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Teacher Expertise in the Primary School :
a Survey of Selected Schools in Two Education Authorities
in the North East of England

By

Christine Shinn Taylor

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Thesis submitted for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Education
UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM (1987)



-7 JAN 1988

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the nature and deployment of teacher expertise in the primary school. The relevance of that expertise to primary school requirements is assessed in the light of pupil, teacher and curricula needs.

A literature search revealed many definitions of the expertise which might be anticipated in the teaching personnel in primary education but, at the same time, produced a remarkable scarcity of teachers' opinions towards the debate on 'subject expertise'. It is this deficiency which this survey intends to redress.

This investigation was undertaken in order to present an overview of current practice. Research procedures, involving questionnaire, interviews, documentary analyses, diaries and free-accounts, identify the sources and areas of teacher competencies and the modes of deployment of those talents. Informants' acknowledgements of their own areas of strength and weakness form a major component of the survey, as do their desires for organizational strategies which will either alleviate perceived weaknesses or capitalize on declared strengths.

Elements raised in the literature review of Part I are empirically supported in the research findings of Part II. This is particularly evident when collected information indicates that human and financial resources and headteacher policies are crucial issues affecting the use of available teacher expertise, and when, from the collated data, two specific subjects emerge as giving serious cause for concern : music and science. These curricular areas are given more detailed reportage.

This inquiry reinforces and extends existing research and concludes that a more flexible use of teacher expertise is both necessary and desirable for the provision of a balanced curriculum. Teacher preferences for fuller deployment of existing expertise, professional skills and a judicious mixture of all talents are firmly established.

Statement of Copyright

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Acknowledgements

I am grateful to:

Mr. L.R. Barnes, my supervisor, for constructive discussions, advice and support,

Dr. I.G. Booth for his reading and critical comments, staff of the participating schools for their time, interest and willingness to assist, and

Sunderland Borough Council for granting me secondment from teaching duties to undertake this research.

INTRODUCTION

This study addresses teacher expertise in the primary school. The concept of the teacher 'expert' has been subject to changing definitions. Over recent years, expertise, as offered by certain members of the primary teaching force, has been formally recognized through scale posts. Whereas such posts awarded in the past have invariably encompassed rather mundane and insignificant jobs, there is a greater tendency in current practice to link these with specific curriculum responsibilities. The current holders of such posts have come to be looked upon as the in-school advisers or consultants and are often acknowledged as possessing 'curriculum expertise' or a 'relative expertise' in their specific area (the element of relativity arising from a comparison of the available teacher talents in the school). It is true to say that many post holders would be wary of the word 'expert' while only a small minority would consider themselves 'specialists'. Several might however admit to possessing particular curricular competencies worthy of utilization.

It is twenty years since Plowden¹ highlighted the idea of allowing eleven and twelve year olds

"the stimulus of teaching by, or at least of teaching supervised by, the specialists who are in charge of secondary school departments. This is especially valuable in subjects such as mathematics and science in which skilled teachers are scarce."

It is this mention of 'subject-specialists' which has aroused the critics in more recent times. Plowden made the statement while advocating a change in the transfer age from junior to secondary school but several reports and surveys since have promoted the idea of 'specialist' teaching, in junior departments especially, as a means of 'improving standards' and compensating for a 'lack of confidence' alleged by H.M.I.² to exist in many primary school teachers when dealing with particular subjects. Critics have suggested that such 'specialists' can only encourage the primary school curriculum to develop along the lines of secondary education by compartmentalizing separate subjects. The argument follows that any advancement in the deployment of subject specialists would be both detrimental and counter-productive to the accepted philosophies of primary education.

More recently still, have come calls³ for a "judicious mixture" of the talents of all teachers whether offering 'specialist' or 'generalist' expertise or a 'relative' expertise in curriculum appropriate knowledge and skills. The benefits to be accrued from the usual class teacher system operated in primary schools are rarely doubted. Questions which have arisen have asked whether *all* teachers can or should be expected to provide for *all* needs of *all* pupils across *all* areas of an increasingly widening and demanding curriculum.

The term 'expertise' as used throughout this thesis will therefore cover that wide definition of competencies already referred to

as well as any further strengths recognized in the teaching force on a paid, subject-orientated scale post or as a verbally acknowledged proficiency from individuals and colleagues.

This recent debate regarding 'subject-expertise' in the primary school has lacked any real contribution from teachers themselves. As those engaged in current practice, their needs, opinions and desires must be aired:

How do they perceive their own abilities to cope across the full primary curriculum?

Where do their areas of strength and weakness lie?

Is teacher expertise in specific curriculum areas appropriate to their needs?

What, for them, would contribute towards the most effective teaching and learning situations?

It was with these questions and previous related findings in mind that this research was deemed necessary. The objective was an overview of current practice with the aim of assessing the relevance of teacher 'expert' roles to the real requirements of primary education in general and the needs of pupils and teachers in particular.

The study focuses on what teachers would prefer in the way of organization, assistance and support. A close look is taken at methods employed for making the most of teacher strengths and at situations where expertise is going unnoticed and therefore untapped.

From the outset the study attempts to:

- (i) draw some conclusions concerning the continuity or otherwise between school documentation and the practice of teachers, i.e. to compare the rhetoric with the reality;
- (ii) make some tentative interpretations of the attitudes of teachers towards the initial business of selection and implementation of curricular policies;
- (iii) detect the main areas of 'strength' and 'weakness', from teachers' own opinions and acknowledged competencies, in transferring curricular expectations into classroom practice; and
- (iv) assess both the contribution and wastage of teachers' talents and the subsequent relevance of available expertise to primary school needs.

To this end, research techniques employed included questionnaire, interviews, free account schedules, informants' diaries and documentary analysis.

The research was conducted in two neighbouring education authorities in the North East of England across 4 schools selected for their differences as well as for certain similarities. The fifth school, chosen for the pilot study, yielded equally interesting and comparable results and, as little in the way of alteration proved necessary in the techniques and methods employed in that 'trial-run', it was decided to include the findings with those from the overall survey.

The research therefore comprised: 5 headteacher interviews administered after the completion and return of the headteacher questionnaire, 50 teacher interviews, 5 diaries and 5 free-account schedules. These main sources of information were supplemented by documentary materials from the two local education authorities including responses to D.E.S. circulars and memoranda as well as internal school brochures, prospectuses, job specifications and schemes of work. The interviews (by far the most revealing aspect of the study) took place between November 1986 and February 1987 as did the compilation, by teacher informants, of the diaries and free-accounts. Full details of the methodology and the research findings can be found in Part II of the study.

Part I presents an historical perspective against which the continuing contentions of 'specialist' and 'generalist' in the primary school can be brought into focus. This first section is a literature review accompanied by relevant reports, surveys and promulgations. Chapters 1 and 2 set out a documented context from which much of the criticism and calls for accountability can be seen to have germinated. Chapter 1 traces those suggestions for a "judicious mixture" of teacher expertise from the turn of the century to the present day and against the prevailing ideologies of elementary and primary school education. The term 'specialist' can be seen to embrace very broad definitions in its applicability to teacher talents. Phrases such as 'specialist skills', 'specialist knowledge' and 'specialist help' can be set alongside those expressed

by the Burnham Committee⁴ in their first recommendations for scale posts for 'special responsibilities', 'special work' and 'special qualifications.'

The growth of the post holder's role, post Plowden, is historically plotted and linked to those developing ideas that fuller deployment of teacher expertise through this role would contribute towards better quality of curriculum provision. The growth of the 'accountability movement' is also documented in its related declarations of a search for higher standards.

Chapter 1 is very much a diary of events recording the historical perspective of requests for full deployment of teacher expertise in the primary school. Chapter 2 augments that chronology by airing prevailing attitudes. The chapter connects the calls in recent times for a fuller use of teacher strengths to calls for accountability and desires for political control over the curriculum. At the same time, some positive effects from school evaluations are detected. Subsequent suggestions indicate that, whatever the origins of the evaluation movement, perhaps some worthwhile functions for teacher expertise have been revealed.

Chapter 3, while upholding that the present specialisms debate arises from attempts at 'quality-control', seeks to provide a wide range of opinions on the attributes and drawbacks associated with specialist and generalist teachers. The chapter recognizes the broader functioning currently allotted to both roles and sees possibilities for favourable mergers.

The final chapter of Part I submits a selection of the many varied duties currently seen to be applicable to teacher 'expertise', in whatever guises, in the primary school. The feasibility of some of these functions is discussed in the light of the restricted resources available to most schools. Despite the many problems raised by researchers and writers, it is concluded that there would seem to be a constructive part to be played by the teacher 'expert' in the primary school if given the opportunity.

Part II, the major section of the thesis, presents the research findings. Chapter 5 deals with the aims, objectives and all research procedures while the collected data are set out under appropriate headings in Chapters 6 to 9. The selected schools are introduced as case studies before analyses are undertaken of the sources and areas of teacher expertise found to exist (Chapter 7), the modes of deployment of various teacher talents (Chapter 8) and an assessment of the relevance of those talents to pupil and teacher needs (Chapter 9). This latter chapter includes a substantial section on particular curriculum areas which warranted special coverage due to allegations in previous surveys that they were badly taught and indications in this study that they required urgent attention. The final chapter (Chapter 10) comprises a series of numbered statements emphasizing the main conclusions and offering some suggestions towards applications for the research data.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. The PLOWDEN REPORT (1967) 'Children and their Primary Schools' LONDON:HMSO, para. 370.
2. The 1978 H.M.I. Survey revealed inadequacies in the teaching of areas such as science, history, geography, art and craft. The Thomas Report (1985) - an I.L.E.A. survey 'Improving Primary Schools' reinforced these findings by pointing to a lack of confidence' in several curricular areas - (see paras. 2.144, 2.151 and 2.163 especially - referring to music, P.E. and science respectively).
3. The phrase "judicious mixture", when referring to teachers' talents generally but to those of the specialist and generalist specifically, enters the debate regularly. It was possibly in the Board of Education's 1923 revised Handbook of Suggestions where it was first coined in this context. More recently, the phrase has been associated with Rose (1986), as chief HMI for primary education, in a talk given to the National Association for Primary Education's A.G.M. (April 1986).
4. BURNHAM COMMITTEE REPORT (1948) Scales of Salaries for Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools. LONDON:HMSO.

PART I

AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

CHAPTER 1

THE CHRONICLED CONTEXT

The precise nature of the primary school teacher's role has been a matter for debate for over 80 years. The issue of the class teacher as 'generalist', 'subject-specialist', or as a creature capable of coping with a prudent amalgam of the two, has appeared with an almost predictable regularity since the 1905 'Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers':¹

"In large schools the greater part of instruction in each class is generally assigned to one teacher, and this is the best arrangement if the teacher can treat each branch of the curriculum with success. If, however, the teachers are not proficient in all subjects alike, the work may be distributed so as to assign instructions to those members of staff who have special knowledge of them."

Eighteen years on and the 1923 revised 'Handbook'² actually refers to a waste of talent in teaching and suggests a "judicious" use of specialization as a method for efficiently deploying available expertise. Although both 'Handbooks' mentioned were referring to the elementary school which catered for pupils up to 12 and, in some instances 14, it is fair to assume that pupils of 10 and 11, in the present latter years of junior school, would have been included.

Taylor (1986)³ traces the 'Changing Character of Primary Education' from elementary to primary and cites The Hadow Report



of 1931 as capturing the essence of primary education with 'activity' and 'interest' becoming key words. Already an emphasis on teaching methods and a broader curriculum begins to appear. Taylor suggests that, by 1939, "the nature of primariness had changed both in its theory and its practice."

From 1944 until fairly recently Campbell (1985)⁴ suggests that relatively weak control was exercised by central and local authorities over what was taught in primary schools:

"primary school teachers worked on the assumption that the potential for developing the curriculum in their schools was restricted only by resources and by the talents, commitment and energies of individual teachers."

This statement does fail to take account of the 11+ examination which, certainly with hindsight, undoubtedly restricted curriculum development from the time factor alone. As long as the 'top' classes in junior schools were being trained, day after day, in appropriate speed-tests then little time remained for more adventurous pursuits. Kogan (1980) acknowledges that this apparent autonomy of the primary school can be overstated and chooses to summarize the position thus:

"after 1945, the convention that schools create their own curriculum became part of the established wisdom of British education. It was announced to be the right way of doing things."

Alexander (1984) in 'Primary Teaching' explores some of the background to the considerable degree of autonomy assigned to

the primary Head and class teacher - an issue which he sees as having raised the question of accountability. This book addresses some of the contingent questions of the degree to which primary teachers can be held responsible for classroom processes and outcomes and the kinds of teacher competence which have to be assumed in order to validate self-evaluation or professional accountability.

The 1944 'Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers'⁵ speaks in terms highly recognizable today from government sources. It emphasizes the need for "modern education" to "adapt itself to modern needs". From the conception of the primary school and throughout the 1959 Handbook there is an assumption that the class teacher rather than the specialist is more desirable for promoting the envisaged learning situations. The 1959 Handbook discourages learning through 'subjects' until upper junior classes but, at the same time, recognizes the value of deploying available teacher talents:

"the primary school is richer for any specialist knowledge or skill possessed by any of its teachers."

It suggests that the headteacher should make use of staffs' special interests and knowledge and

"encourage members of his team to seek specialist help from each other when this is available."

It was in 1948 that a recommendation of the Burnham Committee stated that:

"For assistant teachers there shall be special posts in respect of which allowances over and above the

scale salary shall be granted for special responsibilities, special work of advanced character, special academic qualifications or other circumstances." 6

Early interpretations of "special responsibilities" in the primary school indicate a partiality towards supervisory responsibilities. The Stockport Enquiry (1984)⁷ highlights needlework stock and boys' games as favourite areas and adds:

"Some posts seem to have been awarded for length of service, with no pretence at special responsibilities, while others appear to have been given to teachers who happened to be working in the school when the posts became available."

Despite this rather arbitrary start to life there has developed, over the years, an increasing interest in the role of post-holders in primary schools. The documented path leading to a view of curriculum expertise in context must therefore take into account the increasing emphasis given to the post holder's role, post Plowden.

Although the Plowden Report (1967) envisaged the post-holder's main responsibility to be in helping headteachers write schemes of work, any changes in primary school practice in this area were slow to occur. Plowden's impact was in child-centred education and recommendations made for post-holder functioning were not adopted at that time but were left for later events such as the 1978 H.M.I. Survey. It was these later reports which reinforced and thoroughly advocated curricular roles for post-holders.

A greatly extended range of activities is proposed for

'consultants' in 8-12 schools (DES 1970)⁸ including guidance to colleagues, paired teaching, team leadership and establishing curricular links with other schools. A far more substantial role is identified in 'Primary Education in England' (HMI/DES 1978) with a view to post-holders beneficially influencing the quality of work throughout the school.

On this theme of improved quality, two major reports on specific areas of the curriculum - Bullock (1974) - makes a case for a language co-ordinator in primary schools, while Cockcroft (1982) prescribes a detailed list of duties to be performed by the maths co-ordinator. More documents and speeches followed. HMI/DES 1982⁹ and 1983¹⁰ are but two which illustrate the increasing limelight focused on curriculum post-holders. The aspect of improving curriculum quality has been paramount while the talents and expertise expected from the post-holder have expanded. The assumption throughout is that the post-holder, in possession of both curricular and interpersonal skills, will lead the way through a particular curriculum area to the 'best' that can be offered and maintained.

Within this context of quality, and developing alongside since the mid-1970's, has been a concern for 'standards' and especially those reached by able children in primary schools. This movement can be traced not only in DES and HMI but also in the 'Black Papers'¹¹ where an alleged decline in standards was laid at the door of a supposed dominance and reliance on progressive methods. This whole

issue of falling standards can be seen to have become the germination bed for what is now considered to be political control over the curriculum. Briefly, this might be viewed in the destruction of the teacher controlled agency for curriculum development - The Schools Council, and the establishment of a DES unit for national curriculum evaluation - The Assessment and Performance Unit,¹² as well as in the steady flow of documents from the DES on aspects of the school curriculum (see ref. 15-18) all hinting at aspirations towards central control.

In 1984, Sir Keith Joseph, the Secretary of State for Education, expressed a desire to the North of England Conference¹³ for the primary school curriculum to have more breadth, more differentiation, more relevance and a better balance between its parts. He called for explicit definition to be given to

"the objectives of each phase and of each subject area of the curriculum, of what in each needs to be learned by all pupils and of what should additionally be attempted by some."

It is arguable that Sir Keith simply accelerated a process already begun by James Callaghan - the then Labour Prime Minister - when he launched the 'Great Debate' with his Ruskin College speech in Oxford.¹⁴ He questioned 'standards' and 'accountability' in the education of the future workforce of the nation. From here stemmed the notion of a 'core-curriculum' whether defined in terms of subjects to the age of 16, or in terms of 'areas of experience' as preferred by H.M.I. In short, moves were afoot for political

influence on practice - moves which began with a series of circulars from the DES. Circular 14/77¹⁵ required local authorities to report upon the extent to which practice in their schools matched that envisaged in central policy. Circulars 6/81¹⁶ and 8/83¹⁷ actually specified the particular document - 'The School Curriculum' (DES 1981)¹⁸ to which conformity was expected and therefore assumed professional acceptance. The Government's White Paper 'Better Schools' (Cmd. 9469, 1985) sets out a whole range of issues connected with children's education. It is through documents such as these that the DES could be seen to be more active and certainly more directive, making this last decade somewhat different to the previous one.

The "core-curriculum" is viewed, in part, as a means of harnessing pupils - girls in particular - to subjects which might otherwise be dropped at an early stage and accounts for the government's commitment to the provision of these subjects for all pupils from 5 to 16.¹⁹ Coupled with this is the government's determination to see greater subject expertise introduced into primary schools where, it is now believed by DES, children's attitudes, towards science and technology in particular, are formed.

At the same time as the 'run-up' occurred towards the '5-16 curriculum' culminating in Sir Keith's speech to the Council of Local Education Authorities Conference (July 1984)²⁰ Mr. Eric Bolton, Senior Chief HMI, in his first major speech on primary education (May 1984),²¹ called for a bold and ambitious re-think of teaching

methods and organization in primary schools. He advocated that class teaching "should cease to dominate" and that children from 9 years upwards "need to be taught by 'subject specialists' for some of the time", especially in maths and science. If this has a familiar ring to it the reader might care to return to that statement from Plowden (1967, para. 370) quoted in the Introduction to this study. Bolton's words have a greater urgency to them with "should cease" and "need to be taught" by comparison to Plowden's "allows ... the stimulus of teaching by" and, of course, Plowden advocated that class-teaching should remain the main essence of primary education. There are however distinct echoes from the past in Bolton's words - some even reminiscent of those found in the 1905 'Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers' (see reference 1).

Similar reverberations sounded when Jim Rose,²² as chief HMI for primary education, addressed the annual general meeting of the National Association for Primary Education (1986). Within the context of how much the 'generalist' and how much the 'subject-specialist' the primary school teacher should be, Rose suggested that the way forward lay "not in one extreme or the other - all the curriculum provided by the class teacher or all provided by specialists - but a judicious mixture of both forms of organization to make the best use of the talents of the teachers." Sixty three years before this speech, the 1923 revised 'Handbook' had had similar ideas in mind.

The extent to which teachers' strengths are utilized will form a major component of this study. Having traced the historical context within which calls for deployment of teacher talents, competencies, expertise and specialisms have emerged, it can be seen that these are not confined to recent times. Calls in the last 15 years must be viewed against a backcloth of questioning, quality-control and accountability, whereas those which are over half a century old must be seen in the context of the elementary school - its aims and practices. Has there really been a complete shift of emphases in primary education since those days of the 1905 'Handbook Suggestions' or, have beliefs regarding the acquisition of subject knowledge remained - albeit in a semi-dormant state? One other contentious proposition lends itself to some reflection - the possibility that current demands have caused the context within which we educate 5 to 11 year olds to come full circle!

It is this concept of *how* pupils in primary schools are best educated which is central to this whole study. How the needs of pupils can be effectively met is a crucial question which will be dealt with in successive chapters and addressed in the empirical research.

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2. BOARD OF EDUCATION (1923) the revised 'Handbook'. (The Handbook was revised at infrequent intervals.)
3. TAYLOR, P.H. (1986) 'Expertise and the Primary School Teacher' - see page 7.
4. CAMPBELL, R.J. (1985) Developing The Primary School Curriculum, page 13.
5. The Handbooks at this stage were issued by THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION and not the BOARD of earlier times.
6. This pronouncement was made in the BURNHAM COMMITTEE REPORT (1948) Scales of Salaries for Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools. LONDON: HMSO.
7. METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF STOCKPORT (1984) Specialisms in the Primary School: para. 1.3.
8. D.E.S. (1970) 'Towards the Middle School', LONDON: HMSO.
9. HMI/DES (1982) 'Education 5-9: An Illustrative Survey'. LONDON: HMSO.
10. HMI/DES (1983) '9-13 Middle Schools: An Illustrative Survey'. LONDON: HMSO.
11. Two such papers of the period were:
COX, C.B. and BOYSON, R. (ed) (1975) Black Paper. LONDON: DENT.
COX, C.B. and BOYSON, R. (ed) (1977) Black Paper. LONDON: TEMPLE SMITH.
12. The A.P.U. was established by the DES in 1975 for the monitoring of specific areas of the curriculum.
13. JOSEPH, SIR K. (1984) Speech to the North of England Education Conference, Sheffield, Friday 6 January 1984 (in *Oxford Review of Education*, Vol. 10, No.2).
14. Callaghan, J. (1976) 'Towards a National Debate - The Prime Minister's Ruskin Speech', *Education*, 22 October, pp.332-3.

15. DES (1979) Local Authority Arrangements for the School Curriculum, Report on the Circular 14/77 Review. LONDON: HMSO.
16. DES (1981) Circular 6/81.)
17. DES (1983) Circular 8/83.)
-) Circulars asking each L.E.A. to review its policy for the school curriculum and to consult governors and teachers before publishing a formal statement.
18. DES (1981) 'The School Curriculum' outlines, without much detail, the core curriculum for primary schools.
19. CURRICULUM MATTERS: a series of discussion documents published by HMI under this general title. The Foreword explains that the need for such was brought about by the announcement from the Secretary of State in his speech in Sheffield in January, 1984, that he intended to seek broad agreement about the objectives of the 5 to 16 curriculum.
20. JOSEPH, SIR. K. (1984) Speech to the Council of Local Education Authorities Conference, July 1984 (reported in T.E.S. 27 July 1984, 'National Curriculum step nearer')
21. BOLTON, E.J. (1984) "Current Issues in Primary Education" talk given 12 May 1984 at The National Association for Primary Education - A.G.M.
22. ROSE, J. (1986) - talk given to The National Association for Primary Education and reported in Times Educational Supplement 'Staff becoming subject consultants' 2 May 1986.

CHAPTER 2

CRITICISM AND EVALUATION

This chapter presents some of the varied sentiments surrounding specific influences on primary education. It develops the chronology of Chapter 1 by linking climates of opinion to moves designed to affect primary school practice. The chapter is divided into 3 subsections with the aim of gradually unfolding the critical context in which recent conceptions of teacher expertise have come to be viewed.

The first section approaches the aspect of questioning which has become a prominent feature of current practice. This questioning can be shown to exist in the presumed acceptance of child-centred ideologies, the related emphasis on providing for each individual pupil and in teachers' own self-questioning of their provision for those individual needs. This scrutiny can then be traced beyond the school to calls for a greater accountability from primary schools of their methods for satisfactorily meeting the needs of all individual pupils.

The second section 'Evaluations - within and without' tenders the opinions of several authors on the benefits or difficulties likely to ensue from interrogation becoming a regular feature of primary school policy. It is from the 'accountability movement' without and school development programmes within that current desires

for curriculum expertise can be detected.

The final section proposes that it is through the deployment of subject expertise in the primary school that methods of control on curricula provision have been seen to be feasible. Those calls in the first half of the century for a fuller use of teacher skills, which were presented in Chapter 1, tended to focus on compensation for staff weaknesses, avoidance of wastage and the accepted benefits likely to stem from utilization of special interests and knowledge. Recent similar calls from HMI have seemingly suggested comparable themes but, as this chapter highlights, these calls have occurred in such close proximity to government plans for accountability and adherence to core-curricula that other conclusions have tended to be drawn. Moves to deploy teacher expertise and/or specialisms in the primary school have come to be associated with appeasing the critics, allaying fears and introducing an element of quality control on the primary school curriculum. Whether or not these prove to be the only uses for teacher expertise in the primary school will be a major feature of this whole study.

Critical Approaches

Blenkin and Kelly (1981)¹ devote a high percentage of their book 'The Primary Curriculum' to exploring some of the major influences on the development of primary education. They argue that in this way we are more likely to achieve a clearer picture of its theoretical bases. They assume that the official ideology

of primary education can be viewed as 'progressive' education, following the same principles as that movement, developing over many years from the thoughts of Rousseau and his counterparts and reinforced by developmental psychologists. They justify that assumption by stating that some official sanction was given to this view by Hadow (1931) and Plowden (1967).

To understand what exactly is meant by education being 'child-centred' one needs to grasp the implications behind the shift of emphasis which took place. This shift is usually referred to as one which gave higher regard to the knower than to the knowledge itself, with the child no longer the passive learner of previous times but seen to have a positive role in his classroom world of activity and creativity. It is this 'progressive' tradition which Blenkin and Kelly feel is currently at risk, not only from external sources, but also from within teaching itself, if all those involved do not clarify exactly what it is they are about.

Few writers or educational personnel would dispute the emphasis in the primary classroom being placed on the development of the child as an individual - an important facet of 'progressive' education. However, some interesting reflections are cast by Walkerdine (1983) when considering:

"that set of assumptions which is shared by the considerable range of positions in which the nature of the individual child is unquestioningly taken to be the natural starting point for thinking about education."

The seemingly uncontroversial assumption, stated by Plowden on the

opening page of 'Children and their Primary Schools' (1967), that

"underlying all educational questions is the nature
of the child himself"

is put under the microscope by Walkerdine. She sets out an argument that certain classroom practices, centred on "individualism" may actually manufacture the individual rather than reveal "a natural individual". Teachers might thus be blinkered from seeing children in any other way. Walkerdine quotes the 1978 HMI report on Primary Education in England as testifying to the "almost universal occurrence of grouping and individual work" as indicating the concern that teachers have for individual children. Could it be, Walkerdine asks, that the techniques and practices which teachers use every day actually produce the nature of the child?

This idea that teachers would do well to operate forms of self-questioning becomes a salient factor in much of the literature reviewed, as does the increasing questioning and growing scrutiny from without. This latter development is now most often referred to as the 'accountability movement' and it is this which Rodger and Richardson (1985) see as being the source of many of the pressures behind the low teacher morale detectable in many schools. Galton, Simon and Croll (1980) see the origins of many criticisms as being in the early 'Black Papers'² where the editors claimed that traditional standards were being rapidly eroded. Richard's paper 'Primary Education 1974 to 1980' in 'New Directions in Primary Education' (1982)³ identifies the four issues of contraction, curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation as indicators of a change

which has been largely initiated from outside. Throughout this book, control and accountability are given considerable attention while set against the 'traditional versus progressive' backcloth.

In any attempt to give a balanced run-up to, and sum-up of, the 'accountability movement' the desire grows to endeavour to answer the criticisms of one paper or survey with the results and findings of another. For example, the theme running through 'The Black Papers' of eroded standards was, to some extent, contradicted in the study of streaming carried out by the NFER (Barker-Lunn, 1970) which indicated that only one third of the teachers in the sample advocated mixed ability grouping and that the majority supported traditional practices.

Around the same time, the controversial study on standards of reading carried out by the NFER⁴ coupled with the media interest in these and the William Tyndale affair⁵ served as catalysts for further criticisms of modern practice. Galton, Simon and Croll (1980)⁶ state that on numerous occasions the methods of primary school teaching have been held responsible, by critics of both education and teachers, for "indiscipline, the increase in crime rate, vandalism and also for a supposed decline in literacy and numeracy." In short, seeds of moral panic were sown as well as those of doubt and distrust. What was really happening behind classroom walls? A monitoring of standards seemed to be one method of pacifying the critics.

Evaluations - Within and Without

Rodger and Richardson (1985)⁷ see the origins of self-evaluation in the 'Accountability Movement.' The teaching profession must however, be wary of acknowledging this to any great extent for it would then immediately seem, especially to those critics still ready to swoop that, prior to the probings of that movement, no teacher or school ever made attempts at evaluation. The term 'self-evaluation', as used by many authors, must be carefully construed. It is a term used increasingly to denote evaluation within the school as opposed to that exercised by outside bodies. However, the idea of personal self-evaluation, i.e. the teacher questioning his/her own techniques and performance, is surely nothing new.

The primary school curriculum must be evaluated in order to assess and point towards its own pathways of development and success if not to satisfy recent demands for monitoring. It might be argued that assessment of the teacher's professional self has always been present, to different degrees, regardless of the jargon attached to this exercise. It takes no real soul-searching on the part of the teacher to discover that pupils are showing little interest and neither responding nor improving. To let warning signs go unheeded would eventually lead down the path to classroom-chaos. In many instances the teaching atmosphere would become intolerable, leading to a complete breakdown in the education process, while in others, the feed-back would become so infrequent as to be negligible and therefore disheartening and depressing. In fact, it could be argued,

that of all professionals, the teacher, (even if not seeming to live up to the expectations from certain critical quarters), has every reason to be an honest, disciplined evaluator of both self and content if, for no other reason than that of self-sanity. Even more so for the majority of primary school teachers who, for one full academic year, must educate, entertain and enthuse the same set of individuals across a broad range of experiences. This in itself is likely to produce vigilance in the search for progression and new and more interesting stimuli.

A recurring theme in much of the literature reviewed, and mentioned briefly in Chapter 1, is that of the primary school curriculum having developed in a manner more or less free from the external constraints placed upon other educational establishments in the way of public examinations. (As was previously stated, this freedom was certainly trimmed to some extent by the 11+ examination and, of course, streaming.) It is also thought to have remained free from internal constraints of a structure based on distinct subject departments. Many of the phrases constantly found in written policies and reports referring to the flexibility of the primary school curriculum emphasize that stated aims should be to encourage children 'to question', 'to predict', 'to learn and practise skills.' These aims were reinforced by the views propounded by Hadow (1931) in those often quoted words:

"the curriculum is to be thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than of knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored."

If these ideals are to be paramount in primary school policies then there must be the realization that whatever types of evaluation are used within, by teachers and school for purposes of assessments, these are hardly likely to be the same measurement criteria employed from outside for greater public accountability. The result can only be imposition from without.

Blenkin and Kelly (1981) believe that the principles behind curriculum development at the primary level must be examined in their own proper context and not scrutinized by styles of evaluation that derive from different sources. They go beyond the mere notion of these styles being unsuitable by stating that they are

"likely to introduce distortion rather than rigour, to cut across the natural development of a good many years and to lead to losses rather than gains in educational terms." 8

It is in the calls from D.E.S. to L.E.A.s⁹ regarding curriculum content and progression that those involved in primary education might detect pressures from without. Many of the documented requests from D.E.S., which have been issued over the last 8 years, along with the 'Curriculum Matters Series'¹⁰ publications from HMI, serve to highlight the dichotomy between the accepted integrated nature of the primary school curriculum and the compartmentalized features of these subject-orientated statements. In short, those methods of evaluation imposed from without, and feared by many authors to have the potential for serious repercussions within the primary school, are indeed upon us.

It is the intention in Part II of this study to detect how these external influences have affected the selected schools of the survey. It is also proposed to identify any signs of school-centred evaluations having had any of the beneficial effects which have been evident in the findings of other research.

Rodger and Richardson (1985) stress that evaluation is for the school as a whole and, despite the 'accountability movement', schools should not fall into the trap of self-evaluation becoming merely an exercise in self-justification. Evaluation should not be purely for accountability purposes. They believe that self-evaluation has several worthwhile functions as an integral part of the curriculum development process, airing opinions on school climate and resources to improve quality and to increase the democratisation of school management. From this should follow an extension of the professional skills of the staff and a utilization of all the expertise available in the school. Rodger and Richardson are convinced that once a school has managed to extend and regularise these activities they will be better able to render an adequate account of their activities to the public, hence "the process of self-evaluation is a self-validating one."¹¹

It is this same issue of evaluation through staff discussions, organized meetings, working parties, etc. that Campbell (1985)¹² sets out to explore in his book 'Developing the Primary School Curriculum.' He sees these activities and the changes that follow from them as the major mechanism for what has become known as 'school-based'

curriculum development. From within this context Campbell views the possibilities for the development of the 'collegial' school with its working groups of teachers developing school-wide policies and practices. In other words, the process of self-evaluation can be the source of teacher collaboration and the subsequent deployment of available subject expertise. It is by such developments that Alexander (1984) maintains that the privatized equilibrium of 'my class' and 'my school' as often viewed by teacher and Head respectively, will be replaced by a sometimes uncomfortable collective analysis of school-wide problems and responsibilities.

With subject areas designated by D.E.S./H.M.I. for coverage in the primary school, the quality of that coverage has been brought to the fore. Whereas some authors believe that internal evaluation and subsequent curriculum development programmes will have the effect of ensuring that schools generate quality of provision, others have doubts. It is from within the demands for accountability that the most recent calls for subject specialization would seem to have germinated. It is "the pressure" of subject specialisms which Blenkin and Kelly (1981)¹³ believe will have the effect of undermining the unified approach to curriculum in the primary school.

It becomes evident that variations occur in assumptions regarding the nature of the subject specialist in the primary school. While some authors see the specialist as one who, by definition, teaches only his or her subject throughout the school in secondary sector fashion, others are prepared to interpret 'specialism' as expertise

in a specific curriculum area, possessed by some or all class teachers and worthy of fuller deployment where and when revealed by processes of school self-evaluation.

