

Educational Enquiry module

How can I improve my practice through ‘walking the talk’ and ‘dealing with doorsteps’?

Marie Huxtable 5th Feb 06

Context

I am writing in the context of a conversation through documentation with

- 1 My examiner at the university judging 3,500 – 4,500 words of continuous prose against criterion shown in appendix 1; can I demonstrate I have met the criteria with originality and insight?
- 2 My peers in the action research group critically appraising my account; can you see evidence of my values as lived through my practice, the emergence of my living educational theory and the standards of judgement I am using?
- 3 Fellow educators, with a strange taste in literature; have I written in a way that engages you and connects with your own learning journey in ways you find useful?
- 4 My self; through developing this account can I ‘see’ what I am saying in a way that helps me progress my thinking and practice?

An introduction

I work for Bath and North East Somerset as a senior educational psychologist with a remit for coordinating the APEX (Able Pupils Extending Opportunities Project) and related work.

In developing my understanding of high ability, intelligence, gifts and talents, as a psychologist working in education I am particularly drawn to the ideas of psychologists such as Renzulli (1997), Sternberg (1990), Freeman (1998), Adey (2002), and Gardner (1993) and more recently to Dweck (1998) as outlined in appendix 2.

Over the years I have tried to develop a framing for my activities that are consistent with, what I am now beginning to understand as, my ‘living educational theories’ and ‘living values’ as described by Whitehead (1993).

I hold to the belief that all learners have the capacity for extraordinary achievement and I have sought to develop my practice to reflect my growing understanding of what I mean by extraordinary achievement and how I can contribute to the educational environment in which it can flourish. I have brought this into the public forum in an article (Huxtable 2005). An example of how I act on my theoretical framing in my work can be seen in a picture of the constellation of my activities (appendix 3) and the draft of my work plan for 2005-2006 (appendix 4).

I have found the traditional approaches to evaluating my work at best inappropriate and at worst destructive and I have searched for ways of evaluating my effectiveness against standards which contribute to the progress of my understanding and practice and enable me to hold myself publicly accountable. ‘Jack Whitehead’s account of one possibility of being Marie Huxtable!’ (2005) very much resonated with me when he began with:

‘Catherine Snow’s challenge in her 2001 Presidential Address to the American Educational Research Association to develop agreed-upon procedures for transforming practical knowledge into public knowledge:

“The challenge is to enhance the value of personal knowledge and personal experience for practice. Good teachers possess a wealth of programs. And having standards for the systematization of personal knowledge would provide a basis for rejecting personal anecdotes as a basis for either policy or practice.” (Snow 2001 p.9)

Through this account I want to explore a chapter of my journey towards my understanding of standards of judgment that are of acknowledged worth for myself as an educator to be held accountable to.

The spur to action – my practice as my living contradiction

As an expert enquirer

I have attached increasing importance to children and young people engaging as ‘expert enquirers’; pursuing an enquiry in an area of personal passion, in a disciplined manner, within a timeframe and with a valued outcome.

Children and young people as ‘authentic’ researchers is coming more to the fore with changes in social policy (appendix 5) but seems to be running as a parallel, rather than integral strand in education. Perkins (1992) captures the problem when he says, *‘what do we want of education? This is the key question for the entire enterprise. Unless we now what we want and pursue it with ingenuity and commitment, we are not very likely to get it’*. He goes on to suggest it is *‘...generative knowledge – knowledge that does not just sit there but functions richly in people’s lives to help them understand and deal with the world.’*

I still have the feeling that there is more to understanding what I want from the pursuit of engaging as an ‘expert enquirer’. It is more than knowledge for understanding and dealing with the world as Perkins suggests. It is more than an understanding of my developing skills as a researcher as implied by Kellett (2005). It is even more than Renzulli (1997 p212) implies through his definition of Type III enrichment opportunities; *Investigative activities and artistic productions in which the learner assumes the role of a first-hand inquirer; the student thinking, feeling and acting like a practicing professional’*; although he touches on it when talking of ‘feeling’.

Claxton’s (2002) learning muscles describes some of the personal qualities of learning to learn which emerge through ‘expert enquiry’ but still does not touch on the missing point.

I think that what comes from engaging in an ‘expert enquiry’ has to be understood by all those skills, understandings and disciplines these writers describe but also must help a person develop a better understanding of themselves; what they value and a growing understanding of what they want to pursue to the benefit of themselves and others. That for me is the beginnings of understanding what standards I can use to judge my work.

Branko Bogner, an educator working in Croatia in contributing to the BERA Practitioner-Researcher 2005 e-seminar Croatia, with urls to be found on www.actionresearch.net seems to have come closest.

If this is the learning I expect for young people then surely this is the learning I expect for all. I have increasingly exhorted educators, and other adults, to engage in their own enquiries. You can see an example of this in the slides taken from a presentation I made at a local conference for Head teachers in 2004 (appendix 6)

While I am looking for examples of children as ‘expert enquirers’ and teachers are being exhorted to undertake practitioner research I have become increasingly aware I am in no position myself to answer the question, ‘what ‘expert enquiry’ am I involving myself in’.

