TRANSFORMING CHALLENGING SCHOOLS THROUGH THE LEADERSHIP OF SUPERHEADS

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Abstract

The ascent of 'school-improvement' discourses in recent educational development initiatives has often centred on the installations of senior teachers from other schools into those that are seen as 'failing'. Specifically, the notion of 'superhead' has been introduced in recent years as a strategy for improving 'failing' schools, where such individuals are given a brief of 'raising standards'.

Education' texts have abundant literature on alternative conceptions of leadership and on the role of leadership in effecting change. Little exists, however, on the impact of external leaders or 'superheads' transforming schools in challenging circumstances. Less still has been written on how individuals assume such roles and how they understand the process of transformation.

This study takes an insider-outsider perspective on the practical challenge entailed in transforming school performance. From working as a teacher and consultant in two of the three inner city case study schools in Northern England, I draw upon data generated by using a mixed methods approach across these schools, all emerging from challenging circumstances. I examine how leadership impacts upon middle leaders and pupils through the narratives of mainstream ideology. The voices of the adults and children in these data serve as a reminder of the human impact resulting from external and internal interventions in schools.

Social theory is mobilised in support of this task by drawing upon the writings of Foucault to problematise taken-for-granted practices in education. Foucault's tools provide a mechanism for inspecting the narrative, through which I align history, power and discipline to education. Thus, I argue that a 'superhead' being transported in to transform a school is too simplistic a notion and one that undermines the complexities visible within these data gathered in this study.

Introduction

This thesis examines the notion of 'superheads' and their role within the leadership of schools. It asks the question: 'How might we conceptualise the role of leadership in transforming schools from 'challenging' to 'successful'?' together with four supplementary questions:

- Could there be a rubric for leaders bringing a school out of challenging circumstances?
- How might leaders act differently?
- What impact does leadership have at middle management level?
- What impact does leadership have at pupil level?

Here, 'challenging' is used to denote schools in Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) category 4 or attaining lower than national average examination results. The work stems from my interest in how to improve the educational experiences to which children are exposed, one that has developed for me over the years as a learner, a teacher and a school consultant.

The writing employs the work of Michel Foucault as a theoretical tool to examine aspects of the English education system. One way this thesis approaches this is by looking at how schools reflect the world they occupy and, in particular, the political influences inherent within our society. The focus is on the notion of 'superheads' and the part they play in this process. A 'superhead' was a new phenomenon in education which hailed from the Fresh Start programme in 1999. Under this scheme, many schools were closed and reopened with a new name, often with new management and staff. It was aimed at those secondary schools where fewer than 15% of pupils

achieved five or more good GCSEs (grade C or better) for three consecutive years (Mansell, 2000). It designated a new type of categorisation in the language of school leadership.

Outline of the thesis

The research took place in three secondary schools (A, B and C) in areas of high deprivation in a major English city between 2006 and 2007. All the schools had recent GCSE examination results that were on a positive trajectory. Two had emerged from special measures, i.e. graded 4 by Ofsted after a 'superhead' had been drafted in to improve them. My position in the field was one of 'insider-outsider researcher' in that I was familiar with schools in this category both as a teacher and a consultant. My professional experience had contributed to being comfortable in schools of a challenging nature. As a consultant, I had to assess quickly a school's needs, gain the trust of the staff and pupils, deal with volatile situations and, in the process, improve both teaching and learning. Head teachers, governors, staff and pupils all confided in me to a great or lesser extent.

Whilst initially located in the mathematics department, my work often expanded across the curriculum areas. Being visible around the school was one of the tactics I employed to become a familiar figure to the adults and children. Entering the 'no go areas' was part of my everyday work and I was often met with confrontational face-to-face threats from groups of teenagers that did not want me on their patch (Appendix C1). Here, the pupils, many of whom were gang members, were free to smoke cigarettes or cannabis and plan petty crimes. For example, crimes included younger pupils being used to gain access to properties through small windows and open the doors for their older and bigger school friends to burgle. I was

conscious of high levels of fear within some of the teaching workforce and knew that many relied on others to ensure their safety.

I had decided, at the time, that I wanted to lead a school out of challenging circumstances. To prepare, I embarked upon studying for the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) led by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL), meshing the theoretical aspect to the practical. I also wanted to research the leadership of schools of this nature to explore what head teachers do to improve schools and how this impacted upon middle leaders and pupils. To gain an insider view, I took a teaching and leadership position at school A. Here, I used a homogeneous sample of the population and disseminated questionnaires to 117 year 11 school leavers. The school had been in special measures since their year 7 and had started to improve during their final school year. Homogeneous sampling is a type of purposive sampling, that is, the group has been selected because its characteristics are specific to the research being carried out. It is used when the research needs to understand a particular group in depth. The homogeneous nature of the group however, can result in the sample being biased (Muijs, 2004). The aim of using questionnaires was to collect pupils' opinions from a larger data set than I could have accessed through interviews.

As their teacher, I had developed a different relationship with them than an external researcher could have done. I was both an insider and an outsider, someone who had come in to their environment from the outside but also had a deep understanding of the structures and workings of their milieu. Researching in school A brought with it other complications. Research language is very different to that used in schools by teachers. It represented an elitist discourse that

did not reside in schools. Gradually, I had to relinquish my desire to resist this and to use it as a productive thinking tool to be challenged, both as a professional and as a researcher. Attempting to see the pupils as research subjects when I had grown to know them so well, was difficult. Whenever I read through the data, I remember the names and faces of many of the school A pupils whose stories I had listened to over the course of their final year at school.

Further to the study at school A, I conducted one set of interviews in school B and one in school C, at each of three levels: senior, middle leader and pupil. In total, I interviewed two head teachers, two middle leaders, four year 8 and two year 11 pupils, to triangulate their data.

I underestimated the impact my role as consultant and teacher had upon the research process. I fully understood the situations these head teachers had found themselves in and admired their tenacity and professionalism in continuing on a daily basis to endeavour to improve the lives of their staff and pupils. This can be a helpful aid but can also serve to reduce sensitivity to aspects of the data. When head C talked of 'no go areas' (Appendix C1), I fully understood what he was referring to. This was not something I needed to ask a supplementary question about in order to seek clarification, as another researcher may have done. This subsequent acknowledgement of reflexivity, which correlates with Foucauldian philosophy, is discussed more fully in Chapter Four. Furthermore, my professional experience has allowed a level of expertise to draw upon throughout this thesis. I use mathematics as a vehicle on many occasions here; for example, the middle leaders I interviewed were both heads of mathematics. I also mention the impact of changes in mathematics to help illustrate how various

governmental initiatives have impacted on pupils' educational experience.

The research indicated that leadership of schools is very complex and one which demands a high set of skills which are not easily transferable. To suggest that a 'superhead' can be catapulted into a school with a recipe for reform is too simplistic and this is echoed in the data. The two head teachers interviewed in schools B and C, continued to reflect upon their practices, to realise their mistakes and to hone their skills.

Their data indicated the importance of excellent teaching in their schools' improvement. This resonates through all levels of the data from leaders to teachers to pupils. Another aspect which deemed to be important was the fabric of the buildings and facilities. However, this was mentioned by the leaders and the pupils and not by the teachers. I use the term 'architecture' to describe the school buildings in an attempt to adhere to Foucault's terminology.

Both middle leaders interviewed, appeared fearful of the consequences of 'saying too much' and conveyed a strong sense of being compressed from the top by senior leaders and from the bottom by pupils. Nonetheless, in both cases there was a strong emphasis on the care they had for their pupils and a dedicated investment in teaching in an enjoyable, meaningful and productive way. In comparison to the school leaders and the pupils, the teachers seemed to have a restricted autonomous voice, as discussed in Chapter Seven.

There were parallels in the questionnaire and the interview data gathered from the pupils. They spoke of the importance of excellent

teaching, a reservation about the use of supply teachers, new teachers being brought in and the poor behaviour of some pupils impacting negatively upon their progress. School discipline also featured fairly heavily with mention of security cameras, fencing and disciplinary procedures.

This study provides a snapshot – a glimpse into the lives of the inhabitants of three schools at one particular moment in time. It problematises the simplistic notion that a 'superhead' can be projected into a school and it will automatically improve. This idea undermines the huge amount of skill and dedication these school leaders need to possess together with the more intricate nuances of organisation functioning. The data reflect the challenges presented to the schools' heads and the impact of moving from challenging to successful has on both the teachers and the pupils.

By using the work of Foucault, social theory is mobilised in the educational arena. Through deconstructing some 'taken-for-granted' practices by many within education, this writing exposes how easily educational professionals and pupils can docilely comply with the expectations of the system. This work offers a critical contemplation for those prospective school leaders to gain an insight into the demands of this job and to learn from those who have gone before.

Each chapter serves a purpose in putting forward an argument against the premise that a head teacher or 'superhead' can easily be transported into a school to replicate what s/he has done in another institution. I draw attention to the complexities of historical and cultural saturation at a personal level as well as at institutional levels to include school leaders, teachers and pupils. Whilst no rubric exists, there are some interesting similarities and parallels

between the head teachers' practices.

This first chapter will introduce the argument that we are socially constructed beings. This idea, one discussed in depth by Foucault, is important to the overall thesis in that it foregrounds how we are culturally modified into becoming uncritical recipients of societal structures of which our educational system and school leadership are a part. This subtle process, in turn, lends itself to us conforming and perpetuating those same structures. In this chapter, I start with the individual by introducing the notion of how categorisation leads to marginalisation and by what means this shapes the 'self'. By 'self' here, I mean how a person constructs their personal identity through being part of the external influences in which they exist.

To personalise this idea, I continue with a brief location of my 'self' in this research, how this has influenced my perspective and affected the data. I consider how my ontological position had been affected by my pedagogical views and suggest that 'genealogy' may be a more accurate term to describe my ontological development, that is, how my developing views shape what I see. Genealogy is a term employed by Foucault to describe how we are impacted upon by external influences to construct ourselves.

The discussion widens to a problematising of education by looking at its history to locate the idea of 'superheads' within a contextual framework. In this chapter, I suggest that schooling, which began as an experiment, has drifted off course (Kendall and Wickham, 1999). I start to expose some of the subtle influences that have led to many people, educators included, to becoming accepting and docile recipients of the system. In this chapter, I also introduce three themes, which I return to as necessary. Firstly, is the notion of examining the oscillating themes of educational

change over time as an 'opening out' and 'closing in' of thinking. Secondly, I present the idea of 'games of choice' to denote when we are deceived into thinking that we have more autonomy that we actually do. Thirdly, I start to employ the use of a criticism/critical tool to examine how various practices can differ from the underlying principles behind them.

In Chapter Two, I once again acknowledge my part in the research process by revisiting my ontological position as interpretivist, an aspect pursued in greater depth in Chapter Three. By employing Foucault as a theoretical model, I excavate archeologically notions such as brute power, discipline, fiscal and pastoral power, together with the power of the 'gaze'. This is aimed at placing such aspects under a critical lens in order to start to disrupt accepted practices. In this chapter, the reader is encouraged to become curious when, for example, yet another education initiative occurs. One instance of this could be the recent Department for Education's Green Paper (DfE, 2016) which recommends that new grammar schools should be opened to allow greater mobility to pupils from deprived areas. Examining new proposals using power, discipline and leadership as critical lenses may offer a fresh and different insight. Here too, I problematise the use of qualifications as a quantitative measure of educational prowess by asking if they are merely a commodity.

I continue the use of 'opening out' and 'closing in' from the first chapter and suggest that whilst 'opening out' is synonymous with divergence and creativity, conversely unthinking and closed systems are convergent and restrictive, resulting in greater power structures being manifest.

Chapters Three and Four develop the notion of the construction of

the self by applying it to the methodology employed in this study. Here I suggest that ontologies do not exist as discrete entities but are cultivated through internal experiences and external forces. I question how Foucauldian an interpretivist position can be, as this suggests trying to uncover meaning, whereas Foucault would contend that meaning has to be constructed, not 'a something' to be revealed (Brown and Heggs, 2011). These chapters aim to illuminate the reflexive nature of my research data, that is, how they can be affected by my ontological and epistemological assumptions and my role as insider-outsider researcher. I discuss ethical issues and reflexivity, reliability and validity, generalisation and triangulation in an attempt to give as full and balanced account of the process as possible.

Chapter Five examines school leadership both at senior and middle levels by conducting a critical examination of literature, some of which would be considered mainstream and contribute to perpetuating the dominant discourses of the elite. It introduces two frameworks, which will be used to scrutinise the head teachers' data and unpick the rationale behind these choices. Part of this includes casting a critical gaze upon my decision to include them into the study in the first place. This chapter serves as a platform for the school-based empirical work, which follows in the subsequent three chapters.

Chapters Six, Seven and Eight discuss the data gathered from the case study schools alongside the supplementary research questions. In each of these chapters, whilst seeking parallels and contradictions from person-to-person, school-to-school, I aim to elicit the unquestioning acceptance that contributes to the propagation of restrictive thinking. I continue to use Foucault to assist me in my task to notice the taken-for-granted assumptions.

Here I identify recurring themes within these data and problematise the analytic frameworks used that have served to propagate and perpetuate elitist discourses. Themes discussed include the varying strength of voices throughout the hierarchical tiers of schools, the importance of good and permanent teachers, diminishing power, disciplinary structures, architecture and accepted practices.

The conclusion of the thesis pulls together the various themes and discussions. It argues that a rubric for school leadership is too simplistic a notion which underestimates the complexities involved in such a role. The importing of external leaders into schools already fraught with challenge is not a panacea to be applied lightly. Direct reference to the leaders is seen more overtly in the middle leaders' data whilst the pupils discuss the effects of leadership more than the leaders. To the pupils, the leaders are a faceless force that tells them what to do.

The parallels drawn from the data are used to outline the importance of excellent teachers in schools and the need to retain them on a permanent basis so as to avoid the use of supply teachers where possible. Whilst no rubric exists, I suggest that there are categories into which the head teachers' initial duties appear to fall. These are vision, teaching, facilities (architecture), care, systems, success criteria, discipline and external bodies. Such categorisation is anti-Foucauldian. By grouping the data into categories of my design I am introducing a bias into the analysis.

This chapter sets the scene by providing an overview of each chapter and how they contribute to the overall argument of the thesis. It sets up discussions of themes, which are revisited and developed throughout. The idea that beings docilely come to accept

practices that we consider normal, is a notion revisited in each chapter.

Chapter 1   A history of the present

Introduction
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From the moment an individual is born, and often before this, they start being categorised. The first assigned section is that of 'female' or 'male'. If the birth takes place under medical supervision, the medics will observe and decide whether the new born baby is 'healthy' or 'unhealthy', i.e. needs medical intervention or not. The weight, length and time of birth are usually recorded along with the date. So, the process of categorisation has begun, within the first few minutes of life.

The process continues with the naming of the child, perhaps the religious affiliation to which s/he will belong, the influences that the child is exposed to, the playgroup, nursery, school the child will attend. Further examples include, the clothes in which s/he is dressed and the toys and friends which s/he is allowed or encouraged to play with. All these decisions are made in line with the norms of the social structure into which the child has been born. Most of these procedures are conformed to without question and in many cases with great vigour. The influences surrounding an individual are often invisible and this is how they can operate without question or rebellion (Pomerleau et al., 1990).

People are subtly manipulated into accepting ideas and rules and are cultivated into 'subjects'. These customs become 'practices', and as far back as the mid-1500s, La Boetie pointed out, they are:

> …the first reason for voluntary servitude… men will grow accustomed to the idea that they have always been in subjection, that their fathers lived in the same way; they will think they are obliged to suffer this evil, and will persuade themselves by example and imitation of others …based on the idea that it has always been that way (La Boetie, 1975:60).

This thesis problematises the English education system by questioning its aims, its practices and origins. If our educational system, like the penal system, arose as a result of an experiment (Kendall and Wickham, 1999), then it should be held up to regular scrutiny. Foucault asks us to consider, that simply because a model has existed for over 200 years, whether this is sufficient proof that it is working (Foucault, 1977). By forging our limited frameworks, developed over time from our cultural biases, onto others, we reduce possibilities as we become complicit in the 'slavery of education' (Foucault, 1991:292). Chapter One, traces education back to its origins and foregrounds the path which has led to the 'history of the present' (Foucault, 1991:31). The subtle forces that mould us to conformity is a large part of this work and therefore, some 'taken-for-granted' notions are problematised in Chapter Two, drawing heavily upon the works of Foucault and his ideas on brute and soft power. The intricate web of subtleties and powerful influences contribute to what Foucault would term a *'dispositif',* and I will refer to as an 'apparatus', a machine in which our choices are manipulated and moulded to result, in what Lippmann (1921:13) referred to as the 'manufacture of consent'. We are all subject to our limiting beliefs, values, practices, frameworks or apparatuses. They can be described as:

> …a thoroughly heterogeneous set consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, and philanthropic propositions – in short, the said as much as the unsaid (Agamben, 2009:2).

By taking cognisance of their existence, however, we can start to critique their effects and make informed decisions as to which behaviours and practices we might encourage to develop. La Boetie called to us to recognise the level of one's servitude and to cease obeying the masters, but this call still too often goes unheard (La Boetie, 1975). Therefore, it is the task of our schools'

'superheads' to tread new paths, to '…abandon production line Fordism and stop blindly following policy' (Coles, 2013: no page), or to reinforce the status quo by refusing to question and challenge the apparatus.

The history of my present

Since Foucault asserted that all aspects of our current present can be traced back to its historical past, I am using the notion here, in this section to examine how I have been constructed by my milieu and experiences to form what I am calling the 'history of my present'.

Whilst the historical and social construction of my story is important, I do not wish to overly dwell upon this as it is predicated upon memories, possibly false, that I choose to hold onto. We each tell ourselves stories which contribute to the production of the self. Therefore, 'confessing the details of one's own life means that one is more susceptible to being ensnared in and manipulated by networks of power' (Foucault, 1990:59-63). Foregrounding some experiences at the expense of others requires categorisation. The question to be asked is, why mention this aspect and exclude another? Using role categorisations such as child, adult and teacher would only serve to restrict my thinking, however, it is particularly difficult to look back at one's own autobiography without using these or similar labels.

My desire to work with challenging pupils stems from my childhood experience of education. In this context, I am using the word 'challenging' to denote belligerent and uncooperative pupils who rebuke the status quo and who question what and how they are taught. They are uncompliant and unaccepting individuals who critique the surrounding cultural norms and, as a result, become

categorised and 'marginalised'. Marginalisation, according to Foucault, is one of three 'modes of objectification of the subject', known as 'dividing practices'. The second mode is 'scientific classification', for example, mental illness and the third is 'subjectification', that is the way individuals make themselves become subjects (Rabinow, 1984:8-9). Here, marginalisation depends firstly on classification or categorisation. Once the class or category has been established and defined, beings or practices delineate on a binomial scale, i.e. they either belong to the group or not (Foucault, 1991). By using the term 'challenging', I depart from Foucauldian principles as it serves to uphold part of the dominant discourses which maintain the status quo of education and contribute to the normalisation and homogenisation that Foucault strove to expose (Thomson et al., 2013).

Whilst I enjoyed my primary schooling, as a teenager I was often bored by seemingly pointless learning over which I had little, if any, control. I was implicitly aware of the power structures involved and attempted to establish my voice and power by developing behaviours that deviated from the norms of the classroom. The binomial pendulum of being switched on and then off to schooling had begun. I became acutely aware of those teachers that could make learning clear and meaningful and those that could not. This pendulum has oscillated backwards and forwards throughout my education. This gave me an early indication of the power which teachers hold to engage or disengage learners.

Later, I started to work in 'challenging' schools. In these schools, there are often large numbers of pupils demonstrating challenging behaviour, intent on seizing power and disrupting the status quo. This notion is based on hierarchical classroom settings, which ultimately reflects my own experience base. Acknowledging the biased belief systems which we hold is a considerable part of this

thesis. Throughout my educational experiences, however, I have maintained my love of reading and learning, and developed an increasing love of mathematics, which I use on occasions in this writing to assist me in making a point. My role as a teacher, and subsequently a consultant, has allowed me to become fairly comfortable in schools of this nature and this probably assisted me in the research process. I have developed a critical eye for these types of schools, identifying what seems to be working well and what might benefit from support. Transferring this ability into the skills required as a researcher was much more difficult than I anticipated. I found it hard to develop and maintain my objectivity as I became immersed in the familiarity of my surroundings. I found it hard to think as a researcher when I was so accustomed to thinking as a teacher and a consultant. My role was normally one of problem identifier and solver and here I was now cast into the role of critical analyst. Furthermore, the language of doctoral studies and research is very different to that of everyday school life. As a 'doer', the conflict between my ontological stance as interpretivist necessitated that I stand back from the data gathering and analysis, and develop a different art of noticing.

Schooling: An experiment drifted off course?

Here, I problematise the aim of schooling. Its purpose could be, amongst many things, to expand the minds of learners. Alternatively, it could aim at coercing them to conform. My intention here is to disturb thinking, as Foucault might, and not to suggest that this is an either/or choice. According to former Labour Leader Prime Minister, James Callaghan in his Ruskin speech (1976):

> The goals of our education, from nursery school through to adult education, are clear enough. They are to equip children to the best of their ability for a lively,

constructive, place in society, and also to fit them to do a job of work. Not one or the other but both (Callaghan, 1976).

I belong to that group of educationalists that aims to develop endless curiosity and the ability to question, both in ourselves and in our learners; to honour independent and creative thinking and inculcate a lifelong love for learning; to expand, excite, liberate and produce. Basing an education system upon what we ourselves have experienced, immortalises established practices by employing a 'rear view mirror' model – possibly one that has been subjected to limited critical analysis. For example, former UK Education Minister, Michael Gove was instrumental in reintroducing long division into the National Curriculum (DfE, 2014a) in spite of conflicting advice from Ofsted (Ineson and Babbar, 2014). He has been steadily criticised by many teachers for adopting an, 'it didn't do me any harm', nostalgic approach to education policy. Taking time to consider the purpose of education will produce a variety of responses depending upon the individual.

In the main, education has forced me to conform to rules and regulations. This conformist expectation is by no means a coincidence when the history of education is subjected to critical analysis. Predicated upon a system spanning centuries, the correlation between the focus of using education as one of the many ways to control the masses can be seen, subtly manipulating children into unquestioning beings, or what Foucault would describe as 'docile bodies' (Foucault, 1991:135). The regimental aspect visible in Lancastrian and Christian Brother schools was designed to achieve acquiescence and submission. This employed the use of 'tactics' which incorporated the use of 'coded activities' to signal trained responses from pupils upon hearing the heavily reduced set of spoken commands from the teacher (Foucault, 1991:167).

The use of few words, bells, the clapping of hands, a mere glance from the teacher, and other signals resulted in regimented responses orchestrated with 'mechanical brevity [that reinforced] both the technique of command and the morality of obedience' (Foucault, 1977:166).

Today this is still visible in schools where, for example, teachers raise one hand to achieve silence and this is followed by each child, in turn, raising their hand until all are raised, that is, until all have complied. This artificial pre-arranged code contributes to building an efficient machine formulated upon a combination of forces with a precise system of command (Foucault, 1991). It also contributes to developing a disciplinary regime, discussed later.

Whilst this experiment may be viewed negatively, this is not necessarily the case:

> The classroom was invented as a cautious experiment… and remains an experimental space, in that a whole series of experimental strategies, dreams, programmes, and so forth are brought to bear and tested there; yet these experiments are always productive in the sense that ideas, objects, actors, new forms of self, emerge from this arena… These productions provide a functional justification for the classroom (Kendall and Wickham, 1999:124-125).

However, I contend that we have become trapped in an, often unquestioning, acceptance of this experiment. Perhaps schooling in its truest sense of developing the questioning ability of our learners will bring about its own downfall by allowing sufficient numbers to question its purpose and its validity:

> A few decades from now people will regard the schooling of today with revulsion, as astonishingly primitive, in the same way we deplore the eighteenth-century treatment of the mentally ill. Our successors will not be able to understand how citizens dedicated to personal liberty and democracy could have placed

learning on a compulsory basis, such that citizens had to report to certain buildings every working day of their youth in order to be bossed about by agents of the state (Moffett, 1994, cited in Loader, 1997:153).

The history of the present

The introduction of 'superheads' has taken place within a long contextual history and the remainder of this chapter provides an overview of these developments to place the notion of 'superheads' within a historical context.

The structure of our current educational system, Foucault (1977) argued, was already visible as far back as 1667 with the setting up of apprentice training at the Gobelins school in France. It was around this period that the term 'discipline' was introduced and meant:

> …power exercised over one or more individuals in order to provide them with particular skills and attributes, to develop their capacity for self-control, to promote their ability to act in concert, to render them amenable to instruction, or to mould their characters in other ways (Hindess, 2001:113).

By 1737, schools had developed to include formal daily roll call, ability setting and the submission of work for assessment. Further to this, measures of progress were established and recorded and periodic inspections were taking place.

By the early nineteenth century, new forms of knowledge were born, including medicine, psychiatry and social work. These helped to identify and isolate new objects of concern that may well have existed before, but had not been categorised and labelled. Prior to that, 'mad' people were integrated into 'normal' society and were not dealt with separately. However, in this era, the advent of prisons, mental institutions and hospitals helped to create 'new objects of concern, investigation and intervention' (Chambon et al.,

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1999:108). Education displayed similar, regimented styles evident in the army, with strict timetables, routines and dress codes.

From the seventeenth to the twentieth century in philosophy, empiricism was the order of the day with a focus on certainties, positivism and a disregard for the role of language in creating and constructing the world. Modernity brought with it a 'fixation with knowing the truth' (Chambon et al., 1999:37) and the understanding that one truth existed.

Up to this point, education remained firmly in the hands of those who could afford it. Children from poor families, in the main, were needed to contribute to the economy of the household. In Britain, from 1913-1937, free places at grammar schools increased by almost one third (Parliament, no date). Despite this, many poorer children had to turn down their offer of a place due to the restrictive extra costs involved. By 1944, the Conservative-led coalition government had decided that education equity for all was desirable. They introduced free secondary education through the 1944 Education Act, which extended education to the age of fifteen years and eventually intended this to extend to sixteen years. Although no mention was made of a tripartite system, as is commonly attributed to the Act, Local Education Authorities responded by proposing grammar, secondary modern and technical schools (Gillard, 2007). In order to allow greater access to grammar schools, an examination was designed to test eleven year olds, in the form of the eleven plus examination (Education Act, 1944). The aim was to allow children from all socio-economic backgrounds, access to education (Gillard, 2007).

By the 1960s, an 'opening out' started to occur, signalled by the emergence of changes in music and other creative arts. In some schools, there was a focus on technical subjects rather than

academic. The 1967 Plowden Report (DES, 1967) advocated that new skills were needed and the primary curriculum should help pupils develop greater curiosity and adaptability and increase levels of aspiration. In many schools, particularly the grammar system, the 'traditional' routines experienced over many decades continued.

The cultural effects and conformity to normal practices can be seen in relation to compulsory school ages. Prior to the 1944 Education Act, the compulsory school leaving age had been fourteen years of age, a practice that had been in force since 1918. The Act raised it to fifteen years initially. By 1972, the school leaving age was eventually raised to sixteen years, bringing with it considerable problems within many classrooms, where disgruntled teenagers were reluctant to participate in a school that they were being forced to attend New vocational courses were seen as one way to appeal to the interests of the new breed of reluctant learners (Cowan et al., 2012). The outcry at the change of age amongst many teenagers provides an indication of how the surrounding culture impacts upon what is considered to be acceptable or otherwise. Beings are subtly moved along a path of cultural changes without really acknowledging how this is formulating and impacting upon their opinions and views. This in turn helps to cultivate and grow ontological stances.

By the late 1970s and the start of the 1980s, many schools had adopted a more 'modern' approach to mathematics:

> What is wanted is not a change in content but a change of teaching style, of teaching methods; so that children are both able and encouraged to bring their intelligence into action; they help each other and they correct others' mistakes… they don't mind being told by each other, they help each other (Skemp 1986, cited in Twice Five, 1986).

Despite this more creative outlook to education, the mood, however, was changing and by the end of the 1980s, a 'closing in' period had begun. England was being led by the Conservative government under Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher. By 1988, the Education Reform Act (ERA) was introduced and this set the scene for the ensuing two decades. There was a greater focus on accountability and this fed down to the school leaders who were put under pressure to show that their schools could perform. The Act's major provisions included a National Curriculum and testing. Mathematics was divided into fourteen 'attainment targets'. The recommendations of the Cockcroft Report (1982) partly informed the mathematics non-statutory guidance, which encouraged an appreciation for the awe and wonder of the subject. However, hard-pressed teachers soon focussed on the statutory requirements alone and Cockcroft (1982) was assigned to the background by many.

