

PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION

Shared understandings: enhancing the practicum

A study of the perceptions of teachers, employed in preservice teacher education on short term contracts, in terms of their own professional development and their development of shared understandings regarding the practicum.

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Abstract

This research is a qualitative study of twenty five teachers who have taken time away from the classroom to work on short term contracts in a University College of Education preservice teacher education programme. The study considers their perceptions of the ways in which this experience has enhanced their professional development in terms of greater understanding, expertise and career prospects and how it has changed their own teaching practices when they returned to a school or centre. It explores whether this experience has enhanced their professional roles within the school setting, particularly in having input into new initiatives and policies.

The study also examines ways in which their increased knowledge of the academic requirements of the University together with their increased understanding of the role of both the school/centre and the college in the preservice teacher education programme is perceived as enabling them to better support students during the practicum. In the case of those who returned to senior positions within a school or centre their ability to be resource persons for other Associate/Tutor teachers within the school is also examined.

Introduction

The development of partnerships between schools/centres and providers has been internationally recognised as an important aspect of pre-service teacher education (Goodlad, 1990; McWilliam & O'Brien, 1993; Peters 1999; Wilkin, 1990). While these partnerships may serve many aims, the underlying belief in their value often stems from the generally held assumption that such partnerships provide opportunities for the relationships between theory and practice to be more effectively enhanced. It also allows student teachers to draw on different experiences and perspectives in constructing their own understanding of the teaching and learning processes (Calderhead & Shorrock, 1987; Stevenson, 1998).

While there are a number of ways such partnerships can be fostered, one approach used in a New Zealand College of Education is that of short-term contracts. These short-term contracts (usually one-year in length) enable classroom teachers to work in the pre-service programme with an understanding that they will return to their school/centre at the completion of their contract. This three-year study explores the perceptions of such teachers' experiences during their time at College and after their return to their schools/centres. It examines the ways in which this experience enhances their role as associate teachers and the shared understanding that is important to the practicum.

Literature Review

"A constant pre-occupation for most teacher educators is trying to achieve a meaningful and working relationship between theory and practice in teacher education" (Thomas, 1996, p.137). It has also been noted that the integration of students' on-campus learning with the time they spend teaching in schools is an issue that teacher educators sometimes find difficulty in addressing (Broadley, Gibbs & Simpson, 1998; Calderhead & Shorrock, 1987). There is a need for development of more genuine partnerships between academics, teachers and student teachers during the process of professional preparation (Ethell & McMeniman 2000; McWilliam & O'Brien, 1993; Wilkin, 1990).

A common vision

Hastings and Squires (1999 p4) suggest that "lack of effective communication, genuine partnership and common frame of reference" contribute to the persistent dichotomy between theory and practice. There can be a conflict between the view of teachers as professional

decision makers, a perspective taught in tertiary institutions, and the view of the role of the teacher as technician which is sometimes dominant in practice (Goodson, 1997; Ethell & McMeniman 2000; Zeichner, 1986). Tripp (1990) points out that some educational research has an ideology that denigrates and de-professionalises teachers and that far from assisting teachers as a group, the academic culture in education tends to marginalise them. In contrast, some teachers adopt positions which tend to blame the university for being "so heavenly minded as to be of no earthly use" (McWilliam & O'Brien, 1993, p.47) or "too theoretical and out of touch" (Anderson & Herr 1999, p.12). Even within the tertiary institution there can be two viewpoints; those of pre-service educators with a primary focus on professional development and those for whom research is the primary focus (McGee, 1998). Further, the practicum component of a course is not always perceived as having high status (Cooper & Orrell, 1999). Traditionally "student teachers have had to bridge the culture difference between university lecturers and associate teachers in teacher education programmes, often unsuccessfully" (Hope 1999, p187). In order for genuine partnerships to develop each side must respect and value the contributions of the other and develop a common vision.