Quality Control

It might be argued that the rise of the 'specialisms' issue in primary education still harks back to those debates of the 70's when primary teachers were criticised for neglecting to plan for a reasonable standard in basic skills and suggestions were made that children were suffering because teaching aims were not clear. In fact, the 1978 Primary Survey produced no evidence to support the view that 'progressive' education was widespread even though the survey itself was actually conducted between autumn 1975 and spring 1977 - a period coinciding with those main events of Auld 1976¹⁴ (the William Tyndale public enquiry), Bennett's (1976) controversial 'Teaching Styles and Pupil Performance' report and 'The Great Debate' launched by Callaghan's Ruskin College speech.¹⁵ Barker-Lunn (1984) commented on these and subsequent events in her paper 'Junior Schools and their organizational policies' - evaluative research carried out by NFER in 1980 on 732 junior schools and departments. The figures indicate that help for more able children had increased considerably and many schools had formed enrichment groups. There was an attempt to cope more adequately with individual differences and this was seen to be in direct response to the Primary Survey. Further research by Barker-Lunn

into teachers' methods and practices reported in The Times Educational Supplement (7 December 1984) - 'Basics still top of the junior timetable' shows topic and project work to be much less frequent than traditional work. Barker-Lunn comments:

"What is clear is that the vast majority of junior school teachers are firmly in control of their classrooms. They determine what activities their pupils will undertake there is no need to exhort them to go back to basics."

These research findings of the 1980's would all seem to answer the main criticisms of the 70's. However, in that same article (T.E.S.) Mr. Norman Thomas, former chief HMI for primary education, remarks that this general picture of a narrow curriculum dominated by the basics underlines the need for schools to broaden their approach. This general theme of 'basics dominating' has been reinforced in several other pieces of research including Bassey's Nottinghamshire survey (1978)¹⁶ and the ORACLE Studies¹⁷ of Galton and Simon (1980) and Simon and Willcocks (1981). Even the recent I.L.E.A. 'Junior School Project' (1986)¹⁸ discovered that the majority of Heads stressed the value placed upon one or both of the basic-skill subjects, mathematics and language.

Cries from the critics have subsequently revolved around raising standards, increasing the scope of the primary school curriculum, more differentiation in accordance with children's abilities and aptitudes and an improvement in the methods employed to ensure planned progression for all pupils in all aspects of the curriculum. On this latter aspect, Lady Plowden regretted the "lack of planned progression

either in class or school" detected by Bassey's findings in his Nottinghamshire survey (1978).¹⁹ Most of the current criticisms have come from government quarters and received an airing, en masse, in Sir Keith Joseph's Sheffield Speech (1984).²⁰

In short, the most recent rise of the debate to have specialists in the primary school has come about through a belief that the existence of such teachers would improve standards and counteract the alleged inadequacies of the generalist. Alexander (1984)²¹ attributes the development and application of specialist expertise in primary schools becoming a priority for initial training to HMI pressure. Indeed, with so many critical reports at the root of this proposal it is not surprising that the whole issue of specialists in the primary school has come to be viewed in some quarters as further government attempts to control the curriculum. Any discrediting of current practice when viewed against 'evaluation' and 'accountability' movements, implies a working towards a cost-effective service with the specialist teacher seen as an agent for 'quality-control.'

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CHAPTER 3

'SPECIALIST' versus 'GENERALIST'?

Tensions have undoubtedly arisen as the concept of 'specialists' in the primary school has seemingly gained ground with increased publicity. The 'specialist' and 'generalist' have come to be regarded as antagonists reflecting opposing educational ideologies. This idea has been encouraged by the critical nature of many of the reasons offered for promoting specialisms in the primary school - i.e. criticisms of current practice. These criticisms have invariably been 'felt' personally by many generalists as those currently engaged in the majority of teaching in primary classes. When Rose (1986)¹ stated that there were still teachers who "reached for their gun" whenever the idea of subject teaching in primaries was mentioned, he underlined that opposition was still in evidence.

This chapter will set out some of the many opinions proffered on both sides of the debate in an attempt to decide whether 'specialist' and 'generalist' are likely to be opponents or components in the primary school of the future.

The Case for Specialisms

The Plowden Report (1967) broached the idea of eleven and twelve year olds receiving "the stimulus"² of being taught by specialists while suggesting changes in the transfer age from junior to secondary.

Other reports have favoured specialist contact in junior education as a way of 'bridging the gap'. The Thomas Report (1985)³ states that there is a case for a gradual development of co-operation and interchange between teachers in the later years of the primary school and in the early years of secondary - "based on the educational requirements of the children". This is seen as a method which would avoid any sudden shift of practice. The two preceding paragraphs of the same report deal with the discontinuity in organization and weigh up the two separate approaches seen to exist in primary and secondary schools. There is the suggestion that the notion of child-centredness used in primary "has too often led to too little consideration of the directions that teaching can best take" while the notion of subject-centredness in secondary has often led "to less concern than is desirable for building on what children already know and are interested in."

Thomas goes on to argue that while the arrangement of one teacher for one class has the advantages of organisational simplicity and adaptability it is not advantageous "when the curricular demands of the children stretch the teacher beyond capacity." The report, overall, is not advocating the kind of specialization traditionally associated with secondary schools but is, nevertheless, suggesting that there could be benefits for the older pupils in primary schools meeting more than one teacher.

The H.M.I. Survey (1985) 'Education 8 to 12 in Combined and Middle Schools' again lays emphasis on the transition period and

suggests that the schools could usefully re-examine their teaching arrangements to determine whether the needs of older pupils might be better catered for with a more effective use of consultants or by some exchange of classes to allow for shared staff skills and interests. This, the report believes, would enable older pupils to experience a gradual transition through a combination of class and specialist teaching.

Cohen (1976), in her paper 'Perspectives on the middle years', sets out to examine the polarity between primary and secondary education. She maintains that compromises in aims, methods and curriculum must be sought to avoid the inherent danger of confrontation developing but that there must be an acceptance of the validity of elements in both approaches.

Hargreaves (1987) in 'The Cultures of Schooling: The Case of Middle Schools' suggests that the middle schools have seldom succeeded in bridging the philosophical gap between primary and secondary education in a way which teachers can cope with and parents can understand. He argues that the schools have tended to be dominated by secondary orientated teachers with little opportunity for primary trained staff to set the ethos. He maintains that this policy has increasingly had the approval of both HMI and Government in their belief (with little evidence according to Hargreaves) that subject specialism guarantees high standards. Hargreaves argues that the needs of middle school pupils would be best met by well-trained generalists, committed to mixed ability teaching. He does not rule

out all specialist teaching but states that it should not be attempted across the board when there is no evidence that it is needed. It would be better, he feels, to rely on generalists who can cope with science and technology than wait indefinitely to recruit specialists in these shortage subjects.

Taylor (1986)⁴ detects, in the recommendations of the 1978 HMI Survey on the fuller use of teachers' particular strengths, an attempt being made to help alleviate situations where there is a shortage of specialist skills as well as providing support for the class teacher not possessing complete competence in certain subjects. Based on an empirical survey of a large number of sample classrooms containing seven, nine and eleven year olds, the 1978 Survey revealed inadequacies in the teaching of such areas of the curriculum as science, history, geography, art and craft. After looking at class and specialist teaching it concludes that it is important to make full use of teachers' strengths to benefit the older pupils in the junior school especially, but without losing the advantages that are associated with the class teacher system.

The Thomas Report (1985) points to 'a lack of confidence' in several curricular areas amongst class teachers. Three examples of this occurred in Music, P.E. and Science:⁵

"the lack of confidence of many teachers leads to the isolation of musical activities",

while findings in the teaching of P.E. proved that most of the schools the team visited were well equipped for this but,

"we are concerned about the number of teachers who lack confidence in teaching the subject."

The same report states that most primary school teachers concentrated on arts subjects at school and college and "many lack confidence in science." The extent to which these findings of the Thomas Report hold true for the situations explored in this study will be fully reported in Part II.

The D.E.S. Survey (1983) '9-13 Middle Schools'⁶ suggests that though children ought to have a variety of experience within subjects, work in depth is particularly important for able pupils "so that they can be challenged to extend their thinking." The survey found that good standards of work could be achieved when subjects were taught separately or in combination. In the section 'Use of subject teachers' it is stated that the survey "revealed an association between higher overall standards of work and those schools with a greater use of subject teachers." It is this section of the survey more than any other which has been held up by supporters of subject specialisms as being a pointer towards future development in junior education particularly. The theme promoted has usually been one of 'better standards.' This 1983 survey continues by describing how in 7 schools substantial use of subject teachers was introduced into 2nd year classes (equivalent to 3rd and 4th year juniors) and how 5 of these were among the schools which achieved significantly higher standards of work. The report does not advocate a complete turnover to separate subject teaching at this age but:

"more use of subject teachers in a number of areas of the curriculum without at the same time destroying the close association children enjoy with their class teacher for a substantial part of their work."

The questions raised concern the age at which children should be introduced to subject teaching and how and when the balance between generalist and specialist teaching should change.

Any claims made regarding teachers' specialist subject knowledge and links with teaching and content quality have not been without critics. Walkerdine (1983) comments that, in the 1978 Primary Survey, references to standards, skills and testing sit uneasily alongside the accepted ideas about the needs and interests of individual children. Campbell (1985) maintains that the majority of findings of the 1978 Survey relied almost entirely on the professional judgements of the inspectors although some objective tests were used. He sees concerns emerging for standards, sequence and scope (his 3 S's) with a more effective use of teachers' expertise seen as remedying the mismatch between work set and the pupils' perceived capabilities.

There has developed throughout the recent 80's, a body of opinion reiterating the value of the class teacher in the primary school, condemning any major infiltration of subject specialists but, at the same time, acknowledging the existence of areas which would benefit from a more effective use of teachers' expertise. Even HMI ideas in this field have become somewhat 'muted'. Elsmore (1984)⁷ stated that ideally every primary school should have nine teachers for the nine subject areas considered by HMI to be the compartments

into which knowledge, skills and concepts should be fitted. Two years later Rose (1986)⁸ (referred to on page 8) was suggesting a 'judicious mixture' of both forms of organization to make the best use of teachers' talents.

Views in the Balance

The whole concept of teacher expertise in the primary school has come to be viewed in its broadest terms across a whole range of projected roles. Few would promote the idea of compartmentalized subject teaching in the primary school on a similar basis to that in secondary schools and few would dispute the overall advantages of class teaching. Alexander (1984) maintains that the generalist class teacher is there by historical accident and any justifications offered for class teaching in terms of the child's educational needs have been added subsequently: "They may be valid, but equally they may be rationalisations rather than rationales."⁹

The values of the class teacher system are categorized in The Primary Survey of 1978 and are clearly set out in The Thomas Report (1985)¹⁰ where it states that the class teaching situation offers sufficient opportunity for the teacher to get to know the children and vice versa. It also provides a situation which ensures curriculum coherence and adoption or advantage of all occasions even if they overlap the ordinary divisions of the school day. There is also the acceptance of more individual work being made possible with this arrangement. (This latter point is questionable in the light

of the ORACLE Studies' findings (1980)¹¹ where the actual amount of individual attention accorded to pupils remained small at all levels). It is interesting that, in many of these facets, secondary schools can be seen to have started to reflect some similar aims with pastoral care programmes forming teacher-pupil relationship bonds throughout school life and recent options for more integrated work in the early years.

However, the question has been asked in the 1978 Survey:

"Can class teachers manage to provide all that is necessary for particular classes? If not what must be done to help them manage satisfactorily and in a way that is on balance advantageous?"

Wragg (1984) sees the greatest disadvantage of generalism to be that "many teachers feel inexpert at everything in our complex and information laden society." He suggests that due to the huge amount of knowledge being generated in almost any subject at the present time, a primary teacher seeking to be a specialist is bound to be only able to cope with the smallest fraction of what exists.

McMullen (1986) summarizes the pressing organizational issues facing primary schools as how best to preserve the values and strengths of conventional pupil groupings and at the same time respond to the increasing complexity of the primary curriculum. He sets out details of a week's residential conference for 75 primary headteachers looking at the issue of curriculum coverage and teacher responsibility. The Conference recognized the inadequacy of the two extremes of both 'isolated whole curriculum class teaching and of simple specialization

even for older pupils.' From the debate emerged a clearer picture of the concept of the Curriculum Co-ordinator; a position of curriculum responsibility for every member of staff "based upon a school policy of organized mutual help and designed to support not only conventional class teaching but a range of group teaching approaches." It was stressed that such sharing of expertise could not be exclusive to scale post-holders.

Thomson (1985) in her article 'Connecting Patterns' believes that there are aspects of specialist teaching and support which could be of real value to teachers in primary schools. She maintains that a great deal of that value is concerned with the way the word 'specialist' is construed and its application to the individual learning needs of children. Some of her most rewarding teaching experiences are acknowledged to have occurred whilst working alongside other teachers, indicating to her that the notion of class-based teaching is not necessarily the best kind of organization for developing learning at all times. This definition of specialist-support and teachers' preferences for such is an issue which was raised regularly by informants in this North East survey. Those findings will be presented in the second part of the study.

Morrison (1985) 'Tensions in Subject Specialist Teaching in Primary Schools' warns against any wholesale acceptance of the value of subject specialist teachers in primary schools. The article argues for 'creative tension' and 'balance' after reviewing the ideological, epistemological, political and curricular tensions. Morrison suggests

that what is called for is a broad conception of subject specialism - "embracing teaching experience" and "overarching curricular areas". On no account, he maintains, should moves towards subject specialisms threaten the primary ethos or lose sight of educational vision in order to meet inappropriate political requirements.

Frisby (1984), from his own experiences as a headteacher, illustrates what he considers to be a weakness of the primary school - its over reliance on the autonomy of the class teacher - by describing how teachers' enthusiasms and knowledge were deciding the 'non-basics' curriculum in his school. He argues that one way of responding to the current demands for the raising of expectations, extending the curriculum and matching tasks to abilities, is to increase the degree of specialist teaching in primary schools. He acknowledges that this idea can be criticised on the grounds that it dilutes the special relationship which young children must have with their teacher but wonders whether today's children should be so dependent upon such a predominantly emotional relationship. He feels that outside influences have made more children ready for specialist teaching with 70 per cent of fourth year juniors capable of enthusiastic responses to the stimuli provided by secondary school environments - i.e. the resource stimuli not generally provided in primary schools. His overall conclusion is that a reasonable degree of teacher specialization does seem to be productive:

"It enables teachers to enrich the whole school by the enthusiastic pursuit of their own professional

interests. It provides opportunities for in-service and curriculum development. It promotes the idea that a school should function as a totality - a team of teachers with common aims. It gives children equality of access to a wide curriculum. It generates a wider range of interactions and relationships to be developed, observed and assessed."

('Specialisms in Primary Schools' - Frisby 1984).

Few writers have shown quite as much enthusiasm as this article suggests but most have been willing to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each approach.

The title of this chapter 'Generalist' versus 'Specialist'? was set in the interrogative to highlight the assumption that the two are normally seen to be contradictory but need not necessarily be so. There is an indication of an acceptance, by many, of a "judicious mixture" of the two. Wragg (1984) states that a way out of the dilemma, and one that has already been adopted by many schools, is for Heads to encourage all teachers to develop 'semi-specialist strengths' -

"All teachers would then have their own particular areas of relative expertise and would be obliged to offer some degree of leadership and inspiration to their colleagues."

In conclusion, it can be stated that 'generalist' versus 'specialist' produces no solution to the problems currently facing the primary school but that 'generalist' combined with 'specialist' might well be a feasible way forward.

Suitable combinations of all teacher talents and the most effective teaching situations available are the prime focus of this

study. The research findings in Part II will draw attention not only to the current practice found to exist in deploying teacher expertise but also to the opinions and desires of the teaching force regarding alternative, combined practices.

This chapter has drawn attention to some of the positive and negative elements which have been found to exist in both generalist and specialist approaches. One of the purposes of this research was to discover how teachers themselves rated the benefits and drawbacks of each.

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4. TAYLOR, P.H. (1986), in 'Expertise and the Primary School Teacher', makes this comment on page 23.
5. These 'lack of confidence' references can be found in The Thomas Report (1985) at paras. 2.144, 2.151 and 2.163 respectively.
6. D.E.S. (1983) '9-13 Middle Schools'. An illustrative survey by H.M.I. LONDON: HMSO. See para. 8.7 and the section entitled 'Use of subject teachers.'
7. ELSMORE, G. (1984), as chief H.M.I. for primary education, had this view reported in T.E.S. 28 September 1984: 'Firmer HMI guidance drafted'.
8. This statement by Rose was publicised from that same speech noted at reference 1 above.
9. See the section 'Primary Ideology and the Requirements of Class Teaching' pp.13-15 in Alexander's (1984) 'Primary Teaching.'
10. These opinions are put forward by Thomas in para. 3.35.
11. ORACLE STUDIES (1980) Observational Research And Classroom Learning Evaluation - see Galton, M., Simon, P., Willcocks, J. and Croll, P.

CHAPTER 4

CURRENT OPINIONS ON TEACHER EXPERTISE

This chapter intends to focus attention on those main activities seen to be within the capacities of the teacher 'expert.' Specific roles, highlighted by Government, Inspectorate and independent observers, will be approached through a series of sub-headings. While still referring to the historical perspective, the chapter will concentrate on recent years and the current situation. Comments concerning the feasibility and desirability of specified tasks will be included where suitable research data exists and will be accompanied by critical appraisal of any pertinent conclusions.

Having recognised expanding definitions of 'specialist' in previous chapters, this section will address 'expertise' in the broad concept, embracing the many varied duties proffered as desirable functions for the teacher 'expert' aiding both staff and curriculum development in primary schools. The increasing value of the curriculum post-holder, traced in Chapter 1, will form a substantial area where teacher expertise is expected to exist since the suggestion in the 1978 HMI Primary Survey that one way of making fuller use of teachers' strengths was by giving them responsibility for an aspect of the curriculum.

This chapter, although not concentrating on the expertise of all teachers in what Taylor (1986)¹ refers to as the 'technology of

teaching', does assume the existence of such. Without those talents for explaining, clarifying, directing, producing and acting - with all that that entails in voice control and gestures, etc., the generalist, specialist, consultant or whatever, would lack the main credentials for professional expertise.

Emergent Roles for the Teacher 'Expert':

(i) to create confidence and continuity

Plowden (1967)² advocated the change to middle schools as an attempt to provide a better transition between junior and secondary. To agree with the essence of this thought, i.e. that the change should stimulate and not dishearten, should be carefully prepared and not too sudden and that the new school should know enough of the previous school's ways to maintain curricula momentum without repeats or huge jumps ahead, there must be an acknowledgement of the same holding true for the child leaving his final year of junior education. There must be liaison between junior and secondary and The Thomas Report (1985)³ recommends that the teachers chosen for this should be of sufficient standing to command the respect of other staff. The Report sees the provision of curriculum posts as being of particular significance in this connection. Having a subject 'specialist' in the primary school who is able and confident to make a point on the same professional footing as the secondary school 'specialist' could well prove valid and effective to schools' liaison and curriculum continuity.

Gorwood (1983) in 'Curriculum Continuity on Transfer from Middle to Secondary School' sets out some of the major barriers to continuity as seen by the upper schools. His survey was conducted on the output of 10 middle schools, 8 of whose transfers involved a majority of pupils of average or below average ability. He maintains that the influence of the former education diminishes after transfer to upper school:

"the rapidity of erosion of pre-transfer learning on upper-school attainment was more pronounced than had been anticipated."

He concludes that early experience has little influence on long term attainment. With this view, redundancy would threaten most primary school teachers and would certainly reduce the significance of any liaison roles. One major drawback in this piece of research is that no suitable research devices were found for accurate measurement of pupils' interests, abilities and successes across all curricular areas.

Any emphasis given by teachers to liaison and continuity as an outlet for teacher expertise will be detected in the information collected from staff of the selected schools in this study.

(ii) to enthuse and inspire

There is a particularly good description in the ORACLE Studies (1980)⁴ of a situation where an absent teacher had left a series of questions for pupils to begin in class and complete for homework. As they were reluctant to set about the task the substitute teacher was

forced to leave his own work in an attempt to chivy the pupils along. He discovered that the work concerned wave motion and the pupil questioned had little understanding of what was involved. The teacher, obviously with some interest and understanding himself, collected some coil springs and proceeded to involve the pupils in practical experiments and varied hypotheses. In the words of the editors:

"Gradually a transformation overtook the classroom. What had earlier been an uninterested and bored class suddenly became actively involved and enthusiastic as the teacher's own enthusiasm for the subject transferred itself to them."

Morrison (1986) reinforces this theme in 'Primary school subjects specialists as agents of school-based curriculum change' when he states in his conclusion that

"subject specialists have in their grasp the potential for transforming pupil experience from the mundane to the creative, and from the ephemeral to sustained depth of study and the satisfaction that it brings."

Without some inbuilt enthusiasm and interest it is unlikely that teachers will have the same infectious effect on pupils as those who have. When Thomas (1985)⁵ calls for the publication of science guidelines and other support materials and hopes that there will be advice on schemes and suitable content so that progressive courses with continuity from year to year and from primary to secondary school will be achieved, then these alone are not bound to combat "the lack of confidence" in several areas - including science - felt by many teachers and highlighted by the same report. In such instances, the

role of the subject specialist has been seen to extend beyond that of inspiring only the pupils, to one of also boosting staff morale and confidence and encouraging innovation. These effects are obviously desirable and possible from any teachers possessing enthusiasms which are curriculum appropriate and are not therefore necessarily confined to post-holders or 'specialists'. For these reasons, this research will make a particular point of discovering *all* of those teacher talents which might be beneficially channelled into curricular provision.

(iii) to initiate and innovate

Brown (1983), in 'Curriculum Management in the Junior School', reinforces the belief that published, structured materials have not always proved to be the answer when help is required. He infers that the impact of large-scale projects of curricular innovation has been disappointing with problems arising through dissemination, financial constraints and even an insufficient account taken of the tradition of school-based curriculum development. He maintains that many materials were rejected by primary schools while others were relied upon too heavily and were not adapted or extended sufficiently. Most of the large-scale projects were, Brown believes, designed to give the generalist some specialist support. Blenkin and Kelly (1981) comment that when published project materials are used

"to plan and structure the work for the teacher and pre-specify the experiences to be undertaken by the children, then both the unified curriculum and the process of education are undermined."⁶

Brown proposes that effective curriculum management in primary schools is best served by school-based, in service models rather than centrally directed schemes. There is the drawback of this being particularly time consuming but there are positive elements of producing greater job satisfaction and responsibility for the staff.

Knight (1983), on the other hand, in 'The Heritage Project and the Management of Externally Prompted Change in Primary Schools' argues that the rejection of external instigation and management of change is unfounded and unwise. He draws on the Heritage Project in Lancaster to illustrate the case. Beginning in October 1981, the project set out to extend the curriculum by developing the awareness of 5 to 11 year olds of their heritage. By work in History and Geography it was hoped to promote appropriate concepts, attitudes and skills with coherence and progression. The local adviser sought to produce change not just in the 4 schools of the study but also throughout the area using these initial schools as models. Knight states that this externally prompted, externally designed and mostly externally managed approach contrasts with the proliferation of ideas which see the school as "an independent barony". He suggests that school-centredness, as far as curriculum change is sought, is unsatisfactory. He believes that the responsibility for failure or success may well deter many teachers whereas having an external 'scape-goat' may give an added confidence.

Hargreaves (1982) in 'The Rhetoric of School-Centred Innovation' largely supports the idea of school-centredness being ineffective,

depressing staff-morale and often offering little hope of moving beyond the bounds of existing practice. His main conclusions suggest that while great demands of time, energy and resources have been invested in school-centred innovation, success has not been demonstrated, nor has its future effectiveness in raising or maintaining staff motivation. In reply to this last statement it could be purported that innovation and curriculum development instigated from within the primary school have never been able to be viewed in their real terms due to the many inherent limiting factors of which staffing, resources and time are paramount. Such major handicaps have invariably restricted staff enthusiasm, horizons and motivation.

Throughout the issue of curriculum development - whether internally or externally instigated - there are several emergent roles for the 'specialist', the 'expert' or the keen member of staff (elected or volunteered!). Invariably, one teacher would be required to function as co-ordinator if not instigator, and monitor if not innovator. Increasingly, all of these roles, and more, have been anticipated in the functioning of the post-holder.

(iv) as curriculum post-holder

The history behind 'scale-posts' and their subsequent development from the time of their introduction was outlined in Chapter 1. More recently, The Thomas Report (1985)⁷ suggested that teachers in charge of classes in primary schools should take on a dual role: one of seeing to the coherence of the programme of work of their

class and secondly as an adviser/consultant in some area of the curriculum throughout the school. Later in the same report the suggestion is also made that when a class teacher is unable to cope with a topic then the adviser could step in.

Garland (1982) sees the role of adviser and supporter to colleagues as devolution of curriculum leadership by branching away from asking the Head's advice on all aspects of the curriculum. He argues that policies are required for the whole curriculum and not just for certain subject areas. He refers to a pilot study of policy creation in a small number of primary schools. The teachers interviewed accepted the legitimacy of the newly emerging role of curriculum consultant but considered that there should still be responsibilities for a class as credibility was seen to grow from being a good class teacher rather than from an ability to produce policy statements.

Campbell's book (1985) 'Developing the Primary School Curriculum' focuses on post-holder led development through the post-holders' expertise. This exploitation of expertise is referred to as 'specialism' and he distinguishes between the variety of forms this took in practice : specialist teaching, subject teaching and subject diffusion. Campbell sees the specialist as having something to offer in school-based curriculum development where teachers are involved in

"drawing upon the specialist expertise of curriculum post-holders in order to improve existing practice and policy in a small scale, gradualist fashion, with an openness to evaluation." 8

Campbell identifies indirect benefits from freeing post-holders to work with other teachers either as a 'consultant' leading in-service activities in the school or working alongside them in their classrooms. In all the case studies, the class teachers' confidence in the post-holders subject tended to increase as a 'spin-off' from the main curriculum development.

The Stockport Enquiry (1984)⁹ found a wide variation in the duties and responsibilities of post-holders, including curriculum development, extra-curricular activities, team/year group leaders, pastoral care, good classroom practice and what they termed 'trivialities' such as responsibility for the tuck shop. Wide anomalies were found to exist in the time and effort expended by staff, the expectations of head-teachers, the skill and expertise of post-holders and the degree of delegated responsibility.

Loizou and Rossiter (1987) discovered that the main responsibility commonly required of the mathematics post-holder was the supervision and requisition of resources and materials. From their interviews with over ninety teachers, including head teachers, and their visits to thirty one schools, these two researchers specify what was seen by their informants and themselves to be a suitable situation for post-holder functioning:

"In an ideal primary school the post-holder would be the person who not only contributes as a class teacher, but is also there to teach alongside other colleagues; advise by running in-service courses and meetings, preferably in school time; demonstrate lessons while the rest of the staff are released to watch him doing this; have enough

resources to be able to allocate to every classroom enough materials and apparatus for every child according to his needs and stage of mathematical development."¹⁰

It hardly needs stating that, for most schools, this remains an Utopian dream but, at the same time, it is not satisfactory to provide teachers with titles appropriate to their expertise and perceived responsibilities if staffing, resources and time are not commensurate with the practicalities of discharging the role effectively. The possibilities of post holders being able to carry out satisfactorily all of those duties expected in job description etc., became a crucial issue in this North East study. A discussion and comparison of the schools' rhetoric and realities is presented in Chapter 8 of Part II.

Barriers to Effective Deployment of Expertise

Rodger et al (1983) note the difficulties encountered by post-holders in trying to exert the kind of influence welcomed by H.M.I. The problems include the lack of time away from classroom teaching duties to work with colleagues and the lack of the necessary support from headteachers when post-holders attempt to introduce curriculum development policies. Campbell (1985) suggests that with falling rolls and staffing being reduced accordingly -

"a school's ability to deploy teachers in ways that can effectively exploit their skill and expertise will become limited and, most crucially perhaps, the opportunities to free teachers for necessary curriculum development activities in school time will be lost."¹¹

It is arguable that long before the days of redeployment and falling rolls any attempt to 'free' teachers was always a major hassle in primary schools. Undoubtedly, staff expertise might well be affected by an arbitrary loss of a specialism.

The Stockport Enquiry (1984)¹² states that small schools, and those which are contracting, experience increasing difficulty in adequately covering the main curricular areas as well as the balance of responsibilities becoming distorted as the redeployment of Scale 2 post-holders becomes more common. This same enquiry raises questions concerning the minimum size of school which can support adequate development in all curricular areas by maintaining a sufficient stock of expertise. It lists factors which can adversely affect small schools such as insufficient scale posts to cover the curriculum, individual members of staff overloaded with curricular responsibility, difficulty in making time available for scale post holders to work with other teachers, curtailment of extra-curricular activities and fewer opportunities for promotion often resulting in competent teachers being attracted to larger schools which can offer higher scale posts.

The recurring themes of 'poor staffing' and 'lack of time' would seem to be major constraints on efficient use of teacher expertise in most primary schools, regardless of size. The Birmingham Studies Group (1983) states that although evidence suggested that some Heads do attempt to redress the problems encountered:

"primary schools are insufficiently resourced in terms of manpower to permit the full use of the expertise of their staffs."¹³

Gray (1983) in his research into 'Resource Management in Primary Schools' was able to conclude from his findings that the problems facing primary schools are largely resource-based, both in human and financial terms:

"A general impression is of class teachers burdened by frustration and discontent, and of head teachers uncertain as to how they should react to rapid and bewildering changes occurring both within and outside their schools."¹⁴

Gray's impression is indeed one of only negative responses answering the resource problems in the primary school. It takes no account of the rallying spirit often evident in many schools when cutbacks have in fact inspired new ventures. The team spirit displayed on these occasions, while not condoning the reasons responsible, would nevertheless appear to offer positive directives towards alleviation.

However, even with this criticism of Gray's opinion, the situation presented in these varied reports is one hardly conducive to the most effective teaching possible. It creates yet another angle from which criticisms and evaluations might be viewed as well as providing deterrents to any future curricular extensions and innovations. It is a situation which will receive investigation in this study as some of those questions raised are particularly appropriate to this research:

How much of a limiting factor to effective teacher deployment has falling rolls and reduced staffing been?

Has the smallest school in this North East survey been adversely affected by its size and those subsequent difficulties raised in the Stockport Enquiry? and

How far is Gray's 'general impression' applicable to the headteachers and staff of the schools in this study?

The collated data from this research will offer responses to these questions as well as extending the views on effective deployment of expertise presented throughout this chapter.

Raison d'etre

Despite reticence on the part of some to embrace wholeheartedly the teacher expert in the primary school there is, nevertheless, an identification of a substantial, positive role to be played by any teacher offering a relative degree of curriculum expertise. This expertise need not necessarily be acknowledged in the form of a scale post, nor need it take on a 'specialist' character to the exclusion of the expected functions of the class teacher. Whatever talents schools find themselves possessing then it would seem worthwhile, through processes of self-evaluation, to utilize these teacher strengths, especially in curriculum areas where other staff would welcome encouragement and support. This view is strongly advocated by Rodger and Richardson (1985) who illustrate their perspective through an example from their research. All staff were asked to write down

special abilities or knowledge which they felt could be of use to the school. An impressive list was eventually compiled comprising: teaching experience, personal interests and hobbies, curricular knowledge and skills, 'office-skills' and management skills. Obviously expertise which is not applicable to the school context should not be deployed just for the sake of it but pooling of appropriate skills is, Rodger and Richardson suggest, "a valuable aid to future policies of curriculum development." The authors advise that where interests and skills in an aspect of the curriculum exist and are not utilized then this is 'wasteful':

"such cases if revealed by the process of school self-evaluation are at least accessible to review."¹⁵

Much of the literature examined, in the attempt to build up an historical perspective through which teacher expertise may be viewed, envisages many specific functions for the curriculum expert.

'Primary Practice' - Schools Council Working Paper 75 (1983) sees the most important activities being the ability to keep up-to-date on developments in the specialism and the adeptness to inspire the quality of teaching in that given area. It also offers twelve probing questions for the post-holder to use as a checklist.¹⁶

From the Birmingham Studies (1983) came seven main headings for the functions of the teacher expert. These encompassed teaching, drafting, displaying, purchasing, discussing, arranging and evaluating - mostly in their widest definitions.¹⁷

The questions still being pondered revolve around the context

in which these roles should be performed (Rodger et al, 1983, illuminate this area), the nature of any advice offered (the Birmingham Studies, 1983, unearthed some interesting findings regarding teachers' preferences for advice), the strategies employed to make the most use of expertise (illustrated in the specialist teaching, subject teaching or subject diffusion of Campbell's 1985 Warwick Inquiry) and the logistics and ramifications of such.

Central to all of these questions and suggestions is the search for improved quality of curriculum provision and greater teacher effectiveness. If this is to be achieved within an educational context rather than from a political one then teacher expertise cannot be ignored and must be assessed as part of school curriculum development plans.

It is this thread of 'teacher effectiveness' which can be drawn through all of the reviewed literature, regardless of shades of opinion. The idea of teachers creating the most effective climates for learning, employing their talents and tactics to most effect and thereby having the most beneficial effect on those in their care, is paramount. A.V. Kelly (1984) warns of 'the danger of tampering' and maintains that any decisions about the use of teacher specialisms in the primary school curriculum, as a means of improving the 'elusive notion of standards', cannot be taken in isolation from decisions about the educational principles upon which that curriculum is predicated. Galton, Simon and Croll (1980)¹⁸ point out how researchers interested in teacher effectiveness have sought to define 'good' and

'bad' teaching in terms of test results and have ignored pupil activity in the classroom. They stress the limitations on this approach and argue that a complete evaluation must concern itself with five elements in the teaching process: aims, strategy, tactics, pupil behaviour and products with all their inter-connections. The ORACLE Studies (1980),¹⁹ involving these elements, provide a huge selection of objective data against which quality and teacher effectiveness may be assessed. These studies are in contrast to many recent HMI studies which have identified areas requiring improvement in quality and teacher effectiveness but which have rested heavily on the unmonitored, subjective judgements of the Inspectors. Rodger and Richardson (1985) explore self-evaluation as the most suitable vehicle for producing an effective teaching environment and preferable to outside inducements. For Campbell (1985) the concept of a 'collegial' school, based on a healthy acknowledgement of specialist expertise and teacher collaboration, is put forward as a model for effective practice.