These mechanisms represent some ways in which the brute force of the government was being brought to bear upon schools. The National Curriculum brought with it many difficulties:

> It was huge and therefore unmanageable… the most
> damaging outcome of it was that it prevented teachers
> and schools from being curriculum innovators and
> demoted them to 'curriculum deliverers' (Gillard, 2007:1).

By 1991, the Parent's Charter promised the publication of school examination results, as a means of making education more accountable and transparent to parents and employers. It also pledged to make school inspection reports available. By 1992, the newly-formed inspectorate, which would become known as Ofsted by 2007, brought difficulties as its 'role was less supportive and more evaluative' than that of the former HMI and its leader was '…a strong critic of schools and teachers…' (Thomson, 2009:116). This discussion prefaces education as it approached the new millennium

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and continues with the following section on the last two decades.

The last two decades

By 1998 and 1999, under Labour's administration, even greater intrusions were made into the school day and the 'closing in' period continued to take hold. This was done through the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies into primary schools, where one hour a day was set aside for each of these subjects. A three-part lesson was advocated in spite of research data, which indicated that a multi-episodal lesson was a more productive teaching tool (Burghes, 2000). The initial literacy framework was very prescriptive and provided minute-by-minute model lessons for primary schools. Prior to this, these subjects were often contained within themed topics but the dedicated hour put a greater emphasis on pupils learning them as an academic subject in their own right. This may have reduced understanding of the useful applications of the disciplines. Contrary to many teachers' beliefs, the strategies were never compulsory but were only ever recommended. The fact that alternatives were available was not widely discussed as school leaders and teachers tended to regard the strategies as obligatory. However, as the BBC news reported, the choice was linked to success indicators and the accountability that was evident during the Conservative government was still prevalent:

> Confident, successful schools have always taken a 'pick and mix' approach to government initiatives of this sort and if their results are good, Ofsted inspectors would have few grounds for challenging their way of doing things. There might be awkward questions though for schools that were not delivering the results ministers wanted to see, if they were not using the centrally-approved strategies (BBC News, 2009).

This could be considered essentially as a distinct lack of option, or what I call a 'game of choice'. This is where people are led to believe that they have a choice when in actual fact little or no choice

exists. Foucault employed the term 'games' as '…an ensemble of procedures which led to a certain result… [and produced a] winner or loser' (Foucault, 1984, cited in Bernauer and Rasmussen, 1987:16). The game at play here, mimics the notion of democracy and the power to effect change. There is simply a choice which exists within a limited set of parameters. By delivering 'good' examination results, schools could become exempt from implementing the strategies. The definition of 'good' was defined by the number of pupils attaining a certain level in public examinations. This criterion could be debated at length and whether it is synonymous with a 'good' education is also questionable. Drawing upon criticism/critical distinctions, the practice here is one of accepting the government's definition of what 'good' results are, and achieving them is an acceptable way in which to be able to opt out of educational guidelines. From a critical point of view, this is based on a principle which correlates 'good' examination data as evidence that all is well and those schools can continue their practices uninterrupted by public intervention.

The 1988 Education Reform Act discussed earlier, had given more power to parents. Examination results were published allowing a visible source of information to parents, as a platform to choosing schools for their children to attend. This set the scene for the publication of School Performance tables in 1994, essentially setting schools in competition with one another. The neoliberal Thatcher government had a focus on maximising the role of the private business sector, disabling the comprehensive system and reinstating selection. The New Labour Blair decade (1997-2007) was initially viewed by many as a relief from the preceding Conservative policies with a belief that selection for secondary education would finally be abolished:

> There were good grounds for believing this. After all, David Blunkett, then shadow education secretary, had

promised at the Labour Party Conference on 4 October 1995: 'Read my lips. No selection by examination or interview' (Jones, 2003:145).

The motion had widespread public support. An ICM poll in 1996 had shown that 65% of the population supported comprehensive education, whilst only 27% favoured a selective system (Guardian, 1996, cited in Chitty and Dunford, 1999). However, it quickly became clear that New Labour's education policies would be little different from those of Thatcher and her successor John Major:

> This meant an endorsement of much of the 1988 Education Reform Act and its successors, in relation both to 'parental choice' and to competition between schools in a diverse and unequal secondary school system (Jones, 2003:145).

In relation to selection, despite Blunkett's promise, the warning signs had been clear. Blunkett's pre-election promise 'Read my lips. No selection' now became 'Read my lips, no *more* selection,' which meant precisely the opposite: selection would remain in those areas which practised it, unless parents voted against it locally. Indeed, the mantra of the Blair government's first term was 'standards not structures', by which it meant that it would be concerned with raising pupils' achievement, rather than worrying about the types of school they attended. By 1995 however, New Labour set about extending the number of fully-selective faith schools, creating academies and specialist schools which were allowed to select 10% of their intake by aptitude. The S for selection which was apparent in the Tory regime had become replaced by S for specialism by New Labour, but essentially amounted to much the same thing (Gillard, 2007).

Whilst all these debates were taking place, teachers were grappling with changes brought about by new examination structures and a national curriculum. Whilst the Tories told teachers 'what to teach', the New Labour told them 'how to teach' (Gillard, 2007). There was a focus on 'delivering' the curriculum which, instead of being a

creative and integrated force, became a way in which things could be prescribed, measured and people made accountable. Lesson delivery became a mechanistic way to transfer knowledge, rather like delivering a parcel (Thomson et al., 2013). The National Strategies provided short and medium-term planning in core subjects. The effect of this was that new teachers were '…coming into teaching with significantly greater national levels of intervention in teaching practice. I would categorise it as thinking like a functionary – I will do what I've been instructed to do' (Hall and Noyes, 2009:326).

The arrival of 'superheads'

By the late 1990s a new programme was devised, whereby experienced and successful head teachers were identified and appointed to help rescue failing schools. Under this scheme, schools were closed and reopened with a new name, new management and often new staff. It was aimed at secondary schools where fewer than 15% of pupils achieved five or more good GCSEs (grade C or better) for three consecutive years (Mansell, 2000). The initiative was beset with problems from the start. One designated head refused to take on an assigned school and three heads resigned in the space of five days. Teachers moving to the schools had to be guaranteed jobs elsewhere in the event of the school failing further (Gillard, 2007).

Over the subsequent years, the discourse surrounding superheads fell from the agenda although the ideology remained. By 2013, the government was calling for a 'champion league' of head teachers. Today, this league is known as National Leaders in Education (Department for Education, DfE, 2014b). Legislation (now the Education and Adoption Act, 2016, (EAA) forced 'failing' schools to close and reopen as academies. These operate outside the jurisdiction of the local authority, often with a new head teacher and

new staff. The focus here was to centralise the control of schools and this continues today. Many successful schools also voluntarily opted to become 'converter' academies, with some head teachers becoming 'executive heads' of chains of academies as part of Multi Academy Trusts (MAT).

The current climate

The rise of academies has continued to develop with all maintained schools set to have become academies by 2022 (DfE, 2016, EAA, 2016). By Sept 2016, the May administration called for Britain to become a world-class meritocracy. This will be achieved through lifting the current ban on new grammar schools being opened. The leaders of these new grammar schools will be expected to open and run another school located in a disadvantaged area. The expectation is that children from deprived homes will be enabled to access such schools. The ideology here is clear. Grammar school head teachers are better than those in challenging circumstances. All that is needed is their formula for success to be replicated. This notion contradicts the data gathered in this research. Such models are not easily transferable. One wonders how grammar school head teachers would deal with 'no-go' areas. There is a high chance that they would not have encountered such a phenomenon in their own institutions.

In mathematics education, I contend that a new period of 'opening out' has started to occur. Ofsted lists understanding and curiosity as two of the components of good mathematical learning. With a focus on mastery (Drury, 2015), the Cockcroft Report (1982) is being discussed alongside the work of Skemp (Twice Five, 1986), bringing with it a greater focus on critical thinking and relational understanding, rather than simply regurgitating facts in a rote manner.

Conclusion

Chapter One situates me in this study with 'a history of my present' before considering the 'history of the present' and asking the question 'is schooling an experiment drifted off course?' The intention here is to present a rhetorical question designed to disrupt docile acceptance of common practices. The aim is to highlight the process of the construction of the self and to bear allegiance to how the past shapes the present. The brief history of education is provided to locate contextually the introduction of superheads. The notion of oscillating waves existing in education is signposted with the mention of an 'opening out' and 'closing in' of thinking. The chapter continues with a discussion on the past two decades in education alongside the political arena and closes with the current situation in education.

This discussion aims to set the scene for the subsequent chapter which examines aspects such as qualifications as a commodity, brute and pastoral power, including fiscal power and the power of the gaze. To assist me in framing these discussions I will introduce Foucault's theory as a theoretical tool to hold practices and structures up to scrutiny.

Chapter 2   Foucault's tools as a theoretical model

Introduction

This chapter employs Foucault as a theoretical model through which I scrutinise educational practices. It builds upon the previous discussion to combine the history of education with Foucauldian tools in order to acknowledge the importance of the apparatus in which my research data were gathered. The intention here is to develop criticality to inculcate sufficient curiosity to expose the toleration of the intolerable (Foucault, 1988). Its use in a Foucauldian manner is 'to help us see that the present is just as strange as the past' (Kendall and Wickham, 1999:4). Tracing education to its origins could be described as a 'history of the present' (Kendall and Wickham, 1999: 4).

The interpretivist stance to be taken here views reality as subjective and socially constructed, in other words, it follows the idea that knowledge does not exist as something 'out there' to be gathered or captured. Foucault's tools support this position, as his work on power and discipline emphasises the importance of how we are locked into discursive structures which support the apparatus. One of the techniques I have used here is what Foucault referred to as 'archaeology', that is, a drilling down into systems and discursive apparatuses to expose aspects which may have been otherwise left invisible:

> Archaeology helps us to explore the networks of what is said, and what can be seen in a set of social arrangements: in the conduct of archaeology, one finds out something about the visible in 'opening up' statements and something about the statement in 'opening up visibilities' (Kendall and Wickham, 1999: 25).

There is no one correct way to use Foucault's work – indeed he said

so himself. However, education and knowledge seem to have developed into commodities which are measurable under examination. I will start this chapter by considering this notion in order to preface my discussion on my ontological and epistemological positions in Chapter Three. I will pose the question: 'is education a commodity and are qualifications simply a currency?'. I will follow this with a discussion on discipline and power to mobilise Foucault's thinking tools to help me apply a gaze of criticism on educational practices.

Education as a commodity, qualifications as a currency

Precious metals such as gold and silver have little inherent use apart from looking attractive. In other words, in themselves they have no value except that which is placed upon them. However, because they are rare and buried, they became a symbol of wealth, which had a price and they also became a measure of all prices, that is the precious metal coins could be exchanged '…for anything else that had a price'. (Foucault, 2003: 189). Simply because these metals were a mark of wealth, people exchanged items for them, that is they wanted to obtain the actual coinage. However, by the seventeenth century, the exchanging function of money had reversed, with people wanting coins simply so they could exchange them for something else. In turn, these 'something elses' became the mark of wealth.

This reading prompted me to consider how money, as an exchanging object, could be compared with knowledge. Examinations are designed to measure knowledge and provide a mechanism to gain qualifications. These in turn act as an exchanger for opportunities such as employment, salaries, etc. This suggests that our current treatment of education is that knowledge is a 'thing' that can be captured and measured and exchanged. Knowledge has been reduced to a commodity. The examination system

attempts to standardise it so that two similar grades represent exactly the same amount of knowing. They result in categorising and marginalising the 'haves' from the 'have nots'. The examinations in themselves may well have very little inherent value, unless a learning process is being undergone at the same time. However, preparation for the examination may well culminate in a rich understanding if accompanied by deep creative thinking, and the assimilation and transfer of the content to another context. Examinations, though, do not simply mark the end of a period of study, they are integrated throughout education, '…woven into it through a constantly repeated ritual of power' (Foucault, 1991: 186). Similar to the procedures of hospital examinations, formal assessments marked the '…beginnings of a pedagogy that functions as a science' (Foucault 1991:187). So, the use of examinations was instrumental in ensuring that a positivist approach to learning was deeply entrenched in many educational practices. There were also other factors at play, which helped uphold the apparatus. Examinations were a visible exercise of power, whereas disciplinary power normally 'is exercised through its invisibility' (Foucault, 1991:187).

This consideration of pedagogical approaches being influenced by dominant practices, and resulting in disciplinary power, leads me to introduce key aspects of Foucault's work, including that of brute power, disciplinary power, pastoral power and bio power, and how power operates in schools. Through this framework, I will build upon the discussion started in the previous chapter.

Power

Different types of power exist which can overlap and wax and wane, depending on the situation. Brute power is associated with domination, bullying, persecution, and is characterised by punishment and rewards. It is apparent in the rules of the state and

can also manifest on occasions in school leaders and bullies (Foucault, 1977; Fendler, 2010). Disciplinary power is visible through its mechanisms such as school buildings, curriculum, timetables, regulations, examinations, surveillance and knowledge. This power often operates in a hierarchical top-down manner.

Pastoral power is a softer, less overt and therefore more insidious form of power. This can operate through technologies such as the teacher-pupil relationship or soft but strong peer pressure. There is some form of dependence on, and perhaps admiration for, the 'pastor' who watches over and cares for the group. Whilst all power is both pervasive and invasive, pastoral power is more insidious than brute power or disciplinary power (O'Neill, 1986). Brute power is more obvious due to employing recognisable overt systems. 'If the state is the political form of a centralized and centralizing power, let us call pastorship the individualizing power' (Faubion, 1994:300). Constant, often invisible judgments are made, followed by 'subtle coercion', which is continuously carried out to ensure that conformity is maintained. In this way, and also through mechanisms of discipline, expectations and behaviours, culturally constructed norms are established, resulting in what Foucault called bio power, i.e. it shapes how we think and therefore how we act (Foucault, 1977; Fendler, 2010; O'Farrell, 2005). These technologies of power are not mutually exclusive and can interchange and rearrange themselves. They can circulate throughout an organisation, and 'distribute[s] individuals in this permanent and continuous field' (Foucault, 1977: 177).

Foucault was a powerful influence in the world of social science and drew upon the work of Nietzsche. The phrase 'knowledge is power' is quite commonly used today. With the invention of knowledge came the invention of power:

> Knowledge and power were exactly reciprocal, correlative, superimposed. There couldn't be any knowledge without power; and there couldn't be any political power without the possession of a certain special knowledge (Faubion, 1994: 31).

So too he asserted that 'power produces knowledge'. They,

> …directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations (Foucault, 1991: 27).

In other words, for Foucault, knowledge and power, whilst related, were not the same. He went to great lengths to clarify any confusion. 'If they were identical, Foucault would not have wasted his time studying their relation' (Chambon et al., 1999:xxiv). However, their reciprocity is brought into question by the suggestion that, whilst power could exist without knowledge the converse is not true. This would suggest that knowledge cannot exist without power. Power is constituted at the site of knowledge (Kendall and Wickham, 1999). Foucault suggested that 'it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together', thus reinforcing a triad of knowledge, power and language (Foucault, 1990: 100).

Piro (2008:39) suggests that 'power essentially alters relationships which affects people's actions'. Gunter maintains that:

> …power is both a 'power to' and a 'power over' relationship. It is the power to achieve, directly or indirectly, wanted and unwanted outcomes (Gunter, 2005:42-43).

Gunter suggests that the 'power to' requires cooperation whereas the 'power over' could mean that conflict can occur. She reminds us that power is about influence and, according to Heywood (2000), there are different faces of power: the power of decision-making or judgement to shape behaviours, intimidation, deal-making, creating

obligations, loyalty and commitment. Also, non-decision-making prevents issues being aired, whilst thought control governs the ability to shape what another thinks, wants or needs. However, Gunter reminds us that the manner in which we attribute power is very complex and we cannot assume that it is a direct 'cause and effect' relationship. The difference between power and authority is highlighted by Heywood (2000), with power being the 'ability' to influence, and authority as having 'the right' to do so.

The term power can convey negative connotations and have associations with conspiracy and dirty work. It is helpful to consider the word in connection with energy sources in order to view it as Foucault did. He suggested that power is never merely repressive but always productive (Foucault, 1991). 'Real power', according to Foucault, necessitates the possibility of resistance, and if liberty is removed totally, then no power relations exist. This implies that the subject needs to have the freedom to accept or reject the government for 'true power' to exist, as it is 'exercised only over free subjects' (Faubion, 1994:342). Here, the individuals are: 'faced with a field of possibilities in which several kinds of conduct, several ways of reacting and modes of behavior are available' (Faubion, 1994:342), because:

> If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression (Foucault, 1977:119).

As Rothbard (1975), introducing La Boetie's essay, comments:

> …the bulk of the people themselves, for whatever reason, acquiesce in their own subjection. If this were

not the case, no tyranny, indeed no governmental rule, could long endure (La Boetie, 1975:13).

La Boetie points out:

> The tyrant is but one person, and could scarcely command the obedience of another person, much less of an entire country, if most of the subjects did not grant their obedience by their own consent (La Boetie, 1975:13).

Power in schools

The following discussion suggests how schools are manipulated and controlled through mechanisms such as the curriculum and the use of titles to highlight the hierarchical structures within, so as to locate schools as an inherent part of a disciplinary system.

It is said that he who controls the agenda controls the meeting, and in a similar way we could consider the school curriculum and its construction and the mobilisation of power as a result. The term 'curriculum' itself is problematic and can marginalise, to employ a Foucauldian description. A national school curriculum could be considered as a list of subjects covered inside the classroom and anything outside this category as being 'extra curriculum'.

The school curriculum can be viewed as one part of Foucault's apparatus. In 1976, former Prime Minister, James Callaghan put forward a strong case for a so-called 'core curriculum' of basic knowledge, which eventually was put in place by the Conservatives in the form of the National Curriculum (ERA,1988). Having a national curriculum in England reduces the autonomy of schools to be able to decide upon their own provision. Whilst there is some flexibility in how the curriculum is interpreted, this is inevitably constrained within statutory laws. The National Curriculum (ERA, 1988) brings with it a certain amount of control and restriction to school leaders and teachers, and 'an efficient

machine' is created (Foucault, 1977:164).

Power in schools often cascades from the top echelons, downwards to the staff and to the pupils. The term 'top echelons' is used quite deliberately here to convey a sense of the hierarchical top-down structures visible in many of the schools in England today. Here we can see the head teacher and senior leadership team at the top, followed by middle leadership and subsequently the pupils. 'Middle leaders', in this context, is taken to refer to those who hold 'middle ranking posts in the hierarchy of a school being neither senior leaders …nor junior staff (though this term is never used)' and who teach as well as having leadership responsibility (Busher et al., 2007:2). It is a similar role to a subject leader's position in the primary sector, although the latter might coordinate more than one subject (Hammersley-Fletcher, 2002, 2004). This notion of hierarchical structures is discussed more fully later in this work. Within this hierarchy exists a section of people sometimes referred to as the 'non-teaching staff', that is, they are defined by what they do 'not' do, rather than by what they actually do. These titles serve to assist us in contributing to the accepted practices, because: '…who legitimately belongs to a community can only be judged on the basis of knowing who is excluded' (Danaher et al., 2002:85).

The titles herald the inherent power structures and bring with them some form of narrative which helps to constrain and to conform both the title holders and others into a set of behaviours, either desirable or not. By this acceptance, the power relations are developed and maintained. This acceptance, albeit unwilling, is seen in a study by Devine (2003), where the children's talk was replete with examples of adult power and the absence of consultation with them over curriculum, teaching methods and practices in the school. Teachers worked tirelessly to emphasise 'work over play, effort over idleness, obedience over disobedience'

(Devine, 2003:140). Control was firmly in the hands of the adults both at school and national levels. This notion of control is reflected in the data from school A, where one pupil reported that '[the] teachers thought they had more power and authority than they actually had' (Appendix A2). The suggestion here is that this pupil appreciates the subtle and impermanent nature of power relations. In Foucault's terms, 'the children were being constructed as other, their subordinate status derived from their location within adult discourse as unformed and in need of intervention and control' (Devine, 2003:140-141).

Schostak and Schostak (2010) make a distinction between Power and powers, using a Spinozan concept, where Power (with a capital P) is the aggregation of the powers (with a lower case p) of individuals that have been combined, for example, as in the organisation of a school. Power, hierarchically organised, uses the combined or aggregated powers of individuals to dominate the powers of a given individual (Schostak and Schostak 2010). In the example above, Devine (2003) describes how the combined Powers of the teachers impacted upon the individual powers of the pupil.

The school is one site of disciplinary power that we accept within our modern society. It is predicated upon our cultural acceptances and acquiescence to perceived authorities. The subsequent section considers this aspect in more detail.

Discipline

One aspect of a good school, according England's former Prime Minister, David Cameron (2010), is a good standard of discipline. In the past fifteen years or so, the terminology changed from discipline to behaviour management, and it is interesting to see how this term has returned once again. Discipline brings with it connotations

of traditional (meaning old-fashioned) values. Institutional discipline had developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in schools, manufactories, armies, etc. School discipline in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, 'succeeded in making children's bodies the object of highly complex systems of manipulation and conditioning' (Foucault, 1977:125). Discipline is achieved through a double system of gratification and punishment and 'operates in the process of training and correction' (Foucault, 1977:180). There is, contained within this, a score keeping of good and bad points or, as Foucault calls it, 'an arithmetical economy' of penance and privilege points (Foucault, 1977:180).

Many of today's schools operate electronic bonus points that can be saved and traded for quite expensive and desirable items. The system can also be used for demerits which reduce the pupil's balance. Once again, the exchanging practices rely on the value placed not upon 'good' work or behaviour but on how many points this will be worth and their value upon exchange. The inherent value of knowledge grown through a rich education is reduced, in this way too, to a commodity.

In Foucault's book *Discipline and punish*, discipline is described as a specific form of power exercised over individuals to help them develop their ability to self-control, to mould their characters, to make them receptive to instruction and to act in concert. It is not intended to merely restrain but also to enhance and make use of people's capacities. Foucault (1977) suggests that discipline can be seen as a generalised method of control of others and of oneself (Foucault, 1977). According to Foucault, disciplinary power has followed on from the power of sovereignty, that is, automatic obedience to a monarch (Foucault, 1977). It is not a thing or a substance but a network of relations, 'a mechanism of power which regulates the behaviour of individuals in the social body' (O'Farrell,

2005: 133).

The use of the term discipline can be tracked back as far as the late 1790s, where brute power was evident in the structure of factories, armies and schools:

> Discipline is an art of rank, a technique for the transformation of arrangements. It individualizes bodies by a location that does not give them a fixed position, but distributes them in a network of relations (Foucault, 1991:146).

It was first visible in Jesuit classrooms that:

> organized a new economy of the time of apprenticeship. It made the educational space function like a learning machine, but also a machine for supervising, hierarchizing, rewarding (Foucault, 1991:146).

Various attitudes to discipline can be examined using the criticism/critical distinction referred to earlier. By this I mean we can start to look at discipline as a practice to see how it operates throughout our everyday experiences. We can then examine the principles upon which that practice is predicated. Discipline as a practice could be designed to protect or to constrict. Different cultures approach behaviour management in different ways. Foucault (1977) would suggest that the cultural milieu must surely have an impact upon how this is achieved. The leadership techniques required to bring the expectations of behaviour to a satisfactory standard will also vary. In England, in the summer of 2011, there was an outbreak of riots following the fatal shooting of a man by police officers in London. The ensuing violence included arson attacks, petrol bombs being thrown at police, vandalism and the looting of shops. It spread across some major cities in England resulting in the deaths of three people in Birmingham. It was highly publicised in the media, with the same footage being repeated continuously by television stations. The

response by politicians was one of zero tolerance, and large numbers of offenders were identified and charged. Parliament, in spite of being in recess, was reconvened to discuss the situation. David Cameron, the Prime Minister at the time, said:

> The whole country has been shocked by the most appalling scenes of people looting, violence, vandalising and thieving. It is criminality pure and simple. And there is absolutely no excuse for it (BBC News, 2011).

Ironically, riotous behaviour is condoned within the ranks of the Bullingdon old Etonian boys' club of which both David Cameron and London's former mayor Boris Johnson were once members. Commenting on the legacy of misdemeanours, the former Prime Minister said: 'We all do stupid things when we are young and we should learn the lessons', in an interview, in which he launched a forthright attack on the rioters of that summer. The interviewer wanted to know, what was the difference between a Bullingdon bash and the riots? The answer, the article suggests, is that whilst the rioters were jailed, Cameron became Prime Minister (Beardsworth and Pimlott (2013: no page).

This focus on tough measures upon some, has been replicated not only in the law courts but also in educational policy. One example of such brute force was implemented by Michael Gove (2011), former Secretary of State for Education, who called for increased military presence in schools by introducing 'Troops into Teaching', an initiative that commenced in January 2014. He also called for more men to become teachers in order to provide a positive role model in a bid to solve the problem of the 'underclass'. Further tough measures included same day detentions, a tightening up on truancy and poor attendance and giving teachers the right to search pupils.

In return for giving schools more power, we will also

expect them to secure improved attendance. Schools where truancy persists can expect much closer scrutiny. In preparation for the new tougher inspection system, Ofsted will be trialling no notice monitoring inspections this term, targeting schools with poor disciplinary records and poor attendance. The right every child deserves to be taught properly is currently undermined by the twisting of rights by a minority who need to be taught an unambiguous lesson in who's boss. As well as strengthening teachers' search powers we are also giving teachers the right to impose detention on the same day a school rule is broken (Gove, 2011).

There is a clear agenda that the brute power of the government is to be enforced by the disciplinary and pastoral power of the schools. So too, by means of a more rigorous Ofsted inspection system, this same heavy-handed approach has been brought to bear on school leaders and teachers. There seems to be a steer towards ensuring children do not step out of line and if they do, then the repercussions are clear, as illustrated in the paragraph below and the subsequent data excerpt. Children are there to be instructed, disciplined and moulded. In turn, if schools step out of line and do not conform then a similar principle exists: schools are to be instructed, disciplined and moulded.

In a drive to re-instate 'traditional' (i.e. Gove's notion of) punishment for misbehaviour, '…pupils face the prospect of being told to pick up litter or write out lines hundreds of time…' by encouraging schools to use 'tough but proportionate' punishments (Gove, 2014). Gove's idea of 'traditional' punishment has been culturally developed and, as such, seems normal and acceptable to him. This differs significantly from practices in Japanese schools where '…understanding, not compliance is the goal of discipline' (Lewis, 2007:147). The tight regimented discipline that Gove suggests has similarities with that of Jean-Baptiste de La Salle (1651-1719), founder of the Christian Brother organisation[1] and patron saint of

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[1] A Roman Catholic teaching organisation also known as De La Salle.

teachers. La Salle dreamt of a classroom where pupils would be assigned positions according to various criteria, including their level of attainment, whether they were neglected or clean, well behaved or unruly. The seating arrangement would not be allowed to change without the consent of the school inspector (Foucault, 1991, 1977). Discipline did not simply prescribe how a child would act in the classroom but also extended to how they sat:

> …nothing must remain idle or useless… pupils must always hold their bodies erect, somewhat turned and free on the left side, slightly inclined, so that, with the elbow placed on the table, the chin can be rested upon the hand, unless this were to interfere with the view; the left leg must be somewhat more forward under the table than the right. A distance of two fingers must be left between the body and the table…The right arm must be at a distance from the body of about three fingers and be about five fingers from the table, on which it must rest lightly (La Salle, 1783, cited in Foucault, 1991:152).

The effect of disciplinary techniques is evident in the questionnaire data gathered from school A, where 35% of year 11 pupils cited overt tactics which inhibited their school lives. These they described as the 'worst change' that they had been exposed to. The changes mentioned included aspects over which the pupils had little power. They mentioned increased security measures around the school resulting in limited access to certain areas, teacher strictness and uniforms.

Responses which dealt with school security included statements referring to, 'all the security', 'gates', 'cameras', 'fencing the whole place off', 'field', 'fencing [the] playground', 'taking away the field', 'not allowed on grass', 'the cameras', 'the cameras everywhere'. Those responses that directly related to school discipline made mention of, 'strictness', 'too much discipline', 'teachers thought they had more power and authority than they actually had'. Other comments made mention of 'uniforms', the use of the 'VIP lounge'

and having their 'fizzy drinks taken away' (Appendix A2).

This list gives the impression of the pupils 'being done to', rendering them 'docile bodies' with little ability to affect or stop the changes being introduced by the school leadership team. The advent of increased security, which had successfully invaded their territory, was accompanied by newly- appointed strangers, including a 'superhead', together with some senior leaders, myself included, and other teaching staff. Previous perceived privileges such as the 'fizzy drinks machine' were removed and the insistence on complying with uniform regulations increased. Interestingly a VIP lounge had been created as a 'rewards' system. By definition, this excluded those pupils who were unwilling to agree to comply with the new changes. The lounge was fitted out with pool tables, computer games, televisions and such like. By Foucauldian standards the introduction of such a lounge would serve to exclude, segregate and delineate the 'belongers' and those who would remain 'outsiders' (Foucault, 2003). Just as the fencing provided a physical barrier to stop entry to the fields, playgrounds and other areas, so the VIP lounge represented a different, invisible barrier, which was just as effective.