As a gifted and talented learner

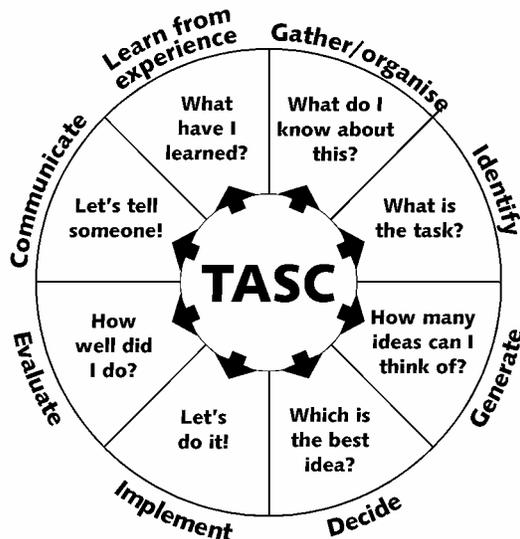
Everyone has an aptitude for something. The trick is to recognise it, to honour it, to work with it.
Shekerjian, (1991 p. 1)

I have sought to encourage educators to search for, recognise, honour and work with those amazing places of learning and creativity in themselves as valued learners; as members of the inclusive educational community they are seeking to create for their pupils.

In August I tripped over a doorstep and was caught apologising to it! Through my struggle to 'walk the talk' I hope to learn how to recognise doorsteps and use them as a step up rather than retreating with the well rehearsed repertoire of self defeating behaviours that I have spent so much of my professional life trying to help children confront.

By explicitly framing the next part of my account in Wallace's TASC wheel (2004) I intend to both give a publicly accessible account of my enquiry and to extend my understanding and practice beyond its framing to connect with what I am beginning to understand of Whitehead's work on living education theories, living values as standards of judgement, and embodied knowledge and Rayner's work on inclusionality (2005).

TASC: Thinking Actively in a Social Context The TASC Problem-solving Wheel



Belle Wallace 2000

Gather/organise

My understanding of the TASC framework comes from Belle Wallace's books (2002), (2002), (2001), participating in her workshops, personal discussion with Belle and teachers using TASC, and visiting schools where teachers and children are working with TASC. I have also been

mindful of TASC when listening to professionals from a diverse range of disciplines, such as engineering and the arts when they have given an account of the enquiry or research process they go through.

The similarities between these different problem solving and enquiry processes shown in appendix 7 are striking even though the roots are various. TASC attracted me particularly because it was easily understood by a diverse range of people acting as enquirers, from a small child exploring paint to a professor explaining how to develop and implement an engineering design brief.

I have taken my understandings of different types of learning opportunities from the work of Renzulli (1997). I have interpreted his third type of learning opportunity as an opportunity to develop the skills, understandings and passions of an 'expert enquirer' by 'pursuing a question of personal interest, pursued in a disciplined manner (e.g. as described by TASC), within a time frame and with a valued outcome'. Through this enquiry I specifically want to explore the connection with Whitehead's work on living values, living educational theories and living values as standards of judgement.

Through my work with the child and adults as 'expert enquirers' /researchers, collaboratively engaged in creative enquiries (appendix 4), I have become increasingly aware of the similarities between adults and children engaged in the learning processes and reflected on the roles, rights and responsibilities of teachers and learners in an inclusional context (appendix 8).

These thoughts and discussions have all served to emphasise to me the importance of 'knowledge of self' in contributing not only to emotional well being but also to achievement; what qualities of me do I value, how do I want to be valued by others, how do I want to express these as I earn a living, how do I want to contribute to my society...? Through my enquiry I not only learn skills of the discipline but also explore those questions that contribute to my possibilities of living a satisfying and productive life.

Writers such as Goleman (1996), Covey (1989), Persuad (2005) and Johnson (2003) seek to engage readers with that part of themselves that relates to understanding what they have they value that can enable a person to learn to live a more satisfying and productive life. In the world of education Robert Sternberg (2000) expresses something similar; *'To unleash student's best creative performance, teachers can help them find what excites them'* and on p73 in *'Teaching for Successful Intelligence'* he suggests prompt phases for the teacher such as *'find yourself, discover who you are, uncover your passion, know what to do and where to go'*.

It is the passion and the inclusionality in education that, while it drives me, I see only glimpses of in the approaches, procedures, strategies, and the latest 'lunch box'. Where I have seen it most powerfully expressed has been through my personal encounters in ways that while I find it hard to articulate, I can often recognise.

For instance, the accounts I have read of both Wallace's and Whitehead's works have interested me; I found them intellectually neat, elegant. I have found other people's work very stimulating as well but what captured my imagination, and confirmed the intellectual pleasure I found in their work, was the passion and inclusionality that both expressed through their physical presence.

I believe there are many stages before answering a question. The first is recognising there is a question to ask, the next is asking the question in a way that opens possibilities of enquiry. When I started this enquiry I was at that stage; hugely irritating and frustrating with tantalising wisps, beginning to entwine only to melt or grate when touched. It is like looking at a visual illusion; first you realise there is something to be seen then the problem, how do you see what is there unless you know what to look for?



Sometimes it helps if you just stop looking and chat about something else to some fellow travellers over a cup of coffee; Claxton (1997), and Wiseman (2002) suggest something similar.

At the NACE conference, October 2005, Belle Wallace shared with me some of the photos she had taken to illustrate her work. One in particular struck me because of the physical response of Belle as she talked to me about it, which seemed to convey the passion for education and the values she held in common with Jack Whitehead and me. I was very mindful of Jack's phrases 'the flow of life affirming energy' and 'embodied knowledge' as I looked at Belle as we talked about this picture.