There would seem to be a continuous need to promote effective forms of partnership in primary education including that between the generalist and specialist. Whichever descriptive labels are tagged to teachers, it must be remembered that the specialist, the subject expert, the curriculum post-holder etc., are still primary school teachers embodying all the accepted connotations. All that is valued in primary education is not going to fly out of the window because one such relative expert happens to teach a particular class, for a

particular session, for a particularly well thought out and organized reason.

The way forward would indeed seem to lie in that 'judicious mixture' of all teacher talents so regularly referred to in the history of primary education. However, it is only within the context of current practice in primary schools that the need for teacher expertise can be fully assessed and thereby justified in the light of teacher and pupil requirements. This assessment and those other crucial issues generated by the existing literature could only be competently addressed by an empirical study intending to meet the concerns and controversies head-on and in context. It was to this end that the research recounted in Part II was deemed necessary and embarked upon.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. TAYLOR, P.H. (1986) 'Expertise and the Primary School Teacher' discusses this 'technology of teaching', pp. 115-118.
2. THE PLOWDEN REPORT (1967) C.A.C.E. 'Children and Their Primary Schools' stressed these points in para. 427 especially.
3. THE THOMAS REPORT (1985) 'Improving Primary Schools' proffers these views at para. 2.279.
4. ORACLE STUDIES - GALTON, M., SIMON, B. (1980) 'Progress and Performance in the Primary Classroom' pp.202-3.
5. THOMAS (1985) makes these calls in para. 2.165 of the I.L.E.A. report 'Improving Primary Schools'.
6. BLENKIN, G.M. and KELLY, A.V. (1981) 'The Primary Curriculum' make this statement on page 183.
7. THE THOMAS REPORT made these suggestions at paras 3.37 and 3.41.
8. CAMPBELL, R.J. (1985) 'Developing the Primary School Curriculum' see pp. 45-6.
9. THE STOCKPORT ENQUIRY (1984) 'Specialisms in the Primary School', para. 3.2.
10. LOIZOU, C.D. and ROSSITER, D. (1987) 'The Role of the Mathematics Post-Holder in the Primary School', FACULTY OF ED., UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM, page 38.
11. This quotation can be found in CAMPBELL, R.J. (1985) page 40.
12. The findings referred to can be seen at para. 4.2.
13. This quotation comes from page 8 of THE BIRMINGHAM STUDIES GROUP (1983) 'Curriculum Responsibility and the Use of Teacher Expertise in the Primary School - five studies.' Department of Curriculum Studies, UNIV. OF BIRMINGHAM. Schools Council Primary Schools Research and Development Group.
14. GRAY, L.S. (1983), 'Resource Management in Primary Schools', Dept. of Education Management, Sheffield City Polytechnic, makes this statement on page 100.
15. This point is made most strongly on page 131.

16. SCHOOLS COUNCIL WORKING PAPER 75 (1983) 'Primary Practice'
LONDON: METHUEN. The checklist can be found on pp. 137-138.
17. These 'functions' are set out on pp. 14-15.
18. GALTON, M., SIMON, B. and CROLL, P. (1980) 'Inside the Primary Classroom', air these views on page 114.
19. ORACLE STUDIES (1980) (Observational Research and Classroom Learning Evaluation) have provided this data in those publications referred to at 4 and 18 above.

N.B. Further general 'thematic' references, which were acknowledged, can be found in the main bibliography.

PART II

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

This second, more extensive part of the overall study provides a detailed description of the research conducted in the selected schools in the two education authorities in the North East. Research procedures engaged, the case studies and the findings are presented under appropriate chapter headings with numbered sub-sections.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

This chapter sets out the chief objectives of the research. It describes the selection and approach procedures involved in the choosing of the 5 schools in the survey and reports on the methodology employed for the collection of data.

5.1. Aims and Objectives

The main aim of the research is to provide an overview of organization, responsibilities and expertise and any deployment of existing teacher talents in selected primary schools. In order to attain this objective the following questions were posed at the outset:

1. (a) How do different schools organize their timetabling, teaching and curricular programmes?
(b) Do they capitalize on the strengths of their staffs and, if so, how?
2. (a) If not, are there talents amongst the teachers in these primary schools which are being wasted?
(b) If so, why?
3. (a) Could the expertise within the primary teaching force be better channelled to benefit the school as a whole under present given circumstances and constraints?

(b) Would the staff of the schools in question welcome organizational change to allow for such?

In discovering the answers to these questions it was hoped to be able to present a clear picture of how teachers themselves view their own abilities across the full primary school curriculum and whether head-teachers perceive their organizational strategies as contributing towards effective use of teacher expertise. Furthermore, it was intended to comment on the typicality of the collated data in as far as this would be viable from this sample. There was also a desire from the outset to compare the findings of this survey with those relative from previous research.

Towards these main objectives the research design was formulated so as to gather data concerning the sources and areas of teacher 'strengths' found to exist as well as any deployment of talents. In the light of the answers to the 3 main questions posed, it was planned to draw out any relevance that teacher expertise might be seen to have to the overall requirements of the primary school.

5.2. Selection and Approaches

The survey is based on empirical work undertaken in 5 schools selected for their contrasts as well as their similarities and thereby obtaining a wide range of teacher opinions, qualifications and experience with possibilities for comparisons in organizational structures and classroom practice. The schools chosen were located in two neighbouring education authorities in North East England;

namely a small R.C. aided primary school, a large, group 6, state primary school, two 2-form entry junior schools and a large 4-form entry junior school. Initially, only 4 schools were selected for the survey proper with the fifth school - one of the 2-form entry junior schools - acting as the trial ground for testing and refining interview questions and techniques. It became evident during this pilot study that the actual format of the interviews and questionnaire required little alteration. The interviews were attempting to cover too much ground so any adjustments were in pruning rather than extending. As no gaps existed in the collated information from the pilot study it was decided to include the findings in the overall survey.

The schools were approached through contact with the headteacher after permission was sought and granted from relevant personnel in the 2 L.E.A.s. From the outset, complete anonymity was stressed for informants, schools and L.E.A.s., with participation being purely voluntary. Confidentiality was reiterated with each informant at the time of interview with the added assurance that replies would not be discussed with their colleagues or headteacher.

Arrangements were first made by telephone with the headteacher for an initial visit to explain the research requirements in more detail and, if all was satisfactory, to leave the headteacher questionnaire (see Appendix i). The 5 schools selected were all willing and a convenient time was chosen for the headteacher interview (Appendix ii) which was conducted after the questionnaire had been

completed and facts and figures absorbed. One school at a time was studied with all data collected and collated before moving on to the next. This avoided any crossing or mixing of information. The time schedule varied from school to school depending on staff preferences and, of course, the size of the school. In some schools it was favoured that interviews were conducted on particular days of the week, at times which would cause the least disturbance to teaching routines. In other schools, the teachers were free to make their own arrangements and were able to reciprocate class 'covering' with one another. Other arrangements included the Head and/or Deputy Head and/or 'floating' teacher taking informants' classes and this enabled interviews to be administered very efficiently over a shorter period of time. In all cases, special arrangements were always necessary to 'free' primary school class teachers from teaching duties because of the dearth of non-pupil contact time available in this sector of education. However, the manner in which these arrangements were handled was often revealing in itself as far as staff autonomy, headteacher policies and internal communication were concerned.

To supplement questionnaire and interviews, school documentation relating to curricular programmes, job specifications, brochures for parents and visitors etc., was also requested. Again the anonymous nature of any references that might be made was emphasized. All the schools were more than helpful in their loaning and duplicating of whole files of information.

Finally, during and after the teacher interviews, decisions and choices regarding suitable 'victims' for keeping a week's diary or drafting a free-account schedule were made. These tended to be informants who were both interesting and interested and had extra responsibility for areas beyond their normal class teaching duties. Thankfully, those approached all agreed and must have gone to a great deal of time and trouble to record the interesting, informative and sometimes humorous results. These are referred to in the relevant sections of the research findings. (Appendices v and vi set out instructions for diaries and free-accounts.)

5.3. Research Format and Expectations

This section sets out a series of numbered paragraphs as route markers through the research and gives some idea of what was hoped to be achieved at each juncture.

- (i) After the initial approaches, the first meeting with each head-teacher was hoped to produce various quantities of school literature which could either be read on the premises or taken away for further perusal. From this, general information was hoped to be gleaned regarding the surrounding catchment area, the school building, organization of classes and resources, allocation of teachers and responsibility posts and perhaps something of the ethos and ideologies of the school. The questionnaire would be left with the Head at this point and arrangements made for its collection when completed.

- (ii) After digesting the information collected from the headteacher questionnaire and the school documentation it was anticipated that some identification may be possible of curricular strengths, resource pools, particular faces of the school shown to the community at large, any use made of outside agencies and the roles of post-holders as assessed from written policies and headteacher opinions proffered in the questionnaire replies.
- (iii) In possession of this background knowledge the full headteacher interview could be conducted (Appendix ii) in an attempt to establish his/her aims for the whole school, instigated changes, planned reforms for the future, specific roles of post-holders, integration of new staff, etc., as well as checking the accuracy of the first impressions gained from the written word. It was hoped to build up a profile of the Head regarding his/her perceived roles, the extent of delegation and autonomy, methods of organization and degree of responsibility for schemes of work and strategies for monitoring and evaluating throughout the school.
- (iv) At this stage, plans could be set in motion to interview all willing teaching staff individually, regardless of position or scale post. These general interviews would concentrate on discovering how each member of the school saw themselves fitting into the overall framework. It was also intended to probe for more personal details regarding likes and dislikes, interests,

qualifications, experience, particular strengths, etc., with room for each informant to comment on changes and developments they would like to see for themselves and/or the school as well as for personal opinions on current situations in education (Appendix iii).

(v) Appropriate extensions to the interview schedule for post-holders would have the general aim of discovering roles in practice, relevant experience, the nature of the acquisition of the post and job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. (Appendix iv).

(vi) At this point, an examination of each school's drafting, implementation and organization of specific schemes of work could be undertaken with an appraisal of the part played by any relevant subject consultant, post-holder, specialist or relative expert. A closer look at means of monitoring and ensuring specified progression throughout the school might also reveal any opportunities available for teachers requiring guidance and assistance in implementing curricular policies into practice.

5.4. The Questionnaire

In order to avoid headteachers' interviews becoming too lengthy, with the danger of critical listening ceasing, it was decided to use a questionnaire for each Head. It seemed that the nature of much of the initial factual information required could adequately be obtained from written replies. In the case of school size the headteacher

may have needed to look up figures so this particular facet seemed more appropriate to a questionnaire than to using valuable interview time in filing cabinet searches. At the same time, there were some areas of the research where it seemed more satisfactory to allow the headteacher some reflection time rather than to press him/her into an answer straight 'off the top of the head.' (It is appreciated that there are some instances when the latter can be informative).

The limitations and difficulties normally associated with questionnaires, and with mailed questionnaires especially, were not envisaged to apply to this study. Moser (1971) sets out many of these limitations but does note that several can be overcome by combining questionnaire and interview. By employing this method in this particular study it was hoped that any answers to the questionnaire requiring further clarification could be checked during interview thus avoiding the ambiguity or finality of a questionnaire only answer. Secondly, the follow-up interview would provide opportunities to probe beyond the question and to overcome any unwillingness to answer anything. Furthermore, it would provide a situation for appraising the validity of *what* a respondent said in the light of *how* s/he said it. Finally, it was the intention that the very nature of this survey would lend itself to situations where opportunities would exist to supplement or verify some of the respondent's answers with observational data.

(The full headteacher questionnaire can be found in Appendix i.)

5.5. The Interviews

This section describes the reasoning and background factors behind the interview schedules eventually used and incorporates some thoughts of writers on research techniques which were taken into account.

As the interviews were to form the major element of the study and provide the main data, it was important that the collated answers to each question to be included were to be of use and interest to the overall survey. Nisbet and Entwistle (1970) suggest that the pilot run might give some ideas for a coding system rather than trying to record or write every answer and thereby offer economy of time and labour. Pre-coding of the schedule would also allow replies to be recorded without interrupting the rapport. Nisbet and Entwistle also recommend tape recording the pilot interviews with the idea that this could warn of a faulty style on the part of the interviewer.

Campbell (1985) in his Warwick Inquiry, refers to the 'reflective' interviewing style of Stenhouse (1982) when the latter stated:

"The people I interview are participants and they are observers of themselves and others; my object is to provide in interview the conditions that help them to talk reflectively about their observations and experience. It is their observations I am after, not mine."

With this quotation in mind, the creation of the 'best' interview situation for participants needs to be well thought out, tried and tested. Might it be better to use a tape-recorder to collect fuller,

more accurate replies or could this put too many informants 'on-guard' and make for inhibited replies? Saran (1985) feels that the use of tape-recordings in 'sensitive' research could be counter-productive and should therefore be avoided. On the other hand, attempts to accurately record anything but the shortest of answers in writing could be quite off-putting for both interviewer and interviewee and may well cause the latter to purposely trim replies accordingly. It was vital to bear in mind the nature of data collection when planning interview schedules.

Measor (1985) makes a point of stressing the artificiality of the contrived interview situation and for this reason recommends that structured interviews are to be avoided. She suggests that the researcher designs a set of thematic areas to cover. Preissle Goetz and Le Compte (1984) make reference to the three forms of interview as differentiated by Denzin (1978): the scheduled standardized interview (virtually an orally administered question), the non-scheduled standardized interview (a variant of the first in that the same questions and probes are used for all respondents but the order in which they are posed may be changed according to how individuals react) and the non-standardized interview (a sort of interview guide where general questions to be addressed and specific information desired are anticipated but can be approached informally in whatever order or context they happen to arise).

In the interviews for this survey it was realised from the outset that there would be *particular limitations* - mainly time -

i.e. how long a teacher could be spared classroom duties, *particular aims*, i.e. to attain a certain uniformity in the asking of questions and recording of answers across all the selected schools and *particular objectives*, i.e. the need to get answers to the many questions necessary to build up the envisaged data bank. There were too many questions which *had* to be asked to leave to informal chance that at some time during the interview they would automatically 'crop-up' under broad area headings. For these reasons it was felt that this research warranted a fairly structured interview schedule. Many of the structured questions, logically presented, would receive swift responses and therefore leave more time for those areas, towards the end of each interview schedule, where fuller probing and discussion was intended. The order of questions would be such that, with occasional linking phrases, the interview could flow logically and conversationally. In this way there would be less temptation to omit questions or change their sequence and this would fit the intention of having some uniformity across all the schools. Obviously the sequenced questions would not be so rigidly adhered to that the fact that a respondent had already addressed a topic out of sequence was ignored. Nor would time be so exactly portioned that a respondent could not voluntarily elaborate on an earlier reply.

As all interviewing in this study was to be personally administered, many of the problems Moser (1971) highlights in the formal interview could be avoided by the same encouragement being offered to all informants for enlargement of answers. Other elements could

also be equally well controlled - i.e. the flexibility desirable for probing, paraphrasing a question for clarity and requesting further data. In this way, the interviews for this study were to become a mixture of structured/unstructured and formal/informal techniques depending on the nature of the subject-matter.

Nisbet and Watt (1984) recommend striking a balance between openness and structure in the interview situation. They suggest gradually altering the emphasis as the interview proceeds by the interviewer initially playing a listening role, using non-directive techniques, making comments brief and if any judgement is implied then rephrasing the respondent's statement to check that the implication is correct. In the later stages the interviewer might begin to take a more positive part by checking interpretations, by referring back and re-phrasing or by presenting challenging statements (which must not of course introduce any 'threat' element) and by inviting the interviewee to add any further comments or points he might have missed.

It was against this background reading and accumulated suggestions that semi-structured interview schedules were devised for this survey (Appendices (ii) (iii) and (iv)). Parts of the schedules appear particularly formal and structured for reasons already mentioned but, seen as a whole, each interview follows a conversationally coherent plan. The interviews started in non-threatening areas, allowing respondents to express themselves but offering, what Wragg (1984) refers to as "enough shape to prevent

aimless rambling." In fact, it turned out that in some areas of the schedules, informants did tend to stray from the point offering some interesting remarks. At times this could be seen as the 'counselling function' sometimes served by interviews which Measor and Woods (1984) see as often producing some profitable listening. However, time constraints in this survey were not always conducive to this indulgence.

The three interview schedules drawn up aimed to present a balance and flexibility of styles. All began on non-sensitive ground with specific, structured questions, led into area headings under which discussion could be incorporated and probes introduced and flowed logically into more 'opinion-type' orientated questions making for freer discussion. It was decided not to use a tape-recorder in case of inhibiting replies but to attempt to record and code answers by hand during the pilot study. This turned out to be quite satisfactory and was therefore used throughout.

The headteacher interviews were the fullest and longest and were always written up from notes and short-hand immediately after the interview. Heads were given a full copy of their interview transcript to look through with the option of adding, altering or retracting any statement. This proved to be a useful element of validation.

Schedule sheets were duplicated for the interview of every teacher informant to facilitate the recording and coding of replies. It is these which are set out in appendices (iii) and (iv).

Wherever fairly lengthy remarks were uttered by informants, which were felt to be worthy of quotation in their entirety, these were always read back to the interviewee for verification. Interviews were arranged so that there was always at least a 5 to 10 minute break between. This enabled each informant's sheet to be thoroughly checked for accuracy and comprehension while the interview was still 'fresh.'

5.6. Presentation of data

In the ensuing chapters much use is made of tabulation for presenting specific facts and figures in the belief that the use of clear, purposely designed tables can often clarify collected information, especially in cases of comparisons and contrasts.

Chapter 6 introduces the reader to each school in turn as an individual case study and presents some comparable features. Chapter 7 sets out the data collected regarding the sources and areas of teacher expertise found to exist, while Chapter 8 explores the various approaches towards deploying that expertise in the 5 schools. Chapter 9 focuses on a major section of the interview schedule - i.e. opinions and attitudes towards specific curricular areas, and collates the information collected on teachers' own competency 'ratings'. This section attempts to illustrate the relevance of particular expertise to school needs in general whether curricula, teacher or pupil orientated.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. CAMPBELL, R.J. (1985) Developing the Primary School Curriculum. SUSSEX: HOLT, describes his inquiry into 8 schools in Warwick and quotes (on page 5) STENHOUSE, L. (1982) 'The conduct, analysis and reporting of case study in educational research' in McCormack, R. (ed.) Calling Education to Account. LONDON: HEINEMANN.

CHAPTER 6

THE SELECTED SCHOOLS AS CASE STUDIES

This chapter presents information regarding the 5 selected schools. Each school is set out separately, in no particular order other than placing the 3 junior schools first. The contributing data is drawn mainly from the headteacher questionnaire and interview although occasional use is made of notable teacher informant remarks and school policy statements. The descriptions are set out as background against which other findings in the research may be viewed. The chapter is divided into sub-sections starting with some useful information on the 2 local education authorities and culminating in a summary of significant similarities and contrasts across all 5 schools.

6.1. The Two L.E.A.s.

The 5 schools are situated within 2 neighbouring local education authorities in the North East of England. These will be referred to as L.E.A. X and L.E.A. Y. Sharp contrasts were evident in calls to schools for submissions of schemes of work (i.e. L.E.A. requests to satisfy D.E.S. 6/81 and 8/83 - 'The School Curriculum').¹ L.E.A. X had requested schools to submit aims and objectives for the school as a whole and for individual subject areas whereas L.E.A. Y had asked not only for these but also for the actual detailed schemes and syllabuses for each curriculum area. Some subject advisers in

L.E.A. Y had designed and distributed what they considered to be appropriate schemes of work, or topics for inclusion in such, to all their primary schools. This was not evident in L.E.A. X although teachers here felt that advisers could be called upon as 'supporters' if needed. In L.E.A. Y there were definite assumptions by teachers that advisers were 'inspectors'. These differences were upheld by informants who had worked in both L.E.A.s and who were therefore able to make comparisons.

6.2. State Junior School - L.E.A. Y. (to be referred to as S.J.1.Y).

BACKGROUND

The school

Size - group 5 (approaching 6), state junior mixed school which comprised 379 pupils.

Facilities - split-site in 2 very old buildings with the 'main school' housing 3rd and 4th years and 'the annexe' - approximately 200 yards away up a busy main road - housing 1st and 2nd years in an old secondary school block.

The catchment area - an old mining village, greatly extended by new developments over recent years and providing a broad social mix.

Organization of classes - divided into 14 separate mixed-ability classes for teaching purposes, all within year groups.

Headteacher - had held the post for 3 years having taken over after

the retirement of a Head highly organized in managerial and administrative tasks. Acknowledged the many problems initially encountered.

Teaching staff - a stable core of staff for many years - several used to the streamed situation which had had to change when the present Head arrived to comply with L.E.A. policy and not simply his wishes for change. Several staff admitted to not having 'come to terms' with mixed-ability teaching. There were no job descriptions in existence, the Head stating that he preferred a 'flexible approach' which could be restricted by prescriptive roles. Three probationary teachers had joined the school this year making a good age mix across the 15 teaching staff.

Teaching arrangements - generalist classwork was the norm. There had been a specialist music teacher in the past who was away from the school on secondment. The Head discouraged 'setting' initially so that teachers would experience teaching across the full ability range. The deputy head was responsible for drawing up a timetable to cover broadcasts but otherwise staff were left to organize their own teaching week. Time allocation to specific subjects was not a policy particularly adhered to as cross-curricular links were seen to be coming more to the fore, although many informants were found to be still working the traditional timetable favoured in the past.

Schemes of work - these had been formulated and submitted to the L.E.A. in all areas except Environmental Studies which was currently being researched. Relevant post-holders had initiated some staff discussion and drafting of policy. Most staff felt that the whole business had been 'rushed'. There were no formal methods employed for monitoring adherence to schemes of work. The weekly record keeping by each teacher at present, subsequently submitted to the headteacher, was under review.

Summary

This was a school seeming to have been pushed into change from its traditional organization not only by the acquisition of a new headteacher but also by L.E.A. policy for mixed-ability classes in primary schools. This pre-determined re-organization had coloured all aspects of the 5 year plan the Head had had in mind, followed by the limitations to change brought about by 2 years of industrial action. Now, those envisaged plans were being overtaken by a proposed new school. Most teachers felt that the school was in one long process of change with little time and no guidance for adjustment. Many expressed a feeling of 'not knowing' what the 'new' Head expected. All were aware of each other's relative strengths and regretted that opportunities were not available to exploit these through school organization and policy.

This school might be described in conceptual terms as '*metamorphic*'.

The appropriateness of this description will be reviewed on moving from the descriptive to the analytic.

6.3. State Junior School - L.E.A. X. (to be referred to as S.J.2.X.).

BACKGROUND

The school

Size - group 4 state junior school which comprised 207 pupils.

Facilities - a 30 year old building with pleasant surroundings but the rooms were felt to be too small and the internal decor in need of attention.

The catchment area - old village houses, a local council estate and a large new estate of private housing. A large proportion of pupils were prison officers' children.

Organization of classes - Year 1: 2 separate mixed ability classes and 1 class which contained 6 first years and 20 second years.

Year 2: 1 full mixed ability class and others in mixed 1st and 2nd year class above.

Year 3: 1 full mixed ability class and a mixed 3rd and 4th year class.

Year 4: 1 full mixed ability class and the mixed 3rd and 4th year class above.

7 classes in all.

Headteacher - had held the position for 3 years and had arrived with

definite pre-conceived ideas about changes and achievements. These had had to be greatly modified on discovery that the school was 10 to 15 years behind current thinking in primary education. After a great deal of friction there was now a feeling of being 'on-course' with the support of the majority of staff.

Teaching staff - 7 full-time teachers and 1 part-time teacher withdrawing for special needs provision. The Head was in favour of job descriptions and, as none existed, had indicated his intention to introduce them. Several staff had openly expressed worries about this so it had been decided to meet together to prepare a sample lay-out .

Teaching arrangements - class exchanges were arranged mostly to facilitate music teaching for which there was a subject specialist. Within these moves, attempts were made to incorporate other teachers' strengths so that the probationary teacher (a physics graduate) could come into contact with a class other than his own while the craft teacher could also make her abilities more widely felt through the school. Attempts were also being made to integrate the S.E.N. sessions with class work rather than have groups withdrawn as was currently happening.

Schemes of work - aims and objectives for each curriculum area had been written up and submitted, as requested, to the L.E.A. Actual schemes of work were still under discussion with

a published commercial maths scheme established through the school and a language scheme underway which had developed into an amalgamation of teacher ideas and published programmes. It was felt that the choice of these schemes had come about very much through staff discussion and initiatives.

Summary

There had undoubtedly been problems at this school when this new Head arrived. The "hard time" experienced initially had now waned with the eventual loss of many of "the old guard" as the Head described some of the staff. Teachers interviewed were, on the whole, very supportive of envisaged and completed changes. The Head had obviously made himself aware of teacher strengths and specialisms and had attempted to draw upon these as well as to match scale posts to areas of existing expertise. For these reasons, this school might be appropriately referred to as '*specialist-aware*'.

6.4. State Junior School - L.E.A. X. (to be referred to as S.J.3.X.).

BACKGROUND

The school

Size - group 4 state junior mixed school which comprised 202 pupils.

Facilities - a 22 year old building, well planned and in a pleasant location surrounded by well kept garden at the front and playground and an open expanse of playing fields at the rear.

The catchment area - described by the headteacher as approximately 60% private housing and 40% council housing with parents, on the whole, very supportive. A small number of foreign children attended the school whose parents were involved in university work.

Organization of classes - 2 mixed ability classes within each year group.

Headteacher - had held the post for just over 2 years and was conscious of 'not changing working methods for changing's sake'. Treading carefully but still encountering negative responses from some staff.

Teaching staff - fairly stable and static and used to the policies and strategies of the previous autocratic Head. According to several older, more traditional staff, the attempts made by the current Head to de-centralize decision making were no more than delegation rather than moves towards a greater autonomy. Eight full time teachers, including a new probationary teacher, 1 part-time remedial teacher and a visiting E.F.L. teacher, covered the 8 separate classes and withdrawal groups.

Teaching arrangements - one class teacher to each class with the exception of divisions for boys' and girls' games and some division of the sexes for craft work. Withdrawal groups operated across all 4 years for S.E.N., and English for foreign children. A group of the most able pupils

in the 4th year was taken by the headteacher.

Schemes of work - other than in maths, language and environmental studies there was little or no direction for other areas of the curriculum. The 'School Development Plan' stated that it was intended to introduce a science scheme "as financial circumstances permit." Commercial schemes were in use for maths and language.

Summary

Every member of staff had a job description designed by self and Head but all adhering to the same pattern. All were able to be reproduced, along with other school documentation, at the touch of a button on the computer system. This highlighted the emphasis on methodical administration and the desire for precise organization throughout the school. All teaching was subject-orientated and timetabled. Although the Head was aware that there were staff 'weaknesses' in science and computer work he felt that class teaching should still dominate. He acknowledged that his own 'weak' areas had always been music and art and craft but that any specialist assistance was only feasible in an ideal staffing situation - something the school did not have.

Of all the schools studied, this school had the most 'traditional' leanings with its school uniform, inherited prefect system and compartmentalized teaching and will therefore be referred to in conceptual terms as '*traditional-cellular*.'

6.5. State Primary School - L.E.A. Y. (to be referred to as S.P.I.Y).

BACKGROUND

The school

Size - the largest school of the survey - a group 6 primary school with 435 pupils.

Facilities - a 16 year old building, well-planned with 2 hall areas, infant and junior departments all connecting and generally light, airy and colourful.

The catchment area - a good social mix "with a constant pull upwards" in terms of expected standards and achievements was how the Head chose to describe it. Large new council and private housing estates surrounded the school.

Organization of classes - 15 mixed ability classes incorporating some mixed year groups.

Headteacher - had been in the school for 4½ years and had definite ideas on management and change which amounted to an acceptance of not being able to alter teachers and attitudes overnight. He viewed his own background, and those of the staff, as having lived through 11+ and traditional grammar school education followed by, what might amount to, 20 years of formal teaching experience. It was therefore not surprising, he felt, that many changes were usually little more than 'cosmetic alterations' as far as true classroom practice was concerned.

Teaching staff - 17½ teachers to cover 15 classes allowing some flexibility in organization. All staff had 'prescriptive' job specifications with scale posts matching areas of interest and strength.

Teaching arrangements - as well as one teacher to each class there was a 'floating' member of staff, a part-time teacher and the deputy head without a class. The Head also had a teaching timetable. There was a commitment to employing teacher expertise throughout the school as an aid to other staff or enrichment for other classes. This involved organizational strategies for releasing post-holders from their normal class teaching duties.

Schemes of work - planned curricular programmes existed for most areas, with some (notably C.D.T.) still under discussion. Methods for monitoring and evaluating were evident in record keeping which was submitted to post-holders and headteacher as well as in the staff development exercises which enabled post-holders to work in other classes and thereby make informal appraisals.

Summary

A highly organized school on paper and in practice, possessing a great deal of teacher expertise which was both recognized and deployed. Many of the ideas on staff development percolated from the Head who was succeeding in conveying aims and employing positive strategies for

implementing desired policies.

A suitable conceptual term for this school might be Campbell's (1985)² image of the '*collegial*' school "predicated on the two values of teacher collaboration and subject expertise." The aptness of this description will be re-assessed as further features are identified through the study.

6.6. R.C. Aided Primary School - L.E.A. X. (to be referred to as A.P.1.X).

BACKGROUND

The school

Size - a group 3 Roman Catholic primary school with 145 pupils - the smallest in the survey.

Facilities - a 50 year old block, now the junior department, and a much newer 7 year old block housing infants. The two were connected and provided, on the whole, good accommodation.

The catchment area - very much 'village' and all associated with that in terms of extended families, close-knit communities and traditions. The headteacher viewed the intake as coming from a wide social spread welded by the denominational aspect of the school.

Organization of classes - each of the 3 infant year groups formed a mixed ability class while years 1 and 2 of the junior department were in one class and years 3 and 4 in another.

Headteacher - the longest serving Head of the survey having been at the school for 5 years and believing that the teaching philosophies and policies in the school could now be viewed as mainly 'progressive', retaining only the selected elements of the formal, traditional methods which had dominated when she arrived.

Teaching staff - 5 full-time, and 1 part-time teacher for special needs provision. Each teacher possessed a job description. There was evidence of some of the older staff favouring more traditional methods than were being encouraged but being prepared to support and persevere.

Teaching arrangements - one teacher to each class with the part-time teacher either withdrawing individuals or groups or working alongside class-teachers. There was no official timetable as such. The curriculum was covered through project and topic work. Generalist class teaching was the norm but the science specialist occasionally worked in other classes and the headteacher had taught a particular class for maths on a regular basis.

Schemes of work - commercial maths and language schemes were in operation as was a science scheme and a music scheme which had more or less been abandoned due to the loss of the in-school expert. There was evidence, in several curricular areas, of selection and review of materials and schemes with references to D.E.S. 'Curriculum Matters' publications.³

Summary

The overall picture was one of gradual, planned transformation and development with an emphasis on progressive methods despite the desire by some members of staff to retain certain traditional procedures. The size of the school promoted an acknowledged awareness of each other's attitudes and practices which, in turn, created a situation conducive to the transmission of ideals and ideas - managing to permeate even the classroom wall barrier. For these reasons this school will be referred to as '*osmotic*' and attempts will be made in later sections of the study to discover just how appropriate this turns out to be.

6.7. Comparisons Across The Selected Schools

Under this heading the main similarities and differences found to exist across the 5 schools will be highlighted. Sub-headings are employed to indicate areas where comparisons were most interesting and might prove useful at a later stage in the study. Information for this section has been selected from all the data collection devices employed.

The following table sets out some of the facts and figures already referred to as well as introducing others for the first time. It focuses on the comparative elements of the previous separate statements.

TABLE 1. Differences Across the Five Schools: designation and staffing

Characteristics	S.J.1.Y.	S.J.2.X.	S.J.3.X.	S.P.1.Y.	A.P.1.X.
Type	7-11 mixed junior	7-11 mixed junior	7-11 mixed junior	5-11 mixed primary	5-11 mixed primary
Size	3-4 form entry	2 form entry	2 form entry	2 form entry	barely 1 form entry
Pupils	379	207	202	435	145
Classes	14	7	8	15	5
Teachers	15 F.T.	7 F.T. 1 P.T.	8 F.T. 1 P.T.	17 F.T. 1 P.T.	5 F.T. 1 P.T.
Scale 1 Teachers	5	2	1	7	2
Scale 2 Teachers	4	4	6	3	2
Scale 3 Teachers	4	0	0	6	0
Senior Teachers/ Deputy Head	2	1	1	1	1

(N.B. Where anomalies in staff provision to size of school would seem to occur this is due to contraction and subsequent 'protected' posts where there have been no redeployments or natural wastage.)

(i) Ideologies and Philosophies

School philosophies were described by all headteachers interviewed as being an amalgamation of ideologies, with the child undoubtedly at the centre but with selected traditional elements. S.J.3.X. 'traditional-cellular' proved to have retained far more traditional aspects with the view that parents preferred a well-ordered 'work ethos' to transmit from the school. The 2 primary schools displayed a greater leaning towards a 'child-centred' approach with A.P.1.X. especially working a fully integrated day. Even in these 2 schools, however, there were members of staff with a desire to retain more traditional methods. From all the junior schools evidence emerged from interviews and diaries which suggested that several teachers, although seemingly agreeing with stated school objectives on paper were, in practice, teaching very much along the formal lines they had always been used to. This tended to apply mostly to older members of staff from 50 upwards.

(ii) The Headteachers

The headteachers had two major similarities. All were in the age group 38-42 and all were in the early stages of their first headship. It is worth tabulating certain features relating to these 5 Heads:

TABLE 2. Comparisons of Headteachers

ATTRIBUTES	S.J.1.Y.	S.J.2.X.	S.J.3.X.	S.P.1.Y.	A.P.1.X.
SEX	Male	Male	Male	Male	Female
INITIAL TRAINING	3 yr. Cert.	3 yr. Cert.	3 yr. Cert.	3 yr. Cert.	3 yr. Cert.
MAIN SUBJECT STUDIED	History	History	History	P.E.	English
FURTHER QUALIFICATIONS	B.A.	B.Ed.	B.A.	M.Ed.	B.Ed.
YEARS AS HEAD	3	2½	2	4½	5

One interesting feature to emerge from the table is that all of the Heads had followed a 3 year Certificate of Education course and then, several years later, had embarked on degree courses in Education in their own time.