The introduction of rewards such as a VIP lounge, or an electronic points system mentioned above, could perhaps be construed as a bribe, in order to entice those pupils who might be on the borderline of misbehaving, into conforming. Those pupils who were always deemed well behaved would not need such enticements and the rewards might not appeal to their individual tastes or interests. There is a suggestion in the data where one pupil called Claire recommends that school A should, 'Kick out the kids which make life hard for others, not reward them'. Claire, therefore, might represent a faction of the school population who neither belongs (or wants to belong) to the VIP lounge, nor to the dissenters who

refuse to comply to the school rules but to a third group who conforms to the school rules and attends school to learn. This is borne out in the remainder of her comment where she used the questionnaire to say, 'Thanks (to a teacher), just want to say thank you for pulling us through the last of my maths course, without your help I would have got nowhere' (Claire). Other pupils' comments suggested that they too were exasperated by the poor behaviour of some of the pupils: 'I would put the bad kids in one class and the good ones in another', 'I would try to change behaviour of the students', '[The first thing I would change is] the students [sic] bad behaviour', with calls for, 'Stricter teachers and some fun teachers', '[Change] the way the kids talk to the teachers'. 'The pupils' behaviour towards others' and 'People …[to] have more respect for the teachers and pupils, everyone would treat each other the same' (Appendix A2). The statements suggest that these pupils had developed some form of criteria for deciding which pupils were considered bad or good, and that it was desirable and perhaps possible to change behaviour.

The data above suggest that the pupils were not content with the status quo of the school. They were using the questionnaire as a vehicle to have their voices heard. They were vocally pushing against the apparatus in which they found themselves. However, it may be that it was the recent changes in the school that had prompted their noticing of the milieu in a more critical way. Perhaps we all need a call to action, a call to critique. It may be that we have the tendency to comply with the status quo without question, until something jars against us and stimulates us into action. This correlates with the 2011 riots, mentioned earlier, being provoked by the death of a young man.

In this work, I have used mathematics as a means to illuminate my examples, and as such am implementing another form of discipline.

In this way, I am deviating from Foucault to some extent. Mathematics, according to Foucault, is in itself, part of the continuum of limiting frameworks in which we choose to operate. Whereas I would view mathematics as a creative and liberating language, Foucault describes it as being born from 'techniques of measurement' which forms part of the 'petty, malicious minutiae… [a]nother power, another knowledge' that amongst other strange sciences has delighted humanity for over a century (Foucault, 1977:226). Similarly, language, whilst central to creativity, can also be considered as one of the earliest forms of strait jackets placed upon us, and 'forms the necessary limits of our experience and thought' (Oksala, 2011:93).

Fiscal power

Taking the discussion on discipline further, Foucault's teacher, Althusser (1971) viewed schooling as an instrument that contributes to an ideological state apparatus: one that moulds us into conformity, and that many pupils and parents willingly subscribe to (Brown and England, 2004).

Part of this process may be to manufacture workers. According to Kiyosaki (2009), the founding of the American General Education Board by the Rockefeller Foundation was part of a wider conspiracy to make children 'simply be a cog in someone else's money machine, or a worker on someone else's plantation' (Kiyosaki, 2009:36).

Prior to this, Monitorial schools existed where 'masses of poor children could be taught so well for so little' (Chodes, 1988). These schools trained children to become 'monitors' who, in turn, became responsible for teaching other pupils, and as such ran on a very low budget. The system was based on that developed by Londoner Joseph Lancaster and was 'built up cog by cog' to

become a 'machine for learning' (Foucault, 1977:165).

Interestingly, this model was still in use, albeit unofficially, in my primary school in Ireland where older pupils, myself included, were expected to teach classes of younger pupils if a teacher was absent. The unquestioning acceptance of this stands in stark contrast to the response that this would be met with today. By 1852, the American General Education Board had destroyed the existence of these schools.

The dislike of this type of schooling was mirrored in England where Lancaster was seen as a dangerous radical who was giving the 'unwashed masses the skills to move upward'. Slowly, Monitorial schools were squeezed out by the Church of England, backed by massive funding from the government (Chodes, 1988). Here we see examples of where the power of money, industry, the government and the Church can be used to interfere with the processes of education.

The intertwined association between wealthy employers, the government, and the production of children as future workers is visible in Gove's speech referring to carpet retailer Lord Harris, also owner of a chain of academies in London:

> Phil is able to support state education so generously because of his success in business. His firm Carpetright has brought jobs and opportunities, as well as high quality low cost flooring solutions, to thousands (Gove, 2011).

Our education system today exists within a global fiat monetary system; that is, one that the legal tender is not backed by gold reserves (Roche, 2011). Its power, as discussed earlier, depends upon the faith that the consumer places upon it. This is something that we seem to take for granted without much question. The introduction of the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) by the

Conservative government in 1992 started a transfer of public assets to private hands. Today, PFI schools are paying large rents to private companies who own and run their school buildings, with extra rent usually charged for evening and weekend events.

Another example of the business model being implemented by the Conservatives was the rebranding of schools to academies and colleges which, '…enabled the Thatcherite vision of the school as an independent small business to be further developed' (Gunter, 2012:22). Businesses are disciplined by the demands of market forces and this may well be one way in which schools can be disciplined.

The power of the gaze

We can see examples here, of how the brute power of the government impacts upon the lives of our children. Their discipline and control are necessary to ensure they become sufficiently 'docile and useful' (Foucault, 1977:231) to comply with the demands of the elite. This discipline is enforced in part through school systems. Increasingly, these now involve the use of surveillance cameras, which Foucault would refer to as a technology in the 'conduct of conducts' (Foucault, 1982, cited in Faubion, 1994:341), where people and routines are regulated and controlled by the use of the 'nominative gaze' (Hindess, 2001:130). Surveillance by a 'faceless gaze' (Foucault, 1977:214) aims to influence the behaviour of the pupils. This premise differs to the view of a teacher in Japan who reported, 'I don't want to create children who obey because I'm here. I want children who know what to do themselves, children who learn to judge things themselves' (Lewis, 2002:127).

The use of a 'monitoring gaze' (Chambon et al., 1999:108),

whereby people judge each other, aims to achieve conformity. Those who act differently to the norm separate themselves from the group and are subjected to 'marginalisation'. The methods of attaining conformity changed from exclusion techniques prevalent in the eighteenth century to the nineteenth century's 'inclusion and normalization' (Faubion, 1994:79). Here, disciplinary methods used in factories, schools, prisons and hospitals were similar. They acted in the 'process of production, training [formation], or correction of the producers' (Foucault, 1973, cited in Faubion 1994:78) through technologies that controlled both time and bodies: 'They are institutions that, in a certain way, take charge of the whole temporal dimension of individuals' lives' (Foucault, 1973, cited in Faubion 1994:79-80).

Each institution seemed to extend beyond their main function, for example, schools did more than to teach children to read but also obliged them to wash. They created a new type of power which was manifested in four ways, namely: economic power (as was the case in factories); political power – that is to give orders, admit and expel people; judicial power – constantly judging, punishing and rewarding; and finally, an epistemological power – that is, how to extract knowledge from and about others (Faubion, 1994:83).

The idea that school discipline differs from one country to another suggests that cultural influence has a large part to play in developing accepted practices. The link between discipline, punishment and rewards discussed above connects with old-fashioned, behaviourist psychological theories being employed. It could be that countries such as Japan do not buy into this type of psychology. Foucault discerns between the origin of power and its descent. The intention of the former Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, to give schools more power seems to be connected to the subjugation of the masses or, more accurately, the underclass. Here, I believe

Foucault would not simply look at where Gove started out from, but would also examine his experiences as a journey, which has influenced him as he developed (Foucault, 2008). For instance, a large part of Foucault's work rested upon archaeology, where our present self is merely a top layer superimposed upon 'what has been said, centuries ago, months, weeks ago' (Foucault, 1978, cited in O'Farrell, 2005:64). The subtle unquestioned influences coagulate to form the man, resulting in what Foucault would refer to as genealogy and others would say is ontology (O'Farrell, 2005; Peters, 2003). Thus, there are only 'human beings that have been historically constituted as subjects in different ways at different times' (Peters, 2003:208).

There is a suggestion here that power is a heavy-handed tool, and something to be applied from above. How this impacts upon school practice is largely up to the head teacher to decide. As mentioned earlier, Foucault (1977) suggested that power is not necessarily a negative force but can be used in productive ways to benefit others. Leadership which employs power in this way, may help to organise individual powers for mutual benefits democratically (Schostak and Schostak, 2010).

Therefore, in terms of this study, school leaders and 'superheads' may sieve the demands streaming down from government and selectively choose which parts to focus upon, to dilute or ignore, to suit the school vision. Conversely, if a head teacher desires to strengthen a dominant approach, then this aspect can be subjected to a magnifying glass. Thomson et al. (2013:158) describe this as 'regimes of meaning making constructed in and as discourse to see how some lines of thinking and arguing come to be taken as truths, while some other ways of thinking/being/doing are marginalized'.

Pastoral or soft power

The imposition of power is seen to be legitimate provided it is based on the real or perceived consent of those being governed. How this consent is achieved is described by Lippmann (1921:13) as being 'manufactured', and by Bernays (1947:113) as being 'engineered', by influencing our perceived needs. These men were pioneers in public relations and were what would be currently known as 'spin doctors'; that is, experts employed to manage and manipulate the opinions and behaviours of the public. Both words that they use convey a sense of anything but a natural occurrence, and suggest it being a contrived process. Ultimately, this could be described as the power of persuasion.

Foucault maintains:

> …what defines a relationship of power is that it is a mode of action that does not act directly and immediately on others. Instead, it acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on possible or actual future or present actions. A relationship of violence acts upon a body or upon things; it forces, it bends, it breaks, it destroys, or it closes off all possibilities (Foucault, 1982, cited in Faubion, 1994:340).

The research data contain evidence of different types of overt and insidious power, including laws, school structures, and peer pressure, which encourages people to act in a particular way. We are influenced indirectly from many sources including the media, cultural norms and friendship groups.

Usually people go about their everyday lives surrounded by expected and accepted practices. Only when something which is deemed to be unacceptable occurs do we tend to stop, take stock, and question our ethics and value systems. Some time ago the comedian Jimmy Carr told a series of jokes to a live audience.

Allegedly, he was testing out how far he could go before causing offence. The content he covered became darker and darker before a young lady shouted out from the crowd that he had gone too far. He simply laughed and reminded her that up to that point she had been comfortable with a whole range of other really unsavoury topics and had seemingly found them acceptable. Perhaps the acceptance of the other members of the audience provided a pack type mentality, where it is difficult to stand up alone and be counted and easier to merge with the crowd. Alternatively, everyone except this young lady was happy with the content being discussed.

This begs the question as to how we come to decide what to accept or reject. The environment in which the action or dialogue is being carried out is possibly one factor. Listening to a comedian on stage telling jokes might be acceptable in that context, but the same content in the work place might be seen to be outrageous. Also, the attendees probably knew what they were signing up for when they bought tickets, and this may demonstrate a level of acquiescence on their parts. So, it is probably fair to say that the situation involved plays a part in what is considered acceptable or not.

Leaders, as promoted by people like Bernays (1928), who was an early example of a spin doctor, will draw upon such cultural influences and use them to their benefit to shape behaviours towards their goals. This soft approach pulls people in line and gently entices them to follow the leader. It would be an easy conclusion to make that leaders may well like and encourage such behaviour. Indeed, this may be one facet of successful leadership, and may be a building block of power (Schostak and Schostak, 2010). One wonders whether the soft, subtle approach is less ethical, being a more manipulative technique than those overt methods employed by dictatorial leaders. At least, with the latter there is an awareness of what is happening.

Foucault's apparatus (Agamben, 2009), mentioned earlier, could be viewed as a control system in which we all operate to a greater or lesser extent. The greater the sphere of influence from the apparatus, the more likely we are to be sucked in, manipulated and consumed, thereby remaining docile bodies (Foucault, 1991). The more smoothly it operates, the less attention we pay to its actual existence. It could be likened to a matrix (from the film The Matrix, 1999), where people exist in batteries belonging to a mainframe that is centrally controlled causing 'the world that has been pulled over your eyes to blind you from the truth' (Schuchardt, 2003:27):

> …the harmless citizen of postindustrial democracies ...readily does everything that he is asked to do, inasmuch as he leaves his everyday gestures and his health, his amusements and his occupations, his diet and his desires, to be commanded and controlled in the smallest detail by apparatuses (Agamben, 2009:22).

Figure 1 shows my visual representation of how the apparatus draws the individual in, reducing the individual and producing 'the subject'. The larger the apparatus becomes the great its sphere of influence (Agamben, 2009)

Fig 1

By simple manipulation of political agendas and popular media, the aims of the political parties can be achieved with relative ease. One way of doing this is to release news stories at key times so as to

mask other news headlines, which might otherwise have adverse ramifications for the government. Another way, according to Gunter (2012), is to conceal the main agenda by seemingly caring for people's needs. For example, she cites government ministers' response to teachers' heavy work load by creating more teaching assistants and lesson cover supervisor positions, and producing online curriculum resources; may simply mask the real intention to replace qualified teachers altogether:

> While the rhetoric was about professionalism and freeing teachers to teach, in reality the process was one of deprofessionalisation with a lack of attention to a defendable model of pedagogic practice (Gunter, 2012:23).

So perhaps we need to be at the very least curious, if not out and out suspicious, when new education initiatives are heralded. This could be examined through considering power, discipline and leadership.

Conclusion

This chapter employs Foucauldian tools to help deconstruct some taken-for-granted practices in our schools. It intends to exemplify ways in which we are subtly orchestrated to conformity, while only occasionally are we abruptly awakened to our limiting beliefs and culture.

By starting with a discussion to problematise education by considering knowledge as a commodity, and to consider qualifications as a currency, I also intended to give an example of how my reading of Foucault has enabled me to transfer his writing to another situation and allow me to think critically. Here I re-examined my thinking surrounding education, and started to view it as a 'thing' rather than a process. So too with qualifications. Rather than seeing them as something with an innate quality, I

started to examine them as a means to an end. This change of lens provides me with a more critical stance than I previously possessed.

As power is a key feature of Foucault's work, I mobilised some of his writings in this area, to examine practices in schools by looking at, for example, how the brute force of the government can bring about initiatives such as introducing soldiers to schools to assist with ensuring conformity. In this chapter, too, I examined discipline, fiscal power, the power of the gaze pastoral or soft power and bio power. These aspects combine to assist me in my argument that we are culturally and subtly moulded into unthinking conformity, only occasionally allowing ourselves to be disrupted.

I would suggest that the cultural aspect of schools needs to be carefully considered before a head teacher comes in from outside to transform it. I contend, too, that the unchallenged assumptions and beliefs of the head should be encouraged to come under scrutiny and their limitations be exposed.

Chapter 3 Research design and methodology

Introduction

Chapters Three and Four develop the notion of the construction of the self, as discussed in the previous chapters, and apply it to the methodology employed in this study. In keeping with the strong emphasis on the impact of cultural influences on the individual, I suggest that ontologies do not exist as discrete entities but are cultivated through internal and external experiences and events. Taking up an interpretivist stance may suggest that 'truth' or 'meaning' actually exist and merely require interpretation in order to be accessed and understood. I am employing the term here in a wider sense, more akin to Foucault, in that the researcher's interpretation will influence the data so no actual truth can exist. My epistemological position as social constructivist coincides with this ontology. Here, I am suggesting that knowledge is fluid and is influenced by our biases and beliefs and therefore can be constructed. By acknowledging the sway and impact that the researcher has on the data gathered, I aim to illuminate the reflexive nature of my research and discuss this in Chapter Four, alongside the attendant ethical considerations.

This research was conducted ten years ago in three case study schools A, B and C in a large city in England. The schools were in areas of high deprivation and recent GCSE examination results had shown improvements. Schools A and C had emerged from special measures, i.e. graded 4 by Ofsted after a 'superhead' had been drafted in to improve them. School B had improved its profile under the leadership of a long-serving head teacher. As this school had experienced improved examination results and transformed its profile locally from challenging to successful, I will include this head in my definition of 'superhead'.

First, as a teacher and then a consultant working in challenging schools, I had observed improved outcomes in schools such as these and I became curious about what it was that the school leaders were doing to improve their institutions. At the time, I was preparing myself to undertake a head teacher's role and hoped that this research would provide me with insights that would support me. As such, my research role was one of insider-outsider practitioner. This was a double-edged sword as it impacted upon the research data gathered, bringing with it some advantages as well as disadvantages, which will be discussed more fully later.

This chapter deliberates upon my theoretical positions more fully and links it to my research framework. It begins with a more thorough dealing of my ontological and epistemological stance, linking it to key literature. From there, it leads to the use of Foucault's works as analytical tools and how these support my choice of methods. As I am tending towards a position of social constructivist, it is important for me to ensure that the theoretical perspectives employed correlate and exemplify the epistemological positioning inherent therein. My choice of Foucauldian tools in order to mobilise social theory in the educational arena sits comfortably with my ontological and epistemological positioning. The prevailing contemporary political agendas, public attitudes and opinions, social issues and economic circumstances affect educational discourse, policies and practices. They also impact upon all the social actors, the leaders, teachers and pupils as well as upon me as a teacher, consultant and researcher. This reflexivity can result in ethical considerations when undergoing research. This is dealt with in greater depth in Chapter Four.

This thesis surrounds school leaders in the form of 'superheads' transforming challenging schools to more successful institutions. It aims to answer the research question 'how might we understand

conceptualisations of leadership in transforming schools from 'challenging' to 'successful'?' 'Challenging to successful', in this context, is taken to indicate a positive trajectory of GCSE examination results or upward movement from an Ofsted category 4. Ofsted currently operates a 4-step grading system with the grades 1 and 2 indicating 'outstanding' and 'good' respectively. In September 2012, grade 3 changed from 'satisfactory' to 'requires improvement' or 'not yet good' whereas 4 is deemed 'inadequate' that is, has serious weaknesses or requires special measures (Coughlan, 2012).

Methodology, ontology and epistemology

Research does not occur in a vacuum but within social contexts (Sparkes, 1992). Thrupp (2001:5) states 'that research is always coloured by the political and ideological climate of its time and that it is incumbent on researchers to be reflexive about this, so as to avoid compromising research activities wherever possible'. Neither is a paradigmatic position static but evolves through time and is subject to revision (Heshusius, 1989). Depending on the source there are numerous paradigms to draw upon. Sparkes (1992) refers to three: positivist, interpretive and critical, and I have adopted an interpretive stance, which is discussed more fully below.

Ontology is the nature of being, that is, who I am and what factors have combined into making me that person. In Foucauldian terms, this would be classified as genealogy (O'Farrell, 2005; Peters, 2003). In this work, I will refer to ontology so as to adhere to research terminology. Although I have adopted an interpretivist stance (Guba, 1990), I started this research with more of a positivist positioning, searching for the 'truth' in the form of one correct answer. This notion asserts that the 'truth', like knowledge, is out there waiting to be captured. Positivists conceive research as straight forward and unproblematic. They strive to capture and

describe the reality of the situation 'They apparently believe that human experience of the world reflects an objective, independent reality and that this reality provides the foundation for human knowledge.' (Weber, 2004: v).

Operating first from a positivistic approach in earlier days felt comfortable and secure, before I began developing more open and creative ideas within the realm of social constructivism. Wildemuth (1993) suggests that the difference between positivist and interpretivist paradigms is that the former recognises an objective reality is not dependent on the researcher and the latter views reality as subjective and socially constructed. As my readings progressed, I began to develop and started to address the difficulties inherent within the positivist paradigm. People are not similar to laboratory studies that can be measured on a scale. The truth which is established, will differ greatly depending on the power structures, whims, biases, personal fantasies and memories from whence they emerge. Erickson (1986) suggests that the term 'interpretive' refers to a 'whole family of approaches' that is more inclusive than many others and can be qualitative and/or quantitative (Erickson, 1986:119).

The perceived dichotomy between the positivist and anti-positivist positions has led 'researchers into feeling compelled to take one side or another, as regards their main research orientation' (Kock et al., 1997:1). This tendency to 'take sides' is discussed by Lather (1993) who ascertains that, by insisting on a particular research design, we are imposing an authority and suggests that researchers should avoid being pigeonholed. Whilst this view is understandable, I feel that having various paradigms at our disposal can be a useful medium through which we can compare our standpoints.

Foucault suggests that '"truth" is to be understood as a system of

ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation, and operation of statements', that it is 'linked in a circular relation with systems of power that produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it - a "regime" of truth' (Foucault, 1976, cited in Faubion, 1994:132). Here he contends that it is the apparatus that produces the truth that it regulates and controls it, with power as the mechanism through which it is sustained. This Foucauldian notion sits comfortably beside my definition of my interpretivist position:

> Inevitably, the sense we make of the social world and the meanings we give to events and situations are shaped by our experiences as social beings and the legacy of the values, norms and concepts we have assimilated during our lifetime (Denscombe, 2003:300).

In the interpretive approach, the person within the world has an effect upon it as much as the world has an effect upon the person. It is a multi-directional, osmotic interaction with others, including, in the context of my research, school leaders, pupils and teachers. By examining and giving license to the constraints placed upon my ontological position, I can begin to understand and then accept that my viewpoints are not infallible but are situated within a certain paradigm, which, by its definition, creates limitations. This paradigm is simply a position, a map, a representation of a perceived 'reality'. The perspective from which I see the world, will have an impact on what I discover in my research outcomes, what I foreground and what I decide to background. When conducting the research, I had not fully appreciated how my ontology would affect the research design. My taken-for-granted assumptions greatly influenced my approach. For example, I chose to interview at 3 levels within 2 of my case study schools, namely school leaders, middle leaders and pupils, using a hierarchical structure to organise and to triangulate. Unwittingly, I was accepting and perpetuating the dominant discourses and power structures inherent

in many schools.

Some researchers such as Lazarsfeld (McNeill, 1990) put a greater emphasis on research data being proven and free of the individual researcher's influence. McNeill (1990) tells us of his intention to conduct research that was free from bias and aimed to uncover the causes of human behaviour (McNeill, 1990). Conversely, Mellon states:

> Total objectivity is impossible for researchers who are, after all, human beings. The difference between the two research traditions [positivist and interpretive] is not that one has and one lacks objectivity. The difference is that naturalistic researchers systematically acknowledge and document their biases rather than striving to rise above them (Mellon, 1990:26).

One aspect of the interpretive approach to consider is that the researcher must deal with the compositions provided by the researched. This then is used to formulate a story of what the researched described. The researchers' task is to recreate the truths which they have discovered and do this to the best of their ability. Using verbatim quotations may help with this. However, this task can never truly be accomplished, for whilst there are many different versions of the truth, once it is discussed by another, misconceptions must surely be incorporated. Consequently, the researchers' writings are always merely interpretations of what they think the research subjects are doing, thinking or experiencing. The researchers' insights are restricted, because they cannot know for certain what the actual truth is for the researched.

Epistemology concerns itself with how knowledge is acquired and is influenced by the inherent ontological features. As mentioned earlier, my position tends towards that of social constructivist, employing Foucauldian archaeological tools to uncover truths as far as possible. This means to me that I want to drill down into my data

and scrutinise aspects of them in order to bring a selection of ideas to light (Kendall and Wickham, 1999; O'Farrell, 2005).

This position though is not fool proof and presents limitations. Morgan and Smircich (1980) suggest the relationship between subject and object is an indicator of the ontological and epistemological assumptions on which a study is based and this spectrum of involvement from complete participant to complete, detached observer can serve as an epistemic barometer (Westbrook, 1994; Chatman, 1984). This highlights one weakness in taking any approach, social constructivist included. If this barometer is important then how can researchers decide where on the spectrum they and the participants reside?

Secondly, since the participants are actors, socialised within the prevailing norms and wholly constituted by structure, Copeland (2000) suggests they would be acting as mere puppets without any individual or unique thoughts. If this were the case, what would the advantage be in gathering such pedestrian data?

A further drawback of this approach is that social constructivists tend to trust the information being relayed to them by the participants and in this way, they can be deliberately misled (Copeland, 2000). The researched can decide the story they want told, regardless of the accuracy of this information.

A fourth criticism is that social constructivists:

> usually find[s] a field of what are called relevant social actors who are engaged in a process of defining technical problems, seeking solutions, and having their solutions adopted as authoritative within prevailing patterns of social use (Winner, 1993:369).

In this way, the approach can marginalise and exclude some social

groups by deciding which ones are relevant to the study, thereby disallowing the others from having their voices heard. For example, my research approach not only selected the field in which to conduct the study but also selected the fields to disregard. It identified those whom I chose to interview and those I did not choose, those that I elected to distribute questionnaires to and those I excluded. These choices were very subjective.

Finally, a fifth criticism of the approach is that, since the researcher has to interpret the data gathered, this leaves it open to flaws. These aspects are discussed more fully in the forthcoming section on reliability.

Overview of data gathering and analyses

The research data were gathered in three case study schools A, B and C in a major English city between 2006 and 2007. At the time, I was working as a consultant, supporting schools in challenging circumstances. I was invited to work in school A alongside the 'superhead'.

School A is an urban secondary comprehensive 11-16 school on the south side of a major English city with 650 pupils on roll. The majority of its pupils come from an area of high crime and deprivation. The population of the school is predominantly Afro-Caribbean with higher than average numbers of pupils on the free school meals and special needs registers. The school had been placed into special measures category, as defined by Ofsted, five years prior to this research and the head teacher at the time had subsequently left. Because of its declining reputation in the local area, the school had suffered from diminishing numbers over the years. This meant that, due to spare places being available, many new pupils had arrived at the school over time.

A new head teacher was drafted in at the request of the Local Authority. This leader had formerly led another school deemed to be 'successful'. He managed to retrieve school A from the Ofsted category of special measures in a very short time frame and secured 'specialist school status'.

The year 11 pupils reported that they had had one permanent mathematics teacher since they had started the school in year 7. I was aware that I represented their last chance at success in their forthcoming examination and was confident that I could help. At the same time, this presented me with a remarkable opportunity to experience first hand how a 'superhead' works on a daily basis. I decided to join the school as a full-time member of staff for one year, as head of mathematics and assistant head. During this year, however, the 'superhead' had developed his role, becoming an executive head teacher and leaving much of the daily running of the school to his former deputy, recently appointed as head. I had less exposure to the 'superhead' than I had anticipated.

The research data from school A focused entirely on the experiences of the year 11 pupils who had only ever known the school to be in special measures until quite recently. In the summer of 2006, questionnaires were issued and returned from all 117 pupils in the year 11 cohort. The details and ethics of this are discussed more fully in Chapter Four. This aspect of the process was designed to focus on the supplementary research question: 'What impact does leadership have at pupil level?'

Of the 23 questions asked, 3 were qualitative and 20 were quantitative. This was a deliberate positivist approach as I wanted to be able to process these data using SPSS, Chi square tests and using a null hypothesis to seek to achieve evidence of correlations. It also allowed me to access the opinions of a larger group that

interviews would have disallowed.

One of the problems that occurred during this process was that I had become familiar with the pupils. I had come into the school as an outsider and brought changes to mathematics teaching and learning. I was both one of 'them', that is an insider, a teacher and a member of the senior team as well as a stranger, a newcomer. I was someone who had listened to their stories, had understood their position and had got alongside them to help them learn and enable many to pass their examinations. I had not appreciated fully how this relationship would impact upon the integrity of my data.

School B is a large 11-16 secondary comprehensive school with around 1,500 pupils placed on the north-eastern side of a large English city. The school population is mainly white British and free school meals fall roughly within the national average. The surrounding catchment area is one of high deprivation. In previous years, pupils had achieved GCSE scores which placed it 'below average' when compared to all schools and 'well below average' when compared with similar schools. However, the school's results had improved steadily over the years and it had started to gain a better reputation in the surrounding community. The school had just moved into new premises as a result of Building Schools for the Future (BSF) funding. BSF was a government investment programme in secondary school buildings in England starting in 2005 until 2010.

One noteworthy feature here, as mentioned earlier, is the head teacher was not technically a 'superhead', in that he had not been transported in from an outside school. However, his school had seen improvements similar to schools A and C. I conducted 3 sets of interviews here during 2006 and 2007 with the head, the middle leader and a group of pupils. I was not known to the head or

middle leader and this created a very different dynamic to school C. Here I was more of an outsider researcher although my understanding and involvement as a teacher allowed me privileged understanding of the issues discussed. The design of this research was similar to school C and aimed to address the supplementary research questions:

- Could there be a rubric for leaders bringing a school out of challenging circumstances?
- How might leaders act differently?
- What impact does leadership have at middle management level?
- What impact does leadership have at pupil level?

