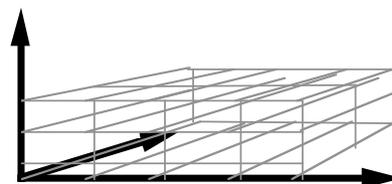
Identify a particular action you can take in that area.

Decide an occasion on which you will try out an experiment.

Anticipate the factors which might work against you and how you will overcome these

Fix the time and place for reviewing the result of your experiment.

Learning About Classrooms: Yourself A Reflection Activity



This activity is one which you might try a number of times, at intervals through your learning experiences. It may help to register progress and set new sights.

Do

Think back over an appropriate period of your learning experience - say the last term. Try to remember what your views about classrooms were, together with your views about your own management of classrooms. Make some detailed notes of what comes to mind:

Now think about the views you hold now, at the end of that period. Note down any significant points where your view has modified or changed:

Review

from the above evidence, select and record three significant points on which your approach has been developing.

What aspects of your learning are you most satisfied with?

What aspects of your learning are you least satisfied with?

In which areas have you been making most developments?

Classroom context and properties

Physical setting, Social environment, Psychological climate

Educational context and structures

Goals, Tasks, Social Structure, Timing and Pacing, Resources, Teacher's Role

Learn

Think about what has triggered you to learn in the areas where you have progressed. Think also about the sources you have used for the new views and strategies you have developed. Are there any patterns?

How will you be triggered to learn in the next stage? What sources will you use?

Apply

Make a proposal to yourself of the areas of learning you wish to prioritise for the next period/ term.

You may find the activity on the next page useful for the overall context.

Below is a set of concerns¹ which beginner teachers may have to greater or lesser degree.

I'm concerned about the following

Most of the time
Much of the time
Some of the time
Little of the time

1. Being accepted by new classes
2. Maintaining appropriate class control
3. Feeling more adequate with a range of teaching methods
4. Coping with time pressures
5. Working with many students each day
6. Having adequate teaching materials
7. Coping with the routine and the demands of the classroom
8. Guiding students intellectual and emotional growth
9. Meeting the needs of different kinds of students
10. Diagnosing student learning problems
11. Ensuring each student is getting what s/he needs
12. Working with unmotivated students
13. Doing well when a supervisor is present
14. Getting a favourable evaluation of my teaching
15. Being accepted and respected by other professionals
16. Developing good staff relations
17. Seeing the subject I'm teaching in the whole curriculum
18. Supporting achievement through being a tutor
19. Talking to parents about pupils' attainment
20. Assessing my own development as a teacher

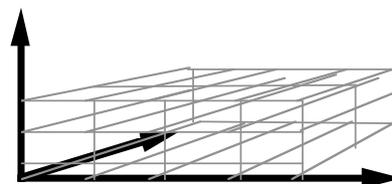
Use your responses to this set of ideas to prioritise areas in which you will invest energy during the next period.

Are the concerns you have identified also clear to others who you are working with? Think about any of your colleague learner teachers whose views you share: are they clear about your present concerns? Or might they suggest that you should have other concerns?

Think about any other teachers you may be working with (mentors, supervisors etc): are they clear about your present concerns? Or might they suggest that you should have other concerns?

¹ developed from Fuller F (1969), 'The concerns of teachers: a developmental conceptualization', **American Educational Research Journal**, 6, 207-226.

Learning About Classrooms: Experienced Teachers An Investigation Activity



While you have been observing and investigating the management of classrooms, you may have developed ideas about how experienced teachers do this.

It's important to think ahead to how you will do your own reflection and problem solving in the future, and this investigation may raise some issues in that.

Do

Think of teachers and classrooms you have observed.

Have you seen any evidence of those teachers involved in learning about their classrooms? (Recognise of course that it's very difficult to find visible evidence of most forms of learning!).

Review

What sort of learning about classrooms do these teachers typically do?

Is it: trying out new practices, new 'recipes'?
trying to solve problems they've identified?

What triggers these teachers to learn? Is it:

- ⊗ feeling dissatisfied with their present approach
- ⊗ noticing pupils' dissatisfaction
- ⊗ seeing/hearing from/hearing about a credible colleague
- ⊗ talking in a team/group
- ⊗ new pupils
- ⊗ new syllabus/materials
- ⊗ new year, new room
- ⊗ going on a course - inspiration
- ⊗ visiting another school
- ⊗ the inspectors coming

What sources do they use for new knowledge and strategy? Is it those which:

- * give rapid payoff
- * are practical and extend repertoire
- * have been devised by fellow practitioners or adapted locally
- * are flexible and open to further adaptation
- * are near at hand, easy to access, and above all continuous
- * contain an appeal to the idealistic core of practitioners through person contact rather than print or visual media

Learn

Some of the characteristics of teachers' learning which are mentioned above are important reflections on the professional life of teachers. They may be seen as:

- practically oriented professionals drawing chiefly on their own and their peers' experience to resolve problems or otherwise modify their teaching
- recipe collecting and exchanging, traded on the basis of 'what worked for me' and 'what feels right'
- more recourse to intuition and individual re-invention than other professionals.

Given these characteristics, it seems important to focus on:

- the triggers which help teachers review
- the availability of appropriate sources, usually peers they chose
- the occasions teachers have to reflect and discuss

Apply

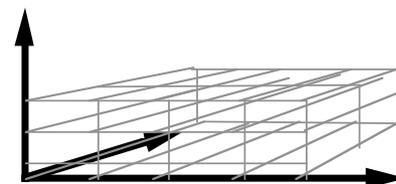
Make some proposals for enhancing teachers' professional learning about classrooms: the triggers, the sources, the occasions to discuss.

Think about your own professional development and your future learning about classrooms you manage:

- how might you keep yourself open to those triggers which promote review?
- how will you seek out the sources you need for ongoing learning?
- how will you organise your own occasions for reflection and discussion?

If teachers develop their classroom repertoire through selecting and adapting ideas consonant with their ideals and their view of themselves, how will you avoid the trap of only trying out those ideas you feel most comfortable with - i.e. not really challenging yourself?

Teachers and Individual Pupils An Observation Activity



This activity may not be appropriate as a single observation. The focus is the occasions when teachers are having individual discussions with students, and your presence as an observer could be distorting in various ways. If you are not able to observe such a discussion, use this activity to collect impressions of the discussions you have seen going on between teachers and individual pupils, or turn it into an investigation activity. Teachers have many discussions with individual pupils, often in their roles as tutors to a group. But what can we observe about those discussions? what sort are they?

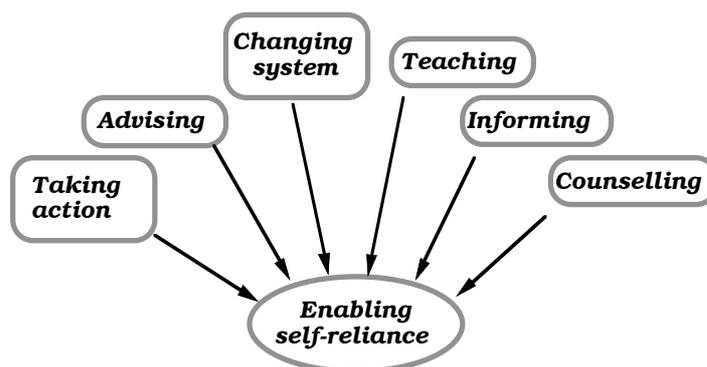
John Miller¹ in his analysis of tutoring suggested that *individual discussions involved a range of activities*:

- Taking action** Agreeing with a student that it's appropriate for you to take action such as speaking to someone, finding further information.
- Advising** Laying out some new strategies or alternatives for action (as opposed to the unrealistic and annoying 'If I were you I'd ...').
- Changing the system** Recognising and acting on the fact that some of what you hear from an individual's experience demonstrates what's wrong with the school system we're responsible for operating.
- Teaching** Introducing new thoughts ideas and notions which help the student make sense of her/his experience (this is obviously not teaching of a didactic sort).
- Informing** Making available to the student any sources of useful information which you are aware of.
- Counselling** Giving the student a chance to talk about and reflect on experiences, and to take new steps in the light of those reflections.

A very important point about all of these activities is that they are all in aid of the same purpose - promoting the student's self-reliance.

'TACTIC' is the mnemonic for these elements.

Note that it covers most but not all of the aspects of working with individuals: knowing your limits and when to work with someone else is also important.



Do

Using these six elements, what is the profile of each in the work of tutors you've observed with individuals in their tutor group?

What proportion of the time are they taking action?

What proportion advising?

and so on.

- Show your rough estimate of these overleaf, filling in a lot or a little for each:

¹Miller JC (1982), **Training in individual guidance and support**, MSC

Taking action	0%	100%
Advising	0%	100%
Changing system Teaching	0%	100%
Informing	0%	100%
Counselling	0%	100%

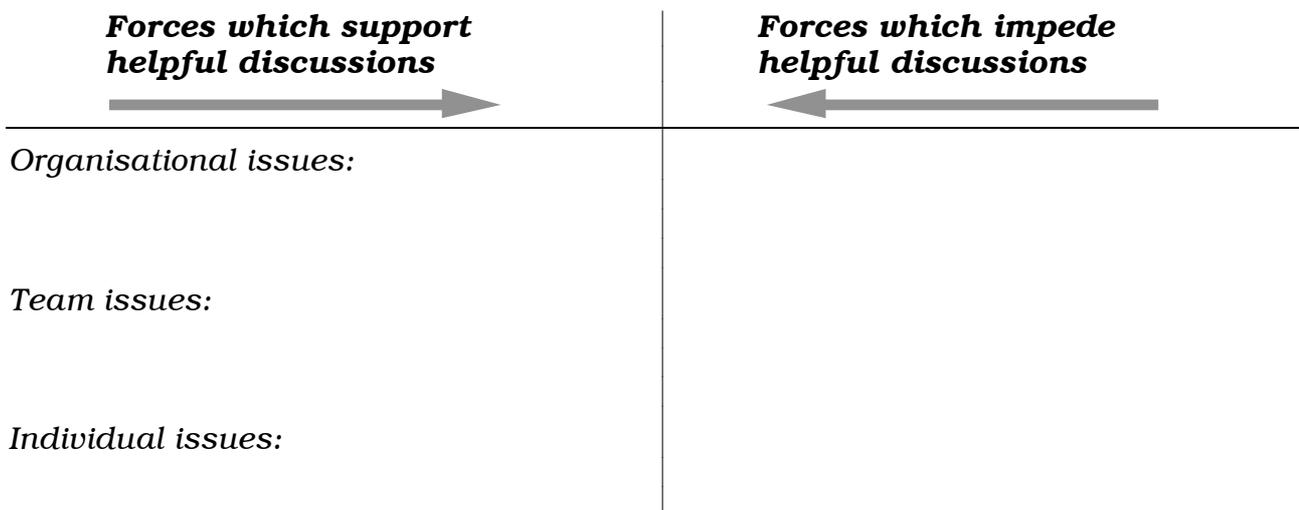
Review

Now compare the profile you've recorded with others from other occasions. Look for similarities and differences.

Learn

What do you think are the forces operating on teachers which create the picture you've observed?

Is the overall picture you've created one of useful helping discussions? Is it a picture of discussions which really promote self reliance? [It could be the opposite of that in a few schools, with teachers spending their time 'bawling at' pupils]. Identify here the forces which support and impede helpful discussions.



Discuss with others the general issues this has raised.

Apply

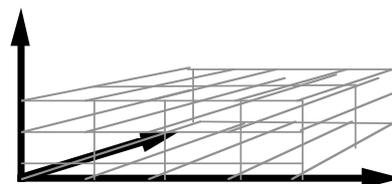
If you thought that the overall profile of discussions with individual pupils needed improvement:

1. what would the improvement be?
2. what would need to happen for the improvement to occur?

In your future role as a teacher, are there any aspects of working with individual pupils which you would like to improve on? Identify the resources (people, places, times, ideas) which might support you in this.

Teachers and Individual Pupils

An Investigation Activity



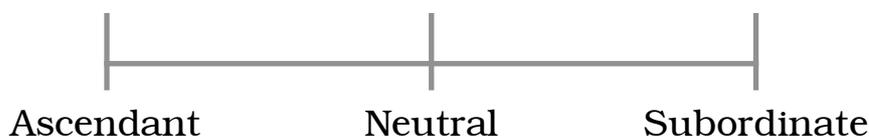
It is useful to evaluate how effectively the tutor is engaged by the system. Here an idea of 'tutor ascendant' is as salient today as it was twenty years ago. The role of the Tutor in a school or college might be characterised in one of the columns below:

Tutor ascendant	Tutor neutral	Tutor subordinate
Tutor feels primary responsibility	Tutor feels significant assistant in care process	Tutor feels basically a register checker
Tutor is obliged to have full access to all information on pupils	Information mostly available on request	Tutor not given confidential information on pupils
Subject teachers contact tutor in the first instance when worried	Subject teachers sometimes keep tutor in touch, but not regularly	Subject teachers always go direct to team leader in serious cases
Letters home written by tutor on her/his own initiative	Tutor can suggest letter required	Tutor not normally shown team leader's correspondence
Tutor basically responsible for attendance, calling for help when needed	Team leader follows up absence queries initiated by tutor	Tutor merely marks absences in register, and takes no further action
Tutor present at all major interviews with parents, etc.	Tutor told what took place at interview	Tutor not informed such interviews are to happen
Tutor's views usually solicited by senior staff before pupil seen by them	Tutor informed reasonably fully of any action by senior staff	Summary action taken by senior staff without notification to tutor

Marland M (1974) **Pastoral Care**, Heinemann

Do

Decide where you would locate on the simple scale below the role of the tutor (on average) in the school you're in.



Collect the views of a number of tutors as to where they would locate the school's view of tutors.

Review

Collect and discuss a number of perspectives from different teachers/tutors.

What similarities and differences do you note?

What were the main issues they were taking into account in arriving at their rating?

Did they mention any differences in different sections of the school?

Were there any examples of individual tutors who seemed to be the exception to the rule?

Learn

What are the main features of a school which lead to the characterisation of tutors as 'ascendant'. Identify the three most important features in the school you have been examining.

Were any of the following factors influencing the picture?

Goals of pastoral care and its role in the school:

clear ←————→ unclear

The role of the tutor and its purposes

clear ←————→ unclear

Messages from senior managers that it's

important ←————→ unimportant

Methods of communication

effective ←————→ ineffective

Time to do the tutoring work and to plan it

adequate ←————→ inadequate

Support and training for this aspect of teachers' role

reasonable ←————→ unavailable

How did their work as tutors with individual pupils contribute to the professional satisfactions of the teachers you talked to?

Was it a positive contribution in the school you have looked at?
or was it a negative contribution, an 'additional' chore with little use?

If you came across an example of an individual tutor performing at much better levels than the average for the school, what was it that led to this success?

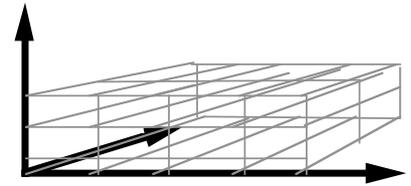
Apply

What aspects of the school would need to be improved for this aspect of tutoring to work more effectively?

What are the forces which work against the notion of ascendant tutor?

What is your personal perspective on this? As you look forward to the whole of your role as a teacher, do you want your tutoring to be ascendant/neutral/subordinate?

Teachers and Individual Pupils Personal Action



Do

Think about a meeting you've had with an individual pupil, or a number of such meetings. Focus on your role in helping such meetings along to a useful purpose. What stages have such meetings moved through, and what skills have you been using in helping the meetings?

Review

Below is a view of the stages and skills in working with individual pupils.¹ Use this to identify stages and skills which you are already handling effectively [indicate towards the right box], and to identify those which you would be interested to improve [indicate towards the left box].

Stages

making the date				
setting the scene				
agreeing the agenda				
reviewing the picture				
analysing situations				
looking at patterns				
deciding the agenda for change				
generating alternatives				
selecting a strategy				
planning a change				
rehearsing				

Skills

listening				
showing you're attending				
supporting talk				
giving encouragement to develop				
using alternatives to questions				
talking about feelings				
summarising				
challenging				
using 'I' statements				

Learn

Are there stages or skills which you presently give less attention to than you now might wish? Which ones? Think through what has led to these being undeveloped in your present repertoire. Decide for yourself what advantages may follow from developing these aspects.

Apply

Identify an occasion in the near future when one of these underdeveloped stages or skills might be valuable in a meeting with an individual pupil, and what experiment you will build in to that meeting. In the longer term, What opportunities for your future professional development in these areas will you look out for?

¹ from Watkins C and Thacker J (1993), **Tutoring: in-service workshops for a whole school approach**, Longman.

Tutoring with individuals is most successful when some core qualities are conveyed:

- (a) being straight about your own position, your own response etc
(rather than hiding behind some 'front' or other)
- (b) putting yourself in the other person's shoes, to understand things from their position
- (c) demonstrating some warmth and acceptance, with perhaps an extra focus on the feelings of the tutee
- (d) keeping a practical focus too, helping to develop new strategies which build on the strengths of the old

Review

Take each of the four qualities in turn, and:

(i) think about occasions when you have conveyed these important qualities.

What have you done and said?

(a)	
(b)	
(c)	
(d)	

(ii) Now think about occasions when you were aiming to be helpful toward an individual pupil, but for some reason the above qualities were not present.

What did you do and say on those occasions?

What were the reasons behind this?

Learn

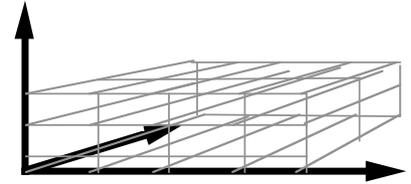
What makes it most possible for these qualities to be conveyed?

What makes it least possible?

Are there particular aspects you wish to practice further?

Teachers and Tutor Groups

An Observation Activity



The focus of this activity is the occasions when a tutor meets with their tutor group. This is not intended to include those brief occasions used to complete attendance registers (unless those 'brief occasions' turn out to fill much more time!)

Do

Arrange to observe a number of meetings of a tutor group.