All of the headteachers had participated in L.E.A. 'Headship training courses' and had derived some benefit from meeting colleagues in similar situations and from participating in simulation exercises. Two of the headteachers commented on the amount of their workload which revolved around general maintenance and administration rather than the use of professional skills. Another commented that guidance given which was of most immediate use was "who to ring for roofing repairs!" Many of the opinions expressed by the headteachers supported Alexander's (1984) suggestions that crash management courses for Heads are not nearly sufficient for people who have usually previously proved themselves, "by someone's definition", as a sound class teacher. Headteacher comments also reinforced Alexander's belief that

administration to many Heads is seen as a chore and a distraction away from the main tasks of headship.⁴

All Heads had encountered similar problems on taking up their positions. It was noticeable that these had gradually faded or been overcome as the time in the job increased. Four out of 5 Heads felt that they had experienced "a fairly rough time" and "several difficulties" in their first 2 years. One reason for this appeared to be in their inheritance of particularly traditional schools used to dominant and autocratic Heads who were well-known and respected in the community at large.

It was evident that all of the headteachers had experienced barriers to change through staff, tradition and, not least, through 2 years of industrial action which had prohibited meetings, working parties - in fact anything connected to new developments which might have required time together outside the normal teaching day. Furthermore, these 'new' headteachers had been responsible for having to implement D.E.S./L.E.A. policies and requests for curricular aims, objectives, schemes, etc., all bearing the hallmarks of 'accountability' and viewed by several teachers to be time-consuming administrative tasks which diluted the main job of teaching. The following quotations collected from teacher informants serve to highlight some of the difficulties:

"It should be the Head's job to make the decisions not ours."

"Delegation just means more work for us when the Head's the one with the time."

"We at least always knew what the last Head expected even if he was a tyrant most of the time."

(All of these comments came from curriculum post-holders in their early 50's.)

All of the Heads had seen, or, in the case of those in the job for only 2 to 3 years, were just beginning to see, some modifications and fruitions of their pre-conceived plans and ideas.

The I.L.E.A. 'Junior School Project' (1986)⁵ collected data from 50 junior schools which indicated that, in general, schools with new Heads and long serving Heads were associated with negative effects, whilst schools where the Head had been in the post for 3 to 7 years (mid-term Heads) were associated with positive effects. These mid-term Heads were more likely to have adopted a strategy of selective influence on teaching styles. The project suggested that new and long-serving Heads may need special encouragement to maintain or to institute more effective practices and that inter-relationships between given characteristics and possible policy options should be borne in mind when considering the ways in which junior schools might be able to improve their effectiveness. The views of head-teachers themselves and other data collected in this survey in the North East would support these I.L.E.A. findings concerning new and mid-term Heads.

(iii) The Teacher Informants

Fifty teachers were interviewed from the 5 selected schools. This does not correspond exactly to the numbers set out in TABLE 1

as some teachers preferred not to be interviewed and several were absent from school for a long period. Opportunities did arise, however, to interview some of the 'supply'/'unattached' teachers in the schools at the time of the survey. The sample of informants for this research can therefore be broken down into the following groups - reference to which may be of value later as well as being of interest here:

TABLE 3: Categories of Teacher Informants

INFORMANTS	S.J.1.Y.	S.J.2.X.	S.J.3.X.	S.P.1.Y.	A.P.1.X.	TOTALS
Female	9	5	6	10	5	35
Male	6	3	3	2	1	15
Scale 1 teachers	5	2	1	5	2	15
Scale 2 teachers	4	4	6	-	2	16
Scale 3 teachers	4	-	-	6	-	10
Deputy Heads	2	1	1	1	1	6
Part-time teachers	-	1	1	-	1	3
Aged 20-30	1	1	1	4	1	8
Aged 30-40	8	2	2	5	2	19
Aged 40-50	2	4	3	3	1	13
Aged 50-60	4	1	3	-	2	10

(Note - one of the scale 1 teachers appearing in the figure for S.P.1.Y. was a 'supply' teacher. An 'unattached' teacher replacing a scale 1 was also interviewed in S.J.2.X. and has therefore been entered in that scale 1 teacher column.)

Four of the five schools selected had probationary teachers at the time of the study. They have been included in the appropriate figures of TABLE 3, however the exact details are:

S.J.1.Y. - 3 probationers aged 25, 32 and 36 (all female).

S.J.2.X. - 1 probationer aged 24 (male).

S.J.3.X. - 1 probationer aged 24 (female).

S.P.1.Y. - 3 probationers aged 21, 23, 29 (all female).

As can be seen from the ages, several of these probationers were older than one might expect due to either training as mature students or, after qualifying, not managing to immediately secure a post in a school for various reasons. A.P.1.X., the only school without a probationer, had in fact had one the previous year and she was still teaching at the school. Every school, therefore, produced informants who were recently trained. Most of the schools also possessed a wide age range of staff as TABLE 3 shows. S.P.1.Y. however, possessed a high proportion of younger teachers, having only three over 40 years of age.

Of the 50 teachers interviewed, 26 had spent their entire teaching careers in junior education, usually having had experience of all four age groups but many tending to have stayed, for long periods of time, with either lower or upper juniors. A further 4 teachers had taught only infants but were in full primary schools. The remaining 20 had had experience across several age groups: 10 had taught infants and juniors, 6 had worked in both secondary and junior sectors, 1 in middle and junior and 3 had taught infant, junior and secondary age groups.

(iv) Non-Pupil Contact Time

The amount of time teachers spent away from teaching duties in the working day varied greatly from school to school and within each school, often depending on the position of the teacher, i.e. the higher up the hierarchical ladder the more non-teaching time granted. What did stand out was that the timetabling of so-called 'free' time was left very much to headteachers and therefore depended on several factors - a) was the Head prepared to teach to relieve teachers of their classes?

b) had it been possible to arrange teachers and classes in such a way, at the beginning of the year, so as to gain a 'floating' teacher?

c) was it generally agreed that teachers could opt out of certain morning assemblies or hymn practices for purposes of meetings, working parties, preparation, etc.?

d) how far was it feasible for teachers to come to their own arrangements with colleagues for doubling up classes in order to 'free' one teacher?

Examples of all the above arrangements were evident, and, in some schools, all of these methods were, or had been, used at one time or another. As was pointed out, however, when systems (a) or (b) were favoured then the Head still had to make choices and/or decisions as to who should benefit. The main problem with these two methods seemed to be that should staff be absent, or unexpected situations arise, then these tended to be the first arrangements to be 'shelved' and could

therefore never be totally relied upon for providing time for post-holder functioning.

In the survey, not one scale 1 teacher had timetabled non-contact time other than some probationers, notably in L.E.A. Y, who received 1 hour per fortnight to attend the L.E.A. probationers' meetings. Only 2 of the scale 2 teachers interviewed received $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour non-contact time per week. On the whole, scale 1 and scale 2 teachers relied solely on catching 20 minutes on either a hymn practice morning or broadcast assembly morning. Even with this arrangement, each had to participate on a duty rota for these events. The other main problem with this was that music teachers (their presence being necessary for each assembly) were often given 'free' time elsewhere in the week, but, as they stated, this could be very limiting as no-one else would be free and one tended to have to receive, second-hand, decisions and conclusions reached by the rest of the staff.

Overall, school S.P.1.Y. had most provision for non-contact time on an organized basis, brought about mainly by Head and Deputy Head engaging in some relief teaching and the possession of a 'floating' teacher. In this school and S.J.1.Y, where scale 3 posts existed, these post-holders were timetabled for up to one hour per week but, as 3 informants pointed out in S.J.1.Y, this had materialized over the term to nearer one hour every 3 weeks due to staff absences.

These findings reiterate those of other researchers:

Rodger and Richardson (1985)⁶ state that

"Primary school teachers normally work a full timetable, only being freed from classroom duties on odd occasions such as hymn practices or music lessons."

Loizou and Rossiter (1987)⁷ found

"It was, however, very much the case that in nearly every primary school visited the Headteacher, post-holder and class teachers could ill afford the time to take part in the interviews."

Rodger et al (1983) made the point that the Primary Survey (1978) recommended that post-holders be given time to perform their suggested functions but that, in practice, this was seldom done and the conscientious post-holder was left using playtimes and lunchtimes in attempts to fulfil his duties.

Immediately the message can be detected that, with poor provision of time away from one class, any available expertise must be restricted in its modes of deployment.

(v) Schemes of Work and Planned Progression

Common to all schools was the discarding of past, out-of-date schemes. Moves towards this had been set in motion primarily by the arrival of new headteachers. While schools in L.E.A. Y had rapidly replaced out-dated schemes within the time limit allowed for the submission of planned curricular programmes to relevant subject advisers, schools in L.E.A. X. tended to be still 'feeling their way' in several areas with old schemes abandoned and proposed ones either not drafted or limited by resources.

S.P.1.Y. and S.J.1.Y. had implemented planned programmes across the full curriculum although only the former had established an organized policy for monitoring and evaluating.

A.P.1.X., although not in possession of planned schemes for all areas of the curriculum, was able to function efficiently through the preference for project work and the integrated day with the detailed planning necessary for this. All staff held files of schemes of work in operation and all submitted project forecasts to the Head listing the areas and skills expected to be covered. This was followed by a critique of what actually happened in practice with pitfalls and problems noted as well as successes, developments and recommendations for the future.

In schools S.J.2.X. and S.J.3.X. aims and objectives for each curriculum area had been drafted but no unified schemes existed for use through each year group other than in the published Maths and Language schemes, and Environmental Studies in S.J.3.X. The specialist subject teaching employed in S.J.2.X. reduced the possibilities of repetition in certain areas but this problem had not been entirely overcome in these 2 schools especially.

Teaching in the junior schools tended to be more subject orientated than in the 2 primary schools with junior teachers' own class timetables fragmenting the day. There was however a definite preference detectable for skill rather than content based curricula.

Finally, the prevalence of commercial schemes in use for Maths

and Language work is worth recording in view of informants' comments presented in Chapters 7, 8 and 9. All of the schools had implemented such schemes. Many teachers remarked on their personal likes and dislikes for the particular chosen schemes. Most approved of the inherent elements of progression and monitoring but many emphasized the huge quantity of marking which usually arose. Several teachers felt that extension material could be a problem in Maths while others felt that they were working within 'a straight jacket', duty-bound to adhere to the scheme even when particular approaches were not personally favoured. Within the scope of this study, this theme will recur in the ensuing chapters in its connections with the efficient deployment of teacher expertise.

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CHAPTER 7

THE NATURE OF TEACHER EXPERTISE

This section of the research findings attempts to select data which will throw light onto specific sources and areas of teacher expertise. The data is drawn from opinions teachers proffered regarding expertise in themselves and others and is therefore best prefaced with some clarifying comments.

7.1. Attitudes Towards Teacher Expertise

There would seem to be a danger in a great deal of other research and literature of the last five years of seeing expertise in primary schools only as far as it exists in the work and expectations of the post-holder. This is understandable, given that it is usually through the position of post-holder that expertise is expected to manifest itself and in any survey regarding the deployment of expertise one is more or less forced, by current practice in schools, to look in this direction.

There is evidence in this survey to suggest that expertise is far more prevalent in primary schools, in its existence, if not in its deployment, than might have been expected. Assumptions that the primary school teacher's competencies can tackle all areas of the curriculum from 5 to 11 are proof in themselves of a certain acknowledged but 'unsung' expertise which teachers in most other

education establishments would be hesitant in claiming for themselves.

The many attitudes concerning teacher expertise which were revealed in the research can be summarized as follows:

- (i) teacher expertise does not occur through the accumulation of a body of knowledge alone. There were several accounts of highly qualified academics struggling with the art of holding the attention of an interested but demanding audience,
- (ii) initial professional training does not make one an expert - it takes experiences of successes and failures in self and others to build up a teaching expertise,
- (iii) expertise, applicable to the classroom, tends to be a conglomeration of interests, enthusiasm, knowledge of content as well as of pupils, workable techniques, anticipation and awareness,
- (iv) strengths and fortes in teaching are relative to the competencies and weaknesses not only of the teacher next door but to all colleagues in the school at any given time. Their shortcomings might turn one teacher into a 'relative expert' in a specific area. The reverse is also true - their expertise can either highlight another teacher's inadequacies or enthuse and inspire a teacher's attempts in weaker areas,
- (v) "expertise is particularly susceptible to improvement" - an idea aired in the Birmingham Studies (1983)¹ and re-

iterated in this research through many similar phrases.

The expert was seen to be continually questioning, searching and keeping abreast of developments.

It became increasingly evident, as the research progressed and the 55 interviews were completed, that every informant had some expertise to offer. The following sections therefore aim to reveal people, places or events which may have acted as catalysts in the acquisition of certain proficiencies.

7.2. Sources of Expertise

Alexander (1984) suggests that teachers' ideas and practices come from many sources, some of them highly elusive. He recognizes three overlapping areas of experience which all primary teachers have in common - i.e. a class teacher, the work in a particular kind of institution and having undergone particular professional training. The informants in this survey, all having been influenced at some stage by these experiences, provided data from which 4 possible sources of teacher expertise were identified. Section (i) sets out 2 of these by covering professional training and main academic study. Section (ii) highlights personal interests, hobbies and experience while section (iii) concentrates on any benefits accrued from in-service training.

(i) Initial Studies

There was an assumption, expressed by all informants, that teachers experienced insights and guidelines during their professional

training which, when coupled with classroom exposure over many years, are responsible for professional expertise. It is therefore in the teaching of particular curriculum areas that this study intends to discover *how* expertise exists and *where* it exists - i.e. in which 'subjects'.

The term 'main-subject' will be used to refer to academic work pursued by teachers during their initial college or university studies.

The interview schedule asked whether informants' primary teaching had benefitted or been affected by initial main subject studies - (Appendix (iii) - questions 7 to 10). The following table sets out information concerning the initial studies of the 50 teacher informants:

TABLE 4. Variations in Initial Teacher Training and Subsequent Studies

This table sets out the numbers of teachers in the 5 schools who had completed certain courses or combinations of training and study.

COURSES FOLLOWED	S.J.1.Y.	S.J.2.X.	S.J.3.X.	S.P.1.Y.	A.P.1.X.	TOTALS
2 yr. Cert. of Ed.	4	3	3	1	2	13
3 yr. Cert. of Ed.	3	2	2	5	2	14
B.Ed. degrees (3 & 4 year)	4	-	1	2	1	8
B.A./B.Sc. + P.G.C.E.	-	1	-	1	-	2
3 yr. Cert. + Diploma or similar	-	1	1	1	-	3
3 yr. Cert. + B.A./B.Ed.	3	-	2	1	1	7
3 yr. Cert. + Degree + Higher Degree	-	1	-	-	-	1
B.Ed. + M.A. (Ed.)	-	-	-	1	-	1
B.A. + P.G.C.E. + M.A. (Ed.)	1	-	-	-	-	1

A sufficiently good mix and variation of initial studies existed to draw worthwhile conclusions from the following findings:-

The majority of teachers interviewed felt that they had derived some benefit from initial main subject study but not necessarily from the point of view of it being applicable to classroom work. Most felt that study in depth had been worthwhile for their own personal development and the majority agreed that, for students intending to become primary school teachers, there was value in main subject study to degree level if only to improve the image of the primary school teacher and break down the hierarchal view, held by many, of the education system employing levels of excellence 'from the bottom upwards.'

Several teachers were more specific regarding the influences of their main subject studies on their classroom work. The feeling was that this influence tended to be indirect rather than direct. One historian felt that he was more able than many to make History come alive for pupils because of his own knowledge and personal enthusiasm. One teacher, who had studied Biology, mentioned how every so often she was able to give fairly full explanations to her class, when specific events occurred, purely from her own background knowledge.

Many teachers who felt they could draw on their initial study were those who had worked in the creative arts - i.e. drama, art and music. Several expressed the view of finding their own knowledge and abilities invaluable for enthusing and encouraging children

as well as being able to develop themes and topics from aspects seeming quite insignificant on the surface.

Sixteen of the 50 teacher informants felt that they had derived useful skills and knowledge from their initial main subject studies which they had been able to apply to the classroom.

Seven of the 50 informants thought that there was no necessity for primary school teachers to study a subject in depth. Another informant did not want to go as far as this but felt that main subject study for 3 years was too much and could be trimmed so as to allow more time for students to acquire some of the broader approaches necessary for work in primary education.

Forty three out of 50 informants therefore agreed with the principle of all teachers embarking on recognised courses of academic study, with 27 of those 43 informants feeling that, although they themselves had not gleaned classroom applicable knowledge from their own main subject study, there were, nevertheless, personal benefits to be gained.

These opinions and results had no significant relationships to the age of the teacher or to the actual type of course followed in initial training. It would seem that the majority of teachers would support current policy for primary school teachers engaging in some academic study designed for self enrichment rather than just professional applicability.

Of the 50 teacher informants, 16 were scale 2 post-holders and

10 were scale 3 post-holders. The incidence of initial subject study corresponding to the responsibility area covered by the scale post was 8 out of 26. Two of these were cases of qualified librarians being given scale 2 posts for 'Library/Resources'. Of the remaining 6, 3 were examples of teachers, having studied English as a main subject, retaining and developing an interest in Language work in schools resulting in:

- 1) an English graduate with P.G.C.E. and M.A.(Ed.) holding a scale 3 post for Language, R.E. and year co-ordinator in S.J.1.Y.,
- 2) a 3 year certificate trained teacher with a B.Ed. degree acquired later, having studied English as a main subject, holding the scale 2 post for Language in S.J.3.X.
- 3) a B.Ed. + M.A.(Ed.) having also studied English as a main subject, holding a scale 3 post for Language in S.P.1.Y.

The remaining cases included a Maths 2 year trained certificate teacher holding a scale 2 post for Maths for many years in S.J.3.X., a Music 3 year trained certificate teacher, with a first degree and also higher degree, holding the scale 2 post for Music in S.J.2.X., and a 3 year trained certificate teacher, specializing in Art and then in a Fine Arts degree, holding a scale 3 post for Art, E.S. and year co-ordinator in S.J.1.Y.

As well as these examples, there were 4 deputy heads who had retained an interest in their original subject of study and who were

offering their expertise in this area in various ways to their own classes or to the school as a whole. These areas covered Art, Science, Language and S.E.N. and R.E.

There were several scale 1 teachers who, although not financially acknowledged as possessing a particular expertise through the procurement of a scale post were, nevertheless, displaying and retaining talents and interest in their main subject.

It was generally agreed that initial professional training, either through P.G.C.E. or college of education work, had played a part in the acquisition of teaching skills.

It was upheld by a majority of informants that main subject study had been worthwhile personally even if not directly applicable professionally. Several teachers had derived a lasting knowledge and enthusiasm from main subject study which was relevant to primary teaching.

In conclusion, it must be recognized that initial studies have been one source of the expertise found to exist in the survey schools.

(ii) Personal Interests and Experience

This section deals with expertise which teachers possessed and which had not been acquired from formal courses. Teachers' own interests, leisure activities and experiences in schools since initial training tended to be the main sources of teacher expertise available in the selected schools. Many teachers, over the years, had developed certain skills which were curriculum applicable and,

in some instances, had eventually been awarded scale posts for this expertise. It was noticeable that these were often far removed from subjects in initial study. The following list presents some examples:

Scale 2 for Art and Craft	(main subject Geography)
Scale 2 for Language	(" " P.E.)
Scale 2 for Art and Craft	(" " Geography)
Scale 2 for Library & School Magazine	(" " R.E.)
Scale 2 for Language	(" " R.E.)
Scale 2 for Music	(" " English/ Geography)
Scale 3 for P.E.	(" " Chemistry)
Scale 3 for Music	(" " Textiles)
Scale 3 for Art and Craft	(" " English)

There was expertise offered by scale 1 teachers which had origins in personal hobbies and interests. The most notable examples were pointed out by teachers themselves or by their colleagues and were mostly in areas of art, skills in musicianship, drama and theatre work, sporting activities and local history interests. Many of these teachers turned out to be well-known 'experts' in their field in the locality, with several able to supplement their daytime earnings by practising their skills in the evenings. A more detailed analysis of the utilization of these and other areas of expertise will appear at a later stage in the study.

(iii) In-Service Provision

There were definite subjects highlighted in this research where teachers felt they had gained a great deal towards their expertise from in-service courses. The main categories were Maths, Technology and Computing, Science and Environmental Studies. Teachers who had embarked upon courses in these subjects had done so for numerous reasons:

- a) there had been a necessity in a particular school at a particular time to fill a 'gap' or develop the curriculum, and/or
- b) the volunteer concerned had already developed some interest in the area during his/her teaching career which was unrelated to any previous study, and/or
- c) the interest had always been there on a personal level and it was decided to develop it and adapt it to school work when appropriate in-service courses came along.

Again, it must be noted that the previous statements were applicable to many scale 1 teachers but were more easily traceable and visible where scale posts had recognized expertise.

Examples of post-holders having developed initial interest from in-service work and for a variety of reasons were:

- | | | | |
|---|---|---------------|-------------------|
| a) Scale 3 Mathematics | - | main subjects | Art and Geography |
| b) Scale 3 E.S./Science | - | " " | Art and Drama |
| c) Scale 2 Science | - | " " | History |
| d) Scale 3 Mathematics | - | " " | Biology |
| e) Scale 2 Ed. Technology and Computing | - | " " | Geography |

It should be pointed out that in cases such as these where teachers had branched away from initial main subject areas they tended to have studied a great deal in their own time, acquiring various relevant qualifications. They had not relied totally on local L.E.A. provision but had also looked towards the broader scope without.

During the course of this survey several teachers interviewed had embarked upon new courses as 'extras' to develop within the school. One main example was C.D.T. (Craft, Design and Technology) and this was an area where there seemed to be an expectation, by the Head, for certain post-holders to add this area to their responsibilities. Another example was of two members of staff - one with a scale 2 post for A.V.A. (Audio Visual Aids) and a probationer - (both in the same school) having started a diploma course, 2 evenings per week for a full year, in Environmental Studies. This was seen as personal interest and extension as well as for future development within the school.

Other noteworthy cases involved curriculum areas being annexed to existing scale posts to cover particular gaps which had developed. Two scale 3 teachers had been asked to share responsibility for the development of Environmental Studies as an extra to their existing curricular responsibilities. A scale 2 Music post-holder had been asked to add Language to her responsibilities and another scale 2 post-holder asked to take on Needlework as well as Music. In these instances, L.E.A. courses, where they existed, had been viewed as

necessary providers of assistance and support.

It would seem that in-service provision as a *source* of teacher expertise has been limited until very recent times. In the past, this provision has served more to extend and update teachers' interests and abilities. Currently, however, with an ever expanding primary school curriculum, the data showed that in-service work is becoming more and more necessary as a *source* of knowledge and skills, providing schools, through individual receivers, with a certain relative expertise to be transmitted. This is also true for situations where expertise leaves a particular school and is either not replaced at all because of contraction or is replaced with a different strength.

It is also worth noting what seems to be an expected transience which is beginning to colour some headteacher's attitudes towards teacher expertise, and can often be detected in job advertisements for curriculum scale posts. (A recent example appeared in T.E.S. requiring a scale 3 teacher to take responsibility for Science and P.E. 'in the first instance.')

No doubt headteachers are aware of those problems of expansion of curriculum and contraction of staff, already referred to, when suggesting post requirements. However, if teachers are to be expected to not only add expertise to that already possessed but to also replace expertise, then, here again, in-service courses must become a major *source* for that replacement. This in turn begs questions of economics and the wisdom of developing teachers' competencies in one curriculum area to discover later that this must then lie dormant, or be totally neglected, while a school/

Head- preferred different curriculum area be re-trained for. It also raises the question of the quality of expertise expected of teachers who can be asked to disregard talents, accumulated over many years, for the rapid absorption of others.

These varied sentiments were expressed by several teachers in this research who had actually added new areas of responsibility to their posts, were in the process of being asked to do so or who felt that the situation was imminent in their school. This, to some extent, dilutes the recommendations made by Rodger et al (1983)²:

"Changes in post designation can be useful for both the teacher and the school and should be encouraged."

If post-holders are 'stuck' in inappropriate roles then obviously change would be beneficial. However, since the time of Rodger's research, much more has been expected of curriculum post-holders in drafting and implementation to meet L.E.A. /D.E.S. requirements. Major changes in subject area responsibility could inflict impossibly high work loads on teachers just beginning to see some rewarding results from their efforts in one sphere.

Whichever way the situation is viewed, current trends would indicate that in-service provision will certainly be called upon in the future to be a central *source* for the production of the 'in-school expert' for several areas of the primary school curriculum.

(This survey was conducted prior to information being released on the INSET requirements in new contracts for teachers. Any

opinions on these were not therefore reflected in teacher responses.)

7.3. Areas of Expertise

As Taylor (1986)³ points out:

"'Expert' is not a term most post-holders have any great wish to embrace. 'Adviser', yes, but nothing that would sharply distinguish them from their colleagues."

Many post-holders interviewed in this survey held this same opinion but were happy to speak in terms of their possessing a 'relative expertise' in the area specific to the post. By this was meant an acknowledgement of having knowledge, and/or training, and/or experience, and/or qualifications, and/or skills and abilities which were comparatively greater than those possessed by other colleagues in the same area - hence the reason for the 'relative expert' holding the paid responsibility post.

Often, teachers, other than those with scale posts, are given responsibilities and this was found to be the case in 3 of the schools studied. This usually came about by a desire on the part of the individual to gain more experience and eventual expertise, or by a desire on the part of the school, and the Head in particular, to make the most of an obvious existence of expertise.

For all of these reasons, the expertise found to exist in the 5 selected schools will be mapped out to cover that discovered in all teachers, regardless of post, and in all areas which could prove suitable for integration into the primary school curriculum.

(i) Acknowledged Expertise

Areas of expertise recognised through the schools' structures and organization of scale posts fell into the following categories:

TABLE 5. Scale Post Allocations

LANGUAGE:	2 scale 2 posts 2 scale 2 combined posts 1 scale 3 post 1 scale 3 combined post		(+ year co-ordinator)
MATHS:	1 scale 2 post 1 scale 3 post 1 scale 3 combined post		(+ year co-ordinator)
ART, CRAFT AND DISPLAY:	2 scale 2 posts 1 scale 3 post 1 scale 3 combined post		(+ year co-ordinator)
MUSIC:	2 scale 2 combined posts 1 scale 3 post		
SCIENCE:	1 scale 2 post 1 scale 3 combined post		
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES:	2 scale 3 combined posts		(+ year co-ordinator)
R.E.:	1 scale 2 combined post 1 scale 3 combined post		(+ liaison work)
P.E.:	1 scale 3 combined post		(+ boys pastoral care)
NEEDLEWORK:	1 scale 2 combined post		
DRAMA:	2 scale 2 combined posts		
TECHNOLOGY/ COMPUTING:	2 scale 2 posts		
AUDIO/VISUAL AIDS:	1 scale 2 post		
LIBRARY/RESOURCES:	1 scale 2 combined post 4 scale 2 posts		
RECORD KEEPING/ ASSESSMENT:	1 scale 2 post		

This table displays all of the scale 2 and 3 posts in operation in all 5 selected schools whether the responsibility area was directly curricular, was of a pastoral or administrative type, or was a combination.

The area of Maths was interesting with 2 of the schools having no scale posts provided - A.P.1.X and S.J.2.X. Responsibility at the former school was taken by the headteacher for implementation, some teaching and monitoring.

Language was well catered for with a total of 6 separate posts across the 5 schools. (S.J.1.Y. had two posts - a scale 3 and a scale 2 - the latter as a co-ordinator in the split-site structure).

Only 2 Science posts were allocated - one of those combined with Environmental Studies. The only other provision of a post for E.S. was a scale 3 linked with Art/Craft/Display and year co-ordinator.

Art, Craft and Display were always linked and as an area was the third most popular choice, i.e. more posts in existence here than for Maths, Science, Technology or Music - but not more than for Library/Resources!

If the posts for Audio Visual Aids and Technology and Computing are included as 'resource' posts then 'resources' totals 8 scale 2 posts. Despite the high incidence of 'resource' associated posts, the majority now in existence in the 5 schools were curriculum based with evidence to suggest that these had been linked to teacher expertise. Further evidence, retrieved from data collected in the

post-holder additional interview schedule (Appendix iv) would suggest that exactly half of the 26 post-holders interviewed underwent some form of formal selection procedure at which they were asked to demonstrate that they met the requirements of the post. Those who had received their post, possibly many years ago under circumstances of being 'next in line', 'there the longest', etc., tended to have had responsibility areas reviewed and either changed completely or adjusted and amended to suit self and/or school. This was a significant effect of new headteachers having been recently introduced and would seem to allay those main fears Rodger et al (1983)⁴ noted in their research and which were alluded to in this study in 7.2 (iii).

(ii) Additional Expertise

At this stage it will be useful to leave scale posts as such and study other expertise available from the teaching personnel in general within each of the 5 schools.

S.J.I.Y. possessed: a scale 2 teacher with a talent and professional capability in painting - (she did not hold a post for Art),
a scale 1 teacher - qualified language expert in French and Spanish,
scale 2 and scale 3 teachers both with musical talents, (post unrelated)
a scale 3 teacher with abilities and interests in cricket, (post unrelated)

a scale 2 teacher with special interest and proven professional abilities in local history and geneology (his post was unrelated),
a scale 1 teacher with specific training and experience in Art (had been a specialist in a secondary school),
a scale 1 teacher (probationer) well qualified and enthusiastic in P.E./sport and creative arts as well as having a special interest in geology,
a scale 1 teacher (probationer) - a qualified swimming instructor,
a scale 1 teacher (probationer) - previous professional theatre work - interested in Drama in schools,
a deputy head with particular strengths and experience in helping children with learning difficulties and another deputy head very keen and knowledgeable in computer work.

S.J.2.X. possessed: a scale 1 teacher - Physics graduate - keen to develop Science through the school,
a scale 2 teacher (post for Music and Language) qualified and keen in Drama,
a scale 2 teacher - wanting to get information skills project underway and interested in Dance,

a scale 2 teacher keen on fell-walking and,
a deputy head with interests in Maths and Science
with much experience in schoolboy football.

S.J.3.X. possessed: a scale 2 teacher for Language with particular
interests and qualifications in Drama, Pottery
and Art,

a scale 2 teacher with a great deal of interest
in concert going and badminton - (held a post for
'record keeping'),

a scale 2 Maths post-holder with personal interests
in Art,

a scale 1 probationary teacher with extra training
in S.E.N.,

a scale 2 post-holder for Library/Resources with
special interests in drama and opera,

two scale 2 teachers especially keen to introduce
health education courses having attended several
seminars and courses and,

a deputy head with interests in sciences and
considerable experience in football coaching at
both local and national levels as well as being
a recognized local golf expert.

S.P.1.Y. possessed: a scale 3 teacher with enthusiasm for outdoor
activities,

a scale 3 teacher very keen on badminton,

two scale 1 probationary teachers - keen and qualified in netball coaching,
one scale 1 probationer very interested in extending creative dance work into school,
a scale 3 Language post-holder with experience in netball coaching and attending a painting class in her own time,
a scale 1 teacher who described herself as an "avid needleworker" extremely keen on embroidery work and producing many water-colours in her spare time painting hobby and,
a dynamic deputy head whose enthusiasm permeated the school - particularly gifted in Art and Craft and Drama.

A.P.1.X. possessed: a scale 1 teacher keen to start an Art Club and very confident in this area,
a scale 2 teacher for Art with personal interests in needlework,
a scale 2 Language post-holder whose leisure activities included walking, climbing and nature study, and,
a deputy head with knowledge and interest in computer work and Science as well as the ability to play the guitar.

Bearing in mind that these lists of enthusiasms and interests are over and above those recognized already in the individual schools for purposes of scale posts, this detailed analysis of information, all collected from survey time in the schools, serves to give a prominence, not often declared, to the extent and nature of possible contributions and expertise which could be drawn on and deployed to the benefit of all.

(iii) Headteacher Expertise

Finally, what of the headteachers? It must be assumed that part of the course for becoming a headteacher has been the proving of good professional conduct in general teaching as well as abilities in curriculum leadership and interpersonal skills displayed over many years of experience. Several of the headteachers interviewed referred to their own acknowledged areas of strength and weakness when engaged in classroom work. One Head pointed out how he had retained his interest in computer work and outdoor activities, while another had been able to extend her concern for language and young children. More information emerged from various sources within each school as to headteacher's areas of expertise. One Head was deemed a particularly good story-teller as well as having an ability to interest children in dramatic ventures. Another was a noted long distance runner - and so on. The question needs to be asked, and was in fact raised by a headteacher himself, as to just how far these accumulated areas of knowledge and experience are applicable to the role of headteacher in today's primary schools. Taylor (1986) in

recording the findings of the Birmingham Studies (1983) names the areas of expertise not highlighted by teachers in reply to the question,

"in which of the following curriculum areas and activities do you believe primary school teachers will have expertise to offer?"

Taylor points out that it was believed that teachers would not have management and administrative skills, nor skills in debate and discussion or in handling meetings or working parties. It was a headteacher in this North-Eastern survey who drew attention to the proportion of his work which was administrative - a higher percentage than he had bargained for. It would seem that applicants for headship are perhaps judged on skills and expertise they display as teachers and not for the skills they will primarily need as Heads. This adds further support to those similar comments from Alexander (1984) which were expressed in Chapter 7.

In answer to that question posed by the Birmingham Study group it was found that "practical experience of the classroom" was the area of expertise which was believed, by a large number of teachers, to be most on offer. Other areas, where it was considered "a fair amount" of expertise would be available were:

"knowledge in an academic subject, understanding of human relations, knowledge of social relations in school and classroom, understanding of teaching techniques, skills needed for developing schemes of work, organizational skills and knowledge of how children learn."⁵

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The nature of teacher expertise in the primary school can be shown to have been derived from various sources. Two main channels became evident: (i) initial teacher training coupled with professional experience and initial main-subject study, and (ii) personal interests. A third area, that of in-service training, was found, perhaps surprisingly, to have been more instrumental in the extension of skills and knowledge rather than in the initiation of such. However, it was felt by informants that growing school needs induced by an ever-expanding curriculum and school contractions may well require teacher expertise to be transient in nature and thereby place far greater emphasis on in-service provision for the future. INSET, it was thought, would have to become the *source* of knowledge available to schools to fill developing openings in areas where expertise was increasingly needed.