The role of the associate teacher

One of the closest partnerships between the school and the pre-service teacher education programme is provided by the role of the associate or mentor teacher. Here the class teacher also takes on the role of the teacher educator. The knowledge base required to be an effective associate teacher includes personal knowledge, the craft knowledge of a skilled teacher, knowledge of educational theory, knowledge gained from classroom research and a good understanding of the dimensions of teaching that need to be considered in planning effective strategies to work with student teachers (Cameron & Wilson, 1993; Doyle, (1990, in Gendall, 1997); Gibbs, 1996; Goodfellow, 1998; Korthhagen & Kessels, 1999). Close co-operation and communication between associate teachers and the teacher education provider is crucial and preparation for the associate teacher role is critical (Hastings & Squires 1999; Korthhagen & Kessels 1999; Saunders 1999). There is a real need to establish partnerships based on collegiality and mutual recognition of the importance of the roles of student teachers, associate teachers, schools and the teacher education providers (Cameron & Wilson, 1993; Gendall, 1997; Goodfellow, 1998). Such partnerships can be facilitated and shared understandings developed when associate teachers have the opportunity to work closely with pre-service teacher educators through secondment as tutors into the pre-service teacher education programme (Russell & Chapman, 1999).

Reflective practitioners

Taking on the role of a teacher educator may involve considerable adjustments for classroom teachers (Whatman, 1997). However they bring to the pre-service programme relevant and recent experience that assists students in gaining a greater understanding of teaching and learning processes as they occur in a school/centre. In turn, in the teacher educator role, classroom teachers have many opportunities to explore teaching from different perspectives, discuss issues with colleagues and immerse themselves in current literature. They have increased opportunities to reflect on their own practice in the classroom/centre and their role as an associate teacher. It is inevitable that the experience of being a teacher educator will lead to changes in self-perception and their resulting teaching practices. Burt & Davison (1998); Codd, (1998); Haigh, (1999); Schon, (1987) suggest that such partnerships have the potential to support the development of reflective practitioners and facilitate " the exploration of the relationship between formal course work learning and school-based experiential learning" (Codd, 1998, p.13).

Reflection on experience is central to any successful approach to teacher development (Burt, 1998; Ethell & McMeniman, 2000; Goodson, 1997; Schon, 1987; Zeichner, 1993). Haigh (1999) however, argues that "while the case for becoming a reflective practitioner may be readily supported, many factors have been identified as potential constraints on being reflective" (p.3). Constraints cited are; lack of time, unsympathetic colleagues who see reflection as unnecessary or destabilising, a lack of a 'shared language' of reflection, and the habitual routines that have been established. Moving from the classroom into pre-service teacher leads to increased levels of reflection on the part of those involved as a result of opportunity to engage in recent research literature and explore new theories or revisit theories previously learnt (Anderson & Herr, 1999; Haigh, 1999; Russell & Chapman, 1999; Schon, 1987; Sullivan, 1998).

Partnership opportunities

Partnerships will also benefit those who have been involved in pre-service teacher education over a long period but who have not had recent experience in a classroom. Through working closely with tutors who have current experience of classroom teaching an awareness can be developed of the realities of the 'chalk face' environment and how this has changed over the last decade. Ethell and McMeniman (2000), Kiggins (1999), Russell and Chapman (1999) and Whatman (1997), argue that the making links between theoretical knowledge and its application in today's classrooms is crucial in providing good teacher education. "However good the pre-service college programmes and its staff are, they will not be effective without complementary and explicit practice" (Whatman, 1997, p.6). Richardson (1996) points out that while the benefits of teachers talking to colleagues has been recognised in schools, the benefits for teacher educators have not yet been explored thoroughly. She suggests, "One can only speculate that such dialogues would be extremely useful among teacher education faculty members, both in terms of enhancing individual reflection as well as developing common languages and goals related to the teacher education program" (p. 724).

Shared understandings

As a result of being on 'both sides of the fence' it is highly likely that those employed as tutors gain a different perspective and greater insight into the role of the associate teacher. The opportunity to view teaching and teacher education through 'different lenses' and to be immersed in literature and on-going dialogue with other teacher educators is likely to have an impact on those returning to the classroom/centre. It will influence both the ways in which they approach their teaching and their work as associate teachers. Furthermore new insights might be disseminated to other colleagues who may also be, or become, associate teachers. The shift from a school/centre setting into a college of education is likely to provide teachers with greatly enhanced opportunities and more time to reflect on their teaching while working with student teachers. This is not only important for their own on-going professional development, but it is also a necessary prerequisite in helping student teachers reflect on their experiences as learners and future teachers (Wilkin, 1990)

Methodology

Drawing from the interpretative paradigm (Cohen & Manion, 1994), a case study approach was employed in this research project, in order to gain a fuller appreciation of the diversity and richness of participants' experiences in relation to being employed on a short-term contract at a College of Education. The research data for the first stage were collected by means of a taped interview in response to a questionnaire and for the second stage by either written or taped answers to a questionnaire. A qualitative approach was used when analysing the data.