Jack's response to the photos is given in his Keynote for the Act, Reflect, Revise III Conference, Brantford Ontario. 11th Nov 2005 found at <http://www.jackwhitehead.com/monday/arrkey05dr1.htm>

Such affirmations and visual narratives can be understood in a conversation between myself and Marie Huxtable. Marie is a psychologist working on educational projects in the Bath and North East Somerset local authority, the equivalent of your School Board. The affirmations of inclusionality felt and understood by Marie Huxtable and me are focused on our responses to the expressions in the eyes, face, body and hands of the pupil below as she shows what she has been working on, to the photographer Belle Wallace. Belle Wallace is currently President of the National Association for Able Children in Education (in the UK) and you can access her biography at http://www.nace.co.uk/home.htm?tasc_biography.htm~mainFrame We both felt a flow of life-affirming energy in our responses to the image and with each other. We recognised this flow of energy between us and affirm that it carries our hope for the future of humanity and our own. For us, the way the pupil shows Belle what she had produced carries two affirmations. There is the affirmation from the pupil that what has been produced is a source of pleasure and satisfaction. There is the affirmation from Belle and ourselves that we are seeking to enable ourselves and others to feel this quality of pleasure and satisfaction in what we and others are producing. I am associating such affirmations with what I mean by living a productive life in education.

What is the task

As I have outlined I have not found a satisfying way of moving between the flow of learning derived from the intellectual enquiry described in for instance TASC, where the individual reflects on what they have learnt about learning through the enquiry process, what they have learnt about

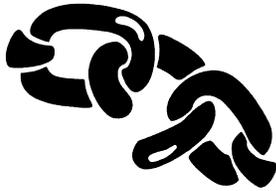
themselves as enquirers, for instance the 4Rs that Claxton (2002) refers to, and the understanding of their own values, embodied knowledge and passions which Whitehead refers to (1993). The discontinuity between the cognitive and affective is reflected throughout the schools systems with the segregation of curriculum and pastoral being just one example. Alan Rayner vividly demonstrates the problem caused by the severance of head from heart and its resolution in his short video where he illustrates the inclusional two.

So the question is clear; how can the movement between the cognitive and affective be described in a way that teachers and children can act with.

Generate ideas and select

How to find ways that will generate ideas about how to make the connection flow?

Juxtapose text; the ideas can be linked but linking still leaves the two separate discrete and disconnected.



Juxtapose people with shared passions and values but different spheres of influence and contexts; this offers far more possibilities for dynamic, creative, collaborative conversations. This could happen through the net but something very organic happens when people are together. The subtle changes in the body, the inflection in the voice, the twitch of the eye brow, they are part of the meaning of the words uttered, and the ebb and flow of conversation carries energy difficult to replicate without physical presence.

The possibility of bringing the embodied understanding of Belle Wallace and Jack Whitehead physically together brought a rare, provoking opportunity for exploring that space between their ideas and worlds. What there was in that space I did not know but I recognised that within lay possibilities of progressing many of the other niggling thoughts swirling around about inclusion, inclusionality, collaboration, educational relationships, and how to enable children to learn to live satisfying and productive lives.

Implement

The plan was simple; get the bodies together in the same place with time to talk.

Since Belle Wallace first ran TASC training days in Bath and North East Somerset in 2002 teachers have been working with TASC in a variety of ways in our schools and Belle has been extending her understanding and practice nationally and internationally.

As I began to plan the programme for Belle's visit it emerged that many of the people involved with TASC were also working directly with Jack either through the Teachers Action Research accredited module or the Heads 'Pause for Thought' group. To have Belle and Jack together with creative, passionate educators embodying their respective work, in the schools where things were happening, to contextualize conversations – that felt exciting! Video was to be used for documentation.

Evaluation

Although you are possibly reading this as a single flow narrative I do not write linearly. It is this weaving between that is providing the motive – the energy - and I realise that I have turned from talking to the examiner to converse with the educator and my self. In some respects I am turning to a different audience to engage in my story in the way Carter (1993) suggests for teachers accounting for their practice

'For many of us, however, these stories capture, more than scores of mathematical formulae ever can, the richness and indeterminacy of our experiences as teachers and the complexity of our understandings of what teaching is and how others can be prepared to engage in this profession.'

Returning to the evaluation and answering 'how well have I answered the question I posed or the task I set myself'. At this point in the chronological story I could not claim that I was any clearer as to how the movement between the cognitive and affective could be described in a way that teachers and children can act with; but the story is only half told.

Did Belle, Jack and the educators feel affirmed by the encounter of a physical kind? They say they did and the pleasure Sue Heal (Headteacher) is expressing on the video during the start of the visit to her school supports that assertion. Jack's reference to TASC in his contribution to the British Council Seminar 6th Dec 2005, and Belle's invitation to Jack for an article for Gifted Education International provides further evidence of an affirming encounter.

Communicate and Learn from Experience

Through the submission of the educational enquiry to the scrutiny of the academy and placing this in the public domain through the web on <http://www.actionresearch.net> I am seeking to communicate and explain my learning to others.

Thinking of Rayner's work and his phrase 'receptive responsiveness' I move from communicate to, to communicate with and a different flow emerges which carries the opportunity for the co-creation of valued knowledge. It re-engages me with the introduction I wrote to this account 'I am writing in the context of a conversation through documentation with...' I connect me to you through the hinge of the documentation.

Communicating with opened up an Aladdin's cave for me and while my educational influence in my own learning is distinct, I do not see it as discrete from, my educational influence in the learning of others. (I take the use of 'discrete' and 'distinct' from Alan Rayner). It therefore feels inappropriate to sever these last two parts of the TASC wheel but I want the flow of one to continue through the other to connect the learning of skills, understanding, values up through the centre of the wheel which seems to be the curiosity that energizes enquiry.

Thoughts on enquiry procedures – giving form to the fog which invites, but does not impose structure

I have been increasingly puzzled as to how the middle of TASC connected to the process of enquiry in a way that was not a continual round of stop and start, and how the individual grew in a social context without imposition; the same problem exists with the procedures mapped out in other methodologies as shown in appendix 5.

I have seen circles, spirals and loops but they all leave me with the problem of how to connect the ends and the middle?