Teacher expertise, having developed from certain roots, can be seen to exist across a broad range of areas, subjects and activities from the specific, as discovered in this research, to the general, as highlighted in the Birmingham Studies (1983).⁶

From this point it is necessary to advance the research findings by discovering how much of this available expertise was actually being put to beneficial use in the selected schools, what methods were being employed and with what success.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. BIRMINGHAM STUDIES (1983) - 5 studies into 'Curriculum Responsibility and Teacher Expertise in the Primary School', page 35. UNIV. OF BIRMINGHAM, DEPT. OF CURRICULUM STUDIES.
2. RODGER, I.A. et al (1983) 'Teachers with Posts of Responsibility in Primary Schools', page 203, para. 15. UNIV. OF DURHAM: SCHOOL OF EDUCATION.
3. TAYLOR, P.H. (1986) 'Expertise and the Primary School Teacher', page 54. WINDSOR: NFER-NELSON.
4. RODGER, et al expressed fears that some post-holders could get 'stuck' in inappropriate roles - see reference 2 above.
5. See TAYLOR, P.H. (1986), pp. 80-81.
6. BIRMINGHAM STUDIES (1983), see page 94.

CHAPTER 8

THE DEPLOYMENT OF TEACHER EXPERTISE

"A group of primary school staff recently noted that it is not uncommon for a headteacher to have no idea of the main subject taken by a teacher during initial training. This may not be as surprising as it sounds as many teachers eventually lose interest in their original 'main' subject or subjects and develop new knowledge, interests and skills. But the situation where a teacher is interested and has skills in an aspect of the curriculum, and is not able to utilise such interest and skill in the school, is wasteful, and such cases if revealed by the process of school self-evaluation are at least accessible to review."

Rodger and Richardson (1985)¹

It is with this statement in mind that this section will examine the ways in which curriculum appropriate talents and expertise were put to use in the selected schools. Headteacher attitudes to expertise and post-holder functions will be viewed, as well as the roles of post-holders on paper and in practice. Other areas of expertise available in each school will be noted and their contributions assessed. In conclusion, the deployment of, and limitations on teacher talents will be evaluated in order to determine the extent of 'active' and 'latent' expertise across the selected schools.

8.1. Headteacher Perspectives on Post-Holder Expertise

In the headteacher questionnaire (see Appendix (i)) each Head was asked what criteria s/he would look for in appointing a post-holder with responsibility for an area of curriculum and teaching.

While reviewing the various responses to this question it is also worth taking into account headteacher attitudes towards job descriptions and envisaged roles for post-holders.

S.J.3.X, described previously in conceptual terms as 'traditional cellular', had job descriptions for each post-holder which set out, in the same form for each, the broad expectations of the role, culminating in a final paragraph, complying as much with L.E.A. requirements as Head's, that the post-holder should undertake other such duties in connection with the area of responsibility in the school "which the Head Teacher may from time to time require."

Three of the 5 schools made use of job descriptions. These were A.P.1.X, S.P.1.Y and, that already mentioned, S.J.3.X. S.J.2.X was in the process of formulating these at the Head's instigation while the Head of S.J.1.Y. was actively against the use of such, stating that he wanted 'flexibility and adaptability' in post-holders. He went on to state on the questionnaire that job specifications, in his view, tended to become 'prescriptive' rather than 'descriptive' and, "it is in the nature of primary education that the children's needs within school might necessitate changes in emphasis and teachers adopting new roles." This statement gives more weight to the detected desire for a certain transience of expertise amongst post-holders from some headteachers and L.E.A.s. This was identified and discussed in section 7.2.(iii). Furthermore, this statement, coming from the headteacher of S.J.1.Y, might

be viewed alongside informants' reports, in interview schedules in the same school, of the feeling that everything was permanently "in the melting pot" with constant changes afoot. It would seem that teachers here were experiencing not only the crucial organizational changes already mentioned of streaming to mixed ability and from old split-site buildings to a new purpose-built school, but also a headteacher expectation of 'adaptability' which, when viewed alongside these other major moves, was seen as unsettling. These features reinforce the choice of the conceptual description given to this school of 'metamorphic'.

Of the three sets of job descriptions in use, those employed by S.P.I.Y. were specifically 'prescriptive' in nature and intentionally described as such. There was an acknowledgement of future 'emergent' roles possibly developing and requiring discussion. All of the job descriptions referred to the necessity to work 'in conjunction with.....' and 'by consultation with headteacher and other staff' - a feature favoured by Heads as part of democratic decision making.

On the whole the responses given by headteachers to the question of criteria sought in post holders were comparable to those given by headteachers in the Birmingham Studies (1983). As Taylor (1986)² points out -

"Some heads look for the driving innovator. Others for the congenial facilitator."

Of the 5 Heads interviewed in the North East, 3 were specific

in stating the criteria they would look for in post-holders. These 3 gave prominence to proven teaching ability, interpersonal skills and organizational capabilities. Two of the respondents stressed that a knowledge and expertise in the subject area was desirable while 3 expressed a preference for a teacher who would keep abreast of current practices and developments in primary education. It was the 3 Heads of the junior schools who gave the detailed lists of criteria while the 2 primary school Heads were more general with their statements. The Head of A.P.1.X. wanted 'a good general primary teacher' while referring to the written job descriptions as suggesting the criteria one would seek in appointing a post-holder. The Head of S.P.1.Y. stated that "a conscientious, professional catalyst will make a success of any area of the curriculum." Further probing was carried out during interview with all of the head-teachers in order to establish some priorities and to clarify the more general statements. It became evident that all gave highest priority to the 'good' class teacher and, although 3 Heads were reluctant to state that knowledge and/or expertise of a particular subject area was desirable, one did admit to having realised that this was a necessity in some areas as had been discovered when the school lost expertise which was irreplaceable from amongst the remaining staff. Another Head had assisted in the appointments of post-holders where proven experience and subject knowledge had been sought for school needs. The Head of S.J.2.X., while acknowledging that good classroom practice was

of prime importance was, nevertheless, attentive to the subject expertise existing on his staff and to the establishment of appropriate links between this and scale posts. This was a main reason for the conceptual description - 'specialist aware' - being given to this school.

All headteachers acknowledged that their schools possessed experts, interested enthusiasts and, in some cases, specialists. It is with this knowledge, gleaned from Heads and from the teachers themselves (whether referring to self or colleagues) that a more detailed analysis of the actual deployment of available expertise in the 5 schools is undertaken.

8.2. Roles of the Curriculum Post-Holder

There is the suggestion contained in the H.M.I. Survey, Primary Education in England (1978), that fuller use of teachers' particular strengths in areas of the curriculum would be achieved by making their expertise more generally available. It is through the work of the post-holder that most schools would expect to achieve this extension of teacher talents across the whole school. It is therefore the work of the post-holder which will be examined in the first instance for signs of deployment of expertise.

This section of the study will consider the formal descriptions and job specifications documented in school records. These represent the official rhetoric. Considerations of the self reported activities of the post holders will follow. These represent the

practical realities for teachers and can be compared to the rhetoric.

(i) The formal documentation as rhetoric

Rodger et al (1983)³ reached several notable conclusions in their research regarding the context in which the role of post-holder is performed. These can be summarized as follows:

- (a) how the post-holder performs his/her job is a reflection of the relationship with the headteacher,
- (b) headteachers tend to operate with either a definite policy on the deployment of post-holders or a complete absence of one,
- (c) it is preferred that headteachers should have a policy, be it either authoritarian or democratic,
- (d) where there is no policy on the deployment of post-holders the individual concerned is left in a vacuum which can only be filled from a professional commitment.

These four points have been selected from Rodger's research as useful comparisons with the findings from this study and should be borne in mind until the conclusion of the section when corresponding threads will have been drawn out.

The first written contractual agreement received by a newly appointed post-holder would normally be that issued by the L.E.A. Two contrasting examples found to exist are:

L.E.A.Y. Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of my Committee, I wish to confirm your appointment as Teacher of music (scale 3) at school.

L.E.A.X. At a Meeting of the Governors of the above named school on ...(date)... it was recommended that you be appointed to the Permanent post of Scale 2 as from ... (date)...

In the second example there is no guidance from any written contractual agreement from the L.E.A. as to the exact nature of any duties expected of the post holder. This is important in that informants in this survey expressed the view that L.E.A.s. were increasingly expecting post-holders to earn their extra salary - an issue also identified by Rodger et al in 1983⁴ - before the pressures of D.E.S. 6/81 and 8/83⁵ had been brought to bear on the workload of post-holders. It would seem therefore, that with no set rules for L.E.A. wording of post-holder contracts, the onus for indicating what is expected lies within the school, through either Head, staff, post-holder personally or a combination of all three.

Of the 5 selected schools, 4 had headteachers with specific written policies on the duties post-holders should perform (S.J.2.X. being in the process of producing these at the Head's prompting). Only one school, S.J.1.Y., was relying on the spoken request with an assumption, on the part of the headteacher, that everyone knew what was expected of them. An assumption which proved to be incorrect during this research. The attitude of post-holders in this school

mirrored Rodger's findings at (d) above that "the individual is left in a vacuum which can only be filled from a professional commitment." At the Head's own admission, S.J.I.Y. was in an unenviable position with its split-site nature presenting "enormous problems in communication" (Head's own words). This was borne out when a scale 2 post-holder in one building stated that he had only received, by word of mouth, secondhand, the actual title of his scale post area. It was not surprising that the majority of post-holders here felt 'undirected' with several reminiscent of by-gone days with an autocratic Head. This also reiterated Rodger's findings set out at (c) above that "it is preferred that headteachers should have a policy, be it either authoritarian or democratic."

Of the job descriptions put into print, all had been headteacher instigated and much of what was included was headteacher drafted. Certain components had been entered after discussion and agreement between Head and post-holder. Many of the verbs used to describe the proposed role of the post-holder were common to all 3 schools. Altogether 35 verbs existed across the 3 sets of job descriptions. These amounted to an impressive list of duties required of post-holders over and above their class teaching commitments. A thorough examination of these verbs revealed 4 distinct 'skill groups':

- (1) 'inter-personal' skills - those functions requiring public relations skills: an ability to influence without appearing 'threatening'.
- (2) 'knowledge-based' skills - functions dependent on familiarity with subject-matter and professional 'know-how'.
- (3) 'watch-dog' skills - awareness devices designed to anticipate needs.
- (4) 'practical/administrative' skills - possessing everything from physical stamina to organizational efficiency.

The active functions expected of post-holders are listed in the following table. Beside each verb, appropriate 'skill-group' numbers have been placed. It became evident that many of the expected roles required a combination of these skills:

TABLE 6. The Active Skills Listed in Post Holder Job Descriptions
(presented here in alphabetical order)

to act as	1	to formulate	2 4
to advise	1 2	to identify	1 2 3
to arrange	4	to liaise with	1 4
to assess	3	to make	2 4
to attend	4	to manage	1 3 4
to be aware of	1 2 3 4	to monitor	3
to be responsible for	4	to organize	1 4
to clarify	1 2	to plan	1 2 4
to co-ordinate	4	to provide	1 2 4
to continue	4	to read	2 4
to develop	2 4	to record	3 4
to devise	2 4	to requisition	2 4
to discuss	1	to review	3 4
to encourage	1	to specify	1 2
to ensure	2 3 4	to undertake	1 4
to establish	1 4	to work alongside	1 2 3 4
to evaluate	4		
to explore	4		

'Skill-groups': 1 'inter-personal' 2 'knowledge-based'
3 'watch-dog' 4 'practical/administrative'

Only one school - S.P.I.Y., made any reference to 'teaching' and this was "where necessary working side by side with colleagues and providing demonstrations of sound practice and techniques by arrangement with the Headteacher."

By comparison, the Birmingham Studies Group (1983)⁶ arrived at 7 main functions for the teacher 'expert', produced by a group of Heads:

- "1. Teaching his own class new topics, other classes complex topics, other classes jointly, his colleagues' complex topics, or principles of new equipment, withdrawal groups (e.g. gifted), parents' evenings.....
2. Drafting schemes of work, summaries of staff discussions, own job specification, assessment procedures, resource index, in-service summaries.....
3. Displaying children's work with comments, available resources, potential resources, in-service courses...
4. Purchasing books, equipment, materials.....
5. Discussing formally in staff meetings, with year groups, with children (in front of staff), with LEA advisors, with Head, with parents Informally by request or by initiative with individual colleagues.....
6. Arranging visits for children, visits for colleagues to other schools, particularly to attend in-service courses.
7. Evaluating children's work, children's progress, children's needs, also staff work, progress and needs....."

Taylor (1986)⁷ on commenting on these functions, acknowledges that no-one would or could be expected to cover all these areas. Several members of the Rodger et al project (1983), who were the post-

holders and the research reporters of the established network, found themselves to be over-committed in their prescribed post-holder functions and concluded that it was better to concentrate on one aspect of the post-holder's workload than "to try and advance on all fronts."⁸ Considering that these statements were re-inforced repeatedly by post-holders in this survey, then the wisdom of producing extensive expectations on paper should be questioned, especially when there is little possibility or opportunity of implementing them all in practice. Waters (1983) warns against the production of bland or cosmetic documents which are neither helpful nor accurate and suggests that delegation, to be effective, must be conscious and precise.

There has so far been an identification of 2 different policy angles towards the 'printed role' of the post-holder in the survey schools: (a) of a Head, but not necessarily staff, preferring an open-ended, free approach to role functions and, (b) two schools whose Heads and post-holders had developed job descriptions so detailed as to make implementation either exhausting, if not impossible, but certainly greatly diluted in practice to that on paper. These two types of printed policies may be referred to as 'flawed diplomatic' for (a) and 'chancy diplomatic' for (b) - bearing in mind that the aspect of diplomacy was held in high esteem by all Heads. S.P.I.Y., on the other hand, had set about producing purposeful 'prescriptive' statements for the post-holder's role. Again, these were fairly extensive in breadth but pin-pointed specific duties which would

seem, on reading, to be attainable in practice (a feature to be fully explored in the next section). For this reason, the job descriptions here may be referred to as 'specific diplomatic' bearing in mind that, here also, the aspect of diplomacy had been in attendance for the initial drafting.

In conclusion, 4 out of 5 Heads were in favour of written job descriptions. The completed ones had been arrived at after discussion between Head and post-holders. In all cases, the Head had been responsible for an initial 'rough draft' open for comment. Only one Head was not in favour of written role descriptions and he had obviously given a great deal of thought to the issue and had arrived at decisions which he felt suited everyone.

The next section will present a detailed examination of the post-holder's role as it was found to be in practice.

(ii) The daily realities

This section will present data collected from interviews, post-holder diaries (see appendix v) and free-account schedules (see appendix vi). The latter schedules were descriptions drawn up by post-holders, and/or deputy heads, of duties normally performed over an academic year and of intentions for the future. They include some personal reflection and assessment of roles and, in some instances, draw parallels between the role in practice and that on paper where it exists. The findings will be set out under suitable sub-headings in an attempt to guide the reader through the main functions found

to be operated by post-holders.

a) DRAFTER AND SELECTOR

All post-holders in L.E.A. Y. had played a major part in choosing and drafting the planned schemes of work in their particular curriculum area. Because of the time limit set upon the submission of schemes by this L.E.A., the staff at the 2 schools felt as though there had been a period of intensive production with most post-holders working on their particular schemes at the same time. It was expressed by informants that this had necessitated staff discussions and working parties being kept to a minimum as there were so many calls coming from different directions. A further problem had been the various facets of industrial action over the same period which had severely limited times and occasions for general discussion. Post-holders had therefore, on the whole, completed the major task of actually writing out a scheme independently and in their own time, i.e. evenings and weekends. The research leading up to the selection and drafting again, had had to be done out of school hours. Only in some instances had arrangements been made by headteachers for curriculum post-holders to have some non-teaching time to enable them to visit other schools to see schemes in operation or to view and select suitable materials.

In schools S.J.l.Y. and S.P.l.Y. post-holders had been instrumental in selecting and designing suitable schemes. This was evident in 3 areas:

- 1) Liaising with advisers, and staff in other schools,
- 2) Researching to achieve a suitable end-product and
- 3) Requisitioning to collect the various necessary materials
for implementation.

By comparison, the schools in L.E.A. X. had a far more leisurely approach to the processes of selection and drafting. These 3 schools all had maths and language schemes in operation which had been 'bought in', i.e. ready-published schemes. This had entailed an initial choice from the commercial schemes available. The main criteria used in this selection process were established to have been post-holder/Head/staff preferences and cost (not necessarily in that order). These maths and language schemes were also common to the 2 schools in L.E.A. Y. and were found by Loizou and Rossiter (1987)⁹ to be much in evidence in their research. They even discovered that in one L.E.A. the Mathematics Inspectorate had actually narrowed down the choice between published schemes by offering financial assistance in favour of the 'chosen ones'. The desire on the part of L.E.A.s and subject advisers to see commercial schemes in operation obviously relieves the curriculum post-holder of much of the responsibility of selection and drafting. It furthermore opens up many questions regarding the deployment of teachers' acquired experiences and expertise towards catering for the individual needs of *their* school and *their* children - a requirement which cannot be guaranteed to be satisfied in a 'common core' maths or language curriculum.

Other than in these two curriculum areas, post-holders in L.E.A. X. had, so far, been asked to contribute comparatively little to curriculum policies. For those post-holders who had designed their own schemes of work, it had been necessary to use their background knowledge as well as undergo the time consuming jobs of research and writing. This establishes that 'knowledge-based' and 'practical/administrative' skills needed to be employed. It became evident that, if the written policy was to be meaningful to all staff and therefore suitable for implementation, a further group of post holder skills needed to be called upon: 'inter-personal' skills were necessary for discussion and liaison.

b) IMPLEMENTOR AND ADVISER

The term 'implementor' is used here to describe the role of the post-holder in terms of a transmission agent. Those who saw themselves either in this role now or, having been in the role in the past, viewed the job from two angles -

- 1) as an agent 'carrying the message', i.e. introducing a new scheme of work into the school and,
- 2) as an agent of change, i.e. attempting to influence practice.

Three curriculum areas became evident as those having necessitated post-holders to act in the first category and these were maths, language and science. Most teachers had required guidance in the administrative and organizational elements of published maths and reading schemes when they had first been introduced and many admitted

to still not having mastered these elements to their own satisfaction. Post-holders, where available, had been looked upon as the main 'guiding lights' towards this end.

In the case of science, the relative expertise of those holding that responsibility in S.J.1.Y., S.P.1.Y., and A.P.1.X., had been called upon "to come to the rescue" (informant's own words). This had usually involved again, organizational tasks, introducing science boxes (i.e. published schemes) and useful equipment. In this curriculum area it had usually also meant a great deal of searching for, and borrowing of, suitable equipment.

In S.J.3.X. it became evident that the post-holder with responsibility for technology and computing was trying to act in both of the listed 'agent' categories but with little success at his own admission and subsequent findings proved. As with certain new aspects of some of the science schemes, he found himself having to overcome fear and reticence in colleagues in the same way as science post-holders were having to do. This was no easy task given that, in his case, this was having to be done in 'snatched moments' with no engineered, time-tabled occasions to embark on this role. It is in this area of 'problem recognition' that the role of the post-holder as implementor merged with that of consultant/adviser.

S.P.1.Y. was the only school in the survey with a specifically designed programme for combatting staff difficulties, fears and reservations in tackling areas of the curriculum. This was referred

to as 'staff development' and was based on post-holders being given one hour each week away from their own classes to assist and, if necessary, teach and demonstrate in other classes. This seemed to be working in practice with teachers requiring assistance signing up for time with the appropriate post-holder. There seemed to be no stigma attached to the idea of asking for help and it was done quite openly on the staffroom notice-board. Post-holders would spend an hour with that teacher, assess the difficulties and/or work alongside offering useful techniques and general advice.

It became increasingly clear during the research at this school that 'inter-personal' skills were those needing to come to the fore during the deployment of the adviser/consultant role. The smooth introduction of the numerous new schemes in both S.J.1.Y. and S.P.1.Y. had also called for a great deal of patience and public relations tactics from those post-holders involved.

In S.J.1.Y. some staff had made their own arrangements to make use of post-holder expertise. This had usually been done without prior agreement with the Head and only within year groups. As there was no non-teaching time offered specifically for this it had usually meant doubling up or swapping classes so that the post-holder taught a class other than his/her own. This highlights an important post-holder role and one that was either missed completely or given little prominence in the job descriptions. This next section addresses that role of 'teacher.'

c) TEACHER

As was pointed out on page 137, the Birmingham Studies (1983) found 'Teaching' to be given highest priority, by headteachers, for functions expected of post-holders. In the 5 selected schools in this North East study, all post-holders were engaged in teaching their own classes and were undoubtedly bringing any expertise to bear in that situation. Only S.P.1.Y. had any pre-planned programmes for post-holders teaching other classes for purposes of demonstration and colleague assistance. This was always done with the class teacher present and served to introduce staff to new equipment or techniques (especially new members and probationers) and to assist in the teaching of 'difficult' topics or help overcome teacher inadequacies.

Post-holder teaching of other classes in S.J.1.Y. tended to be few and far between and was only evident in the 1st year classes where some swaps had been arranged to allow the science post-holder to teach his subject. It was, however, necessary for the class teacher to leave and cover the post-holder's class.

The class exchanges which took place in S.J.2.X. were engineered to facilitate specialist teaching and this will be studied separately in section 8.3.(i).

In A.P.1.X, although a relatively small school in this survey, attempts were being made to introduce some internal professional development programmes by having the deputy head, as the science

expert, visit other classes and assist the class teacher in the teaching of certain topics, but this was not done on a regular basis as in S.P.I.Y.

Rodger et al (1983) concluded that curriculum development was best done in conjunction with at least one other teacher where a professional partnership could be nurtured. This research team made the further suggestion that:

"'Paired teaching' can be the best way of influencing others and implementing and monitoring schemes."¹⁰

In other words, if a post-holder is able to work alongside teachers in other classes, this 'paired teaching' can offer informal opportunities for appraising the overall situation in classes throughout the school, i.e. the 'watch-dog' role.

d) MONITOR AND EVALUATOR

As a major group of verbs referring to the 'watch-dog' elements of monitoring and evaluation was identified in the written job descriptions (see Table 6) it is worth turning to this area to discover the extent of that role in reality.

In current practice, there was little evidence across the 5 schools to suggest that post-holders played any major part in this area. The exception was S.P.I.Y. where, again through the prescribed 'staff development programme; post-holders were able to oversee progress in other classes in the school. It was also the case in this school that staff submitted records and progress reports on curricular areas

to the appropriate post-holder as well as to the Head. It was clear that this was the only school employing the 'paired teaching' (suggested by Rodger et al (1983) and referred to above) that was having any significant influence on the processes of monitoring and evaluation.

Post-holders in S.J.1.Y. expressed concern for monitoring methods - especially where it was suspected that colleagues were experiencing difficulties or were choosing to drift away from planned schemes of work. In some instances - especially in maths and language work, post-holders had been called upon to help out, but, with little time set aside for such occasions, found great difficulty in managing anything other than 'rushed' assistance and that was usually only verbal.

Post-holders in A.P.1.X. tended to monitor on a purely informal basis, i.e. staffroom discussions. The deputy head made some attempts to evaluate the science scheme from colleagues comments and reactions.

Through informal discussions and teacher admissions in S.J.3.X. it was known that several staff lacked confidence in attempting any work involving the computer. For this reason some time had been set aside during a morning assembly for the post-holder to run a training session which would hopefully illuminate staff difficulties and help the post-holder assess the areas needing to be addressed. Comments collected suggested that the session had been helpful but was a 'drop in the ocean' with no feasible long-term solutions.

Other than in S.P.I.Y., there was little formal monitoring of both teachers' and pupils' work by post-holders. All, however, acknowledged that informal monitoring existed albeit through lunch-time discussions, 'snatched moments' and even second-hand reports. It would seem therefore, that under present circumstances, most post-holders need to rely as much on 'inter-personal' skills for monitoring and evaluating as on those of the 'watch-dog' type.

e) PURCHASER

By far the largest group of post-holders were responsible for the requisitioning of suitable stock, within a dictated budget, than for any other prescribed role mentioned. All had been required, at one time or another, to select suitable equipment and books which were appropriate to school needs as well as to individual teacher and pupil needs. This might be viewed as very much an 'administrative' task with the assumption that certain 'knowledge-based' and 'inter-personal' skills were required to fulfil the function satisfactorily.

f) DISCUSSION LEADER

Evidence of post-holders acting as chairmen of staff meetings or producing discussion documents for staff was limited to schools S.J.I.Y. and S.P.I.Y. and had come about during the drafting of policy documents and attempts to introduce schemes with consensus rather than conflict. Hence, post-holders had chaired small

working parties or had presented subject statements to full staff meetings: roles requiring many of those listed skills in Table 6.

g) ORGANIZER AND SELF-EDUCATOR

Several post-holders had attended relevant in-service courses and had then been responsible for producing a course report and making sure other staff were aware of any recent developments within the particular curriculum area. Few had attended recent courses due to 'no-cover action' and the subsequent poor availability of organized training events.

Most post-holders had made arrangements at some time with external agencies for school visits or equipment borrowing and had often managed to liaise with other schools and with the appropriate subject adviser. Again, these tasks had required post-holders to engage in employing several different skills to ensure success.

8.3. 'Active' Expertise: the full picture

The deployment of teacher expertise has so far been viewed only through the work of the post-holder. It became evident in the survey that expertise was both available and 'active' amongst others in each school who had not necessarily been 'labelled' with a curriculum area on a paid basis. It was also the case that some specialist subject-teaching existed, sometimes corresponding to a scale post, but not always. Furthermore, expertise was 'active' in several schools, although 'classroom-confined' or extra-curricular, and is therefore

worth some analysis. This section aims to deal with all of those areas not already referred to.

(i) The Specialist Teacher

Despite the recent calls from H.M.I./D.E.S. (alluded to in Chapter 3) for specialist provision in the primary school for pupils from 9 years upwards especially, it would seem that the traditional use of specialist teaching in shortage subjects such as music is today much less in evidence if these case studies are typical. Of the 5 selected schools, only one was particularly 'specialist aware' and attempting to draw on available specialisms. Of the other 4, all had in the past employed some specialist teaching, especially in music, but had had to curtail this because of contraction or other school needs.

S.J.2.X. had managed to link the provision of specialist music teaching with other available talents. A major criticism of specialist teaching in the primary school has been the 'loss' of the class for specific periods. None of the teachers here felt that this was in any way detrimental. In fact, all agreed that for those curriculum areas being covered by specialists, it was beneficial to pupils and teachers alike. The music teacher here was questioned most closely as it was she who might have been in danger of 'losing sight' of her own class. It turned out that she was not with her class, as a unit, for 3 hours every week. She was, however, quite in favour of this knowing that her expertise in music was being deployed beneficially

in other parts of the school while, at the same time, her own class was benefitting from the capabilities of specialists in science and art and craft in her absence. (These were areas where she did not feel particularly confident in any case). No teacher in the school was losing contact with music completely in that some still tackled the subject through television and radio programmes. Of the 3 curriculum areas mentioned here, in the context of specialist teaching, the music and art and craft teachers did hold the scale 2 posts for the subjects but the science teacher was still a probationer, a physics graduate keen to extend his enthusiasms through the school and being encouraged to do so.

S.J.3.X. possessed a music specialist who was granted only one occasion during the timetabled week for taking groups of children for recorder tuition. This was achieved by either the headteacher taking the remains of her class not involved in the instrumental groups or by those pupils being 'split' amongst other staff who would have some of their own pupils at the recorder groups. The situation was extremely limiting: only small numbers of pupils benefitting, only half an hour per week and no structured situation where other children not involved in music might benefit or feel that they were also doing something special.

One other area existed in some of the schools where specialist teaching was detected and that was in the provision of special educational needs. S.J.3.X. did seem to draw most benefit from this having 2 part-time specialist peripatetic teachers come to the

school for remedial help and English as a Foreign Language. S.P.I.Y. was also well catered for in S.E.N. work, making use of existing expertise on the staff as well as part-time assistance. S.J.1.Y., by the end of the survey, had seen the return of the specialist teacher for this area of need and she was working in a 'floating' capacity throughout the school.

(ii) Extra-Curricular Activities

This area was considered relevant to the main issues of this research in that, if expertise employed outside normal working hours was seen by informants to be of benefit to pupils and a necessary part of curriculum enrichment then, any data collected was worthwhile. Furthermore, there have usually been assumptions that expertise rewarded by scale posts in areas such as P.E./Games and Music should manifest itself by some responsibility being taken for extra-curricular provision. This becomes more worthy of examination if schools neglect to make suitable in-class curricular provision in the belief that extra-curricular options suffice. The timing of this survey proved how unpredictable the nature and extent of extra-curricular activities could be in the light of recent industrial disputes.

It rapidly became evident that one school in particular made much use of teacher expertise and enthusiasms in extra-curricular work and this was S.J.3.X. Here was a school, labelled 'traditional-cellular', where most talents were classroom confined for the

teaching week but where pupils might benefit from numerous expert guided activities at lunch-times and evenings. Several groups (notably boys) were enjoying lunch-time use of the computer guided by the Head and the post-holder in this field. Football was obviously held in high esteem and teams were coached by the deputy head with his years of local and national experience. The talents of a golfer were available on the school field on particular evenings as was training in badminton in the hall. Another teacher's flair for museum work was brought to life by collecting for displays in the entrance hall. A music club was run for 'listening and appreciating' by a member of staff other than the music post-holder. The school was particularly 'male-sport orientated' but did seem to be capable of providing a wide programme of extra-curricular events.

The other schools also had extra-curricular activities based mainly around music and sport, although most teachers involved admitted that much of the momentum and regularity with which these events had once flourished had been lost during the teachers' actions of withdrawing goodwill. When one noted the range of clubs, teams and groups which these schools had possessed or were still keeping going by engineering some in-school practice time (especially for seasonal productions and the like) then an acknowledgement must be given to extra-curricular activities as a major outlet for teacher talents and expertise.

It cannot go unnoticed that, on the whole, areas receiving most emphasis after school time were the same areas which suffered

during school time from lack of sufficient teacher expertise, e.g. music and computer work (see Chapter 9). This begs the question as to whether the in-school expert in these areas feels duty-bound to make amends outside the normal timetable for the seemingly sad lack of efficient deployment of suitable expertise within it.

(iii) Attributes of deputy heads

The I.L.E.A. 'Junior School Project' (1986)¹¹ discovered that the role of the deputy head could vary considerably. The multiplicity of tasks performed by some deputy heads was evident in this research and although I.L.E.A. believed that the role varied depending upon the needs of the particular school and the philosophy of the head-teacher, it has been noticeable in this survey that, as well as these two features, a third comes into play, i.e. the age and attitude of the deputy head. Coulson and Cox (1975) state that Heads who do not give their deputy the opportunity to take decisions are placing them at a disadvantage for a future after promotion. Plowden (1967) suggested that headteachers should delegate more of their duties 'than is commonly done.' However, the situation in these 5 selected schools is one of Heads themselves not being far-removed from their days as deputies. It became evident that

- a) Heads of S.P.1.Y. and A.P.1.X. (the 2 primary schools) expected more of their deputies than the 3 junior school heads,
- b) the 2 deputy heads of S.P.1.Y. and A.P.1.X. were both in their 30's with views on further promotion and still fairly new to the

role of deputy head, having held the position for 2 and 3 years respectively.

c) the 3 deputy heads of the junior schools were all in their 50's, had all held the position under the previous headteacher and were all contemplating early retirement.

All deputy heads had 'subject' expertise to offer. Only the 2 younger deputy heads in the primary schools were putting that expertise to good use by assuming some curricular responsibilities as well as those pastoral and administrative duties usually associated with the job.

Only the deputy head of S.P.1.Y. was without a class and able to spread her talents through the school. The 3 deputy heads of the junior schools were class teachers and any curriculum expertise was 'class-confined'. The one exception to this was in the case of S.J.3.X. where the deputy head's keen interest and abilities in sport were deployed in extra-curricular activities.

Only the deputy head of S.P.1.Y. could be seen to have an overview of the curriculum throughout the school and to have been involved in giving support and assistance to other post-holders.

Free-account schedules, diaries and job descriptions would indicate that all the deputy heads were involved in administrative responsibilities and pastoral care of pupils and staff but that the extent of this involvement varied considerably. Only one deputy head was actively engaged in policy decisions and advisory roles and was

the non-class teacher of S.P.1.Y. Her programme of work and responsibilities was specific and varied with much 'active' expertise in evidence. The 'active' expertise in science, of the deputy head in A.P.1.X., was evident through his research and drafting of a scheme as well as attempts at 'paired-teaching' towards implementation. Restraints were undoubtedly placed upon the deputy heads who were full-time class teachers. Any attempts headteachers had made to delegate other duties in their direction had usually been unwelcome. It was felt that 'extra' tasks could not be adequately coped with when class teaching still had to have top priority. This would indicate that any lack of delegation noted by Plowden (1967), and others, is not always due to headteacher policy only.

(iv) Headteacher Contributions to 'Active' Expertise

Headteachers interviewed by Cook and Mack (1971) pointed out the importance of being involved in the school through "getting their hands dirty." It was felt that by working alongside teachers, or taking their classes, they could "subtly communicate the art of teacher training." Sadly, there was little evidence in this research of headteachers attempting to do this. Again, it was in the 2 primary schools S.P.1.Y. and A.P.1.X. where most headteacher classroom contributions were apparent.

The Head of S.P.1.Y. had been directly responsible for the implementation of the 'staff development programme'. When this was first initiated the Head had been totally responsible for relieving

post-holders of their classes. He had been both instigator and enabler and consequently post-holders had been able to operate in other classes alongside class teachers before the arrival of 'floating' teachers.

