

FORUM

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This issue

**Symposium on G.C.S.E.
City Technological Colleges
Towards More Effective Junior Schooling**

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The Next Forum

This will be our second Special Number on Primary Education. Peter Mortimore and his team contribute a third article on the ILEA Research Project — on classroom factors related to effectiveness. Roger Murphy, of the Assessment and Examinations Unit at Southampton University writes on his Primary School Assessment Project. Doreen Weston contributes on sex-stereotyping in school, 'Can History Help?', while Ray Pinder writes on teaching in multi-ethnic classrooms. In addition there are articles by Maureen Hardy (on her recent work on oracy), Andy Hargreaves (on Middle schools) and Annabelle Dixon (on the Under-Fives). Ian Menter and colleagues contribute 'Bussing to Birmingham' — on race and student teachers — and Glyn Johns and Iorweth Walker 'A Mathematics Camp for Secondary Schools'.

A Radical Education Agenda?

As this issue goes to press, election fever is mounting rapidly. By the time it appears, our readers may know the result. On the other hand, things may drag on till the Autumn.

Education is in disarray. The teachers' action continues — in protest against the imposition of a pay deal by central government, a measure rightly regarded as profoundly unsatisfactory by the main teacher organisations, but one which is directly in line with much of recent government strategy overtly downgrading teachers — whatever the half-promises for the future. Advantage is being taken by mushrooming right-wing bodies to pressurise for 'radical' initiatives directly challenging the whole basis of control of the existing system. Vouchers are back, in spite of even Keith Joseph's refusal to take them seriously; proposals are made, by the so-called Institute for Economic Affairs, for the wholesale privatisation of the system; the pressure is on to remove education from the control of local authorities by whatever means are at hand. Many of these proposals are reaching a height of irresponsibility never before experienced.

But will they remain 'proposals'? 'It is no secret', Kenneth Baker told *The Guardian* (31.3.87), 'that this government has a radical education agenda'. The proposed establishment of 20 City Technology Colleges is a direct attempt to destabilise local systems of comprehensive education, as we made clear in the Editorial of our last issue. Now, in spite of a profound lack of enthusiasm for this initiative on the part of industry, Baker claims that ten of these are in train. Further he has made clear his intention to establish more colleges on this model if returned. In 'The Commodification of Education' in this issue, Clyde Chitty subjects this whole initiative to a rational criticism. His conclusion is that this policy — the affirmation of 'free market values' — requires that 'the state system of comprehensive education should be totally destroyed'. The privatisation of education is being undertaken 'in the interests of the rich, the powerful and the articulate'. Divisive procedures now being introduced, under the banner of 'freedom of choice', are clearly designed to break up locally controlled systems of both primary and secondary education. Higher education, it has just been announced (in the White Paper, **Meeting the Challenge**) is to be removed forthwith from any form of local control.

We may hope that, in spite of all this over-excited activity, common sense will prevail. A Conservative party group, representing MP's, teachers and local authority spokesmen, has come out publicly against many of these proposals — and actions. Their manifesto, **One Last Chance**, boils down, according to the **Times Educational Supplement** (3.4.87), 'to a

commitment to the maintained sector of education' because that is where 'most parents send their children'. One spokesman, a comprehensive school head from Surrey and honorary secretary of the Conservative National Advisory Committee on Education, has gone on record as highly critical of City Technology Colleges: 'They are largely irrelevant and will inevitably cause problems for the schools in the localities where they are cited', he is reported as saying. Philip Merridale, Conservative leader on the Council of Local Authorities, confessed that his 'blood had chilled' on hearing the 'rapturous applause that Mr Baker invariably receives when launching blistering attacks on local government'. But of course many Tories are themselves involved in local government, and more might be in the future; for these, the current denigration of local government seems short-sighted, to say the least.

Locally maintained school systems have many successes to their credit, though these seldom receive press publicity. The recent agreement between the Inner London Education Authority and London employers guaranteeing jobs for school leavers from four pilot East End schools as a reward for good attendance, punctuality and homework standards is a far better way of developing such liaison than the disruptive initiative of City Technology Colleges. That is a **local authority initiative** — nothing whatever to do with central government — or with Baker's 'radical agenda'. HMI's have recently produced a 'thorough and exceptionally enthusiastic' account of all-round progress within the educational system of Sheffield (TES, 3.4.87) — an authority now launched on an ambitious, **locally inspired and organised** curriculum reform initiative affecting both primary and secondary education. Other examples could be cited.

Our conclusion must be that the educational world has had quite enough of the populist posturing of government representatives and spokesmen, whose main concern is clearly electoral advantage. The popular (locally administered) system of education in this country is a great deal too valuable to be sacrificed in the pursuit of short-term temporary advantage on the part of specific politicians and their hangers-on. Above all the teaching profession needs to continue to make it quite clear where it stands; both on the question of salaries and conditions and their determination (as it certainly has), **and** on the wider issues of educational strategy and policy. Here, their voices need to be heard loud and clear above the general hubbub created by right-wing mavericks and others having neither knowledge nor experience of the popular system of education.

Ten Years On

Ian Stronach

Co-editor of the MSC-funded TVEI Working Papers, Ian Stronach is a supporter of technical and vocational education. He feels, however, that the recent government White Paper 'Working Together — Education and Training' is both incoherent and improbable, and that its main purpose is to smuggle youth unemployment under the vocational blanket. The author is a lecturer at the Centre for Applied Research in Education, University of East Anglia.

For a decade the educational systems in the UK have been held accountable for economic decline and a lack of international competitiveness. Ever since Callaghan laid his 'profane hands' on the curriculum in October 1976, politicians and planners have continued to prescribe vocational cures for economic ills. Initiatives have been outnumbered only by initials, as JCP gave way to STC, WIC and WEP, which in turn became YOP and YTS. On the school side, SCIP and EISP (in Scotland) were supplemented by NTI (briefly), NTVEI, TVEI, CPVE and CTCs. The acronymic codes are now so extensive that it is possible to hold a conversation about vocational preparation without speaking English at all.

But what does the new language mean? And what are we to make of the new promotional style — of Mr Baker's boat-trip on the Thames last September in order to release balloons to celebrate the success of CPVE? Or of the glossy prevocational literature inviting young people to 'take a step up' to CPVE ('you learn what is relevant to you, *now*')? As startling as the DES 'Now' Curriculum is MSC's full-page newspaper warning to Japan in January about the potency of YTS training ('Watch out Japan, here comes Tracy Logan'). The meaning and marketing of vocationalism are important issues to debate on the 10th anniversary of Callaghan's 'Great Debate' speech. Most important, though, is the question of the underlying rationale — of the vocational theory that has become accepted as axiomatic. That theory is simple. It states that economic recovery depends on a more skilled and better motivated workforce. Education and training must make young people part of an enterprise culture. Therefore expanded and reoriented education and training for the 14-18 year group — active, practical, relevant and vocational — is vital. The theory has become accepted as the educational common-sense of the 1980s, and is most clearly expressed in the recent White Paper. It is worth examining in some detail.

'Working Together — Education and Training'

The White Paper is a remarkably succinct justification for prevocational and vocational education. Essentially, it offers a view of vocational education nested within a psychological theory, which in turn is contained within an economic argument.

The economic argument is this. Britain has serious economic problems because of a lack of competitiveness. The reasons do not involve investment or resources — 'The same machines and equipment are available to all.' (1.3) Therefore the problem is one of people. People lack motivation and training. In turn, that problem breaks down into the three issues of 'climate', motivation, and skills: 'There must be a climate in which people can be motivated, and in which their potential can be harnessed.' (1.4) Climate means incentives: '...in which learning is rewarded and is seen to lead to progress for individuals and companies.' (1.4) Thus the economic problem boils down to national deficiencies in personal attitudes and skills: 'We live in a world of determined, educated, trained and strongly motivated competitors. The competition they offer has taken more and more of our markets.' (1.1) The economic remedy is to promote higher 'standards of performance, of reliability and quality. It is these which will make the critical difference to the design of British products and services, their delivery, after-sales service, customer relations and marketing and, not least, management.' (5.37)

The heart of the solution is psychological: 'Motivation is all important so that attitudes change and people acquire the desire to learn, the habit of learning, and the skills that learning brings.' (1.4) Motivation can be built on a climate of incentive, and will involve a 'change of attitude towards learning.' (2.9)

Given that psychological climate, the vocational outcomes become possible. These are 'the three essential elements of preparation for competence in any field of employment: skills; knowledge and understanding; and practical application.' (2.11) The outcomes depend on effective learning which is relevant to employer needs. Such learning emphasizes active and practical methods, and stretches each individual. It broadens the curriculum while preparing young people for working life — as TVEI does: 'the provision of technical and vocational education in a way which will widen and enrich the curriculum, and prepare young people for adult and working life.' (3.1) In this prescription several definitions of education are proposed. All qualifications 'will need to be practical and relevant to employment' (2.10) within an education designed to enable 'people to progress to the limit of their creativity and potential' (2.12). Such an education

will aim 'to give to every pupil and student a capability which makes them versatile and sufficiently adaptable for the technological challenges of employment.' (2.2) (The Report is jointly authored by the DoE and DES and at times reads as if they took turns to write each sentence.)

Three points can be made about this nested vocational-motivational-economic rationale.

The first is that the argument rests on an economic assumption that recovery depends on improved motivation and skills amongst — principally — the young. Such a human capital theory has much in common with the sorts of modernisation programme prescribed by the developed world for the Third World in the 1960s. The theory was notably unproductive in that context, and may not have improved with age. Thus the link between vocational education of this sort and economic performance of any sort has yet to be established. In addition, by personalising economic competitiveness (be motivated, get skilled) we may end up confusing an economics of recovery with a metonymics of blame (if **you** were trained and motivated we wouldn't be where we are today).

To turn to the second point, it is clear that a psychological theory is housed within the economic argument — a theory of motivation. ('Motivation is all important, so that attitudes change, and people acquire the desire to learn, the habit of learning...etc.') It is argued that if first we motivate people then attitudes will change as a consequence, and people will want to learn. The model, therefore, looks like this:



But motivation means (SOED): 'that which moves or induces a person to act in a certain way; a desire, fear, reason etc., which influences a person's volition.' In that account, motivation, attitudes and desires are inseparable. Thus the White Paper is proposing a tautology, and the statement can be transcribed in the following way: 'Good attitudes are all important, so that bad attitudes change and people acquire good attitudes...etc.' Alternatively, the White Paper may mean 'motivation' in the sense of an extrinsic incentive such as the reward of a desired job, or of promotion. In that case, we are defining youth motivation in terms of a job, since numerous studies show that a job is the major incentive for wanting to be educated or trained. Thus motivation is held to lead to jobs, and also to be created by them. The cause is consequence of the effect. In short, the White Paper's theory of motivation makes little logical sense. It is also doubtful if it makes empirical sense. Most studies indicate that young people lack jobs rather than motivation.

The third point is that many aspects of the vocational model of learning expressed in the White Paper are themselves unproven. We do not know if 'effective learning' will be effective, nor even what notions like relevance and competence really mean in terms of an economic or educational pay-off. The crucial notion of skill 'transfer' is acknowledged to be doubtful, 'standards' within YTS are questionable, and the

current school-based rhetoric about active and student-centred learning is largely untested — and, we may note in passing, just the sort of thing that Callaghan was so doubtful about ('informal methods') back in 1976. This is not to dismiss the possibility of improvement at all, merely to caution that we should not confuse economic prayer with vocational practice.

The promise of the White Paper is no less than cultural revolution. TVEI is 'one of the most significant broadenings of the school curriculum this century.' (1.5), and YTS is a historic reorientation of training. If we develop and extend YTS '...we shall begin to earn the dividend which investment in learning will bring' (7.7). We must make our vocational education and training system the 'envy of the world' (1.7). But, as things stand, the relation of the educational to the motivational, and of the motivational to the economic, remains a vocational assumption resting on a tautology contained within an improbability. Far from being axiomatic, our vocational rationales are highly problematic. The White Paper, therefore, is not common-sense. It is nonsense.

Nonsense on such a scale has its own good reasons. Ten years ago, when Callaghan was addressing the schools-industry divide, the Holland Committee was beginning to enquire into youth unemployment. How could the 'personal needs' of the young unemployed be met? They sensibly concluded that young people were not to blame for their unemployment: '...getting a job is often a matter of luck and frequently determined by factors well beyond the control or achievement of the individual such as the state of the national economy, the local industrial structure or the kind of preparation for work available at school.' A major effect — perhaps even purpose — of the ensuing vocational debate has been to bury that insight, leaving only the last phrase sticking out of the ground. The national economy, it was later claimed, is not to be blamed for youth unemployment. Indeed, inadequately trained and motivated young people are a basic cause of the economic malaise. The blame is thus shifted from the economic arena to the personal, or to the educational. The problem of unemployment becomes the problem of training. This alchemy was evident in the 1982 MSC Youth Task Group Report — 'This report is about providing a permanent bridge between school and work. It is not about youth unemployment.' Instead YTS was to be 'a historic step which marks a turning point in the industrial history of this country and a decisive break with the past so far as education and training of young people are concerned.'

By 1986 it was no longer necessary to mention unemployment: The White Paper makes only a passing reference to unemployment in terms of the Youth Guarantee of training opportunities (4.7). But because the notion of training is being used to hide the fact of unemployment, the vocationalist drive intensifies as youth unemployment continues to grow (the 'policy-off' version), and the pressure on schools to become even more 'vocational' accordingly increases. The more unemployment grows, the more training is needed. The more training is needed, the more it must be the fault of the young. Provision for 16 year olds is expanded to the 14-18 group, and from there to the 11-18 group. The vocational creche is just round the corner. What we have uncovered, of course, is Young's Law of Vocational

The Commodification of Education

Clyde Chitty

The present government seems determined to drive through its plans to establish City Technological Colleges in urban centres up and down the country. This tactic, we warned in our last issue, 'is clearly aimed at further disrupting, or de-stabilising, locally controlled systems of comprehensive schools'. Here Clyde Chitty, a long-established member of our Editorial Board, submits this proposal to a critical analysis.

The Background to the New Initiative

Launching the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) in November 1982, David (now Lord) Young, the then Chairman of the Manpower Services Commission, made it clear in a veiled threat that the MSC was prepared, as a last resort, to set up its own schools or colleges if it did not receive the necessary support and co-operation from Britain's local education authorities. 'Much has been made in the media,' he wrote, 'that the MSC has the power and the authority to open its own establishments, so let me say at the outset that we have no intention of doing that as I believe and hope we can work as partners with the local education authorities. *If that did not prove possible, then we might have to think again*' (my italics).¹ In the event, of course, there was no need to implement the threat, since large numbers of local authorities, both Labour and Conservative, starved of resources after four years of Thatcherism, were soon falling over themselves to bid for the new money involved in the pilot schemes.²

It seems clear that TVEI was never intended to cater for pupils of all abilities. Shortly after the launching of the scheme, David Young conceded that it was not designed for pupils who were taking 'good' O and A levels. 'They are not going to join the scheme. My concern is for those who are bright and able and haven't

been attracted by academic subjects...'³ Later, upon his appointment as Secretary of State for Employment in the 1985 Cabinet reshuffle, he outlined his vision of the future: 'My idea is that, at the end of the decade, there is a world in which 15 per cent of our young go into higher education ... roughly the same proportion as now. Another 30 to 35 per cent will stay on doing the TVEI, along with other courses, ending up with a mixture of vocational and academic qualifications and skills. The remainder, about half, will go on to two-year YTS.'⁴ Here, then, was a classic statement of secondary and tertiary tripartism with its crude concept of restricted access to higher education for a privileged minority and the rest of the population divided up between technicians and robots.