One problem that arose here was the middle leader was absent on the day of the interviews and his deputy was assigned to the task.

School C is an 11-16 Roman Catholic secondary comprehensive school with just over 1,000 students based in a very economically-deprived council estate with high unemployment, on the south side of a large English city. The area reports high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour and is situated in one of the most deprived areas of the country. The school population is predominantly white British. The school, at one stage, had a very good reputation in the local area but its profile had fallen dramatically over time. After it was placed in special measures category, as defined by Ofsted, the head teacher at the time left the school and a series of temporary heads were drafted in. A new head teacher was secured by the Local Authority, one with a reputation of successful school leadership. This head was working hard to improve the profile of his school. At the time the research was conducted they had recently moved into a new building as a result of BSF funding.

I was familiar with school C in my role as consultant, due to it having been in challenging circumstances at one stage. The head teacher was in his third headship, the first being in a rural 'middle-class' area and the second a failing school which he led alongside his current school. He had been headhunted and appointed to change the profile of the school. The research data were gathered during 2006 and 2007 and comprised interviews with the head, the middle leader and 2 pupils. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. They were then analysed by reading and re-reading to seek data which address the supplementary research questions:

- Could there be a rubric for leaders bringing a school out of challenging circumstances?
- How might leaders act differently?
- What impact does leadership have at middle management level?
- What impact does leadership have at pupil level?

The heads' responses for both schools B and C were placed in a grid alongside the NPQH criteria to seek out similarities and differences.

My role within the education community also necessitated me becoming an insider-outsider practitioner. I was known to the head and this relaxed the formalities of the interview situation. I had seen the school in former situations and had an appreciation for the hard work and endeavour it had taken to achieve the sense of calm that I was aware of on the day I arrived to conduct the interviews. This familiarity removes any level of objectivity from the process. My role also impacted upon the data gathered from the middle leader, who viewed the process with suspicion and initial reluctance, and possibly saw me as an agent of the structures of power.

Methods

In my data gathering, I employed a mixed-methods approach across the three schools. This included the use of questionnaires in school A and semi-structured interviews in schools B and C. I incorporated questionnaires into my research to capture as large a sample as possible and to inform my interview questions. I included open and closed questions in the questionnaires in order to allow some sense of the children's voices to emerge. The questionnaires allowed me, to some extent, to overcome the reduced field that the interviews restricted me to.

Silverman (2006) warns against treating research methods merely as techniques. They need to reflect the nature of the research, resonate with the epistemological and theoretical stances and be fit for purpose. I would like to have flexibility to select methods as appropriate to the study. For example, whilst I have not conducted a positivist study, I have used questionnaires and the SPSS data package to assist me in analysing the resulting data.

The dichotomy between quantitative and qualitative methods is too simplistic and a combination may be hugely helpful. Silverman views such positivist-interpretivist polarities in social science as 'highly dangerous':

> At best, they are pedagogic devices for students to obtain a first grip on a difficult field – they help us to learn the jargon. At worst, they are excuses for not thinking, which assemble groups of researchers into 'armed camps', unwilling to learn from one another (Silverman, 2005:8).

This criticism of approaches serves to problematise the categorisation inherent within selecting one approach over another. As such, this would be an anti-Foucauldian route to pursue. In this way, the methodology employed here departs from the theoretical

use of Foucault. A further hiatus occurs when I employ tools such as the Excellence in Mathematics Leadership (EiML) framework and NPQH models to analyse my data. I employed these tools as they were two mainstream models which were used to prepare middle and senior leaders for their roles. I sought to examine whether the frameworks provided any similarity to those data gathered from the schools' heads. Since they represent instruments which uphold the apparatus my use of them foregrounds them and helps to perpetuate the dominant discourses. Their use is problematised more fully in Chapter Six.

Whilst I have lent heavily on Foucault's tools, there are weaknesses in using him as a theoretical framework. The use of Foucault's work alone to problematise the area of research provides a limited model. Previously, in many countries his writings were not recognised as being of sufficient academic rigour, although this situation is starting to change. Nevertheless, he debated some controversial aspects of everyday life such as madness and prisons, exposing some unsavoury practices by stepping outside the dominant discourses and archaeologically addressing some taken- for-granted notions (O'Farrell, 2005).

Also, whilst French is a precise language, there is always the danger of translation errors and misinterpretation and this serves to make Foucault's work even harder to access and use. For example, the '…word "dispositif" is translated as 'deployment' in the *History of sexuality,* but as "apparatus" elsewhere' (O'Farrell, 2005:7).

Sampling

The entire population for this study is comprised of pupils who had been taught in schools that had been in challenging circumstances and emerged into a more successful institution. The year 11 group had attended school A as it plummeted into its worst stage and

remained there for several years before a new management structure, including the 'superhead', was put into place. The group I worked with in this aspect therefore was a homogeneous sample of the population. This type of sampling is used '…when the goal of the research is to understand and describe a particular group in depth' (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006:no page). Using a sample size of 117 was sufficiently large enough to generate a wide range of responses to analyse. A sample size of thirty is held by many to be the minimum number of cases if researchers plan to use some form of statistical analysis on their data. Delice (2010) reminds us, however, that it is up to the researcher to decide on an appropriate sample size depending on the research topic, its aims and analysis techniques.

Questionnaires school A

I used a four point Likert scale for the quantitative questions and this was a deliberate attempt to ensure that the pupils considered their responses rather than simply opting for the middle choice. This focus highlights the organisation of knowledge for research purposes, i.e. providing a limiting range of responses for the participants to adhere to. By using this scale, I removed their ability to select the middle score where this may have truly reflected their opinions. Likert scales are used in structured interviews but may also be employed in semi-structured interviews alongside the opportunity 'to probe and expand the interviewee's responses' (Opie, 2006:118). The difficulty with using Likert or rating scales is 'not really knowing if the rating given by one observer means the same as the same rating given by another observer' (Opie, 2006:125). Having a sufficiently large sample of 117 should have helped to iron out some of the inconsistences induced in this way.

The data were inputted into SPSS and each child given a code number from 1 to 117. The code -99 indicates missing data, which

resulted from either the question not being answered, the response being illegible, misinterpreted, multiple responses given instead of one, or the pupil not being in a position to comment (Field, 2009). For example, Question 2 asks the pupils to indicate which year they joined the school and, if they had joined in years 10 or 11, they were asked to proceed to Question 15. 33 pupils indicated that they had joined the school in the previous two years. The instruction regarding this was written in quite small font and the questionnaire design may have been improved, if this had been made more apparent (Appendix A1).[2]

Asked whether the pupils agreed with the inspectors' decision to place the school in special measures – of those in a position to reply 80.5% said 'Yes' and 19.5% said 'No'. The final question: 'What is the *first* thing you would change?' resulted in 96 out of 117 replies. This question might appear as a pseudo parity of power in that the pupils would be unable, in their current position, to actually be in charge and to change the school. Nevertheless, I would have hoped that this question, however hypothetical, could produce some helpful and informative answers. 18 responses made some mention of teachers or teaching. This would indicate the importance that the pupils placed upon teaching. The data were analysed using cross tabulation processes to look for any correlations that might exist.

The construction of many of the questions was, in retrospect, quite weak and, in part, incorporates somewhat leading questions. For example: Question 7: 'Which year were you in when you noticed an improvement in standards?' leads the respondent to believe that not

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[2] To aid the data inputting and analyses process, males were accorded a value of 1 and females a value of 2. The codes used were reversed so that Strongly Agree was given 4 points, Agree 3, Disagree 2 and Strongly Disagree 1 point. This was to fall in line with the usual practice of awarding a positive response the highest score (Field, 2009).

only was there an improvement but presupposes that they noticed it. Also, Question 8: 'Which year was the happiest year for you at this school?' and Question 9: 'Which year was the unhappiest year for you at this school?' – both questions suggest that there was one year in particular, that could be considered the happiest and the unhappiest when indeed this might not have been the case. The pupils may have been equally happy or unhappy throughout their time at the school or if there were changes to this status it may not have been year-group based. However, the questions had been informed by my informal chats with the pupils prior to the questionnaires and I felt that these types of questions mentioned issues that had been discussed previously (Appendices A2, 3). More leading questions appear in questions 10, 11 and 12 (Appendix A1).

In defence of the weaknesses described above, I had tried to incorporate simplicity so that the pupils could complete it quickly without too much deliberation. Robson (2002) asserts that the questionnaire length and, therefore, the time needed to complete is an important factor to take account of during the planning process. In fact, all the pupils completed it, returned it and did not discuss it with anyone else, thus it provided an individual response which drew upon the personal memories that each pupil had of a situation, as far as possible.

A major part of the art of designing such a tool is to write questions which allow the respondents to understand what you want from them and feel happy to give it to you, whilst the questions 'remain faithful to the research task' (Robson, 2002:242). I explained to the pupils the focus of my study and that I was trying to capture their experiences as a pupil in a school which had been placed in special measures and subsequently had emerged and changed its profile to specialist school status.

As well as the use of a questionnaire, I decided to conduct interviews as described below.

Interviews schools B and C:

Noaks and Wincup (2004) indicate four different interview strategies: structured, semi-structured, open-ended interviews and focus groups. I decided to conduct semi-structured interviews in schools B and C so that I could ensure that I had covered all aspects of what I intended, whilst also allowing the respondent to add anything necessary when and where appropriate. I thought that conducting an open-ended interview might seem as though I had arrived unprepared which, in turn, could have been construed as being unprofessional and wasting the participants' time.

This contradicts the advice: 'we might expect to carry out a relatively small number of open-ended interviews in order 'to enter, in an empathic way, the lived experience of the person or group being studied' (McLeod, 1994:89). I decided to veer away from using a formal fully-structured format. I wanted to set the scene that a dialogue was to occur, to make the participants feel that their views were important, to gain other information that I may not have gained otherwise and to attempt to make the interview as informal and comfortable as possible.

I interviewed those pupils that were made available to me on the day. In school B, this was four year 8 pupils and in school C it was two year 11 pupils. In the latter, the pupils selected were the deputy head boy (M) and head girl (F) at the time. This may have been a deliberate choice on the part of the head of mathematics as they would be reasonably competent and articulate people who had experience in representing the school in a good light. A discussion on this aspect follows more fully in Chapter Eight. Initially, I felt that

this would not provide me with the honesty that I might have achieved, particularly as the head of mathematics remained in the room throughout most of the interview and was able to comment afterwards on some of the responses that were made during the session – although at the time he appeared to be busy continuing with his own work.

Upon reflection and listening to the recording of the interview, I realised that I had stumbled across a rich description of life as a sixteen-year-old teenager, particularly from the head girl. Schostak (2006) describes the interview as an 'inter-view' by inserting a hyphen to define a space between the interviewee and the interviewer. I find the notion helpful as for me; it tends to slow the process down, to concentrate on just that one word, split into its two parts, as if playing it in slow motion. By doing so I am forced to consider the fortunate position of obtaining an internal glimpse of someone else's world. By conducting the interviews, I gained a unique insight into the experiences of another and was privy to listening to their individual stories, their dominant discourses, which had been built up slowly over time.

The students' personal positions within the school, friendship groups and home lives allowed them to construct themselves as 'social actors' within their personal social problems (Chambon et al., 1999:57). This places them as participants '… in a larger political drama concerning demands of labour, the demands of employers and the demands of the government' (Schostak, 2006:4-5). This notion situates the interviewees in this study as elements in a larger political arena.

I had clearly underestimated the intrusion the interview has into one's professional life. This was echoed in both schools B and C, where, on one occasion, I had to return the following week to allow

the teacher some preparation time, whilst in the other I had to reassure the teacher several times that his responses would be kept anonymous. When I returned to school C the following week, I was bemused by the evident amount of preparation the teacher had conducted in advance of the meeting. He had written notes on the questionnaire sheet presumably with reminders to himself on what he wanted to mention in response to each question. This made me feel that I had better remain with the questions listed as it would seem to be unfair to add subsidiary questions, even if his responses gave rise to them. Perhaps I had simply overlooked the learning style of this teacher. He may always prefer to be fully prepared for any task in advance and appreciate not having to extemporise. The middle leaders' interviews are discussed more fully in Chapter Seven.

Other participants, such as both head teachers and the pupils, seemed to be comfortable in dealing with the questions as they came and presumably were confident that they would be able to respond in an appropriate way. This promotes the question whether this was down to learning style, experience, confidence, a fear of one's own voice or pressure to comply. Schostak (2006) describes this as 'the right to say no':

> The negotiation of access as a principle means that access can either be able to be granted or denied or conditions given which reduce the ability of the interviewer to record or represent what is seen and heard (Schostak, 2006:54).

This dilemma leads me on to consider the ethical issues involved in the subsequent chapter.

Analytical models

As well as using SPSS as a tool to assist with the analysis of the data from school A, I selected two models to guide my

scrutiny of the interview data at senior leadership levels from schools B and C. They are: the NPQH training criteria, as set out by the NCSL and the EiML tools, which have been drawn up to support middle leaders of mathematics. Using such models as these, by definition, categorises, delineates and classifies and as such, according to Foucault, is itself a tool of power (Ball, 1990). Here I am objectifying the interviewees: '…the objectification of the subject by processes of classification and division… are what Foucault called "dividing practices"' (Ball, 1990:3-4). The dividing practices were also visible in my use of the tools. I was not focused on middle leadership per se in this research but on the impact that senior leadership had upon these teachers. For this reason, I have not used the tools to interrogate the middle leaders' data.

Whilst mainstream leadership training provides 'useful material for heads and other educational leaders and potential leaders who wish to understand distributed leadership, its development within their school and its likely benefits' (Arrowsmith, 2005:33), it is a limited model, lacking in methodological rigour, sound research and literature base (Arrowsmith, 2005).

Thrupp and Willmott (2003:3) suggest that 'much of this literature should be permanently retired [and be replaced by those] more genuinely educational, more politically astute and more committed to social justice'. However, practices which render people as subjects of power can also constitute them as powerful subjects. 'The effects of power are both positive and negative' (Ball, 1990:5).

Thrupp categorises the literature into three main sections: primarily problem solving, overt apologism and subtle apologism. Primarily problem solving texts often include tips which reduce the complexities of education into simplistic bullet point formulaic remedies (Thrupp, 2003). Overt apologism looks to 'restructure the

school so that it fits with the ideologies and technologies of neo-liberal and managerial reform' and fails to challenge these structures (Thrupp, 2003:151). Subtle apologist texts 'indicate some concern about school leadership within the context of post-welfarist education reform' but they fail to emphasise and address these concerns. They are insufficiently critical and do not 'really challenge managerial models of leadership' (Thrupp, 2003 159).

The NPQH qualification was introduced by the government in 1997 in an attempt to improve the leadership of schools by making the training and qualification a mandatory requirement in 2009 for all first-time-appointed heads in the maintained sector (DfE, 2011). It was led by the NCSL, which has since amalgamated with the Teaching Agency to become the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL). The incorporation of the word 'teaching' into the title is interesting and could be seen as an acknowledgment of the importance of teaching in school life. When the discourse contained within the training texts was analysed by Thomson (2007:1070), it showed that '…it demonizes inner urban children, families and neighbourhoods while individualizing their behaviours and needs and ignoring their strengths and assets'. Since all three of my research schools were in highly-deprived urban areas, this choice of analytic tool may have been counterproductive.

Since February 2012, the NPQH qualification is no longer a requirement for headship (DfE, 2011), although the NCSL states that 85% of governors look for evidence of the qualification when appointing head teachers (NCSL, 2012). Here again we have the suggestion that there is an element of choice at play as the qualification is no longer mandatory. The choice, however, is subtly reduced or perhaps removed when the majority of schools expect newly-appointed school leaders to have it, so we see

another 'game of choice' in evidence. This qualification is one which has been put in place by the government. By controlling the training of the schools' leaders, the government, in turn, has a greater scope of influence upon the schools themselves, resulting in what Gronn (2003:7) calls 'designer leadership', which '…is by and large unlikely to challenge [the] agenda' (Thrupp, 2005:18). By using these models, I have granted them a status, and a 'second-order judgement' has been made (Kendall and Wickham, 1999:13). Thus, by default, I have deviated from Foucault's methodology.

Whilst recognising these reservations and appreciating that 'there has been surprisingly little academic work about (rather than for) the NCSL' (Thrupp, 2005:12), I decided to incorporate NCSL materials into my work to help me assimilate my former knowledge with my current and emerging knowledge and to help me to order my thinking. It was one way in which I could align theory against practice to deliberate upon how well the models would stand up to practical scrutiny. Whilst I had anticipated this activity from the beginning of my study, I had not predicted that I would employ Foucauldian tools to analyse critically the models themselves. This strategy has provided me with a more holistic and objective viewpoint of the overall elitist discourses being upheld by such models.

As mentioned, the second model I have used is that of EiML, which categorises aspects of the middle leadership role. These materials were funded by the DfE in England. These also form part of the dominant literature and by utilising them, I inadvertently awarded them an elitist stature. Upon reflection, it would be useful to examine the data alongside an analytic tool that was independent of the education system, in an attempt to reduce bias. My choice to use these models made at the start of writing this thesis has allowed me to see how insular and unquestioning

my approach actually was. Without their inclusion, I may never have come to put them under the critical lens of the Foucauldian tools. So, in their own way, these models have acted as a vehicle to allow me to consider the extent to which my own decisions are confined and limited, thereby becoming a more reflexive researcher in the process.

Conclusion

This chapter intends to locate the research methodology within the cultural aspects of this study. It emphasises the impact of the researcher's ontological and epistemological positions and how this can limit the choices made in approach and methods. This serves to reinforce the arguments made in the previous chapters that we are moulded by the apparatus which, in turn, our actions serve to uphold. The theme of this discussion is continued in the forthcoming chapter, which deals with ethics, reflexivity, reliability, validity, generalisation and triangulation.

Chapter 4 Further methodological considerations

Introduction

This chapter continues to build upon the methodological underpinnings of the research. My role as insider-outsider researcher brought with it inherent problems together with some positive attributes. This chapter lends itself fully to discussing these aspects, including ethical issues and reflexivity alongside reliability, validity, generalisation and triangulation. These are discussed in an attempt to give as full and balanced account of the process as possible.

Ethics and Reflexivity

In order to consider my blank and blind spots, as well as recognising the effect of my 'self' before, during and after the research took place, I need to consider how I affected the research data process and outcomes. The effect is known as reflexivity. Reflexivity acknowledges the relationship between the researcher and the social world, which is in keeping with Foucauldian thought. My role during the research gathering, both in the questionnaires and in the interviews, will have affected the responses, at least in some way. In particular, my familiarity with this type of environment and my knowing some of the participants in the field will have impacted upon the data. Whether I nodded to some answers or frowned after others will also have resulted in subtle expressions of non-verbal and verbal responses. The uncertainty at transferring from teacher/consultant to researcher and engaging in quite a different process than I was accustomed to in the interviews, will also have affected the responses gained.

Ethics can be employed in two different ways, one meaning 'actual norms' and the other 'a study of moral norms' where the latter is

used synonymously with 'moral philosophy' (Banks, 2004:48). Banks suggests that, in the first definition, the terms 'morals' and 'ethics' are used interchangeably. Although they each come from different roots, they both have the same meaning of habits, customs and norms. Some, but not all theorists, make a distinction between the terms where 'morals' are viewed as 'externally imposed universalisable values or duties'. The term ethics, however, is defined as 'constructed norms of internal consistency', or the principles at the foundation of one's conduct (Osborne, 1998, cited in Banks, 2004:48-49). In this context, I have followed Banks' lead and used the terms ethics and morals interchangeably.

This research was carried out before the current, more stringent ethical codes were in place at the university and it complied fully with the ethical obligations at the time. However, a statement such as this, declaring compliance is, in itself, insufficient and the ethics involved need to be carefully considered and discussed. As a teacher when the research was carried out, I was an 'insider' that is, I was familiar with the routines and practices inherent within the school setting. This allowed me a level of privilege, to some extent, in that the head teachers, as gatekeepers, may have been more convinced that I would have a sympathetic and informed understanding of the nuances within their school and provide a less critical and unbiased interrogation of their data. In school A, as mentioned earlier, I had been invited by the Local Authority and head teacher to work at the school as a consultant, to help it in its journey to becoming successful. Initially, I had agreed to work there to support them for 6 weeks whilst also gaining useful preparation for my research, but I was so touched by the stories of the students – particularly those starting into year 11, that I decided to stay for one academic year as a full-time teacher. These students had told me how they had been taught mathematics for four years by part-time temporary supply teachers and they described how the

system had failed them. As a newcomer to the school, I was definitely an outsider and one who had to prove myself, gain their trust and respect and to restore in them the hope that they could perform well in their forthcoming GCSE examinations.

The change of roles from newcomer to insider and from teacher to researcher exemplifies the fluidity involved in describing and quantifying researcher identities. Bauman (1993) accords the term 'liquid identities' to describe this lack of stability, multiple positions and continuously shifting relationships which result in the messiness of research. At the time, I did not consider the extent of the ethical implications as a researcher, thinking more as a teacher who wanted to help the students as far as possible. However, the implications were much more far reaching than I could have anticipated. Whether they liked me, trusted me, respected me or not, I would have impacted upon the data gained. Either way, it introduced an extra set of power dynamics into the situation that an external researcher may not have encountered.

Not to consider the power relations involved here could possibly perpetuate unjust practices within the social body, according to Foucault (O'Farrell, 2005). I conducted questionnaires without considering the possibility that I, as the person conducting the enquiry, could affect the outcome and, therefore, the integrity and reliability of the data. The fact that all 117 pupils completed their questionnaires immediately following their GCSE mathematics examination is one indication that my position had influenced this. When the students described the newcomers in the data, they were including me by default in that description as I had arrived new to the school in their final year. How that would have impacted upon their responses is hard to decide in hindsight. This description describes how complex, conducting research really is and adherence to a set of codes is only a part of the process.

The interviews at school C were also subject to influence as I had carried out some work at the school as part of the Local Authority support package. I was known to the head teacher and middle manager. In some ways, this aided the interviews with the head as it was quite informal. It also had an impact on the middle leader's interview, as discussed below.

A set of ethical codes, whilst well-intentioned in its aim, is an example of the apparatus that we are exposed to (Agamben, 2009; Foucault, 1977). Their very existence, according to Sikes (2006), are an indication that research can be harmful. Fine et al. (2000) note that such frameworks can be evoked to allow us to abdicate from moral and ethical responsibilities. This, in turn, can safeguard researchers from litigation. Sikes (2006) suggests that a good acid test for researchers to consider is whether it would be acceptable for the researcher's own child to have taken part. In this respect, my answer would surely be 'yes' as I have always put the safeguarding of children foremost in my work and personal life.

However, ethical guidance can serve as a moral framework to make researchers stop and consider issues that may well be otherwise overlooked or ignored. Not only does the impact upon those researched need to be considered, but how the research could be used or misused by others in the future is also a point worth considering (Sikes, 2006). Used flexibly, it should not constitute an either/or situation but could be used to '…throw light into unseen corners and can suggest new avenues of thought [it should not be] a substitute for personal judgement' (Seedhouse, 1998:208).

The research involves children, who are regarded as a 'vulnerable' group. There was also a certain degree of 'exposed vulnerability' with the teachers whom I interviewed, as discussed below. The question of whether I conducted myself in a different way as a

researcher than I would have done as a professional person or in a personal scenario is something to be considered here. Upon initial examination, I would exhibit ethical conduct in all three areas of my life, that is, rely upon 'moral agents' such as 'honesty, integrity and so on' (Banks, 2004:6).

I endeavoured to incorporate an 'ethic of care', entailing a focus on 'particularity, context, discretion, compassion and empathy' (Banks, 2004:15). Whilst Banks suggests that there are two theoretical approaches to ethics – partial and situated or impartial and detached – they are not mutually exclusive. I would consider my ethical approach to be the former rather than the latter. 'Partial, situated approaches' stress 'relationships, motives and emotions' (Banks, 2004:12).

My background and understanding of the world of schools provided me with empathy for the participants at all three levels employed. I was aware of the 'busyness' of the school leaders and teachers and was grateful for the time they allocated to me. At the same time, I identified with the children I spoke to, who relayed details of their lives in a descriptive manner. This makes me wonder whether empathy is part of ethics. Establishing a sense of trust with the participants probably enhanced the process and made the data emerge more easily. Recognising the feelings of the interviewees and questionnaire respondents was possibly a precursor to establishing productive conditions.

Prior to the school visits, I prepared the questions and, before commencing the interviews, I explained fully who I was and what the research was for. I handed each interviewee a printed set of the questions so they could keep abreast of where I was up to in the session. I also disseminated a copy of an ethics sheet (Appendix D) and gave assurances that responses would be kept anonymous, as

would the name of their school. In one case, as mentioned in Chapter Three, the interviewee was a bit dismayed that he had been nominated to be interviewed without being fully consulted or his permission sought. He had been told that I was due to visit his department but no mention of an interview had been made by the head teacher.

In this situation, I was confronted with an ethical dilemma. Should I abandon all the research intended in that particular school and source another or continue with the research as intended? I had already interviewed the head teacher, who had set aside a fair amount of time in a busy school day in order to be interviewed. I was reluctant to dismiss his data on an ethical basis. I decided to employ a common-sense approach and suggested that I could come back the following week to allow the middle leader time to read through the questions. He seemed to be happier with this suggestion. I also gave him the opportunity to withdraw from the process altogether but he agreed to take part and said he appreciated being given time to prepare more fully. I returned the following week and interviewed both him and his pupils. Perhaps it was his professional position that made him wary of the interview in the first instance because when he allocated two pupils to take part in the ensuing pupils' interview session, there was no suggestion, as far as I was aware, that they would need time to prepare.

This situation evokes a question as to how permissions were granted within my research. The gatekeeper, in all three schools, was the head teacher. This clearly brought with it a whole raft of attached difficulties, as it provoked a sense of mistrust on the part of the teachers. This resulted in producing suspicion where I may have been seen as an agent of the head teacher and my neutrality brought into question. This necessitated me having to establish a sense of authenticity and reassure participants that their

responses would be made anonymous. I also had to reassure them that the final thesis was for a doctoral study and, therefore, implicitly suggesting that the audience would be very limited.

Further to this, I would not be expected to produce a report, either verbal or written, for the head teachers or other bodies. I did not state that they would be given a final copy of the thesis for feedback before submission. In fact, this research was very one-sided, in that the participants did not benefit at all from taking part, except from having the opportunity to reflect upon their situation and to have someone seek and listen to their opinions or, as Schostak writes, to 'give witness to their experiences and views' (Schostak, 2006:135). However, my approach could be viewed as being an 'unscrupulous, self-serving researcher[s]' (Piper and Stronach, 2008:19).

The power relations involved in the gatekeeper having the authority to give someone access to others is noteworthy here. Once the access has been granted, some level of power is acquired by the researcher. That is not to say that it automatically results in compliance on the part of the participants, the contrary was the case in school C. Foucault suggests that the interplay of power needs exactly these conditions in order to exist, otherwise it would result in domination (Chambon et al., 1999). Foucault suggests that knowledge and power are closely related and teacher C's knowledge gave him a more powerful sense of authority than he might have exhibited in other circumstances (Faubion, 1994). This formulates what Furlong (no date) suggests is 'the ritual humiliation of the researcher' (Furlong, cited in Kogan, 2003:73). He knew that he had information which would be useful to me, which Foucault might call 'special knowledge' and he made me wait and return to the school the following week in order to have access to it (Faubion, 1994:31).

Foucault's approach to power is distinctive in its stress on how power is embedded in social relations and activities, and its 'productive' aspects. Power operates through the micro-political processes of social interactions, producing distinctive social realities and kinds of human subjects in the process (Miller and Silverman, 1995:735).

In this instance, I was subjected to the power of teacher C, whilst waiting for his consent to conduct the interview. This provided a supplementary gatekeeper to the official one in the form of the head teacher.

In school B, I was allowed access to a group of year 8 pupils to whom I explained the reasons for the interviews and gave a copy of the questions and a letter of explanation and thanks. This seemed to establish a professional start to the proceedings and the pupils acted accordingly.

There are clear sensitivities with involving children in the research process and this consideration falls within the realm of ethical issues and researchers need to be mindful that children are vulnerable. Permissions need to be sought and the same level of integrity maintained as would be in the educational arena.

Christensen and James (2000) remind us of the power relations involved in researching children and that researchers need to be mindful that they are interpreting the children's meanings using the adult mind.

Ironically, by protecting children in a well-intentioned manner, we can inadvertently expose them to questionable practices:

In Australia it is no longer satisfactory for parents to consent to their children's involvement in research: now the children themselves must consent and indeed sign consent forms – even five year olds – thus entering into contracts which are strictly illegal (Piper and Stronach, 2008:19).

Involving children in illegal contracts could hardly be perceived as protecting their interests. It could result in 'removing their voices' and risk them not having their voices heard (Piper and Stronach, 2008:19).