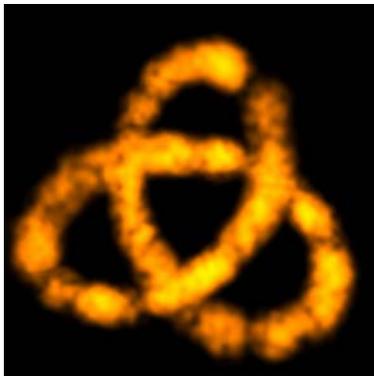
Circles do not connect through a flow form, no matter how you rearrange them. They are closed and lead us to see what they represent as discrete rather than distinct; we move from one disconnected bit of the curriculum in school to another, one exciting experience to another, the curriculum is separated out from well being. Open circles; spirals and loops are no better and literally end up with loose ends.



The articulation with the Monday conversation group around, the movement Jack identified between Sue and myself in the video, the reflection in the movement of one with another we could see in Alan Rayner's illustration of inclusionality, the energy of shared laughter... and the niggling problem of circles grew a new understanding that moved me from the constraints of a wheel, through the non connection of a spiral to a mathematical knot!

A three dimensional mathematical knot, connecting the individual into the social to extend the skill, understanding and values and then sweep back up to connect through the centre to the evolving enquiry.

What sort of knot I don't know and art and maths are not my strong points as you might have gathered, but both Alan Rayner and John Wadsworth at the Bath Monday Conversation recognised the shape as a zero spiral from my attempts to represent it through drawing and movement; the movement is important.



The trefoil is close but not quite right; but you get the drift. I particularly like this knot because of its title '*smokey trefoil, not relaxed*' from the knotplot site.

<http://www.pims.math.ca/knotplot/se/radtubes.html> . I even like the introduction to the page '*The notion of deriving a knot energy by viewing a knot as a radiating tube ...*' It seems to capture the flavour of what I am trying to express.

Now I can see how I can connect, in a generative way, my learning in collaboration with others, moving through 'learn from experience', which includes my learning related to my values as well as skills, and which sweeps up through the centre and connects with a renewed flow of enquiry.

And what have I learnt about my self?

It is through the video that Jack took of me, Belle and Sue and his communication *with* me that I have begun to see myself through other eyes as he describes in 'Jack Whitehead's account of one possibility of being Marie Huxtable!'

The video of me and Sue shows the harmony of the movement between us and this immediately resonated with Alan Rayner and his exposition of the inclusional 2. The place of Belle between Sue and me can be seen as the connection and the hinge. The reader can judge whether the claim I am making is valid. It was the articulation of the Monday group as the image of me was being played, that the connection was made for me and led to thinking of the shape of the connections I have outlined above. I had not used video before as a medium for self reflection in this way. I had variously used it for skills training but not for a window into the affective domain. Here I am now realizing the sense I can make of Jack's writing in his account as me:

'I am following Whitehead's (2005) ideas on the use of visual narratives for communicating the meanings of affirmations of inclusionality in explanations of educational influence as we co-created our own affirmations:

*"I often find images carry more meaning than words, although I usually need words to communicate the significance the image has for me. I also find conversations with others about images help to develop shared meanings of the values that help to constitute my productive life. I call these shared meanings about embodied values the **affirmations of inclusionality** and the representation of these meanings, **visual narratives**....'*

Through exploring a flowing connection between the work of Belle, Jack and Alan with others through conversation and video I understand a little more about inclusional relationships between teacher, learner, student, enquirer and enquiry, and a collaborative relationship with a peer, and I see (literally) why bringing accounts to a public arena is important.

A powerful metaphor emerged when Jack and I were going to share the video clip with the B&NES action research and inclusion group, for further validation of the physical expression of connection between Sue and myself that the Monday group had acknowledged. Fortunately the technology failed to work as planned. While Jack could see the clip on the laptop the projected image remained a neat orderly blank space. The power of the metaphor was immediately responded to by everyone. As long as I look at myself through my eyes I continue to see the blank screen, it was not until I shifted, actually turned away from, my preoccupation with my view that I could, in this case literally, see myself as someone else saw me. The meaning I have made of this is that it is not enough for me, as an educator, to identify a child's gifts, talents, abilities (whatever term you fancy). Unless the learner is prepared to move to share my view I am not in a position to work educationally with them. Mai Li Juan, a colleague of Moira Laidlaw in China, expresses the sentiment eloquently when she asks 'how can I attract my student's attention educationally?'

I have been thinking of the implications for understanding an educational relationship between teacher and student of moving from a traditional teacher centered, to child centered learning, to enquiry centered education as outlined in appendix 7.

The roles, rights and responsibilities of teacher and student are distinct but not discrete. Jack's writing 'Jack Whitehead's account of one possibility of being Marie Huxtable!' was an articulation *with*, not *to*, and I received his account without any feeling of imposition or violation. On the contrary I found it affirming and generative; there was evidence I could see that he had understood what I was getting at in trying to make sense of TASC and his work and where I wanted to go. His articulation of my thoughts was better than I had been able to manage in trying to express what I was thinking to myself which opened up further opportunities. I can see the generative connection he has made between my journey of enquiry and his own as a fellow professional educator with shared values. For instance, the reference to the day with educators

on 19th June 2006: *Heads and Hearts in Learning - Making the Link*, and the work of Branko Bogner in Croatia with children as action researchers enquiring as 'expert enquirers' developing their own understandings of their own lived values and living educational theories. I invite the reader to read Jack's account and mine as I am, looking for evidence of an emerging educationally inclusional relationship as I now understand it through writing this account.

This feels a very similar dynamic to a collaborative relationship but this is taking me on the upsweep through the centre of TASC into another story. Where this is beginning to take me can be found in appendix 9.