In fact, although the TVEI has indeed been divisive, the 'target group' has not been as clearly defined as the Government and MSC might have wished. Early reports pointed to the existence of wide variations both *between* and *within* different schemes.⁵ And these findings have been confirmed by more recent surveys which show that in some schools TVEI pupils constitute a separate technical stream, whereas in others, they straddle the two main groupings now emerging: one group taking a fair spread of GCSE subjects: the other following a range of practical and pre-vocational courses leading on eventually to the CPVE and YTS.⁶

The Government has made no secret of its determination to destroy the whole concept of a comprehensive system embracing a genuinely unified curriculum. The word 'differentiation' entered the vocabulary of the DES and of the Government with Sir Keith Joseph's Sheffield Speech of January 1984 (and it is included as one of the desirable characteristics of the curriculum in the 1985 HMI document **The Curriculum from 5 to 16**). Questioned by Brian Walden on ITV's **Weekend World** programme at the beginning of 1984 about events at Solihull and elsewhere, where attempts to reintroduce grammar schools had failed, Joseph stressed the need for different educational routes *within* the comprehensive school. 'If it be so, as it is, that selection *between* schools is largely out', he said — apparently conceding defeat on this issue, 'then I emphasize that there must be differentiation *within* schools.'⁷ In fact, of course, even at the time of this **Weekend World** interview, there was a considerable degree of differentiation *between* schools. A BBC TV

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Absurdity: that vocational preparation expands in inverse proportion to the likelihood of jobs.

Thus what began 10 years ago as a desire for better links between school and work threatens to become a vocationalist redefinition of education. That ideology is full of holes because it rests on a basic confusion between 'training' and unemployment. And that takes us back to Mr Baker releasing his vocational balloons over the Thames. The marketing strategy is essential because the underlying vocational rationale is so weak: PR must paper over the cracks. But marketing and selling are the antithesis of educating, and our job as teachers and educators must be to prick these vocationalist balloons so that education — including vocational education — can rest on a more critical foundation than image, ideology and deceit.

Panorama programme, shown in March 1986, pointed to the three-tier structure of secondary schools that had developed in many areas: a top tier consisting of well-endowed, well-resourced private schools, a middle tier embracing comprehensive schools with prosperous catchment areas and parents able to find money for expensive books and equipment, and a bottom tier where school buildings were crumbling and books and equipment were scarce.⁸ Yet, having said that, there is no doubt that under Joseph's successor, the move towards differentiation both *within* and *between* schools has taken on a new and sinister dimension. It has, moreover, as we shall see, become part of a clearly-defined New Right ideology to destroy the state system of schooling as we know it and hand education over to the control of crude market forces. And all this in the cause of the 'genuine flexibility and diversity in education that true liberals ought to cherish'.⁹ George Orwell, thou should'st be living at this hour.

City Technology Colleges

An important part of the Government's invidious strategy is the setting up of schools which are independent of the local authorities. This is what makes the proposed City Technology Colleges so attractive to the right-wing ideologues who would like to see the ownership of *all* schools transferred from local authorities to individual trusts.¹⁰ Significantly, it was his attack on local education authorities which won for Baker the loudest applause during his speech to last October's Conservative Party Conference.

'Their purpose will be to provide a broadly-based secondary education with a strong technological element, thereby offering a wider choice of secondary school to parents in certain cities and a surer preparation for adult and working life to their children.' So runs the Government's rationale for its new schools outlined in its glossy brochure, **A New Choice of School**, published in October 1986 to launch the new scheme following Baker's initial announcement to the Tory faithful. It goes on to say, somewhat disingenuously: 'it is in our cities that the education system is at present under most pressure.'¹¹

As John Clare has pointed out¹², the brochure is itself indicative of the Government's new approach to education: '16 shiny, tastefully designed pages illustrated with technicolour pie-charts, flow-charts, maps and diagrams, all decorated with friendly drawings carefully showing black children as well as white and, in the approved manner, boys passively looking on while girls do things on work-benches, computer terminals and rock faces. And there in the middle of page one is a portrait of Mr Baker himself, complete with a facsimile of his signature and a message to the shareholders: "This booklet describes my proposals for City Technology Colleges. This initiative will give parents a new choice of school. Its purpose is to create fresh opportunities for the children of our cities". Education is being privatized; and for the schools of the future, only the finest marketing techniques are appropriate. As Clare goes on to observe: 'the booklet is a City prospectus. It even boasts a corporate logo: CTC, for City Technology College, the T bent into an arrowhead, thrusting hopefully upwards. Its purpose is to make a familiar

pitch: after British Telecom, Gas, and Airways (not to mention Jaguar and Amersham International), here now is your chance to buy a piece of the action in British schools — Britschool, perhaps.'

There are to be 20 CTCs initially (each taking between 750 and 1,000 pupils) established in a number of urban areas, some of them suffering acute social deprivation and receiving attention in other ways through the Inner City Initiative. It is intended that the first colleges will be open by 1988, with 20 running by 1990. The brochure makes reference to 27 possible locations, including Hackney and Notting Hill in London, the St. Paul's area of Bristol, Handsworth in Birmingham, Chapeltown in Leeds, Knowsley on Merseyside and Highfields in Leicester. But it is, in fact, Solihull on the outskirts of Birmingham, an area not specifically mentioned in the brochure, which has won the race to be the first local authority to choose a site for a CTC. Officials in the authority were said to be 'in a buoyant mood' after a visit in early December by Bob Dunn, education junior minister, to inspect the premises of Kingshurst School, a half-empty comprehensive on the edge of a big council estate.¹³ Poor Handsworth will obviously have to wait a little longer to receive the benefits of the Government's munificence.

The funding of the new super-schools — with private sector sponsors contributing to capital and (to a lesser extent) running costs — is clearly designed to give them equipment and resources which even the most prestigious public schools would envy. The Government has invited industry and commerce, educational trusts, charities and other voluntary organizations to consider sponsorship of CTCs. Sponsors will not be able to make a profit, but their reward, according to the brochure, will be 'richer opportunities for good education in the cities and an enhanced contribution to the vigour and prospects of the communities there.' They will, in fact, have the pleasure of appointing the head and the staff as well as the knowledge that they are making 'a long-term investment in the adult and working population of the future'.¹⁴ In return, Mr Baker will contribute an annual grant per pupil at a level of assistance comparable with what is provided by LEAs for maintained schools serving similar catchment areas. It has, in fact, been estimated that they will cost the Government between 35 and 40 million a year.

In a **Weekend World** interview at the beginning of last December, the Education Secretary said that he had been 'immensely encouraged' by the 'very strong response from industry'.¹⁵ Yet this is very much at odds with all the other reports on the present situation. Despite appeals to the CBI for sponsors to come forward with at least 1 million, and preferably twice that amount, for the initial funding of each of the new schools, it is clear that industry has serious doubts about the feasibility of the whole scheme. A **Guardian** report has shown that 'although industrialists like in principle the idea of technology-orientated schools to educate the computer-literate workers of the future, they are concerned that sponsoring the colleges could cause problems in their relations with local education authorities who run the country's comprehensives.'¹⁶ GEC, Shell, BP and Esso, to name but a few, have firmly rejected this sort of industrial sponsorship in education. And a BBC Radio Four **Analysis**

programme, broadcast in December 1986 and concentrating on the Bristol area, found no evidence of forthcoming financial support for a local CTC from any industrial enterprise, large or small. Apart from any other considerations, the St. Paul's area of Bristol was considered wholly unsuitable as a basic catchment area for a prestigious new school — far better, in the view of the President of the local Chamber of Commerce, to choose one of the more salubrious parts of the city 'where you have an improving but hard core of people who are capable of being trained'.¹⁷ More recently — and in a desperate bid to get money from somewhere — the Government has suggested that businessmen who put up the money for the first CTCs will be free to stamp them with their own 'company ethos'¹⁸ — a quite extraordinary concept which makes a nonsense of the idea that the management of sponsoring firms will play a limited role in the running of the schools.

There is also considerable, and perhaps intentional, confusion over the methods to be used for *selecting* pupils for the new schools. The DES brochure is less than precise on this issue. 'Each CTC will serve a substantial catchment area. The composition of their intake will be representative of the community they serve. They will not be neighbourhood schools taking all comers; nor will they be expected to admit children from outside the catchment area. Their admission procedures and catchment areas will need to be defined in such a way as to give scope for selecting pupils from a number of applicants. The precise arrangements will need to be decided case-by-case, but a typical catchment area is likely to contain at least 5,000 pupils of secondary age, from whom 750-1,000 pupils will be admitted.'¹⁹ We are seriously expected to believe that all CTCs will have a comprehensive intake, with children admitted regardless of ability or background. Indeed, it is part of the very justification for the scheme that it will help those youngsters who would be 'low-achievers' in a normal inner-city school. Yet at the same time we are told that 'pupils will be selected by the Head and the Governing Body on the basis of their general aptitude, for example as reflected in their progress and achievements at primary school; on their readiness to take advantage of the type of education offered in CTCs; and on their parents' commitment to full-time education or training up to the age of 18, to the distinctive characteristics of the CTC curriculum, and to the ethos of the CTC ... A prime consideration in the selection of pupils will be whether they are likely to benefit from what the CTC offers.'²⁰

Minister of State Angela Rumbold has described the CTCs as 'an injection of hope into depressed areas'. In her view 'it would not be just the middle-class aspiring parents who sent their children to them'.²¹ And Kenneth Baker expressed similar pious hopes in his **Weekend World** interview in December. CTCs would not 'cream off' the most able pupils in the catchment area. The all-ability nature of the CTCs would be an important part of the 'contract' drawn up between the Government and the promoters or trustees. Moreover, Inspectors would be sent into the new schools to make sure that the 'contract' was being honoured. CTCs would simply require a commitment from parents that their children would work hard at school and possibly stay on beyond the age of 16.²² Yet interviewed in **The Guardian** by

Terry Coleman on the previous day, Baker had claimed with pride that CTCs would be the first move in an attempt to resurrect the grammar schools.²³ And speaking to the press after his address to the Young Conservatives Conference at Scarborough in February, he claimed that he was 'trying to revive some of the traditional standards nourished in the grammar schools' through the introduction of CTCs and the proposed 'national curriculum'.²⁴

Political Implications

The point is, of course, that the Baker proposals have less to do with curriculum innovation than with crude political dogma. They serve to remind us that the fight against selection is never finally won: it has to be refought by each succeeding generation of democrats and egalitarians. What we now have to contend with is an earlier rationale for the grammar schools — and particularly grammar schools situated in inner-city areas: namely, that they make it possible for a limited number of hard-working and deserving youngsters to climb the 'ladder of opportunity' and rise above their wretched circumstances. As the late John Vaizey pointed out, the problem in the 1950s was 'to identify the one clever child in a big group and rescue it'.²⁵ And R.H. Tawney once described this meritocratic concept of progress as the Tadpole Philosophy whereby 'intelligent tadpoles reconcile themselves to the inconveniences of their position by reflecting that, though most of them will live and die as tadpoles and nothing more, the more fortunate of the species will one day shed their tails, distend their mouths and stomachs, hop nimbly on to dry land, and croak addresses to their former friends on the virtues by means of which tadpoles of character can rise to be frogs.'²⁶

But the new proposals mean far more than a mere return to the divided system of the immediate post-war period, damaging though that would be in itself. Baker made it clear in his **Weekend World** interview that the CTCs were to be regarded as 'prototypes' for the entire secondary school system: they would be independent of LEA control and — 'a very important principle' — they would be allowed to recruit as many pupils as they could. If one sees the central authority as a 'tension system', not as a consensus, it seems clear that Baker is now very much the willing puppet of that right-wing group within the DES which would dearly love to see the entire state system dismantled.²⁷ Having been defeated on the question of 'education vouchers' members of this caucus now sense that they have 'come in from the cold' and could well achieve most of their objectives in a third Thatcher administration.²⁸

The views of the right-wing Hillgate Group, outlined in the recently-published **Whose Schools? A Radical Manifesto**, are put forward with the confidence of a group of extremists who firmly believe their time has come. 'Schools,' we are told, 'should be owned by individual trusts. Their survival should depend on their ability to satisfy their customers. And their principal customers are parents, who should therefore be free to place their custom where they wish, in order that educational institutions should be shaped, controlled and nourished by their demand.' In other words, education is to be treated as a 'market' with 'consumer

sovereignty' as the dominating principle — the 'commodification' of education. At the same time, in the words of the manifesto: 'the politicized local education authorities will be deprived of their major source of power, and of their standing ability to corrupt the minds and souls of the young.'²⁹ It might all appear to be incredibly dotty, until one reads in **The Observer** that 'the Conservative manifesto for the general election is expected to promise that schools will be allowed to opt out of local authority control'.³⁰

Conclusion

The essence of Thatcherism is that key areas of our social and economic life should be subservient to market forces. In its repudiation of the post-war social democratic consensus, the philosophy of the Radical Right, rooted as it is in the open affirmation of 'free market values', requires that the state system of comprehensive education should be totally destroyed. The policies being advocated at present are no more than a means to an end: the privatization of education in the interests of the rich, the powerful and the articulate. The proposed new CTCs should be seen as an important step along this road. To view them as an isolated initiative is to seriously underestimate the sinister nature of the Government's purpose.

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Why are we Waiting?

According to official figures more four year olds now attend regular schooling in England and Wales than at any time in the past.

These are not nursery schools, designed to meet the needs of such young children. It is for the most part, fairly formal schooling with little of the equipment or space that would be provided in the former. Nor, increasingly, are they necessarily being taught by teachers with training for this age group.

It is a situation shamefully unique to Britain. The phenomenon does not exist either in other European countries or in communist ones, nor would it be tolerated.

Commendably, H.M.I. are concerned; they have collected evidence and written a timely report on the needs of such young children in school.

Naturally the report points the way to a further look at the way in which we educate young children, provide for their needs and train their teachers. All of which is politically sensitive and will inevitably and rightly, cost money.

The report is badly needed by those seeking guidance and support. It appears that it should have been made public last year. Unaccountably, but unsurprisingly, it seems to have been delayed.

FORUM hoped to publish a review of the report a year ago and will of course be delighted to do so when it appears.