Try to give a broad breakdown of the proportion of time in each of the following headings:

Administration: collecting notes, giving out notices, checking timetables, equipment, homework diaries, report cards etc.

Groupwork: structured occasions when pupils talk about aspects of school life and their own developments, on a potentially broad range of matters: social and group relations, approaches to study, getting the most out of school, choices in school, etc.

Chatting: occasions when pupils (and perhaps their tutor too) are talking in an unstructured way about whatever happens to be on their minds. Include occasions when the majority of the tutor group are chatting and the tutor is talking with an individual pupil about progress or whatever.

Jot down your proportions here:

Heading	Proportion of time
<i>Administration</i>	
<i>Groupwork</i>	
<i>Chatting</i>	

Review

Bring together a number of observations

What overall picture have you built up? With what exceptions to the overall pattern?

What do you think the forces are which have led to the pattern you've identified?

Now focus more specifically on *groupwork* with the tutor group.

On the next page are given some typical hindrances and helps to such work. Decide how you would rate the practice you have observed on the seven issues raised.

Learn

Bring together a number of accounts from a school. What are the main forces which generate the picture of groupwork in tutor groups you have observed? What exceptions to the general picture are there, and what can we learn from them?

Exchange examples of positive groupwork taking place in tutorials: describe the goals, activities, resources, structures and skills you saw being used.

Apply

Do you feel that the profile of tutor group meetings should be different from what you have observed? If so, specify in what way. From your analysis, what would have to happen for the change you seek to come about? Make some proposals.

What helps and what hinders the practice of tutorial groupwork? ¹

Use each of the dimensions below to describe the practice you have seen and the impression you have gathered.

Are there clearly some aspects which hinder tutorial groupwork in the school?

Are there some aspects which help?

Mark on each item the position on the scale where you think the practice is best described.

'Death by photocopier'

Team leader generates 1,000 worksheets, dishes them out to tutors who dish them out to pupils

Planning in teams

Team leader and tutors plan activities together, refine and develop them with pupils

Tutors and 'losing control' fears

Tutors don't really do much groupwork because they're fearful of the methods

Developing through experiment

Tutors choose what sort of methods they'd like to try, and develop approaches gradually

A 'sex & drugs & litter' approach

The content of tutorial work is a bit of a rag-bag, all sorts of 'topics' thrown in

Thinking about pupils' needs

A coherent idea of pupils needs is available and pupils' views are elicited

Over-programmed

Every minute of tutorial time is supposed to be filled with pre-planned activities

Responsive & planned

Flexibility in use of planned activities, allowing response to other issues which arise

Not co-ordinated

Little planning takes place with other contexts, years. Pupils say 'We've done this!'

Good communication

Programmes and plans are discussed across contexts and years, in a whole-school view

Smothered by administrivia

Tutors rarely get round to groupwork, spending most time on registers, notices, diaries, etc

Clearly prioritised

Tutors make clear time allocation to administration, and handle it actively

Tutors unsupported

Each tutor is left to get on with their group in an isolated way

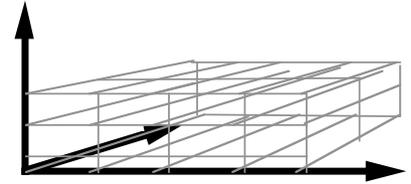
Team deliver together

Tutors share strengths across groups, are supported by leader

¹ from Watkins C and Thacker J (1993), **Tutoring: in-service workshops for a whole school approach**, Longman.

Teachers and Tutor Groups

An Investigation Activity



The focus of this activity is the time tutors spend with their tutor groups.

First, give a description of the school's framework for tutorials:

How much time per week is timetabled for the tutor with the group?

Is this separate from or connected to the time when attendance registers are completed?

Is it a general practice of the school to timetable tutors to teach their tutor group?

How much time is given to meetings where tutors discuss, plan and review their work with tutor groups?

What documentation does the school have to support this aspect of tutoring:

documents clarifying the goals and purposes of tutor group work?

plans for an overall framework for the content of tutor group work?

documentary resources for tutorial activities?

In the time which tutors have with their groups, are other supports available to them (for example their team leader or another specialist working with them on a theme)?

Do Collect tutors' views on the answers to the enquiries above.

Review Have you received similar answers from the different people? If not, how may this divergence of perspective be explained?

What strikes you about the provision and support for tutor group work in this school? Are there any aspects of the above which tutors generally consider need improving?

Learn Is there any evidence for these typical pitfalls in tutorial work:

- connecting tutorials to registration decreases the amount of groupwork,
- tutors who teach their tutor groups make more realistic links,
- tutors who do not have time to plan and review together do not develop,
- documents which communicate a vision of tutoring can be very important.

Apply What would need to happen for the improvements which tutors seek to occur? What proposals would you make?

Do

Enquire of tutors how they see their role and purpose with the tutor group.

What aspects under each of the headings do they feel comfortable with? What aspects do they not feel comfortable with?

Heading	Some aspects tutors feel comfortable with	Some aspects tutors do not feel comfortable with
<i>Administration</i>		
<i>Groupwork</i>		
<i>Chatting</i>		

Review

What similarities, differences and trends do you note in the information you've collected.

Learn

Do you have any first impressions on what might explain the trends you note?

Is there any evidence for the following:

- tutors feel least comfortable with aspects they have least control over,
- tutors prefer to hold conversations with individuals rather than group,
- tutors may focus largely on aspects which present little perceived risk.

Apply

In the light of your explanations, what proposals would you make for developing the management of the tutor group?

0-0-0-0-0-0-0

Do

Enquire of pupils across a range of years what aspects of tutor group work they value most.

From what aspects do they learn most? from what do they learn least?

What changes would they wish to see in the use of tutor group time?

Review

Bring together the results of a number of enquiries. Are there particular themes, issues, trends to be noted?

Learn

Did you find that different years voice different needs?

Were 'young' tutor groups more interested in group activities which support group-building?

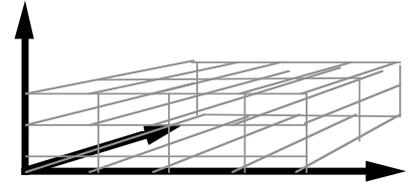
Were pupils in later years looking for someone to review their progress and work with them, and help them with strategies for development?

Apply

In light of your findings, how would you engage pupils' views in the management of the tutor group

Teachers and Tutor Groups

Personal Action

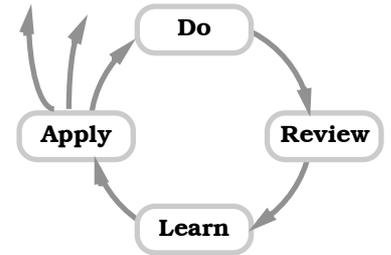


Do

With a tutor group you're attached to, or a group you've got to know, plan some activity which you'll try out with the group.

Pointers:

- Identify some aspect of a theme which the group is currently addressing.
- Plan the session to incorporate a process of action learning:



- Use the headings on the reverse of this sheet to plan in detail.

Review

After the session, sit down and write some notes on the following:

What's the most important thing that happened? Why?

What difficulties did you encounter? How did you resolve the difficulties?

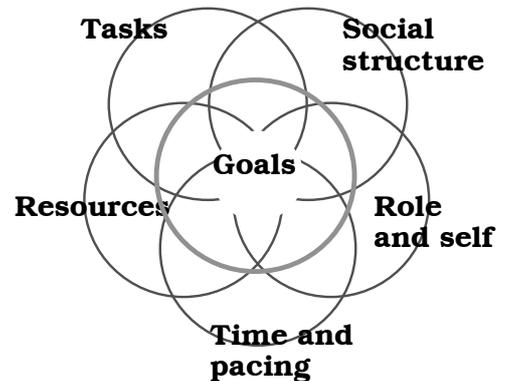
What strategies seemed effective? Why?

What else could have been done?

Learn

Use the headings developed earlier in this pack for examining classroom management to identify which aspects under each heading went most effectively and which went least effectively.

Try to also gather the perspectives of others: the members of the tutor group, and the tutor too.



Apply

If you were to run a similar session again:

Would you do anything differently?

For future reference:

Are there particular aspects you would now pay attention to in a different way?

Are there particular supports for you in this sort of work, which you have identified and could make use of again in the future?

Are there particular training needs which you have identified for yourself, which you would now wish to communicate to the appropriate colleague?

Assuming that, beforehand, you've prepared all the resources you'll need, these are some of the issues you may anticipate in running the session:

A. *Communicating the goals of the session*

- (i) To what real-life problems/situations does this session relate? [remind pupils of these]
- (ii) In what will the pupils be more competent after this session? [tell them]
- (iii) How will you answer the pupils' question 'What's the point of this?' [before they ask it]

B. **Doing the activity, its structure**

- (i) Is there a need for pupils to work individually at first? [e.g. to locate and record their own perspective] If so, clarify why. For how long?
- (ii) Will you then ask them to work in small groups (e.g. 3s and 4s)? If so, what composition of groups do you want? What instructions will you give the small groups? Will you ask them to adopt roles such as scribe and reporter? How will results be used?

C. **Reviewing what has happened.**

Here, use open questions to develop discussion of the processes which have been occurring and the various strategies which pupils have been adopting to the issue at hand. The trap is to allow the discussion to fall into a false consensus, with the development of some notion of a 'right answer'.

- (i) The style of question you might use could include:
 - What's the most important thing that happened? Why?*
 - What difficulties did you encounter? How did you resolve the difficulties?*
 - What strategies seemed effective? Why?*
 - What else could we have done?*
 - What differences between us did we notice? What similarities?*
- (ii) Will you want pupils to exchange their ideas, e.g. in pairs? If so, what directions will you give them (i.e. what do you want them to focus on?). Do you want them to look for similarities or differences, or both, or something else? How long should this be given, and what will happen to their results?

D. **Learning from the review**

It's important to make a note of some of the issues which have come up, and what has been learned about handling them.

You might write up three key issues, or collect from pupils the approaches they adopted to the activity.

You can structure this part of the session, or (with support and practice) can hand the task over to pupils.

E. **Applying what's been learned**

Towards the end of the discussion stage it's important to raise the possibility of change and experiment, perhaps through raising:

Would you do anything differently? (now you've examined this situation).

Then it's important to apply the learning. This can be achieved by raising:

What other situations are like this one?

Is anyone experiencing a situation like this one at the moment?

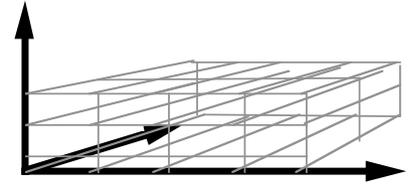
What strategies can the group offer?

Is there an experiment we can try before next time?

And finally *goal setting* may be relevant, asking pupils to say to each other what they aim to do before the next session on issues raised in this one.

[You will no doubt have noticed the important point that the stages proposed for your learning about running tutor group sessions are the same as those proposed for the pupils']

Teachers in Teams An Observation Activity



Teachers meet in groups on a range of different occasions.

On some of these occasions they're called teams (subject teams, year teams, etc.). Is the term appropriately used? Here is one view of what makes a team different from a group:

- it has a clarified and shared conception of its task/goal
- it generally decides the means by which it will accomplish the task
- this often means allocation of roles and/or functions
- it will periodically review its progress and its functioning
- members may develop ownership of and commitment toward the goal/task
- conflicts will need to be acknowledged.

Think about and discuss these features, and what you would expect to find as evidence of each.

Do Arrange to attend some teachers' meetings and decide the extent to which there is evidence of the statements below:

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ➤ the conception of the task/goal is shared | <input type="checkbox"/> low | <input type="checkbox"/> medium | <input type="checkbox"/> high |
| ➤ the means of accomplishing tasks are decided | <input type="checkbox"/> low | <input type="checkbox"/> medium | <input type="checkbox"/> high |
| ➤ roles and functions are allocated | <input type="checkbox"/> low | <input type="checkbox"/> medium | <input type="checkbox"/> high |
| ➤ progress and functioning is reviewed | <input type="checkbox"/> low | <input type="checkbox"/> medium | <input type="checkbox"/> high |
| ➤ ownership/commitment is developed | <input type="checkbox"/> low | <input type="checkbox"/> medium | <input type="checkbox"/> high |
| ➤ conflicts are acknowledged | <input type="checkbox"/> low | <input type="checkbox"/> medium | <input type="checkbox"/> high |

Review What are the forces which have led to the picture you've observed? In other words, what has helped or hindered this group of teachers to become a team? Identify some features of:

- the school organisation they meet in:
(for example, does the school give this team clear tasks, responsibilities and resources)
- the way the team works when it meets:
(for example, does the team share and prioritise its tasks, control its own agendas, and effectively use the contributions of its members)
- the style of some key roles within it:
(for example are chairperson, minute taker, and other roles functioning effectively and having a useful influence and contribution?)

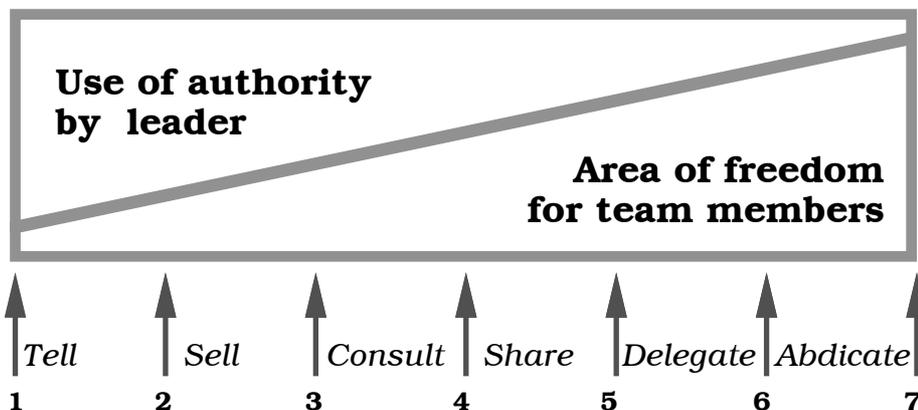
Learn Discuss and identify the three main forces which are affecting the particular group of teachers you have been focusing on.

To what extent do you feel these apply to other groups/teams (i.e. are features of the organisation or of wider issues) and to what extent are they particular to this team?

Apply From the analysis above, what would need to happen for this group to function

It's a trap to attribute too much of the way a team works to the style of its appointed leader. Every team has a number of leaders in it, each contributing important aspects. But it can be useful to bring attention to the formally appointed leader, as there are some differences in their style which can be influential (not least because of the way that other team members react to these issues).

One way in which leaders vary is the way in which they exercise their authority. This model¹ suggests that the more a leader uses their authority, the less freedom for team members. It also offers us six words to characterise a leader's use of authority.



Do

Arrange to attend some teachers' meetings and decide which of the six words most effectively describes (on average) the style of the leader.

Review

In what ways did the leader exercise their authority - give some detailed examples of the sorts of things which led you to characterise their style in the way you did.

In what ways did the group members respond to this style of exercising authority. Give some detailed examples of the sorts of responses you observed, from a range of different people in the group.

Learn

What do you think was leading this leader to exercise their authority in the way they did? Were any of the following an influence?

- their view of the task and what it demanded
- their view of the group members and what they could offer
- their view of groups and what they can offer

Were there any other important features of the team meetings which seemed to be connected to the leader's use of authority? For example, the amount of contribution which others made, the roles they adopted, ...

Effective leadership is not merely adopting a single style: different positions on the above model may be appropriate for different situations and issues. Did you see any evidence of leaders using a range of styles?

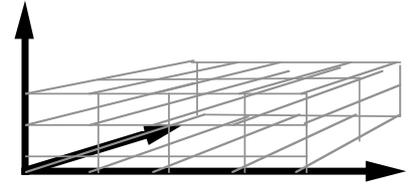
To what extent do you feel these observations apply in other groups/teams (i.e. are features of the organisation or of wider issues) and to what extent are they particular to this team?

Apply

From the analysis above, what do you think would be necessary for the leader to exercise their authority in a range of different styles? Make two suggestions.

¹ Tannenbaum R and Schmidt WH (1958), 'How to choose a leadership pattern', **Harvard**

Teachers in Teams An Investigation Activity



You have observed some team meetings and some of their features, but you may not be able to observe the fact that teachers (especially in secondary schools) are often members of more than one team.

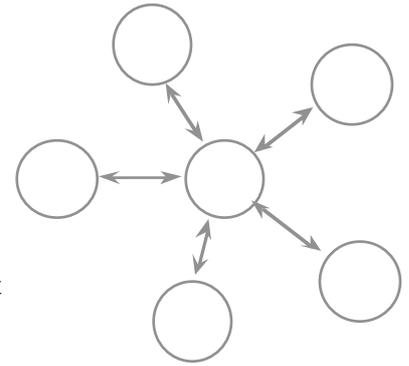
Do

Arrange an occasion to have ten minutes discussion with a teacher you have got to know.

With them construct a 'role map' showing themselves at the centre and placing the main members of staff with whom they relate on the outside.

Then indicate the various teams which that teacher belongs to, and find a way to indicate these on the role map.

Ask the teacher to show the different importance the different teams have for them by the strength of the line connecting them to each team in the diagram.



For each of the teams ask the teacher to indicate their answers to the following:

I feel I influence this team a little a medium amount a lot

I affiliate to this team a little a medium amount a lot

I feel I achieve in this team a little a medium amount a lot

Finally, enquire of the teacher their view of being a member of more than one team:

is it *'I'm a member of more than one team in name only'*

or *'Being a member of more than one team is a nuisance'*

or *'I gain job satisfaction from contributing to more than one group of adults'*

or *'I'm encouraged to see my links to a number of parts of the organisation'*

or something else!

Review

Collect up the results of such investigations with a number of teachers.

Look for similarities and differences in what they say.

Learn

Identify what influences the extent to which teachers' feel actively involved in more than one team. Include:

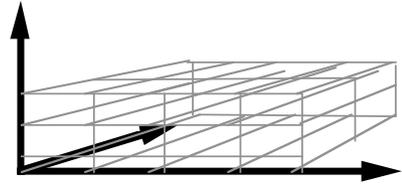
- features of teachers' identity (e.g. whether the teacher feels more than merely a subject teacher);
- features of each team's functioning (e.g. whether the teacher can influence, affiliate, achieve in that team);
- features of the school's overall functioning (e.g. whether the working of the school encourages the teacher to see themselves working in multiple teams, and supports it)

In general terms, to what extent do you feel the life of teachers really treats them as team members in a school?