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Appendix 1

Unit Assessment Criteria

Each unit will be assessed on the basis of an academic assignment consisting of between 3,500 and 4,500 words of continuous prose. Within this range, length will be negotiated between student and tutor. The assignment will be located in practice and theory. Students may attach additional material which supports or exemplifies claims made in the assignment.

		A	B	C	D
CRITERION 1 Design To what extent has the student ...					
1	made critical use of literature, professional experience and, where appropriate, knowledge from other sources, to inform the focus and methodology of the study or enquiry?				

CRITERION 2 Knowledge To what extent has the student ...					
2	made appropriate critical use of the literature and, where appropriate, knowledge from other sources, in the development of the study or enquiry and its conclusions?				

CRITERION 3 Implementation To what extent has the student ...					
3	demonstrated an ability to identify and categorise issues, and to undertake an educational study or enquiry in an appropriately critical, original, and balanced fashion?				

CRITERION 4 Outcomes To what extent has the student ...					
4	demonstrated an ability to analyse, interpret and critique findings and arguments and, where appropriate, to apply these in a reflective manner to the improvement of educational practices?				

		YES	NO
CRITERION 5 The Assignment Is the assignment ...			
5a	of the approved length and format?		
5b	written in an acceptable standard of English?		

Criteria Differentials

- A The candidate meets the criterion with originality and insight
- B The candidate meets the criterion well.
- C The candidate meets the criterion overall, although there are weaknesses.
- D The candidate does not demonstrate an ability to meet the criterion.

Appendix 2

Some key influences in my learning journey

Sternberg's book on 'Successful Intelligence' resonated at a time that I was thinking about what attributes a successful learner had. His ideas about 'creative', 'analytic' and 'practical' intelligence and how they interplayed made 'common sense'. Freeman's (1998) work challenged the mythology surrounding high ability and introduced me to learning and identification of ability through engagement in different levels of learning opportunities; her sports approach. Renzulli's work connected and extended my thinking from Sternberg and Freeman, though his concept of 3 rings of giftedness; analytic and creative, but now with a place within his model demonstrating the importance of task commitment with an understanding of high achievement. His School Wide Enrichment Model revolutionised my understanding of the interplay of different types of learning opportunities in stimulating and supporting learning. The work of Adey linked the concept of 'teachable intelligence' directly with the curriculum through his work on CASE (Cognitive Acceleration through Science Education). Gardner's work on multiple intelligences became increasingly popular and made me think further about my understanding of the notion of 'intelligence', learning styles, preferred areas of performance and how this was being interpreted in schools. Finally I was introduced to Dweck's work and found her ideas on how the theories a person holds about the nature of intelligence; 'entity' or 'incremental' has direct implications for how they view themselves and act, linked with my still embryonic understanding of Whitehead's living values, living educational theories and living contradictions.

Appendix 3

A constellation of my activities; July 2005



Appendix 4

A draft of my work plan 2005 – 2006 (July 05)

Introductions, tasters, sources of information

'Thinking and Feeling' March 06

A growing number of practitioners have been involved in one or more initiatives. They have also become increasingly aware that there are a whole variety of possibilities to extend into and want an overview and a way of deciding what would be best for them next. Having sounded out teachers, Heads, B&NES officers and I am intending to offer a day for practitioners - teachers and LSAs.

Aims

- to share with teachers and LSAs a framework they could use to 'map' the different approaches, strategies etc they come across and so understand how they fit together
- to give a taste of P4C, TASC, BLP in practice (these are spread across B&NES, are content free and non age specific and contribute to the development of independent and interdependent learners and enquiry based learning.)
- to enable participants to deepen their understanding of TASC, P4C, BLP
- to provide an opportunity for educators to talk to one another about their practice related to the progression of their pupils developing informed aspirations and the confidence and competencies to realise them

APEX Saturdays workshops

There will be a programme each term with increasing diversity of providers and venues. A research project will be started to enable us to learn and share successful practice with schools and collaborate with young learners in developing the work.

B&NES Focus Day/s for teachers

These Focus Days with national names related to an identified area of development have added to the 'pallet of information about national and international work which is still evident across the authority. The links will be with 'Thinking', Emotional Intelligence', 'Enquiry Based Learning', 'Authentic Learning'.

Thinking in Practice - Tapping into Talented Teachers

Teachers meet termly for an afternoon. Practitioners share their practice through short presentations and audience participation in an activity used with pupils. The first meetings were about 20. This has dropped to on average 8 participants per session. Consistent feedback that this is a very useful forum for practitioners to share and consider their practice in a 'safe' environment and that this should continue to be offered.

Participants have said that it has been a good source of information about different approaches and provided a taster that they can decide whether to pursue. It has also contributed to the development of a supportive culture as they have felt able to ask questions that they wouldn't feel able to in a larger group and they have appreciated the presents of all phases as this has enabled them to learn what others are doing that has implications for their pupils and they have felt supported to venture into new territory.

Courses, masterclasses etc

Master Writers

The feedback from pupils and adults was very good. More have been requested by both and a small group of teachers are progressing their understanding and practice as writers and reflective practitioners through an enquiry group supported by Chris White (Bath Spa University College).

I will run at least one, more depending on funding, Spring 06.

Master Mathematicians

The 2 days run by Sarah Savage (primary consultant) with Dr Keith Walton (University Bath) were very well received by pupils and adults. A pupils Maths day was run by Jill Manserg (BSUC) with a small group of teachers who took part in last years Maths day

I will work with Sarah to provide at least one day in Spring for pupils and adults with support from Prof. Chris Budd of another mathematician (University Bath) and support the establishment of a small enquiry group of educators who are passionate mathematicians along the lines of the writers group.

Course for Teachers -Philosophy for Children

The 6th repeat of the Level 1 Sapere course led by Barry Hymer is being offered and already filling. As requested I am planning to offer a Level 2 course during the next year.