Towards More Effective Junior Schooling: Further Results from the ILEA's Junior School Project

Peter Mortimore, Pamela Sammons, Louise Stoll, David Lewis and Russell Ecob

This is the second article in a series contributed by the ILEA research team whose Junior School Project is the most comprehensive such study ever to have been carried through in this country. In this article the authors look at the twelve key factors which research indicated contributed most closely to school effectiveness.

In our last article, published in the January edition of FORUM, we provided an introduction to the ILEA Junior School Project. We showed there that our information demonstrated that some schools are more effective than others in terms of the educational outcomes of their pupils, and that school effectiveness does not seem to depend on pupils' backgrounds. In this article we will focus on the third of the questions we asked: 'If some schools are more effective than others, what factors contribute to such positive effects?' In other words, our aim is to identify the ways in which the more effective schools differed from those which were less effective.

A great deal of information was collected about school and class policies during the four years of field-work. Data were also obtained about those aspects of school life over which the school and the class teacher can exercise little direct control. These latter aspects were termed 'givens'. The two sets of information, about 'givens' and policies, included many factors which related to the school as a whole and others which related specifically to classes within schools. Examples of some of the 'given' factors are the status of schools (junior and infant or junior-only; county or voluntary) and their staffing. Examples of 'policy' variables (matters under the control of the school) are the methods of allocating pupils and teachers to classes, and teacher involvement in decision making.

We found that much of the variation between schools in their effects on pupils' progress and development was accounted for by differences in their policies and practices, and by certain of their 'given' characteristics. Moreover, many factors and processes were found to be related to 'good' effects on several different outcomes (both progress in cognitive areas and non-cognitive outcomes).

Moreover, a number of the significant variables were themselves associated. By a detailed examination of the ways in which classroom and school processes were interrelated, it was possible to gain a greater understanding of some of the important *mechanisms* by

which effective junior education is promoted.

From these analyses we were able to identify a number of key factors which are important in accounting for the differential effectiveness of schools. We emphasise that these factors are not purely statistical constructs. They have not been obtained solely by means of quantitative analysis. Rather, they are derived from a combination of careful examination and discussion of the statistical findings, and the use of educational and research judgement. They represent the interpretation of the research results by an interdisciplinary team of researchers and teachers.

Key Factors for Effective Junior Schooling

Initially, before describing over which factors schools and teachers can exercise direct control, consideration is given to less flexible characteristics of schools. It was found that certain of these 'given' features made it easier to create an effective school.

Schools that cover the entire primary age range (JMI), where pupils do not have to transfer at age seven, appear to be at an advantage, as do voluntary-aided schools.¹ Smaller schools, with a junior roll of under 160 children, also appear to benefit their pupils. Class size is also relevant: smaller classes, with less than 24 pupils, had a positive impact upon pupil progress and development, especially in the early years.

Not surprisingly, a good physical environment, as reflected in the school's amenities, its decorative order, and its immediate surroundings, creates a positive situation in which progress and development can be fostered. In contrast, extended periods of disruption, due to building work and redecoration, can have a negative impact. The stability of the school's teaching force is also an important factor. Changes of head and deputy headteacher, though inevitable, have an unsettling effect. It seems, therefore, that every effort should be made to reduce the potentially negative impact of such changes. Similarly, where there is an unavoidable change of class teacher, during the school

year, careful planning will be needed to ensure an easy transition, and minimise disruption to the pupils. Where pupils experience continuity through the whole year, with one class teacher, progress is more likely to occur.

It is not, however, only continuity of staff that is important. Although major, or frequent changes tend to have negative effects, change can be used positively. Thus, where there had been no change of head for a long period of time, schools tended to be less effective. In the more effective schools, heads had usually been in their present post for between three and seven years.

It is clear, therefore, that some schools are more advantaged in terms of their size, status, environment and stability of teaching staff. Nonetheless, although these favourable 'given' characteristics contribute to effectiveness, they do not, by themselves, ensure it. They provide a supporting framework within which the head and teachers can work to promote pupil progress and development. However, it is the policies and processes within the control of the head and teachers that are crucial. These are the factors that can be changed and improved.

Twelve key factors of effectiveness have been identified.

1. Purposeful leadership of the staff by the headteacher

'Purposeful leadership' occurred where the headteacher understood the needs of the school and was actively involved in the school's work, without exerting total control over the rest of the staff.

In effective schools, headteachers were involved in curriculum discussions and influenced the content of guidelines drawn up within the school, without taking total control. They also influenced the teaching strategies of teachers, but only selectively, where they judged it necessary. This leadership was demonstrated by an emphasis on monitoring pupils' progress through the keeping of individual records. Approaches varied — some schools kept written records; others passed on folders of pupils' work to their next teacher; some did both — but a systematic policy of record keeping was important.

With regard to in-service training, those heads exhibiting purposeful leadership did not allow teachers total freedom to attend *any* course: attendance was allowed for a good reason. Nonetheless, most teachers in these schools had attended in-service courses.

2. The involvement of the deputy head

The Junior School Project findings indicate that the deputy head can have a major role in the effectiveness of junior schools.

Where the deputy was frequently absent, or absent for a prolonged period (due to illness, attendance on long courses, or other commitments), this was detrimental to pupils' progress and development. Moreover, a change of deputy head tended to have negative effects.

The responsibilities undertaken by deputy heads also seemed to be important. Where the head generally involved the deputy in policy decisions, it was beneficial to the pupils. This was particularly true in terms of allocating teachers to classes. Thus, it appeared that a

certain amount of delegation by the headteacher, and a sharing of responsibilities, promoted effectiveness.

3. The involvement of teachers

In successful schools, the teachers were involved in curriculum planning and played a major role in developing their own curriculum guidelines. As with the deputy head, teacher involvement in decisions concerning which classes they were to teach, was important. Similarly, consultation with teachers about decisions on spending, was important. It appeared that schools in which teachers were consulted on issues affecting school policy, as well as those affecting them directly, were more likely to be successful.

4. Consistency amongst teachers

It has already been shown that continuity of staffing had positive effects. Not only, however, do pupils benefit from teacher continuity, but it also appears that some kind of stability, or consistency, in teacher approach is important.

For example, in schools where all teachers followed guidelines in the same way (whether closely or selectively), the impact on progress was positive. Where there was variation between teachers in their usage of guidelines, this had a negative effect.

5. Structured sessions

The Project findings indicate that pupils benefitted when their school day was structured in some way. In effective schools, pupils' work was organised by the teacher, who ensured that there was always plenty for them to do. Positive effects were also noted when pupils were *not* given unlimited responsibility for planning their own programme of work, or for choosing work activities.

In general, teachers who organised a framework within which pupils could work, and yet allowed them some freedom within this structure, were more successful.

6. Intellectually challenging teaching

Unsurprisingly, the quality of teaching was very important in promoting pupil progress and development. The findings clearly show that, in classes where pupils were stimulated and challenged, progress was greater.

The content of teachers' communications was vitally important. Positive effects occurred where teachers used more 'higher-order' questions and statements, that is, where their communications encouraged pupils to use their creative imagination and powers of problem-solving. In classes where the teaching situation was challenging and stimulating, and where teachers communicated interest and enthusiasm to the children, greater pupil progress occurred. It appeared, in fact, that teachers who more frequently directed pupils' work, without discussing it or explaining its purpose, had a negative impact. Frequent monitoring and maintenance of work, in terms of asking pupils about

their progress, was no more successful. What was crucial was the *level* of the communications between teacher and pupils.

Creating a challenge for pupils suggests that the teacher believes they are capable of responding to it. It was evident that such teachers had *high* expectations of their pupils. This is further seen in the effectiveness of teachers who encouraged their pupils to take independent control over the work they were currently doing. Some teachers only infrequently gave instructions to pupils concerning their work, yet everyone in the class knew exactly what they were supposed to be doing, and continued working without close supervision. This strategy improved pupil progress and development.

7. Work-centred environment

In schools, where teachers spent more of their time discussing the *content* of work with pupils, and less time on routine matters and the maintenance of work activity, the impact was positive. There was some indication that time devoted to giving pupils feedback about their work was also beneficial.

The work-centred environment was characterised by a high level of pupil industry in the classroom. Pupils appeared to enjoy their work and were eager to commence new tasks. The noise level was also low, although this is not to say that there was silence in the classroom. Furthermore, pupil movement around the classroom, was not excessive, and was generally work-related.

8. Limited focus within sessions

It appears that learning was facilitated when teachers devoted their energies to one particular curriculum area within a session. At times, work could be undertaken in two areas and also produce positive effects. However, where many sessions were organised such that three or more curriculum areas were concurrent, pupils' progress was marred. It is likely that this finding is related to other factors. For example, pupil industry was lower in classrooms where mixed activities occurred. Moreover, noise and pupil movement were greater, and teachers spent less time discussing work and more time on routine issues. More importantly, in mixed-activity sessions the opportunities for communication between teachers and pupils were reduced (as will be described later).

A focus upon one curriculum area did not imply that all the pupils were doing exactly the same work. There was variation, both in terms of choice of topic and level of difficulty. Positive effects tended to occur where the teacher geared the level of work to pupils' needs.

9. Maximum communication between teachers and pupils

It was evident that pupils gained from having more communication with the teacher. Thus, those teachers who spent higher proportions of their time *not* interacting with the children were less successful in promoting progress and development.

The time teachers spent on communications with the whole class was also important. Most teachers devoted

the majority of their attention to speaking with individuals. Each child, therefore, could only expect to receive a fairly small number of individual contacts with their teachers. When teachers spoke to the whole class, they increased the overall number of contacts with children. In particular, this enabled a greater number of 'higher-order' communications to be received by *all* pupils. Therefore, a balance of teacher contacts between individuals and the whole class was more beneficial than a total emphasis on communicating with individuals (or groups) alone.

Furthermore, where children worked in a single curriculum area within sessions, (even if they were engaged on individual or group tasks) it was easier for teachers to raise an intellectually challenging point with *all* pupils.

10. Record keeping

The value of record keeping has already been noted, in relation to the purposeful leadership of the headteacher. However, it was also an important aspect of teachers' planning and assessment. Where teachers reported that they kept written records of pupils' work progress, in addition to the Authority's Primary Yearly Record, the effect on the pupils was positive. The keeping of records concerning pupils' personal and social development was also found to be generally beneficial.

11. Parental involvement

The research found parental involvement to be a positive influence upon pupils' progress and development. This included help in classrooms and on educational visits, and attendance at meetings to discuss children's progress. The headteacher's accessibility to parents was also important, showing that schools with an informal, open-door policy were more effective. Parental involvement in pupils' educational development within the home was also beneficial. Parents who read to their children, heard them read, and provided them with access to books at home, had a positive effect upon their children's learning. One aspect of parental involvement was, however, not successful. Somewhat curiously, formal Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) were not found to be related to effective schooling. It was clear that some parents found the formal structure of such a body to be intimidating.

Nonetheless, overall, parental involvement was beneficial to schools and their pupils.

12. Positive climate

The Junior School Project provides confirmation that an effective school has a positive ethos. Overall, the atmosphere was more pleasant in the effective schools, for a variety of reasons.

Both around the school and within the classroom, less emphasis on punishment and critical control, and a greater emphasis on praise and rewarding pupils, had a positive impact. Where teachers actively encouraged self-control on the part of pupils, rather than emphasising the negative aspects of their behaviour, progress and development increased. What appeared to be important was firm but fair classroom management.

The teachers' attitude to their pupils was also important. Good effects resulted where teachers obviously enjoyed teaching their classes and communicated this to their pupils. Their interest in the children as individuals, and not just as pupils was also valuable. Those who devoted more time to non-school chat or 'small talk' increased pupils' progress and development. Outside the classroom, evidence of a positive climate included: the organisation of lunchtime and after-school clubs for pupils; teachers eating their lunch at the same tables as the children; organisation of trips and visits; and the use of the local environment as a learning resource. The working conditions of teachers contributed to the creation of a positive school climate. Where teachers had non-teaching periods, the impact on pupil progress and development was positive. Thus, the climate created by the teachers for the pupils, and by the head for the teachers, was an important aspect of the school's effectiveness. This further appeared to be reflected in effective schools by happy, well-behaved pupils who were friendly towards each other and outsiders, and by the absence of graffiti around the school.

Conclusions

From our detailed examination of the factors and processes which were related to schools' effects on their pupils, a picture evolves of what constitutes effective junior education. This picture is not intended to be a 'blueprint' for success. Inevitably, many aspects of junior schooling could not be examined in the Junior School Project. Furthermore, schools are not static institutions. Our survey was carried out between 1980 and 1984, and therefore it has not been possible to take full account of all the changes (particularly in approaches to the curriculum) that have taken place since that time. Nonetheless, we have been able to identify 12 key factors that were consistently related to pupils' progress and development, and thus to effective junior schooling.

In this article we have only been able to give a brief description of the 12 key factors identified in the Junior School Project (full details appear in our forthcoming book *School Matters: The Junior Years*). Unlike the 'given' characteristics discussed earlier, these factors depend on specific behaviours and strategies employed by the headteacher and staff. It is essential to realise that the school and the classroom are in many ways interlocked. What the teacher can or cannot do often depends on what is happening in the school as a whole.

Thus, whilst the 12 factors do not constitute a 'recipe' for effective junior schooling, we feel that they provide a framework within which the various partners in the life of the school — headteacher and staff, parents and pupils, and governors — can operate. Each of these partners has the capacity to foster the success of the school. When each participant plays a positive role, the result is an effective school.

In the next issue of *Forum* we will present a more detailed examination of selected factors which specifically relate to the classroom teacher, and discuss some of the implications of our findings.

1. On the whole, the latter tend to have more socio-economically advantaged intakes than county schools.

To Our New Readers

The Editors

FORUM acquired many hundreds of new readers as a result of our Special Number on Primary Education, published in January. Another such Special Number is planned for September.

May we invite both our new, and our longer-term subscribers, in both primary and secondary schools, to send us material for the journal?

We welcome articles that reflect the realities of teaching in our schools and colleges today. We are particularly interested in actual class teaching experiences and have published many articles by practising teachers on this. We are interested also in articles relating to gender questions, all forms of stereotyping and teaching pupils from different ethnic backgrounds in a multicultural situation.

We are interested in articles from teachers in inner-city schools, but also in those from suburban and rural areas. We would like articles from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as from England.

We have, in the past, focussed very much on comprehensive secondary education, and on the swing in this direction over the last 20 years. We still need articles on the issues currently arising in these schools or in tertiary developments, and invite contributions. But we also want articles on the issues and trends in primary schools throughout the United Kingdom. We aim to ventilate the educational needs of the entire age group — from pre-school to eighteen. Our objective remains that of encouraging the development of a genuinely comprehensive system from nursery school to tertiary and further education.

FORUM has always set out to reflect the actualities faced by teachers and students within the schools and colleges as they exist now. We are interested in positive, progressive practices at all levels of education. We need to reflect your opinions and experiences.