Materials

For the first part of the research a questionnaire was used as the basis for a structured interview. It focused on the previous teaching experience of the interviewees, their experiences while working at the College and their perceptions of how these experiences had subsequently influenced their teaching and enhanced their professional development. The questions were predominantly open-ended, allowing the interviewer the opportunity to ask further questions to clarify points made by the participants (Cohen & Manion, 1994). For the final stage of the research a questionnaire was distributed to the participants and they were given the option of responding in writing or on tape.

Procedure

Those teachers who had been on short-term contracts between 1994 - 1999 were contacted and asked to participate. All those who were approached willingly agreed to participate in the study. In the first two years of the study they were interviewed while at college and again on their return to the school/centre or, were just interviewed in the school or centre if they had previously been at college. Nine who held senior positions were re-interviewed in the third year. Forty two interviews were carried out overall.

While the interview for stage one was structured mainly around the questionnaire, opportunities for participants to add additional comments were provided. Taped interviews were transcribed and then analysed. To protect the privacy and identity of participants, interviewees were assigned a number and these numbers are used in the result section to indicate the source of the quote. Interviewees were given the opportunity to see and comment upon a draft copy.

Participants

The research sample interviewed involved six males and nineteen females. While the majority of interviewees had worked at the College on one year fixed term contracts, others had been employed for periods of time that ranged from one semester to two years.

The sample included three who had worked in early childhood centres, fifteen who came from the primary sector and seven from the secondary sector. Twenty-two of the twenty-five interviewed had been associate teachers. Of the teachers interviewed one had been a supervisor of an early childhood centre, two were principals of primary schools, eight had held positions of seniority such as Head of Department, Dean or Senior Teacher, nine were assistant teachers and five had been working in part time or relieving positions. All had had five years or more full time experience in the classroom. The average length of time in school was sixteen years, with most having worked for between eleven and twenty years.

Data Analysis

The transcribed interviews and written responses to the questionnaires were analysed item by item by both researchers. Agreement was then reached on the interpretation of interview data, categories used and the emergent themes (Cohen & Manion, 1994). It was decided where appropriate to let the voices of the participants speak for themselves, in an attempt to capture the richness of meaning present in their comments (Rudduck, 1993).

Results

The first stage of this research considered the perception participants had of ways in which their time at college had enhanced their own personal and professional development

(Russell & Chapman, 1999). A section of the questions concerned their opinion of the ways in which this experience had increased their understanding of the role of the Associate teacher and changed their practices in working with student teachers. The second stage of the research, which is the main focus of this paper, explored this aspect of their experience in more depth.

The research data showed that participants had a range of teaching experience in schools prior to coming to the College. Some had worked continuously in the classroom. Others had had intermittent classroom teaching experience, interspersing periods in the classroom with working in other areas of education, working part time or working in non-educational settings. All those interviewed felt that their time at college had been of benefit to them in a variety of ways (Russell & Chapman, 1999).

Reflection on philosophy of teaching and teaching practices.

Many respondents felt that the time at College allowed opportunities for reflection that were not possible in the normal day to day activities of a classroom teacher. They felt they had been able to re-examine what was best practice and the relevance of theory in informing such practice, particularly from the perspective of an experienced teacher. *"It helps you re-examine what the best way to teach someone is." (10) "One of the very useful things about the year was that I could actually stand back from teaching and reflect on what I had done, what I had been doing and sort out where I wanted to go." (2)* There was also the satisfaction gained from having their practices, philosophies and classroom programmes affirmed. Moreover the opportunity to visit different schools and reflect on what was seen was appreciated. *"It enabled me to see a lot of different schools...just being in a lot of different classroom environments...So it was good. I was always looking for, you, know, seeing what I liked and what I didn't like." (15)*