David et al. (2001:347-348) point out that, 'Traditionally, parents' permission has been sought for their children's participation in research'. In their research, they attempted to allow the children to make the decision to partake or not, by approaching them through schools in order to 'privilege their own self-selection and decision to participate in research rather than that given by their parents and/or their teachers' (David et al., 2001:348). In essence, in their case, although the school head teacher was the initial gatekeeper who allowed the researchers access into the school, the children were allowed to decide if they wanted to participate. The pupils involved in my research were not provided with this opportunity as they were selected by the teachers. At the time, I did not question this arrangement, as it did not occur to me that it was based upon my own personal acceptance of the hierarchical social constructs in play.

Since the interviews took place during lesson time, the notion of the pupils giving 'informed consent' may be a non-starter. Had the teachers asked for volunteers and fully briefed them on what was involved, they may have had more children that I required and then be faced with the task of selecting from that number. The motivations which children have for taking part in research, as described by Edwards and Alldred (1999), are:

- Interest in the subject being researched
- Research as educational, that is, they would learn something from the process
- Research as an opportunity to talk about their lives and discuss problems
- Research as the opportunity to air opinions and experiences and be listened to by an adult.

However, the children in my research interviews might have simply seen it as an opportunity to do something different from the normal routine or to be excused from their mathematics lesson. Either way, the notion of 'informed consent' is an area which might benefit from further scrutiny. Giving consent at the outset may also be a dubious practice when working with children (Alderson, 1993) and the consent should be confirmed at intervals throughout the process. However, my research with children each consisted of only one interview or one questionnaire, and regular confirmation of consent may have interrupted the flow of the study and disabled the process.

In all, I endeavoured to ensure that the children were at ease with the process and made it as unobtrusive as possible. In hindsight, the introductory information details which I handed to all interview participants should have been amended into more child-friendly words for the children involved (Appendix D). By treating the children in the same way as the adults involved, I have reduced the 'other' to the 'same', contradicting the advice of Bauman (1993) that, whilst recognising the pupils as social actors, it did not justify my treating them as adults. One other difference between the treatment of adults and children in my research was that of confidentiality. In my ethics information form (Appendix D), I included the paragraph:

> Unless otherwise agreed for particular purposes, names of people and places will not be used in the reporting process. Information will be anonymised. Data will be stored securely and no one other than me will have access to the identity of the school or people interviewed

If a child had divulged something which brought child protection aspects into question, I would have had to breach my confidentiality agreement.

Consent to conduct the research was given by the head teacher who in each case (A, B and C) was the gatekeeper for this particular study. In each case, it was him who I approached to ask permission to carry out the fieldwork. I briefed each head teacher fully before embarking on the study and supplied them with a printed copy of the ethics form and the set of questions for the semi-structured interviews. As I did not have access to the middle manager or pupils at this stage, I could not personally prepare these groups in advance.

In both schools B and C, the middle managers were not really aware of why I was visiting. In the latter case, once I had explained my intention, it was clear that the teacher C was not happy about the situation and I asked if he would prefer me to go away and return the following week. This offer was accepted and when I returned he seemed happy to take part as he had had time to read over the questions and prepare the answers. In both schools B and C there appeared to be some reticence on the part of the teachers in answering the questions. There was a worry that the information would be given to the head teacher and it could be used against them.

In school A, I sought the permission from the head teacher as the school gatekeeper initially to ascertain if I could issue questionnaires. Once granted, I had to consider when the best time would be in which to do so. Here, I was faced with a dilemma, should I use the pupils' lesson time or free time in which to conduct the study? To make the results as reliable as possible, I wanted the pupils to have a quiet time in which to reflect upon the

questions. I also wanted to ensure that every pupil had the opportunity to return their copy if they so desired. I was aware that I needed to remove as many constraints upon the pupils as possible, including difficult home circumstances that may have prevented them from completing the questions out of school hours. I decided that the most ethical time was to take a few minutes following the final mathematics examination. I had spoken to them all in advance to make it clear that this would happen and to give them the right to withdraw. I also checked with the head teacher and the university that this was acceptable.

The questionnaire was designed to be completed quickly and was comprised of 23 straightforward questions, most of which were tick box answers. They were located on one doubled-sided A4 sheet (Appendix A2). Employing Sikes's (2006) advice that researchers should consider 'would this be acceptable for your own child?' premise, I was certain that I would have been perfectly content for my child to have been issued the sheet of questions in similar circumstances.

It was perhaps the best opportunity to have access to a whole year group at one time and a peaceful time slot in which to gain responses. I think it was a credit to the 117 pupils who, without exception, completed the task. In all cases, I said that the responses would remain anonymous and with the pupils I explained what that meant. I have removed any aspect from my writing which would serve to indicate where the school is situated or which school was used. I have simply referred to them as schools A, B and C and anonymised the identities of those involved. Although I informed all participants, except pupils from school A, of where the final published account would likely to be stored and offered to share it with them if they wished, no-one asked me to do this.

In schools B and C, I agreed the time and date in advance with the head teacher. They, in turn, organised for the middle manager to meet with me. The middle managers arranged access to the pupils. I introduced myself where necessary (some participants already knew me) and explained why I was present and handed out the printed information as described earlier. I asked permission to take notes and use a voice recorder where applicable, before commencing the interview. Before leaving the interview, I thanked everyone who took part. This was an essential aspect of the study as I cannot acknowledge the interviewees in my work due to anonymity being preserved. I believe that the ethical considerations surrounding research are important. Contemplating upon the approaches and implications of a study may well lead to a more thoughtful and respectful stance and help the researcher gain a more empathic lens from which to work. Without this consideration, the researcher becomes more of a technician, disconnected from the human issues (Miller and Silverman, 1995).

Something that I did not pay heed to, however, was my exit strategy. Schostak (2006) reminds us that we mostly, but not always, engage in some sort of conversation after the interview has ended. This may partly be due to the participant wanting to continue speaking. In the interview with head teacher C, he was walking towards the door as the interview concluded as he was needed elsewhere in the building. This provided a natural, though abrupt, end to the proceedings and there was no opportunity for small talk or further conversations.

However, in the other cases as the interviews had ended, I did not make note of the conversations which ensued or how I incorporated an exit strategy into the process. Perhaps I missed an opportunity at this point to seek further data but from an ethical point, I would not have felt happy to use data received after the interview ended. It

was as though the participants were officially off duty and could relax into their own personas, i.e. one which is not being recorded or notes being written about. They had completed the task they had set out to do.

One final consideration before leaving this discussion on ethical procedures is that of the disposal of raw data (Oliver, 2003). I have retained all data during the time of writing up this thesis as I needed to be able to refer to them at various stages. The data have been anonymised, password protected and saved in such a way that if it was accidently accessed by another person, they would gain no further information than if they looked in the appendices of this work. The recorded accounts have also been saved electronically with password protection. It is likely that I may decide to retain these data after the submission of this thesis in case I may wish to call upon them at a later date. This shows that the data represent a richness and a value which extends beyond the limitations of this study.

Reliability and validity

Reliability considers the amount of consistency in a study and whether, if conducted again, would produce the same results. This can be done by making our research strategy, data analysis methods and theoretical stance as transparent as possible. One way to ensure this is to record observations in the most concrete way possible. Rather than reconstruct what the interviewee has said, it would be preferable to include 'verbatim accounts' (Silverman, 2006:283). Reliability is not the same as validity and a study may be reliable but not valid. However, it would be highly unlikely that a researcher would obtain the same accounts from the participants if they conducted the research at a later date. In qualitative studies, exact reliability can only be aspired to rather than achieved.

In an attempt to ascertain the reliability of the data gained from school A, I used SPSS and conducted Chi-Square tests to compare features of the data and to see if they were statistical significant. I employed a null hypothesis, for example: 'special measures have no adverse effects on pupils'. I continued to work with other aspects such as whether there were links between the child's school experiences and their happiness, the effects of gender on the data results, attitudes before and after going into special measures, attitudes on discipline, the impact of the school leadership on students' attitude and such like. In all tests carried out, no statistical significance was found (Appendix A4). This may have been due to the numbers used not being sufficiently large or the questions being too weak to illicit strong differences. Not being statistically significant would suggest that these data do not represent the whole population, that is all year 11 pupils leaving a school of this nature. Since these data are not representative, it calls to focus their individuality and remarkability. In doing so, this supports my thesis that head teachers cannot simply transfer and replicate practices from one school to another. Nevertheless, whilst statistically not significant, I would suggest that these data are important.

In the analyses of the questionnaires, I compared questions such as: 'Did you agree with inspectors' decision?' against 'Should standards of discipline at this school be tighter?' I also checked for gender bias in tests such as: 'gender' versus 'which year was the happiest year?' The results are housed in the cross-tabulation tables in Appendices A3 and A4. Whilst disappointing from a statistical and positivist point of view, the quantitative scores and qualitative comments all added to the richness of the study overall. The responses and comments supplied extra information to help me to prepare for the pupil interviews and to increase my understanding of what being a sixteen-year-old student in a category 4 school was

actually like (Appendix A4).

Within the study, I was endeavouring to establish the 'truth', as it existed at that particular moment but, as Begam (1996, cited in Chambon et al., 1999:32) asserts, 'The truth is made, not found' and that 'meaning is acquired through culturally conditioned paradigms'. This fits alongside social constructivism, which acknowledges the effect of social conditions and experiences in the understanding of 'truth'. The uncertainty attached to which version of the 'truth' is the best one, will be an area of conflict, which will not necessarily ever be resolved. In solipsism, the only certain thing is that you 'exist' and any other knowledge is impossible.

Hammersley (1992) uses the phrase 'the degree of consistency' to help explain reliability (1992:67). I argue that there was a good degree of consistency within this study as the data were gathered in a similar fashion, using similar means and entirely by me. Some social scientists suggest that since social reality is always in a state of flux, we should not worry about whether our research instrument measures accurately (Silverman, 2006). It is understandable how this could be frustrating to positivists, just as if a set of weighing scales gave different readings for the same item depending on who took the readings and at what time of day, would be unacceptable. However, within social science we have to come to terms and accept, and perhaps embrace the whole notion of flux and see it as an opportunity rather than a threat.

Generalisation and triangulation

Interpretivists stress that meanings are not independent of people (Browne et al., 2009). People coordinate their behaviours, communications and understandings through language. It is through such a process that terms get to be made generalisable. This becomes manifest in statements such as 'teachers always pick on you like that' or 'that's what always happens to people like us'

(Schostak and Schostak, 2010:447). Within the school climate, teachers coordinate their understandings of what they do and why they do it in relation to the discourses, the agendas and the policies, in which they are immersed.

Since views have been constructed in this way they cannot be treated as objective. In an attempt to see the situation from as many standpoints as possible, I used data triangulation in schools B and C by investigating three different levels: head teacher, middle manager and pupils (Schostak and Schostak, 2010). I included this form of triangulation to gain viewpoints from as many different perspectives as possible. Berg defines triangulation as 'the use of multiple lines of sight' (Berg, 2001:4).

Conclusion

This chapter provides a discussion of the ethical dimension of gathering research data. It serves to emphasise the importance of deliberating upon ethics beyond simply complying with an ethical code. It reminds the researcher of the sensitivities and complexities involved in gathering data in the social arena.

In this chapter, the power of reflexivity is also scrutinised in order to ascertain the impact this has upon the research process. Whilst no easy method exists to eradicate this, it is important, nonetheless, to deliberate upon it and archaeologically expose these subtle influences. This also emphasises and supports the overall argument of this thesis, which highlights the cultural impact of people and practices inherent within our apparatus. Whilst the discussion on the reliability, validity and generalisability of the research may suggest a positivist approach to research, that is not the intention. These data provide a very insightful, unique glimpse into life inside schools and I would be surprised if they were replicable. However, they provide some thought-provoking

perceptions and themes that will be useful to deliberate upon. These aspects of the research are discussed in order to cast light upon them so as to make the process as transparent as possible.

The use of triangulation was included in an attempt to gain three different perspectives of the inherent issues. By examining the data at three levels I have endeavoured to increase the rigour and reliability of the piece. The discussion that has evolved to this point sets the scene for the data to emerge in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight, which examine my four supplementary research questions in detail.

Chapter 5 Senior and middle leadership

Introduction

This section looks more closely at leadership in schools. This is reasonably easy to talk and write about, but much harder to do in practice (Kaser and Halbert, 2009). This thesis focuses on the senior leaders of schools to ascertain if they have one rubric for school improvement, and to examine how their leadership impacts upon teachers and pupils. The middle leaders were incorporated into the study as a means to triangulate the data to gain a wider perspective, that is, as teachers within school rather than being selected for the leadership aspect of their role. As middle leaders, however, they would have greater contact with their heads than main scale teachers. By main scale, I mean teachers who have not been promoted to a higher position in the school system. By incorporating middle leaders into this study, I aimed to see how the head teachers' leadership impacted upon them as teachers.

In the last three decades, there has been a shift from the discourses of school 'management' to 'leadership'. Perhaps the shift in terminology is part of a deliberate ploy to distract us from leadership as a social practice, making it into a more quantifiable, positivistic (and therefore measurable) 'thing', a term which is discussed later in this chapter (Thomson and Hall, 2011). If so, then the change is more than simply an extension of the duties and characteristics of a head teacher, but a vehicle to subjugate and to assess against. In this way, the brute power of the government is transferred into disciplinary power as described in Chapter Two.

Gunter (2004) wonders why head teachers are currently described

as leaders and questions whether the label itself is benign or toxic. This suggests that once a label has been awarded, the conditions of play change and a new and different expectation starts to be transmitted. Gunter goes on to ask,

> …why are they not labelled as planners, or strategists, or data analysts, or policy-makers, or performers, or organisers? Of course, they are all of these, but why does one become the prime identifying label? (Gunter, 2004:24).

This could be described as a form of new managerialism which, according to Hartley (1997), renders everything as certain, objectively recognisable, measurable and therefore comparable. It is a facet of capitalism deployed in the interests of neoliberal forms of organisation whereby the government creates the structural conditions to increase performance. Many head teachers, both current and aspirant, complicity and docilely fall into line with this.

New managerialism came into being in the public sector in the 1990s and, according to Lynch et al. (2012), it established new sets of practices and values. It focused on outputs rather than inputs, and employed performance indicators to mark progress. It decentralised, thus producing smaller units, and favoured choice and competition (Lynch et al., 2012). It was predicated upon the scientific management principles of Taylorism from the 1900s, which focused on one correct way of doing things: payment by results, matching skills to the person and monitoring (Taylor, 1911). These models all contributed to the apparatus of the time, and responded to a need to streamline practices and make them more efficient as part of the corporate form of managing people (Agamben, 2009; Foucault 1977). The terminology may simply be a tool to control, and to make skills measureable as defined by various official policy making bodies (e.g. Department for Education and Ofsted) as well as using international performance

comparisons to justify their organisational and policy demands.

The term 'leader', just as 'captains of industry' is used in the corporate world, may be complicit in an attempt to sustain the heroic narrative of elite capitalism, so that schools require heroic 'superheads' as leaders who, through acts of supreme charisma, transform everything around them.

The terminology from the 1980s has changed from school management to leadership. Clearly the adoption of new terminology signposts a change in the processes involved therein. Senior management teams started to become known as senior leadership teams in order to earmark the new culture. As far back as the 1980s, Peters and Austin (1989) wrote:

> the concept of leadership, is crucial to the revolution now under way – so crucial that we believe the words 'managing' and 'management' should be discarded… Leadership connotes unleashing energy, building, freeing and growing (Peters and Austin, 1989: xix).

There was greater focus in schools on vision and the bigger picture, and less on the nitty-gritty of daily practices. This was not an attempt, however, to undermine the importance of management, but to enhance school leadership by placing a focus on both aspects. Furthermore, in England, many head teachers are expected not only to lead and manage but also, on occasions, to teach (Southworth, 2002).

By the time the National Curriculum was introduced into England in the late 1980s, followed by the subsequent introduction of school league tables, qualifications took precedence over other aspects of education. Head teachers were placed under pressure to ensure their pupils performed well in external examinations. In turn, the focus was turned onto their leadership, particularly if the school was

underperforming. Up to the early twentieth century, the Great Man Theory of leadership suggested that leaders were born not cultivated. Conversely, extensive research was carried out by Stogdill (1948) who suggested that there were no major differences between leaders and non-leaders. Nevertheless, he went on to identify ten characteristics or personality traits associated with outstanding leadership (Stodgill, 1948, cited in Northouse, 2013:21). These are:

- drive for responsibility and task completion
- vigour and persistence in pursuit of goals
- risk taking and originality in problem solving
- drive to exercise initiative in social situations
- self-confidence and sense of personal identity
- willingness to accept consequences of decision and action
- readiness to absorb interpersonal stress
- willingness to tolerate frustration and delay
- ability to influence other people's behaviour
- capacity to structure social interaction systems to the purpose at hand

Yet, Thomson and Hall (2011) argue that leadership is a social practice, rather than a categorised list of attributes that results in a homogenising outcome.

This listing 'has the effect of making the subject under scrutiny a 'thing' whose attributes can be refined, named and renamed, discussed and debated' (Thomson and Hall, 2011:386). Compiling a traits list suggests that leadership can be reduced to a noun and is a similar notion to power being viewed as a tangible object, rather than a force upon someone, or a relationship with something (Thomson and Hall, 2011).

Missing from the list above, amongst other things, is 'integrity'. Peters and Austin (1989) assert that a leader without integrity is no leader at all, and that the best bosses are neither tough nor tender and take risks to try something new. The terminology integral to discourse such as this brings with it a whole set of expectations. For example, the use of the word 'bosses' carries with it connotations of being 'bossed about' by a person in authority. In comparison, the term 'leader' suggests someone at the front, who leads the way, rather than working alongside others.

Becoming a 'superhead' is necessarily prefaced by becoming a head teacher in the first instance. With the abundant demands and pressures placed upon today's school leaders, one might question as to why someone would decide to be a head teacher in the first place. Fielding's (1996) audit suggests four main reasons: idealistic, functional, utilitarian and personal (Fielding, 1996). The first category seems to be the only one with an altruistic motivation, whilst the others appear more egotistic. As '[h]eads come in many different shapes, sizes and styles' (Fielding, 1996:39), how they do the job and decide on the areas for development, will determine how successful they are likely to be (Fielding, 1996). Hyman (2005) says that '[e]very leader plays many roles. Getting these roles in balance, realising that people rely on you to be each one of them at different times, is the essence of good leadership' (Hyman, 2005:79).

Leadership models

Caldwell and Spinks (1992:115) refer to educational leadership as the 'real work of the school'. Here, I discuss two main types of leadership styles, transformational and distributed. The transformational model suggests one person leading from the front, as a 'superhead' might appear to do. In this way, the head may be at the top of the hierarchy in terms of their power base. An

alternative style, in the form of distributed leadership, reduces the pyramid of power and involves others in key decision-making procedures. From a Foucauldian perspective, these two styles are quite different. However, within both, the real essence of power remains firmly with the heads. It is their choice as to how this power is translated into practice within their schools. Where the boundaries of these models lie is open to debate. By delineating the various models into discrete styles, I am by definition, categorising and labelling them, thus causing the possibility of marginalisation to occur (Rabinow, 1984). By considering this, though, I hope to at least acknowledge that it may culminate in limiting and restricting my thinking.

Transformational leadership results in positive and sustained improvements which can be achieved in many ways depending on the strengths and personal style of the head (Caldwell and Spinks, 2008).

Gunter (2005) suggests that transformational leadership is a subset of distributed leadership. Here, she argues against the premise that I stated above, that the locus of power is not centralised to one person but is spread across the team, and that a co-learning dynamic is present. I would contend that a transformational head is a very obvious leader with a clear vision, who draws upon the strengths of the whole team and delegates accordingly. I suggest that in this model, the head allows the power structures to transmit across to others. According to Santamaria and Santamaria (2012), transformational leaders are risk takers. They serve as role models in order to improve 'the bottom line'. The use of language such as 'the bottom line' acts as a signal to the power structures at play. If indeed a distributed model was present in this instance, it would suggest that the distribution was limited to a small group rather than across the school. This ideology is culturally constructed and forms

part of the overall apparatus. Such rhetoric would seem alien in the many countries where schools operate without a dedicated line manager.

Conversely, Lumby (2016) contends that distributed leadership is not only different to a transformational, heroic type of leadership but is an antidote to it. Here, the power bases are distributed more equally across the school. The teachers and pupils have a greater sense of autonomy and can influence both policy and practice. Rather than power being located in one area, being the privilege of only special candidates, distributed leadership allows almost anyone to enjoy the status of being a leader. It allows the hierarchical nature of schools to become flattened and key decision-making opportunities to become more accessible to all.

Santamaria and Santamaria (2012) claim that transformational and distributive models are less closely linked than subsets, and that they are merely associated models. I suggest however, that one may be the subset of the other, depending on the school and the style of the leader. Indeed, it may be, contrary to Gunter's view (Gunter, 2005), that distributed leadership is a subset of transformational leadership, not vice versa and a route that an excellent leader may take in a bid to achieve success. Yet this is not a hard and fast science, and one style may be able to exist without the other.

Caldwell and Spinks (1992) describe the four facets of transformational leadership as: cultural, strategic, educational and responsive. I will now discuss each of these aspects in turn. Cultural leadership necessitates embedding values through every aspect of the school including policies, language, actions, curriculum, values and beliefs (Caldwell and Spinks, 1992). This type of leadership is exemplified in the data gathered from heads B and C,

where they make mention of oracy and combing language (Appendices B1 and C1). There is also a suggestion that the heads leading from the front demonstrate their values and beliefs: that myths of underachievement should be smashed (Appendix B1).

Strategic leadership differs from routine practical leadership in three ways: time, scale and scope of action. This style is more concerned with seeing the long view, which is one of the attributes of a good leader (MacBeath, 2002). Here, keeping abreast of trends and issues, sharing knowledge, establishing structures and processes, setting priorities, maintaining focus, and monitoring and reviewing are listed as attributes (Caldwell and Spinks, 1992). There seems to be a greater focus here on management rather than leadership.

Educational leadership necessitates a focus on the educational opportunities presented to the students. This not only includes focussing on exactly what learning is taking place, but also what criteria and accountability measures will be used to assess success.

Responsive leadership includes identifying the purposes to be addressed, testing, clarifying roles in accountability, appraisal of staff, performance indicators, feasibility, evaluation and review. Clearly the focus on these aspects have increased over the decades, where a more positivist model is currently expected from school leaders, and hard data and measures tend to carry greater weight (Caldwell and Spinks, 1992).

Senge (2006), however, takes a slightly different stance on leadership by suggesting that systems are organic, living organisations with the leader as their designer. This communicates to me a more fluid and dynamic role than the others listed above. It suggests head teachers who shape and redefine their school as

they go, ensuring that the culture reflects the mission statement and overarching aims. Since, as Lumby and English (2010) argue, education is the 'crucible where the elements of humanity are shaped', we must focus not on 'how to raise standards or assure quality' but on 'how to wholeheartedly maintain the guiding intelligence of creative and empathetic leaders of schools' (Lumby and English, 2010:25).

School leaders act as gatekeepers, not only restricting people entering the school premises, but also deciding on which initiatives to act upon or place greater authority in. Heads must choose which non-statutory aspects they will respond to. High stakes accountability may result in heads playing safe and focussing upon examination grades above all else.

Ryan (2011) makes a call for schools to have a greater focus on developing creative thinking. He refers to the Wright brothers, generally accredited with the development of the modern aeroplane, having both been school dropouts (Ryan, 2011). Unfortunately, though, according to Bottery et al. (2008), the very essence of creative thinking is being drained away due to some head teachers being concerned about the punitive nature of their jobs. Threats of poor Ofsted ratings and possible sackings can result in them being wary of encouraging creativity in their schools, especially with examination classes.

Since the leadership of a school will have a profound impact on those who work and learn there, Ryan (2011) suggests that effective leadership can be achieved by modelling desired practices, active monitoring, developing conversations and working to achieve a professional learning community.

One important aspect of a leader's role is ensuring high quality

teaching and learning occur. One way to do this is to develop an autonomous teaching workforce that takes responsibility for their own professional development and expands their professional expertise. Here the locus of power is relaxed, allowing teachers to grow their own pedagogy and educational philosophy. According to Caldwell and Spinks (1992), the principal should be involved in all training programmes in an attempt to develop a self-managing school. Creating a culture of excellence is achieved in subtle and overt ways. When this is executed well it can result in a decentralised, self-managed school where patterns of behaviour reflect the core values and beliefs (Caldwell and Spinks, 1992).

So, is self-management a utopian state that all heads should aspire to? Not according to Barker (1993), who describes it as '...a form of control more powerful, less apparent, and more difficult to resist than that of the former bureaucracy' (Barker, 1993:408). He describes an open plan office where the workers have zero tolerance of aspects such as lateness, which previously the boss would have turned a blind eye to. This could be considered as one means of employing the panoptical gaze as a self-regulatory disciplinary mechanism (Foucault, 1991). Once again, the nature of overt control being less manipulative than covert disciplinary systems comes into question. Man can easily become caught up in bureaucratic systems and red tape, and thereby 'cannot squirm out of the apparatus into which he has been harnessed' (Weber, 1978:987-988). Foucault would refer to this as the 'conduct of conducts' (Foucault, 1982, cited in Faubion, 1994:341) by which our routines are regulated and controlled through the nominative gaze (Foucault, 1977).

'Superheads' and school leadership

The political cultural scene, prior to 1999, had certainly prepared the

way for the emergence of the 'superhead'. High profile people such as Chris Woodhead, former Chief of Ofsted, had painted a very explicit and public picture of a failing education system resulting from poor teaching, one which needed to be rescued. So, when the Blair administration announced the new 'superhead' initiative there were plenty of willing volunteers.

One example was Marie Stubbs (2003), who had been a successful head teacher. She was headhunted to rescue a failing London school after the head teacher, Philip Lawrence, was murdered in 1995. The new influx of 'superheads' across the country saw many using their charismatic stories to win over the teachers, and their power to influence was enhanced.

The principle of one person coming in and improving a school singlehandedly was likened to a gun slinging superhero by former London head teacher and Ofsted Chief, Sir Michael Wilshaw. In February 2011, he was reported as saying:

> Take that scene in Pale Rider when the baddies are shooting up the town, the mists dissipate and Clint is there… Being a headteacher is all about being the lone warrior, fighting for righteousness… We need heads who enjoy power and enjoy exercising that power (Barker, 2011: no page).

Here we have a scenario of a one-man-band doing it all alone. It tends to suggest a lack of charismatic leadership. Charisma, a term once associated with the Church, was used to describe educational leadership for many years. The religious undercurrents surrounding the word charisma may signal subtle links between leadership within schools to leadership in world religions. This aspect is discussed by Lumby and English (2010), who make the point that the term 'mission' is linked to the work of Christian and Mormon disciples. Charisma has lost its potency over time, and this influence has been replaced by '…self-help gurus, New Age prophets, sports

personalities and television celebrities' (Thomson, 2009: 57).

Bottery contests the wisdom of promoting a 'charismatic' stance, since:

> such individualist emphasis can convince governments and policy makers that they should be promulgating a picture of the leader as just such an [sic] heroic charismatic 'follow–me-over-the-top' figure and for incumbent or aspirant leaders to believe that this is what they should be attempting to emulate (Bottery, 2004:18).

Similarly, Fielding (1996) warns that there are 'very few outstanding, charismatic, and universally recognised "brilliant" leaders, most headteachers tend to be known more for their weaknesses than their strengths' (Fielding, 1996:17). Macbeath, too, questions the need for charisma in our school leaders:

> There is a large degree of consensus in the literature that the immense, or perhaps really rather fragile, egos of the charismatic giants are not what is looked for in educational leadership (Macbeath, 2002:12).

Gardner (1996) suggested that charismatic leaders have both '"internal" narrative capacities and "external" cultural opportunities to make their stories resonate with large numbers of people' (Gardner, 1996, cited in Thomson, 2009:57). In other words, they have the ability to tell stories '…that influence others directly or indirectly through the ideas that their stories develop' (Thomson, 2009:57). This power over others is what Dowding refers to as 'social power', or the ability to deliberately change the incentive structure of others (Dowding, 1996, cited in Gunter, 2005:42).

Not everyone agreed with the 'superhead' principle. The NCSL, which awards the NPQH referred to earlier, has worked hard to debunk the myth of the 'hero' or 'superhead', preferring to promote a more empathic approach. By 2009, Kaser and Halbert were

thankful that 'the days of the heroic solitary leader "heading" the school are almost gone' (Kaser and Halbert, 2009:7).

Heifetz (1994) pragmatically suggests that by looking for 'superheads' we are 'looking for saviours, [but instead] we should be calling for leadership that will challenge us to face problems for which there are no simple, painless solutions' (Heifetz, 1994:21). Brian Lightman, former general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders also dispels the notion of a single saviour: 'Different schools require different styles of leadership, but schools are too complex institutions to be led by one person alone' (Stewart, 2011: no page).