So please send us articles about teaching experiences of all kinds. These should be about 1,500 words in length and should be addressed to: The Editors, FORUM, 11 Pendene Road, Leicester LE2 3DQ (two copies please, if possible, and enclose S.A.E.).

Achievement in Primary Schools; the Select Committee's Report

Geoffrey Southworth

The House of Commons Select Committee on Education recently produced a very comprehensive report on primary education. It is clearly important that its proposals and recommendations are widely discussed and, where agreement can be reached, implemented. Here Geoffrey Southworth, an ex-primary school teacher and head, now tutor at the Cambridge Institute of Education, both summarises and assesses this report — and stresses the need for action.

In all the primary schools where I have worked or visited you can readily find two very large paperback books. They are the two volumes of the Plowden Report. You usually see them either on staffroom bookshelves or in headteachers' offices. Quite often, because of their size and weight, they act as bookends holding up a random collection of assembly books, story books, teacher manuals and suppliers' catalogues. The Plowden Report has analogously supported and, sometimes, propped-up, Primary education for twenty years. It hardly needs saying that the twenty years between Plowden and now have seen many changes and much turbulence. So much in fact that the Plowden report needs not only to be revisited but revised. In many ways that is what the House of Commons Select Committee Report on Achievement in Primary Education does.

The Select Committee's Report keeps the faith with much of Plowden, acknowledging Plowden to be a monumental report (1.5) but it does this in the context of the 1980's and in the light of recent research and thinking. Whilst the Select Committee's report takes a broad approach it presents its discussions and findings in three parts. Part one considers the terms 'education' and 'achievement'; part two deals with the primary curriculum and its conduct; whilst part three is concerned mainly with initial and in-service training and teacher supply.

The breadth of the report is one of its great strengths. A considerable list of topics and issues are noted: the under fives, parents, needs of particular children, multicultural education, the co-ordination of support services, curricular areas, teaching styles, class teaching, curriculum-led staffing, liaison, governors, school size. The list could fill the remaining space of this article. In the report itself the Table of Contents runs to over five pages. It is salutary to read the contents pages since they convey the scope and scale of issues presently confronting primary education. Moreover, many of these issues are day-to-day concerns in the schools so that whether it is a two or twelve teacher school, primary teachers are daily facing a long agenda of things to cope with. It is perfectly understandable that schools feel under pressure for not only is the agenda long but the

decisions often require skills and knowledge in diplomacy, politics, ethics, epistemology and psychology. As comparatively small schools primary schools could easily feel overwhelmed. Yet the report presents the issues in a straightforward and readable manner. Moreover it depicts primary education as involving a range of complex issues which are neither 'easier' because the children are young, nor 'simple' because the schools are small. The report comments 'that it is just wrong to assume from their simple organizational framework that pupil:teacher relationships are simple in primary schools' (8.48). Those who formerly regarded primary schools as beautiful because they are small might now see primary schools as beautifully rich, complex and challenging.

The report's breadth can be seen in other ways too. First, there is the number of witnesses called before the committee. The witnesses represent a range of groups, institutions and interested parties and many of their comments inform the report. Second, throughout the report reference is regularly made to other documents and reports (Bullock; Cockcroft; Swann; Warnock; Taylor; DES & HMI documents). To some extent the Select Committee's report acts as a summary of the documents which have bombarded schools over the last ten years. The Select Committee also refer to work outside the DES/HMI circle. Prominent among these references are the ILEA's 'Improving Primary Schools', 'Improving Secondary Schools' and 'The Junior School Project', plus the work of Professors Bennett and Galton (and their colleagues). Consequently, the report is not self-referenced — unlike HMI whose documents sometimes are (e.g. 'The Curriculum from 5-16', HMSO, 1985). Moreover, whilst the report is a useful summary it also adopts a critical stance. Discussing the Gulbenkian Foundation's 'The Arts in School' (1982), the Select Committee report says: 'the Gulbenkian Committee, with its timely reminder of the cultural and aesthetic content of education, draws attention to a dimension of the primary school curriculum that other studies frequently lose sight of.' How true, since at present science, maths, CDT and technology look to be the only valued curricular areas.

Given the scope of the report it is only possible to highlight a limited number of the issues discussed. The first I will focus on is that of Early Years Education. At a number of points in the report provision for children under five is discussed and a number of sensible recommendations are made. Schools should be staffed on their expected summer roll (5.47); all nursery and reception class teachers and nursery nurses should have a programme of visits to the establishments from which their pupils come (5.31); there should be an urgent review of the number of training places for teachers intending to teach 3-8 year olds (5.56); and there is the recommendation that the DES should develop urgently a national policy for provision for four year olds (14.17). It is also good to see parents included in the discussion (5.32-5.35).

The report considers the place of 'subjects' in primary education and agrees that whilst the retention of subject divisions is a useful concept for the teachers, subjects should not be regarded as discrete entities but as guides to the substance of what has to be taught (6.29). Teachers might also find helpful the section on first hand experience, specialist subjects and facts. First hand experience is valued and so too are 'facts'. A wide variety of content is seen as permissible and choice should be left to individual schools dependent upon a number of factors including what is available for study within the locality; the interests of the teachers and what the children already know: 'Schools in York would be eccentric if they did not use the Minster as a basis for their work on the changing influence of the Church; and schools in Salisbury would be eccentric if they did' (6.35). The report attempts to make sense of the confused issues of subject knowledge, curricular areas, content and experiential learning (7.15). Furthermore, the discussion tries to keep children in mind since the report notes that some children have complained that they do not know why they are expected to do a piece of work and the report recommends that this issue should be faced squarely in teacher training and INSET courses (6.62). Such a recommendation shows how the report tries to keep teaching and learning in view, as do the sections on teaching styles and the grouping of pupils.

One challenge in producing a broad report is that of treating all issues with sufficient 'depth'. I feel some issues have been given too little attention. For example, the discussion on multicultural education is somewhat shallow and I am unconvinced that the report's stance on preparing pupils to live in an ethnically mixed society is consistent with what is said about the Christian faith. Nor is much attention devoted to gender issues either in connection with staffing or children.

It is possible to identify four themes in the report. First, there is a centralist stance on the curriculum. Although the report accepts that timetabling and the detailed content of the curriculum are best left to individual schools and their governors (7.9) the weight given to curricular statements by the Secretary of State should be considerably increased (7.11). The argument behind this seems to be that a national framework would provide an entitlement curriculum. It seems to be a high-risk strategy since the curriculum could become another party-political football. The report though includes some important caveats to the centralist stance. A requirement of this stance is that a 'Consultative

Committee' be established which would be semi-detached from the DES and representing views from within and outside education. Such a committee could advise the Secretary of State on the broad content of the curriculum (14.54). This might be a necessary check on the Secretary of State's powers but I wonder if the dismantling of the Burnham Committee may be a more accurate indicator of what might happen to such a committee if a Secretary of State disapproved of the advice?

A second theme is that of working together. Norman Thomas has subsequently written about this theme (*Child Education*, January 1987) and he sees the report as advocating co-operation between children, between teachers and with parents. Such a theme continues one tenet of post-war education and the 1944 Education Act, namely 'partnership'. It is an attractive idea but also rather vulnerable. For one thing the report tends to assume that groups such as 'parents' or 'governors' are homogeneous. One of the challenges some schools face is that the parent group and governing body are not homogeneous but divided and formed into factions. Similarly not all staff groups are co-operative or collaborative. To advocate working together, particularly in staff rooms and committees, requires skills in communicating and dealing with differences. In terms of teacher collaboration attention needs to be paid to the nature of staff groups, relationships and the primary school as an organization of adults (see Primary School Staff Relationships Project; Cambridge Institute). Working together sounds easier than it is.

The third theme is co-ordination. This appears in a variety of guises but most obviously as the 'co-ordinating and specialist role of primary school teachers'. The report, thankfully, turns away from the idea of each aspect of the curriculum being taught by a teacher specialising only in the teaching of that subject (9.20). The assumption is that most teachers can teach most aspects of the curriculum to most of their pupils (9.23), yet it is too much to expect every teacher to keep up to date in every field. Each would be helped 'by having a colleague nearby to turn to for information and help and especially so if the roles of adviser and advised could be exchanged on other occasions: i.e. there is no question of hierarchy' (9.24). Almost all teachers will become co-ordinators (whilst remaining as class teachers) and take a lead in formulating a scheme of work and by helping colleagues individually to translate the scheme into classroom practice either through discussion or by helping in the teaching of the children (9.25). Such a scheme implies many things (time, INSET support, school development plans, reviews, interpersonal skills etc.) yet it surely offers a way forward, particularly as the organizational structure of primary schools will be altered by new salary structures.

Fourth, this way forward, indeed all ways forward, rely on better resources. 'The inescapable conclusion we draw from this analysis is that primary schools cannot be expected to make much further improvement unless there are more teachers than registration classes' (9.54). The report calls for more teachers, more equipment, greater parity and greater support (10.52). It is simultaneously encouraging and depressing. Encouraging because it is cheering news. Depressing because it has taken so long. Most teachers, LEA

Symposium on GCSE

The common examination for all students, which comprehensive teachers pressed strongly for in the 60s and early 70s, has turned out to be a 'system of examinations' with 'differentiated papers or questions in every subject', as Keith Joseph put it. But this examination is now being brought in in secondary schools in England and Wales, posing an immense variety of problems to the schools. For this reason FORUM has arranged this symposium, contributed by experts in the field. First, Caroline Gipps, lecturer in Curriculum Studies at the University of London Institute of Education — a psychologist who taught in primary schools and has since been closely involved in research — considers the implications for teachers arising from this inbuilt differentiation. Second, Harry Torrance, Research Fellow in the Assessment and Examinations Unit, University of Southampton, considers the problems involved in course work assessment in G.C.S.E., and warns of the need for a clear understanding of the issues now emerging. Finally Ross Phillips, Vice Principal of Bosworth College, Leicestershire, who has been closely involved in running Humanities courses in comprehensive Upper Schools, and a member of a G.C.S.E. panel for Integrated Humanities, assesses the significance of the new examination for courses of this kind.

Differentiation in the GCSE

Caroline Gipps

Teachers' calls for a common exam in the 60s and early 70s were very specific — they wanted a common exam in which all students who were entered took the same exam having followed the same syllabus. However, as thinking developed in the late 70s and 80s, the concept of 'differentiated' papers emerged — in the Waddell Report, (1978a), a Government White Paper (1978b), and in the Cockcroft Report on maths (DES 1982). Sir Keith Joseph put the argument in terms of positive assessment — by pitching questions and papers at different levels of difficulty *all* candidates would be enabled to show what they know, understand and can

do. Assessment would thus be a positive experience and motivation enhanced.

This all sounds perfectly reasonable, as do the arguments in the Cockcroft Report about not putting students in for an exam for which they are not prepared, or capable of being prepared. Why then should I be raising differentiation as an issue? Let us look first at some of the practical implications.

Implications of Differentiation

The major implication for teachers is that if candidates

Achievement in Primary Schools (continued from page 75)

Advisers and HMI have recognised the lack of resources for some time. Indeed, some school buildings are so bad that I take the mention of a flat roof to be a euphemism for leaking roof! As for levels of equipment it is more likely that a family of four which possesses a colour t.v., video recorder and a computer will have at their disposal as much hardware as some primary schools have for 250 children and adults. It is also depressing that the Select Committee's chairperson, Sir William van Straubenzee said, at the launch of the report, that changes will neither be immediate nor dramatic.

For me the report is an important document, perhaps the most important for primary schools since Plowden. The contents could enhance many staffroom discussions and decisions, to say nothing of how the report should influence school-focussed INSET, Teacher Training,

LEA and DES policy-making. It offers a lot of sound argument and suggests developments based on constructive advice and positive support for primary education. The report accepts the achievements of Primary schools but warns of being complacent and offers a sense of direction for the future. It is something of a map for the way forward. However, since it was published and given some early reviews the report has been most notable by its absence. Few journals have announced its arrival, and no mandarins (DES or LEA) seem affected by it. It should not be left unattended or neglected. It is an opportunity to lobby for vital resources since the report presents a cogent case. We should be like British Gas: if you see Sid (or Kenneth or Angela) tell them about it. Importantly, **ask them what they are going to do about it.**

are to be entered for different exam papers then decisions will have to be taken about which papers they should enter. Different papers will in many cases involve different syllabuses and courses, so students will have to be selected for these. This means that the system will still be divisive and that teachers will still have to decide on which students are suited for which route or course and that in some cases these decisions may still have to be made as early as 14.

As the Cockcroft Report said:

'We have been given to understand that there are some teachers who are expecting that the introduction of a single system of examination at 16+ will remove the necessity of advising pupils and parents as to the papers within the exam which pupils should attempt. However ... those who teach mathematics must accept responsibility for giving such advice.' (DES, 1982, paragraph 527)

There are some rather more immediate problems for the examining groups in developing differentiated exam papers.

The national criteria stipulate that for certain subjects — French, Maths, Biology, Physics, Chemistry and Science — differentiation must be achieved by candidates sitting different papers leading to different grades and with a restriction on the grades available from any common papers in those subjects.

Thus for the complete range of grades to be awarded there must be differentiated assessment for students of different levels of ability. Within these subjects syllabuses which have only common papers will offer only a limited range of grades.

Various models are possible. In maths, for example, the most popular approach is to set four papers in ascending order of difficulty. Candidates must be entered for two adjacent papers; there are therefore three combinations possible (and thus three courses/syllabuses). The hard and medium-hard papers lead to grades A to D, the medium-easy and medium-hard combination to grades F to C and the easy and medium-easy combination to grades G to D.

This approach leads to a number of problems. For example:

Do the three combinations cover equivalent ranges of difficulty?

If a candidate is entered 'too high' and fails on those papers does s/he get no grade?

It is possible to get a D grade via three different routes, which makes the specification of grade related criteria for that grade problematic.

The decision about which route a candidate should take is more difficult on this model than under the GCE/CSE system, since there are three possibilities. 'Double entry' will not be allowed in GCSE either, an option which schools and/or parents currently use for candidates over whom there is some contention or doubt about level of performance. Exams are likely to be timetabled on the same day for one subject so that different Boards and levels are all taken at the same time.

In science differentiated papers with a common component are being used. There are two variations of this model:

the common paper with a hard option (grades A to F) and an easy option (grades G to C); or

the common paper (grades G to C) with an extension paper (grades G to A)

Taking the extension paper or the harder option will have implications in that candidates who do so will have a second chance, as it were, of raising their overall grade which the candidates not taking those papers will not have.

In modern languages the approach is even more complicated with a model of four base papers and four higher papers. Candidates may take any number of papers from three to all eight. This results in there being 24 possible combinations of papers that candidates could in theory sit. Details of which combinations would result in which grade are not yet finalised. One suspects that the examiners are finding it rather a complex task!