Other aspects that were valued were collegial interaction and working with college students and feeling that their input was relevant and valued. *"The interactions I had with my colleagues while I was at College would have had the most profound effect on me...discussions and the working together with all those colleagues has been quite priceless." (4) "The opportunity to interact and discuss with staff at(the College) was brilliant." (9) "Most positive was working with students, and seeing the interest and vitality and sort of excitement... about teaching and learning." (18) "I guess I had an idealistic notion that as a current practising teacher, I had something to offer both the staff and the students." (9) "Often I thought that they (students) weren't particularly well equipped for the task that they were doing in the classroom and I thought ...here's a chance to actually have some input from the other side of the fence."(2)*

The opportunity to increase their professional knowledge in a range of areas while at the College was also valued. The most frequently mentioned aspect was the opportunity to access recent research literature and to examine current issues and policies. *Having access to all that sort of reading about current developments in education ...I've just found that an absolutely wonderful part of the job." (6) "(Making) a link between theory and practice that when you are immersed in the practice you forget." (20)* Other respondents commented on the benefits of studying their specific curriculum areas in depth. *"Perhaps the most important was the opportunity to focus particularly on one curriculum area...and really extend my knowledge and understanding of that." (9)* Interviewees also welcomed the chance to attend conferences, seminars and training courses. *"My year was like a year of retraining." (7)* In addition they appreciated having an increased understanding of pre-service teacher programmes and the opportunity to gain additional organisational and administrative skills.

Other benefits highlighted by a few respondents included being personally challenged to extend their skills, gaining in confidence and being intellectually stimulated. *"(It) has been really helpful to me in my own practice... having to think at a higher level...not just thinking everyday with young children but having to think of all the reasons why, and all the research and all the theories behind why we do what we do."*(14) *"I think I have come into my own in terms of my own professional self."* (8) *"It's given me greater confidence."* (15)

Changes to classroom practice.

As a result of these benefits most interviewees felt that they had made changes in the way they taught. The changes identified included a greater focus on sound pedagogical practice, an increased awareness of equitable practices, and a willingness to experiment and be innovative. Interviewees also indicated a greater understanding of the curriculum documents and subject content, and an increased awareness of the importance of relationships within the classroom. *"I am much more critical in the way I teach... I feel now that I am planning much better ... and I'm thinking about some of the tried and true strategies we teach our trainees"* (7) *"I think my teaching is better because I have unpacked it even further...and it gave me that chance to revisit the habits I had got into in teaching.. I'm much better in conveying to the students what they have to learn ...I think my teaching is more transparent to them... I've actually reduced the content and spent a lot more time on strategies for learning and teaching them about strategies for learning."* (10) *"Thinking about children's needs...thinking about including people in your classroom activities...thinking about relationships and that sharper focus on learning and teaching. I came away from here with a much greater understanding of what it is to be inclusive and to actually build relationships with students."* (23) *I've certainly got a bigger commitment to sort of hands-on type learning and trying very hard to keep the creative process alive."* (15)

However there were some who indicated that their practices had remained unchanged and it could be argued that this was as a result of their existing expertise and commitment to this role prior to coming to the College

Shared understandings - enhancing the practicum

Nearly all of those who had returned to the classroom were still associate teachers. Most of these respondents felt that the experience of being at the College had proved valuable to them in their role as associates, giving them an increased understanding of ways in which the College and the schools were able to work together in the education of preservice teachers. Their responses indicated areas where they considered it important that there be more shared understanding the better to support the practicum. They also suggested ways in which they, as associates, felt their own ability to support pre-service teachers and beginning teachers had been enhanced. Nine of the group of interviewees who held senior positions in their schools were also questioned about their ability to become resource persons, in the area of the practicum, to other associate teachers within their school or centre.

The bigger picture

One aspect that was felt by all interviewees to be of considerable importance was the ability of those involved in the partnership to 'see the bigger picture'. Having the opportunity to work with students both in college as tutors and in schools as associates was seen to contribute to a much clearer understanding of the requirements of both sides of the partnership. *"I now see what college is trying to do...the philosophy of training teachers...I had no idea before of how the partnership worked."* (18) *"Understanding the programme used at MUCE has been useful."* (22) *"An understanding of the preservice teacher training programme has allowed*

me to know what knowledge and experiences the students/beginning teachers should bring with them. Then I can provide scaffolding when and where required in a meaningful and developmental context."(4)