Whilst the notion of 'superheads' took a back seat for a few years, the ideology still surrounds the educational agenda. By the autumn of 2013, the former Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg announced his intention to create 'an elite squad of head teachers – called 'the "champions league" in a scheme similar to Tony Blair's "superheads" programme' (Mason, 2013:no page). By 2014, 'superheads' had been approached to take over the running of some failing Birmingham schools (Coughlan, 2014). By 2016, the May administration perpetuated the notion that all challenging schools needed was to be led by a successful head from another school. As mentioned earlier, the proposal is that new grammar school heads will be asked to run schools in deprived areas. The rationale is clear, grammar school leaders are better skilled and better equipped to run challenging schools than other types of school leaders, and their skills are transferable. The seeds which were planted by Tony Blair in 1999 are still being harvested by current government ministers more than a decade and a half later.

Why lead a school in challenging circumstances?

In the cases of schools A and C, both head teachers were drafted in

by the Local Authority to rescue failing schools. As such, they both fall into the normal discourse surrounding what is considered a 'superhead'. In the context of this writing, though, I am employing the term to mean a person who has successfully transformed a school's profile. By using this definition, I am deliberately and intentionally using the term to categorise and subsequently marginalise (Rabinow, 1984).

Foucault would suggest that such marginalisation is unproductive (Rabinow, 1984), but here I suggest that my main focus on 'superheads' as opposed to other types of school leaders is being employed in a productive way. I contend that the successful leadership of challenging schools does not necessarily require an outside influence. In doing so, I am challenging the need for a 'superhead'. Head teacher B can in fact serve to be the antithesis of the belief that a change in leadership is essential to improve schools. Another difference is that head teacher B did not choose to be the head of a failing school, as did the other two. This provides a totally different dynamic from which the data can emerge.

In a small study carried out by the NCSL, all but one of the heads of challenging schools were in their second headship. They all seem to respond to the challenge that the work presented. The success they had experienced in a previous school had provided them with confidence. This, coupled with a desire to make 'rapid changes and see significant fast improvements', produced quick fixes which improved the school's reputation in the community (NCSL, 2010:7). These heads seem to thrive in the fast paced and demanding environment in which they find themselves. They describe the "buzz… the adrenaline rush' from realising that potential for success" (NCSL, 2010:8), the excitement from the lack of boredom, together with the continuous changing demands made upon them. They were driven by a strong, inclusive, aspirational,

people-centred moral purpose to make a difference, and were sustained by their supportive teams and networks. They tended to possess the ability to shut things off, that is, to compartmentalise.

Their attributes the report says, were characterised by conviction, respect, tenacity, humility, emotional intelligence, passion and risk taking. This publication was released by a government run body, and so the rhetoric was totally compatible with the educational discourse of the time. This type of oratory, alongside the policy documents, the demands of Ofsted, in line with Ofsted's leader, Sir Michael Wilshaw, and together with the right-wing press, all combine to contribute towards the apparatus (Agamben, 2009). The apparatus is predicated around the perceived 'failure' of schools to meet their externally specified floor targets. In doing so, the range of discourses are narrowed and heads are funnelled into playing a game over which they have little control. As a result, their actions are limited as they seek to respond.

Middle leadership

Having discussed senior leadership in schools, this section turns the attention to middle leaders. Middle leadership has grown in importance over the past two decades or so. Prior to this, there was an understanding that the head's role was paramount within a school. When this changed the:

> … realization was revolutionary because prior to the work of Earley and Fletcher-Campbell (1989) it could be argued that there was the tacit assumption that the leadership necessary to develop the effective school was vested in the head teacher (Mercer and Ri, 2006: 105).

Supporting the tenet that there are more important roles in schools than that of the head teacher, Brown et al. (2000:242) propose:

> …in the present context in secondary schools we

would argue that the department is the key focus for change within the school and that heads of department, with responsibility for a manageable group of people, can enable successful change within the group and thus contribute to whole school improvement.

The continuing shortage of mathematics teachers has resulted in many inexperienced teachers being promoted to middle leadership roles through necessity (Smith Report, 2004; NCETM, 2009). It may be that they feel coerced to take on roles that they are ill prepared for. This represents a 'game of choice' in many cases. Here we can see another example, added to the one cited in the section above, of where the possibility of resistance exists; and it is in such an interaction that Foucault would say that power can reside (Foucault, 1990).

So, whether being gently coerced to become a middle leader or becoming one through free choice, there is a suggestion that the role is important. This aspect emerged too in the research carried out by Hall and Noyes (2009): '[t]he subject leaders are the engine room; they have the biggest job and they are in the position to reach in both directions' (Hall and Noyes, 2009:324).

The NCETM states that good leadership is one of the factors to obtain and sustain high quality teaching and learning. This is achieved by clear communication between senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers, being a strong role model, and having a clear vision (NCETM, 2009). This focus on leadership fits neatly into the dominant discourses surrounding schools, and which form part of a continuum of limiting structures placed upon schools from the late 1980s.

The notion that being an effective leader can be categorised into a tick box list continues with Jones and Sparks' work (1997:45), who suggest there are 8 factors in becoming an effective head

of department. These are:

- Vision and sense of purpose

- Setting quality standards

- Monitoring effectiveness

- Creating the right culture

- Planning

- Professional development

- Rewarding achievement

- Being a positive role model

Here the authors are indulging in what Foucault would say was an attempt at creating order which should be challenged at every opportunity, as it is limiting and crumbling at the edges (O'Farrell, 2005). The demarcation of the middle leader into such a list reduces the identity of the person into a quantifiable set of attributes. This contributes to the apparatus which slowly and subtly impacts upon all persons involved, rendering them into docile and acceptant beings. As such, the middle leaders are co-opted by the prevailing power structures, the policy-makers, the media, and such like.

The list correlates largely with the EiML tools (Appendix C4), with the addition of quality standards and being a positive role model. This then assists the argument that much of the literature surrounding education leadership conforms to the dominant discourses of the apparatus through which control is exercised. The literature forms part of a disciplinary mechanism which operates in a subtle manner upon our middle leaders to inculcate them to become a key part of the process of control, bestowing them with the function of ensuring the compliance of staff. This is 'directed not only at the growth of its skills, nor at the intensification of its subjection, but at the formation of a relation that in the mechanism itself makes it more obedient as it becomes more

useful and conversely' (Foucault, 1977:137-138).

Buckby (1997) adds role clarity, ownership and genuine participation in the policy formulation as essential factors for ensuring effective middle leaders. The term effective here might simply suggest how efficient the middle leaders are in reproducing the social order and conforming within the boundaries of their limiting and well‑defined tick box roles. However, it might mean they are effective in bringing about social justice and democratic practice. Since the training literature formulates part of the dominant discourses, unless fully examined critically by prospective middle leaders, it could serve to simply strengthen the messages by transferring them from theory into practice.

Conclusion

This chapter discusses some of the literature surrounding school leadership at senior and middle levels. It examines the introduction of the term 'superhead' into educational dialogue and discusses this notion alongside that of a superhero, the lone warrior who appears on the scene to sort all problems. Here, I examine the terminology of charismatic leadership, which has slipped from the discourse over the years. This serves as an indication of how citizens are culturally influenced by dominant dialogue. Two main models are discussed: transformational and distributed leadership, although these are probably intersecting models. The idea that a self-managing school could be seen as a desirable ideal is discussed alongside the suggestion that it may be a very covert manipulation technique. The aim here is to simply unearth the practices and to disrupt the acceptance that often accompanies them. By looking at some of the traits that school leaders possess, I indicate that having a predilection to risk, and to fast‑paced challenging environments, is beneficial.

Before going on to look at middle leadership I suggest that a 'superhead' is not necessarily an outsider who has been drafted in from another school, nor necessarily someone who has led another school prior to their current one. The literature surrounding middle leadership suggests that this role is very important. In mathematics, the shortage of teachers has resulted in the promotion of many before they have gained sufficient experience in their jobs. Whilst this thesis is not intended to examine middle leadership in any great depth this section is included in order to gain a wider picture of school life and prepare for the data-gathering sections, which I discuss in the forthcoming three chapters.

Chapter 6 The school leaders

Introduction:

The aim of this section is to examine school leadership within the context of the research, which asks, 'How might we understand conceptualisations of leadership in transforming schools from 'challenging' to 'successful'?' by considering the supplementary research questions:

- Could there be a rubric for leaders bringing a school out of challenging circumstances?
- How might leaders act differently?

Whilst the previous chapter discussed theoretical models of leadership, this focuses on leadership in practice in two schools, B and C.

The head teacher from school A was not interviewed. This was a deliberate approach as I had chosen to work in the school in order to inform my pragmatic working knowledge and to understand schools in challenging circumstances within a practical context. I was attempting to understand the practice of my area of research whilst leaving the theoretical to one side. Having heard how the school's move into special measures had affected the pupils, I was keen to capture their opinions; therefore, I made the decision to incorporate the views of the pupils as I saw them as a rich site of data in a situation which would be difficult to reproduce at a later time.

The data discussed below were gathered in schools B and C, using semi-structured interviews, asking the same set of questions to both school leaders in order to provide commonality between both sets of data and to aid comparison (Appendix Q1).

Some main themes emerged from the head teachers' data, such as examination results, staff, exclusions, architecture, discipline and school uniform. These disciplinary power mechanisms are evident in what Foucault would call the sayable and the visible and seem here to suggest measurable success (Foucault, 1977). The following discussion is designed to look for parallels between the head teachers' data to illuminate some of the dominant discourses inherent within the leadership field and begins with the head teachers themselves. Within this discussion, I problematise the analytical frameworks used within this study. By scrutinising the texts therein, I attempt to employ a Foucauldian analysis to expose archaeologically how the status quo, the agenda of the elite and their apparatus are perpetuated. I consider too, how different socio-economic contexts might not be reflected in such manuals (MacLure, 2003) and begin to make suggestions as to how this weakness might be addressed.

I conclude this chapter by answering the research question that, whilst there is no one rubric for improving a school, two important themes emerge from the data that deserve to be considered. These are: the quality of teaching and the quality of the school buildings.

'Superhead' or not?

There was a distinct difference in the profiles of the head teachers from schools B and C. Whereas head teacher C had come into the school in order to 'turn it around' and had experience of being a head teacher in two previous schools, head teacher B had been in the job for 17 years. I had presumed that he would be relatively new to the role due to the recent upturn in examination results. This made me wonder why it had taken him so long in bringing about the changes and if it was indeed him who was responsible or some

members of his senior or middle leadership teams. I wanted to ask this question but felt it would be offensive to do so.

According to Harris (2008), to secure a 'turnaround' in schools always necessitates a change in leadership. This was not the case in this example, suggesting the wider meaning of the word leadership is being employed, as discussed in Chapter One. However, upon scrutiny I began to consider whether head teacher B's skills had developed over the years along with other aspects of his situation, which had contributed to his increased success. Riley (2000:47) maintains that 'there is no one package for school leadership, it is not static, takes more than one person and can be nurtured and developed'.

By examining the profiles of the head teachers in the study, I started to categorise, define and subsequently to label them. This led to a continuum of classification, which starts with categorisation on one hand and finishes with marginalisation on the other, although the latter is not always the result of the former (Rabinow, 1984).

Within this context, I was attempting to label the head teachers as either super or not. If I used the definition that a 'superhead' had to be drafted in from outside, then I marginalised head teacher B. As I decided that this was not a necessary criterion for 'superheadship', head teacher B was included. This highlights the importance that categorisation plays within the culture to which we belong. The importance here is to recognise the arbitrary nature of definitions that are adhered to rigidly. Such definitions decide whether a child has passed or failed an examination or whether a school achieves its floor targets and is labelled as successful or failing.

The head teachers' voices

The head teachers spoke confidently and with no sign of the fear that was evident from their teachers, which will be discussed in the next chapter. They appeared accustomed to being asked to express their opinion and to speak with an outsider.

Their data showed evidence of being drawn into the dominant discourses inherent in education today, illuminated by their use of similar phraseology. This may have been due to engaging in head teacher training such as the NPQH, without which, 'one does not become recognised as a legitimate leader and by going through these methods of professional development one is shaped in approved ways' (Gillies, 2013:53).

Both heads mentioned the raising of expectations of teachers and pupils. The language they used was very similar. Head teacher C stated, 'blast the myths' surrounding underachievement, whilst head B spoke of 'smashing that myth' (Appendices B1, C1). Underperformance had mythological undertones, suggesting that the teachers and pupils had previously subscribed to a concept of underachievement. They had been deceived into accepting less than they were capable of and needed the head teachers to come along to rescue them and to change this.

Vision – perpetuating the dominant discourses

One aspect of leadership, according to the mainstream training materials, such as EiML and NPQH, is that of vision. The allegiance to a vision in such mainstream training materials can be seen in the analysis table below:

Subject Leadership (EiML)	School Leadership (NPQH)
Developing a common purpose and a shared culture Vision and aims: Promoting and creating a shared vision for why mathematics is important, what you want for your pupils and what you all want to achieve in your school/department through the mathematics curriculum	**Module 1 –Strategic Direction and development of the school** 1.1 The moral purpose of headship 1.2 Vision into action 1.3 School development planning 1.4 Accountability for improvement

This allows insight into how the dominant discourses of senior leaders are constructed. Such literature serves to propagate these discourses and uphold the apparatus. By asking Question 5 (Appendix Q1) 'Can you briefly tell me what your mission and vision are?' I was inadvertently perpetuating the dominant discourses to which I had been party, both as a student on the NPQH course and using the EiML materials as part of my daily work. Here, I was presuming that the head teachers not only had a mission and a vision, but they would be described within a school development plan (and such a document would exist) and the heads would be easily able to articulate them without referring to it. In fact, both heads appeared to be unfazed by this question and answered with confidence and ease.

The correlation between my questions and assumptions and the NPQH training is quite alarming! For example, the first module of the NPQH training materials contains four sections, the first two of which consider the 'moral purpose of headship' and 'vision into action', whilst the third section deals with 'school development planning'.

From this I would conclude, that I approached this research

immersed in the dominant discourses of the apparatus, the heads were immersed therein too, so the interviews were conducted in such a way as to perpetuate and extend this limiting framework thus supporting the existing power / knowledge structures of schooling. In order to highlight the correlation between leaders' practice and the NPQH training materials I will now explore the notion of vision further.

Formulating a vision or moral purpose for the school and developing the capabilities of teachers, and thereby the school climate, is in keeping with the distributed leadership model and was apparent in both data sets. However, Bottery (1994:150) questions the simplistic notion of vision:

> Whilst an essential function of a leader is to present to pupils and teachers their own personal vision of where the school and society should be going, another is to provide a forum in which other visions are debated and resolved. Participation and dissent are then essential features of any educational organisation worthy of the name.

Bottery's statement combines the two models of leadership, mentioned in the previous chapter, where one leader articulated his own vision, whilst another utilised the vision of others (Caldwell and Spinks, 1992).

The way the vision is communicated can differ, with some leaders announcing it theatrically and passionately from the outset, whilst others being more low-key and allowing it to become a subtler, integrated part of daily life. The latter is what one head teacher describes as '…avoiding the vision' deliberately avoiding the 'big "vision" meeting… it just was not my style' (Tomlinson et al., 1999:98-99). Loader (1997:12-13) suggests that a good principal dreams the dream and needs to work 'within a philosophy with articulated goals'. How this articulation occurs, either directly or more

implicitly, largely depends upon the style of the leader.

The NPQH framework asks prospective heads to examine the school's vision and assess how it was arrived at, to ascertain if it is based on social or political views and looks forward to the future as well as to improve on the present state of affairs. It encourages heads to adopt a wider lens of the world, to become less risk averse so that pupils do not 'mirror our actions and our cowardice [which] makes them timid and reluctant to embark on adventurous dreams' (Jude Kelly OBE, cited in NPQH, 2006, Unit 1.2:10). It encourages however, the head to work with the governors to develop the mission statement and this could be construed as the ruling elite dominating the unruly masses. The need for the head to 'walk the talk' (NPQH, 2006 Unit 1.2:19) is repeated in the heads' data in my research (Appendices B2, C2). Whilst Kelly draws attention to pupils mirroring their teachers, our teachers and heads are mirroring the dominant training literatures.

Interestingly, there is less focus in the NPQH manual on creating a common culture than is seen in the EiML materials. The former reminds heads to examine how diversity can be seen as a resource. The EiML materials require middle leaders to promote and create 'a shared vision for why mathematics is important, what you want for your pupils and what you all want to achieve in your school/department through the mathematics curriculum'.

One may wonder then, who is involved in creating the 'shared vision'. There is no suggestion that the pupils would be involved in this process in a similar way that no teachers would be involved in developing the school's vision (unless part of the governing body). Thus, the dominant structures of school life and the apparatus are being upheld within these inherent processes and practices.

This notion is maintained in the remainder of the EiML statement. The adults agree why mathematics is important, although many pupils might decide otherwise. So too do the authoritarian adults decide what they want for the pupils as well as what everyone involved should achieve. The pupils' voice is not present in any shape within this discourse. The relevance of mathematics escapes many pupils particularly those who live in deprived, challenging inner-city areas, such as the pupils in this research. By calling middle leaders to develop a common purpose and a shared culture (EiML), one must ask, whose purpose and whose culture are they sharing? The culture I experienced, whilst supporting school C when in challenging circumstances, was one of smoking, drugs and petty crime and this stands in stark comparison to the culture in which I am immersed in my personal life. Therefore, the socio-economic context of schools will directly influence the activities of its inhabitants. It will impact upon the discourses therein across a wide continuum where no two schools are alike. The shared culture applauded by EiML materials suggest a 'one size fits all, blanket approach' and begs the question 'whose size is it anyway?'.

The socialisation of pupils from deprived areas such as those used in this study differs remarkably from those from homes that '*mentor* or *apprentice* their children into certain Discourses [sic] that schools and the wider mainstream culture reward' (Gee, 1992:123). The latter group is privy to preschool discourses that prepare them to participate in the elitist structures of schooling. Without such priming children from socially disadvantaged areas are likely to be unable to take part fully in the education process and run the risk of being regarded as a poor learner who falls behind 'in the accumulation of knowledge, as this is measured and validated in the discourses of schooling' (MacLure 2003:177).

The NPQH materials describe 'vision' as the 'cement which holds a

school and its community together…' (NSCL 2006, Unit 1.1:14) thus heralding its importance. If this aspect is used to make 'clear the school's purpose' (NCSL, 2006, Unit 1.2:9), perhaps it also needs to enhance educators' ability to see the past, the present and the future clearly. The past needs to be acknowledged and included without elevating it to 'a golden age story' which occupies an 'intellectual high ground' whilst relegating the present into one of 'intellectual decline' (MacLure, 2003:74). Foucault asserted 'history does not consider an event without defining the series of which it is part, without specifying the mode of analysis from which that series derives…' Therefore, '…discourses must be treated as …sets of discursive events…' which are 'discontinuous in relation to each other' (Foucault, 1981:69). Thus, I contend, 'vision' should include developing the clarity to 'see' the 'taken for granted' assumptions by critically examining the historical construction of events, conventional educational literature, training resources and practices. Vision should involve describing the school's unique culture – what makes it that school and not another. By harnessing this uniqueness, heads can avoid perpetuating a 'one size fits all' managerialist approach to education. Here too, I call to problematise those practices and utterances which are so deeply ingrained into our structures to be viewed as common sense (MacLure, 2003).

The importance of teachers

One essential component of being an excellent leader, which resonates throughout this study, is the ability to recruit good staff and then to be able to delegate to them. Complex changes require a suitable amount of shared control and decision-making during implementation (Fullan, 1992). Nevertheless, the balance between leadership and delegation is subtle. Leadership that is too tight can result in resistance and mechanical acceptance, whilst too loose an approach provides a vague sense of direction (Fullan,

1992). This notion illuminates the subtleties of the circulation of power within an organisation. Providing the teachers feel as if they have some degree of power, however limited, they can be manipulated in believing that they have some quantifiable worth within the system.

I suggested earlier, that head teacher B needed time to develop and to hone his skills so that he was capable of identifying key staff. Over time, as the school started to improve, it was likely that he was able to attract stronger people into key positions. Head teacher C recounted his mistakes in identifying these key people and misjudging the situation. This may have slowed the pace of the transformation. This dispels the notion that the head teacher was solely responsible for the school's achievements and disagrees with the suggestion of the head as a superhero described by Sir Michael Wilshaw in the previous chapter. Both sets of data suggest that having the support of good people, who agree with the direction that the school is going, is an important aspect for a leader.

This concurs with Stubbs' (2003) opinion:

> When you're leading this sort of school, you have to lead from the front and be very visionary. You're the person on whom everyone relies. You want teachers on board who are fighting all the way with you. It separates those who want to be with you and those who don't very quickly (Stubbs, 2003:145).

It is important to consider here that those who work within this type of vertical system, be it the teachers, pupils or others, may well come to accept and expect this sort of organisational structure. This in turn will impact upon what they consider to be a norm, i.e. upon their cultural moulding. Subsequently, this acceptance will have implications for the children in later life, their expectations of work and political organisation. In this way, the model is allowed to self-perpetuate.

If the appointed leaders have a more democratic disposition, however, they may well appoint those with a similar orientation. This might lead to a greater number and a wider range of voices being heard and, through an organisation of debate, result in collective decision-making. If this is the case, then the children coming through the system will have a different set of beliefs and expectations of the value of their voices (Schostak and Schostak, 2010).

The need for strong supportive staff was highlighted in the data from school C in two ways. Firstly, in gaining and maintaining a productive working environment and secondly, in ensuring a high quality of teaching and learning. In school C these data could be assigned under the 'planning for improvement' and 'self-evaluation' sections of the EiML tool (Appendix C4), as it involved head C 'making an honest appraisal of what you are good at' (EiML, Appendix C4). This has parallels with the analysis table below.

Subject Leadership (EiML)	School Leadership (NPQH)
Planning for improvement Making an honest appraisal of what you are good at, what needs to be worked on and planning actions and developments accordingly	**Module 2- Strategic leadership of learning and teaching** 2.1 Determining the curriculum 2.2 Analysis of data and target setting for school improvement 2.3 Equal opportunities 2.4 Monitoring, evaluation and review
Working and developing together as a team Developing and sustaining a culture of sharing teaching ideas, encouraging professional development and working together to develop	**Module 3** CPD **Module 4: Strategic management of staff and resources** Strategic management of people

This suggests one of two things: either the discourse of leadership is designed as a mechanism to control the structures of leadership and uphold the apparatus, or good leadership consists of particular components regardless of their context (i.e. at senior or middle levels). A Foucauldian analysis suggests the first, restricting other possibilities. The table above shows aspects of practice but the aims upon which the practice is predicated remain less obvious. A critique here will look at the rationale behind the aims whilst the use of criticism will deconstruct the actual practice.

By reflecting upon his practice, head teacher C recognised that he had made some errors in the first stages of running the school, as did head B: 'if I was starting again I would be much more aware (Appendix B1). Head C's evaluation indicated that he initially mistook strong disciplinarians for good teachers:

Some people could go in and talk to the kids and could control the kids and the kids would be reasonably interested or very interested but in actual fact at the end of the lesson they wouldn't be asked to do homework, books wouldn't be marked, effectively there was no progression and then results would, would naturally you know, come through. I knew how to weigh in with the vast majority of them and that was a gradual process of realising after the first exam results… I've not had time to check all your books and all the rest of it, how often you were doing practice questions or essays or what your coursework's like, you're not very effective. So, I had to sort of like readjust you know, get people in (Head C, Appendix C1).

This excerpt suggests that this head places importance upon the setting of homework, progression, books being marked, revision and examination results as an integral part of the learning process. These factors might be part of what he defines as being a 'good teacher'. They represent ways in which a disciplinary system operates from head teacher level through to the teachers. By foregrounding aspects such as these, the head awards them privilege, thus they become magnified and become part of the '*dispositif*' or 'apparatus' *(Agamben, 2009; Foucault, 1977).*

Head C relayed his reliance on appointing better teachers through:

…getting new people into the school, the kind of people who are really bright and lively not necessarily young but you know, bright and lively, often young as well who would get theatre trips going, up the ante of school productions, visits to the art galleries, all of that sort of thing, build on the strengths of the school like PE who get good results but also strengthen… the PE department in terms of giving them enough people to run the football matches and… engage with the kids so we had a better working relationship (Head C, Appendix C1).

This is evidence that the head had a vision of what a good school is like and had set about putting mechanisms in place to achieve

this. This correlates with improvement planning, listed in the EiML text, and is concerned with setting out a development plan, knowing what you intend to do and how you intend to do it, as well as monitoring the process and knowing what the success criteria looks like (EiML, Appendix C4).

The importance of suitable teachers was also mentioned in the interview with head B, where he asserted that it was important to establish basic core values and then to appoint staff to support these. This notion is mooted by Tomlinson in Bush and Middlewood (2005:232): 'A key process within schools is recruitment. School leaders need a clear, overall picture on how staff can achieve goals'. The importance of good staff featured in both interviews:

> I insisted on being involved in every appointment. Without staff you are dead in the water. You need a core of people to support that (core values) and you reach a tipping balance. I am constantly combing language and actions, what you say and what you do (Head teacher B, Appendix B1).

This is similar to the sayable and the visible mentioned earlier. These terms describe the main aspects of what Foucault would call '*dispositif*'. This system or 'apparatus' is a set of practices or discourses either explicit or covert, the said and the unsaid (Foucault, 1977). It is not simply the component parts of this apparatus that are important but the interplay and relationships which exist between them. The internal dynamic between these parts is changed when one factor is removed or adapted or a new factor is incorporated. Examining each part of the data in isolation is counter-productive as they need to be viewed as part of a greater and very complex system.

The visible in these data includes everything from the school building, the grounds, the corridors, cafeteria areas, pupil behaviour, staff behaviour and use of school bells, to name a few. It indicates

the importance of personnel in bringing about school improvement. 'Managers know that people make the critical difference between success and failure' (Patterson et al., 1997, cited in Harris, 2002:71).

As well as having suitable staff on board, the heads appear to rely upon a strong senior leadership team. Head C incorporates the term 'we' when referring to his senior team. This indicates that he had extended his vision beyond himself. Nevertheless, at times, he also used words such as 'me' and 'I'. This suggests a vision of a lone ranger leading from the front and does not fully resonate with the shared vision he starts with. However, if the role of a true leader is isolated and set apart, even though working as part of a team is essential, this excerpt may not indicate a total conflict. This idea correlates with Ofsted chief and former London head teacher, Sir Michael Wilshaw, who mentions that leaders need to act like the lone warriors: 'fighting for righteousness, fighting the good fight' (Stewart, 2011:no page). Conversely, Duignan (2012) asserts that it is no longer possible for heads to take a 'lone ranger' stance due to the increasing internal and external pressures placed upon them.

If teachers are an important facet of school success, then ensuring adequate professional development occurs must be too. Macbeath (2002) mentions supporting teachers as one of the 6 traits of effective leaders. At any rate, the quality of the teachers and their teaching is high on the school leaders' agenda whether this is carried out in a supportive fashion or otherwise. Another way of stating this is using the terms 'capacity building', which is an aspect of distributed leadership (Harris, 2002).

The importance of this is reflected in the data from head B:

> We conduct a training needs analysis annually. We

address the needs of the whole school. We plan the training of staff with a mixture of courses and conferences. We go for quality. Sometimes the best training is done in house using our own expertise. If it doesn't improve learning, then it is not worth doing. As a manager, you have to take risks and be at the cutting edge. Sometimes [this means] you will get cut if you are going to compete (Head B, Appendix B1).

The training needs analysis tool in its own way becomes a technology of disciplinary power (Foucault, 1977). By monitoring lessons and conducting such audits, the teachers are judged, usually under Ofsted's labels. One response to this dilemma is to develop or dismiss:

I find it really, really hard that there is a class of children who nobody is pitching in for. You can support somebody who is incompetent for as long as you like but there comes a point where you know that it is not going to make any difference. Particularly if they have been doing it for a long time (Day et al., 1999:149).

This notion is reflected in head C's data where he described staff development as: essential, desirable and coercive. Coercion suggests that staff do not possess the right to refuse.

Although the tools I am using here to assist with the analysis of the data serve to support the dominant discourses of which they are a part and as such may not be very helpful, I am using them simply to help me to organise my thinking. Thrupp and Wilmott (2003:3) take a tougher stance by suggesting a tool such as this may actually be 'harmful because of the way [it fails] to challenge existing social inequalities and the way it chimes with managerialist policies'. Further arguments levied against school improvement literature define it as not being sufficiently critical, with criticality being thought of as the 'C' word. (Thrupp and Tomlinson, 2005; Gunter, 2009). The EiML tool is used here to focus on liaison with staff and external agencies. This aspect was mentioned by head C, whose first move was to appoint two deputies to support him. He also sought

support from the Local Authority:

> Then there was the working with the local authority really, to get the school out of the category and to get better facilities. So, I made sure that I was er… I would do whatever I could to get closer to the local authority so I got myself a good working relationship with a lot of people at the local authority who I thought were the movers and shakers, there was a lot of moving and a lot of shaking [laughs] and as such I have a really good relationship with the LA (Head C, Appendix C1).