There are two more general problems for the exam boards in setting differentiated papers. One is that papers must now contain enough tasks pitched at the level of the G grade candidate, and this is not something that they have had to do before. The other is that it is not easy to know always what the difficulty of a question is; it depends, obviously, on what students have been taught but also on the students' interests.

Where common exam papers have stepped or differentiated questions, or parts within questions, then candidates must be trained in strategy — knowing where to concentrate their time and which questions to answer.

In subjects like English and History where differentiation is not required by differentiated exams or questions, the examining groups have opted largely for differentiation by outcome, both in coursework and written exams. In the exam setting differentiation by outcome is a model we know well: using an undifferentiated — or neutral — question to elicit an essay type answer on the basis of which candidates differentiate themselves by showing what they know, understand and can do.

The difficulty here is in writing a 'neutral' question which is not only open to the full ability range, but also an equally fair stimulus to both high and low achieving groups. There is some evidence from the exam boards that the very open-ended question is not fair to all, as the low achievers find the lack of structure more difficult i.e. they have more difficulty producing an 'essay' in response to an open question.

In English some syllabuses are opting for no examination, so that all assessment is by coursework. Although development of the assessment of coursework is some way behind that on examinations, there are those who believe that well designed coursework programmes offer an effective vehicle for achieving differentiation through common tasks across a range of subjects (Macintosh, 1986, p.26).

There are however some more serious implications of differentiation. Some candidates will know before they take the exam that they cannot get higher than a grade D for example. This I suspect will do much to counter the notion of positive assessment. Also how many readers feel totally confident that girls and ethnic minority students will be entered at the level for which they are truly capable?

More importantly, the underlying philosophy embodied in the 'Cockcroft argument' is that students have a fixed (and therefore probably innate) ability in Maths which is not amenable to change by improved teaching or a change in curriculum. This is a philosophy with which many in education would disagree.

The hidden message too behind the requirement that Maths, French, Biology, Physics, Chemistry and Science be more strictly differentiated is that these are the more difficult, high status subjects and the others are in some sense a soft option.

These are all issues which need to be opened up for discussion so that teachers, and parents, are aware of what is happening. Many teachers involved in GCSE no doubt have their hands full coming to grips with the new syllabuses, coursework assessment and the like. But we must not lose sight of the wider issues.

For the hidden picture of the GCSE — behind the talk of criterion referencing, positive motivation, practical, oral and coursework assessment — is of an examining system that subscribes to a concept of high status subjects, effective streaming within these subjects, and a

notion of fixed ability. Is this what teachers had in mind when they called for a common examining system for the comprehensive school?

Acknowledgements

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Differentiation and the Role of the Teacher

Harry Torrance

There has been, and no doubt there will continue to be, a good deal of debate about the nature and purpose of differentiation in GCSE. On the positive side the Department of Education and Science (DES) and the Secondary Examinations Council (SEC) have put forward two basic arguments in favour of differentiation, one essentially technical, the other pedagogical. Following the 16+ feasibility studies of the mid-1970s and a further review of the evidence by the 1978 Waddell Committee, the DES took the view that alternative — differentiated — papers would be necessary to maintain standards and ensure that high achievers would be sufficiently stretched under a common system. The technical difficulties of producing a common paper for a common curriculum were taken to be intractable in an examining 'culture' which assumed the defining characteristic of an examination to be the use of final papers and the purpose of examinations to be that of discriminating between candidates. Ensuring a good spread of marks, rather than certificating what all pupils had achieved by the time they left school, was the key criterion for a good examination. More recently this view of the role of examinations has come to be

challenged — certainly at 16+ — and a rhetoric of criterion-referencing has gained ground; that is assessing and recording what pupils have achieved in relation to the objectives of a course rather than the performance of their peers. In principle every candidate could 'pass' a criterion-referenced test and, some would argue, they should, if their teaching has been appropriate and they are entered for the test when they are ready.

At the same time as these ideas come to be discussed the principle of 'readiness' seems to have become conflated with the issue of stretching high achievers such that the DES now talks about assessing what pupils 'know, understand and can do' (DES 1985 p2). The SEC has put a specifically pedagogical gloss on this by stressing that assessment should be a positive experience for all rather than a 'dispiriting' one (SEC 1985a pl). Candidates should therefore be presented with tasks which are not 'too difficult' (ibid). Furthermore, it is argued, such aspirations cannot simply be accommodated by setting final papers. Coursework must be utilized to make judgements about 'aspects of attainment which may not easily or adequately be tested

by (final) papers' (SEC 1985b p2). Thus differentiation has been raised in status from technical necessity to pedagogical principle.

Others have viewed these developments with increasing scepticism. A range of counter-arguments have been put forward suggesting that positive claims for differentiation may be at best pious hopes, at worst a deliberate smoke-screen to mask the return of tripartism to our supposedly comprehensive school system (cf Gipps 1986, Horton 1987 and the editorial introduction to the previous issue of this journal). What is certainly true is that the DES, in so far as its view can be gleaned from the General and National Criteria, does not seem to have come to terms with either the practical and logistical problems of operationalising differentiation in the school and in the classroom, or, more fundamentally, with the potential implications and consequences of the educational theory underpinning differentiation. The principle of differentiation is claimed to ensure that assessment will be a positive experience, that pupils will only be asked to attempt tasks at which they have a reasonable chance of success. But this will be very hard for teachers to accomplish when faced with the complex task of constructing appropriate assignments to test what pupils 'understand and can do'. Many difficult decisions will have to be taken over which children should attempt which tasks.

Equally challenging, if not more so, is the issue of pupils developing at different speeds and with different interests. This 'interactive' view of learning seems to inform at least some of the claims of GCSE (and indeed other current initiatives) with regard to more individualised practical work, fieldwork and the general relevance of the tasks with which pupils will be asked to engage. Designing and selecting tasks and supporting pupils engaged on them thus becomes more complicated still, as does the unpredictability of the outcome. Taken seriously such a view of learning suggests that there can be no straightforward 'tracking' of pupils since different pupils will accomplish different levels of achievement in different contexts. However the working assumption which underpins the DES's view of differentiation still seems to be that of 'ability' as a relatively uniform and stable individual characteristic which can be accurately assessed at an early stage in a pupil's secondary school career so that pupils can be setted and possibly even streamed.

The issue is not so much whether 'differentiation' is being created (or re-created) by GCSE, but rather the extent to which the very real differences which can be observed in pupil performance are perceived as unchangeable and therefore predictive of likely success on particular curricular tracks. Levels of achievement do differ across pupils, though not necessarily uniformly or incrementally. Likewise levels of achievement differ across the performances of the same pupil depending on context, motivation and so forth. But erecting a system of differentiated papers related to differentiated grades, which in turn calls forth early syllabus and coursework specialisation, does considerable violence to the notion of providing all pupils, flexibly and responsively, with tasks which are appropriate at particular points in time.

Where then does all this leave the school and, more particularly, the teacher? Some have argued for far more emphasis to be placed on 'differentiation by

outcome' rather than by initial selection and setting and the SEC has acknowledged this as a possibility (SEC 1985a). The SEC has construed this as the provision of a 'neutral stimulus' — a poem in English for example — which would call forth different responses. Macintosh (1986) argues rather more challengingly that 'it has become increasingly clear that well-designed coursework programmes provide a potentially much more effective vehicle for achieving differentiation through common tasks across a wide range of subjects' (p26). One might take issue with the phrase 'achieving differentiation'. Given the argument so far a phrase such as 'recognising and responding to differentiation' might be more appropriate. Nevertheless the case is well made and the key words from this short quotation must be 'well-designed coursework programmes'. A significant feature of such programmes will be the extent to which they treat coursework as an integral part of the teaching and learning process as opposed to simply a technique of assessment (and, moreover, a technique which could seem like a massive and imposed bureaucratic chore). The issue is whether coursework develops as a teaching strategy — to encourage and facilitate 'learning through doing' — rather than remains within the domain of 'assessment', construed only as an alternative means of testing in a practical 'non-examination' sort of way that which pupils have already learned (or at least have been taught!).

Of course the hands of some teachers are already tied. Some of the subject-specific National Criteria — in Maths and the Sciences for example — are quite clear in their injunctions concerning different courses leading to different combinations of final papers and ultimately therefore to different grade ceilings. Likewise even in those subject areas where more flexibility does exist there is no guarantee that examining groups will accommodate it, far less encourage it. Their business is first and foremost the awarding of certificates in as valid and reliable a manner as possible — and that usually means in as tightly controlled a manner as possible. Support for the development of curriculum and teaching methods may be important to some group personnel but it is not their *raison d'être* — at least not yet. In such a context the process and practice of moderation is likely to prove to be a crucial mechanism at this 'interface' between curriculum, assessment and pedagogy. A much less rigid approach to moderation will be needed if teacher involvement in school-based assessment is going to progress beyond teachers simply acting as examiners on behalf of and under instructions from 'the board'. If teachers are to have any sort of chance of realising some of the educational implications of differentiation, and to make the most of what some would argue in any case to be the very limited opportunities which GCSE provides, then they will need assistance in *setting* coursework as well as monitoring when it comes to the marking and grading of coursework. More flexible moderation arrangements, probably involving local consortia of teachers and possibly also involving seconded subject specialists as full-time moderators for a limited period, could provide the opportunity for teachers not only to discuss the products of coursework, but also the specific ways in which such products have been produced and the more general teaching strategies and curricular patterns which have given rise to them.

Whether local authorities and the examining groups can come together on this remains to be seen, certainly some are trying. More interesting perhaps in the longer term are the emerging collaborative enterprises between boards and LEAs which are taking place outside of the traditional examination structure: OCEA, the Northern Partnership for Records of Achievement, the Welsh development, the initiatives of the South West and South East CSE Boards and the Dorset/SREB Assessment and Profiling Project (cf Broadfoot 1986). In principle reporting pupil accomplishments in a 'Record of Achievement' should allow for the more flexible approach to teaching and learning alluded to above. In practice boards and LEAs have got a great deal of in-service work to do if such aspirations are to be realised. In particular validating the process of producing Records of Achievement and also possibly accrediting teachers to engage in the process provides a parallel mechanism to moderation, but one which must, of its very nature, attend to the quality of teacher-pupil interaction, and not simply to the comparability of outcomes. These are challenging issues for boards, local authorities and, not least, teachers to confront. But it is

up to educators at all levels of the system to take seriously the theory of learning underlying differentiation, to ensure that the practice of differentiation is not corrupted and turned against us, and, more especially, against future generations of children.

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Integrated Humanities: A Step Forward

Ross Phillips

The existence of Integrated Humanities GCSE is a positive step forward. Through my involvement with a group of Leicestershire teachers who successfully piloted a joint GCE/CSE syllabus which laid the foundations for a GCSE, I believe the Humanities curriculum is better placed now than at almost any other time in a relatively brief history. As the debate about GCSE sharpens, as teachers encounter new, unfamiliar, apparently cumbersome or inappropriate assessment procedures, the temptation in humanities departments will be to recall a golden age when there was freedom from the intrusion of examination demands.

It is important to place Integrated Humanities in a context of development. I would like to focus on some of the strands in the process of a changing Humanities curriculum. Perhaps I should point out that when I first became involved in Humanities we did not speak of Integrated Humanities but rather Social or Community Studies. ROSLA brought this about. It seemed that,

with ROSLA, there was a legitimacy about courses which did not depend on one discipline and were about 'Living in Society'. In the early part of the last decade the notion of a Humanities course for all students was acceptable, and in Leicestershire a flurry of course development occurred for students of all abilities in the 14-16 age range. It should not be forgotten, however, that this legitimacy was gained through the intrusion of a powerful citizenship ideology.

A background of prestigious Humanities projects existed. Some were enthusiastically received. I well remember visiting schools using the expensive MACOS materials. Other projects were rejected because they targetted the average to below average ability range. The totality of this rejection was a mistake. Consider Stenhouse writing about the Schools Council project:

'We understand by the humanities the study of both human behaviour and human experience. The study of human

behaviour is broadly the concern of social sciences....The study of human experience is reflected in the arts and in the biographical aspect of history.”¹

Despite a professed concern to integrate subjects, some ten years ago Humanities teachers had failed to pick up this message. Perhaps this was because departments were dominated by young, eager and recently trained social scientists? Certainly examination boards had responded to the expansion of Social Science in Higher Education by offering A levels in Economics, Law, Sociology and Politics. Another bumper market could not be ignored: there were rich pickings in the certification of sixteen year olds. Humanities courses needed GCE and CSE certification to justify inclusion in a crowded curriculum and the exam boards readily facilitated a proliferation of Social or Community Studies courses prepared by teachers anxious to use them as a vehicle for extending their enthusiasm for the social scientific perspective.

By the end of the 1970's such courses were causing concern. Teachers and students were dominated by syllabus demands. The central problem was that Social Studies had been accepted for examination as a body of knowledge distilled from a narrow range of social science subjects — assessment techniques reflected this. More importantly, a growing national concern about examination performance squeezed the more adventurous Mode III approaches until teachers squealed!

The consequences of permitting subject preciousness to intrude into the initial development were compounded by this increasingly complicated process of examining, across a two tier system, demanding comparability, validity and reliability. Department meetings were characterised by conflicting agenda items: discussions about ‘the unit test’ and an urgent desire to break away from structured approaches to syllabus content. Summer terms were a frenzy of moderation meetings where complaints about inappropriate, cumbersome assessment requirements were voiced loudly.

When, in the early stages of GCSE development, a group of Humanities teachers met in the draughty rooms of a university department to discuss the prospect of a changing examination system, the pressures and tensions associated with change were obvious. Approaches to the Humanities curriculum had strong similarities as well as clear differences. Although there was a commitment to a single system of examinations as evidenced by the complementary nature of GCE and CSE syllabuses, reconciling differences in views as to the next step forward was no easy matter. In attempting to respond to the embryonic Midland Examining Group's draft 16+ Social Science proposal, teachers recognised that modifications to such a syllabus would be inadequate and an alternative syllabus was necessary.

Tensions about the way forward for a Humanities syllabus closely reflected tensions beginning to emerge about the nature of the whole curriculum. With the expansion of comprehensive education had come the rejection of rote learning. Initially, a marginally modified grammar school curriculum had emphasised product-based learning: characteristically this included a core curriculum plus a wide range of subject choices. In

fact this curriculum presented itself to students as parcels of knowledge acquired over two years — each parcel neatly labelled with an examination certificate which gave it currency in the outside world. (Social Studies failed to challenge this approach as far as demanding certification or as far as moving away from the acquisition of knowledge). Thinking on the nature of the whole curriculum was identifying the need to move to a process model stressing learning methods and styles. This same debate had surfaced in Humanities departments as frustration mounted over the pre-eminence of syllabus content and assessment procedures locked into a product-based learning philosophy.