Interviewees indicated that they had a greater knowledge of the requirements of student teachers when working with children and with associate teachers, and that they had an enhanced understanding of the role of the associate. *"I...am far more aware that I have a commitment to provide them with professional support."* (4) The interviewees also felt they had built up support networks that would enable them to access people (and information) at the College and so make partnerships between schools and the College more effective. *"I'm in the fortunate position of now being able to establish my own communication channels and liaise with people that I probably wouldn't have dared to before."* (2)

Shared knowledge and understanding of college structures, programmes and college papers was identified as important, particularly the ability to recognise the limitations imposed on the programmes due to time restrictions and range of content to be covered. *"Previously I had little understanding of the fact that such a lot is crammed into such a little time in terms of class hours."*(24). Interviewee's felt that their greater knowledge of what was covered helped them to have more realistic expectations of what students might be expected to know at different stages of their college career. *"I had made ...massive assumptions of what (students) could and couldn't do."*(10) *"It helped me to realise how much they did not know when they arrived at college and therefore to understand why they are*

sometimes apparently unprepared for the classroom."(2) As a result of this awareness respondents felt they were more able to support and empathise with student needs.

In contrast, they were also able to recognise that there might be a tendency for some associates to be too supportive in working with students in the classroom. They felt that through working intensively with students in the College they had developed the confidence to encourage students in the classroom to take more responsibility for their own learning and this was seen as an important part of becoming a professional. *"I'm coming from the other end now. I'm saying (to students) the success of your development as a professional, as a teacher, is to develop a sense of empowerment.....take control over what you need to do to develop."* (7) *"I often send them back on their own resources and say, well perhaps **you** need to find out about this."* (6) As one respondent suggested *"it's good... I've got both these perspectives , I can put them together and hopefully accommodate their needs but also get what I need in terms of work and assessment from students."* (14)

Having a more informed and realistic view of what is taught in College was also seen as an advantage in enabling them to respond more knowledgeably and perceptively to those students and colleagues who suggested that there were deficiencies in the college programmes *"often students might give associate teachers quite the wrong impression of the sorts of things they have been taught at college, and can be quite negative about what they've learnt because they perceive the classroom to be the place where it all happens...and associates can be influenced by the students comments to believe that they are not being taught what they need to know."* (2)

Another area where respondents suggested there could be greater shared understanding was in understanding the actual requirements of the practicum. As a consequence of working in the College they felt they now had greater knowledge of the learning outcomes associated with the Professional Inquiry and Practice papers, which incorporate the practicum. They believed they could now accept more easily the occasions when the need for students to carry out College tasks for the purposes of completing assignments conflicted with their need to develop their teaching skills.

A common vision

Interviewees suggested that in order to have effective partnerships between schools and colleges there needed to be a common vision for what constitutes relevant pre-service teacher education. Furthermore they indicated that both sides needed to value the contribution of the other and found, as did Anderson & Herr (1999), Hastings and Squires (1999), McWilliam & O'Brien (1993), that this did not always happen. *"I now realise that it's important that we are all saying the same things and not knocking each other ...students need to hear the same messages"(18) " They (students) should see that schools and colleges have the same aim... and... this isn't always what they do see or hear." (8)*

One area where interviewees felt there was a marked difference of vision was in the different emphasis that was placed by the College and by schools on the importance of understanding educational theory. They felt that this importance was not always sufficiently recognised in the school. The need to make explicit the links between *"what we do in the classroom "* and educational theory was identified as an area where they were now more knowledgeable and confident. *"I certainly developed a much greater ability to link theory with practice myself and therefore am better able to help students see the links." (2)"(1)...didn't appreciate the value of theory before and tended to push it aside...now I can help students apply it, where relevant, to practice." (18) " I view it much more seriously now...giving children strategies...being aware of how children learn...I'm now much more confident in this area...much more confident."(10)*

Conversely some respondents felt that often the College did not give sufficient time to the *"core subjects of teaching...a year for reading is nowhere near enough...you need much more time to understand how to develop language." (8)* and were trying to fit too much into the programme. There was a fear that the increasingly 'academic' focus of the College programme, compressed courses and the shorter year was at the expense of the practicum and that this component was not sufficiently valued and supported by some college staff. *" I feel that some people are too busy with all the new stuff...papers...research... and don't really want to make time to visit students in schools"(18)*