Apply

What proposals would you make for enhancing the functioning of teams and the functioning of schools, in order to increase teachers' job satisfaction?

Teachers in Teams
Personal Action



You're not just one sort of team member.

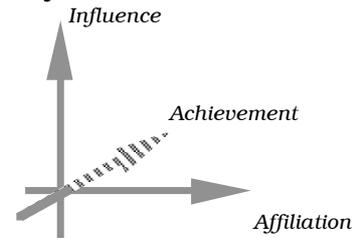
The same person can be a very different sort of team member in different teams.

Everyone differs in their own personal ways from one setting to another.

Do

Think about the question 'What sort of team member are you?'

Use this framework to take that question further on three important dimensions:



Choose two teams of which you are a member. Apply the framework to each by asking:

Do you exercise influence in this team?

Do you support others to exercise influence in this team?

Do you experience achievement in this team?

Do you support others to experience achievement in this team?

Do you experience affiliation towards this team?

Do you support others to experience affiliation towards this team?

Review

What similarities and differences did you note across the team settings?

Note down the main points:

	Similarities	Differences
<i>Influence</i>		
<i>Achievement</i>		
<i>Affiliation</i>		

Learn

What do each of the points you have noted say about the following:

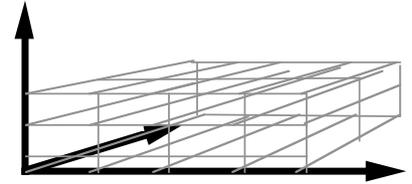
- your overall personal style as a team member
- your different reactions to the different teams
- the different way that the different teams operate
- the similarities across the different teams.

Apply

Are there any aspects of team functioning to which you wish to make a greater contribution? If so, specify the team, and identify the ways in which you wish to contribute further to one of the dimensions. Decide what you will do to start this process, and set yourself a goal which will get things under way.

How will you keep this issue of contributing to teams under review in your future

Teachers and Other Staff An Observation Activity



This activity is designed to increase awareness of the existence of many other staff who work in a school, and start to examine their contacts with teachers.

Do

Think how many other staff (other than classroom teachers) you may already identify in the school. Make a list of who they are, and count the total number.

Was the total 5? 10? 15? more?

Did you include any of the following? If so, see if you can fill in the names of each.

<i>Where</i>	<i>What</i>	<i>Who (names)</i>
in classrooms	special needs support	
	ESL support	
	other peripatetic teachers	
around classrooms	technicians	
	media support	
outside classrooms	withdrawal teachers	
	librarians	
	mid-day supervisors	
	caterers	
	school-keepers	
	secretarial staff	
	administrative staff	
	...	

Note that we have not included here other professionals who are based outside the school, but who may (increasingly) contract their services to the school: educational psychologists, education welfare officers, advisers, inspectors, consultants, trainers.

Review

Which of the above could you name?

Which of the above were you aware of but unable to name?

Which of the above were you not aware of?

Compare the answers you have available with those of someone else in the school.

Learn

Think about your present contact with such staff, and how this contact has been made up to now.

To what extent has it been fortuitous, and to what extent planned?

What has led to you getting to know some of these staff more than others?

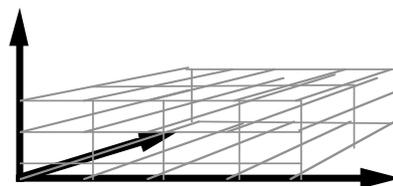
Apply

Has this activity led to any greater awareness of the staff in the school who are not classroom teachers?

Do you have any plan to follow up this activity by making some further contacts?

Teachers and Other Staff

An Investigation Activity



This activity is meant to support the extension of contacts with other staff, the increase in knowledge of what they do, and the further development of such contact.

Do

Choose a member of staff (not a classroom teacher) who you have been introduced to but who you have not talked to in detail about their work.

Arrange an occasion when you can have a discussion with them.

Try to gather their perspective on the following broad areas:

- What are the main aspects of their work - on what activities do they spend their time?
- Which aspects do they find most satisfying? which least?
- How do they relate to teaching staff - how does communication get handled, how do requests get made?
- What are their overall impressions of teaching staff? Are there any areas in which they experience difficulty with teaching staff?
- Would they like to contribute more to teaching staff, and to the teaching process? If so what?

Also try to find out the overall picture of their communications with teaching staff: what do they communicate about? when? how much? do they find themselves in joint activities with teachers? and so on.

Perhaps you could go on to develop some first-hand experience of their work, through 'shadowing' for a day or a part of a day.

Review

Bring together the results of your investigation with the results of other investigations with such staff.

Do any common themes emerge?

Learn

What surprises did you experience in learning about the work of such staff?

What issues strike you as influencing their relation with teachers?

In what ways that teachers do not fully know about can the staff you have investigated support the day-to-day work of teachers?

Apply

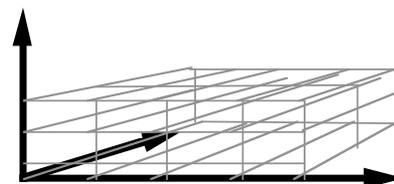
Are there any blocks to relations between teachers and other staff which have been highlighted by this investigation?

Do you have any suggestions to make about how such blocks could be removed or overcome?

Make suggestions under each of the following headings:

- features of the organisation
- features of teachers' behaviour to other staff
- features of other staff behaviour toward teachers

Teachers and Other Staff Personal Action



This activity aims to support you in making a new working link with another member of staff (not a classroom teacher).

Do

Think about your own role in detail, and its present 'role map'. Of the staff who work in your school who are not classroom teachers, identify one who you have some existing contact with, but with whom you have not developed joint work.

Think about an area of joint activity which you could both become involved in and which is likely to have gains for both of you.

Make a meeting with the person and suggest the area of joint work, negotiating with them whether it fits with their view of their role and so on.

Get the work in place and (after an appropriate period) spend some time with them reviewing any important aspects

Review

What were the important aspects for you in any of the stages:

- identifying the area
- negotiating with the other person
- carrying out the work
- gaining from the collaboration
- reviewing the experience

Learn

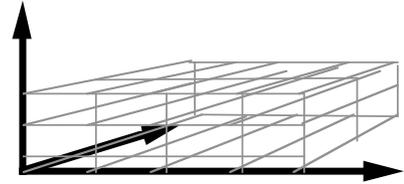
It is suggested that two people relate effectively when one person's view of the other matches that person's view of themselves. To what extent was this a feature of the work you have just completed?

Role relationships do not develop when one has a stereotyped or inaccurate view of the other role. Did you find any evidence of this in the role relationship you have just developed? If you overcame this, how did you do it?

Apply

What will you do to develop your role relations with other staff in your future teaching?
How will you use the resource of other staff effectively in future activities?

**The School as an Organisation
An Observation Activity**



This activity is intended to help you think about the school as an organisation, how you would characterise it, and some of its features.



Think about the school you're in from an overall perspective - take a 'helicopter view'.

1. A school is generally a recognisable organisation - what makes it recognisable?

2. Schools vary along a number of dimensions: one is how 'healthy' it is as an organisation. Writers such as Miles¹ suggest that healthy organisations are characterised by:

- (a) Clear goal focus
- (b) Adequate, open communication
- (c) Power equalisation
- (d) Human resources well utilised
- (e) Participative and cohesive
- (f) Creative and innovative
- (g) Proactive and responds to change
- (h) Conflicts used productively

How would you rate the school you're presently in on the above characteristics?

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)
- (d)
- (e)
- (f)
- (g)
- (h)

3. Schools may also be characterised as differing in 'style'. Heller² identifies four broad leadership styles:

- Charismat: High profile, high energy, high risk
- Bureaucrat: Low conflict, low energy, high debate
- Autocrat: High conflict, high energy, low debate
- Abdicrat: Low profile, low energy, low risk

How would you describe the leadership of your school in these terms?

¹ Miles MB (1975), 'Planned change and organisational health' in Baldrige J and Deal T (Ed.), **Managing Change in Educational Organisations**, Berkeley Calif., McCutchan.

Review

Collect up a range of views of the organisation. Each will perhaps identify different aspects because of the different position in the organisation which they hold, and will embody different gains for them.

Look for similarities and differences.

Learn

1. Organisations are identified by:

- (i) their boundaries from the rest of the world
- (ii) the fact that behaviour changes as people cross the boundary, and
- (iii) visible signs of membership. and attempts to create a corporate identity

How do each of these apply to the school you're observing?

2. Identify some of the elements in the school which contribute to its health as an organisation. What are the limits of the school's control over these elements?

How does the organisational health of the school impact on the professional life of teachers?

3. Heller suggests that each of the above leadership styles has strengths and weaknesses:

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Charismat	entrepreneurial, inspirational, leads from the front	misplaced energy, over-active, insensitive, omnipotent
Bureaucrat	clear procedures, analysis of options	insecure, over-formal procedures, debate without decision
Autocrat	productive, competitive, clear simple goals	inflexible, single-minded, intolerant of opposition, narrow goals
Abdicrat	independence, laissez-faire, low conflict	drift, detachment from reality, sense of impotence

How does the leadership style of the school impact on the professional life of teachers?

Apply

In what way does:

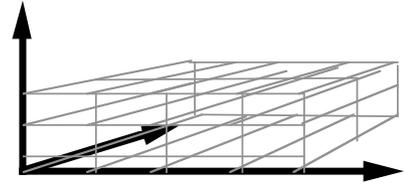
- 1. the definition of the school as an organisation
- 2. the organisational health of the school
- 3. the leadership style of your organisation

have an effect on your day-to-day operation as a teacher?

How would you characterise the sort of organisation you wish to work in?

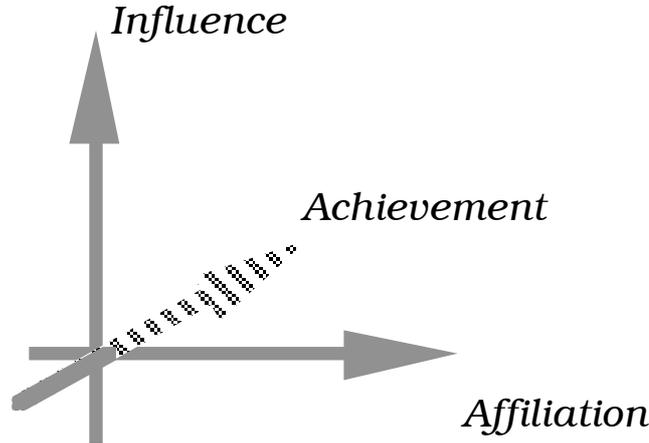
How would you identify an organisation of the sort you prefer? What evidence would you seek?

The School as an Organisation An Investigation Activity



Organisations differ in various ways: one important difference is that of how they engage and motivate their members.

The following are three dimensions of motivation in organisations:



Do

Think about each of these dimensions and the perspective of each of the main members of the organisation. As a general picture, how do you think each would answer the following? Arrange to ask as many of these people as manageable what their views actually are.

To what extent do	Teachers	Pupils	Other staff	Parents	Governors
<i>Influence this organisation?</i>	high med low				
<i>Achieve in this organisation?</i>	high med low				
<i>Affiliate towards this organisation?</i>	high med low				

Review

Compare the results you have, firstly across groups. Which groups feel most that they have influence? that they achieve? that they can affiliate?

Within each group, did you find evidence for sub-groups who take different positions on these questions?

Learn

What groups does the school as an organisation engage most effectively and least effectively?

What does this say about the school? (in particular and schools in general)

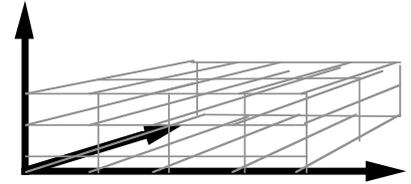
Does the school make any statement about engaging these groups effectively? Does your information suggest that the statements are valid?

Apply

What else could the school do to improve the picture.

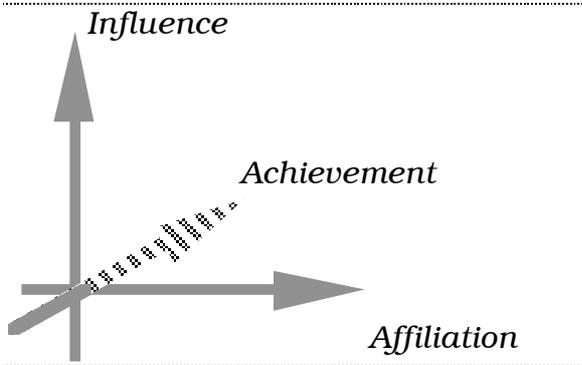
In your ideal school, how would the above groups be engaged?

The School as an Organisation
Personal Action



Do

Apply these three dimensions of motivation to yourself.



To what extent do you feel you exercise influence in the school?



To what extent do you feel you achieve in the school?



To what extent do you affiliate toward the school?



Review

What experiences and issues led you to give the ratings you did?

What answers do you presently have to the following:

- How have you been able to influence most in this school?
- How have you been able to achieve most in this school?
- How have you been able to affiliate most in this school?

Learn

There are a range of things which can help or hinder your role within an organisation, *and they are not all to do with the organisation!*

Note down here some of the things which affect your role within the school, and in particular those elements which help and hinder you taking up an active role within the organisation.

Forces which promote an active role from me



Forces which impede an active role from me



Organisational issues:

Team issues:

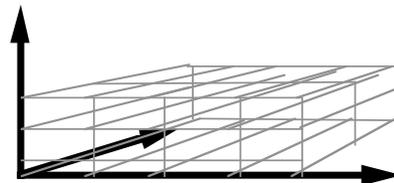
Individual issues:

Apply

Examine each of the issues in turn, and identify whether you wish to (and feel you can) take any positive steps to change the picture you have analysed above. If appropriate, set a manageable goal and a target date. If not, choose a person with whom you will discuss the degree of fit between you and your present school.

School and Community

An Observation Activity



Schools are distinct organisations which exist and live in a particular context.

Do

1. Think about how the school is defined in its neighbourhood.
 - Does it have identifiable physical boundaries which mark it off?
 - Does the architecture mark it out? (i.e. could you spot it from a train?)
2. In what ways does the school refer to the community it exists in?
 - Is there evidence of the community within the school walls? in the displays of school work? in the use of the buildings?
3. In what ways does the school invite in the community?
 - Are there adults other than teachers present?
 - Are members of the community engaged in the school activity?
4. In what ways does the school go out to the community?
 - Does it hold activities at other sites?
 - Does it mark its presence in community events?

Review

Bring together a number of people's accounts on the above themes. Try to build up a composite picture of as much as you can.

Try also to gather evidence (albeit partial) of answers to the above questions for other schools, and make any comparisons you can.

Learn

Different schools have more or less marked boundaries. There are examples of community schools which are placed in central locations such as shopping centres, and the normal 'marking out' of school territory does not occur in the same way.

Would you describe the boundaries of your school as marked out to a high or low extent?

What do you think the implications are of this?

Given the physical boundaries of a school, different schools manage their boundaries in more or less permeable ways. Some schools aim to engage many aspects of their community both on and off site.

Would you describe the management of your school's boundaries as permeable to a high or low extent?

What do you think the implications are of this?

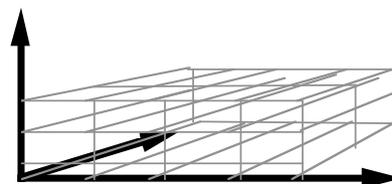
Apply

Are there any ways in which the school marks or manages its boundaries with the community which you think deserve review?

Are there any particular changes you would propose?

School and Community

An Investigation Activity



In investigating the notion of community, it can be important to recognise that the term can be used in a variety of ways:

- it may mean the geographical neighbourhood, the locality
- it may mean some selected reference groups of the locality: a subset of the various significant influences and cultures to which the school relates
- it may mean a set of reference groups beyond the locality, for example a particular community of professionals or of scholars even

It is also important to note that whatever notion of community the school might have, it might be expressed in a variety of ways. Also some schools seem to deny the notion completely.

Do

Find a way of eliciting the view of 'community' which is held by key people in the school. Make sure that the people whose views you elicit include senior and junior staff, those with a named responsibility for this area and those without, classroom teachers and other staff.

Find a way of gathering data on the 'community's' view of the school. Make sure that you try this with a range of different people. Try to get a sense of what aspects of the school are most visible to each respondent, what judgements they make, and whether any reputation effects apply (i.e. judgements which are not based on immediate evidence).

Review

Try to bring together as many responses as possible.

Make comparisons between the views expressed by the school respondents. Are there key differences? Did an overall view emerge?

Make comparisons between the views expressed by the community respondents. Are there key differences? Did an overall view emerge?

On what aspects did you get both school and community respondents expressing a view? Was there significant similarity or significant difference emerging?

Learn

Who were the school respondents referring to when they used the concept of community? Was it neighbourhood/locality? selected groups/cultures? wider references? or just the selected parents?

An organisation can have significant match or mismatch with its environment. Mismatch could sometimes be deliberate, but more often is unintended. Did you identify mismatch? Were there any noticeable effects?

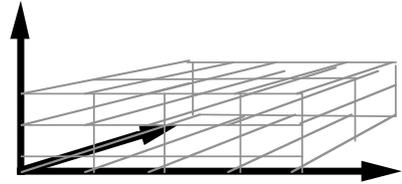
Apply

What view of the school's community is most important to you?

Does your view prove similar to the view expressed by the school you're in?

In your thinking about a school's match with its environment, what would you be looking for in a school you wish to work in?

School and Community Personal Action



Do

Think about your present developing practice as a teacher, and the aspects of your practice which make a community link.

You might be able to organise the elements of your practice under these three broad headings:

- using knowledge of significant people in the community

- inviting members of the community in

- organising learning outside the school

Review

Is everything covered?

Is there more practice under one heading than another?