The Humanities group, considering this problem, sought an approach which reduced the importance of content derived from any subject and stressed the learning process. Recently Greary and Francis have written about this stage of development. When considering the contribution of Vygotsky in informing humanities work they say:

‘The implications of Vygotsky's views are to see learning as both an intensely social and intensely personal process. A conceptual framework should be seen as a set of organising ideas or principles which do not have to be slavishly followed or accepted.’²

In both the pilot 16+ and the GCSE Integrated Humanities syllabus, content is described in terms of a set of organising ideas. Centres must indicate how they might approach these in terms of a process of learning. An enormously liberating feature of GCSE Integrated Humanities is the movement away from discrete packages of knowledge which all students must take home.

MEG Support Materials are introduced with statements about the process nature of the syllabus: ‘The fundamental thrust of the syllabus is that it seeks to promote a view of learning where emphasis is upon the learning process.’ Integrated Humanities may not have moved so far as to entirely embrace Stenhouse's definition, but it does recognise that this area of the curriculum reaches beyond social science in terms of what sources of understanding, perspectives and skills are available to us in encountering, making sense of and reaching informed judgements about the complexity of human issues.

Rejecting content as a structure for learning has a cost when the process must be measured terms of a public and formal examination system.

For GCSE purposes the process is presented in terms of certain objectives which must be assessed according to seven levels of achievement. Five years ago there was an insistence amongst many Leicestershire teachers that assessment of skills was possible and desirable. The MEG syllabus reflects that demand. Nevertheless it would be foolish to suggest that this is not problematic. It would also be foolish not to recognise the genuine anxiety and concern that the assessment procedures will themselves inhibit the learning process in precisely the same way that, formerly, a social studies content did: by forcing teachers and students to avoid certain types of work for fear it will not fit the assessment grid.

One anonymous commentator is clearly worried about this feature. S/he wrote:

The Gateshead Lapp: Pre-vocational Education in a Cold Climate

Roy Haywood and Mary Wootten

The 'Lower Achieving Pupils Project' is the DES-funded project complementary to (but very different from) the MSC-funded Technical and Vocational Educational Initiative (TVEI). FORUM carried a comprehensive study of this project by Penelope Weston, the project evaluator, in our Summer 1986 issue (Vol. 28, No. 3). But how effective is LAPP, and what is happening 'on the ground'? Here Roy Haywood, evaluator of LAPP at Gateshead and Newcastle, and Mary Wootten, research associate for the Gateshead evaluation, report. Lecturer at the Newcastle University School of Education, Roy Haywood taught in secondary schools for twelve years, while Mary Wootten had twenty years experience in all types of school before taking on this research appointment.

The origins of the Lower Attaining Pupils Programme (LAPP), and some of the main issues raised by the Programme in its diverse local forms, were clearly

outlined by Penelope Weston in a recent issue of Forum¹. LAPP is one of the rash of central government educational initiatives brought about by the backlash of social and economic changes within a context of growing youth unemployment. Penelope Weston made the point that within the current 14-16 curriculum and assessment pageant, LAPP has a low profile. This is true both nationally and at the local margins because in many ways LAPP has been overwhelmed by the more glamorous, but more tightly controlled, developments of TVEI. Perhaps this is understandable; there is not much kudos in being associated with low attainers. As a group they are right at the bottom of the pile, and anything done to help improve their position demands much commitment and effort, which may only be measured in terms of a minimal shift in some of the desired outcomes, as stated in the closing remarks of the recent HMI survey of LAPP.

Progress overall in the programme to date has largely been in the improvement of the selected pupils' attitudes to schooling. The principal challenge for the remainder of the programme's life is for schools to turn these real gains into improvements of the academic performance of individual pupils, whether measured in traditional or new ways.²

This article looks at the introduction and development of the Lower Attaining Pupils Programme in one local authority which by most customary economic, social and educational measures, is regarded as a disadvantaged Metropolitan Borough. After providing the contextual background we go on to look at the tensions and frustrations produced when the determined efforts and positive achievements of all concerned with the Project in the schools are set against severely limited opportunities for young people leaving school. We agree with HMI's suggestion that, 'What follows after 16 for the project's pupils and the implications of this pre-16 for the projects themselves in each of the LEAs have become matters for urgent consideration'³. In particular we focus upon less-able pupils facing up to the unequal struggle for a place at the bottom of the employment ladder. As such, the article should be regarded as

Integrated Humanities (continued from page 81)

'There is no doubt that the assessment of a wide ranging, skills based Integrated Humanities syllabus is a most complex operation. I am not sure that it is compatible with the assessment procedure demanded by exam boards. However, Integrated Humanities would disappear if it did not have a recognised qualification....GCSEs, as Bernard Barker noted....are about a lot of things.'³

In my judgement we have not come full circle, neither is GCSE a full-stop in the development of Integrated Humanities. As the transition to a process based curriculum takes place, for the first time Humanities need not be marginalised. Even if aspects of the GCSE syllabus are not revised as a consequence of teachers' professional comment and criticism, it sits square with other significant developments such as records of achievement and modular courses.

It will, however, be interesting to see how the next stage evolves. Teachers in Humanities must look forward rather than hanker for the past, they must re-work their approaches: it is not possible to avoid placing

the student at the sharp end, both of the learning process and of their own assessment, and it is certainly not possible to bolt on GCSE to existing courses hoping the product can be marked differently. Integrated Humanities requires a fresh pedagogy. Whether teachers will see this stage as a crucial one in making a determined bid to move outside the public examination forum at 16+ and seek a different type of validation for the experience on offer remains to be seen. I am optimistic that this might be so; I welcome such a prospect and believe that the step forward into GCSE will have been a positive one.

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2. Jim Greary and Derek Francis, 'The Process Model of Integrated Humanities' in *Humanism in Adversity*, edited by Douglas Holly (The Falmer Press, 1986).
3. Integrated Humanities Newsletter, Summer 1986

providing a particular local and regional vignette to complement Penelope Weston's national portrait of a curriculum programme described as a 'loose federation or family of projects'.⁴

Local Factors and LAPP

When LAPP was announced and LEAs were invited to submit proposals for inclusion to the DES, Gateshead LEA had already identified a number of serious structural problems and was determined to tackle them. King's⁵ survey of 1980 school leavers found that 68% of the sample of fifth-form leavers in Gateshead became unemployed on leaving school. The Borough had to contend with one of the lowest staying-on rates in the country, which meant that schools were struggling to maintain viable sixth forms. In some schools over 25% of pupils left at sixteen with no formal qualifications. The average age of teachers was high, there were few in-service opportunities, little movement of teachers in or out of the Borough, and Gateshead teachers were at the very bottom of the league table for graduate teachers⁶. All these factors combined to form a low educational base-line from which to launch Gateshead's first major national curriculum project.

However, encouraged by a new dynamic Director of Education, with national experience in curriculum initiatives for low attainers, things were beginning to happen. The majority Labour Party Council was determined to attract and secure economically active families to the Borough, which meant improving the quality of schools and schooling. Critical comments in an HMI survey on educational spending⁷ prompted requests from a council delegation to central government for more external funding. When the LEA received an invitation to submit proposals for LAPP, the Assistant Director for Schools and the recently appointed Curriculum Development Officer swiftly responded (the teachers were on summer holiday). The successful submission aimed to build upon the initiatives already started in the authority and to incorporate them into a broader single initiative for low attainers.

Many positive outcomes have emerged from the 'DES Project' (as it is known in Gateshead) in terms of resourcing and re-energising aspects of secondary school practice and organization. The remotivation of individual teachers and the development of an LEA curriculum support structure have been aided by a substantial INSET programme. This year will see all of the LEA's secondary schools and three special schools involved in the Project and using the NEA Unit Accreditation system, in which Gateshead played a significant developmental role. Pupils are involved in and out of school with community work, residential experience, FE college link-courses and extended work-experience programmes. Successful achievements are all recorded in a Pupil Record of Achievement issued to the first cohort of 1986 project school leavers. In terms of making the last two years of compulsory education more enjoyable for pupils, there have been some spectacular individual turn arounds in pupil attendance and motivation.

Wider Issues and Implications

As evaluators, with long and close contacts with the

LAPP project, we see it as our role as 'critical friends' to take a less than parochial view. We feel that it is part of our role to draw the attention of a local and wider audience to important issues which go beyond the immediate context. Our stance towards one of the most crucial issues is encapsulated in Husen's⁸ words. 'Educational reforms are *part and parcel of social reforms*. There is a corollary to this, namely that educational reforms cannot serve as substitutes for economic and social reforms.' Along with others in the region⁹ we are critical of the attitudes of those in the South who are too busy cashing in their silicon chips and making money for themselves rather than creating wealth in which more people have the opportunity to share. When these cynics blame the North Eastern schools for not kitting out youngsters to fit into their definition of the 'world of work' let them remember that it was they, not us, who have been most instrumental in reducing opportunities for work. Furthermore, their cynicism is compounded by their largesse in the form of specific grants to encourage vocational education and training without providing the complementary job opportunities. We would strongly resist the widespread notion that the North has too much history and too little future.

The trouble with polemics conducted by both politicians and academics is that they rarely touch base with the realities of life for many school leavers, and particularly for those of low ability. These pupils have always been regarded as marginal, even if they exist in sufficient numbers to make up 'Half our Future'¹⁰ or the 40% 'for whom existing public examinations at 16+ are not designed'.¹¹ It is not lack of qualifications and skills that is the significant factor for these pupils, but the galloping qualifications inflation of the free market. The prospects for school leavers in Gateshead are not promising; for those of low ability they are particularly bleak.

Gateshead's **Quarterly Review of Unemployment**¹² states that, 'In January 1986, approximately 40% of young people in Gateshead were either unemployed (28.5%) or in government funded YTS/CP schemes for training and work experience (11.5%).' In the same report a spot-check carried out in March 1986 (when the first LAPP pupils were about to leave school) 503 vacancies were notified to the Job Centre. The check revealed that of these vacancies 25% were for government schemes, and the majority (85%) of all vacancies required the applicant to travel outside the Borough to improve their chances of finding employment. What is more, of 220 job vacancies which specifically mentioned entry requirements, 75% required 'previous experience' and only 6% mentioned 'qualifications.' With such problems facing the young school-leaver it is difficult to focus concern and debate within the schools' base of the LAPP project on the means when the ends are not simply uncertain but to so many inconceivable — a future without work or, at best, intermittent employment or Government schemes.

Government strategies for intervention in the curriculum, specifically pointed up in LAPP, TVEI or CPVE, require according to Quicke¹³, school staff to embrace the behaviourist or skills-based approach to teaching as well as the values of the 'new vocationalism' (an increased emphasis on the relationship between

school and work and, by implication, unemployment). LAPP pupils are encouraged to acquire practical and social skills to make them more tractable and presentable, and ultimately, marketable. However, because of the nature of the LAPP target group and the dearth of local employment, the curriculum reality is that much of what the pupils get is aimed towards low-level, sex-stereotyped, practical skills. The programmes demonstrate little evidence of the acquisition of the 'generic' or 'transferable' skills which are heralded as the keys to future employment. Consequently, although the hairdressing, shop work, decorating and low-level building skills currently on offer may help pupils find a place in the no-tech black economy, it is difficult to see how Gateshead's pre-vocational LAPP courses fit pupils for a high-tech future. As a result pupils are counselled towards applying for a job of the 'appropriate' level. Unrealistic aspirations, often in terms of demand not capability, are reduced gradually to encompass the possibly attainable; and these are usually within clearly defined sex-stereotypes.

The first cohort of 120 LAPP pupils left school in Summer 1986 and even though their schools tried not to make them a discrete group in school, they remain an easily identifiable sub-strata outside school. As a group they do not begin to compete for a job on the same terms as their more academic peers. LAPP pupils have been encouraged to gather together Accredited Units into a portfolio of Records of Achievement. Such credentials were aimed at enhancing their employability but, in their present form, they serve to signal that the pupils are on the YTS track. Once there they can be switched through various points to different destinations, with the elite YTS arrangements with individual firms (banks, national department stores) well out of the reach of LAPP pupils. Indeed most of the LAPP leavers in Gateshead have found places on YTS through 'open-recruitment' policies. The danger is that YTS placements may unwittingly operate as 'ageing vats'¹⁴ for turning out 'the world's best-trained dole queue'¹⁵.

As evaluators of LAPP in Gateshead, it is obvious to us that most of the current problems are not educational but social and economic. We recognise the claim that education is under-resourced; but the allocation and direction of specific government grants remains a crucial issue. Closer scrutiny should be directed at an educational, social, and political philosophy which allocates 3 million pounds per annum to LAPP, a scheme seeking to effect major changes for nearly half the secondary school population, while at the same time allocating 33.8 million pounds to the 21,412 pupils currently benefitting from the Assisted Places Scheme¹⁶. To those young people in the North, doubly disadvantaged by geography and conventional measures of ability, re-vamping schooling experiences can only go so far in preventing them from being given the cold shoulder as they set out at sixteen for the 'work of life'. It is to this problem that, as HMI put it¹⁷ 'urgent consideration' should be addressed.

For references see page 89.

*The opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of Gateshead LEA.

A Comprehensive View of a Full School Day

John Hull

Much school time is educationally unexploited. Children find it difficult to see how the parts of their day and timetable fit together. Children and teachers should share an understanding of the way necessary sub-divisions of time and structure complement each other. John Hull reports here on the efforts made at Waltheof Campus in Sheffield, where he is head, both to exploit the fullness of the day and to give students an 'awareness of the wholeness of the enterprise'.

Most secondary school children pass six and a half hours of every school day 'on the premises'. Of this 32 1/2 hour week, only two thirds is spent in timetabled classes. Of the remaining one third, some is occupied by assembly and tutorial time. Most is spent waiting for the next planned event to happen. Time is spent before school starts, at break or lunchtime, before going home or simply in transit between lessons. Often it is educationally wasted time. The typical contact of the educator with the child during these out of lesson times is sadly limited to the issue of challenges: 'Why aren't you on your way to the next lesson?', 'You know you shouldn't be in this part of the building at lunchtime!'. The less pleasant lessons of the hidden curriculum are uncomfortably plain. Yet it is precisely at these times that, under less close supervision, children practise the social skills which many recent curricular innovations have been intended to develop.

Secondary schools are complex institutions. The weight of that complexity in management and structure too easily bears down upon the time the child spends in school crushing it into seemingly unrelated pieces. First the time spent in lessons is divided into core and options. Then it is divided between, say, 20 departments. Each makes different demands. The fact that these demands are rarely coordinated further fractures the child's experience. The child may misbehave, unwittingly crossing another barrier. The misbehaviour is referred outside the department to the pastoral leader. The pastoral team is responsible additionally for a pastoral curriculum taught in tutorial time — a significant curricular segment. The child's experience is again fragmented by his or her perception of the different relationships which teachers foster in extra-curricular time. The mutual enjoyment of these relationships not only contrasts with the greater formality of lesson time.

It is starkly different from the frequently negative contacts of the lengthy but empty moments spent out of lessons.

Not only is the individual child's experience fragmented. The fragments which are his or hers are not the same as the fragments of others. In options procedures most schools pass to the child the responsibility of selecting his or her own curriculum. Still worse he or she may have been assigned to a band or set for which a narrower or different curriculum is deemed appropriate.