The Head of A.P.1.X. had continued to develop her knowledge of children's language and literature by working throughout the school with several classes and teachers. In the absence of a mathematics post-holder, she had been instrumental in implementing a policy for maths teaching throughout the school.

The 3 junior school Heads were engaged more in group and individual work than class-teaching. The Head of S.J.1.Y. was only relieving the deputy head for a short period each week while other Heads tended to concentrate on hearing individuals read.

The Head of S.J.3.X. had designed the environmental studies scheme and was still 'active' in his enthusiasm for computing. He participated in extra-curricular activities, including field-trips, where his expertise in outdoor pursuits was very much in evidence.

The 3 junior school headteachers had not directly influenced teaching styles throughout their schools nor were they actively engaged in monitoring and assessment.

In the research of Hilsum and Cane (1971) half of the headteachers involved were found to give teachers a "completely free hand." In this North East study there was an awareness expressed by Heads of teaching styles and methods they would like to change.

The lack of headteacher intervention strategies, evident in the 3 junior schools, may well be related to the initial reticence of 'new' Heads previously referred to. The 2 primary school Heads were 'mid-term' - a time associated with positive influence.

As in the I.L.E.A. Project (1986),¹² management and administrative tasks were cited by all headteachers as taking up a large proportion of their time. This aspect was emphasized more by the 'new' junior school Heads in this North East survey than by the 'mid-term' Heads.

It would seem that headteachers' contributions to 'active' expertise lie in the fields of

- a) instigation and initiation
- b) imagination and influence
- c) involvement and intervention.

The degree to which any of these is put into practice rests with individual headteacher's personal discretion. When all are actively engaged, then the Head becomes the enabler for the 'collegial' school identified by Campbell (1985) and recognized here in S.P.I.Y. The post-holder has also been described as an 'enabler' but it would seem from this research that post-holders' actions are governed by headteacher strategies.

(v) Expressed Preferences for 'Expertise' Deployment

It was the role of adviser/consultant which was preferred by most post-holders, and their colleagues without scale posts, as a means of utilizing talents in many curricular areas. Post-holders felt

that they should be offering advice when it was asked for. This was also discovered to be the case in the Rodger et al research (1983) where this 'consultant' role was the preferred one combining

"the potential for curricular *influence* with the traditional generalist approach to primary school teaching."¹³

This role also seemed to satisfy post-holders' desires not to be seen as authoritative to the point of appearing 'threatening' - (probably also a reason for many not wanting to call themselves 'experts' in the Birmingham Studies 1983).¹⁴ However, the findings from the 5 schools in this North East study would indicate that many teachers *do* want to be able to turn to 'experts' for areas such as music, and science and technology, especially in the light of growing accountability and expanding expectations.

There was a realization on the part of many informants that many available talents remained 'latent' to the school as a whole and 'active' only within the individual's classroom. It cannot be assumed that these talents were completely 'wasted' in that some pupils would benefit from finding themselves in a particular expert's class. The question does remain, however, as to whether pupils throughout the school were missing out, or indeed 'suffering', by not meeting with all the varied teacher talents in the school. This question will be explored in Chapter 9.

There was no doubt that there were teachers in the survey who were frustrated because their talents were 'classroom-confined' and

this applied to teachers from scale 1 upwards and from post-holder expertise to post-unrelated talents. Probationers were prepared to accept that their strengths would be called upon once they had proved themselves and settled into the school. For other teachers, the confinement of talents could be seen to be of their own making - i.e. 'hiding their light under a bushel' and not being prepared to voice their desire for 'utilitarianism'. Those informants who considered their own talents, or some part of their expertise, to be classroom confined, usually expressed the numerous reasons responsible for this.

Of the 50 informants, only 12 at S.P.I.Y. felt that their school organization promoted the effective use of expertise and, even here, some still felt there were limitations.

Altogether, 40 informants expressed the view that effective deployment of expertise in the primary school was restricted and many offered several suggestions as to what the limiting factors were. The next section, therefore, sets out to explore and examine those most frequently offered.

8.4. Time and Resources: The constraints on staff development

The main constraint upon effective deployment of expertise in this study was seen by informants to be that of 'time'. The Primary Survey (1978) recommended that post-holders should be given time to perform their leadership function. This was rarely evident in this survey other than in school S.P.I.Y. as previously noted. Rodger

et al (1983),¹⁵ in the Durham studies, had similar findings. In short, the conscientious post-holder is left having to use play-times and lunchtimes in order to fulfil his duties. This has the added drawback of being the first area to suffer in times of teacher sanctions and makes for a situation where no time exists in the working day for any major 'out-of-class' duties to be performed effectively.

If we consider the nature of those many duties expected of the post-holder (see 8.2.(i) and 8.2.(ii)) it becomes evident that by far the majority of those duties involve contact and liaison without rather than within the classroom. Rodger et al (1983) suggest that extra time might be 'won' by a variety of strategies. Some of the members of their project did this by employing the following methods:¹⁶

- a) doubling up classes with another post-holder
- b) using the headteacher as an extra teacher
- c) using hymn practices, assemblies, etc.
- d) lengthening the school day (using playtimes and lunchtimes)
- e) using floating teachers where they exist
- f) engaging in team-teaching
- g) using time freed by having visiting drama groups, road safety, etc., in school.

There was evidence across the 5 schools in L.E.A.s. X and Y that these methods had all been tried at one time or another and

that several drawbacks exist:

- a) Doubling classes was not feasible in many of the schools because of room size. Lessons involving 60 or more pupils with one teacher in a hall become rather 'make-shift' and limited and could only be contemplated on rare, rather than regular, occasions.
- b) Using the headteacher is governed by his/her desire to participate and by other commitments. This was seen as the most feasible means of releasing post-holders but depended solely on the Head's attitudes and dedication to post-holder deployment and staff development. This has been plainly evident in comparisons of headteacher policies and strategies across the 5 schools.
- c) Using hymn practices and assemblies to discuss, liaise and communicate was employed by all schools in the survey. (The music teacher invariably missed out for reasons previously stated). Again, this was very much at the discretion of the headteacher. Several staff were of the opinion that their place was with their class during assemblies so that any follow-up or continuity could be maintained, not to mention that some felt that they should be 'seen' to be there by all pupils.
- d) The drawbacks of lengthening the school day have already been covered. Any time which is not contractually governed is not reliable on a regular basis due to staff commitments elsewhere.
- e) Only 2 schools possessed 'floating' teachers (i.e. teachers with no permanent class) and their deployment was totally at the

discretion of the Head as could be seen in a comparison of S.P.I.Y. and S.J.I.Y.

- f) Engaging in team-teaching was seen by teachers to require an enormous amount of forward preparation for both content and logistics and was felt to have some value but somewhat counter-productive if used as a means to 'win' time.
- g) Using time when freed by visiting groups had been employed by all, but again, there were drawbacks. Teachers felt that they should be aware of what visitors were introducing pupils to, should be in a position to discuss or extend this information so that topics and events were not totally isolated and should also display their presence and interest from a public-relations angle as well as checking on pupil behaviour, etc. Besides, visiting groups were irregular and did not give time on a systematic basis for planning.

In short, many of these methods for 'winning' time are in themselves very limited and certainly not always educationally desirable.

Limited financial and human resources are also paramount when discussing with teachers the major stumbling blocks they regularly need to overcome. For many primary schools, the headteacher is the only 'floater' so yet again it rests with him/her as to what policies are employed for relieving staff, specialist help, class swaps, etc. This study has highlighted the totally different approaches of headteachers to issues of staff development and deployment which have been

directly responsible for current practice.

Financial resources, it was noted, limited the introduction of a science course in S.J.3.X. Lack of finance means that most primary schools are working with one computer, irrespective of the size of the school (from 145 to 435 pupils in this study), with the ensuing limiting time-tabled arrangements.

Many informants suggested that difficulties with science teaching often arose through not having suitable facilities or the suggested equipment with which to carry out recommended experiments and projects. It was also pointed out that in L.E.A. X even the science resource centre was finding financial difficulty in getting itself fully equipped as a lending source for schools.

These findings re-inforce Gray's (1983)¹⁷ claims that the problems facing primary schools are largely resource-based, whether human or financial.

Often, the factors limiting effective use of teacher expertise are completely outside the influence of Head or teaching staff. One notable example of this occurred in S.J.1.Y. where the proficiency of a teacher with swimming/survival qualifications and experience was hoped to be utilized. After exhaustive enquiries on the part of the school, several problems were presented by L.E.A. administrative staff claiming that pool time was unavailable and transport costs would be prohibitive.

Other constraining factors were mentioned during teacher

interviews. One was the feeling, experienced by several informants, that they were unable to use their expertise to any great extent outside their own class because "someone else holds that post." This was most evident in drama and art work and served to highlight how, in some schools, curriculum posts could be seen to be inhibitive. This however, when examined in greater depth, suggested that the limiting factor was not the allocation of 'a post' as such but the personalities of those involved in that curriculum area. In other words, the problems were in communication if "stepping on toes" was allowed to become a major issue. The Stockport Study 'Specialisms in the Primary School' (1985)¹⁸ identified this same difficulty but went on to suggest that there are few problems which will not respond in some degree to "positive leadership and sympathetic handling."

The other limiting aspect of current practice, illuminated by teachers, was mixed ability teaching. The 'metamorphic' nature of S.J.I.Y. has already been alluded to, with comments passed on the difficulties encountered by many teachers there in coming to terms with non-streaming. This was by no means confined to S.J.I.Y. In all 5 schools several informants mentioned this aspect and yet 'setting' was not found to be employed in any curriculum area. This teacher attitude to the un-streamed situation "pulling one in all directions at once" was not restricted to older members of staff who might, one could argue, have got used to many years of traditional, streamed teaching. Probationers came high on the list of recounting

experiences and problems encountered in mixed ability teaching. There was a majority view that mixed ability classes greatly diluted the extent to which teacher expertise could be effectively administered within the classroom confines.

Within the scope of 'limiting factors' it is worth returning briefly to an issue already raised - that of published, commercial schemes and the extent of their use in maths, reading and language work. All the schools in the survey had these in operation in these curriculum areas. Some inherent problems have already been raised in previous sections. In this section we might contemplate how the highly structured nature of these schemes could inhibit and absolve teachers from employing personal expertise and professional judgements. It has already been noted that several interviewees expressed concerns about the quantity of marking produced from pupils "beavering away" through the various topics, and the question arises as to the controls placed upon teacher interaction through these commercial programmes. The teacher is reduced to marker and monitor and teacher interaction becomes book orientated rather than child-directed. The ORACLE studies (1980)¹⁹ addressed a similar issue when the research examined the nature of interactions involved in successful teaching (Galton and Simon 1980) and concluded that teacher-pupil interaction was of prime importance for successful learning.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

There would seem to be a situation existing in the selected primary schools of curriculum post-holders seemingly suited more to their responsibility posts in terms of qualifications, experience, interest, knowledge and expertise than has been found in earlier research - such as that by Rodger et al (1983).²⁰ Definite attempts on the part of headteachers to use most scale posts within each school for the purposes of benefitting particular curriculum areas had been recognized. The picture, however, changes from paper to practice. Post-holders knew what they wanted to achieve and how best they could attempt to attain these overall objectives but, because of those limiting factors referred to, were hindered. In short, once past the initial choosing and drafting of schemes, any further flow or use of post-holders' expertise was negligible in all but one school.

The information given by the diarists displayed how frequently teachers with extra responsibilities were reduced from professionals to routine administrators, involved with chores rather than philosophy. One can detect a great deal of time being spent devising coping strategies to deal with immediate events and issues rather than planned campaigns consolidating professional judgements, personal proficiencies and teaching philosophies.

particular facets of 'active' expertise have been identified, as have those areas of 'latent' expertise. The latter was in

evidence across all levels of teachers, often having been forced into dormancy by resource limitations and headteacher strategies. The resource limitations were usually common to all schools and might be seen as problematic to primary education generally. Headteacher strategies tended to be 'school-specific' and had invariably been instrumental in dictating the overall framework in which teachers found themselves to be working. They had significantly affected the scope of deployment of expertise in each school. Strategies, one might expect headteachers to apply, could be grouped under the following terms:

'curriculum intervention', 'direct influence',
'decision making', 'contact',
'teaching commitments', 'pastoral',
'appraisal and development',

and represent forms of intervention designed to produce greater teacher effectiveness. These correspond to those areas of contribution found amongst the 50 Heads studied in the I.L.E.A. 'Junior School Project' (1986).²¹ As in the I.L.E.A. project, this survey of 5 selected schools also discovered that there was a wide variety in the percentage of Heads who took on all of these strategies and in the manner in which they were performed. Although the schools in this North East survey were comparable to each other in terms of localities, teachers and headteachers' ages, experience and qualifications, the current practice in deploying teacher expertise differed considerably. It is possible to state, therefore, that headteacher strategies

are neither uniform nor predictable.

The evidence suggests that headteacher strategies are closely related to the ethos of their schools as reflected in the conceptual terms chosen:

- S.J.1.Y. 'metamorphic' - referring primarily to the changes enforced on the school from outside policies but also discovered to represent the feelings many staff had regarding the Head's strategies e.g. fluctuating expectations arising from having no specific job descriptions and changes in his own commitments to teaching - mainly brought about by those external pressures already alluded to.
- S.J.2.X. 'specialist aware' - directly applicable to headteacher strategies as well as to the whole school. The Head was 'specialist aware' and was therefore instrumental in sanctioning and providing suitable teaching arrangements to cater for specialisms.
- S.J.3.X. 'traditional-cellular' - several 'traditional' elements of this school had been inherited (this was common to all the schools) but more had been retained here. The Head was the 'newest' of the group (see Table 2) and had had the least time to make changes (although the Head

of S.J.2.X. had only held the position 6 months longer). The compartmentalized teaching could be seen to be neat and well-ordered on the surface - a direct reflection of the Head's administrative strategies.

A.P.1.X. 'osmotic' - the 'filtering' effects in evidence were obviously headteacher encouraged with definite attempts on her part to set examples which were to be copied - very much a sapiential authority which paid dividends in such a small environment.

S.P.1.Y. 'collegial' - headteacher strategies here were seen to be directly responsible for the staff being collectively accountable for the curriculum. It was through the Head's own physical efforts i.e. relieving and thereby enabling, that the 'collegial' school, illustrated in the Warwick Inquiry (1985)²² and predicated on the 2 values of teacher collaboration and subject expertise, was able to function.

In view of these analyses and the subsequent importance seen to exist in headteachers' strategies, there is one statement made by Campbell (1985), in that Warwick Inquiry, which must be questioned:

"Collegiality will survive the departure of the head."²³

In the light of some of the findings of this North East study it might be suggested that, if a new headteacher's strategies did not enable teacher collaboration or adequate deployment of teacher expertise then, even with the best of staff commitments and intentions, a lack of overall logistics would severely weaken the collegiality.

Finally, it is worth returning at this stage to the 3 main questions posed at the outset of this research and discovering to what degree they have been adequately answered.

Relevant answers to 1(a) have recurred throughout the study in that all data have pointed towards the ways in which the schools have organized 'their timetabling, teaching and curriculum programmes.' Question 1(b) asked whether schools capitalized on the strengths of their staffs and, if so, how? Chapters 7 and 8 of the research findings have set out those strengths available and the extent of their deployment. It has transpired that strengths are employed but not always to the benefit of the whole school. This chapter began with Rodger and Richardson's statement regarding 'wasted talents' and corresponded to question 2(a) which asked if there were talents amongst teachers in our primary schools which were being wasted and, if so, why? The evidence regarding 'active' and 'latent' expertise has been presented and discussed. To answer the question fully - 'are these talents wasted?' we must consider whether there is a need, or a call, from teachers and pupils, for a more extensive deployment of available expertise. In other words, are the available

talents which are not being utilized because of primary school limitations or, are 'active' only within individual's classrooms, really relevant to the school as a whole? It is to this question, and to those others posed in Chapter 5 at the outset of the survey, that the next chapter will address itself.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. RODGER, I.A. and RICHARDSON, J.A.S. (1985) 'Self Evaluation for Primary Schools', pp. 131.
2. TAYLOR, P.H. (1986) describes the findings of the Birmingham Studies of 1983 in 'Expertise and the Primary School Teacher.' This reference to headteacher responses can be found at pp. 59-60.
3. RODGER, I.A. et al (1983) 'Teachers with Posts of Responsibility in Primary Schools' - see Chapter 6, section C. UNIV. OF DURHAM: SCHOOL OF ED.
4. as above at 3 on page 195, para. 17.
5. L.E.A. responses to D.E.S. circulars 6/81 and 8/83 have placed the onus for satisfying the curricular requests on the school. Responsibility has then invariably been passed to appropriate post-holders where available.
6. BIRMINGHAM STUDIES (1983) 'Curriculum Responsibility and the Use of Teacher Expertise in the Primary School' - pp. 14-15. UNIV. OF BIRMINGHAM.
7. Taylor makes this comment on page 88.
8. see page 197, para. 24.
9. LOIZOU, C.D. and ROSSITER, D. (1987) 'The Role of the Mathematics Post Holder in the Primary School' - see page 32.
10. Rodger et al (1983), page 199, para. 35.
11. I.L.E.A. (1986) 'Junior School Project' - PART B: 'Differences Between Junior Schools' pp. 57-66.
12. See page 57 at 3.vi.a 37.
13. RODGER et al (1983), see page 199, para. 38.
14. see Taylor, P.H. (1986), pp.47-49.
15. These findings were referred to by Rodger et al on page 196 of their research.
16. These methods were set out at para. 27, page 197.

17. GRAY, L.S. (1983), 'Resource Management in Primary Schools', made these claims on page 100.
18. STOCKPORT- MET. BOROUGH OF (1985) 'Specialisms in the Primary School', see section 8, page 18.
19. GALTON, M. and SIMON, B. (Eds) (1980) addressed this issue, pp. 194-195.
20. see Rodger et al (1983), page 200 - CONCLUSIONS D, para. 40.
21. I.L.E.A. 'Junior School Project' (1986) PART B, pp. 47-57.
22. WARWICK INQUIRY (1985) - see Campbell, R.J. (1985)
23. CAMPBELL makes this statement on page 153.

CHAPTER 9

THE RELEVANCE OF TEACHER EXPERTISE TO SCHOOL NEEDS

A main objective of this research was to discover how teachers view their roles in terms of 'generalist', 'specialist', adviser/consultant and post-holder and how they perceive the need for teacher expertise to be exercised through these roles in specific curriculum areas. Only those engaged in the daily rituals of primary education can gauge the real relevance of such issues to their own everyday practice and problems. To this end, all informants were asked, during interview, to express a rating of their own competencies, and/or inadequacies, for the various curriculum areas they could be asked to tackle (see Teacher Interview Schedule - question 21 - Appendix iii). Teachers were encouraged at this point in the interview to enter into fuller discussion and to express their feelings towards particular subjects, with additional clarifying comments if desired, as well as the requested ratings of 'high', 'adequate' and 'low'. The question attempted to address itself to the personal *claimed competence* possessed by the individual in practice. The limitations on a full investigation of such competence are acknowledged.

The *claimed competence* of an informant is a personal, subjective judgement. The next step would be to observe that claimed competence (or claimed inadequacy) at work in the classroom but again there is

a danger of subjective judgements on the part of the observer. Comparisons of teacher competence might be contemplated, again by observation, in specific curriculum areas. There are also possibilities for comparing pupil performance in relation to 'claimed' teacher competence if sufficiently reliable tests and measurement devices could be constructed. These elements were beyond the scope of this survey. The *claimed competence* of individual teachers was deemed to be sufficiently informative for the purposes of this study. Teachers' own admissions, acknowledgements and attitudes towards their abilities in areas of the primary school curriculum were expected to illuminate legitimate concerns for the profession as a whole, as well as extend the findings of other comparable research.

The study set out with the aim of discovering not only those areas where teacher expertise existed and any subsequent deployment, but also whether those teachers' talents available were school-appropriate. In other words, was the teacher expertise in existence relevant to the needs of pupils and other teachers, as well as to curricular requirements in the school? In answering this question it will be possible to make a true assessment of the extent of 'wasted' teacher talents across the 5 selected schools. To do this, specific data collected from interviews and documentary analyses, as well as findings from previous research, will be presented under appropriate sub-headings.

9.1. Teacher Responses and Perceptions

The question 'how would you rate yourself in competence and confidence teaching in the following areas?' was certainly the most sensitive area of the interview schedule and was therefore approached with great care and with an allowance for informants, within the time constraints, to engage in free discussion regarding their personal attitudes to their teaching in those particular curriculum areas listed. (Question 21 - Appendix iii). Although some informants thought initially that they may have difficulty in deciding what 'yardstick' they should use to determine their abilities in curriculum areas, in the event, this was not a major problem. When the named subjects were verbally presented, one at a time, teachers were most definite about whether

- (a) they were particularly lacking in confidence and enthusiasm and/or low on knowledge and competence, or
- (b) they had strengths and expertise.

Most discussion arose through informants not being able to decide whether they fell into the 'adequate' or 'high' category. Without probing too deeply, those with this problem tended to decide for themselves by assessing, quite openly, their perceived abilities. It was the 'adequate' category that informants selected if at all in doubt. In other words, real areas of strength and weakness were not distorted.

Although the curriculum was presented to interviewees as listed

subject areas for administrative ease, there was no assumption that these were taught as isolated blocks. Computer and S.E.N. work were included as integrated components rather than as separate subjects and were viewed in this light by informants.

The following tables set out the 'ratings' given to the various curriculum areas. These ratings were expressed in terms of 'high', 'adequate' and 'low' as a description of teachers' *claimed competence*.

The first table - TABLE 7(i) - shows the overall picture across all 5 schools while TABLE 7(ii) displays a more detailed analysis of the figures in the separate schools.

TABLE 7(i) Competence Ratings from Teacher Informants in 5 Schools
(n = 50).

Nos. of teachers in the 3 self-rating categories of:	'HIGH'	'ADEQUATE'	'LOW'
Reading and Language	38	12	0
Mathematics	27	21	2
Environmental Studies	16	31	3
P.E./Games	18	22	10
Religious Education	17	23	10
Art and Craft	19	18	13
Special Educational Needs	9	22	19
Science	11	13	26
Computer Use	4	17	29
Music	5	9	36

The subjects have been presented in Table 7(i) in an order corresponding with maximum to minimum numbers of teachers acknowledging 'some competence.' 'Some' competence was interpreted as those teachers placing themselves in the 'high' or 'adequate' categories and the order was therefore dictated by adding the numbers in those 2 categories.

Table 7(i) indicates that the greatest number of informants felt 'high' in confidence and competence when dealing with Reading and Language work. Only 2 informants expressed a 'low' rating for Maths though more teachers were prepared to acknowledge 'short-comings' in their approach to Maths than to Reading and Language. By far the greatest areas for concern were Music, Computer Use, Science and S.E.N. It will be useful at this stage to view the situation in each of the 5 schools to see if any variation can be detected. The same 'subject ratings order' is used here as was used in Table 7(i).

TABLE 7(ii) Teacher Responses in Individual Schools

SCHOOLS	(n = 15)			(n = 8)			(n = 9)			(n = 12)			(n = 6)		
	S.J.1.Y.			S.J.2.X.			S.J.3.X.			S.P.1.Y.			A.P.1.X.		
'RATINGS':- <u>H</u> igh <u>A</u> dequate, <u>L</u> ow	H.	A.	L.	H.	A.	L.	H.	A.	L.	H.	A.	L.	H.	A.	L.
Reading/Lang.	11	4	0	7	1	0	8	1	0	8	4	0	4	2	0
Maths	4	9	2	5	3	0	9	0	0	8	4	0	1	5	0
Environ. Studies	4	10	1	2	5	1	5	4	0	4	7	1	1	5	0
P.E./Games	6	6	3	3	3	2	4	5	0	2	6	4	3	2	1
R.E.	6	6	3	1	3	4	3	4	2	4	7	1	3	3	0
Art/Craft	7	3	5	2	3	3	2	5	2	6	5	1	2	2	2
S.E.N.	3	4	8	1	6	1	3	3	3	2	8	2	0	1	5
Science	3	4	8	3	2	3	1	0	8	2	5	5	2	2	2
Computer Use	1	4	10	0	4	4	1	2	6	1	5	6	1	2	3
Music	1	4	10	1	2	5	1	2	6	1	1	10	1	0	5

Several features can now be seen to have emerged in particular schools. The overall pattern of a 'descending subject order', detected in the total figures of Table 7(i), can be seen to still apply to each school but with some slight variations. For example, comparatively low ratings for Maths are revealed at S.J.1.Y. and A.P.1.X. (third and second equal to E.S.) which are not consistent with the expectation that Maths would be ahead. In S.J.2.X. competence ratings for R.E.

Chapter 7, when the nature and sources of teacher expertise were analysed. It was more by accident than design that several 'good' artists found themselves under one school roof. An informant's comment included on page 199 neatly sums up the situation. The opposite was true for R.E. in S.J.2.X. where several staff admitted little or no commitment to the subject. (The high rating for R.E. in A.P.1.X. was to be expected in an R.C. Aided School).

- (b) Internal provision and development programmes were acknowledged as compensation for some staff weaknesses. Where schools had arrangements for pupils with special educational needs to receive regular provision from visiting specialists, or in-school experts, then class teachers acknowledged that they felt "less pressurized to cope with every problem" because they knew other provision existed. (It could of course be argued that this extra provision had actually encouraged an unwarranted complacency amongst class teachers.) Fewer teachers registered a 'low' rating for S.E.N. in the schools which employed the additional skills of a specialist in this area - S.J.3.X., S.P.1.Y. and S.J.2.X.

In schools where teacher expertise was deployed to assist and direct colleagues, beneficial results can be detected in S.P.1.Y. 'collegial' in the number of informants expressing some competence in R.E., Science and S.E.N. and in A.P.1.X. 'osmotic' in Science:

"I feel much happier about R.E. since Mrs. X started issuing the whole school with the 'suggestion sheets'. - We all cover the specified topic to the level of our pupils with the added reinforcement of assemblies for that week tying in."

(Teacher informant - S.P.1.Y.)

(Examples of these 'suggestion sheets' proved the point).

"Mr. X. has written and organized the whole scheme for Science so it's quite handy just being able to pop in for help if you have difficulties."

(Teacher informant - A.P.1.X.)

(c) Curricular emphases, stressed by the Head, reiterated in teacher interviews and detectable in school organization and documentation, were a contributing factor in the levels of competence accorded to certain areas by staff in one of the 5 selected schools. The school had definite leanings towards traditional approaches, reflected in the compartmentalized nature of all teaching, i.e. the classroom-confined talents of the teachers and the total reliance on a strict timetable for all pupils. This school, S.J.3.X. 'traditional-cellular', emphasized the 'basics' as well as having built up a tradition for competitive sports. These emphases are evident in teachers' responses in Table 7(ii). The areas of high competence are considerable, including all Block 1 subjects together with P.E. and Games. This was the only school where greater competence was expressed for Maths than for Language work. Block 2 - areas of 'moderate' competence would include S.E.N., for reasons mentioned previously, i.e. this school did have several visiting 'specialist' teachers. In block 3

(areas of 'low' competence) Science stands out as a particularly low rating in comparison to other schools. In short, traditional emphases in this school resulted in shifts within the 'competence blocks' but also produced highly defined divisions between the 3 'blocks'.

So far, teacher responses in the 5 schools have been limited to numerical presentations with some clarifying comments. This next section of sub-headings will deal with specific areas of the curriculum which attracted most comment from informants and proved to be deserving of special mention. Findings will be accompanied by comparisons with other research. The inclusion of this work of other writers was considered more appropriate at this point than in the previous literature reviews because the direct relevance of the chosen articles to the findings of this survey provide suitable parallels to guide and interest the reader.

(i) The Creative Arts

The place of the arts in the curriculum has been a matter of concern for several years. The 1982 Gulbenkian report 'The Arts in Schools' put forward a convincing case for arts inclusion in the curriculum. Several projects and organizations aimed at supporting the arts in education followed. The National Association for Education in the Arts (N.A.E.A.) was founded in 1983. In 1984 the Schools Curriculum Development Committee (S.C.D.C.) began the Arts in Schools project in answer to the need, expressed by many L.E.A.s,

for a curriculum initiative in the arts. At about the same time, several official documents on the curriculum were being prepared. The Government White Paper 'Better Schools' (1985) suggested that the primary curriculum should "introduce pupils to a range of activities in the arts." 'The Curriculum from 5-16' (H.M.I. 1985) listed art, music, dance and drama among subjects which would contribute towards children's aesthetic development.

N.F.E.R. research in primary schools (Sharp 1984) discovered that teachers frequently expressed the view that they lacked the confidence and expertise to provide adequate arts experiences for their pupils and after a detailed analysis of lessons in art, music, dance and drama it was confirmed that in many schools the provision of these experiences through the school curriculum left much to be desired.

MUSIC

In the literature review in Chapter 3 it was noted that the Thomas Report (1985) frequently referred to primary school teachers lacking confidence in certain curriculum areas. These same areas were highlighted by teachers in this North East study as causing some concern. Thomas states:

"the lack of confidence of many teachers leads to the isolation of musical activities."¹

This isolation of music was evident in the 5 selected schools (although some minor exceptions did exist). It could be argued that the use of

a specialist 'isolates' music if careful planning and consultation with class teachers is not employed. On the other hand, most teachers relied solely on radio and television broadcasts for their music 'time' and admitted to this being divorced from most other classroom activities.

Music, it can be seen from Table 7(ii), was a problem area for a lot of teachers. Only one music 'expert' was identifiable in each school. Thirty six out of 50 informants felt that they needed assistance in music, so music expertise had obvious relevance to teacher needs - a need remaining, on the whole, unsatisfied.

"I don't mind integrating music work when it involves listening and perhaps some rhythm but, as far as real music making is concerned - singing, playing, composing - I'd much rather leave it to a specialist."

(Scale 3 Science post-holder).

This quote, from an experienced teacher, embodies much of the prevailing attitudes teachers have towards music in the classroom. Twenty informants expressed a desire to have all music teaching taken out of their hands and done by a specialist. Several other informants acknowledged that classroom assistance by a music 'expert' was preferable to 'losing' the class completely. Many, however, also felt that talented children could be withdrawn from upper junior classes to have extra guidance from a specialist.

The I.L.E.A. 'Junior School Project' (1986) found that music was the subject that was most frequently taught by a specialist teacher rather than the class teacher.²

The Birmingham Studies (1983) found that a substantial minority of teachers found little or no need for a great deal of competence in music. Taylor (1986), in commenting on this finding, suggests that "this is an understandable view in music which is taught in many primary schools by a specialist teacher."³ This survey in the North East would suggest that the days of the specialist music teacher are numbered if not gone. Only one of the 5 selected schools still employed the music teacher in a 'specialist' capacity and that was S.J.2.X - 'specialist-aware'. It has been noted that the other schools either possessed, or had possessed, a music specialist but were not now employing specialist teaching. The onus for music provision was left entirely with the class teachers in S.J.1.Y., S.J.3.X. and A.P.1.X. (and their main resource was the B.B.C. according to collected data!). Only S.P.1.Y. 'collegial' was employing the expertise of the music post-holder (once employed as a specialist) to assist in classes when and where required. This had not had any significant effect on class teachers' confidence as Table 7(ii) indicates. Ten out of 12 informants still gave themselves a 'low' rating for the subject in this school where shared teacher expertise was encouraged. The following comment, from a teacher in this school, might shed some light on the barriers felt to exist around the subject:

"I enjoy listening to music but possess no skills in either playing or singing. No matter what help I receive or how explicit the guidelines are I still feel one needs to be able to show children in the class that you, as the teacher, have some musical ability - if not talent. Without this I don't think they (the pupils) take you seriously."

A probationary teacher in S.J.I.Y., who had obvious enthusiasm for the expressive arts in general, had found her attempts at music hindered by the attitudes of her pupils. Their previous three years of music in the junior school had been organized and taught by a specialist. The probationary teacher herself acknowledged some reticence about approaching the subject but was attempting some experimentation:

"The children obviously feel that I'm not as good at music as Miss X - and they're right. I find it hard to follow a specialist because each time I attempt something which, for me, is a little more adventurous, the class either correct me or suggest we try it the way Miss X did - a bit off-putting!"

Obviously, non-specialists with the enthusiasm and perseverance of this teacher need encouragement. She, however, was very much the exception for this subject. Many teachers regretted the passing of the specialist and even this probationer felt that specialist assistance in her classroom would bolster her confidence.

It would seem that school contractions are largely responsible for the disappearance of the music specialist thus creating a problem area for a majority of class teachers. Dyson (1984), the warden of Music in Education section of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, stated:

"Frequently where there has been a music specialist in a primary school, he or she is redeployed and not replaced."⁴

A.P.I.X. had been hindered by such a loss of music expertise. This teacher had moved on for promotion and although there was a subsequent

replacement, she had not been able to offer the same expertise. In this instance, a shortage of teachers with music expertise was to blame and, as the headteacher pointed out, such a small school having no further financial incentives to offer was a handicap.

Several informants mentioned that headteachers were in a position to alter timetabling to allow for some specialist music teaching but chose not to do so. Reasons most responsible for this were seen to be:

- a) disruption of classes,
- b) the music teacher's own classwork becoming fragmented,
- c) the desire to have all teachers tackling all elements of the curriculum and,
- d) the Head not wanting to participate in 'relief' teaching.

There was an acknowledgement from Heads in S.J.2.X. and A.P.1.X. that all teachers were not necessarily capable of handling all elements of the curriculum in an equally competent manner. Both Heads had made attempts to combat problems. The desire, expressed at (c) above, was evident in the interviews conducted with the remaining 3 headteachers but only the Head of S.P.1.Y. had set about organizing situations conducive to equipping all staff with the competence to do this.

When Caudrey and Rodgers (1984) conducted research into music teaching in Britain for the T.E.S., they found that primary schools were frequently the first to bear the brunt of cut-backs with many receiving fewer visits from peripatetic instrumental teachers or

losing their music specialists. All of the 5 schools in this North East survey had visiting peripatetic instrumental teachers (mainly in strings) but only for small, withdrawn groups of selected pupils. This would reinforce some of the T.E.S. findings where many music advisers had stated that county orchestras frequently flourished at the expense of music lessons. In other words, it is mostly those children who are already skilled or particularly talented who will benefit from the system.