Learn

How would you describe your vision of how you as a teacher would wish to relate to aspects of the community through your teaching?

Does the overall picture of your practice match your vision?

What has helped you develop the practice you have identified so far?

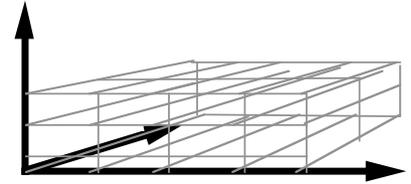
Apply

Develop a plan of how you might extend your present practice to be something more of your vision.

Decide some realistic and manageable developments you could make.

Identify what/who can help you make the developments you have identified.

School and Other Professionals An Observation Activity



This activity focuses on professionals who are not based in school, but who may have a practice of regularly visiting schools and of working with teachers.



1. Who are the other professionals that you know of at the moment.

Check the role titles you have heard so far on this list, and fill in any names you know. Add others which this list has not covered.

<i>Role</i>	<i>Heard of</i>	<i>Name</i>
Educational Psychologist		
Educational Welfare Officer		
Social Worker		
School Nurse		
Local Adviser(s)		
Local Inspector(s)		
...		
...		
...		

2. How does the school you're in view the use of such other professionals?

Think back to conversations in your school which have referred to the professionals you have listed above. In what terms were they referred to? Would any of the following characterisations fit?

Collaborator a colleague with whom some joint work is done

Interloper an 'outsider' who brings their own purposes to your setting

Undertaker someone who comes from elsewhere to take away certain aspects.

Note down if any of the above roles have been referred to on this sort of way:

<i>Characterisation</i>	<i>Roles</i>
<i>Collaborator</i>	
<i>Interloper</i>	
<i>Undertaker</i>	

Review

Which of the above best describes the overall way that the school treats its relations with other professionals?

Are some professionals viewed differently from others?

[Empty dotted box for response]

Learn

Schools and other professionals can find themselves saying these sorts of things:

Schools say:

- they're not really interested in teaching*
- they only tell us what we already know*
- they don't understand our problems*

External professionals say:

- they're not really interested in kids*
- they don't tell us anything useful*
- they don't understand our problems*

It's called the 'blame game', and occurs when communication about roles, purposes and practices is not effective.

Were there examples of this in some of the relations with other professionals? More important, were there some professionals for whom there was no evidence of the blame game? If so, how did they manage their roles and how did the school manage itself to be this effective?

What pointers would you suggest for schools and other professionals to manage their relations effectively?

[Empty dotted box for response]

Apply

You may not be directly relating to other professional in your teaching at the moment, but from what you have learned about your school's relations, what suggestions would you make for things to be reviewed, and improved if necessary?

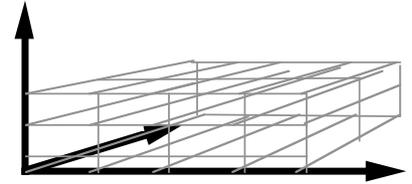
How can the 'blame game' be avoided, and a more effective partnership be developed?

What proposals would you make for the various professionals to communicate about their various purposes and practices?

[Empty dotted box for response]

School and Other Professionals

An Investigation Activity



This activity aims to extend your knowledge and analysis of relations with other professionals beyond what you may have already observed.

Do

1. Choose one or two of the professionals who come into the school and investigate their pattern of contacts.

Who do they link to in the school?

Do they have a 'link person'? What does this person do?

How far beyond the link person do the contacts extend?

In what circumstances might any of these professionals contact you as a teacher?

2. Try to find any school documents in which a written account is given of the school's relations with other professionals.

It would be rare for the rhetoric to match the reality, but what noticeable similarities and differences are there between the written version and the view you have developed so far?

3. Elicit some other teachers' views about the links with other professionals:

Which ones do they know the existence of?

Which ones do they have contact with?

How do they see the gains and losses from working with them?

4. Make an occasion to talk with one of the professionals who comes into the school.

Discuss the pattern of activity in their work and try to elicit their view of relations with school. Perhaps you could go on to develop some first-hand experience of their work, through 'shadowing' for a day or a part of a day.

Review

Collect together the perspectives you have gained from this investigation. Examine for similarities and differences, including for differences within the organisation of school.

Learn

What affects teachers' views of other professionals? Did you find any evidence for the following four factors?

1. *the culture of the school*; its tendency to engage or otherwise people from outside its boundaries. Is it sealed off or inviting in?
2. *the culture of the school section* (e.g. subject area, year); is the subject or year coordinator acting as gatekeeper, keeping relations to themselves, encouraging or discouraging wider relations?
3. *experience of other professionals*; has the experience so far led to staff feeling there is much to be gained from such work? or little to be gained?
4. *the way of working* of the professionals in question: do they work to engage teachers appropriately? do they explain what they offer? do they value teachers' perspectives?

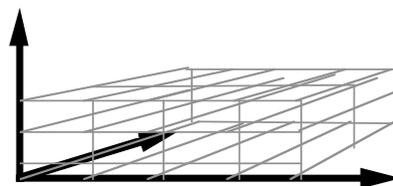
Apply

Is there more to be gained from work with other professionals which the school does not presently achieve?

What would need to happen for that improvement to occur? Make some suggestions for

School and Other Professionals

Personal Action



This activity assumes a collaborative mode of working between teachers and other professionals and aims to support developments toward that end.

Do

Select one of the professionals you know of, but do not know well, and with whom you feel there could be an advantage in joint work.

Remember the lines of communication which are typically used in this school for contacting the person you have selected.

Identify some of the existing ways in which you might be involved in a process involving this person.

In this context, try to identify in detail what it is that this person may have on offer and which you would value working with.

Now develop a specific proposal for contact and work.

Carry this through in whatever is an appropriate time frame for such work.

Review

After the contact and work is over, ask yourself:

- How did you prepare yourself to make an input into a joint process?
- How did you negotiate and influence the joint work?
- Did it stay with the goals you had wished for at the start?
- Did it achieve these goals?

Learn

In work with anyone who brings another professional perspective it is possible to:

- (a) not learn about their perspective
- (b) not have them learn about your perspective
- (c) only notice differences between your perspectives
- (d) become threatened by their perspective

Did you notice any evidence for any of these during the work you did together?

In work with anyone who is a stranger at first it is possible to:

- (a) set unrealistic hopes for your joint work
- (b) set goals only from your own perspective
- (c) not set any goals and become taken over by theirs

Did you notice any evidence for any of these during the work you did together?

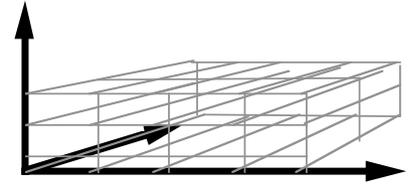
Apply

What changes in work with this particular person would you suggest in order that more is achieved?

What general proposals would you make for engaging teachers' perspectives in joint work with another professional within your school organisation?

What particular plan might you develop for making the most out of relations with other

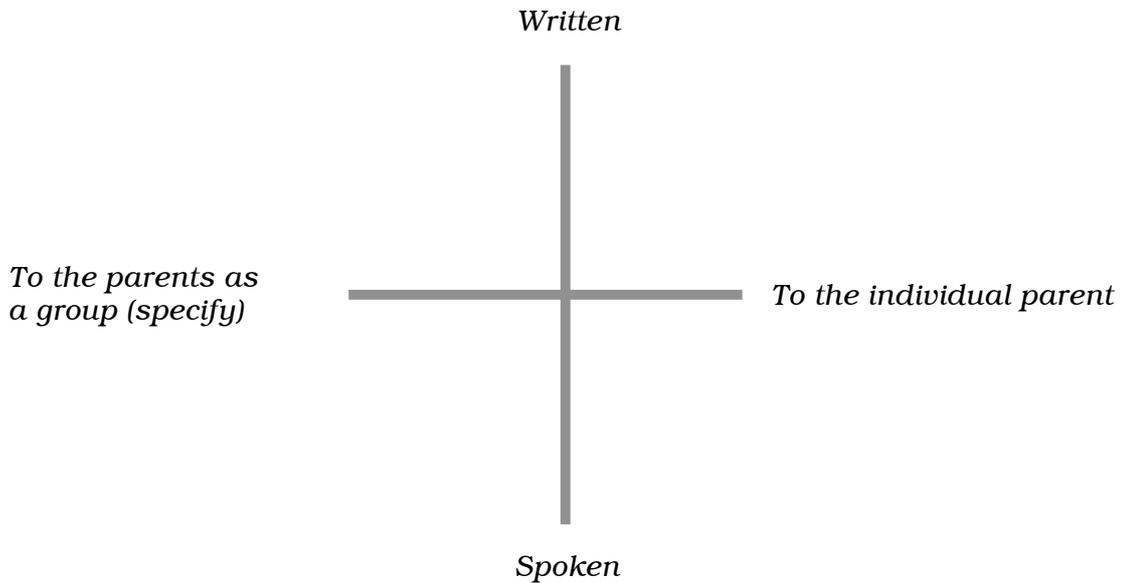
School and Parents An Observation Activity



Do

1. Examining the patterns.

Construct a profile of the present contacts you know of from the school to the home. Use the following dimensions to map out all the examples you can think of:



Review

Build up as complete a map as possible by inviting contributions from others. Where does the balance of communications lie?

Did you have any particular difficulties in building up this map?

Learn

What is the overall view of parents and their roles which you find in these contacts? Bastiani¹ identified four models of communication from school to home:

- *basic information model*: largely factual, restricted to the minimum information consistent with the school's efficient running. Role of the parent is limited and peripheral
- *public relations model*: conveys a positive image of school by selecting items, selection is geared to estimated needs of audience (usually parents), attention given to layout and style
- *developmental model*: concerned with impact on children of school, especially alleviating stress of transitions
- *parental involvement model*: specific reference to home-school relationships, emphasis given to educational matters, school's aims and methods, how parents can help their children learn

Apply

Choose one written communication which has recently been made from school to home. Decide which of the models it represents.

Is it in your view an appropriate model and an effective communication? Make some redrafting suggestions so that it is more appropriate and more effective.

¹ Bastiani J (ed)(1978). **Written Communication Between Home and School**. University of

2. Examining the purposes.

Atkin and others¹ suggest that when parents:

- understand what the school is trying to do
- identify with its main goals and support its efforts
- understand something of the role of educators
- take an active interest in, and provide support for their children's school work,

then the effects can be both dramatic and long lasting.

This leads us to think about the goals of home-school links.

Do

Atkin et al identify six major purposes of home-school links:

- 1 *Informing parents* e.g. about the curriculum, about events, about classroom life
- 2 *Supporting parents* and strengthening their expertise
- 3 *Creating a dialogue with parents* e.g. on children's progress
- 4 *Involving parents in their own children's learning* e.g. attending assemblies, home reading programmes
- 5 *Involving parents in the life of the school* e.g. parent helpers, fund raising
- 6 *Listening to parents* e.g. as providers of information and participants in decision making.

Think about your school (or a manageable sub-group of the school that you know well).

Have you observed activities which might come under all of the above? What were the activities? If some purposes are not covered, what might be the reason(s)?

Now evaluate how well the school achieves each of the purposes listed above. Give each a rating on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 represents low achievement, 5 high).

Review

Bring together a number of perspectives. Were they all aware of the same activities? Did they give similar or different ratings overall?

Who has major control over each of the activities you thought of? Which teachers are most involved in these activities? In which of the six purposes were the largest numbers of teachers involved?

Learn

What activities achieved their purposes effectively?

Was there any evidence that the most effective activities were the ones which engaged most people?

What were the forces which helped these activities happen? What forces were holding back activities which might achieve some of the other goals?

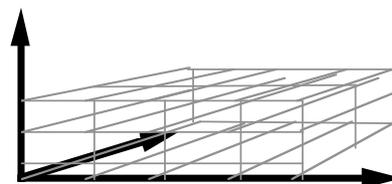
Apply

What would be needed for the school to extend the number of teachers involved in activities toward the purposes which are presently less well achieved ?

¹ Atkin J, Bastiani J and Goode J (1988), **Listening to Parents: An Approach to the Improvement of Home/School Relations**, London, Croom Helm

School and Parents

An Investigation Activity



With observations of the patterns and purposes of school-home links in place, we can also investigate the perspectives of the main parties involved.

Do

Make an arrangement to meet with a member of the school staff who plays a significant role in contacts with homes and families - a deputy head, a pastoral team leader, or similar.

Discuss the general theme of home-school relations, and try to find the colleague's views on the following:

- what are the main successes in this area? what are the main frustrations?
- what are the best examples of effective communication? what are some less effective examples?
- when communication goes less than well, what are the main reasons?

Now make an arrangement to meet with a parent of some pupil in the school (if this proves too difficult you may well get some willing volunteers amongst teachers who are parents of pupils in other schools).

Again talk with them about their experience of home-school relations, and try to find their views on the above three points.

Review

Try to bring together results of a number of such investigations. Identify any important similarities and differences between teachers' and parents' perspectives.

Learn

In examples where both teachers and parents regard links as successful, what are the main explanations they suggest? What else do you think is significant?

In examples where either teachers or parents regard links as unsuccessful, what are the main explanations they suggest? What else do you think is significant?

Macbeth's survey¹ of home-school relations in countries of the EEC identified a process which he called the 'blame game'. It looks like this:

Teachers' complaints about parents

- apathy
- off-loading responsibility
- contact seen as optional right
- shyness, fear, lack of confidence
- contact made only in time of crisis
- they're conservative about educational ideas
- they're too concerned with achievement
- they're over-concerned with trivialities
- the ones we want to see don't come
- they lack expertise in school matters

Parents' complaints about teachers

- apathy
- off-loading responsibility
- contact seen as optional right
- shyness, fear, lack of confidence
- contact made only in time of crisis
- they're conservative about educational ideas
- they're too concerned with achievement
- they encourage parents into trivialities
- they are incompetent at adult relationships
- they lack expertise in home-school liaison

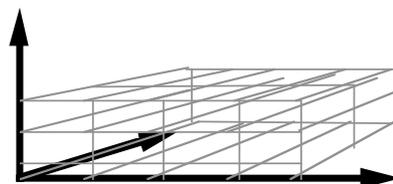
Did you find any evidence of this sort of process occurring?

Apply

What proposals would you make for the development of home-school links and ensuring that the 'blame game' happens as seldom as possible?

¹ Macbeth, A. (1984), **The Child between: a report on school-family relations in the countries**

School and Parents Personal Action



Do

Choose a pupil you know, and for whom you have considered communicating with her/his parents.

First, identify what purpose you are hoping to achieve through this communication:

- Is it
- 1 Informing them
 - 2 Supporting them
 - 3 Creating a dialogue with them
 - 4 Involving them in their own children's learning
 - 5 Involving them in the life of the school
 - 6 Listening to them

Now assume that you're going to make a first contact in writing. Make a quick rough draft of the letter you'll send.

Review

On your own, look back over the first draft and think about:

- (i) if it was read from the perspective of a parent, does the message come across effectively? - is the purpose clearly expressed? is the proposal clearly made?
- (ii) have you made any unwarranted assumptions in your drafting this letter? assumptions about family members? about names? about language use?

Now review the draft with a chosen colleague. What specific feedback would they offer from the point of view of a first-time reader of your draft?

What modifications would you now make for the second draft?

Learn

What were the influences which led you into drafting a communication which you have now revised?

Some¹ of the effective elements in such a communication might be:

- refer to any background or previous communication
- show awareness of their circumstances
- explain your purpose
- suggest how they can help
- show flexibility in what you hope from them
- invite a response
- end on a friendly note
- avoid over-long sentences, and terms whose meaning may not be shared.

Discuss this list and suggest additions, deletions, modifications.

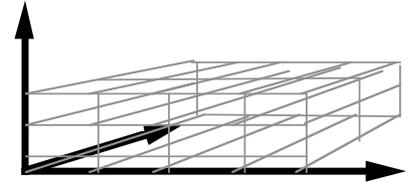
Apply

How would you aim to handle the influences on your approach to communicating with parents in the future?

In what ways can you give yourself future reminders about effective practice?

Are there changes in the school practice which you would recommend?

Learning About the Teacher Outside the Subject Classroom An Investigation Activity



The ways through which teachers are encouraged to learn and develop are vital to their effectiveness and professional satisfaction.

But teachers are not active towards their own development in the same ways.

Bruce Joyce and others¹ surveyed 3,300 teachers and developed the following categories to describe their approach to their own development:

- 1. The omnivore** Omnivores are teachers who are constant and active learners. They use every aspect of the formal and informal system to enrich their personal and professional lives. They are avid readers, workshop attenders, and have broad interests in the performing arts, sports and travel.
- 2. The active consumer** These teachers are active in their learning. They show less initiative than omnivores but nonetheless lead active lives and participate in a full range of personal and professional growth activities.
- 3. The passive consumer** These teachers take workshops and courses when offered, but they rarely seek out or initiate learning experiences. the number of personal and professional activities in which they become involve are, in fact, quite narrow.
- 4. The entrenched** These teachers are, as the name implies, entrenched, They seldom take courses or workshops unless they are paid to do so. They are against efforts to improve their school and for the most part they teach and lead their personal lives as they have for many years.
- 5. The withdrawn** These teachers have no regular outside interests and they are essentially withdrawn from all professional growth activities. They are difficult to involve and, as with entrenched teachers, their personal and professional lives follow patterns established many years earlier.

Do not read these as personally critical descriptions - they are also to be seen as indicators of how effective a school is in helping its staff avoid stress and burn-out.

Do

Arrange to have a discussion with someone with staff development responsibilities in the school.

Do they recognise these characterisations?

How, if at all, does the school provision of staff development opportunities respond to these differences?

Review

Have you seen evidence of these responses in the school?

Learn

What would you identify as the forces which shape different teachers' patterns of professional development? -

- forces in their schools
- forces in other aspects of their lives
- forces in them as individuals.

Are there forces you recognise which could socialise you into any/each of the five categories given above?

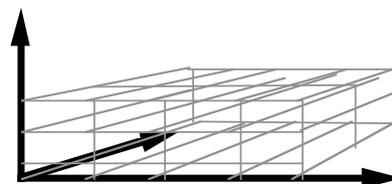
Apply

What thoughts do you have at this stage regarding your future professional learning and development?