Here, as gatekeeper, this head teacher was deciding whom to allow into his school. The gatekeeper role could be assimilated with the notion of the miller deciding which grains should enter the millstone, a Cassian analogy Foucault uses to discuss the substance of our thoughts. Foucault opposed the idea that thoughts are separate from action (O'Farrell 2005). This classification by definition, has to lead to normalisation, i.e. the good or the bad, the accepted or the unaccepted, those allowed entry and those not allowed. The head invited consultants to support the school, to upgrade teaching and learning by 'providing on the ground support… [trying] to win people over, not just as consultants but sleeves rolled up in the classroom type of people' (Head C, Appendix C1).

Seeking external assistance was apparent in head B's data where he described acquiring sponsorship funding from a sports body:

> In the late 90s, we raised 100K from ** Stadium… more by accident that by design. Sport is a winner, few things can motivate as much as sport. This brings community engagement. It is nationally recognised that schools can raise achievement through sports. We went for sports not maths specialist status (Head B, Appendix B1).

Knowing when it is appropriate to seek outside help is an important feature of effective leadership and it must be exercised with caution and sensitivity: 'Bringing in expertise implicitly or explicitly suggests that the insiders do not know what to do or are not trying

hard enough to do it' (Hatch, 2009:175-176).

Discipline and the disciplinary gaze:

The external face of the disciplinary gaze is not merely placed upon heads by Ofsted, but depending on the leader's personal code, could result from the desire to please parents, Local Authority personnel, from their religious beliefs, to possibly their desire to achieve further professional qualifications. Whichever criterion the heads employ as an arbiter of judgement will affect their practice and the ways in which they become subjected. Heads that do not conform to these norms are often considered as mavericks (Gillies, 2013).

Both heads B and C showed an awareness of their schools' public profile locally: 'At present, we are conscious of being "top dog", conscious of that perception and being oversubscribed' (Head B, Appendix B1). Visits to primary schools, local to school C revealed they had major concerns about school C in regard to the behaviour of the students and the high levels of indiscipline (Appendix C1). Hatch (2009) lists public perception of failure and inadequacy as one of the component parts of the cycle of failure. This public face of school life is echoed in the pupils' data in Chapter Eight.

A further way in which a head might be disciplined is through expectations from within the institution. In a hierarchical organisation the leadership cascades from the top through to the echelons below in what Foucault calls a vertical system or 'pyramidal organisation'. (Foucault, 1977:177). Loader (1997:23) describes it as a 'pyramid organisation[s] where the people at the top direct the people in the middle and they in turn tell the people at the bottom, usually the students, what to do'. However, this is not to suggest that the power relations are uni-directional, they tend to

circulate throughout institutions. Pressure on the head therefore, can come from the staff as well as the pupils. Evidence of this was seen in the data with criticism surrounding communication both spoken and written: 'There are problems with communication' (Teacher B, Appendix B2) and the action plan was 'not worth the paper it is written on' (Teacher B, Appendix B2) and the mission statement was 'vague' (Teacher C, Appendix C2).

Here there is an unquestioned acceptance that such written documentation should not only exist but should be fit for purpose. The culture of high expectations is reflected back towards the school leaders from the teachers. This questions the importance of all this documentation to school improvement. The schools seemed to be improving without such structures being actively visible.

The perceived need for a coherent development plan to keep a school on track and in line with its mission and values is highlighted by these examples. According to Hargreaves and Hopkins 1991:8), it helps to prevent initiative overload and 'a rag bag of separate reforms'. The never-ending demands for even better practice were being reflected back from the teachers to the leaders. The school had unwittingly become involved in 'the regime of disciplinary power' one of the distinct features of being immersed in a field of comparison (Foucault, 1977:182).

A third way in which a head teacher is disciplined is through the external criteria that are placed upon him. One such pressure extends from examination success. Foucault comments on the use of examinations as far back as the 1770s. Then, similarly to the current day, examinations did not simply mark the end of the training but 'was one of its permanent factors, it was woven into it through a constantly repeated ritual of power' (Foucault, 1977:186). Those who successfully achieve their targets are

applauded and those that do not face dire consequences in a gratification-punishment model of discipline described earlier (Foucault, 1977). This 'perfect disciplinary apparatus' (Foucault, 1977:173) employs penal accountancy, an arithmetical economy as a means to control its pyramidal organisation. Some authors believe, however, that Foucault is overstating the case in respect of the subjection of individuals working within a system. Said (1986:151) noted that:

> Foucault seemed to have been confused between the power of institutions to subjugate individuals, and the fact that individual behavior in society is frequently a matter of following rules of conventions.

Michael Walzer (1986) too, contends that routines are simply a part of everyday life and social control to which we are all subject.

Examination results are part of routines and the accepted discourse of schools. Both heads, B and C, referred to their schools' successes in GCSE examinations, quoting hard quantifiable measures (Appendices B1 and C1). Head B said that A* to C grades had increased from 17% to 56%. Whilst this was the main concern of head B, it also came high on the list of priorities for head C who described four schools using quantifiable language. He referred to examination increases at his previous school: 'but we did very well so that went basically in five years from 44% to 71% in the old-fashioned method'. This success obviously got him noticed and he was asked to run a nearby failing school as well as his own:

> I got there in Sept and it went into special measures in the Easter, just after Easter and got it out of special measures within 18 months, and we got up to 34% 5 A* to C no tricks just 34%. And I did what I said I would do which was basically I'd stay there until we then had an Ofsted. Two years after coming out of special measures and we got the full all clear (Head C, Appendix C1).

He went on to discuss a neighbouring school by categorising it using the similar criteria: 'They have done very well they have got BTECs[3] in, got about 77%' before going on to classify his own school:

> So, in total the school had been in category for 6 years are you with me? It was just too long but we managed to get it out, er and we'd gone up from basically 24 in the old-fashioned way to 51 and we're now up to 37% 5 A* to C including English and Maths. Back in (year) [inaudible] it was in the low teens, 17 or something like that (Head C, Appendix C1).

Here we see the predomination of the political discourses being reflected in the language employed by the heads. The similarities to Gove (DfE, 2014c) were apparent when he demanded that every secondary school in England achieve the then current national average of at least 40% of pupils achieving five A*-C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics as well as progress measures. By 2016, for the first time, schools were judged on new Progress 8 accountability measures rather than by the number achieving five grades A*-C. The pressure was also extended to primary schools where the floor target has risen from 60% level 4 or above in English and mathematics, plus progress measures, to 65% of the cohort achieving a harder 'expected standard' (100) or showing adequate progress.

Head B too, acknowledged the external demands placed upon him and commented about the importance of examination performance: 'deny that and you deny society' (Appendix B1). This comment suggests a compliant acceptance of the current climate, or what Foucault refers to as 'the inertia of mental attitudes' (Foucault, 2008:10). Yet, this may not be the case. Head B may have had strong views about the use of examination scores to measure success but if he did, he did not express them in this

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[3] Business and Technology Examinations Council- BTEC qualification Level 2 is equivalent to four GCSEs grades A*-C.

forum. His inertia could have less to do with his mental activity and more to do with the lack of autonomy he possessed to resist. Nevertheless, by allowing this tenet into his school he also allows a medium of brute power to enter and to be transformed into disciplinary power through the examination system (Foucault, 1977). This, in turn, may be passed down through the school, allowing its construction to take form and to circulate.

Moral philosophers tend to maintain that we have a negative responsibility, that is, responsibility for what one does not do. 'Clearly, negative responsibility is a burden that especially falls on those with power and influence, since it is typically they who could have made a difference' (Fuller, 2003:173).

The head teachers in my study, are examples of those people who could be seen to remain quiet about initiatives, believing that someone else will take up the banner of protest for them. This could be, in part, due to what is known by researchers as the 'spiral of silence', a term utilised by Noelle-Neumann and Peterson (2004) who maintain that, when confronted by controversial issues, most people fear being ostracised if they express an opinion contrary to the masses. The media can play an important part in cultivating public opinion. Furthermore, there is the tendency within a democracy, where many believe that they have a voice to speak out about injustices and issues, for the public to presume that the channels of communication are open and the objections 'will be publicly expressed and not simply assumed to be self-evident' (Fuller, 2003:160).

Discipline through self-managing schools

The EiML framework above highlights aspects such as: making an honest appraisal of what you are good at, what needs to be worked

on and planning actions and developments accordingly. Housed under the banner of planning for improvement, this could be seen as part of a self-managing strategy which, on the face of it, suggests notions 'of flexibility and autonomy' (Ball, 1994:65). It does, however, articulate steering from a distance and self-regulation, control or '[I]n other words, it is a disciplinary practice' (Ball, 1994:66). It introduces an invisible but forceful architecture of self-regulation and surveillance much the same as the panoptical view mentioned in Chapter Five. There is a suggestion that what is being currently attained is never quite good enough, resulting in teachers working tirelessly to achieve their often self-produced (though government stipulated) targets.

By manipulating middle leaders to formulate their own disciplinary structures they are subtly coerced into conforming by being the master and servant in what Foucault might refer to as 'double conditioning' (Foucault, 1990:99).

This notion is further developed under 'working and developing together as a team' to develop and sustain a culture of sharing teaching ideas, encouraging professional development and working together to develop practice. Once again, teachers participate in the relentless strive towards professional success and collaborate with colleagues to do so.

In contrast, the NPQH manual, unit 2, includes four booklets on the strategic leadership of learning and teaching urging heads to examine characteristics of good teaching and the needs of pupils and to conduct a self-review. This suggests that head teachers know what good teaching is and that there is a common understanding of this in existence (NPQH, 2006, Units 2.1-2.4). Contrarily, by his own admission, head C did not acquire this skill, until leading his third school. The ability of teachers to control rowdy, belligerent pupils was

sufficient to mislead a highly-experienced leader into equating this with sound pedagogical practice (Appendix C1).

As my data suggest, the voices of the teachers are silenced into subdued acquiescence and this stands in stark contrast to the section of the NPQH manual which specifically foregrounds pupils' needs (NPQH, 2006, Unit 2.3). In this way, we might construe that the power/knowledge structures of schooling are designed to constrain the autonomy of the teachers under the guise of flexibility and self-management. Self-management's success as a discourse of power and control 'is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanism' (Foucault, 1990:86).

It is useful to 'bear in mind Foucault's key point that within microtechnologies of control (like self-management) those who exercise power are just as much captured and shaped as are those over whom power is wielded' (Ball, 1994:82). This suggests that not only are the teachers reduced to objects of control but so too are the pupils and the school leaders.

Disciplinary Structures

So far, I have discussed the demands placed upon school leaders, which constrain them. This section now turns the focus onto converting schools from anarchy to altruism before moving onto disciplinary structures within the school, including exclusions and uniform.

Stubbs (2003: on cover) recounts a sense of anarchy when she first arrived:

> Imagine a school where the staff are too fearful to leave the staffroom at breaktime, where stealing and absenteeism are rife, where vicious fights continually break out in the bleak playground and children wander the

corridors chatting on mobile phones and refusing to go to class.

This resonates with the data from head C:

> But the reality was I had to sort out the behaviour 'cos the behaviour was dreadful and the whole ethos of the school was less than Christian, very confrontational, with a few islands of sheer tranquillity with some excellent staff (Head C, Appendix C).

One way that head C tackled this public perception of anarchy was to concentrate on increasing the levels of discipline in his school:

> We had to take back the playground and corridors which meant me leading, being out there at break, lunchtimes, after school, giving people the confidence and the kids the confidence to make sure there were no sort of no-go areas or smoking areas, or crime areas. So, all of that put together, right if you call it a sort of vision… 'cos in the end what I wanted was the kids to be basically safe (Appendix C1).

This excerpt provides a rich environment for Foucauldian discourse analysis. The power relations are visible in the statement 'We had to take back the playground and corridors… there were no sort of no-go areas or smoking areas or crime areas'. This conveys a territorial sense that the playground and corridors 'belonged' to the pupils and a sense of chaos existed. Anarchy is a means by which pupils can resist the apparatus and is evident in the excerpts above. 'Power and resistance are together the governance machine of society' (Hunt and Wickham, 1994:93).

The data suggest the inversion of brute power and rules, and support the notion of the temporary nature of power. It may be that some of the teachers feared the students. This would not be a new phenomenon as Devine (1996) contends that, rather than schools having too much discipline, there is in fact too little, by stating: 'the teachers are afraid of the students, afraid to give

reprimands directly' (Devine, 1996, cited in Chambon et al., 1999:253).

Such views as Devine's suggest an acceptance of how to exist within a hierarchically-organised system where democratic practices and forms of organisation are either absent or limited. Foucault suggests that such expectations have been developed in subtle and barely visible ways over the years rendering the students as docile bodies constituted through technologies of subjection (Foucault, 1977; Chartier, 1977). This would not be because of one type of intervention but through many and varied influences, such as the institution, parental, peer and school norms. However, Foucault suggested that the forces at play are not necessarily hierarchical in their structure 'but circulate throughout an organization' (Thomson, 2012:14).

Whilst head B did not refer to discipline, the pupils at his school were much more vocal in this regard when they discussed previous high levels of indiscipline. These data really emphasise the notion that power is unstable and temporary, 'mobile and localizable' and practised, not possessed (Kendall and Wickham, 1999:50).

> It is not the prerogative of the 'masters' but passes through every force. We should think of power not as an attribute (and ask "what is it?") but as an exercise (and ask "How does it work?") (Kendall and Wickham, 1999:50).

Head C's data describe a girl he had excluded that morning immediately prior to our interview:

> …and that was for a series of assaults on staff but she comes from a criminal, difficult background which has a lot of violence and she got herself thrown out. It's interesting that her mum thought I was going to permanently exclude her – it's not what we do. No way are we doing that, not unless we see her as dangerous. We have staff to think about (Appendix C1).

Similarly, for Stubbs:

> Last term… I made the decision then to exclude her for a few days. It's not something I ever do lightly, and permanent exclusion is something I go out of my way to avoid… But occasionally, as in this case, a temporary exclusion seems justified (Stubbs 2003:217).

Whilst exclusions are one tool to help create a controlled school environment it was by no means the most popular option for the school leaders, as the statements above bear testament. However, it was perceived by head C as a necessary strategy to be used very selectively. Head C was proud of the reduction in exclusions that his school had experienced. 'This term I am most proud of the fact that in terms of fixed term exclusions, we have only had twelve days, and I think that's five kids' (Appendix C1).

The reduction in the number of exclusions that head C reported might have been due to the fact that his staff had developed greater skills in dealing with the belligerent behaviour of the pupils.

It could also be visible evidence of his 'self-caring' school (Appendix C1) which extended a more tolerant hand to its pupils than had formerly been apparent. Other heads may have considered these data as a perceived failure. What can be noted here is that the head was able to refer to a measurable hard data statistic in this context, together with quoting improved examination results and the number of pupils who wanted to attend the school. This reflects the positivist environment in which schools are currently operating, indicating how the managerialist structures of the private sector have infiltrated into the public sector.

Temporary exclusions involve pupils not being allowed to attend school for a fixed period. They are used as a punitive measure and are one way in which schools maintain good conduct. 'One must

punish exactly enough to avoid repetition' (Foucault, 1977:93). In this case, the head holds 'punishing authority' that is, the 'right to punish' to defend their society (Foucault, 1977:90-91). It may be though, that head C and Stubbs (2003) needed to establish a 'principle of moderation for the power of punishment' (Foucault, 1977:90).

If punishment is one mechanism of control, then it is an overt apparatus in a disciplinary power setting. Many other subtler forms exist. One such form is the requirement to wear school uniforms and the subsequent enforcement of this rule. English schools seem to be somewhat preoccupied with strict uniform codes. It may be, however, that, in order to gain back some sense of control in an otherwise out of control environment, the uniform is perceived to be reasonably easy to enforce and a visible measure of improvement. If pupils conform to the dress code of the school, they are making a clear statement that they are buying into the school rules. It could therefore be viewed as 'an efficient disciplinary tactic [and] a technology of governmentality' (Meadmore and Symes, 1996:210). Uniforms were used in charity schools in the sixteenth century to assist in the surveillance of children outside school hours, to ensure their humility, acknowledgement of their impoverished position in life and to teach them gratitude to their benefactors.

In Stubb's (2003) and in school C there seemed to be a sense of pride of wearing a uniform: 'We introduced new uniform options – not changed. We kept the sweatshirt but said they could wear a tie with shirt and V-neck sweater. In year 11 over 90% went for it' (Head C, Appendix C1). Whilst Stubbs (2003) describes: 'uniformed pupils [that] welcome visitors…'

Uniform is a visible sign of pupils' conformity to school regulations. It

is one way in which school leaders can indicate to the public, the sense of order that exists inside the building. The schools that pupils attend is easily identified by the uniform they wear. In many ways, the focus on uniform can take precedence over learning. Schools have placed a disproportionate emphasis on uniform as if it was some, 'form of pedagogic salvation, able to mitigate or offset community concerns about educational effectiveness' (Meadmore and Symes, 1996:209).

Stubbs (2003) describes fundraising as one of the activities that took place in her school. This altruism resonated in the data from school C and suggests one way a school could improve, i.e. by developing children's empathy and outlook on their own lives. Alternatively, it could be seen as part of an elite discourse surrounding the 'deserving poor'.

In school C:

> We raised £12,500 to take 13 children to an orphanage in ** and had £1,500 left for the orphanage. Do you realize that that this will keep this school going for next year?' (Head C, Appendix C1).

This suggests that once a calmer environment has been established in schools, head teachers can start to widen their remit to help external parties.

Architecture

Schools B and C, had impressive accommodation and had benefited from the BSF initiative. The school buildings and the facilities received many comments from the pupils from all three schools, as discussed in Chapter Eight, and also gained mention from both head teachers. There appears to be an inextricable link between the fabric of the building and the sense of pride that pupils and head teachers have in their schools.

As though to highlight this importance, head teacher B's first comment made brief mention of architecture, quickly followed by a reference to teaching and learning: 'This was a split site school and was financially sound but was in the dark ages in terms of teaching and learning. Curriculum is my passion; I felt that I could make a difference' (Head B, Appendix B1).

Building design is an important Foucauldian feature as 'space is fundamental in any exercise of power' as '[A]rchitecture does produce positive effects when the liberating intentions of the architect coincide with the real practice of people in the exercise of their freedom' (Rabinow, 1984:246). School buildings help to establish and preserve the power relations therein. There is a difference between the walls of the building and the space between them. In military camps, the power structures are reflected in the camp design, tents and buildings reflecting the pyramids of power (Rabinow, 1984).

Likewise, in schools, the architectural design from the car park through to the location and layout of the head teacher's office provides clear testament to power discourses. In some schools, the head teacher has a clearly labelled car parking space and office. Some heads have an office from where they can see everyone who enters or leaves the building if they so wish. This can be contrasted with the architecture of Guise by Godin (1859) who designed a workplace intended for the freedom of the people who worked there. In a similar way, no one could enter or leave without being seen by everyone. Foucault (Rabinow, 1984:246) comments that Guise could:

> perfectly well have allowed it to be used a prison…
> as an instrument for discipline and a rather
> unbearable group pressure. …I think it is somewhat

arbitrary to try to dissociate the effective practice of freedom by people, the practice of social relations, and the spatial distributions in which they find themselves. Each can only be understood by the other.

The fabric of the building was mentioned with head B making the point:

A hint [of a school's ethos] is to find reception you sometimes find a window and feel that people are hiding. [This is] quite unwelcoming. A school foyer should be like a hotel foyer. We didn't want it to feel like a school. [Our] parents come from a poor area; [our] parents have poor expectations. We want our school to be welcoming to parents (Appendix B1).

Head B seems to be more interested in the parents' experience here than the teachers, staff and pupils who use the school much more frequently. This might indicate a type of 'window dressing' in operation, to portray an image, an attractive first base for parents and visitors to see. There was an interesting parallel view of the foyer from one of the pupils from school B who thought of it more as a prison. This will be discussed further in Chapter Eight (Appendix B3).

The importance of the fabric of a school building is reinforced by Tomlinson et al. (1999:91), who discuss, an interim London head teacher of a 'failing school', who ensured that the building had a different look when she first took up her position: 'The building had been repainted internally and externally and several rooms and corridors had been re-carpeted. This made a significant improvement to the appearance of the building from the outside'. Similarly, with another head teacher, who initially spent funds on improving the school environment as 'the value of getting the environment right is always a high priority for me' (Tomlinson et al., 1999:99).

Foucault might refer to this as 'spatial ordering', which brings about 'control of the body, control of groups and knowledge' (Rabinow, 1984:19). Many new school buildings have been designed in such a way as to allow staff to observe pupils from many different points. The use of corners in which to hide has been reduced and replaced by curving corridors and stairways. Here the school has become 'a seeing machine, a transparent building in which the reparative gaze of power [is] under the control of a few' (Piro, 2008:36).

The corollary to this, however, is that the pupils also have a wide viewing range, for example, if a fight occurs, As Foucault indicates, 'Is it surprising that all prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?' (Foucault, 1991:228). Piro refers to this as 'criminalizing the school environment and the architectural trend of making schools look more like juvenile detention facilities than learning environments' (Piro, 2008:31).

So far in this chapter I have examined the EiML training framework alongside that of the NPQH. This highlighted the similarity of the models. This suggests that a middle leader who is adept at running a department has developed many of the skills needed for headship.

The following two tables compare data from both heads B and C against the NPQH training framework for school leadership and the data fall easily into the model. One conclusion is that the heads in my study conform well to the dominant discourses foregrounded by such manuals. As part of this, they may simply conform to the national expectations of them as professed by the government, the media and the general public. The close similarities could suggest that school improvement can be carried out by following a manual.

The other possibility is that the module covers basic common sense and practical guidance for a head teacher to follow.

Fig 2 Comparing head teacher B's data against NPQH criteria

NPQH	Content	Head teacher B		
Module 1	Strategic Direction and development of the school Includes developing and implementing a vision and accountability	Basic core values Could make a difference	Walk the talk Combing language and actions	
Module 2	Strategic leadership of learning and teaching- Characteristics of and securing good teaching, needs of pupils and self-review	*Secure good teaching* Be involved with every teaching appointment **Needs of pupils** Sport ECM Pastoral **Self-review:** Be more aware Need sufficient staff supportive of vision to tip the balance Constantly combing language		
Module 3	Working strategically with stakeholders Leading teams, stakeholders, community and CPD	*Stakeholders:* Governors, parents **Leading teams**: Establish departments/ faculties Meetings of Heads of Dept. meetings set up **Community:** awareness of being 'top dog'	**CPD:** Training needs Analysis Respond to needs Use external courses if necessary Use in-house expertise to support teachers	
Module 4	Strategic management of people and resources Finances, human and other resources including accommodation Health, welfare and safety	**Human resources:** Pastoral **Accommodation:** Moved from split site to new building Foyer more like a hotel than a school so welcomes parents		

Fig 3 Comparing head teacher C's data against NPQH criteria

NPQH Content		Head teacher C	
Module 1	Strategic Direction and development of the school Includes developing and implementing a vision and accountability	Establish a senior leadership team Consistency Rewards system	Head teacher awards Common sense approaches Accountability: Using data
Module 2	Strategic leadership of learning and teaching Characteristics of and securing good teaching, needs of pupils and self-review	**Secure good teaching:** Look at the teaching and learning 3 part 4 part lessons Using data Get people out and see good practice **Needs of pupils:** Nurture groups for years 7, 8 and 9 Oratory control v learning Ensure pupils are safe Football matches Head teacher awards Self-review: Using data Oratory control v. learning	Objectives to lessons Effective lessons Oratory control v learning (teaching and learning) How to walk down corridors Engage with the kids for better working relationships Take back the playground and corridors Remove 'no go' areas for smoking Positive news in assemblies Theatre trips, school productions, university, art galleries visits Build on strengths of the school e.g. P.E. Rewards system

Research Question:

My final scrutiny of the head teachers' data involved comparing them to each other as shown in the tables below. The tables include particular details housed within the modules. This was done in an attempt to scrutinise the data more closely and assist in answering the overall research question: 'How might we understand conceptualisations of leadership in transforming schools from 'challenging' to 'successful'?' This chapter focuses on the supplementary research questions: 'Could there a rubric for leaders bringing a school out of challenging circumstances?' and 'How might leaders act differently?'.

The categories of vision, teaching, facilities, care, systems, success, behaviour and support that I have used to classify these data have some correlation with the discussions above. These are outlined in figs 4 and 5 below. For instance, teaching is high on the agenda and attracting good teachers is important for both leaders. Delegation and bespoke professional development are two parts of the process of capacity building staff. Clear, well-defined systems within a school allow it to run efficiently. Head B's data provide an insight into how education has changed over the years as when he arrived at the school he developed departments and began a process of departmental meetings. This would be accepted as normal practice in today's secondary schools.

Disciplinary procedures, including exclusions and uniforms, feature in head C's data but not at all in head B's. Knowing when to call on external support is also outlined as one of the features that head C employed, a factor not mentioned by head B, except for sending teachers onto external training courses if necessary.

Although there is not one transferable rubric that a prospective head teacher can draw upon, these categories suggest that there are

some areas which will need more attention. The categories depend heavily upon the leader's values. This is not to underestimate the complexity attached to a new head teacher arriving in to lead a school, to which the discussions throughout this thesis attest.

Fig 4: Supplementary research question 1: Head teacher C

Could there be a rubric for leaders bringing a school out of challenging circumstances?

Vision	Teaching	Facilities	Care	Systems	Success	Behaviour	Support
Pupils' growth	Looked at the teaching and learning	Painted and carpeted	ECM Ensured pupils are safe	Established a senor leadership team	Examination results from 44% to 71% Number of pupils applying	How to walk down corridors	Visited partner primary schools
Compassion	Objectives to lessons, 3 part, 4 part lessons	Got better facilities	Charitable acts	Full time school counsellor, social inclusion officer, 2 EWOs	Reduced number of exclusions	Oratory control versus learning	Worked with LA
Personal and spiritual development	Effective lessons	Put up / removed shelves	Enlarged special needs department Full time counsellor	2 assistant key stages deputy heads	Pupils wearing the school uniform	Removed 'no go' areas for smoking and crime	Became chair of Local HTs
Academic achievement	Got people out to see good practice	Put up / removed barriers	Nurture groups for years 7,8, 9	Common sense approaches and consistency	Rewards evening Head teacher awards Positive recognition of GCSEs	Took back the playground and corridors	Got people out to see good practice
	Oratory control v. learning		EAL	Use of data	Built on strengths of the school e.g. PE, Football matches		Got people to come in
	Recruited new teachers		Engaged with the kids for better working relationships	Positive news in assemblies and staff briefings	Theatre trips, school productions, university, art gallery visits		

Fig 5: Supplementary research question 1: Head teacher B using headings from head teacher C analysis

Could there be a rubric for leaders bringing a school out of challenging circumstances?

Values and vision	Teaching	Facilities	Care	Systems	Success	External and others
Basic core values Constantly combing language Could make a difference 'what you say and what you do' 'Walk the talk so staff can mirror. If you don't staff, the staff won't'	Getting the right staff Training needs analysis – in house or external courses. Focus on learning	Formerly a split site New school building Foyer like a hotel Welcoming for parents Improved facilities	Safe Happy ECM Pastoral Responsive to need	Organised school into faculties Arranged HoD meetings	Making progress Exam results from 17% A-C to 56% Number of pupils applying for the school Judge everything against 'Every Child Can Succeed'. 'We can improve upon basic intelligence and every child is capable of success' Sport	Awareness of being 'top dog' Parents Governors

The second supplementary research question asked: 'How might leaders act differently?' Head B said that he would be much more aware. This might mean developing the art of noticing, i.e. the similarities and differences between one school and another. If this is done before the new head takes up position s/he would be likely to have a more informed, objective and clinical view of the situation. This also suggests that no two institutions are the same and so necessitates a level of flexibility to recognise and to modify the head's own practices in line with the new school.

Head B commented that it 'depends on what you're importing; a change can be good whatever the ideas'. Here I would disagree as a head bringing ideas that conflict with the dynamic and ethos of a school could be fairly damaging to those involved.

Head B also commented on having basic core values and appointing staff to support these. Here we see evidence of the perpetuating discourses being transmitted throughout the school. This makes the appointment of a new head extremely important as their leadership will ultimately cultivate and shape those within their care and control. Head B uses the word 'mirror' in his discourse and this is replicated by middle leader B. This suggests that the rhetoric used by heads is transmitted through the system.