Master Scientists

The 'collaborative creative days' are being further explored and putting science at the centre of the enquiry has been on the agenda for some time.

This may flow from the work of Penny Hay and Eric Albon on science and art or may be additional.

The intention is to run a day but to connect it to supporting a group of educators with a passion to develop as scientists as well as reflective practitioners. I am hoping that Felicity Gohanajad will be pivotal to taking forward the collaborative

scientists, and make the link between the collaborative enquiries, and with APEX Saturdays Workshops and summer school

Enquiries

Creative Collaborative Enquiry -Writers Group

There is now an established group of teachers exploring creative writing and collaborative learning meeting with Chris White and Julia Green at BSUC and Emma Metcalfe are working on a journal article and may then work on bringing their understandings together with their pupils in a book. The group will be asked if they would run a workshop for the Lead Teachers conference organised by Sue Smith Airey.

Creative Collaborative Enquiry - Scientists Group

Work with Jeremy Franks secondary science consultant, young learners and teachers and specialist school to develop an opportunity presents for pupils and teachers to collaborate as research scientists. Link with @Bristol and scientists from University Bath to support. It may be possible to make a link through sports science. Link with Penny Hay's work on science and the arts

Creative Collaborative Enquiry -Mathematicians Group

A small group of teachers have expressed an interest in taking forward an enquiry along the lines of the writers group. I will work with either Chris Budd Prof Applied Maths Univ. Bath or Tony Miles's (Prof Engineering) postgrad. to support the group to progress as mathematicians and explore with Chris White (BSUC) support for the group as reflective practitioners.

Lead Teachers

The Lead Teachers group has undertaken some work as part of other work, such as assessment for learning, but not disseminated. The next step is to share their developing understandings with others. The Creative writers will be asked to share their work at the Lead Teachers conference in January 06

NACE Challenge Award

All the secondary schools are presently committed to supporting each other through the Challenge Award. Mike Jones (regional advisor, national strategy) is supporting and the school improvement team. A number of primary schools have expressed an interest and the next step is to invite interested schools to take this forward

P.A.S.S.

This group has supported the use of PASS. It is anticipated that there will be a course accredited by BSUC during next year. The next step for the group is to

extend their understanding of the use of PASS and to share their understanding with others in the authority

Hallmarks of Quality Learning Opportunities

The work has begun with museum service providers, @Bristol and others. This will develop to be used to inform the widening learning web providers and schools about the key features of Type 1 learning opportunities

Contributes to CEDES

Continuing engagement with the CEDES project is unclear at present

APEX Summer School 2006

The APEX Summer School will be totally dependent on B&NES funding. The DFES funding was reduced this year and is being completely devolved to schools.

TASC and P4C group

The TASC group supported by Cathy Hamilton (BSUC) intends to continue and all participants have also been exploring P4C. To combine these seems a natural progression. The next step for this group is to share more widely their work and it's interrelationship with their other work such as self assessment for learning. Link Belle Wallace and BSUC to develop an accredited TASC module.

Action Research Groups

Jack Whitehead (University Bath) and Chris White (BSUC) have both offered to support 16 teachers through accredited modules on action research to develop their practice and understanding as reflective practitioners.

IT supporting Collaborative Enquiries Group

Work with Wendy Wood, young person/s and teacher/s to explore IT supporting conversations and research

Supportive Culture

Links, support with cluster initiatives

e.g. Bath Learning Network, Primary Networks. I am anticipating supporting where I can the Keynsham Cluster and others as requested.

Widening Learning Web

The WLW is shortly to go live. The APEX Saturday workshops will provide a first test, then other providers such as museum service, library and @Bristol with a focus over the next year to engaging schools as providers, users and supporters of young people.

Contribution to other forums e.g. Transition Conference, SENCO Forum, Curriculum Leaders,

I am keen to maintain links to enable the understanding of APEX to develop more inclusively and to contribute to the conversations such as assessment for learning which have obvious links

National and regional links

The SWGATE will be a priority in the short term so that B&NES can benefit from and contribute to the DFES and NAGTY supported ventures which might influence national and local policy and practice.

I am a member of the NACE committee in my own time and will try to get to more meetings as the links with B&NES has been mutually beneficial.

Action Research for Inclusion

Chris White (BSUC) and Jack Whitehead (University Bath) are supporting the development of a group of 'Riverside' staff interested in AR and developing practice.

Work with local Universities Bath University e.g. Bath Taps

I continue to try to maintain or develop links with both local universities.

The Learning Centre

I will continue to work with Penny Hay and Chris White - this is more fully reported elsewhere

Emotional Literacy Strategy

I am working with Maggie Wakely (school improvement), Chris Jones (inclusion) and whoever I can make contact with beyond Riverside to develop a strategy for Nigel Harrison

Promoting Conversations and voices

In many respects I see this as a guiding principle to much of the Supportive Culture work over the next year.

A small group of Heads are meeting for a 'Pause for Thought', Mike Young has a 'Futures' group, I intend to work with Gareth Jones (Youth and Community) if possible to enable me to hear and understand the voice of children and young people better within my work, I wish to work with Lynne Attwood (parent liaison) to see if some thing can be done which is manageable to hear and understand the voice of the parent. This could link with Jane D in Early Years

I see the work on PASS, the CA, the collaborative enquiries, 'Thinking in Practice', the Action Research Groups as being other expressions of extending conversations to collaboratively create valued knowledge around the learner

developing informed aspirations and the confidence and competencies to pursue them to their own and societies benefit.