In what ways will you aim to promote your own learning?

How will you combat the forces which might work against you?

Reviewing Your Progress Personal Action



There are a number of elements involved in reviewing your progress:

1. remembering what's happened
2. seeking to understand why things happened as they did
3. making judgements about what has been learned and about the learning situation
4. fitting learnings into overall context and deciding future objectives

For element 1: remembering

Look back over your notes, log, diary, etc. Give yourself some time to think back to what has happened.

Try to identify in detail any noticeable starting point - the way you felt on a key day, the things you did.

Talk with others who were there at the start and let your various memories re-create the occasion.

For element 2: understanding

There can be many things which have affected your learning.

Three simple headings would be:

- (a) the context you're in
the qualities of the school, its culture for learning, the provision for professional learning, the skills of your mentors, and so on
- (b) the things you've been trying to learn
how well were they identified and selected, how complex were they, how well graduated for your learning requirements
- (c) the stage you're at in this professional transition

Regarding professional transitions, you may be handling the transition of initial training, or passing into the first job, or handling some of the other transitions which occur in a career.

It's worthwhile noticing the effects on us as we pass through such a stage.

Do the following 'stages in transition' relate to your experience?

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| ❶ denial | 'It's nothing to do with me: I don't need to think ahead' |
| ❷ disbelief | 'It's not much of a change: I don't need to do much' |
| ❸ anxiety | 'I'm worried: I'm not sure I can do this' |
| ❹ action | 'I'm in it now: here goes!' |
| ❺ reflection | 'What can I do to succeed in this?' |
| ❻ integration | 'Now that I'm learning about this, is it going the way I want it to?' |

For element 3: evaluation

You could develop a review conversation with someone involved in mentoring or a peer who is involved in becoming a teacher. Focus on whether you've managed to get the maximum out of yourself and the situation you've been in.

For element 4: planning ahead

You could use the framework of this pack, reproduced on the next page, to compare where you felt your needs for learning were some time ago with where you feel they are now.

And you could set some priorities for the next stage.

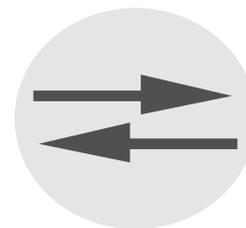
Here again is the framework for the learning activities in this pack.

You could record how much progress you've made in each of the areas the materials support.

You might shade in one, two or three boxes to indicate this.

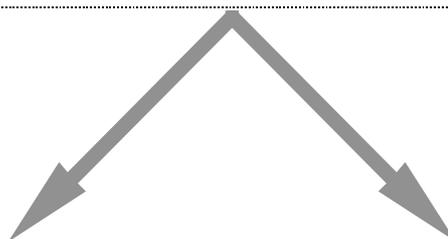
	Obse	Inves	Persc
The subject classroom			
<i>Classroom context, properties</i>			
Physical setting			
Social environment			
Psychological climate			
<i>Educational context structures</i>			
Goals			
Tasks			
Social structure			
Timing and pacing			
Resources			
Teacher's role			
Learning about classrooms - self			
- others			
Outside the subject classroom			
Teachers and individual pupils			
Tutors and tutor groups			
Teachers in teams			
Teachers and other staff			
The school as an organisation			
School and community			
School and other professionals			
School and parents			
Learning about the teacher outside the subject classroom			
Reviewing your progress			

Mentoring Skills and Processes



Contents

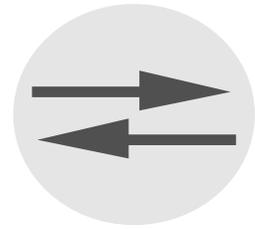
	page
What is this section about?	132
How will I use this section?	133



Ways of helping mentoring along

Some common problems and their resolution

	page		page
How to develop the climate	134	Is there a problem?	160
Setting up your communication	136	Resolving conflicts	162
Clarifying goals and expectations	138	Challenging	164
How to clarify your roles	140	Limits and boundaries	166
Ways of building the agenda	142	Self-reliance or dependency	168
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What is this Section About?

We have taken the view that mentoring is:
the process of helping another learn and enhance their professional role.

and that mentoring is **not** being:

- ✘ a model, for newcomers to imitate in any simple fashion
- ✘ a bureaucrat, who merely processes information
- ✘ a management supervisor, who is 'responsible' for the beginner
- ✘ a counsellor, whose main task is to follow the beginner's agenda, including their personal agenda.

We have tried to keep in mind the key questions:

'Is the beginner teacher really learning?', and

'Are the mentors (and the school) really learning?'

The skills of mentoring need to be derived from and reflect the view of mentoring. and the principal issues which might arise. This is in contrast to portraying the relevant skills as though they had come from another context with other purposes (for example counselling).

The skills of mentoring are both thinking skills and interpersonal skills which together are used in the service of promoting professional learning.

Teachers involved in mentoring need a repertoire of skills, many of which may exist in some form in their present repertoire. We consider them under two main headings:

- (a) skills to achieve the goals
- (b) skills to meet some of the difficulties (new and not so new)

We have developed the conception of mentoring skills from our view of professional learning based on an action learning process. This is summarised on the contents page of this section.

What Will I Find in this Section?

- some principles, ideas, practices and processes to examine
- some examples of activities to use with your mentees
- some prompts to encourage your reflection and your own action learning
- some ways of recording your thoughts and ideas for the future

How will I Use this Section?

The first step is to recognise and accept that you may well be exercising some of the skills already.

Of these, you may be able to talk about and describe some. This is what Dubin¹ called 'conscious competence'. But there are also some which you already exercise but cannot necessarily describe. This is 'unconscious competence'.

Then there may be skills which you know of but know you do not possess - 'conscious incompetence'.

And finally there may be skills which you'd not thought of or heard of, and which you do not exercise - 'unconscious incompetence'.

This section can help you in all four elements of 'Dubin's dichotomies':

1. Unconscious competence	2. Conscious competence
4. Unconscious incompetence	3. Conscious incompetence

- by
1. helping you find a language for skills you already exercise,
 2. helping you extend the skills you know you have,
 3. giving you ideas for those skills you know you don't have, and
 4. suggesting new areas of skill you had not identified.

We imagine you may use different parts of this section:

- on you own
- with your mentee(s)
- with other mentors in your school
- with other mentors from other schools.

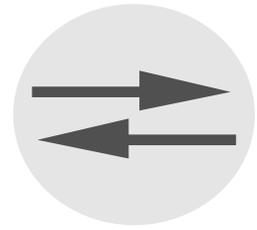
The Layout of this Section

Each theme or heading has been laid out as two pages side-by-side, with some starting ideas and possible activities, followed by space to record your own reflections, pitfalls, notes on what to remember next time and what to record.

We hope that this layout and the space for your own notes will encourage you to:

- keep an effective log of your mentoring processes
- improve the content of this section beyond what we have included.

How to Develop the Climate



Why should I bother with this?

In any relationship it is not easy to discuss issues 'cold'. This is just as true in a professional relationship and even more crucial if you are intending to establish a way of working together that may be unfamiliar at first.

Some explicit attention to the climate of the relationship will be useful from time to time.

In the early stages of developing climate, conversations which help locate each other as people in time and place can be very useful. The activities below aim to promote such conversations.

Activities

Lifeline

Draw your lifeline or career line. It can be straight, jagged, circular, spiral, as long as it is representative for you. Mark key events.

Choose one or more aspects to discuss. Take one another through the experiences you have chosen to indicate.

Developments: draw a future line, indicating some of the paths you hope to travel.

Geography

Use a map of the world to identify where you were born, where you have visited or lived. Feel free to discuss these experiences with one another as you indicate them on the map.

Hidden Curriculum Vitae

Think of the things which you might write down on a formal description of your present role (such as on a CV). Now write down some of the things you have not mentioned, but which bring an important dimension to you as a person, and (no doubt) to the way that you enact your role. (I'm a jazz pianist)



Think about

- what you learned about each other as people, and the range of things you bring to being a teacher.
- what you chose to bring into the conversation and what you chose to keep out.
- what went well and what was a little lumpy



Look out for pitfalls

- one person doing most of the talking
 - power plays entering the discussion? one-upmanship?
 - experiences seeming to be judged (either negatively or positively)
- [Add you own here]



Next time remember to

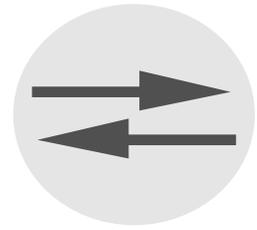
[Note down here some of the things you might do differently the next time you use activities like these]



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[Note down here anything you wish to retain, and might enter into your mentoring log]

Setting up Your Communication



Being heard, being valued and being respected can be demonstrated in part by giving time and space.

If you can consider the conditions of time and space when you meet, you may convey these qualities. This may enhance how all parties feel and promote each being heard.

Activities

- Spend a few minutes reflecting on key conditions that will help to support communication between you....

Frequency- times and timing

How often will you meet? At what times? For how long?

Venue - space and area

Where will you meet? Is it always available?

What messages does that space convey?

Whose agenda

How will you build the agenda?

How will you review it?

Opportunity to speak

What practices will you use to encourage contribution?

Preparation for meetings

What can each expect the other to prepare and to bring?

Outside the meetings

Who can say what to whom?

How do people make contact outside the meetings?

- Agree your 'ground-rules' for operating the exchanges and make sure that all parties have a copy.
For example:

Agreed communication contract

Any information to be released has to be agreed first

Meet once a week

Quiet office will be available

Agenda - learner teacher raises items then mentor

Write up agreed areas of feedback



Think about

- what you are doing in terms of preparation for continuing communication
- how can you ensure that agreed conditions for communication are maintained? Reviewed?



Look out for pitfalls

- are you sure that everyone had the opportunity to outline what was important for them? That all views were heard and noted ?
- having good ideas at the start, but not putting them into practice
- arranging meetings and not according them priority over the many other things which will impinge



Next time remember to

[Note down here some of the things you might do differently the next time you use activities like these]

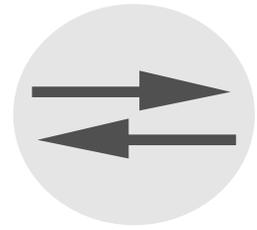


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To help Communication ... [Make a note of the agreed areas]
Should there be difficulties at a later date then they can be referred back to

[Note down here anything you wish to retain, and might enter into your

Clarifying Goals and Expectations



Mis-perceptions of where we're going and what was expected can be a source of real difficulty. Better to clarify goals and expectations in the first place. What do you want to get out of this series of exchanges that you have carefully set up? Do you agree on the priorities and how do you know you agree?

Activities

- Sentence completion activities can provide good starters in this area.

Try the ones below or create your own. Ask the question several times until a series of expectations and goals emerge and write down the key points.

As your mentor I aim to ...

Over the next year I expect to ...

I think it's important that we ...

My learning needs in this situation are ...

As a learning teacher I aim to ...

Over the next year I expect to ...

I think it's important that we ...

My learning needs in this situation are ...

- From sentence completion or from brain-storming, mentors and mentees could generate a number of possible goals. Write each one on a card and use the cards to discuss, modify, prioritise and create a list.

Goals may be short-term, long-term, or continuous.

Draw out the expectations and divide the statements into:

those that can be met from the start

those that can be achieved later

those that will need to be looked at on some later date



Think about

- how you can meet as many goals as possible without being overloaded.
Can you delegate some of them?
- Can you allow the learner teacher to take responsibility for some of them?



Look out for pitfalls

- developing a list of goals and expectations which is not a representation of all parties
- agreeing goals and expectations without thinking sufficiently about how they can be met
- forgetting to refer back to these goals and expectations, forgetting to incorporate them into agendas and have them inform your continuing work



Next time remember to

[Note down here some of the things you might do differently the next time you use activities like these]

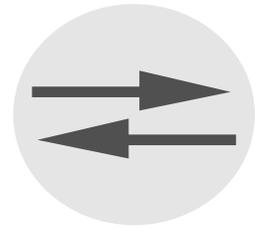


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Write down the agreed expectations and goals.

Don't forget to date them since goals are dynamic: it's a good idea to revisit them from time to time.

Clarifying your Roles

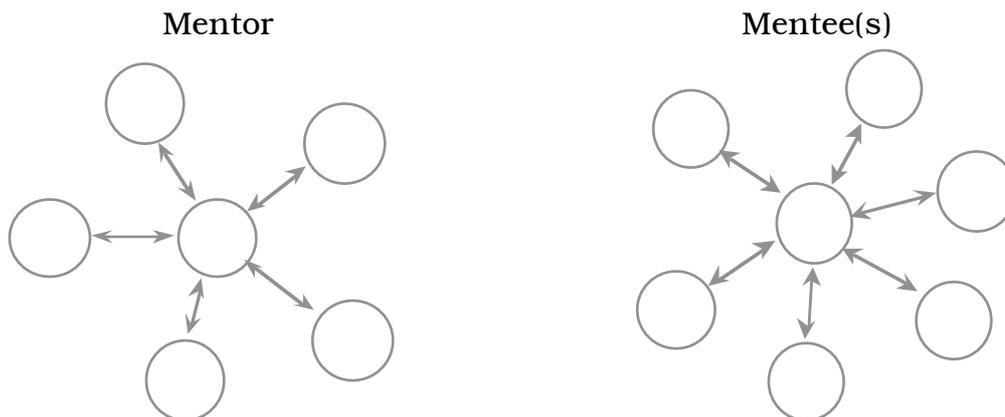


Drawing from your discussions about expectations and goals, similarities and differences are likely to have begun to emerge. Misunderstanding and disappointments can be reduced if you can clarify your roles at this stage. It enables you to identify and agree those areas that you feel are within your remit and capability and those that are not. Poor role definition and role strain can lead to poor communication, isolation and stress, burn-out and breakdown.

So its worth ...

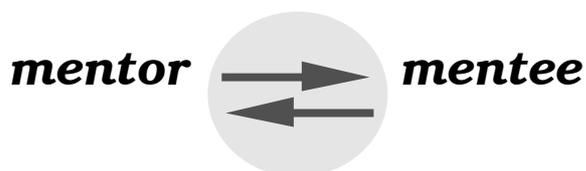
Possible activities

- Take a few minutes out to remember who we are, and why we are here.
- Draw a role map of:



Discuss the implications of what you notice:

- In the particular role-relationship between:



it is useful to discuss and clarify:

- who initiates what?
- who takes responsibility for what?
- who is accountable for what?



Think about

- using the role map technique to identify roles in relation to other areas e.g. family and social roles at a later date
- whether items for future agendas are indicated:
 - for example mentors with multiple hats
 - multiple mentors
 - mentees with multiple responsibilities - classrooms, tutoring, other
 - college tutors with multiple responsibilities
- any surprises for you when you drew up your role map



Look out for pitfalls

- unrealistic roles could be suggested at this stage - it's important to make this clear from the start
- omitting the discussion of who initiates, responsibility and accountability. This is a key one, especially if the learner is to be treated as an adult learner, and problems of dependence are to be avoided for the future
- any areas of tension? It would be important to re-visit and re-confirm these, rather than let them creep under the carpet



Next time remember to

[Note down here some of the things you might do differently the next time you use activities like these]

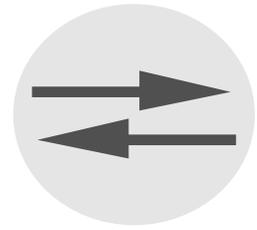


Put in my file

Put the role maps in your file for future reference - to examine role strain should it arise, to examine changes in the map over time.

[Note down here anything you wish to retain, and enter into your mentoring log]

Ways of Building the Agenda



Why should I bother with this?

Meetings between mentors and mentees can be short, and rushed. This of course is an important reflection on school, and on teachers' professional lives.

Because of this the agenda can be rushed:

- a mentor may come to the meeting in a frame of 'How shall I fill the time today?'
- a beginner teacher may come to the meeting in a frame of 'How can I justify myself at this meeting?'

These starting points are unlikely to lead to fruitful conversation about professional learning.

Possible activities

- Start by giving some recognition to experiences since you last met. Spend a few minutes on 'triumphs and disasters' - **not** in order to judge them, but to exchange and tune in.
- Give explicit time to construct the agenda for the meeting.

Each person could say 'What I have on the agenda for this meeting is ...'

Check out that the agenda you construct is raising important issues about learning to teach, about progression, and so on. Does it contain:

- follow-up from the previous meeting
 - reviewing where your needs are now
using the overall framework (see below)
 - planned issues and responsive issues
 - looking ahead to forthcoming stages
- Try the grid of the action learning activities in this pack, reproduced on page 144.
 - Put the items from that grid onto pieces of paper (reproduced on page 145) and use them to create piles of high medium and low priority.



Think about

- the pressures which could take you or the beginner teachers away from an appropriate agenda focussing on professional learning.
- how you may anticipate and resist these pressures.



Look out for pitfalls

- the agenda getting formed in a one-sided way, reflecting one person's concerns more than the other's.
- the agenda becoming too reactive, by focussing on recent concerns and forgetting the overall framework and progression.



Next time remember to

[Note down here some of the things you might do differently the next time you use activities like these]

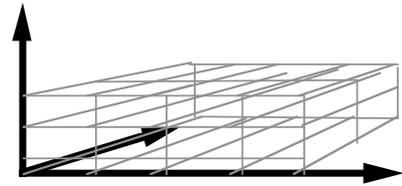


Put in my file

a record of the results created from using the grid or prioritising the items into piles.

[Note down here anything you wish to retain, and might enter into your

Using the Framework to Build the Longer Term Agenda



Below is a summary of the materials/activities in the action learning part of this pack.

Use the grid:

- (i) to record which of the activities you've undertaken to your satisfaction
- (ii) to indicate activities which you've tried and which you would like to try further examples
- (iii) to indicate activities you haven't tried.