Some respondents suggested that there was a mismatch at times between what the students perceived as being taught in the College and what they saw happening in schools. One of the earlier interviewees (6) noted that when students returned from Teaching Experience they would suggest that what they saw associate teachers doing in the classroom often differed markedly from what was modelled at the College. This was especially evident in the area of planning. A shared vision of what was appropriate in terms of student and beginning teacher planning was seen as important. It was suggested that sometimes there is a mismatch between the college requirement for detailed lesson planning and the time restrictions when out at the 'chalk face'. One interviewee suggested that they had found that the time at the College *"confirmed myths that ...students didn't plan like classroom teachers. That there was one way as a student another as a classroom teacher...not that one was good or bad but just different"and "students needed this progression and to understand the college perspective." (18)*

Assessing student teachers

The assessment of student teachers in the classroom was an area where interviewees felt that shared understanding was vital. They felt that while they were at College the opportunity as Visiting Tutor to see a number of students teaching in a variety of classrooms had greatly enhanced their own knowledge and ability in assessing the students they observed. They were now more aware of the range of teaching situations that students might experience and recognised that associate teachers have different levels of commitment to providing

appropriate support for students teachers. " *It was valuable visiting students and interacting with other associate teachers, finding out from the students what they found helpful and discovering, in fact, that some of the things that were happening were not helpful but the students hadn't been able to express their needs.*" (9) As a result several of the respondents felt that they had become more open to the students, were more aware of the need to give specific feedback throughout the practicum and were much more willing for students to indicate the type of feedback they needed. " *I think it reinforces the things that are important, I try to give written feedback and... going around... you realise that's not that common... but is...a way of bolstering their success or underlining it.*" (15) They felt that in understanding the requirements of the practicum more fully they were better able to make honest and valid judgements regarding student teacher achievement. " *I can now report more objectively and thoroughly. This is probably the area, which has had most effect in changing my outlook and methods as I now realise how vital it is to the college to have a realistic assessment of the student's performance. Formerly I may have been loathe to mention some of my concerns but now I feel my evaluations are fairer and I'm less likely to avoid hard issues.*" (2)

Sharing the experience

Obviously as a result of this partnership there is the potential for those returning to schools/centres to be resource people for other associates particularly if they hold a position of seniority. Such experience and networks are suggested as being essential in working effectively for the benefit of student teachers (Cameron & Wilson, 1993; Gendall, 1997; Goodfellow, 1998; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Whatman, 1997). Nine of the respondents re-interviewed in the third year of this research were in senior positions in their schools. In addition to being questioned about their own role as associate teachers they were also questioned as to whether they felt they had been able to share their new understandings, particularly that relating to the role of associate teacher, with other staff members when they returned to their school/centre. In several instances interviewees felt they had been able to make a positive contribution and that they were useful as a resource person for the practicum; they felt that having been on 'both sides of the fence' gave their views credibility with colleagues.. " *I have an excellent understanding of the current course components and can use features from these to act as a platform for discussion. Assistant teachers and staff have received seminars in the fashion of refresher courses from myself outlining current philosophy/focus.*"(7) " *I do provide support (for another associate teacher) through observation and discussion and assisting with report writing.*"(2) " *My experience has enhanced my understanding of the role of mentor/associate teacher and...I am able in a modest way to give (them)more understanding of the curriculum and PIP programme.*"(24)

From these responses it can be argued that the opportunity for classroom teachers to work in preservice teacher education programmes does contribute to shared understandings, particularly of the requirements of the practicum, and that there is the potential to explore this aspect of partnerships in education further. It might be suggested that one development might be the provision of opportunities for university lecturers to work for short periods in schools.

Conclusion

Without exception those teachers employed on short-term contracts felt that their time at the College had been extremely valuable both personally and professionally. They believed that they had been stimulated and challenged to extend themselves. All indicated that they had increased their knowledge in ways that were highly relevant in enabling them to be better teachers. The majority of the interviewees felt that they had increased their understanding of the relationship between educational theory and teaching practice. They believed they had been able to transfer their professional and practical knowledge gained in the



classroom/centre to the position of teacher educator. Furthermore those that continued to be associate teachers when they returned to the school or centre felt that the experience of working in a College of Education had promoted greater understanding of the requirements of this role and enhanced their ability to carry out it out successfully. Time to reflect, opportunities for discussion with colleagues, working with students in the college and visiting a variety of schools were seen as being pivotal in leading to this increased knowledge.

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