Role Models

Publicising Good Practice and Practitioners - children, young people and adults

Publicise local role models through Up Up and Away, APEX website and events

Research Conversation Day for young and mature researchers

Plan a day or half day for those involved in enquiry and research can share their journeys

Overtly Valuing

Developing Accreditation

Work with Jack Whitehead Bath University, Chris White BSUC, B&NES School Improvement and Inclusion team for adult accreditation, Youth and Community for young learners accreditation

Developing Evaluation and Monitoring

Link with AR groups, PASS and Enquiries, School Improvement and Inclusion team initiatives

Appendix 5

'Children as researchers is coming more to the fore with changes in social policy'

The Economic and Social Data Services

<http://www.esds.ac.uk/aandp/create/guidelineschildren.asp> writing of children as researchers concludes:

Researchers are beginning to address the issue of children and young people themselves as researchers which does raise a number of methodological, epistemological and ethical questions. However, it is a direction that does give children the opportunity to influence the research design, and, for the researcher, to gain access to other children which may have been previously denied. In this way, children's views can be expressed with greater directness than when they are interpreted via adult researchers. Young people can also influence how the research is used and disseminated, and what happens to the research data on completion of the project, affording them an even greater participatory role.

The Glasgow Centre for the Child & Society includes in its code of practice on research ethics the statement to be found on <http://www.gccs.gla.ac.uk/pages/publications.htm>

The GCCS encourages participatory research with children, which includes consideration of children as researchers, and supports research specifically directed at improving children's lives.

The GCCS is committed to promoting and protecting children's rights, which include the right of children to participate in and directly inform research.

Other humanitarian organizations involved with children such as the SOS Kinderdorf International <http://www.sos-childrensvillages.org> also promote children as influential researchers

'We know from our daily lives that children do research. But children as "researchers" in a scientific spirit - is that possible? The SOS Children's Village Hermann Gmeiner Academy has coordinated a study that has delved into this question and has tested its practical implementation.'

On the world stage UNICEF promotes children as community researchers

<http://www.unicef.org/teachers/researchers> and gives the pedagogical rationale:

It has long been recognized that learning is most effective when children are actively engaged in the creation of knowledge.

But for the most part the opportunities for children to enquire as researchers appear to have focused on their part as social researchers rather than as an opportunity to transform educational

practice and engage children as collaborative enquirers creating valued knowledge. A few examples can be seen with the establishment of the Children's Research Centre within the Open University childrens-research-centre.open.ac.uk

The CRC is all about children by children. Our primary objective is to empower children and young people as active researchers. The CRC recognises that children are experts on their own lives. We value the child's perspective and believe in promoting child voice by supporting children to carry out research on topics that are important to them.

With the first few sentences to the introduction of her book 'How to Develop Children as Researchers' (2005) Mary Kallett expresses the sentiment:

In the adult world research process is greatly valued as an advanced learning tool and whetstone for critical thinking. The importance of research in professional and personal development is increasingly being acknowledged. So why should children not benefit in a similar way?

But she does not develop the idea of research beyond a traditional scientific methodology where children focus on others as objects of investigation and the educational intent seems to melt away.

Englehardt C, Simmons P (2002) comment on similarities between individual and organisations learning could be extended to the similarities between adults and children as learners and the benefits to both when the dynamics are changed

One problem noted, however, is that the current literature has done little to highlight the parallels between individual development and complex adaptive organisational systems

Moreover, mentoring and apprenticeships are methods noted by these authors to be powerful ways to support true knowing, in a depth that supports action, for both coach and learner.

'Sometimes it helps if you just stop looking and chat about something else to some fellow travellers over a cup of coffee' seems as though the business world has the same idea.

Individual development, overall, is a result of a mix of events and influences that, in some cases, may be more significant than purposely-planned development activities.

Pfeffer and Sutton - 70 percent of workplace learning is informal and not part of any formal corporate effort. This tacit knowledge is transferred through the daily interaction of diverse people in a mix of events, as well as through mentoring.

The connection between the individual and community is nicely illustrated by Peter Senge (2000) on the first page of his book suggesting his values beneath and learning beyond content.

'The boy is much older now, but he still remembers that day; and he remembers what he learned about electricity. He also remembers the feelings he had – of his personal passions being genuinely interesting to others, of helping others learn, of being seen.'

'To move a conversation (and learning) forward, you cannot just find out about others' views. Chances are, generally you will have a view point of your own to express, and it is important to express it – in a context that allows you to learn more about others' views while they learn more about yours.'

Appendix 6

Slides from Presentation to Bath and North East Somerset Head Teachers conference 2004

The barriers - overcome them for all or for none

Young learners as well as old-

- They have huge demands placed on them to achieve targets related to the curriculum set for them not with them,
- when are they supposed to fit in developing an area of personal inquiry?
- If there is no time in school what does that say about how such activity is valued.
- In finding ways to overcome the barriers for ourselves we do so for children
- If we can't find time, don't value learning enough to find ways to make time, to deal with the barriers why should we expect children to be able to do so

Learning to overcome barriers for ourselves help us help children overcome the barriers to learning



Learning happens in a context

What is needed relates to young learners and old - teachers, school, family and community, LA, beyond

- a supportive culture where it feels Ok to take risks, collaborate, seek advice, share, be good at something, to be different ...
- role models young and old - practice what we preach, teach by example, teach what we learn and learn from what we teach, we can learn by example how successful learners learn, gives permission, inspires, gives messages about what learning is for and about - message for life about the value of learning in school
- activities related to beyond the curriculum learning - those of active, thought full, enthusiastic, personal directed inquiry - are overtly valued - as valued as other activities such as passing exams, tests - this gives permission, highlights example, to give status, allocated priority, resources and time

Appendix 7

Examples of problem solving/enquiry procedures

Put alongside TASC, action research procedures such as this one summarised by Jean McNiff (2002)

- Identify an area of practice to be investigated;
- imagine a solution;
- implement the solution;
- evaluate the solution;
- change practice in light of the evaluation ...