	Observation	Investigation	Personal action
The subject classroom			
<i>Classroom context, properties</i>			
Physical setting			
Social environment			
Psychological climate			
<i>Educational context, structures</i>			
Goals			
Tasks			
Social structure			
Timing and pacing			
Resources			
Teacher's role			
Learning about classrooms - self			
- others			
Outside the subject classroom			
Teachers and individual pupils			
Tutors and tutor groups			
Teachers in teams			
Teachers and other staff			
The school as an organisation			
School and community			
School and other professionals			
School and parents			
Learning about the teacher outside the subject classroom			
Reviewing your progress			

Select a number of items from those you've indicated under (ii) and (iii) above; put them in some priority order and choose a manageable number for the medium

Physical setting of the classroom

Social environment of the classroom

Psychological climate of the classroom

Goals in the classroom

Tasks in the classroom

Social Structure in the classroom

Timing and Pacing in the classroom

Resources in the classroom

Teacher's Role in the classroom

Learning about classrooms - yourself

Learning about classrooms -

Teachers and individual pupils

Tutors and tutor groups

Teachers in teams

Teachers and other staff

The school as an organisation

School and community

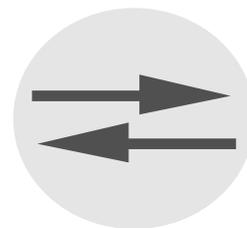
School and other professionals

School and parents

Learning about the teacher outside the subject classroom

Reviewing your progress

Ways to Support an Action Learner



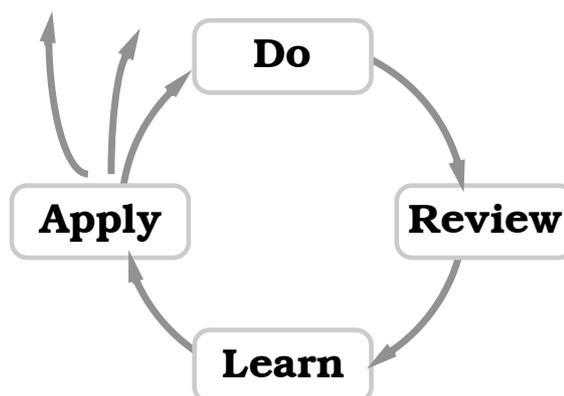
Why bother with this?

Many people learning to teach have not experienced action learning of the professional sort which is utilised in this pack. Therefore they may revert to 'waiting to be told' or 'just wanting to get on with it'.

Many people involved in mentoring have not had extensive experience of supervising action learners. Therefore they may revert to 'I'll tell them about...' or 'I'll get X to tell them about ...'.

Activities

- the mentor may occasionally remind themselves (and the beginner teacher) of their role by saying at appropriate moments 'My role is to support you in the learning you're engaged in' or similar.
- both parties may keep a copy of the Do -> Review -> Learn -> Apply model in open view between them



- if they're not already part of the materials you're using (such as those in this pack), the mentoring role is to provide frameworks/tools to support that action learning agenda:
 - *help to get the activity done*
this may include supporting their motivation, checking out practical preparations, smoothing the communication with others, ...
 - *help to review an experience*
this may include encouragement to make an account, frameworks of questions to consider, suggestions for comparisons and evaluations, ...
 - *help to learn from experience and review*
this may include bringing in useful ideas from a range of sources: readings, theories, others' views, ...
 - *tools to promote application*
this may include support to the question 'what would I do differently next time?', leading to action planning and goal setting.
[see also later parts of this section]



Think about

- your personal preference for one aspect of the action learning cycle over the others
For example, are you:
 - An Activist, who likes to get action moving?
 - A Reflector, who likes to stand back and observe?
 - A Theorist, who likes to analyse, construct meaning, develop theories?
 - A Pragmatist, who is keen to try things out in practice?
- Do you have a starting idea of whether your mentees have a preference in one of these areas?



Look out for pitfalls

- regularly omitting some stage of the action cycle, for example leaving out the review of experience before starting to theorise, or omitting the application stage.
- mentors reducing their emphasis on action learning because other people who are working with the beginner teacher do not seem to be adopting this approach.
- mentors falling into an inactive collusion with beginner teachers:
'Today I thought I'd tell you about ...'
'Oh thank you, that's kind'



Next time remember to

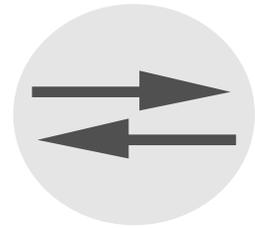
[Note down here some of the things you might do differently the next time you use activities like these]



Put in my file

[Note down here anything you wish to retain, and might enter into your mentoring log]

Helping Target Setting



Why bother with this?

Meetings between mentors and beginner teachers can create supportive and engaging occasions with great potential for learning.

But these occasions are most likely to have impact if they also ask 'So what?' or 'Now what?'

Otherwise the outcome may be some ideas or insights which never see the light of day.

Possible activities

- building in to discussion considerations of:
'what implications are there from this?'
 - for you
 - for the school
 - for our understanding of teaching'
- end each session with five minutes talking about
'what experiments will you set up as a result of this conversation?'
- think about setting a target, with a specified timescale, and check that the target is:
 - ✓ **Achievable**
i.e. can be accomplished with your present strengths
 - ✓ **Believable**
i.e. could realistically happen in your school/organisation
 - ✓ **Controllable**
i.e. within the possibilities of your control (not others')
 - ✓ **Measurable**
i.e. stated so that you know whether /when you've achieved them.
- build the timescale aspect and the success criteria/measurability:
Decide:
 - Is this target short term? medium? long?*
 - By when do I aim to have achieved it?*
 - How will I know when I get there?*



Reflect:

Is target-setting something you practice for yourself? If not you may need some extra reminders to yourself in order to build it into your practice with mentees.



Look out for pitfalls

- regularly forgetting to give time at the end of the session to address target-setting
- forgetting that sometimes targets can be missed, but that we may still learn something equally valuable



Next time remember to

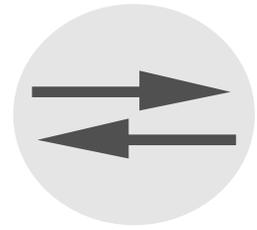
[Note down here some of the things you might do differently the next time you use activities like these]



Put in my file

[Note down here anything you wish to retain, and might enter into your

Ways of Reviewing Progress



Keeping learning purposeful is just as much about *feeling the progress* as it is about setting purposeful goals.

Reviewing is an affirmative process which both motivates and diagnoses.

Reviewing is a key element in reflection.

Reviewing may proceed through:

- * Knowledge phase
remembering from the past
- * Analysis/understanding phase
seeking to understand why things happened the way they did
- * Evaluation phase
making judgements about the learning situation and evaluating what has been learned
- * Synthesis phase
fitting learnings into overall context and deciding future objectives

Possible activities

- open-ended starters to a discussion on the theme, such as:
'Some of the ways things are different for me this term include ...'
'Some of the things I'm more competent at include ...'
'I feel better about ...'
'I feel more motivated to ...'
- structured methods such as:
'Looking back at the *framework*, and the needs you identified last term, how do these look now?'
[see page 144 of this section]
- using the review activities in the activities part of this pack:
Reviewing your progress, page 129
Learning about classrooms, page 87, 88.



Think about

- the overall climate in your school regarding reviewing:
Are staff encouraged and supported in it?
Are students encouraged and supported in it?
- what messages about reviewing the learner teacher may be receiving from your organisation (and from you)
- the methods you use to review your mentoring.



Look out for pitfalls

- reviewing which moves too quickly into discussion does not allow the very important stage of remembering and recollection.
- reviewing without a structure or framework can be largely anecdotal, and suffer as a result.
- reviewing without some records of past activity may be less effective.



Next time remember to

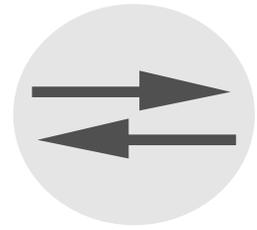
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Supporting Self-evaluation



Teaching is a highly evaluative profession. Classrooms contain public evaluations of people or their performance every couple of minutes.

Teachers can be anxious about evaluation (as shown for example in their responses to appraisal, and, more personally, in their feelings about marking pupils' work - some teachers continually put this off).

This trend may be reversed if we give due weight to self-evaluation. This means evaluation by oneself: it does not only mean evaluation of oneself - that can become too introspective.

Beginner teachers (and mentors too perhaps) can lack practice in self-evaluation.

Possible activities

- encourage evaluation which uses the first person, for example by completing:
 - 'I have learned ...'
 - 'I have achieved ...'
 - 'I found most difficult ...'
 - 'On future occasions I would ...'
- in many discussions about classrooms and schools, the conversation can seem simply critical.
If this happens with your mentees, correct the balance somewhat by asking them to consider what their contribution to the situation has been.
- in any formal evaluation, make sure that the first stage in the process is the beginner teacher's self-evaluation, and that the later stages require others to respond to that.
[see also Section 7 of this pack on assessment]
- provide a structure (or *framework*) to support **what** the self-evaluation could focus on.



Think about

- your own experience of professional self-evaluation:
 - What has supported you in this?
 - Are there any parallels with how you might support the beginner teacher you're mentoring?
- self evaluation isn't learned at a single stroke. You might need to build in some discussion of what's more or less easy about it and how it could develop



Look out for pitfalls

- some beginner teachers may encourage their mentors to take the first step in the evaluation process, before their own step of self-evaluation has had a chance
- some learners turn self-evaluation into self-blame. You might avoid this pitfall by keeping the focus on professional skills and strategies, rather than simply the person



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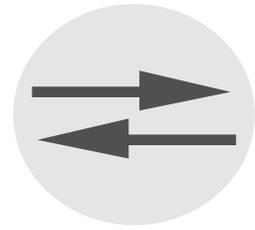
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Keeping Logs and Diaries



Recording things helps with:

- the process of recollection
- the process of reflection and review
- the evidence of progression
- the presentation of achievements
- the task of bringing one's work to account

This applies both to beginner teachers and to mentors.

It also links to the ability to write professionally about your own and others' performance.

Activities

- a diary is usually a personal record, kept in a variety of forms
- a log is a more public record than a diary, but may include selections from the diary
- regularly ask mentees to record things in their diary/log

(rather like the sheets you're reading now ask you to)



- put aside some time to do the writing - book it in your diary, and theirs
- occasionally spend some of your meeting time with both beginner teacher and mentor quietly writing in their respective logs
- at longer term intervals give yourself some time to check that your log is up-to-date
- emphasise the *use* of the log, by referring back to entries, and by asking the mentee which parts they would choose to present in a professional account



Think about

- the things which stop people keeping logs and diaries:
 - people's negative experiences of writing at school
 - some people's lack of experience of writing
 - fears about judgement (sometimes shown up in excessive views about 'confidentiality')
 - judgements of the writing itself or judgements of the topic/person being written about
- what will stop you as a mentor keeping a log of your work.



Look out for pitfalls

- the main pitfall in this area is to never get started. Beginner teachers and mentors alike will need some encouragement to begin a diary or log. They may even need some pressure!
- the second pitfall is not to use the log. It then becomes a chore without a purpose, and is likely to dry up



Next time remember to

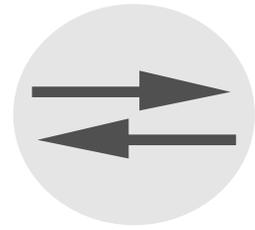
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How to Make Feedback Constructive



Feedback is often not as constructive as it might be. That's because it becomes confused with judgement and because its content and process are undisciplined. Receivers then become defensive.

Constructive feedback requires time.

Principles in making feedback constructive include:

- ★ be descriptive rather than evaluative
- ★ be specific
- ★ refer to things which can be changed
- ★ offer alternatives, leaving the recipient with a choice
- ★ acknowledge with the person that the feedback you're giving is from your perspective
- ★ take time to check over what the other person has taken you to say and try to reach a mutual hearing

Activities

- Use the above principles when offering feedback on something a mentee has been doing.
Try having the piece of paper in front of you, and check down each point. This will help the mentee see the principle behind what you're doing.
- Use some time for explicit practice at giving constructive feedback. This could be done as a short exercise in a mentoring session, with each party trying out the words and phrases they would use in line with the principles above.
- After giving someone feedback, spend some time checking out what they understood from what you said.
This can be time very well spent, as it increases communication and decreases misunderstanding.



Think about

- occasions when you have received constructive feedback.
Did it accord with the principles listed opposite?
Were there any other important aspects?
- the things which cause you to hesitate about giving feedback
Are they mainly fears of giving judgements?



Look out for pitfalls

- a major pitfall on the part of those offering feedback is to turn it into an attempt to influence. It can then become a battle to convince the receiver that you're 'right'!
- a common view in giving feedback is 'start with something positive'. This contains two pitfalls:
 1. the receiver soon gets to know your practice and starts preparing themselves for you to get round to the negative bits
 2. it throws feedback into the evaluative dimension, rather than the descriptive.



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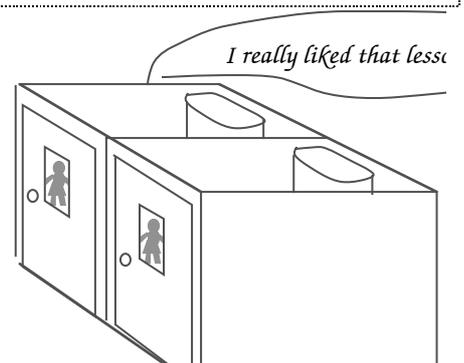
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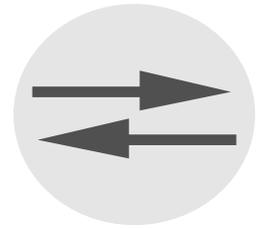
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A final point from our experience:



Using Others



Why should I think about this?

If we only focus on the meetings between beginner teachers and mentors, we can fall into believing that this is the key relationship. This would be limiting in two ways:

- (i) it would ignore the role that many others are doubtless playing in helping the beginner teacher's learning
- (ii) it would ignore the many other influences in the beginner teacher's life (and paradoxically, if we ignore them we can think of ourselves more as an influence rather than a support to learning).

Possible activities

- Map out the support network which the beginner teacher presently has:

<i>Types of support</i>	<i>In school</i>	<i>Out of school</i>
Someone I just enjoy chatting to		
Someone who challenges me		
Someone who I can talk to about my learning		
Someone who gives me constructive feedback		
Someone I can depend on in a crisis		
Someone I can share my anxieties with		
Someone who introduces me to new ideas		

Then discuss the pattern which emerges:

- is rather too much focussed on one or two people?
- are there gaps to think about filling?
- are there ways in which it would be appropriate to extend this support network?

- Give some time to reviewing the others who are significant to a mentee.

What influences are they turning out to be?

Draw another version of the role map (page 140) which also shows the strength of influence of each person.



Think about

- your own support network: is it effective for you? does it focus on a very few key people?
- the messages you may be conveying to others about the issue of support



Look out for pitfalls

- not addressing the idea of support lest you seem 'soft'
- colluding with the idea that support is 'soft', rather than challenging and demanding too
- falling into the idea that support is only for beginner teachers
- assuming that support is something specialised, only for a few (i.e. it indicates they're not functioning)



Next time remember to

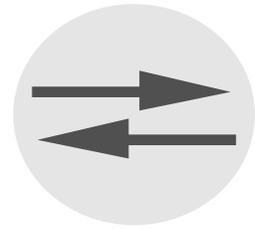
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Is There a Problem?



Mentors may find themselves facing what they perceive to be (or are told to be) problems.

The first step in solving what may (or may not) be a problem is the stage of *problem-definition*.

Do not dive straight in.

Instead:

Possible activities:

Ask:

- When did this problem arise?
What else was happening at this time?
- Who holds this problem most?
How do they show their concern?
- How is this problem being packaged and described?
Who does this, and what is left out of the package?
How would others describe it?
What lines of action are suggested by this packaging?
Would different description by different people suggest different lines of action?
- What else does this 'problem' show us?
for example about staff, communications, schools, other things
- What is the role of the mentor in this situation?
[are they using the positive skills and processes outlined in the first half of this section?]

- Ineffective problem-definition:
 - takes the matter as packaged
 - does not scan widely for alternative perspectives
 - closes down on communication between the people involved

This way people become stuck, and the problem is more likely to seem un-resolvable.

Instead:

- learn from the way the problem is described
- look for alternative perspectives
- keep communication open from the start



Think about

- problem definition takes time. What will pressure you not to give the time to this, and rush to find 'a quick solution'?
- some problems will strike you as 'ones you've seen before'. How can you help yourself scan thoroughly each new one?



Look out for pitfalls

- the main pitfall in problem-definition is to collude with the problem as described to you. How will you bring others' perspectives in?
- sometimes people take on a problem as presented because their self-image would get a boost from believing they could solve it - alone and quickly!



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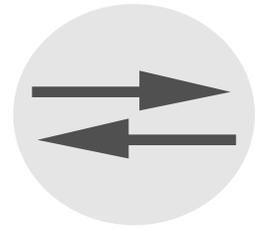
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Resolving Conflicts



Conflicts are not necessarily bad. They may be seen as an inevitable part of human interactions. What is important is how conflicts are handled.

Adopting a constructive approach to conflict resolution can involve:

- not reaching into past issues which are unresolved, yet irrelevant to the present conflict
- taking time to keep all conflicts up-to-date
- taking care to consider when where and how to raise a conflict:
 - getting a good conflict-resolution started needs:
 - a willingness to experiment, in order to get out of stalemates
 - a preparedness not to carry on repetitious conflicts
 - a willingness to communicate where one stands and where one wants to go
 - considering when and where to raise it:
 - fight by appointment only: thoughts are then organized, arguments persuasive, and the fight confines itself to one issue
 - ending a good conflict-resolution:
 - many people avoid raising a conflict because they don't know how to end it. But an 'end' may be fictitious - some issues get resolved, others arise
 - a conflict ends when each person has aired their views, and has questioned the other enough to ensure that this airing has been properly achieved
 - afterwards, reconciliation may be needed: it is achieved by ordinary things: reconciliators stay in character but display the best of themselves.

Possible activities:

The starting point is to define conflicts carefully and to clarify goals.

Then think through what can happen if this conflict is handled:

- (i) as a win-lose situation, where one person's goals can only be achieved at the expense of another's
- (ii) as a win-win situation, where participants try to find a way of achieving something of all their goals.