Both children and teachers need an awareness of their own place and role within the school. That awareness is strongest when it is based on an understanding of the 'wholeness' of the enterprise and of the way the necessary subdivisions of time and structure complement each other.

Yet nearly one third of time in school is largely unplanned. Its educational potential is unexploited. Within the timetabled segments inter-relationships are inexplicit and often unremarked. Teachers have, however, become aware of the need to educate the *whole* child. They recognise the need to foster his or her personal and social development as well as academic development.

The result of this new recognition has been the development of personal and social education courses constrained entirely within the timetabled curriculum or, at best, coordinated between tutorial time and a core programme. These courses have added personal and social fragments to the existing academic curriculum.

In planning for social education, innovators have, not unnaturally, placed it squarely within that part of the curriculum which is already, though incompletely, planned — that is the mainstream timetabled segment. Children spend over six hours per week in 'social time'. That is the time represented by breaks, lunch times and the periods before and after school. The educational potential of social time remains largely unrecognised. How odd it is that social education has become divorced from the resource of social time.

In schools we urgently need to develop a new perspective. This perspective will be genuinely comprehensive not only in the sense that it will be appropriate to all pupils. It will be comprehensive in its embrace of the full range of activities planned for children within the full span of their time in school. The inter-relationships of the differing activities will be plain to children and teachers. The stress will fall not upon the features which distinguish the pastoral from the academic, the core from the options, the timetabled from the social time, but upon the complementary and varied nature of each aspect of school life.

At Waltheof School we have begun to develop such a perspective. We have defined four elements which together embrace the full activity of the school. They are:-

- i) the entitlement curriculum
- ii) chosen activities
- iii) the social curriculum
- iv) the tutorial programme

Between Autumn 1983 and Summer 1985 all staff were involved in a 'Curriculum Debate' (See **Forum**, volume 28, Number 1, Autumn 1985). As a result our

options-led curriculum was abandoned. In its place we agreed to give primacy to an *entitlement curriculum*. We already had a common curriculum in years 2 and 3 of this 12-18 school. Seven mainstream curricular areas existed: English, Modern Languages, Humanities, Mathematics, Science, Creative/Practical, Physical Education. Teachers from these areas had developed integrated Lower School courses. We decided to extend the pattern up the school. We would have 4-year core courses in six areas. The exception would be Modern Languages which would be represented only in the Lower School common curriculum. Work in the seven curricular areas would occupy all 20 periods in the week for Lower School pupils. Upper School pupils would devote 14 periods to six areas leaving six periods for 'chosen activities'.

We set to work to develop a broad and balanced entitlement curriculum which gave access to all areas of experience and which was differentiated in delivery. We believed it to be our duty as educators to define the essential experiences to which all children are entitled within the seven curricular areas, rather than to offer constrained options between related subjects.

We discovered that we now had a curriculum which we could record, see and analyse. We could plan children's experience vertically in four year courses and horizontally across terms exploiting repetition or overlap between curricular areas. Each curricular team defined for other teachers in a so-called level one statement its contribution to a child's education. Each four year course was then divided into short, manageable modules. For each module a summary (level two) of the skills, attitudes, concepts and knowledge to be encountered was framed. For each module a detailed teaching scheme and set of resources (level three) was produced. It was vital that level three materials showed evidence of differentiation and a variety of teaching styles.

In switching to an entitlement model, the school had left behind not only its options-led Upper School curriculum, but also a core course of Essential Studies. For fourth and fifth year pupils ES had provided a course of social, moral, personal and political education. It had represented the school's attempt to 'plug the gaps' in an options-led curriculum by ensuring that all children studied these 'essential' areas. Its creation had, however, never been seen as a permanent solution. ES was only intended by its founders to continue until the school's whole curriculum had been reviewed. In the meantime its practitioners would experiment with active teaching and learning strategies. Ultimately the constituent elements and new teaching styles of ES would be disseminated across a broadened common curriculum. Much of our Curriculum Debate focussed on this dissemination. The contents of ES were fairly readily found more appropriate homes within the seven curricular areas. Those who had taught ES frequently reminded us that often its contents were of secondary importance. The real value of ES lay in its contribution to children's personal and social development. Such development is closely associated with changes in children's attitudes. Our level two statements record the attitudinal objectives of each teaching unit. By analysis at this level we begin to see personal and social education across the curriculum. Children's attitudes

are displayed and monitored only if lessons are structured in ways that call for pupil response, group and cooperative work and experiential learning. Level three statements show our progress in developing teaching strategies which produce these outcomes.

Seven curricular teams span the entitlement curriculum. Within a framework each team has devised its own disciplinary policy. Lodging classroom discipline with curricular teams has freed pastoral leaders for other tasks.

Six periods per week in years 4 and 5 are devoted to *chosen activities*. These periods are complementary to, but different from, the entitlement curriculum. Children are entitled to a range of experiences which is broad and balanced. The entitlement is teacher-prescribed with little room for pupil choice. Yet children need the experience of making choices.

The entitlement curriculum provides all children with the opportunity to take five examinations. We are honest with the minority of our children who are capable of additional examination work. They may choose to devote some or all of chosen activity time to further academic study. The majority make selections termly of interest-based modular courses. The accent is upon choice that is informed.

Many of the interest-based modules available as chosen activities are leisure-based. Many have a community orientation, serving our community, learning alongside its members, learning from them. All provide a different context in which children can display to us their qualities which we too easily fail to note in conventional 'lessons'. As in extra-curricular activity we hope the warmth of shared interest will affect teacher-pupil relationships.

Most modules are not externally assessed. We are looking to NPRA (Northern Partnership for Records of Achievement) to validate them. This will help overcome the dichotomy between the assessed entitlement curriculum and largely unexamined chosen activities.

In the selection and conduct of modules there is far greater stress on pupil autonomy and self management. The chosen activity curriculum places a premium upon choice-making skills, traits of character revealed in living with and learning from the making of mistaken choices, adaptability and skills in relationships with adults and peers.

Similar skills and traits are paramount in our social curriculum — that is the learning which happens at social times. Within chosen activities teacher direction was less and pupil autonomy was greater than in the entitlement curriculum. Within the social curriculum teacher direction is minimal. The role of the teacher is simply to provide the structure within which children must operate. The structure is simple: Children should relax and enjoy themselves in ways that do not inconvenience others. Beyond that they are encouraged to self-manage their activities.

At lunchtimes, for instance, given extensive access to the building and provided with indoor and outdoor games equipment, children have formed committees to manage activities for their year group. Disputes about access to the snooker table, the rota for making coffee and accusations about damage to property are referred to the pupil committee. Here is genuine social and political education taught in a far more real context than

the mainstream curriculum would provide. With autonomy go responsibilities and duties. Children manage coffee and snack bars. Profits are made. Stock is ordered. In a real situation economic awareness is learnt. So far this pupil self-managed activity is confined to lunchtime and break. We hope that its own momentum will carry over into the times before and after school.

Pupils must be aware of the connections between the entitlement curriculum, the social curriculum and chosen activities. They must understand how these three complement each other. The position of tutorial time is pivotal in the curriculum. Tutorial time services chosen activities providing the forum within which termly choices are made, the lessons of past choices are analysed, and the skills necessary to choice are learnt. It services the social curriculum for it provides the space in which to conduct elections to year committees and to discuss problems of self-management. It provides the opportunity for the school to explain to children the nature of their entitlement and through analysis of level two statements to dovetail work in study skills with their use in defined curricular contexts.

We believe that we have made progress towards a comprehensive vision of school life. We know that a Sports Complex will be built within the next three years and that the existing buildings and grounds will be enhanced to facilitate community use within and beyond school hours. This prospect makes the conception of the social curriculum preparing children for democratic self-management and autonomy even more immediately relevant. It builds upon our strong commitment to orientate chosen activities towards the community. We are seconding 15 teachers for a term each this year under the city's School Focussed Secondment Programme. The 15 will engage in practical tasks to carry forward our curricular innovations. We look to the future with confidence.



School-Based Inset and T.R.I.S.T: A Classroom Perspective

Grant Bage and Roger Collins

Our Autumn issue (Vo.29, No.1) carried articles by Sylvia Richardson, on Suffolk's curriculum development plans, and Norman Barlow, on 'TRIST and the Future of In-Service Training'. Here, Grant Bage and Roger Collins, respectively Humanities co-ordinator and Science co-ordinator at Horringer Court Middle School, Bury St. Edmunds, contest Norman Barlow's conclusions. In their view, and experience, TRIST allowed their school to implement local authority plans. It did not mark increasing MSC interference; indeed it gave welcome opportunity for furthering local initiative.

Forum Vol. 29 no.1 contained two articles that were of direct interest to all those involved with curriculum development through In-Service training.

One was a description by Sylvia Richardson of the attempts made by the L.E.A. in Suffolk to promote curriculum development in schools, 'Curriculum Change in a County'. The other was a critique by Norman Barlow of 'TRIST and the Future of In-Service Training.'

The experience that we have had, as initiators and implementers of a TRIST-funded scheme to promote staff and curriculum development in a Suffolk middle school, might allay some of the fears that Norman Barlow voices in his article:

Will those selected for development be ready for it? Will sufficient time be devoted to distinguish between expressed wants and genuine needs?

For us, TRIST did not represent, as Norman Barlow depicted:

heart searching centred ... on the inescapable conclusion to acquiesce in the increasing interference from the MSC into the school curriculum at the expense of local control.

Nothing could be further from the truth; TRIST actually gave us an opportunity to put into practice precisely what our L.E.A. *had already been exhorting us to do* (as so clearly outlined in Sylvia Richardson's article).

We needed no convincing that the progressive and practical educational philosophy expressed in Suffolk's 'Curriculum Papers' was exactly right; but what the L.E.A.s have signally failed to provide, is the opportunity for *all* classroom teachers to apply for time to make curricular change more feasible. We already knew what we wanted in our school before we had ever heard of TRIST. Yet TRIST was the first occasion that we, as subject co-ordinators, were given the financial opportunity to speedily turn our ideas into INSET reality within our own schools. Norman Barlow's criticisms of the MSC and the TRIST process might be more convincing if the L.E.A.s had ever initiated such a de-centralising reform themselves: but in general, the

fact is that they had to be directed towards de-centralisation by central government!

From the classroom perspective and practical experience of two subject co-ordinators in a Middle School, TRIST, it must be repeated, was not seen as an imposition, but as a new resource and an opportunity.

In the September of 1985 we had already decided to re-examine the relationship between the subjects of science and humanities. A general review of our school curriculum was soon to be initiated, and as co-ordinators of the two areas mentioned, we took the opportunity to attempt a fundamental transformation of them.

Essentially we faced two problems. Firstly we wanted to liven up the subject matter of science and humanities, and make both courses more vital and meaningful. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, we wanted to change both the manner in which our two subjects were taught, and the style of the definitions of our objectives. Perhaps the terms 'content' and 'process' could be used to summarise our dualistic approach to curriculum reform, but that would be to over-simplify the reality of our concerns.

It seemed to us, that at least in Primary and Middle schools, both science and humanities share a lot of common teaching objectives. Furthermore, many of the issues which young teenagers quite naturally become involved with, like 'unemployment' and 'famine aid', can themselves only be understood in interdisciplinary terms. We therefore adopted a very simple plan. In a document presented to the management of the school we proposed that, at least initially in the school's fourth year, science and humanities be abandoned and replaced by a new hybrid subject which we will refer to here as 'Integrated Studies'. The learning objectives of this new subject would be achieved through studying a number of themes designed to be highly relevant to the experiences and needs of children in the late 20th century.

In November 1985 we decided to consider ways of presenting our ideas to our fellow members of staff. It was absolutely crucial that our colleagues understood fully what we were about, for 'Integrated Studies', like humanities before it, was to be a team-taught subject.

Fortunately it was at this point that we discovered the potential of TRIST as a means of supporting school-based INSET, for schools in Suffolk were given the opportunity to apply for TRIST funds through a series of local panels.

Our TRIST application was centred upon support for three staff conferences. Each conference was to involve about 10 members of staff for a morning, at our local teachers' centre. The team concerned were to examine, over the three month period from the first conference to the third, both issues raised by our immediate attempts at curriculum reform and general issues connected with curriculum development.

There follows a summary of the topics dealt with at our conferences. It should be noted that the conferences themselves were not 'didactic' in their organisation, but 'heuristic'. (For example, one of our opening activities was a sorting and classification of the stated Aims and Objectives of a number of curriculum documents, both national and local.) This was because we felt that the methods adopted by us as INSET organisers should reflect the classroom methods that we were advocating.

Conference 1

- (a) An analysis by team members of the data produced by a pre-conference survey of attitudes towards various teaching objectives.
- (b) An examination and classification of the teaching aims and objectives of a number of well-known curricular documents including 'The Suffolk Professional Papers', G.C.S.E. National Criteria, and a few published schemes dealing with either science, history or geography.
- (c) The preparation of a small set of 'cross-curricular' tasks for children. These were later used in conference 2.

Conference 2

- (a) A consideration of the demands placed upon children by various kinds of learning tasks. Tasks from all sorts of sources were used including text books, videos, school worksheets and those cross-curricular materials derived from conference 1.
- (b) A review of a number of types and examples of pupil profiles.

Conference 3

- (a) A comparison of some edumetric and normative methods of assessment including standardised tests.
- (b) A further examination of an individual pupil's attitudes and achievements through a review of his work, his record cards, and an examination of taped interviews held with him.

As neither of us had previously organised an INSET programme, we were concerned to gather as much information as possible about the strengths and weaknesses of our conferences. We therefore invited all those taking part to comment freely about their experiences. We also asked everyone to suggest improvements that could be made to our programme.

Naturally, as course designers, we had our own opinions about how things went, but we were quite surprised to discover how much general agreement there was between ourselves and our colleagues as to 'strengths and weaknesses'.

Basically, most people reported that our conferences were interesting, useful and conducive to enhanced feelings of professionalism. Everyone thought that the teachers' centre was the correct venue and that our conferences were about the right length. However, almost all those taking part felt that we attempted to deal with too many subjects in too short a period of time. Certainly we ourselves felt 'under pressure' whilst running the conferences, and it is possible that they were over-organised.

Some of the most positive and useful feedback received from our colleagues was connected with the cross-curricular tasks devised by them between conferences one and two. A number of these tasks have since been developed by year groups into teaching modules for trial in the academic year 1986-87.

We were less successful at developing links between subjects other than science and humanities. No doubt that was a reflection of our own particular areas of interest. However, all those taking part in our conferences did agree that our INSET programme was likely to eventually lead to a more coherent curriculum.

As Norman Barlow comments, TRIST type INSET arrangements do have implications for the disruption of the present curriculum. Our conferences created some organisational problems at school. The departure of about 40% of the staff of the school on three Friday mornings obviously disrupted what was normally a routine day. Furthermore, our effectiveness was seriously weakened by the absence from our conferences of such a large proportion of the staff of the school. Clearly, many colleagues who were able and willing to make a valuable contribution to our programme were excluded. However, bearing in mind the size of our school and the conditions imposed by TRIST it is difficult to envisage how such problems could have been circumvented.