Many therapeutic approaches, such as solution focussed therapy, motivational interviewing and life coaching follow similar procedure establishing with the 'client';

- where do you want to get to (imagining problem solved)
- where are you now
- decide what can be done to move in the direction of desired change
- establish how will you know you are making progress
- act
- record
- Re-evaluate

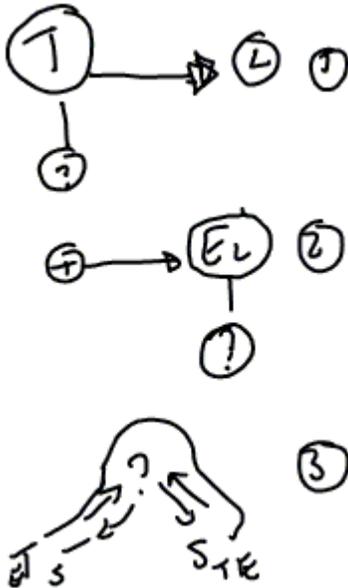
Similar elements can be seen in a 'Systematic model for clarifying concerns and intervention' (Levey and Mallon 1984) which was developed as part of an introduction to a new delivery of a school psychology service, In this case it was presented as a flow diagram which, like TASC, tried to graphically represent a circular rather than linear process.

Jack Whitehead's (2005) summary of the process takes the enquirer into their understanding of themselves as a professional educator while answering questions such as 'How do I improve my practice'.

- I experience a concern when my values are not being lived as fully as I think they can.
- I imagine what I can do to improve matters and form these ideas into an action plan.
- I act and gather data to enable me to make a judgment on the effectiveness of my actions.
- I evaluate the effectiveness of my actions in terms of my values, skills and understandings.
- I modify my concerns, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluations

Appendix 8

Relationships in learning and enquiring



In 'traditional' schooling (1) the teacher (the use of the term master captures the power relationship) has control over the subject matter and delivers it to the child, seen primarily as a learner. The problem for the teacher is how to inspire or force (depending on inclination) the learner to learn the content.

In 'child centered' learning (2) the child is seen as an enquirer into questions of, predominantly their own design, and through the enquiry process learns content and skills. The teacher is subservient to the child. Merriam-Webster online dictionary gives two definitions for subservient: serving to promote some end and: useful in an inferior capacity. The power has shifted and the problem for the teacher is how to influence the child's study.

If 'enquiry' becomes the focus (3) then the child and teacher become collaborators; the teacher is also engaged as an enquirer and student, the child is engaged as enquirer, student and teacher. Each has something distinct but not discrete to offer and gain from the relationship. Each must hold themselves in receptive responsiveness, to coin Alan Rayner's words. The problem for the teacher is 'how to attract the student's attention educationally' as Ma Li Juan put it, and how to support the relationship with the student in a way that is inclusional and not felt to be impositional or violating by either.

Appendix 9

A postscript – a prescript

I have been trying to deal with the issue of references as I review my account with my imagined conversationalists particularly:

- My examiner at the university judging 3,500 – 4,500 words of continuous prose against criterion shown in appendix 1; can I demonstrate I have met the criteria with originality and insight?

and

CRITERION 1 Design To what extent has the student ...made critical use of literature, professional experience and, where appropriate, knowledge from other sources, to inform the focus and methodology of the study or enquiry?

CRITERION 2 Knowledge To what extent has the student ... made appropriate critical use of the literature and, where appropriate, knowledge from other sources, in the development of the study or enquiry and its conclusions?

As I start to go over my work I can insert the references that I drew on but I have become increasingly aware that I have not extended sufficiently into the literature. So as I begin the trawl of my bookcases, the net, the library. I find material of interest and begin to insert and to revise my account, but the original energy seems to be flowing out through the incisions. It also feels as though I am 'cheating'; the literature brings new insights but by inserting them it appears as though my account was built through them, I feel as though this is becoming a game in which I am simply trying to satisfy the academy's criteria, get me a brownie point but it is of no educational value to me and I find myself feeling like a bad tempered adolescent again. However, I have just thought that maybe I have the solution if I follow the framing I have been exploring. In my concluding sentence I wrote, *'this is taking me on the upsweep through the centre of TASC'* and I am now thinking that if I continue through the centre I enter into 'gather and organize', which in turn will lead me through formulating the task, and in my terms, the question for the new, or renewed, account.

Now it feels to me that rather than 'stuffing' bits of the literature search into the 'meat' of this account (apologies to all vegetarians, the metaphor comes as I am about to stab holes in a leg of lamb to insert garlic), I can write a brief account of my new reading as a part of the move from one part of an enquiry into the next. This feels like an energizing flow with curiosity, rather than the enervating effort to reverse up a fast running river with a broken paddle. As I read I can think not only about the development of this account and the learning I can derive from it, but also begin to note and work with ideas that may inform the terrain to tread in formulating my next account. My very mini tour of the literature linking with the *'critical use of literature, to inform the focus and methodology of the study or enquiry'* and the *'critical use of the literature ... in the development of the study or enquiry and its conclusions'* can be found in appendix 5.

This leads the sweep up through another TASC knot with the focus on developing opportunities for children and educators to be engaged as action researchers exploring and extending their skills and understandings not only of and within a discipline but also to progress their understandings of themselves; their learning, their values and constructing their own living educational theories. Opportunities are already presenting; for instance at a staff meeting in an infant school where the staff, practiced at using TASC, were extending their understanding and practice in engaging the children in *communicating with* and *understanding their learning of themselves* and developing their documentation.