Steps in resolving conflicts fairly

- A. *Before*
 - 1. Check it's important enough.
 - 2. Check you're clear about the issues and the outcome you want.
 - 3. Arrange a time to talk.
 - 4. Arrange how you'll talk.
 - 5. Resolve any conflicts over the above.
- B. *During*
 - 6. Initiator gives a clear statement of the issue.
 - 7. The recipient feeds back what s/he believes the issue is.
 - 8. The recipient then responds to the issue raised.
 - 9. Both have an opportunity to correct false impressions to this point.
 - 10. Intermission.
 - 11. Resume.
 - 12. Disengage.
- C. *After*
 - 13. Reflect/review.
 - 14. Reconciliation.



Think about

- your own beliefs regarding the resolution of conflicts
 - do you see conflicts as difficult to face?
 - have you had experiences of conflicts being handled openly and effectively?
 - or kept in the background, festering?
- the climate in your school
 - are there effective models of how conflicts can be resolved, through open, clear communication?



Look out for pitfalls

Obstacles to a constructive approach to conflict -

1. a belief that conflict is 'bad'
This might mean that conflicts get swept under the carpet or denied
2. to see conflicts only in terms of winning and losing
This might mean that conflicts are dealt with in an authoritarian manner



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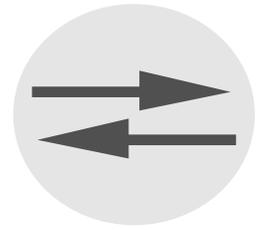
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Challenging



'Challenging' is not something that is expected in the context of helping someone. It is a word that can inspire fear in many people, for it conjures up images of attack, anger and the like.

In the positive sense used here, challenging means an invitation to examine some form of behaviour that seems to be self-defeating. It may be necessary to challenge someone to understand more fully and act more constructively.

The goals of challenging are to help a learner overcome a blind spot, develop a new perspective, and thereby become able to act.

Possible activities

Challenging needs an appropriate 'script' and an appropriate focus:

- Challenging omissions: such as missing experiences, activities, ...
'Sheila, we've talked a lot about school and staff relationships. I think it's time for some activity on your part in that area.'
'David, we've talked about changing this on two previous occasions - I'm not aware of anything happening'.
- Challenging discrepancies: between what they say and what they do, between their view of their performance and other people's.
'Pat, you seem to suggest that you've experienced a problem with the relationships in this lesson. Your Subject Coordinator can't see the evidence'.
- Challenging excuses: encouraging a learner to own their problems and opportunities
'But John, you keep on mentioning all those other tasks as the reason for you not getting the planning done - don't you have to prioritise?'
- Challenging distortions: some people handle matters they find difficult to face by distorting them in various ways
'Do you really think it's the case that all these ideas are 'just theory'?''
- Challenging oversimplifications
'If you go on saying it's all your tutor's fault, you run the risk of leaving yourself out of the picture completely'
- Challenging blocks
'Well we don't know that these pupils dislike the subject, and you may never know unless you try something different'



Think about how you will

- Keep the goal in mind - the learner's benefit
- Earn the right to challenge by
 - developing an effective working relationship
 - working at seeing his or her point of view
 - being open to challenge yourself
- Invite learners to challenge themselves
- Be tactful and tentative without being insipid or apologetic
- Don't ask learners to do too much too quickly
- Be open and explicit about challenging 'Well Tony I think you're missing something there and it's important I challenge you on that'



Look out for pitfalls

Sometimes we demonstrate a reluctance to challenge. Perhaps that is a better starting point than being too eager, but we can be limiting our helpfulness. This may be similar to the tendency to withhold bad news from others even when it is in their interests to know.

We might believe or say:

- we don't want to be challenged ourselves
- we think we're intruding
- we think it will hurt the other person
- we will end up not being liked



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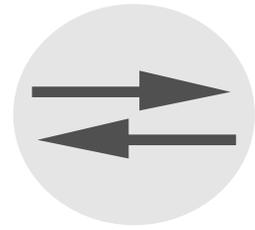
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Limits and Boundaries



Mentors can find themselves, rather too late, in a situation where a limit or boundary has been reached and surpassed:

for example:

- a beginner teacher phones you at home on Friday at 10 p.m. 'for a natter'
- finding that a beginner teacher raises key issues at the end of a meeting
- being asked for more personal attention or action than you feel appropriate.

Possible activities

- First there's an 'activity' of the moment - how to respond!

Assertiveness skills may be key at this point:

'Thankyou for your call. It's not convenient for me now. I would like us to arrange another time to talk'

Some people confuse assertion with aggression, and are therefore slow to be assertive as they predict the other will be aggressive in response.

It can be useful to practice various assertive statements, helping them to become part of your repertoire:

'I won't be able to come to your party. I've already made other plans.'

'I'm interested in what you have to say, but I want to finish reading this chapter first'

'I don't agree with you' 'I don't take that view'

'I really enjoyed your thoughtful comment'

'I'm not satisfied with the way this meat is cooked. I'd like you to ask the chef to fix it'

'I am having difficulty hearing the performance. Would you please stop talking'

- Revisit the processes in the first half of this section.

For example:

Setting up your communication page 136

Clarifying goals and expectations page 138

How to clarify your roles page 140

In particular, is it necessary to:

- re-clarify roles and expectations
 - re-visit ground rules, and perhaps create some new ones
- If the pattern regarding limits and boundaries continues, you might need to exercise the skill of challenging (page 164):
'Pat, I'm aware that you raise some important issues towards the ends of our meetings. I'd like us to get them clearly on the agenda at the start'



Think about

- the messages you may be conveying about yourself as a professional, and the limits and boundaries you exercise.

Is it clear to the beginner teacher that you exercise role boundaries, time boundaries, and limits to the responsibilities you take on?

Think also about the messages your school conveys on this theme.



Look out for pitfalls

- believing (or behaving as though you believe) that you can offer limitless support.

Are you behaving like a martyr? Are you behaving like a workaholic?



Next time remember to

Note here the statements you thought of after the event, and would like to practice for a future occasion.

[Note down here some of the things you might do differently the next time you use activities like these]

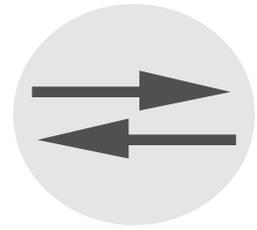


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Examples of the occasions when boundaries have been strained and how this has been handled.

[Note down here anything you wish to retain, and might enter into your mentoring log]

Self-reliance or Dependency



New mentors often ask 'How do I stop myself *doing it all for them?*'

For example:

- you find yourself planning their lessons
- you support their self-evaluation so much you're really writing it yourself
- you continually find yourself offering *your* strategies and solutions.

This is a key issue in helping another learn. All sorts of guidance processes can fall into the trap of encouraging dependency. This is not positive in the long-term. The alternative is to keep a focus on enabling the self-reliance of the learner.

Possible activities

- Keep the question in your own review:
'Am I promoting self-reliance or dependency'
- If you think that dependency is developing, go back through your mentor log, to check whether you have evidence of the pattern occurring. Note the ways in which it might occur, and start to hypothesize about what it may be showing - about you as a mentor, and about this beginner teacher.
- Raise the theme in a mentoring session. This may confirm there is something to discuss further, or alternatively that your impression is unconfirmed.
If you do need to examine the theme further, it's worth remembering that a degree of dependency is acceptable at some stages in a working helping relationship, especially at moments of anxiety and intense learning.
- Make explicit the pitfall you've identified, before you fully fall into it:
for example by saying 'I've just spotted that I could fall into the trap of doing it all for you'



Think about

- your approach to mentoring: is it one where you're happy for an adult learner to make their own way in a fairly independent fashion? Or do you secretly wish that they will attribute lots of credit to you?
- your school: does its culture support people developing an independent line? or are there pressures towards unthinking conformity in some areas?



Look out for pitfalls

- forgetting the action learning cycle, which keeps appropriate responsibility with the learner.
- falling into the trap which awaits many helpers and trainers - an underlying unstated message 'Be like me'.



Next time remember to

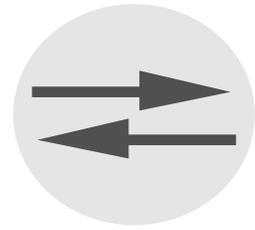
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Spotting the Blocks



Mentoring is bound to have limitations. But there are some which it is possible to learn from and surpass. We might call these 'blocks'.

Because it's an interpersonal process, mentoring may occasionally get into complications, especially if the interpersonal takes more priority than the professional learning.

Blocks in mentoring can be generated by either party, and can indicate various things about the people - their areas of preference, their dislikes, their perceived threats.

Learners may reach a plateau in their learning, indicating a block on their own part - a lack of willingness to stretch themselves, an attitude of 'I can cope - that's good enough'. A plateau can also indicate a block in their learning relationships. These may be linked to one of the following:

collusion: for example with others' low expectations of their achievement, or with a cosy view of mentoring;

anxiety: for example not wishing to excel in ways their mentor has not, or not wishing to leave their mentor behind;

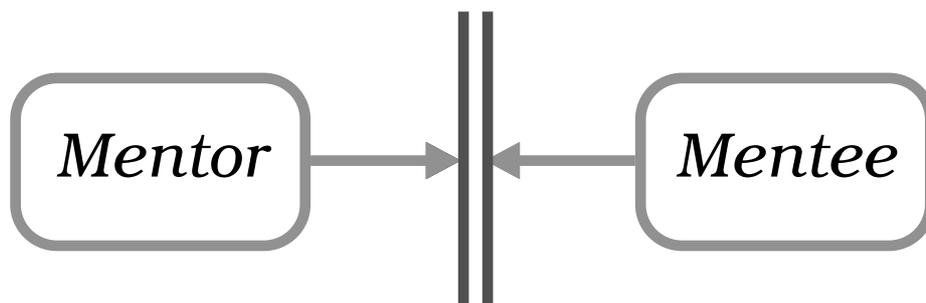
threat: for example not wishing to risk their achievements so far.

Possible activities

- Discuss the following communication knot from RD Laing²
I feel you know what I am supposed to know
but you can't tell me what it is
because you don't know that I don't know what it is.

You may know what I don't know, but not
that I don't know it,
and I can't tell you. So you will have to tell me everything.

- Spend a few minutes discussing with your mentee:
 - their completion of 'I find it most difficult to discuss ... with you'
 - your completion of 'I find it most difficult to discuss ... with you'
- Draw a diagram like that below, putting your respective names in the appropriate places.



Complete the statements: 'This diagram shows the situation when ...' and discuss.



Think about

- the limitations and plateaus which have appeared in your own professional learning, their history and whether anything could have made them otherwise
- your own reactions when one of your students surpasses your own achievements
- the overall level of expectation of learner teachers in your school



Look out for pitfalls

- not all difficulties represent blocks in the people or the relationship. Some difficulties may represent respectable conflicts (see page 162).
- In holding high expectations of any learner, you may meet their reaction 'Why do I have to keep on pushing myself?'. The pitfall for the mentor would be to give way at such a point. Greatest achievement is likely to come about as a result of both support and pressure.



Next time remember to

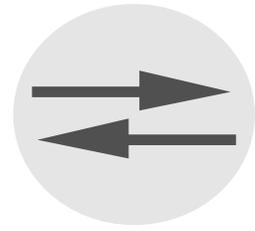
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Problems Linked with Assessment

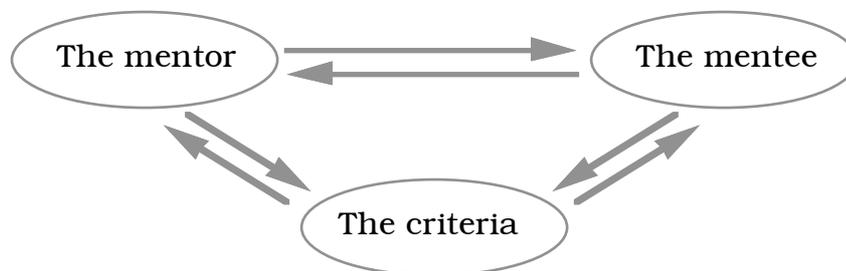


Helping and assessing can become over-polarised, to the extent that some helpers say they'll have nothing to do with assessing. In the context of mentoring we believe this would be inappropriate. The important professional perspective of the mentor should find an appropriate place in the assessment of the learner teacher.

Assessment typically causes tensions in relationships if it is solely seen in summative terms. This would be inappropriate in mentoring, which is likely to be based on proper ongoing formative assessment and self-evaluation of the kind described in this pack.

Nevertheless, experienced teachers are going to play an increased role in the summative assessment, and our experience suggests that these occasions can create difficulty, poor communication between the various parties and at worst power-plays as to who can make final decisions.

The key to healthy assessment is to be as clear as possible about the criteria and the processes (see Section 7 of this pack). In that way mentor and mentee might be able to maintain a healthy learning triangle between themselves and the criteria for assessment (similar to the healthy role triangles in Section 4 of this pack):



Possible activities:

- When matters of assessment are being discussed, keep a copy of the criteria available and in view. Thus create in physical terms the situation in the diagram above. This will allow mentor and mentee to discuss more clearly:
 - your view of your performance in comparison to the criteria
 - your view of the criteria
 - my view of your performance in comparison to the criteria
 - my view of the criteria
- Keep the other role triangles in play, discussing:
 - others' view of your performance in comparison to the criteria
 - your view of that



Think about

- what makes assessment difficult in the teaching profession. Is it that classrooms are such evaluative places and that they (at worst) become closed from view? Is it that people haven't clarified criteria?
- your own experiences of being assessed. When has it been most fruitful? When least?
- the scheme of assessment you're involved in. Is there a message that one party has the final say? or are a number of key people engaged?



Look out for pitfalls

- over-personalising the process, to the point of seeing it as 'I'm assessing you', rather than 'I play a part in the assessment of your teaching'



Next time remember to

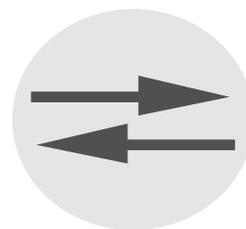
[Note down here some of the things you might do differently the next time something like these activities are used]



Put in my file

[Note down here anything you wish to retain, and might enter into your mentoring log]

Life



What is 'Life' doing as a heading in 'common problems and their resolution'? It's here to remind us that there's more to life than mentoring and teaching. Perhaps you need no reminder of that. Certainly on many occasions it's something to celebrate and value.

Sometimes, however, 'life' impinges on the learning of a teacher:

- something in their personal finances makes them occasionally preoccupied
- a housing difficulty creates tiredness or stress for them
- an event in the family takes precedence for them, or causes distraction
- their motivation to become an effective teacher is in tension with other motives or other family members' views of them.

Possible activities

- when life impinges, similarly to one of the above examples, it is important to spend some time on the issue, but not so much time that you imply you have the skills or resources to resolve it (see next heading 'Referring to Others').

The conversation may go along some of the lines of 'Is there a problem' (page 160).

- sometimes you may not be given any indication that 'life impinges', and on some occasions this may be reflecting an appropriate professional boundary. But you may wish to offer the possibility of talking - everyday starters like 'How's life?' can sometimes be all that's needed. If such a starter is used as a regular check, and it leads to a theme being thrown up, it is important to make an explicit check that the mentee wants to consider the issue with you.
- an initial conversation on the way that life impinges can be helped by drawing out a map of the influences, along the lines of a role map as on page 140, but showing the issues and influences rather than people.



Think about

- the way that 'life' has impinged on your learning agenda as a teacher, and how you have handled such occasions
- is there a limit to how much life appropriately impinges on a professional role? You may meet learner teachers for whom something in life is much more important than teaching and it conflicts with learning. Is this the occasion to ask 'Is teaching really for you?'
- things in life will always be influencing your mentee's learning to some extent. If they are stopping the learning, you may have to accept that they are more powerful than mentoring can be, and that a limit has been reached



Look out for pitfalls

- ignoring the indications of 'life impinging' when they are offered to you, perhaps by saying to yourself 'That's not part of this agenda'.
- undermining someone's self-reliance by implying that such things in life are difficult to cope with using their own resources



Next time remember to

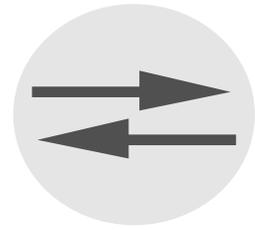
[Note down here some of the things you might do differently the next time something like these activities are used]



Put in my file

[Note down here anything you wish to retain, and might enter into your mentoring log]

Referring to Others



Throughout this pack we have stressed a view of mentoring as carried out by a number of people in a school. We have discussed the relations between such people in Sections 2 and 4.

We have also stressed that someone involved in mentoring should not see themselves as a single or simple influence. In 'Using Others' (page 158) we have suggested activities for bringing this into discussion.

Notwithstanding these two important aspects, there may be occasions when mentoring identifies difficulties which the mentor does not have the skills or resources to address. In this case referring to others is brought onto the agenda.

It is important that teachers involved in mentoring do not see themselves as coping with all that arises in their work with a learner teacher. This could encourage omnipotence or possessiveness rather than professionalism on their part.

Barriers against effective referring to others include:

- lack of knowledge of other resources available
- poor communication between professionals, which might be based on lack of understanding of their work, or on mistrust.

Possible activities

- for you:
check out your present knowledge and who you might recommend as a resource on each of the following:

finance	
housing	
family	
medical	
personal	

- with your mentee(s):
review with them the sources they know of, and who they would seek out on each of the above areas. There may be more than one; they may have positive experiences already; they may have expert knowledge themselves in an area
- anticipate the ways you have of communicating with the resources you have identified. When needed can you make contact effectively?
- discuss the barriers to using such resources - is their inter-professional mistrust or misunderstanding in evidence?



Think about

- how and when you have turned to other resources for help over similar matters. What did it take on your part to get the help you wanted? What was difficult for you? Did a third party play any role for you? If so how were they helpful (or how could such a third party have been helpful?)



Look out for pitfalls

- believing that the sources you know are the ones which are best for your mentees
- believing that your criteria for when you seek additional help will be the same as theirs.