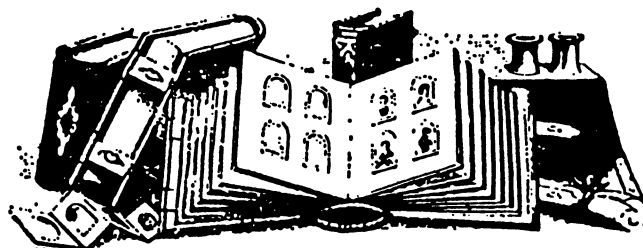
Obviously we share Norman Barlow's concerns over the level of funding that will be available for future INSET, and over the uncertain and speculative nature of future planning by central government for this vital area of the Education Service. But our experiences suggest that the MSC's intervention into school-based INSET can actually be used by teachers to support the aims of themselves and their L.E.A.s (as outlined for Suffolk in Sylvia Richardson's article), rather than be the cause of still more conflict.

Norman Barlow asks of TRIST and the future of In-Service training:

what will the reality be in terms of assessing and meeting individual needs both of teachers and institutions, especially if those institutions are small primary schools with no effective means of drawing attention to themselves?

Our reality has been that school-based INSET of the TRIST type gave us the opportunity to implement L.E.A. policy and our own beliefs, in a way that the L.E.A.s themselves had neither the resources nor the will to provide.

REVIEWS



A Colossal Quango

Challenging the MSC: On Jobs, Education and Training, edited by Caroline Benn and John Fairley. Pluto Press (1986), pp.281. paperback £5.95.

The need for a clear analysis of the activities of the Manpower Services Commission is regularly made more pressing by the appearance of a new 'initiative' or 'scheme'. Baker's City Technology Colleges, for example, whilst not an MSC project, are clearly part of the same assault on comprehensive education. Just how rapidly that assault is moving is suggested by a sentence in Clyde Chitty's chapter of this book that is, in retrospect, ironic: "In the event, segregated trade schools for Britain were only a scare." Not for long, it seems.

For anyone who has to deal with the MSC and its empire of schemes, this book will provide invaluable historical background and thought-provoking political analysis. It maps the growth of the MSC from a relatively small co-ordinating and manpower planning body,

to a colossal quango with a budget of some 2 billion; a growth that saw no parallel change in the MSC's structure of accountability and control, producing a 'new ministry' which is undemocratic and unaccountable. John Eversley's chapter on trade union involvement in the MSC shows how the TUC's participation, far from allowing for genuine democratic control, has done little more than to deflect and confuse opposition to the MSC's policies. Likewise, several chapters show that local control over MSC projects, by the Area Manpower Boards in charge of monitoring the Youth Training Scheme for example, is negligible when set against the power of the central bureaucracy.

Successive contributors trace how the MSC has risen to prominence as a response to the economic and social crisis that is burying the reforming consensus of the post-war decades. The end of full employment created a need for emergency measures, especially to tackle youth unemployment. The faltering of progressive reforms in education created a vacuum which the MSC sought to fill. Mass unemployment exposed the failure of attempts to change, largely through the

medium of the education system, the established hierarchy of life opportunities facing each generation of school-leavers. This climate made a seductive argument of the MSC's official line under the present government — 'educate and train for the likely labour market outcomes of young people'. Far from re-structuring the job hierarchy through education, schools and colleges are now to be a dress-rehearsal for roles of work and unemployment — the reformist world turned upside down. For future managers and professionals, a traditional general education; for future menial workers, a good grounding in the right attitudes through TVEI, YTS and so on; for young women, low-skill training orientated towards low-paid service jobs.

It is hardly surprising that the MSC, which gained its present position as a right-wing response to mass unemployment, should create conflict when it becomes involved in comprehensive education, with its liberal and socialist roots. The Commission's activity has been no less destructive in the field of training. The Youth Opportunities Programme and its successor YTS represent

The Gateshead LAPP (continued from page 84)

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part of what Dan Finn calls an attempt "to remake the British working class", to create a workforce that "is adaptable, reliable, motivated and is prepared to work at wages that employers can afford to pay" — in Nigel Lawson's words. It is true, as several authors in this volume point out, that the traditional routes of entry into the labour market hardly represented a golden age. Training was under-funded by industry, lacked any central economic strategy, and offered too little to certain groups of young workers, notably young women. But this system is being replaced by schemes which, with some exceptions, offer little real training other than habituation to work discipline, low pay, racism and sexism; and schemes which moreover have directly displaced employment.

This book succeeds both in providing a basic coverage of the MSC's operations, and in generating stimulating discussion of the assumptions and aims around which its ideology is constructed. On a number of issues, there is no clear consensus amongst the authors: whilst not a fault in the book, the editors of which disclaim any attempt to offer a worked-out 'line', these grey areas do point to a need for further discussion if opposition to the MSC is to be effective. After all, it was the very "failure of progressive education to stake out its territory" (according to Benn and Fairley) which allowed the interests represented by the MSC so much room for manoeuvre.

For example, the authors are not agreed on their attitude to the education and training systems which the MSC is dismantling, and to the alternatives that could replace the Commission's and the government's present policies. Should the defenders of the education system rally around the value of a general, humanist education — as Andy Green advocates in his chapter on Further Education — or should we attempt to carve out a sort of 'left vocationalism', as Dan Finn seems to suggest, aiming to respond to "the real destinies and interests of the young working class: the world of work"? Similarly, what weight should be given to employers' interests in education and training, and how should these be expressed?

The last point raises an issue around which policies on education and training must revolve: the relationship between those systems and the distribution of economic power in society. Progressive educational policy of the post-war decades failed to dissolve hierarchies of power and income. The MSC's response is, from the point of view of contributors to this book, the politics of despair — to hand over the education and training mechanism to inequality, and preclude even marginal readjustments in the chances of youngsters. The real alternative to the MSC may involve what the editors call 'a fundamental challenge to the prevailing practices of work allocation according to hidden social assumptions about the "type of work" appropriate to individuals on account of their sex, race or social origins.' This book could not perform the much-needed task of putting the MSC under a harsh spotlight whilst also giving full attention to this question. But if there is to be a progressive ideology that can withstand the MSC's offensive, the focus of the debate has to widen from the education and training system, to embrace a discussion of how work, and the

power and income that go with it, should be allocated.

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Collegiate System

Managing Primary Schools by Christopher Day, David Johnston, Patrick Whitaker. Harper and Row (1985) pp. 205.

Although the present minister of education does not see fit to promote a collegiate system of management in schools, there is no doubt that there is a growing trend towards such a system. Even if this is not formalised through the salary structure, heads now realise that staff involvement in planning all aspects of school life is not only conducive to harmonious staff relations but is also effective. It is recognised that any school is likely to include a 'Stone Age obstructionist' (Dayle and Ponder 1976) on its staff, but these individuals are more likely to be drawn out of that attitude by a whole staff project than by a directive from above. This book includes many strategies for involving staff in management exercises and includes convincing arguments that this is a most effective way to proceed.

In his introduction to the book, Philip Gammage of Nottingham University states — 'This is an account and a compendium, blending theory with practice, research with prescription' written by 'practitioners mindful of the need to manage primary schools as professional, accountable and yet essentially educational institutions.' As such, there is a lot of food for thought here which needs careful evaluation before a selection is made for practical application.

Though there is a wide range of ideas put forward, the book is written from the point of view that the headteacher should be a leader and 'leadership here is defined as "consultancy"'. 'The consultant, be he or she head, deputy, scale post holder or L.E.A. adviser/inspector, can only be indirectly responsible for the teaching in the classroom.' 'Adults, like children, cannot be developed; they can only be given opportunities to develop. This is a crucial principle, for it points the way to the consultants' role in the

process of curriculum and staff development. In essence, he or she cannot enforce change, only promote it.'

The wide range of ideas allows the reader to select what is appropriate for his/her needs and then to make use of the lists of factors to be considered in any particular case. The use of lists is a feature of the book which facilitates ease of reference, for this is a work which should be always readily available so that one can check that all considerations are being met when planning a particular course of action.

The authors are ever sensitive to the problems of introducing new procedures in schools, be it curriculum development, evaluation or appraisal. They realise that most of us are reluctant to expose our weaknesses to outside observers and therefore need constant reassurance about the motives behind any action which calls for us to do so. The book then is practical in the sense that it recognises the very real problems which staff management involves.

I have already mentioned that selecting material from the book for practical application needs to be done carefully and this is particularly true in respect of lengths of time involved. The authors mention that time is a scarce resource and in fact give help in the effective management of time, but in today's crowded timetable it would be difficult to fit some of the proposed projects involving concentrated sessions of staff meetings. If change is to be looked upon as a normal part of school life, as the authors suggest, then this aspect of management has to be watched very carefully.

Managing Primary Schools is of interest to all teachers in primary schools but is particularly useful for headteachers. It not only orientates thoughts towards the real human problems in management — 'without a clear vision... of what is desired... school management is likely to degenerate into little more than a set of techniques designed to minimise difficulties and lead to a less hectic life' — but it gives practical support for the many possible courses of action which are suggested. In these times of rapidly changing attitudes in and to schools this book could prove to be extremely useful.

MICHAEL CLARKE

Integration in the USA

Mainstreaming in Massachusetts (1986) by Vaughn M and Shearer A, Centre for Studies on Integration in Education (CSIE) and Campaign for People with Mental Handicaps (CMH) £2.00, pp.38.

This publication was written by the authors after a visit to Massachusetts in May 1985. It is about special education practice in Massachusetts schools under the US legal framework PL94.142 (the US federal equivalent of the British Education Act of 1981) and the Massachusetts law Chapter 766. With ten years of experience of mainstreaming in this State, the authors consider that Britain has some lessons to learn about the education of children with special needs.

The booklet consists of initial sections which outline the federal law 94.142 which amongst other aspects requires that the 50 States are responsible for identifying children with special needs and providing for them in the least restrictive environment. Each child is to have an individualised educational plan (IEP) which gives a profile of the child's needs and the ways in which objectives will be achieved over a one-year period. The Massachusetts State law goes further than the federal law in Chapter 766 in replacing the traditional categories of special education provision (such as mentally retarded etc) with a system of classifying special need according to the degree of time spent out of the ordinary class receiving special provision. The different degrees of time spent are referred to as Program Prototypes and correspond to different administrative arrangements for teaching children with special needs ranging from regular class placement with minor modifications to full-time separate provision. This scheme corresponds to some extent to the concept of a continuum of provision which is current in special education thinking, if not practice, in this country. One of the most interesting aspects of the Massachusetts system is the time limits set for each stage of the formal procedures for special provision. For example, following the parents giving consent to evaluation, it has to be completed within 30 days.

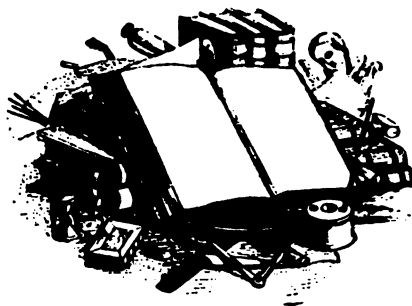
The booklet continues with an account of the context of the reform in Massachusetts and of who is eligible for special education. There are summaries of interviews with leading people involved in promoting and developing the new framework. Various evaluation reports are discussed which indicate that many of the fears that ordinary schools would be overrun by profoundly disabled children and young people were not well founded. The booklet then includes some examples of 'mainstreaming' in practice — with particular reference to the story of Becci Ingram, a 9 year old girl with Down's syndrome who used to go to an ILEA school before her parents emigrated to Massachusetts. The point of the story is to show how ILEA had at that time no plans for the integrated education of Becci whereas now she is in a special class for children who have severe learning difficulties, which is part of a regular school. The 'special class' children at times join the other children for some subjects and these other children at times join the 'special class' children.

The booklet ends with sections on parental rights and involvement and some pointers for Britain, lessons which could be learned from the system in Massachusetts. Such a publication is clearly of considerable interest and relevance to the British system and would be worthwhile reading not only for those with a direct interest in special education but for all educators, as children with special needs are a concern for all.

A very important lesson drawn by the authors relates to the commitment to mainstreaming in Massachusetts. It illustrates what can be achieved with commitment, especially the commitment of the professionals and administrators involved. Another point made by the authors concerns the dependence of integration on a strong and cherished general education system.

The lessons for Britain are clear and not particularly encouraging in the short term, considering the difficulties which the general school system has been experiencing in this country. However, one of the lessons that can be drawn from this comparative exercise is that integration or mainstreaming as a principle has to be interpreted very broadly. The Massachusetts system from the authors' account does not involve the abolition of all separate provision. Integration involves better linking, better contacts and a greater sense of belonging to the regular school for children with special needs. The rhetoric of integration is often counterproductive in this respect. It can frighten ordinary school teachers, parents and children and can raise expectations to an unrealistic level about what is administratively and practically feasible in the school system as we know it. The limits of what is practicable is itself a controversial issue, but a good way of ensuring that all children receive appropriate education is to address this issue as well. This booklet can be strongly recommended.

BRAHM NORWICH
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Education



A Powerful Document?

Defend Comprehensive Schools, a Communist Party Discussion Pamphlet, October 1986, £1.00

The Communist Party has produced a brilliant and timely defence of the comprehensive school system in Britain. Written by Brian Simon following a series of discussions in the Education Advisory Committee, **Defend Comprehensive Schools** is both an attack on the vicious and divisive policies of the Thatcher Government and a forthright statement of comprehensive values. It is pleasing to note, in passing, that it has been deemed worthy of a half-page review in the pages of **The Times Education Supplement**.

According to the latest official statistics, more than 90 per cent of local authority pupils now attend non-selective schools in England (more in Wales and nearly 100 per cent in Scotland). Yet the Left has generally failed to produce strong definitive statements about the aims and objectives of a genuinely comprehensive system. This pamphlet sets out to repair the deficiency.

It is frankly acknowledged that the 'academic' curriculum still predominates in many comprehensive schools, and the pamphlet argues for a common curriculum for all students which incorporates the academic, the practical, the technical and the vocational.

All students should have access to knowledge and culture as it has been accumulated through social development since the start of civilisation. But also all students should have access to scientific and technological developments and to their application in production. All students should have the opportunity of developing productive skills, skills in the areas of craft, design and technology, as is, in fact, now beginning to be implemented in many comprehensive schools.

In the view of the Communist Party (and it is surely one which can attract widespread support) 'comprehensive schools... should aim to develop in their students the ability to make their own informed choices and decisions, to develop their critical powers and confidence in their own ability to participate effectively in the control of their environment and change society in the interests of the people generally.'

It would be nice to think that this powerful document could be widely read as a vital contribution to the inevitable election debate on education. It is obtainable from:

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CLYDE CHITTY

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