Poulson (1984), as education secretary of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, stated:

"Music in the primary schools is much at the mercy of teacher training, staffing and attitudes. If you get a head who is pro-music, you'll find he'll look for staff who have music to offer, and will give them the equipment they need."⁶

Certainly this survey has detected that teacher and headteacher attitudes do play an important part in music provision and the extent of deployment of any available expertise in the subject. It also became evident that outside pressures on schools to incorporate technology and continue to expand the curriculum were directing attention away from the arts. This became apparent when large numbers of informants declared inadequacies in music teaching but felt that -

"current trends in teaching lead you to believe that you must keep up-to-date with new developments in science, etc., and you simply haven't time to brush up on everything." (Teacher's remark).

In other words, music has been relegated a back seat in some schools for the various reasons mentioned. Where headteacher and music expert shared the same enthusiasm and commitment, as in S.J.2.X., strategies employed were seen to be successful even in the face of staff contraction and other curricular obligations.

'Music from 5 to 16'⁷ states in its introduction that

"Music should be an integral part of every child's daily experience."

and

"Music readily links with other subject areas and can make an important contribution to the life of the school and to the wider community beyond."

The majority of pupils in the 5 selected schools of this study were offered 'singing' as their main music making activity. Some teachers - 8 out of 50 - declared that they occasionally integrated 'listening to music' into other work. Only 5 teachers of the 85 interviewed in the I.L.E.A. 'Junior School Project' (1986)⁸ mentioned that they tried to connect music with other areas of the curriculum.

Bassey (1978) discovered that only 15 per cent of the 498 teachers in his Nottinghamshire survey were working to a school syllabus in music. This North East study revealed one school where the 'specialist' music teacher was working to her own syllabus and one other school where a scheme of work was in operation with guidance from the music post-holder. Both of these schools supplemented this provision with B.B.C. broadcasts. In the remaining 3 schools these

broadcasts tended to be the main source of music provision for the generalist class teacher who had no particular music expertise:

"I rely solely on broadcasts. I couldn't begin to tackle it (i.e. music) myself."

"I really wouldn't know where to begin without B.B.C. radio broadcasts. I'm not a musical person and would be dubious about approaching any element of the subject which wasn't just a matter of switching on the cassette or radio."

(Teacher informants).

All 5 schools in the survey possessed either an adequate or an extensive stock of music-making equipment comprising mostly percussion instruments and recorders. The current situation and organization within 3 schools presented a picture of very limited practical music making:

"There are pounds worth of instruments just sitting in the stock-cupboard gathering dust. They were all bought when Mrs. X was taking all the music but now that she's a full-time class-teacher they're hardly ever out."

"Since Mr. X left we rarely use the xylophones and other instruments. Sometimes we get them out for plays at Christmas or for the occasional class assembly."

(Teacher informants).

Of these 3 schools in the survey where there were limitations in music provision, the headteachers were aware of the problems. One blamed contraction and was unable to see any satisfactory solution, while the other two were looking to the future for some alleviation in the form of new, or returning teachers and, in the case of S.J.I.Y.,

to a new, open-plan school. In the meantime, i.e. the present academic year, music was restricted to broadcasts and individual teacher's responses. The figures produced in Tables 7(i) and 7(ii) and informants' own comments would suggest that teachers' motivation towards classroom music leaves much scope for improvement:

"I'd be quite happy to lose sight of music altogether to a specialist teacher. I sometimes feel that my obvious insecurity with the subject is enough to put the class off."

Few would dispute that music education is valid and relevant to the needs of primary school pupils and a great deal of literature exists to reinforce this view. Little exists to show that these needs are being adequately catered for. The situations found to exist in the 5 schools of this study would seem to be typical of findings elsewhere in the country:

- (a) contraction reducing or removing specialist teaching,
- (b) a majority of teachers struggling against their own lack of confidence in the subject,
- (c) hymn practices and B.B.C. broadcasts providing the main menu for most pupils,
- (d) opportunities for existing teacher expertise in music to be influential throughout the school being extremely limited and
- (e) music showing more positive appearances in extra-curricular activities (when unaffected by industrial disputes) than in the classroom curriculum.

When 'Music 5 to 16' (HMI 1985) suggests that children to age 11 "need a regular weekly allocation of time for music"⁹ it can be assumed that a reluctantly 'slotted-in' half-hour, although meeting 'timetabled' requirements is not quite what was envisaged. This study reinforced this:

"Because I get so anxious about music lessons, if there's other work needs finishing off or something else of interest has appeared on the scene, music is the first to get shelved. In fact, I almost look for opportunities not to have to do it."
(Teacher informant)

"I always feel harassed when I've got to collect all the equipment and get the music broadcast set up. It's more bother than it's worth most of the time."
(Teacher informant)

This same HMI document states that "learning music has something in common with the acquisition of language."¹⁰ If this is so, then it is highly unlikely that the sequential learning process necessary is going to be achieved in the weekly ration, administered amidst the problems and reticence found to exist, in some of the schools of this survey. Furthermore, from information gleaned from teacher informants, it would seem that, in language acquisition, pupils are well catered for by staff high in competence and confidence with an enthusiasm to develop this area of the curriculum to its fullest extent. In no way can the same be said of music. There is here an area for concern which, despite the warnings of previous research and reports, is continuing to be problematic for a majority of teachers and thereby unsatisfactory for a great many pupils. Future research into music provision in primary schools must be more of a

'solution-search' than an additive to the now apparent facts of the case outlined above.

Art and Craft

Art and Craft figured highly in scale post allocations (see Table 5), and was an area receiving strong emphasis in most classes. However, a large minority of teachers, holding no responsibility posts for art, felt that they were unable to instil much enthusiasm in their pupils because of their own inhibitions in the subject:

"I'm not an 'arty' person myself and therefore have great difficulty getting the subject across to children."

A prime objective of much art work was, informants commented, for classroom and corridor display purposes:

"You can always guarantee that in the couple of weeks before a parents' evening every class will be beavering away at new art work to brighten up the place!"

Art was an area of the curriculum where most links were forged with other work. Many teachers acknowledged inabilities to generate sufficient 'good ideas' for art and craft.

In all 5 schools, teachers recognized those colleagues 'good' at art and every school possessed expertise in this area:

"When I see the quality of the art work turned out by Mr. X's class I feel ashamed - I could never get the same from my lot."

Art particularly did seem to be an area of the curriculum regularly debated and scrutinised by teachers, especially with regard to expectations:

"I think children should be given a free rein in their art work. You often find that teachers who are good at art themselves stifle children's work by over-directing."

"Mrs. X is a really good artist but I sometimes feel that her class produce work which is too polished - almost professional - it doesn't look like that of 10 year olds."

Two of the 4 scale post-holders for this curriculum area expressed desires for their expertise to have more effect throughout the school. One post-holder did not much care for the work he saw being produced in some classes in the school. He was frustrated that, for many pupils, art had become a 'time-filler' on certain afternoons. His own expertise in clay work, enamelling and print-making was class-confined and he was convinced that, given demonstration time, he could beneficially influence other staff:

" - the only alternatives would be to either ask staff to come to a demonstration over lunch time, or in the evening, or to try and get people together quickly during a hymn practice. It's not really satisfactory - I don't want people to feel pressurized to attend and I don't want to be forced into giving a half-hearted demo because of time, etc."

These findings correspond with those of Sharp (1984) in her observations of 60 classes of third and fourth year juniors. She discovered that the 'typical week's diet' of arts consisted of one session of painting or drawing, some craftwork and a radio music

programme but, whilst there was usually one teacher in each school who was known to be "good" at artistic work, only his or her class tended to benefit. With no mechanism for sharing teachers' talents she discovered a considerable variation in the quality and variety of work displayed within individual classrooms and in the school generally. Three further points emerged during her research which are worth comparing to the situations found to exist in this North East study:

- (a) few teachers were working to written guidelines for the arts,
- (b) "Teachers tended to view artistic ability as an individually owned skill; there was no shared body of knowledge to support the diffident teacher" (Sharp 1984), and
- (c) The attitudes of the headteacher towards the arts appeared to be very important.

In this study, L.E.A. Y subject advisers had issued recommended topics and guidelines in music and art to all primary schools and, although attempts were being made to tackle some of the art suggestions, most teachers felt incapable of implementing those for music. The teachers in the 3 schools in L.E.A. X were working without structured schemes in art and craft (an aspect also evident in Bassey's survey of 1978).

Point (b) above emerged as a salient feature when considering the provision of music teaching, while the elements of 'support' and sharing of expertise have become central features of this whole study.

The attitudes of headteachers have already received mention but

it is worth stating here that in this survey it was the Head's attitude and organisation strategies which were directly responsible for:

- (i) provision of, or lack of, time for effective deployment of expertise,
- (ii) the emphasis given to arts provision, and
- (iii) the nature of some of the provision - a division of the sexes for craft work was evident in 2 of the 5 selected schools where the girls pursued the traditionally 'feminine' areas involving mainly needlework while the boys tackled model making. This was usually arranged on the timetable with a further 'role reinforcement' of a female teacher taking the girls of 2 classes while the male teacher taught the boys. (It is interesting that 'traditional' teacher moves and class swaps such as this have been felt to have been justified for many years as a method of employing male and female teachers' supposed skills, while class exchanges for acknowledged teacher competencies throughout the curriculum are not viewed in the same light.)

Out of the 50 informants interviewed only 6 felt that some 'specialist' art teaching would be helpful. A majority of teachers however believed that some 'expert' guidance in art for older, talented pupils was desirable.

Table 7(i) shows that, over the 5 schools, a large minority of

teachers gave themselves a 'low' rating for art and craft - 13 out of 50. It is worth checking out the situation in the individual schools in Table 7(ii). It is evident that the spread of competency in this subject varied considerably from school to school and can be best summed up with a comment from a teacher in school S.P.1.Y.:

"It's a sheer fluke that we have so many people good at art on this staff. Most of them came to take up other posts and it gradually came to light just how many amateur and semi-professional artists we had. It's good for the school but it seems a bit of bad planning when other schools have got no-one to turn to."

In conclusion to this section on the creative arts it should be stated that although dance and drama were not covered as 'subjects' in question 21 of the teacher interview schedule, it did nevertheless transpire that these activities occasionally existed but were very limited. Across the 5 schools only one scale post was associated with drama. Teacher expertise and/or enthusiasm for both dance and drama was found to exist in 4 of the 5 selected schools - the exception being in the smallest A.P.1.X. These elements of the arts tended to be confined to practices for class assembly plays and preparations for seasonal events and were certainly not part of regular weekly provision.

The data collected from this research would indicate that teachers themselves are not satisfied with the emphasis and attention they are able to give to creative arts in the primary school. Many felt totally inadequate in their approach to music. Art and craft

received most prominence while dance and drama were virtually non-existent in timetable terms. The quality and possibilities for improvement in arts provision were seen to be very much governed by school organization, associated with headteacher desires and the somewhat chancy accumulation of suitable teacher experts.

(ii) Science and Technology

This section sets out teacher responses and attitudes to the 2 main concerns, under this general heading, which currently affect the primary school curriculum, i.e. the teaching of a valid science course to young children and the inclusion of appropriate technology in primary education, usually viewed to be "the computer." Selected data will be presented under 2 relevant sub-headings and accompanied, as in the previous section 9.1(i), with corresponding literature.

Science

This was a subject which also attracted frequent 'low competence' ratings from the 50 teachers interviewed. Twenty six informants felt that science was a particularly 'weak' area for them. This figure is worth further analysis bearing in mind that in schools S.P.1.Y. and A.P.1.X. there were acknowledged teacher experts actively engaged in lending classroom support to colleagues while in S.J.2.X. 'specialist aware', there was some specialist science teaching led by the probationary teacher, a physics graduate.

The highest numbers of informants ranking science 'low' in

specific schools were in S.J.1.Y. - 8 out of 15 and in S.J.3.X. - 8 out of 9. Science expertise did exist in these 2 schools, albeit in only 1 informant in S.J.3.X. but, because of the 'traditional-cellular' nature of this school, no-one was ever placed in a position to be able to reap any benefit. The figures appearing in Table 7(ii) would indicate that where science expertise was 'active' in a school, i.e. providing classroom assistance, demonstrations and paired teaching, then a more even distribution of teacher competencies existed: compare those figures in S.J.2.X. ('specialist-aware'), S.P.1.Y. ('collegial') and A.P.1.X. ('osmotic') with those in S.J.1.Y. ('metamorphic') and S.J.3.X. ('traditional-cellular').

Three of the 5 schools in the survey had written policies for science and had 'science consultants' on scale posts. The 2 schools without planned programmes were

- (a) awaiting the finance to purchase and implement a suitable scheme (S.J.3.X.) and,
- (b) employing the talents of a physics graduate in classes other than his own (S.J.2.X.).

It was in the teaching of science that teachers expressed most worries. It would seem that government policy, and calls from the D.E.S. for every primary teacher to offer some science, have created feelings of 'vulnerability' in many teachers. There was a distinct difference in the qualifying remarks from informants acknowledging 'lack of competence' in science to those, echoed from school to school, regarding music. For the latter, teachers felt no pressing need for

attempts to counteract their inadequacies. Whereas for music, many teachers felt that the system should be providing 'specialists', for science, the majority were of the opinion that this area should be the responsibility of every class teacher. Fourteen out of 50 informants expressed a desire to have science teaching removed from their responsibilities and to have it dealt with by 'specialists' or relative experts, i.e. enthusiasts on the staff who were better than themselves. The majority of informants, however, wanted to retain the teaching of this subject to their own class but with active assistance and paired teaching involving the in-school 'expert':

"I want to improve my own knowledge of the subject (i.e. science) but when the only opportunity of doing so is over a quick cup of coffee in the staffroom I don't think I'm going to get very far."

"I really wanted to go on a science course because, quite frankly, it's impossible here to arrange for any constructive help during school time - but, what happens? Either there's no suitable course on offer, or it's during school time and you can't get released, or you go on an evening session and you're so tired you end up not really taking it in."

A large majority of informants stated that their own backgrounds had not been 'science-orientated' and that they therefore required a great deal of assistance to improve their own confidence:

"I've never liked science - even as a pupil myself - and find that just being presented with a science box (i.e. the purchased scheme) is nowhere near satisfactory."

The Thomas Report (1985)¹¹ called for the publication of science guidelines and other support materials and hoped that there would be advice on schemes and suitable content so that a progressive course,

with continuity from year to year and from primary to secondary school, be achieved. The findings from this North East survey would suggest that commercial schemes are not the full answer. One such scheme was being used in S.J.1.Y. A majority of teachers here were experiencing great difficulties due to lack of suitable facilities, scarcity of equipment and insufficient preparation time. Furthermore, many of the suggested experiments and areas for exploration had proved to be counter-productive for teacher confidence. Many informants stated that these published schemes had reinforced how much their own scientific knowledge was lacking. Typical remarks were as follows:

"I just can't seem to come to terms with the science scheme. Each time I think I'll really try to be enthusiastic but invariably I'm turned the opposite way."

"By the time I've rounded up all the bits and pieces needed and re-read exactly what I'm supposed to be doing, I'm worn out and think of all the other lessons I could have done and enjoyed."

(Teacher informants)

Findings across all 5 schools would suggest that primary teachers are more aware of the need for science teaching since the critical surveys and D.E.S. suggestions. A majority of teachers interviewed admitted that science had "boiled down to nature study", in previous times, "comprising earthworms, frogs' spawn and spring twigs as stock-in-hand topics."

Kee (1987), in a recently published survey 'Aspects of Science Education in English Schools', claims that the huge increase in

primary science teaching, found by the Assessment of Performance Unit to have occurred since the 1978 H.M.I. Survey, has not always been in the most constructive areas of practical work. Classroom observations and various tests on 4,000 ten year olds revealed consistently high achievement among those doing most practical work.

Informants in the 5 North Eastern schools focused on 3 main problem areas for the generalist class teacher attempting valid practical science in the primary classroom. These can be summarized as follows:

- a) lack of appropriate scientific background and personal 'know-how'
- b) lack of suitable facilities and equipment
- c) lack of relevant in-service courses or classroom assistance.

In an address to a national conference on science and technology in the primary school in 1984, Nicholas Sanders, the assistant secretary in the curriculum division at the D.E.S., outlined what he called a "highly ambitious prospectus" for science in primary schools. The conditions for success included:

- (i) a commitment from every school to a valid science programme
- (ii) schools having access to at least one teacher with experience of science "who can act as a science consultant or expert and provide help and support for other members of staff", and
- (iii) teachers needing "continuing access to permanent points of support outside the school."¹²

He saw the greatest obstacle to this policy being the fact that many teachers lacked a background which would give them confidence in the subject - a view certainly supported by the findings from these 5 selected schools.

In contrast, the research by Kee (1987) found that there was no significant relationship between pupil achievement and the amount of science studied by primary teachers in initial training. The researchers state:

"The strategies teachers adopted appeared to be more important than their initial scientific background."

The report also states that there is, however, a clear need for a comprehensive programme of in-service training although the amount of this received by teachers "was not found to be closely associated with students' scientific achievement."

It would seem that successful primary school science programmes for the future depend on suitable provision and alleviation being forthcoming for all these noted problem areas.

Computing

There was a distinct view, held by interviewees, that computers in the classroom were "in fashion" and that one was obliged to "show willing and make use of your timetabled session!" (informant's remarks).

The use of the computer in the 5 selected schools was highlighted in Table 7 as an area for great concern, with 29 informants out of 50 ranking themselves 'low' in confidence. The problems encountered by

many teachers are reflected by Marshall (1987).¹³ He acknowledges, through his experience as adviser for Computers in Education for East Sussex, the various stumbling blocks confronting most primary schools. These can be summarized as follows:

(i) the poor ratio of computers to pupils in primary schools:

Marshall sarcastically refers to Kenneth Baker's figures - stated "with pride" - at the opening of the Hi-Tech Exhibition in January 1987. These figures, when analysed, indicate one and two-thirds micros per primary school! (In this survey, A.P.1.X., the smallest school with 145 pupils, had been allocated one computer, as had the largest school, S.P.1.Y. with 435 pupils.)

(ii) the lack of any suitable syllabus based on access to a computer one day a week,

(iii) the age and layout of the average primary school (i.e. pre-micro electronics) with awkward doorways and badly positioned power-points discouraging many teachers,

(iv) the small number of staff in most primary schools prohibiting adequate provision, or acquisition from in-service courses, of expertise, and

(v) the limited money available for soft-ware and the programs on offer bewildering in both variety and complexity.

Of the 50 informants in this North East survey only 4 acknowledged proficiency in integrating the computer into lessons. S.J.2.X.

possessed no-one who felt they could handle this work effectively. Of the 17 informants who felt they were 'adequate' in computer use, a large majority expressed the view that it was "more trouble than it's worth" with reference to:

- (a) time-tabling arrangements enforcing a rigid time span on usage,
- (b) the setting up and 'trolleying' exercises negotiating corridors and steps left many teachers feeling that they had better things to do with their time and,
- (c) the lack of suitable programs often made computer use an artificial, isolated 'island' within an unrelated lesson just to ensure that pupils all felt "they'd had their turn."

There were reports in S.J.3.X. of pupils approaching the post-holder for 'Educational Technology and Computing' (an obvious enthusiast and expert) and asking why they could not have the computer in their class as often as his class did. In other words, pupils had detected a certain reticence on the part of their class teacher. Expertise in this field, where available, was of obvious relevance to teacher and pupil needs.

A diary, compiled by a teacher holding a scale 2 post for Technology and Computing, revealed a high proportion of 'call-aways' in each working day, i.e. the post-holder being requested to 'come to the rescue' of a colleague. This invariably meant leaving his own class unattended as well as experiencing frustrating interruptions. The duties, seen by staff to be attached to his post,

and most prevalent in his diary, revolved around:

'setting-up', 'recording', 'finding' and 'fixing'.

The diary, kept for one week, from Monday to Friday, contained 12 'call-aways'. Remarks for Wednesday included the following:

"9.25-9.40 a.m. - asked to experiment (by Head) with overhead projector using the hymn sheets in folders. Not satisfactory - idea didn't work - my class becoming impatient."

"10.55-11.05 a.m. - called away to the library to find the beginning of a video tape for colleague"

" 2.00- 2.10 p.m. - program jammed on computer in another class - I'm called to help!"

(It should be noted that these events occurred on top of a full class teaching timetable on that day).

His real 'expertise' in computer work was untapped as a staff resource in that he felt he had a lot to offer colleagues in the way of demonstrations and program advice. He was very conscious of the reticence of several teachers in the school to attempt computer integration. His obvious enthusiasm for such technology was confined to his own class and some extra-curricular activities. The picture was one of teacher expertise being channelled into mundane tasks rather than professionally orientated skills. This teacher's talents were being transmitted away from the pupils by the expectations placed on his scale post and his lack of time away from his own class.

More informants had participated in computer courses than in any other recent in-service provision. The ensuing comments were mixed but these two sides were frequently stated:

"I found the course really good, but it needed to go on much longer to have any real benefit, - it was so easy to forget things before you even got back to school the next morning." and

"The course was supposed to be for complete beginners - well, they lost me off the first session so I didn't go back!"

Many teachers commented that they were made more wary of having the computer in the class by pupils knowing more about it than themselves. This had produced two distinct reactions. Younger teachers were more prepared to capitalize on this by encouraging "the computer buffs" to aid the whole class, while some older teachers (notably those in their 50's) were quite adamant that

"children expect the teacher to have the greater store of knowledge."

It was also interesting that teachers' competence with computer usage had no relationship to age. Whilst several older teachers stated that they had "given up on all this new technology" and "I leave that to the young ones," a lack of confidence in computer work was expressed throughout the age-ranges and included probationary teachers:

"We had no opportunities at college to do any computer work appropriate to the classroom so I desperately need help."

"I haven't a clue what the school has in the way of programs etc., and there's no time to really have a good sort through with someone who knows what they're doing."

(Comments from 2 probationers)

Brown and Danby (Eds) (1986) state:

"Sensible use of computers needs to become a feature of teaching in all schools. To enable this to occur there is a need for a major effort of INSET to disseminate information about the good practice already evident in many schools and to train teachers in the actual mechanics of using computers effectively."¹⁴

There is a good case made by Brown and Danby for the inclusion of computer work in the primary school curriculum. A salient point is that information technology lends itself to new initiatives in liaison as it fits well into the primary approach to project work. However, given the various impediments raised by teachers in the 5 selected schools many would require a great deal of convincing on these positive aspects.

No-one would question the value, and therefore relevance, of appropriate science and technology courses to the primary school. They might be seen as developing and promoting other aspects of the curriculum, encouraging practical skills and/or providing rich and new experiences. The emphases given to primary science in the D.E.S. publication "Science 5-16; A Statement of Policy" are endorsed by The Primary Science Association.¹⁵ It is worth quoting from their article in order to clarify those main aspects of science and technology seen to be relevant to the primary school:

"Primary science is best seen as a practical activity which makes use of first-hand experience to begin the development of the skills and concepts of science. It should start to lay the foundation of knowledge and understanding whereby children may develop confidently within a scientific and technological society,

and become capable of reflective and adaptive thinking, planning and decision making. Science, as much as any other area of the curriculum, encourages the development of curiosity, open-mindedness, independence of thought, persistence, co-operation, self-criticism, fairness and tolerance."

Few teachers would dispute the main essence of this statement, but many in this survey would question their capabilities of providing practical learning situations, within the realms of science and technology, which would be conducive to the acquisition of those skills mentioned. Informants were of the opinion that it was this area of the curriculum which

- (a) had expanded quite dramatically in recent years,
- (b) had received much verbal attention from government sources,
- (c) had been expected to change overnight (especially on delivery of one computer!)
- (d) was creating a great deal of uncertainty, questioning and difficulty in many primary schools and
- (e) required a huge funding scheme to alleviate problems with equipment, facilities and staffing.

It became increasingly evident during the course of this research that the quality of pupils' introductions to, and experiences in, science and technology depended very much on their class teachers' capabilities and their headteacher's concern for 'shared' expertise, together with curriculum emphases. As with arts provision, when so many teachers hold such a 'low' opinion of their own competence in a subject, it is fair to assume that the quality of the primary

school child's encounter with such a subject is, at best, speculative.

(iii) Special Educational Needs

For the majority of teachers in the 5 schools of the survey children with S.E.N. were those who, in previous times, were referred to as requiring 'remedial' assistance, i.e. 'slow-learners'. An exception was S.J.3.X. which had a group of foreign children who warranted specialist help from a peripatetic teacher. In other words, informants' comments were not based on having to deal with physically or mentally handicapped pupils but were addressed towards 'coping-strategies' within the mixed ability situation.

S.E.N. provision, within the context of the classroom, turned out to be a problem area for many teachers. Nineteen out of 50 informants felt that they were ill-equipped for dealing with pupils with learning difficulties. Visiting 'specialist' teachers were in evidence in 3 of the 5 schools but most provision centred around groups of pupils being withdrawn. All headteachers were conscious of promoting liaison between class teachers and 'remedial' teachers. Some of the classroom problems were experienced by older members of staff who had spent years teaching in streamed situations and had never had to deal with "slow-learners." However, other difficulties were raised by younger teachers and by several probationers. These stemmed from mixed ability teaching creating a series of dilemmas for many teachers who felt:

- (a) they were not spending sufficient time with pupils requiring extra help or, were spending too much time with these pupils then feeling that this was to the detriment of the remainder of the class,
- (b) they experienced difficulties in selecting and organizing suitable materials for pupils not able to "keep-up" with the rest of the class while, at the same time trying to make those pupils feel that they were engaged in similar tasks on comparable topics, and
- (c) they lacked suitable training for dealing with pupils with special educational needs. Some probationers mentioned that college courses had been optional. Only one probationer had selected such a course and she had found it "extremely useful." Of the few teachers who had attended in-service courses for S.E.N. most were teachers 'specializing' in this work. However, there was only one school where that accumulated expertise was being spread about the school and that was S.P.1.Y. In S.J.1.Y. plans were afoot to have the in-school expert work through the school alongside class teachers.

In A.P.1.X. not one teacher felt really competent in dealing with S.E.N., while in S.J.2.X. only the part-time 'remedial' teacher rated herself 'high' in this area. Any available expertise in this sort of work is therefore not without significance for the whole school.

Brown and Danby (Eds) (1986) emphasize the importance of continuity for children with "special needs" and the part technology

can play in this provision, arguing that a computer resource should be available to all regardless of academic ability.¹⁶ However, for the majority of teachers in this survey, this would be a case of combining two areas of 'low' competence, i.e. S.E.N. provision and computer use and could well produce a situation which was counter-productive rather than conducive to the desired learning situation.

In a similar vein, the Attenborough Report (1985) recognized "the unique contribution" the arts could make to the education of children with special needs. This same report recommended that all L.E.A.s. should

"give priority to providing for special needs in their programmes of in-service training for arts teachers in ordinary schools."

For many teachers in this North East survey this again would combine two areas of acknowledged weakness and would most certainly be met with some restraint. It is worth contemplating, however, whether in-service courses which approached 'weak' areas such as creative arts and science and technology, through making them appropriate to 'slow-learners', might create an increased sense of security in many teachers in their dealings with all of these aspects.

The following remarks from a teacher in his late 40's and belonging to the L.E.A.'s 'unattached-staff' (i.e. teaches in many schools while covering for absences) provides much 'food for thought':

"I would say most of us require help in striking a balanced curriculum which caters for the needs of all pupils in the class. In my travels around the schools in the area it's my impression that there's a tendency for teachers to be going back to a degree of formality brought about by too many questions and suggestions being fired in our direction."

The emphasis in this quotation was on all pupils. This feeling that all pupils had special educational needs was expressed by many teachers who felt that so much attention had been given to 'slow-learners' that class-teachers had begun to get into a quandary about how to provide for all needs within the mixed ability situation. The observations of this commentator had led him to believe that, in order to relieve some of the confusion, many teachers had returned to many, more formal class-teaching strategies, in the hopes of 'carrying' the majority of pupils along with them. He acknowledged that this was no real answer but merely a self-consolatory measure.

9.2. The Overview Compared

This section intends to emphasize some of the main trends discovered in this survey which have interesting parallels with other empirical studies.

Three of the 5 headteachers interviewed made specific reference to adequate coverage of "the basics" being of prime importance for the class teacher in the primary school. Headteachers expected staff to be 'high' in competence in their teaching of language, reading and mathematics but were prepared to accept that individual preferences

and strengths could display themselves in other areas of the curriculum. Informants acknowledged that Maths work was a dominant feature of each morning of the week and that the commercial schemes in use for maths and language and reading occupied a large portion of the weekly timetable. As can be seen in Tables 7(i) and 7(ii) these curriculum areas received the same comparable 'high' weighting in teacher competence.

The I.L.E.A. 'Junior School Project' (1986) found that the majority of Heads stressed the value they placed upon the 'basic skills' subjects of mathematics and language whilst giving comparatively poor ratings to creative arts.¹⁷

Alexander (1984), in referring to the Cockcroft Report on school mathematics (DES 1982) and the Gulbenkian Report on the arts in schools (1982) as presenting strong cases for their respective curriculum areas, sees the latter making a more powerful case for the arts as a central 'core' element. He believes however, that not only have the reports had unequal impact at school level but that many teachers are totally unaware of Gulbenkian. This alleged imbalance was supported throughout this North East study.

Galton, Simon and Croll (1980) discovered in their ORACLE Studies that the distribution of pupils' time was "fairly traditional",¹⁸ that is, devoted largely to the 'basic' subjects of language and mathematics. They acknowledged that content and presentation had undoubtedly changed over the years. This 'time distribution' finding

supported the conclusions of the H.M.I. survey (1978) 'Primary Education in England'. Around the same period as that H.M.I. survey, Bassey's Nottinghamshire research (1978)¹⁹ reinforced the emphasis, in hours per week, given to language and maths. Galton, Simon and Croll (1980)²⁰ discovered an emerging pattern from their collated data which showed the "typical" primary school pupil spending 36.1 per cent of his time on language (of which writing formed the bulk), 28.5 per cent on mathematics and number work, 24.4 per cent on general studies and 10.9 per cent on arts and crafts. (General Studies included "specialized subjects, such as history, geography, science and religious knowledge" taught separately in some schools and as 'integrated studies' in others. It also included 'topic' or 'project' work).

These figures are interesting within the scope of this North East survey in that they follow the same 'descending order pattern' of teacher proficiency ratings for subjects listed in Table 7. In other words, teachers would seem to feel 'most at home' with those curriculum areas most heavily timetabled.

The Birmingham Studies Group (1983) presented percentages of 'the presumed competence of primary school teachers' from data collected from a questionnaire sent to 465 teachers. The questionnaire asked "To what extent in your view should all primary school teachers have competence in the following curriculum areas: Please use the following scale - Fully: 3, Partially: 2, Not at all: 1. Please ring as appropriate."

Whereas the Birmingham Study asked the extent to which primary school teachers should have competence in specific areas, this North East research asked individuals, in an interview situation, for their own personal competence ratings and was therefore able to probe and collect further clarifying comments. The Birmingham Study reports:

"Most teachers considered that they and their colleagues would be 'fully' competent in only two curriculum areas:

Mathematics (93.4%)
Reading and Language Skills (98.7%)

and partially competent (or rather more so) in the remaining 7 areas:

Science (92.7%)
Music (73.5%)
Art and Craft (95%)
Physical Education and Games (93.2%)
Religious Education (80.4%)
Environmental Studies (95.1%)" 21

The difference in the nature of the questions posed in the Birmingham Studies and this North East research prohibits direct comparisons, i.e. the former addressing a "presumed competence" and the latter, an individual *claimed competence*. For example, in the 5 North Eastern schools, many teachers felt that primary school class teachers *should* all be capable of taking their own science lessons but admitted that they themselves lacked sufficient competence to be able to do this adequately. Again, with the Birmingham Studies, the interesting feature of 'descending subject order' was in evidence from Reading and Language with the highest ratings to Music with the

lowest. R.E. received a rather unexpected 'low' rating similar to that expressed in this North East study. Taylor (1986) found the Birmingham figure "worrying". He was able to understand the poor ratings in Music because of its association with specialist teaching, but not in R.E. It became increasingly noticeable during the interviews in the 5 North Eastern schools that many informants were doubting their abilities to cope with this subject. The mention of R.E. was usually greeted with a 'pained expression' and numerous explanations (one exception being A.P.I.X. - an R.C. primary school). The following remarks, collected from informants during interview, may serve to offer some reasons for the 'poor' ratings given to R.E.:

"We are being told to cover so many topics these days in the name of R.E. that I really feel confused. Should I be looking at other religions - if so - which ones? - and how can I present them fully, in an understandable way to children when my own knowledge is negligible?"

This next comment was extremely prevalent:

"I'm not a religious person - never have been - and am not very keen on doing bible stories and the like."

and was developed further in this short anecdote from another teacher:

"Not being a committed Christian I always felt that I could cover R.E. adequately by looking at moral and social issues and encouraging children's own thoughts and ideas. This was fine until it was pointed out to me - 'miss, we haven't had R.E. for ages!'"

The competence blocks referred to on page 181 were much more in evidence in this North East study than in the Birmingham research, especially on the dividing lines between the blocks. The *claimed competence* of teachers in this study turned out to be more worrying

in P.E./Games, Art and Craft, and in Science and Music especially, than that indicated by the '*presumed competence*' in the Birmingham Studies.

The traditional emphasis on 'the basics' found, by Bassey (1978) and Galton, Simon and Croll (1980), to exist in the scheduled week of primary school pupils is reflected in the prominence given, by a large majority of informants, to those same basics as main areas of teacher competence in both the Birmingham Studies (1983) and this North East survey.

9.3. Key Questions Answered

Some questions posed at the outset of the research remain to be fully answered. Further related questions developed during the study which can now also be addressed.

The third and final question presented in section 5.1. under 'Aims and Objectives' asked

- a) Could the expertise within the primary teaching force be better channelled to benefit the school as a whole under present given circumstances and constraints? and
- b) Would the staff of the schools in question welcome organizational change to allow for such?