Next time remember to

[Note down here some of the things you might do differently the next time something like these activities are used]



Put in my file

[Note down here anything you wish to retain, and might enter into your mentoring log]

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- ¹ Dubin P (1962), **Human Relations in Administration**, Prentice Hall
- ² Laing RD (1970), **Knots**, London, Penguin.

Section 7

Assessment



In this section some issues regarding assessment are raised briefly.

The issues apply mainly to the assessment of beginner teachers, and the formal assessment which takes place towards the end of their training. There are possible parallels with assessment which may take place for newly qualified teachers, and some of the points may also apply to the formal recording which may constitute a part of the appraisal process.

In the past, the assessment of course members at the end of initial training has been one which very few have failed. As schools take a greater role in assessment, and the focus of assessment becomes more practice-based, this state of affairs may continue. But equally it may not.

In this section we have used the well known distinction between formative and summative assessment, even though the distinction does not hold in the final analysis. We want to make the point that summative assessment which is a culmination of formative processes (addressed in section 6) is likely to be the most useful and most dependable.

In our experience the process of formal assessment of teaching can create significant tensions in the learning relationships which have been developing. We have seen examples when conflicts arise between various mentors and tutors. On some occasions in the past attempts were made to 'resolve' such conflicts through positional power. These were inappropriate and are no longer viable. Instead we need to recognise that assessment demands time including the time to communicate. We need to prepare some agreements for communication, such as:

- in cases of early concern about a learner teacher, who will voice the concern to whom, and what action will then follow?
- in cases of conflict over assessment, who will initiate a joint meeting, and what approaches to resolving differences will be used?

Assessment - Where Do You Stand?



Below are some statements which address underlying points in the process of assessment.

To what extent would you go along with each?

For each statement put a tick in one of the columns to show whether you strongly agree, agree, don't know, disagree or strongly disagree.

	√√	√	?	x	xx
<i>Assessment of practical teaching necessarily raises teachers' anxieties.</i>					
<i>Assessment of beginner teachers is rarely handled supportively</i>					
<i>Assessment of teaching can be embedded in learning to teach, from the very first stages</i>					
<i>Assessment of teaching is a very personal process and should only be handled by those who know each other well</i>					
<i>One year teacher training is essentially 'sink or swim', and the assessment methods are likely to reflect this.</i>					
<i>It is possible to agree objective criteria for effective teaching and assess learner teachers against these.</i>					

• Note here any aspects of 'good practice' in the area of assessment which you feel should be embedded in the work you are doing:

• What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the assessment scheme in previous experience?

• What proposals would you make for improving the assessment practice in future?

Developing Good Practice in Assessment

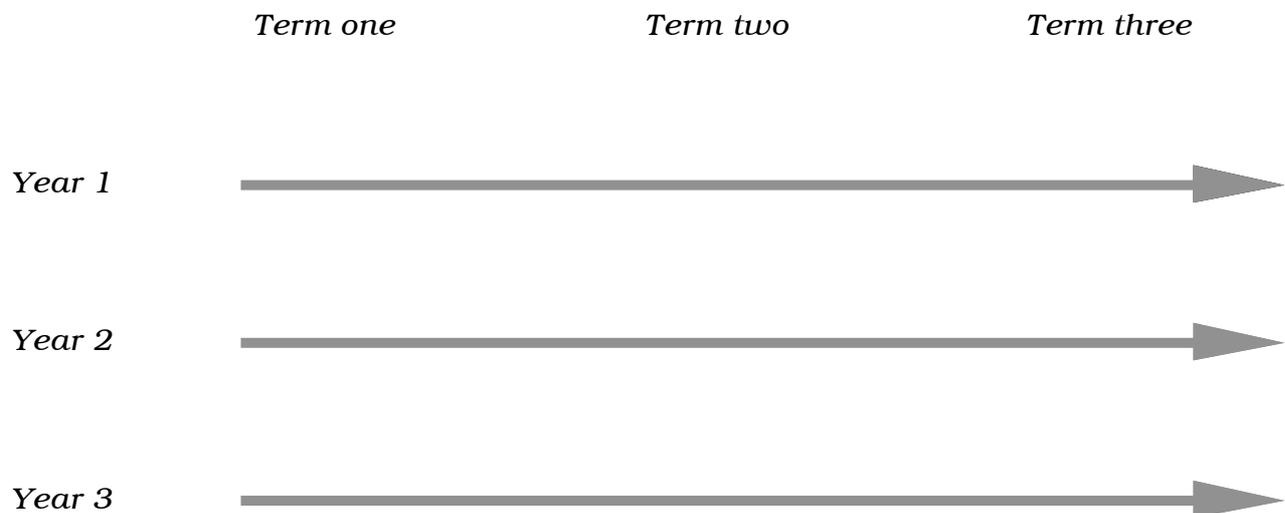


1. Planning

Assessment which is planned and prepared for can be productive. There is no need for assessment to be experienced as a surprise.

The process of assessment can take a significant amount of time, and therefore should not be left, for example, until the end of term with 1001 things competing for completion. Instead, plan the cycle of assessment so that it links to important periods of learning and does not clash with periods when little time is available.

- Plan a time line of the formative and summative assessments: this may cover one year, two years, or more:



2. Recording and reviewing

If both mentor and mentee have been keeping a professional log, then the process of assessment may involve each person making selections from their log.

But extra frameworks may also be required, to ensure comprehensive coverage. On the following page some frameworks for stimulating assessments and discussions are offered.

3. Working on criteria

As we suggested on page 172, assessment is enhanced by keeping criteria public in the communication. This is not always easy. Teaching is such a complex activity that a simple set of observable criteria is not likely to be credible. Therefore criteria may be broad (which will frustrate some parties) and not always simply observable (which will frustrate other parties). Interpretation will always be a feature. The need for communication and consensus-building is clear. There may be a need for an arbitration mechanism.

In our view, there are two broad criteria which operate effectively at the end of initial training:

- is this person learning? i.e. are they examining and extending their teaching repertoire, or have they got stuck or plateau'd?

Frameworks



The practice of self assessment and reporting may be assisted by offering frameworks of different types:

- frameworks of content, and
- frameworks of communication.

The examples on these two pages are not presented as ideals or models. However, they give an example of the ways that assessment may be periodically stimulated on the part of the various roles. Each contains some agreed headings for reviewing and reporting, together with an important introduction which outlines what will be done with the report and who will use it.

1. To the Beginner Teacher

The purpose of this self-assessment is to help you reflect in a structured way on your progress and development to date, and to set some targets for the next stage.

In this process you will need to be positive about what you have learned and the skills you have developed. You should also try to identify your priorities for the next term. Include any specific needs you may have.

The headings below are intended to cover some major areas of your work. Write about your progress and development under each heading. If you think it inappropriate to use any heading, you should say why.

Managing the classroom situation

Managing an educational environment

Learning about classrooms

Involvement in the work of various teams

Involvement in wider aspects of school

Involvement in mentor programme

Any other aspects

Priorities for future development

2. To the Subject Mentor

The purpose of this report is twofold:

- (i) to inform you of the headings which Beginner Teachers are using for their self-assessment so that you may prepare for a discussion with them of their performance and targets. This should include discussion of the self-assessment, and of your own perspective under any of the headings that are appropriate.
- (ii) to pass on your perspective of the Learner Teacher's performance to your school mentor, other tutors, and training/awarding bodies.

The headings below are intended to cover some major areas of the Learner Teacher's work. Please write about their progress and development under each heading. If you think it inappropriate to use any heading, you should say why. In this sort of reporting and discussion, the more detail you are able to offer, the more useful it can be.

Managing the classroom situation

Managing an educational environment

Learning about classrooms

Involvement in the work of various teams

Involvement in wider aspects of school

3. To the School Mentor

The purpose of this report is:

- (i) to remind you of the headings which Learner Teachers have been using for their self-assessment, and which Subject Mentors have been using for their report and discussion.
- (ii) to help you prepare for a discussion with each learner teacher. This should include discussion of the self-assessment, of the subject mentor's report and of your own perspective under any of the headings that are appropriate. It should lead to an agreed statement with the learner teacher which includes the targets they have set. This will be sent to the relevant tutor at the training/awarding institution.

The headings below are intended to cover some major areas of the Learner Teacher's work. Please write about their progress and development under each heading. If you think it inappropriate to use any heading, you should say why. In this sort of reporting and discussion, the more detail you are able to offer, the more useful it can be.

Managing the classroom situation

Managing an educational environment

Learning about classrooms

Involvement in the work of various teams

Involvement in wider aspects of school

Involvement in mentor programme

'Raising Difficult Issues'



There can be occasions when someone mentoring a learner teacher wants to raise an issue about their performance, but finds it difficult.

Examples include:

- differences of expectation over what school experience is for
- differences between learner teacher and another member of the school
- difference over how well progress is being achieved

What makes some of these difficult to raise?

- we predict an accusation in response:
'You haven't helped me enough - it wasn't clear enough'
- we viewed the situation as one of blame
we stop ourselves taking action by thinking 'it's not all their fault'
- we feel we're 'taking sides' especially if there are elements of conflict around.

'Difficult issues' also seem to arise in the context of assessment.

On some of these occasions it's been known for mentors to *avoid* communication, saying 'we can only help if there are agreed formal criteria'. Then the assessment is unlikely to feel supportive.

However, there is an alternative resolution:

- ☆ we trust our professional judgement
- ☆ make it explicit
- ☆ convey it in detail
- ☆ use what we know about constructive feedback (page 156)
- ☆ communicate our perspective/ what we see, without taking sides
and then we might move on productively

In the area of assessment, some other considerations can enter:

- we may feel or experience the learner teacher asking: 'will what you say affect my future employment?'. On such occasions it's important to stay with the detail of what's happening here and now, and to focus on the detail of the assessment.
- we may predict or fear an accusation, for example that our assessment is 'hard-hearted'. Here it's important to keep to observations and information, but giving recognition to the feelings that are likely to arise in this area

And on other occasions we sometimes don't raise things because:

- we believe it won't do anything, such as change their behaviour (especially if we also think it's something fixed such as their 'personality')
- we feel that people will respond with a revenge motive
then we undervalue the picture we have, with the valuable distance, and the data on which it's based, and we're less likely to communicate
- we overstate the extent to which our role includes protecting someone

Overall principles?

- Raising a difficult issue is less likely if it becomes entangled.
- Raising a difficult issue is more likely if it's specific and clear.
- Raising a difficult assessment is helped by keeping criteria clearly in view (page 172)
- Learning about conflict resolution can also be helpful (page 162)

Section 8

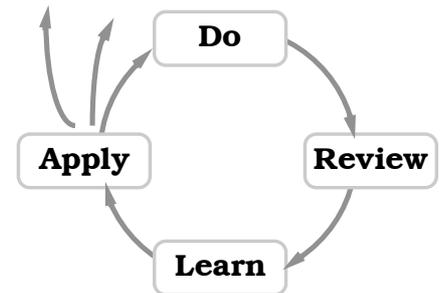
Review and Development



In this brief section some suggestions are made regarding review and development. The review and development which is focused on here is not that of the learner teacher, nor solely of one mentor, but of the whole system of mentoring and whatever impacts on it in a particular school.

Why bother to review?

- to mirror the process of learning:
 - for the individual learner teacher
 - for everyone involved in mentoring
 - for the school



Reviewing may make a difference at all these three levels. It also supports processes of:

- identifying strengths and allowing them to be recognised
- identifying staff development needs
- enabling staff to develop an important range of transferable skills
- empowering people to engage in professional problem solving.
- identifying priorities for school development
- increasing the rewardingness of working in the school
- supporting commitment to long-term improvement
- integrating new practices into the organisation
- reducing need for crisis management

We propose three identifiable stages of review, evaluation and development:

1. Review

asks people to remember and make public their perspectives on the experience.
This should be done as comprehensively as possible, before moving to:

2. Evaluation

in which questions are asked about the value of the various elements and experiences - what was good (enough), what was not good (enough), did we achieve the goals we had at the start? and so on. Here it will be important to focus on aspects of the organisation, not just individuals, and to keep in mind the advice: only ask questions about aspects you're prepared to change. This leads to:

3. Development

in which the focus shifts to the future - what shall we do differently? After a clarification of goals and priorities there may be developments planned for inclusion in the school development plan - matters of organisation and policy, and matters of training.

On the following pages you will find some starting ideas in the area.

Promoting Reflection



*'The cycles of routines
that the rhythms of institutional life
seem to require
inevitably lead practitioners
to reconstruct each day in its own image,
making it difficult to step back,
and to look, even briefly, with the eyes of a stranger'¹*

The rhetoric of initial teacher training is that we are educating the reflective practitioner. This also informs in-service work.

But it's sometimes difficult to achieve.

Examine the notion of reflection in your own practice:

On what occasions do you find yourself reflecting on your practice, as a teacher, as a manager, as a mentor?

What helps you reflect? What hinders you?

See whether this structure helps you identify and order things:

	Helps me reflect	Hinders my reflection
<i>Aspects of my school as an organisation</i>		
<i>Aspects of the teams/ groups I work in</i>		
<i>Aspects of me as a person</i>		

Make some notes on your own to begin, and then exchange your perspective with someone else. Start to identify the major issues which arise.

Promoting Review:

Mentor and Learner Teacher



Some outline headings may help the beginner teacher and mentors to review the experience of being in the school and of mentoring.

The main purpose here is to stimulate recall. Evaluation comes later.

The headings given below may help towards covering a full range of themes.

Reviewing the school experience

- communication issues within the school
- challenges and conflicts between various people involved
- resources required
- management of the learning experience
- multiple mentors

Reviewing the mentoring experience

- how the climate developed
- how communication was set up
- goals and expectations
- clarity of roles
- how the agenda was built
- was action learning supported
- how targets were set
- progress reviews
- self-evaluation
- logs and diaries
- feedback
- others in the picture

Using the Above Headings.

To: both mentor and learner teacher.

We suggest you take this sheet and use it to raise points about the experience you have been through.

You will need another sheet to make notes.

This again is an occasion when referring back to your various logs and/or diaries will be helpful.

After you have made notes, spend some time exchanging the various points which have arisen, remembering that at this stage your goal is to hear each other's perspective.

Later, you may move to evaluation ...

Promoting Evaluation

Mentor and Learner Teacher



The following framework could help learner teachers and their various mentors move to evaluation discussions, and from there to proposals for development:

For me the impact of this experience has been

.....
.....
.....

For me the most valuable aspect of this experience has been

.....
.....
.....

For me the least valuable aspect of this experience has been

.....
.....
.....

The most difficult thing for me has been

.....
.....
.....

There was too much of

.....
.....
.....

There was too little of

.....
.....
.....

In a future similar scheme I would change

.....
.....
.....

In a future similar scheme I would retain

.....
.....
.....

In order for impact to be maximised I need

.....
.....
.....

Other points I would raise include

.....
.....

{continue on other sheets}

Identifying Training Needs in Mentoring



Below are five broad areas of understanding and skill which are of use to teachers involved in mentoring.

Identify the priority you would give to training in each of these, and indicate on the scale for each area.

1. *Understanding classrooms, learning and the role of the teacher*

The Classroom Context and its Properties

Making a Classroom an Educational Context: the Structures



2. *Understanding how teachers learn about classrooms*

Observation, Investigation, Personal Action

Reviewing progress in learning



3. *Understanding the non-classroom aspects of the teacher's role*

Teachers and individual pupils, tutors and tutor groups

Teachers in teams, the school as an organisation

School and community, other professionals, parents



4. *Understanding the concerns and experiences of beginner teachers*

Starting points: Early concerns: Late concerns:

The experience of placement

Understanding roles and relations



5. *Understanding how one adult may help another learn*

Climate, communication, goals and expectations

Building the agenda, supporting an action learner, target setting

Supporting self-evaluation; logs and diaries;

How to make feedback constructive

Assessment



Getting training needs met is not always easy. How will you use this analysis? Who will you take it to? Who else should do it? What steps do you (individually or collectively) intend to take to get this area prioritised

School Developments in Mentoring

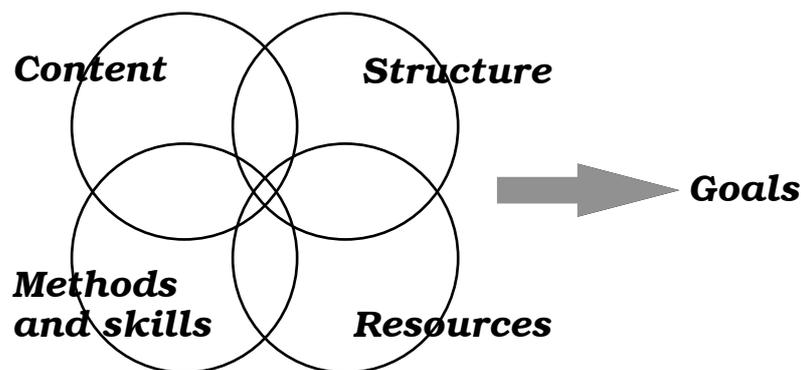


This pack started with some whole school areas which could be anticipated and managed.

One element in identifying developments is to review those areas, and to identify any aspects of school practice which need improvement:

- communication issues within the school
- challenges and conflicts between various people involved
- resources required
- management of the learning experience
- multiple mentors

A broader review may be stimulated by thinking about mentoring as a feature of the whole school, and thinking about five aspects of its functioning:



It is then possible to evaluate each aspect, for example by giving a rating on the scales below:

Goals of mentoring

How clear are they? 1 2 3 4

Are they agreed and communicated? 1 2 3 4

Content of mentoring

How clear is it? 1 2 3 4

Structure for mentoring

Is there one? 1 2 3 4

Are mentors coordinated? 1 2 3 4

Methods and skills in mentoring

Are they clarified? 1 2 3 4

How well developed? 1 2 3 4

Resources in mentoring

Are resources available? 1 2 3 4

Is development resourced? 1 2 3 4

¹ Jean Rudduck “The ownership of change as a basis for teachers’ professional learning” in Calderhead J (ed) (1988) **Teachers’ Professional Learning**, Falmer Press

Section 9

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