The findings have revealed that teachers require help and classroom assistance from 'the experts' in several curriculum areas. Many informants expressed a desire for some specialist teaching in

music especially, and in science to a lesser extent. A majority of teachers wanted to experience more 'paired teaching' with the post-holder/adviser as a means of extending their own knowledge and skills. This was also seen as a method of improving the quality of provision in certain curriculum areas for their class. Certainly post-holders themselves were unanimous in their willingness to enter and assist in classes other than their own. A majority of post-holders saw organizational change to allow this as being very worthwhile. Many felt that their particular talents could be better channelled to have more practical benefit throughout the school rather than being 'caught' in the present situation of administrative chores.

It must be remembered that, other than for music, the vast majority of informants wanted to keep in touch with most areas of the curriculum while acknowledging that their own needs, and those of their pupils, were for classroom based assistance provided by in-school experts whether post-holders or not.

As a means of emphasizing the positive responses to questions (a) and (b), the remainder of this chapter will present data under two related sub-headings. The first, 'Wasted Talents?' will present information to show that teacher talents are not always directed as they might be and will reply to a question which arose in the previous chapter. The second sub-heading, 'Cause for Concern', approaches the idea that, as long as required talents are wasted, and teachers have an unsatisfied need for organizational change which allows for

beneficial deployment of expertise, there arises a 'cause for concern' in many classrooms. Interviews, diaries and free-accounts have provided the data presented in these two sub-sections.

(i) 'Wasted Talents'?

It was stated at the end of Chapter 8 that the question "Are there talents amongst teachers in our primary schools which are being wasted and, if so, why?" could not be completely answered until a full assessment of the relevance of those existing talents to school needs was made. It has become evident that all of those talents, listed in Chapter 7, which were found to exist in the 5 selected schools, have some relevance to the needs of pupils, teachers and the curriculum as a whole if it is to be balanced and coherent. It has become increasingly obvious that certain relevant talents are in short supply in some schools but are in large demand from a majority of teachers and pupils. In situations where this has been found to be the case and where those specific talents in demand have been classroom confined or severely restricted in transmission, then, it can be safely said that these talents were 'wasted.'

Diaries were kept over one working week (Appendix v) by two scale 2 teachers, two scale 3 teachers and a deputy head with special interest and expertise in science. Some of these have been referred to briefly already. Without exception, the diaries presented a picture of these senior members of staff being called upon for a wide variety of coping strategies, routine administration and tedious

and tiresome chores which took valuable time which would have been better devoted to their curriculum expertise. One of these post-holders opted out of a meeting after school, which was directly concerned with her area of responsibility, because she was "so tired after a day of constant interruptions and attempts to deal with several situations at once." In short, the diarists illuminated a life which was physically exhausting rather than mentally stimulating.

On the occasions when the two scale 3 post-holders were due to have some non-class-contact time to perform functions associated with their curriculum responsibility, it was cancelled. The following entry appeared in one diary:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Incident</u>	<u>Reaction</u>
2.15	Playtime - I'm on duty! Go outside. Receive visit from a parent - have our conversation on yard! 3 pupils require 1st Aid.	Take a deep breath!
2.30	<u>No non-contact time - teacher covering for absent colleague (3rd week in a row!)</u>	Irritation

The two scale 3 informants were year co-ordinators as well as curriculum post-holders which increased their load of secretarial and organizational duties substantially. It became evident, that as so many colleagues were requiring classroom assistance or professional advice from these post-holders who were impeded by other duties and restricted time, then, here was a source of 'wasted' talents.

Free Account Schedules were written up by post-holders and 2

deputy heads. Those from post-holders served to reinforce the statements entered in the diaries in that it became clear that post-holders themselves were dissatisfied with the current situation of "too much paperwork". With little or no time set aside for the practical elements of their role, most were frustrated and several had consequently lost their initial enthusiasm for the furtherance of their 'subject' in school:

"When I got this job I saw myself as a real 'trail-blazer' bringing in all the latest ideas and encouraging staff to experiment, etc. After several years as a post-holder and class teacher with only $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour a week without a class - if I'm lucky - I'm reduced to just managing to keep my own head above water never mind advising others!"

"For what I'm able to achieve as a post-holder it's hardly worthwhile. I spend any time connected with the post in ordering, arranging, distributing stock, etc., and not in passing on any ideas or knowledge."

The majority of post-holders were still optimistic that the situation might change in primary schools. They were happy to suggest organizational changes which would facilitate and enhance what they felt to be their true role of adviser/consultant. Most wanted to have the opportunity of working with colleagues in other classes in order to improve their own knowledge of year groups they had had little contact with, as well as to experience a two-way interchange of skills and ideas. The following is a selection of remarks made by post-holders across all 5 schools:

"There needs to be time to work with other year groups, alongside other teachers rather than be permanently isolated with one class."

"I see artwork from other classes displayed but never know the process behind a specific idea."
(Post-holder for art)

In answer to the question 'What, for you, would be the ideal situation?' the following reply from a scale 3 post-holder encapsulated the main themes continually echoed:

"Plenty of support from above and good levels of co-operation from around with an established system of working in all areas of the school on a regular basis."

In short, post-holders themselves acknowledged a wastage of their talents and those of colleagues and were keen to see organizational change to rectify the situation.

Interviews and free-account schedules accentuated the variation in the role of deputy head teacher. The situation ranged from the deputy head who was a class teacher, taking the occasional assembly and dealing with mundane administrative tasks, to the deputy head who was an obvious enabler, motivator and innovator in various areas of the curriculum, having recognised opinions on major aspects of school organization and being both 'social secretary' and 'public relations assistant.' In only one of the 5 schools were the talents of the deputy head deployed in such a way as to have beneficial effects felt throughout. Expertise, gathered from many years in teaching, was restricted almost entirely to one class in 3 of the 5 schools. In one free-account schedule a deputy head stated:

"Jobs carried out over the years, many of which accumulated or abated with time, are timetabling, both overall and subsequently class and individual, rotas of duties, the introduction and timing of class assemblies, stock

ordering - now particularly T.V. pamphlets and film-strips, discipline problems - particularly in the Head's absence and school savings scheme."

Again, the high incidence of administrative tasks is evident. This particular deputy head was an enthusiast and expert in his class-work with computers, as well as having had a great deal of past experience in drama. Both of these talents, in great demand from staff and pupils, were class confined and therefore 'wasted' as far as the school as a whole was concerned.

The highest numbers of teachers expressing a lack of confidence and competence in curriculum areas arose in music, and science and technology. It is obvious that where expertise existed, in these areas particularly, but was not being deployed to satisfy the needs of teachers and pupils, then talents were seen to be 'wasted.'

(ii) Cause for Concern

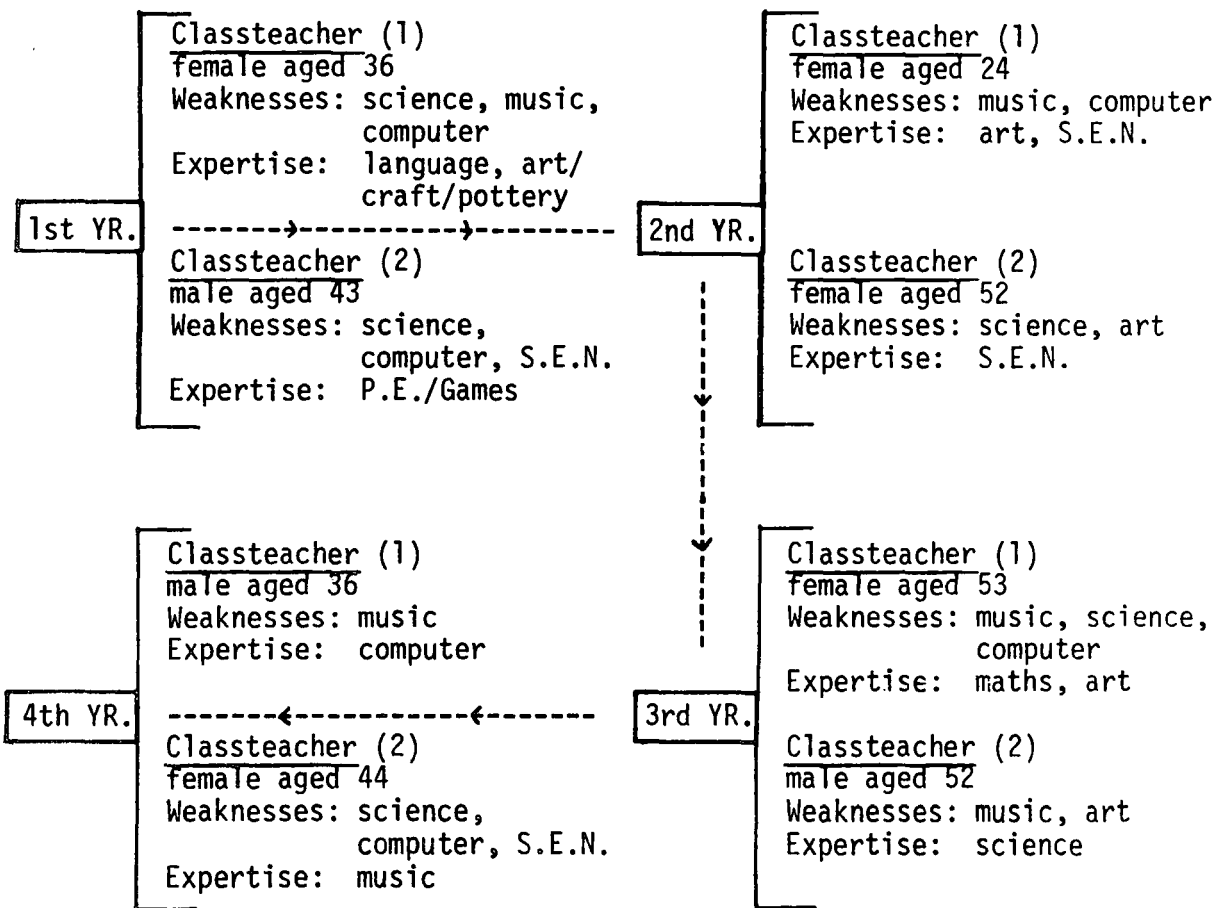
This section is intended to reinforce the view that talents within the primary teaching force could be better channelled to benefit the school as a whole even under present, given circumstances and constraints. It has been established that there are many talents remaining 'untapped' in the 5 selected primary schools and 'wasted' as far as the school as a whole is concerned. This fact was recognized by teachers, regardless of scale post and responsibility area. A majority of teaching staff would welcome organizational change which made for a greater distribution of teacher expertise.

So far, it is the 'plight' of teachers calling for classroom

assistance and guidance generally, in their acknowledged 'weak' areas, which has received most emphasis in this study as a disturbing state of affairs. A related cause for concern comes sharply into focus in the light of these findings: 'what of the pupils?'

There follows a plan of the compartmentalized nature of one of the schools in the survey. Each teacher's acknowledged main areas of strength and weakness are noted. There are 2 classes in each year group and therefore limited routes by which a child can pass through the school:

Figure 1. Projected Route through the 'Cellular-School'



This figure shows that the end-product, after 4 years of this 'compartmentalized' junior school education, is a pupil who has experienced major contact with only 4 class teachers, all of whom would have disliked and/or lacked confidence in music and/or science and/or computer work. Closer analysis of Fig. 1 reveals the frequency with which these 3 curriculum areas appear as teacher weaknesses. Distinct possibilities for 'beneficial class swaps' also emerge when teacher strengths are detected.

The schools in the survey which were attempting to deploy expertise more fully through the school have proved that several possibilities for such do exist. S.P.1.Y. 'collegial' had the most developed and organized system for counteracting teachers' incompetencies. The system, which allowed for paired-teaching and post-holder deployment throughout the school, had relied initially on the headteacher 'relieving' but was now functioning with the help of a 'floating' teacher. None of the post-holders involved felt that they were losing continuity with their own class. All had experienced worthwhile insights and learning situations while working alongside colleagues.

S.J.2.X. was attempting to satisfy school needs by employing some 'specialist' teaching in music and, to a lesser degree, in science and art. The 'specialist' teachers were satisfied that their own classes work was not fragmented but was, in fact, gaining by experiencing other 'experts'. General class-teachers were happy that their own short-comings were counteracted through this extra

contact with 'specialists'.

Without the assistance of the headteacher, paired-teaching, or teachers meeting together for staff development, is problematic for the majority of primary schools possessing no 'floating' staff. Methods of 'winning' time are not always satisfactory or educationally desirable and cannot be relied upon on a regular basis. It would seem that, 'under present given circumstances and constraints' some attempts at 'class-swaps', aimed at deploying teacher expertise more fully, would be the answer. Where the cellular-nature of one class - one teacher is found to be limiting the breadth and depth of experience for teachers and pupils alike, then this is a cause for concern. The various remedies found to be in operation must be tried and tested for their suitability to individual schools.

9.4. Summary and Conclusions

This chapter set out with the intention of discovering how relevant the acknowledged talents of teachers proved to be to school needs. The problems inherent in 'claimed competence' were accepted, but found not to interfere with the main purpose of the study.

Collected teacher response ratings highlighted 3 blocks of 'competence levels':- 'high', 'moderate' and 'low'. Reading and Language was found to be top of the 'high' block with Music at the bottom of the 'low' block. It was discovered that internal provision, staff development programmes and school emphases on specific 'subjects'

could affect a teacher's competence level in some areas. It was teachers' natural talents or accumulated strengths which affected 'subject-ratings' on the whole.

Specific curriculum areas, under the sub-headings of Creative Arts, Science and Technology and Special Educational Needs were looked at as separate sections warranting detailed assessment due to informants' 'ratings' and comments. It transpired that pupil and teacher needs in music, science and computer use were not being fully satisfied in any of the 5 selected schools, although 2 of the schools were making constructive attempts to alleviate problems.

Several analogies were found to exist between the findings of this research and those of previous surveys and reports. It was possible to use the data collected from this study in the North East to reinforce and extend the work of others.

All available teacher expertise across the 5 schools, is, in its broadest terms, relevant to a rich and extensive curriculum. Much of that expertise was found to be particularly appropriate to pupil and teacher needs and greatly in demand for the provision of a balanced curriculum for all pupils.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. THOMAS REPORT (1985) 'Improving Primary Schools' - see para. 2.144.
2. I.L.E.A. (1986) 'Junior School Project' - see PART B, para. 3.vii.a.c.11.
3. TAYLOR, P.H. (1986) in 'Expertise and the Primary School Teacher' makes this statement on page 71 while commenting on the findings of the Birmingham Studies Group (1983).
4. reported in T.E.S. 23 November 1984 'Casualties mount as music fights for survival'.
5. CAUDRY, A. and RODGERS, L. (1984) - findings presented in T.E.S. 23 November 1984 'Casualties mount as music fights for survival' and 'When music can mean no more than hymn practice' - 30 November 1984.
6. This statement appeared in the T.E.S. article referred to at 5 above, 30 November 1984.
7. This is one of the HMI Curriculum Matters Series - No. 4, 1985. These quotes can be found at paras. 2 and 3.
8. I.L.E.A. (1986) 'Junior School Project' PART B, para. 3.vii.a.c.11.
9. This statement can be found in para. 17.
10. at para. 4.
11. This call came in para. 2.165 of the report.
12. SANDERS, N. (1984) - (as assistant secretary in the curriculum division at the D.E.S.) - address reported in T.E.S. 23 November 1984, 'Making the experiment succeed.'
13. This article appeared in T.E.S. 13 March 1987.
14. BROWN, D. and DANBY, M. (Eds.) (1986) The Transition between primary and secondary schools: an information technology perspective. para. 3.3.4.
15. This endorsement was made in 'Education in Science', April 1986, as was the quotation which follows.
16. see reference 14 above. This particular theme is evident in para. 3.2.8.

17. see TABLE 3.14.
18. GALTON, M., SIMON, B., CROLL, P. (1980) (Eds.) 'Inside the Primary Classroom', set out this finding, pp. 77-78.
19. see Bassey, M. (1978) - TABLE 4.
20. see reference 18 above. These particular figures are set out pp. 77-78 and in TABLE 4.10.
21. see Birmingham Studies (1983) page 84 and/or TAYLOR, P.H. (1986) 'Expertise and the Primary School Teacher' pp. 70-71.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter comprises a series of numbered statements which summarize the main trends which have emerged during this research. It also includes applications for the research findings. The first section sets out the central issues which have been identified while the second presents several propositions regarding the typicality of many of the salient features. The third and final section advances specific recommendations which have developed from the collated data and which are particularly pertinent for those with administrative or professional involvement in primary schools. All three sections draw attention to crucial issues arising from this study and of interest to all concerned about the future of primary education in this country.

10.1. Principal Findings

Having found a varied selection of teacher expertise available and diverse methods of deployment in evidence, it can be stated that:

1. Quality of provision in particular curriculum areas was felt by informants to be hampered by their own 'low' competence.
2. It emerged that individual classes could thrive on their class teacher's particular strengths but that the opposite was true for their weaknesses. Due to the large number of informants

expressing 'low' competence in the same areas, it was shown that junior school pupils are liable to pass through their 4 years experiencing the same imbalance in the quality of curriculum provision.

3. Where expertise existed which was in demand by a large number of teachers, it also proved to be in short supply. This was the case in science, computer use and music especially. In these areas, any efficient deployment of the available expertise was shown to be highly relevant to school needs.
4. Classroom-based assistance and advice from in-school experts was seen to be desirable. Where this was not school policy, a large majority of informants expressed a desire for organizational change to allow for such, in an attempt to combat, alleviate or rectify their perceived 'weak' areas.
5. There were many instances in the survey of expertise which was 'class-confined' but which was stated by informants to be required elsewhere in the school. Such expertise was undoubtedly wasted.
6. Excessive administrative chores and servicing of equipment were found to be responsible for the deviation of many teacher talents. Such digression was felt by informants to be a waste of professional expertise in any event, but, when that expertise coincided with curriculum areas where colleagues were seeking help, then the waste was more irritating.
7. Even under current constraints and pressures some of the selected

schools were able to show that teacher talents could be channelled into benefitting the school as a whole.

10.2. Typicality of Emerging Patterns

From the 5 selected schools the following features emerged sufficiently strongly to be indicative of primary schools generally:

1. The assorted backgrounds and qualifications of all informants suggest that the teachers who participated in this research were a representative sample of those to be found in primary schools generally (see Tables 3 and 4). It might therefore be assumed that (a) the varied nature of their talents and expertise is typical of the rich selection available over the rest of the North East and the country as a whole, and
(b) as the levels of competence assigned to specific curriculum areas were comparable across all 5 schools, equivalent 'competence blocks' are likely to be reproduced by staff in other primary schools, with most teachers feeling highly competent in teaching Language and Reading Skills, with Maths a close second, while Science, Computer use and Music are rated in a 'low competence block.'
2. Across the 5 schools, 5 different policies towards the deployment of teacher expertise were detectable. These were reflected in the conceptual terms chosen to describe each school: 'traditional-

cellular' with the majority of talents being class confined, 'specialist-aware' with some of the available subject-expertise deployed throughout the school, 'metamorphic' where changing circumstances were very much responsible for changing attitudes and deployment strategies, 'osmotic' for the smallest school where opportunities existed for a more informal transfusion of ideas and expertise and 'collegial' where a fully organized programme for capitalizing on teacher strengths was in operation. It is probable, in the light of these findings and in the knowledge that no strict local or national formulae exist for full utilization of teacher talents, that the more schools investigated, then the greater variation of policies would be found to exist.

3. Informants in this survey all looked towards the headteacher as the person who should initiate and organize successful deployment of teacher expertise, by either encouraging paired or team teaching, allowing class swaps or facilitating 'relief' from classes for post-holders, etc. It is feasible that this image of the headteacher as 'chief-strategist' is prevalent in primary schools generally.
4. In view of the poor staffing ratio normally found in primary schools and found in 4 of the 5 selected schools, i.e. one teacher for each class, it is highly likely that the ensuing difficulties encountered in 'freeing' staff and generally making 'expertise' more available are experienced nationwide. The logical conclusion would therefore be that a great deal of teacher expertise in

primary schools remains 'class-confined.'

5. The shortage of teacher expertise found to exist in this survey in specific curriculum areas - i.e. science, technology and music, has been shown by previous research to also exist in other parts of the country. The desire of teachers in this study for more extensive deployment of available teacher talents in these subjects is probably illustrative of the situation elsewhere.
6. Difficulties were identified in this research of contraction or teacher replacement having caused a school to lose specific expertise. This had more serious consequences when that expertise was in short supply and no other staff member felt able to compensate. This problem was particularly acute for the smallest school but was not restricted to this school. Such dilemmas would seem to be typical of many primary schools.
7. One school in this survey had collected, quite by chance, a pool of talent in one particular curriculum area, while other schools were shown to have 'gaps' in their curricular expertise. These situations had been created by appointments of staff where, other than for specific scale post allocations, little or no attention had been paid to teacher strengths. Informants felt that this was characteristic of staffing in most primary schools.
8. It was also alleged by interviewees that they were not alone in the huge amount of administrative tasks which had overtaken teachers. This was seen to be part of ever-increasing accountability

and evaluation as well as reflecting the usually poor apportionment of clerical staff to primary schools. This being so, it must be surmised that the subsequent deflection of teacher expertise identified in this research must be recognizable in other primary schools.

10.3. Recommendations

1. With so many teachers acknowledging their own deficiencies in music, science and educational technology - namely computer work - then the possibilities for remedying the situation must be investigated.
2. Where staff of schools express a need for assistance in particular curriculum areas then the extent of the deployment of existing teacher expertise, as well as external supplementary provision, should be examined.
3. With an ever-expanding primary school curriculum, opportunities should be made available for staff to acknowledge their own short-comings and professional requirements, without stigma or assumptions that all primary school teachers should be capable of coping competently across all curricular areas.
4. To encourage recommendation 3, headteachers need to recognize and be aware of teachers' needs. More discussions in schools regarding teachers' needs could only be beneficial to pupils' needs in that, suitable provision of the former governs the quality with which

the latter is satisfied.

5. The desire, expressed by a large majority of informants, to have 'in-school' consultants/advisers/teachers offering expertise in specific 'problem areas', must be taken into account during appointments and redeployments so that staffing of primary schools maintains quality and balance in curriculum provision.
6. If the professional skills of teachers are to be fully deployed then competing workloads must be reduced by the appointment of more clerical and technical staff to primary schools.
7. Despite numerous recommendations in previous research, problems created by having insufficient teachers and little non-contact time are still prevalent in primary schools. It can only be reiterated that without adequate staffing, there is little room for manoeuvre, few opportunities for innovative practice and less chance of pupil and teacher needs being satisfactorily met.
8. This study has important messages for future in-service needs. The requirements of the teacher's contract includes in-service programmes to satisfy individual and school needs. This research makes clear what is lacking in curriculum expertise and what kind of in-service training is required.
9. If primary schools can become more flexible institutions in the way they deploy their expertise, children will get a better balanced curriculum taught with enthusiasm throughout.

Suggestions for further research

As well as those suggestions already included in Chapter 9 of the study, the following two areas are worthy of further investigation:

1. The main barrier to the percolation of expertise was seen by most informants to be the classroom walls, i.e. one teacher to one class producing a confinement of teacher talents. Further exploration is therefore necessary in order to establish whether the removal of that barrier (i.e. an open-plan school) produces any different results and possibilities.
2. As by far the highest level of teacher competence was shown to exist in maths and reading and language work, the extensive use of commercial schemes in these areas should be evaluated. Could it be that such schemes serve to stifle teachers' natural talents rather than encourage their acknowledged expertise to devise and adapt to the needs of their own pupils?

APPENDICES

APPENDIX (i)

THE QUESTIONNAIRE - Headteachers only

The main purpose of this questionnaire was:

to discover factual information about the school which would not necessarily be included in school documents and brochures,

to have time to digest and reflect on this information before the interview and, therefore, be in a position to tailor questions more accurately and open doors for fuller discussions through displaying a better knowledge of the school's organization and headteacher's standpoint, and,

to give the headteacher notice of some of the discussion topics likely to arise during interview which would be better answered with some forethought.

HEADTEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE
ON THE ORGANISATION OF THE PRIMARY/JUNIOR SCHOOL

As with all other elements
of this survey your responses
will be treated as entirely
confidential

SECTION 1

1:1 What group number is the school?

1:2 What group number was the school when you became Head?

1:3 How many pupils are there in each year group?

NURSERY DEPT.

INFANT DEPT.

JUNIOR DEPT.

YR.1

YR.2

YR.3

YR.1

YR.2

YR.3

YR.4

TOTAL PUPILS

1:4 How many classes are there in the school?

1:5 How many teaching staff, other than yourself, are employed?

F.T.

P.T.

SECTION 2

2:1 How old are the school buildings?

YRS.

2:2 Do the buildings meet your main requirements?
(Please tick)

YES

NO

If not, in what ways are you limited by your physical surroundings?
(Please tick)

insufficient rooms	
rooms too small	
lack of display areas	
lack of specialist areas	
internal decor	
other (please specify)	

SECTION 3

3:1 How many scale 1 teachers are on the staff?

Are any of the teachers given responsibility
for areas of work?

If 'Yes' please specify for what they are responsible

3:2 How many scale 2 teachers are on the staff?

For what areas are they responsible?

Teacher 1 _____

Teacher 2 _____

Teacher 3 _____

Teacher 4 _____

Teacher 5 _____

Teacher 6 _____

3:3 How many scale 3 teachers are on the staff?

For what areas are they responsible?

Teacher 1 _____

Teacher 2 _____

Teacher 3 _____

Teacher 4 _____

Teacher 5 _____

Teacher 6 _____

3:4 How many other, more senior, responsibility posts are there, including deputy head?

Briefly note what functions you expect them to perform.

3:5 To whom are postholders responsible?
(Please tick)

	HEAD
	STAFF
	ADVISER
	OTHERS (please specify)

3:6 What criteria would you look for in appointing a post-holder with responsibility for an area of curriculum and teaching?

Please indicate below, in note form, if you wish.

Please note that there will be opportunities during the interview to discuss any points arising from this questionnaire or to supplement any of your comments.

APPENDIX (ii)

HEADTEACHER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

APPENDIX (ii)

HEADTEACHER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- to be viewed alongside headteacher questionnaire - responses to which may be checked or discussed at this interview.

BACKGROUND

- of intake : general catchment area
parental interest
parents in school - (probe for occasions)
- of school : religious basis
school philosophy - (discuss whether there is general agreement on this)
- of self : length of time as Head
previous experience and training
pre-conceived ideas regarding changes and objectives - have these been fulfilled?
- Discuss any major changes made or planned and any value gained from L.E.A. training courses for Heads.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

- teaching groups/classes
- extent of group work and withdrawal
- use and nature of any setting
- extent of timetabling - whose responsibility?
- extent of generalist class work, specialist or subject teaching and peripatetic visits.

PROBE: Attempt to detect the freedom, or lack of, that staff may have for organizing and re-organizing amongst themselves

SCALE POSTS/RESPONSIBILITY AREAS

(to be discussed in conjunction with answers to Section 3 on headteacher questionnaire)

Duties
Job Specifications
Inherited and/or changed posts
Deployment of expertise

SCHEMES OF WORK AND PLANNED PROGRESSION

Written policies
Methods for monitoring
Head's responsibilities, direction and delegation
- link to

HEAD'S CONTACT TIME

with : curriculum policies
staff
pupils
class/group/individual teaching

Encourage Head's opinions on curricular expertise, teacher talents, etc., and the deployment of such.

APPENDIX (iii)

TEACHER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- set out in structured questions with appropriate spaces left for recording each informant's responses. This sheet was duplicated and used at each interview.

TEACHER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE - GENERAL

SCHOOL:

TEACHER SCALE:

AGE:

SEX:

1. How many years have you been in teaching?
2. How long have you been at this school?
3. What age group are you teaching?
4. How long have you been teaching this age group?
5. What experience have you of other years in primary education?
6. Do you ever employ class 'swaps' with colleagues in other classes/
year groups for any reason?
PROBE: what occasions
any team-teaching
freedom to arrange such
7. What experience, including initial training, did you have before
here?
8. What main subject/s did you study through initial training?
9. Have you found you've been able to draw benefit from this study
in your primary teaching?

and if so, how?

if not, why?
10. Do you feel that you could have benefited from current D.E.S.
ideas for teacher training equipping teachers for subject con-
sultancy posts? DISCUSS.

11. Could teachers benefit from in-service courses with similar aims?
DISCUSS in-service provision and any personal benefits experienced - any desirable changes?

12. Have you developed interests and/or some knowledge or expertise in other areas during your teaching career?
If so, in what and how did this come about - personal interest, in-service work, etc.

13. Would you say you are making the most of the curricular strengths you possess? DISCUSS.

14. Is the school as a whole, or a portion of the school benefiting from your knowledge, interests or strengths and if so, how?
PROBE

15. Are there 'subjects' on your class timetable which you personally particularly like and dislike? If so, which?

16. Which curriculum areas do you feel least confident to tackle?

17. Why do you think you feel this way about those areas?

18. Have you ever attempted to improve your knowledge of these areas and if so, how, and was it worthwhile?

19. In which areas of the curriculum do you rely most heavily on published material?
20. Discuss the attention paid to school policy documents and the adherence to syllabuses. What methods are employed for checking, record keeping, etc.?
21. How would you rate yourself in competence and confidence teaching in the following areas? H - high, A - adequate, L - low. (Allow for any age group distinctions or preferences and probe for subject integration and reasons behind responses).

Mathematics _____

Reading and language skills _____

Science _____

Music _____

Environmental Studies _____

Art and Craft _____

P.E. and Games _____

R.E. _____

S.E.N. provision _____

Computer work _____

22. Are there any areas of the curriculum where you would like to see someone more expert than yourself teaching your class and/or helping out in the class and/or able to be consulted for assistance?

Discuss other possibilities.

23. Are there any organizational arrangements which make this possible at present? Discuss the possibilities and desirability for re-arrangements.

24. How would you like to see post-holders used in the school?
Does this happen at present? (free discussion)

25. How much non-pupil contact time do you have each week?

26. If any, is anything particular expected of you during that time?

27. Other than your own class teaching, are you responsible for any area in the workings of the school - with or without scale post?
DISCUSS

(If 'yes' to the last question and the area of responsibility carries a scale post then proceed to the additional interview schedule).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION/ADDITIONS

Record anything the informant feels s/he may have left out or would like to add or comment on.

APPENDIX (iv)

POST-HOLDER INTERVIEW EXTENSION

ADDITIONAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR POST-HOLDERS

POST SCALE:

RESPONSIBILITY AREA:

ACQUISITION OF POST - HOW?

WHEN?

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE
(source of expertise)

NATURE OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Job Description

To whom responsible

Duties performed

SATISFACTION/DISSATISFACTION (open discussion)

DESIRED ROLES AND IMPROVEMENTS

APPENDIX (v)

Instructions for informants keeping a week's diary.

DIARY INSTRUCTIONS

Please record, in as much detail as possible, an account of your weekly workload. Log all the duties you perform in chronological order on a daily basis. This should include the work inherent in your normal class teaching duties and might comprise:

planning/preparation/resources,
teaching,
marking,
displaying, etc.,

as well as those duties involved with your specialism or responsibility post both within and without the normal working day.

Log each encounter, no matter how short, and give brief details of each, e.g. state location, duration and give reactions - satisfaction/frustration, etc., and acknowledge who initiated the event.

You may wish to include at the end, any supplementary comments, or information regarding any work you had planned which, for one reason or another, you were unable to accomplish.

N.B. As with all other aspects of this survey the anonymity of informants will be preserved.

APPENDIX (vi)

Suggestions for the compilation of a Free-Account Schedule.

FREE ACCOUNT SCHEDULE INSTRUCTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Please describe how you view your role in the school. You might include, and comment on, any job specification you have been issued with formally or entered into verbally.

You might like to list a programme of work/events, related to your post of responsibility, which you feel should be accomplished in an academic year. This could include schemes of work, courses, meetings, organizing resources, seasonal events, etc., as well as ways and means of assisting colleagues.

Finally, it would be helpful if you were to make some comment on whether you feel your strengths and talents are being put to full use throughout the school, what the responsibilities of post-holder/consultant should be and any changes in the present system you see as being particularly worthwhile.

N.B. As with all other aspects of this survey the complete anonymity of informants will be preserved.

APPENDIX (vii)

Abbreviations employed throughout the thesis.
(Presented here in alphabetical order)

A.P.1.X.	-	Aided Primary (School) 1 in education authority X.
Cert.Ed.	-	Certificate of Education
C.D.T.	-	Craft, Design and Technology
D.E.S.	-	Department of Education and Science
E.F.L.	-	English as a Foreign Language
E.S.	-	Environmental Studies
F.T.	-	Full-Time
H.M.I.	-	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
H.T.	-	Headteacher
I.L.E.A.	-	Inner London Education Authority
INSET	-	In-Service Education and Training (of Teachers)
L.E.A.	-	Local Education Authority
N.A.P.E.	-	National Association for Primary Education
P.G.C.E.	-	Post Graduate Certificate of Education
P.T.	-	Part-Time
S.E.N.	-	Special Educational Needs
S.J.1.Y.	-	State Junior (School) 1 in education authority Y.
S.J.2.X.	-	" " " 2 " " " X.
S.J.3.X.	-	" " " 3 " " " X.
S.P.1.Y.	-	State Primary (School) 1 " " " Y.
T.E.S.	-	Times Educational Supplement

APPENDIX (viii)

Glossary of terms

- 'cover' - term used to describe responsibility being taken for a class by a teacher other than the usual class teacher.
- 'floating' teacher - a teacher employed in a school with no full-time responsibility for one class. Such teachers usually engage in visiting several classes or groups throughout the school.
- free-account schedule - a description given by a teacher of how s/he views his/her role in the school (see Appendix (vi)).
- 'free-time'
'non-contact time') two terms often used to indicate time away
) from normal class teaching duties.
- to free) terms used to describe a member of staff
to relieve) entering a particular class so that the
to cover) usual class teacher may be deployed else-
) where.
- 'unattached' staff - the term used by education authorities to describe a team of teachers who are not permanently attached to any one school. Such teachers are placed in schools when and where needed due to absences, etc.

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