Head C mentioned his initial mistake of confusing oratory control with good teaching. This suggests that he had conflated the two in his previous school or that controlling pupils was not high on the agenda there. Suffice to say that, since he had come in from rural schools to one in a very deprived inner-city area he was ill-prepared for the task ahead and this led to misjudgement.

The commentary above, which responds to supplementary research question 2, tends to point to supporting supplementary research

question 1, that there is no rubric for improving a school. Heads, however, do seem to need the ability to reflect and analyse critically their practice in order to improve it. They also require excellent staff to support them in their task.

The frameworks and Foucault

The frameworks were a useful tool for me to employ for analysing the research data, in that they provided me with a sense of security from which to work. This is, however, a limited and dangerous approach from which to operate. By adopting such mainstream frameworks as these, I was unintentionally reducing the data to conform to the overarching discourses seeping within and through the apparatus.

The frameworks, as with everything, appear as part of a continuum of political and social engineering. By the time, they were published in the early years of the millennium the pump had been primed. The ways in which this was achieved are too many to discuss within this writing. Some historical events which preceded them would include the Black Papers as far back as 1969 (Cox and Dyson, 1969a, 1969b) which levied an intense criticism of progressive education. Whilst few comprehensive schools were fully up and running, this criticism hit hard and served to undermine teachers (Ball, 2008).

Further weight was accredited to the Black Papers by the Ruskin Speech made by the then Prime Minister, James Callaghan in 1976, mentioned in Chapter One. Here he applauded the discourse of derision aimed at schools and teachers by the Black Papers. Under the auspices of making a clarion call for Black Paper prejudices, he challenged incompetent teachers and educators' monopoly over the purpose and methods of education. He argued that the 'secret garden of the curriculum' should be opened up (Callaghan, 1976,

cited in Ball, 2008:73) a comment which appealed to the media and marked the end of the teacher control of the curriculum. Curriculum, assessment, teacher training, school and working life were all called to debate. This 'opened up a set of policy agendas that were vigorously pursued by the Conservative governments of 1979-97' (Ball, 2008:74).

The curriculum is a tool which is used to decide what constitutes school knowledge. Controlling the curriculum is an effective way in which to control society. Classifying pupils according to how much 'non-school knowledge a student requires, the less 'able' he or she is perceived to be' (Paechter 2001:169). Paechter (2001:168) suggests that school knowledge is valued by the middle and upper classes and is a 'means of exclusion of working class students from an education that would give them more power'.

Paecher (2001:168), referring to the work of Keddie (1971) and Walkerdine (1988), suggests that working class pupils (or perhaps more accurately non-working class pupils) (my parenthesis) have difficulty adapting to schools' 'particular knowledge codes, and that educational success is specifically to do with the ability to enter into this different knowledge-world'. So, the more tightly the curriculum is controlled the more power this knowledge can wield.

Another factor which preceded the frameworks was that of teacher training. Previously this was undertaken by many in teacher training colleges or as B.Ed. degrees in universities. The advent of courses such as Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) reduced the time available for pedagogical and critical debate. As time progressed many future teachers began to be trained in schools in programmes such as the Graduate Teacher Training Programme (GTTP) (see Appendix B2) resulting in universities having less influence on students taking these routes.

The 'Leading from the Middle' qualification was launched in 2003. Unlike EiML it was not subject-specific and for this reason I did not choose to use it as an analytic tool in my research analysis. Neither training was compulsory. The NPQH programme however, at that time, was compulsory. All newly appointed heads from 2004 were required to either have successfully completed the course or to be working towards it. This could be viewed as one way in which greater control over schools could be achieved (Ball, 2008). By 2012 this requirement was relinquished – a change which could be seen as an 'opening out' of thinking. Alternatively, it could be viewed as a response to the reduced number of applicants for headship positions. Nevertheless, many schools still require the NPQH qualification from newly-appointed heads (NCSL, 2012).

The advent of reduced criticality which preceded these mainstream training techniques must have prepared for their reception into the neoliberal world of a national curriculum, reduced autonomy and increased accountability. Having undertaken NPQH training myself and been involved in working with EiML materials, the agenda had been decided in advance by policy makers and were both presented as unquestionable 'truths'. I was never asked to consider the weaknesses of such models or to design alternatives.

Perhaps, however, the lack of criticality was an innate part of a professional training course for teachers rather than one of academic inquiry. By this I mean a practical course designed to help school senior leaders in the day-to-day tasks that lie ahead of them. This might be viewed as the 'scissor movement', a term coined by Burawoy (2005), discussed by Rowley (2014:50) which describes how 'sociologists have become increasingly left-wing [whilst] the world has moved to the right'. Criticality, as Gunter (2009:93) suggests, has become 'the "C" word and is dangerous in a neo

liberal world'.

Conducting a full Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) would be too lengthy for this writing and not in keeping with my methodological standpoint. I am attempting here to extract archeologically, elements of the apparatus which restrict, constrain and subordinate. By employing the training texts as an analytical tool through which to scrutinise my data, I inadvertently introduced bias into this study.

'CDA is the name given to the work of a group of linguists who emphasize the social and institutional dimensions of discourse' bringing an overtly political agenda to the fore (MacLure, 2003:186). The aim in doing so is to identify the 'workings of power and domination that inhere in discursive practices and thereby to facilitate emancipatory social change' (MacLure, 2003:186). It is such an ambitious aim that it bring critics such as Hammersley (1997) and Lupton (1995) to launch sustained attacks on CDA (MacLure 2003:187). This work is not attempting to become an agent of change, but merely to act as a vehicle to unearth accepted practices and question taken-for-granted notions. Here I am acting more as a 'critical secretary' rather than a 'critical activist' (Apple, 2016:131).

'Discourses operate within discourse communities which share common ways of thinking, being and doing. The discourse practice within a discourse community can be seen as normative, in that it creates 'truths' about what is appropriate thought, speech and action' (Thomson et al., 2013:158). 'Foucault suggested that people do not speak discourses, they and their actions are spoken by them'. They are texts and utterances, ways of thinking and sense making, behaviours, relationships, interactions, signs and material objects (Thompson et al., 2013:13). The frameworks I have used in this work are part of the technologies of power, part of the

discourses that contribute to the often-invisible apparatus, of which schools are a part (Foucault, 1991).

The first four sections of the NPQH framework described earlier in this chapter have been aligned against data from both heads B and C. Head B mentioned having basic core values, walking the talk, making a difference and 'combing' language and actions (Appendix B1). The formulation of core values by leaders would have been orchestrated by the normative discourses of which they are a part. These values do not take into account the different values inherent within other social constructs, either economic or cultural. The head, however, is encouraged to pass these values onto staff and pupils as some type of parcel to be delivered without question.

The expectation that leaders can 'make a difference' too has the suggestion that a difference needs to be made. From what premise this is made is hard to discern. The change-maker is arrogantly deciding that the state of play is inferior and needs to be made better, cured or transformed. The discourse is that'[a]spiration is a moral duty. One cannot be satisfied with one's current social position, one must be self-disciplined to want and work for self-improvement, in this case, social mobility' (Thomson et al., 2013:164). This extends to the teaching workforce. Policies and practices place considerable pressure on teachers to become better and better, thereby propagating the notion that whatever exists is simply not good enough. For example, the discourses within head B's data reinforce the use of training needs analyses and CPD to ensure the quest for perfection is pursued.

The neoliberal, financial and managerialist characteristic of education is very apparent in the NPQH framework within module 4. Here, adults are dehumanised and commoditised by being conflagrated with buildings and other resources. In this way, the

workforce is reduced to being a 'thing' that 'costs' rather than an immense source of energy from which students can be inspired and educated.

Head C reported establishing a senior leadership team, which correlates with the NPQH ideology (Appendix C2). This reflects the assumption of hierarchical structures being the correct way to lead a school. As mentioned earlier, this top-down system is not apparent in many other countries. If this is the case, how does it reflect the diverse multicultural fabric of England today? One way to address this would be to look to international countries for alternative school structures. Being considered as the 'top dog' within the community demonstrates that hierarchies within the school are also visible between schools (Appendix B2).

Accountability is also a feature of the NPQH framework. This suggests a master / servant imbalance of power. The head is accountable to the governors, parents, Ofsted and the government. The teachers are accountable to the head, parents and Ofsted. The pupils are accountable often to their parents, teachers and the head. The wave of accountabilities sweeps through the schooling system holding those involved in a powerful magnetic field of fear.

Head B recounts establishing departments and faculties. Many in education today cannot remember life before such units of power existed. This Balkanisation of the curriculum does 'not allow students to understand how subject matters [are] connected' (Thomson et al., 2013:160). One way to start to address this fragmentation is for schools to undertake a problem-solving activity which encompasses all or most of the disciplines, thus reflecting more clearly the world outside the school gates.

The categories that I developed in Figures 4 and 5 above, need to be problematised in much the same way as the NPQH and EiML frameworks have been.

Using such categories and frameworks for analytical purposes could be viewed as reducing leadership into bullet points rather than embracing its complexity (Gunter and Willmott, 2002). The universalism of the category labels does not take account of the different socio-economic contexts and so in themselves perpetuate the status quo.

The eight labels assigned to head C: vision, teaching, facilities, care, systems, success, behaviour and support were reduced to seven labels for head B. Behaviour was not addressed by head B. This could suggest that head B did not wish to mention this topic, whereas head C did or perhaps it was not a pertinent feature to mention in head B's interview. In any case, using such a global term as 'behaviour' is particularly unhelpful. It means different things to different people and is based upon their own set of socially and politically constructed values. What is deemed to be 'poor behaviour' in one school might differ entirely to another. A myriad of value judgements must be brought into play to use such terminology. The binary of 'poor behaviour' sits in stark contrast to 'good behaviour' in a judgmental, executioner positioning. The definitions of the terms changing from one milieu to another with the powerful acting as judge and jury.

Punishments levied for 'poor behaviour' can have catastrophic effects upon a child's educational outcomes and upon their futures. If the head decides to permanently exclude a pupil they may be assigned to another school, home tuition or alternate provision units. Here they become the 'other', an 'outsider', marginalised by the schooling system.

The category headings serve to divide the art of leadership into artificial sub-divisions and trivialises the wealth of assumptions that are necessarily having to be made. If the system is designed to produce a 'one size fits all' approach to education with little regard to socio-economic contexts, then this naming and framing of leaders' practices only serves to exacerbate the situation and preserve the status quo.

I suggest that we avoid as far as possible, the use of grouping and subgrouping to define educational practices and outcomes. Such frameworks are counterproductive as they act as a veneer to cover profound issues.

As Loughlin (2004) asserts, it is our job to think, to question and to expose faulty reasoning. By doing so, however, we run the risk of upsetting the smooth functioning, air-brushed façade that the status quo often provides (Darbyshire, 2008). Exposing education to critical examination nevertheless, can widen the gap between sociologists and school leaders even further and perhaps is the price of pragmatism (Gunter, 2009).

By avoiding thinking critically, however, we risk education falling into an 'epistemological fog, an almost wilful opacity' that is kept hidden from view by resisting a Foucauldian panoptical approach to knowledge in the mistaken belief that it reduces rather than increases control (Apple 2014:viii). By operating in this non-critical way, we extend and support the 'spiral of silence' mentioned earlier in this chapter.

Nevertheless, if we refuse to question the integrity and robustness of common texts, utterances, policies, training courses and suchlike that contribute to the normative discourses, how can we be sure

that they are fit for purpose? Such criticality necessitates a lot of hard work, according to Gunter, as well as being subversive and depressing (Gunter, 2009; Gunter and Fitzgerald, 2007).

Conclusion

This chapter considered various aspects of school leadership and notes the confidence with which both school leaders speak. This becomes a noticeable feature by comparison when dealing with the middle leaders' (B and C) fear of speaking out, as discussed in the forthcoming chapter.

This chapter problematises the notion that heads and middle leaders need to have a clear vision and the ability to put this into practice, and situates this rhetoric within an apparatus designed to uphold elitist dominant structures. Other aspects of the analytic frameworks are also held up to the light for scrutiny, in an attempt to unearth what may be considered as common sense approaches in schools. It is precisely because these aspects largely go unquestioned that they need to be exposed and examined and to wonder why they have become insidiously ingrained into our systems without question. The inequity of access to mainstream discourses for pupils from socially deprived areas is highlighted here together with some suggestions to reduce more equitable educational outcomes.

Thrupp, referring to the work of Hirsch (1997), maintains that '[s]ocial class disparities between schools in the UK have been not so much ignored as accepted as part of the natural order' (Thrupp 1999:139).

It is not only the pupils from the lower socio-economic classes that are disadvantaged; however, 'If the school system is dealing

unjustly with some of its pupils, they are not the only ones to suffer… An education which privileges one child over another is giving the privileged child a corrupted education, even as it gives him or her a social or economic advantage' (Connell, 1993:15).

The section on disciplinary structures highlights the need for schools in challenging circumstances to create a safe and meaningful learning environment in which the pupils can thrive. Once these aspects have been addressed, the school may extend outwards to help others in an altruistic way. One way in which school leaders achieve an orderly environment is by excluding disruptive pupils. A further way is by enforcing a uniform policy and this task is made easier if the pupils want to conform to it. By allowing them some choice in this respect, the pupils achieve a sense of autonomy and ownership. In this way, they are manipulated into conformity. Further to this, the text suggests that, not only do pupils adhere to the uniform policy in the main, but actually gain a sense of pride in doing so.

This chapter contributes to the overall thesis in that it discusses how political and social discourses placed within a historical time line apply subtle pressure that helps to mould school leaders. This is turn becomes evident in school practices that help to shape and construct the expectation of conformity.

By examining the heads' data it also attempts to answer the following supplementary research questions: 'Could there be a rubric for leaders bringing a school out of challenging circumstances?' and 'How might leaders act differently?'.

An important point to note is that the data suggest that there is not one exact profile for a head attempting to 'improve' a school. Neither is there a requirement that the head must be brought in

from outside. Coming in from outside might bring with it a fresh outlook for the school but one major drawback is that the heads need time to become acquainted with the new milieu in which they find themselves. Both head teachers in the data would reconsider their approach and this suggests that they are reflective practitioners. Furthermore, it suggests that neither were free from making mistakes. For example, head C, who had led 'middle class' schools, was initially impressed by those teachers who could control their classes rather than teach them.

Head B had taken seventeen years to improve his school. His data suggest that he learnt the skills of identifying key staff to implement his vision and thought it was important to be part of every interview and appointment process. He acknowledged that he needed to achieve a tipping point of staff who were in line with his vision. Here we see evidence of the apparatus being perpetuated by those in charge.

Aspects such as focusing on better teaching, concentrating on improving external examination results, ensuring the safety of pupils through better behaviour structures, improving the fabric of the building and focusing on teachers' professional development are all key features highlighted here.

However, these data have allowed me to do more than consider the research questions. They have provided a vehicle through which to drill down into the statements encountered in the interviews, using an archaeological approach to unearth aspects, to examine the 'minutiae of etiquette and behavioral [sic] standards' and to 'problematize[s] what we take for granted' and this disquieting process 'stirs up large pools of certainty and opens them up for scrutiny' (Chambon et al., 1999:255, 259).

Tabulating both sets of data under similar headings assisted in comparing the data. Throughout the data there are many parallels such as vision, teaching, architecture (listed as facilities), care, systems, success and external features. This was due to the type of questions that were asked. This technique has helped to identify the similarities of approaches as well as the differences. Head B did not mention uniforms, exclusions or discipline in his data, where head C did. Both leaders referred to examination results as a key feature of success; however, the figures themselves play less of a feature than the improvement. School B had moved from 17% A to C up to 56% whereas school C had moved from 44% to 71% A to C. These figures show that, at the time of the interviews, school B's final position was only slightly above school C's starting point.

From this scrutiny, I would suggest that there is no one rubric for improving a school. Using raw examination results as a measurement of success is not a reliable measure. A percentage improvement might provide a fairer measure.

Chapter 7 The middle leaders

Introduction

This chapter provides a gateway into the schools that were employed in the research and allows the teachers' voices to be heard. It concentrates on the third supplementary research question: 'What impact does leadership have at middle management level?'

The chapter draws out some themes for analysis, which begin with an introduction to the two teachers in this study followed by a discussion on recruiting excellent teachers, a theme which will be returned to again in the subsequent chapter.

This chapter will then include a section on the teachers' fear and lack of voice. There is a focus here on accountability measures and how they place teachers in a tenuous situation. This draws a comparison to the section in the following chapter that discusses pupils' voices, setting up the notion that, as we get older we become more and more constricted by the apparatus. Foucault examines themes within texts. Discourse, according to Foucault, is more than language and is problem-based not period-based. The analysis will consider the discourses of power that fear and accountability play in holding teachers to ransom and which serve in the 'conduct of conducts' (Foucault, 1982, cited in Faubion, 1994:541).

The theme of disciplinary power returns here once again with an examination of how school structures uphold it and how the use of the disciplinary gaze contributes to its production, resulting in the marginalisation of pupils. A section is included here on the accepted practices of the teachers and an examination of how leadership impacts upon their daily lives and highlighting some of the

contradictions in the data. The chapter concludes with returning to the supplementary research question above by suggesting that the impact of school leadership upon middle leaders is much more obvious than that seen with the pupils in Chapter Eight. It indicates that teachers need clear guidance from senior leaders who possess a strong vision and have the ability to put it into practice in a coherent and focussed way. The teachers would like their voices to be heard, to be listened to and their suggestions acted upon.

The middle leaders

Teacher C was in his nineteenth year at the school and had been there throughout its journey, from being a good school, going into special measures and back out again. He had also seen various changes of leadership and how this had affected the school's progress. This provided an insightful account of the school from a teacher's perspective, even though he had not been a subject leader for all this time. His main aim, when promoted to head of department, was to raise attainment: 'There were so many changes that I could introduce to raise attainment, that was my main aim' (Teacher C, Appendix C2).

Teacher B was the second in charge in the mathematics department. As the head of mathematics was off work due to illness, teacher B was deputising for him in the interview and had been briefed in advance as far as was possible. Teacher B had left the school some time previously, to take up a position as head of department at School X. He had not enjoyed the job, so had returned to his former school and was enjoying working again with the current head of department. This allowed me to ask some supplementary questions about his experiences as head of department. He explained that he had learnt from working in a more 'successful' setting:

I learnt about monitoring lessons and staff. The school was more successful [than this one] so I have tried to transport these ideas and implement them into this school. The monitoring of lessons [here] could be developed further (Teacher B, Appendix B2).

Teacher B reflected upon his professional performance: 'I am a better second in department than before and would be a better head of mathematics' (Teacher B, Appendix B2). This suggests that he had not been ready for his promotion but had learnt sufficiently from the process to assist him in the future. I would contend too that there is, within this statement, a perceived acceptance of the hierarchical nature of schools. Here too, is the notion that practices can be transported from one school to another.

Schools in challenging circumstances often find it hard to recruit and retain talented teachers. One way that school B had attempted to address this problem was through teacher training routes. Teacher B compared the strengths of PGCE students to those from the GTTP. He maintained that the former had stronger mathematics knowledge, better planning and questioning techniques, whilst their behaviour management techniques were roughly equal. He asserted that the university-trained PGCE students eventually overtake the school-based GTTP students generally. The university students are taught to think more to consider 'what happens if?' and 'what would you do if?' scenarios. They focus on how to learn, how to solve problems and to try out their ideas.

For GTTP success, a good mentor is essential if the student is prepared to mirror their practice. Teacher B went so far as to say they were mouldable. There is a suggestion here that schools train and mould people whilst universities educate. Foucault discussed at length, the effect that culture has on subjectifying the individual,

using subtle forces which result in moulding him into conformity. Here we see an example of this practice being employed in school (Foucault, 1977).

Whilst teacher B observed a gap between knowledge and understanding, he conceded that GTTP students were a necessity in order 'to recruit and get bodies into the classroom' (Teacher B, Appendix B2)

Teacher B mentioned that they had a high turnover of staff but this also meant that some weak teachers had left. The fact that he classified some teachers as being 'weak' is an example of the use of norms to categorise and classify groups of people. He had presumably accepted the definition of 'weak' by applying Ofsted criteria for 'unsatisfactory' teaching, whilst by doing so, 'normal' (i.e. satisfactory or better) is being regulated to the margins. The usage of the terms 'weak, unsatisfactory, satisfactory or better' shapes the reality that we see. Edelman (1988) discusses how we 'variably construct social problems, social actors, and social solutions' (Edelman, 1988, cited in Chambon et al., 1999:57).

At department level, teacher B said they had focussed on structural changes concerning examination boards, including introducing early entry and incorporating ICT packages into the curriculum. The team then rewrote the schemes of work and 'ditched' the commercial scheme, which was in place for Key Stage Three. According to Little (1981), teams working together to develop curriculum planning exemplifies one of the definitions for collegial practice.

Here we see some element of critical thinking, flexibility, creativity, independence and autonomy. Having control over the way in which the mathematics curriculum is taught was important. In this regard, the head acquiesced control and allowed the 'expert' some license

with which to make informed decisions. It is through such mechanisms that the vision and the ideology of the middle leader can become visible. Introducing ICT, for example, as a teaching and learning tool, hints at both educating children whilst preparing them for a digital future, rather than simply preparing them to pass an examination.

It is in such a scenario as this that the knowledge bases of the subject leader emerge and with it, the inherent power relations attached (Foucault, 1977). 'In short, knowledge and power operate almost interchangeably' (O'Farrell, 2005:101).

Similar to the pupils' data discussed in the forthcoming chapter, there is a suggestion that learning should be as enjoyable and engaging as possible. In school C:

> We tried as much as we can to make it a little bit more fun, practical activities, using ICT, using interactive games and graphic calculators. …if they are enjoying the lessons that is my first aim, they are enjoying the lessons they can learn, if they can learn they can improve, if they can improve they can raise standards and we have better results and everybody's happy, even the government (Teacher C, Appendix C2).

Teacher B, however, was most proud of:

> The ethos and the culture. When ** was first head of maths pupils' motivation was low and he couldn't get the kids into the classrooms… Kids [now] understand the importance and the relevance [of maths] (Appendix B2).

Compare this to another type of teacher with a different epistemology, a different set of criteria, one that includes simply providing sufficient information to pass an examination and the structures of teaching would be very different indeed.

Teacher fear – lack of voice and accountability

In Foucauldian terms, fear restricts free speech and this results in a loss of power. Being able to give a rational account of oneself enables frank and fearless speech. Whilst this may be 'dangerous to democracy …it is also indispensable for its health' (Mendieta, 2011:116).

The institutional position the speaker holds may well affect what is said, and this must be remembered when conducting any discourse analysis. For example, the head teacher, head of department or students may simply be 'a spokesman… the mouthpiece for the organization… They are not free agents, they are socially constrained' (Fairclough, 2005:12, 22).

The fear of being interviewed was communicated in two different ways. In school B, the teacher paused the interview on a number of occasions to ensure that his identity would not be disclosed. There seemed to be a very definite concern that whatever he said could come back to haunt him.

Teacher C, however, seemed more confident in the interview in answering the questions. Initially, he had been very unhappy at being expected to conduct the interview in the first place. It was only when I offered to give him the questions in advance and to return the following week that he agreed to be interviewed at all. This may simply be an indicator of his learning style and that he would have preferred to be fully prepared in advance rather than thinking on the spot. Alternatively, he may have been grasping onto whatever remnants of power he felt still remained by protesting to taking part and deferring the start time. In situations of diminishing power, the ability to speak or not, may be all that is left to control.

My role as an insider-outsider researcher may have added to the fear of teacher C. I had worked in the school previously to help retrieve it from special measures and as such may have been seen with suspicion, as an agent of the head teacher.

This sense of fear, verbalised at middle leader level, was not evident in any form in the heads' interviews. This suggests that there is a perceived or a real threat present, one that is making the teachers feel insecure and which would result in some form of punishment or recrimination, either subtle or overt. The middle leaders' data displayed a distinct lack of trust in the system, which is a visible mechanism of the power structures at play. The system 'constantly supervises the very individuals who are entrusted with the task of supervising…' (Foucault, 1977:177).

There was no evidence in the heads' data to suggest that this was a deliberate ploy on their part. Head teacher C said: 'Very, very rarely do I ever admonish without bringing it back on myself or the senior staff you know, not you, it is we and us' (Head C, Appendix C1).

There was also a lack of teacher voice in the overall operation of the school, according to the data. Teacher B felt that cluster managers were only asked opinions as a matter of courtesy and not as a means to genuinely seek ideas or feedback. This excerpt correlates with teacher C, who mentioned the difficulty that the middle managers experienced in having their ideas and views taken seriously enough by the school's leaders to result in any form of action. Teacher B commented: 'Things are constantly changing bottom up and top down' (Appendix B2). This would correlate with Buckby (1997:27), who suggests that heads of departments, 'feel largely sidelined as regards whole-school curriculum design and whole-school policy formulation, yet they are arguably the cornerstones of implementation'.

Teachers are accountable for ensuring that children make progress. In both schools B and C there was a focus on improvement and progress. In school B it was defined as: 'the amount of teaching and learning that takes place on a day-to-day basis by the students relative to their ability' (Teacher B, Appendix B2). Whilst in school C:

> You are looking for change for the better so, when you progress, when you review strategies and you analyse what you've been doing and if you've made progress, some of them are obviously measurable and some others aren't. You can see if you've made progress when you evaluate, basically in your plans and some as I said can be measurable like exam results are measureable, see if you have achieved your objectives that you've set out. Some others they cannot be measured so you could measure them by interviewing people like you did yourself today. I talk to pupils, like once a year I interview, sometimes up to four pupils per year (Teacher C, Appendix C2).

This indicates a positivist reduction in thinking, resulting in a performativity culture (Gillies, 2013). What can be measured seems to gain superiority and increased currency. The ability to measure progress has greatly been improved through the use of computers and data processing software. These data, together with the technology, contribute to the apparatus (Agamben, 2009), which could be seen as a result of the government's desire to influence behaviour by reducing learning to an accountable arithmetic.

In both schools B and C, accountability was mentioned: 'There is a feeling that coordinators' heads are on the block if targets are not met' (Teacher B, Appendix B2). This provides a suggestion of fear and punishment being circulated throughout the middle leadership. In school C:

I think there is more accountability since we had the new head. People are more accountable now, like especially the middle managers. I think the middle managers are leaders now rather than just managers because I think before the new head came, people were just managing (Teacher C, Appendix C2).

This insinuates that the former head had not had such structures in place. This could be as a direct result of the newer forms of training and accreditation that head teachers are expected to comply with. However, I did not enquire into this aspect within my interviews and, as such, this remains as speculation.

Disciplinary structures, gaze and marginalisation

Teacher C's data, similar to that of teacher B, referred to pupil misbehaviour. The interview had been interrupted on a few occasions due to pupils being sent to him to deal with. He mentioned the 5% 'core' of pupils who continued to misbehave but felt that there was no solution for them. This contributes to the dominant discourse surrounding good discipline in schools. The focus on behaviour may well have begun with the introduction of formal schooling but various emergences such as the Elton report of 1989 and the former Prime Minister's speeches have helped to keep it on the agenda (Cameron, 2010; Gillard, 2007).

The marginalisation of the misbehaving pupils soon became evident. Some of them wanted to come and sit with him at the start of lessons instead of going straight to class, as they knew they would end up with him eventually. This highlights the acceptance the children had developed in regard to how they would be received in class. They had become classified into an 'abnormal' group that could not be educated alongside others. The unquestioning nature of this is apparent. The teacher felt that the school leadership team needed to discuss this with middle managers and develop

strategies to 'fast track' – that is to use procedures which are different than those used for other children. He had suggested this in a meeting with head C who seemed to like the idea but it had fallen by the wayside (Appendix C2).

A factor that featured in both teacher interviews was that of pupil improvement and how it can be measured. The responses included recognition of easily measured phenomenon such as examination results. Softer data were collected through interviews and annual pupil surveys. This suggests that, underneath all the positivist layers of data collection, monitoring and behaviour management is a caring and vocational educator who takes his job seriously and wants his pupils to become successful.

Nonetheless, the pupils were a focus of scrutiny, placed under the external gaze of the teachers. The discourses of control within the data soon started to emerge. Teacher C appeared to readily accept notions of monitoring without any mention of questioning its role or its validity. This strikes a semblance with the normalising effects of surveillance. A panoptical eye with a disciplinary gaze, is watching over the accepting docile bodies of the teachers and the pupils (Foucault, 1991 as in Rabinow, 1984). In this context, the middle leader has assumed the role of a lens in the compound eye of the school leader and ultimately the government.

Teacher C monitored pupil progress using a new tracking system. Once again, we see a focus on setting up systems to enforce monitoring and surveillance and where the teacher becomes the vigilant eye of the government. Here the teacher operates within 'a pastoral modality of power' (Faubion, 1994:300) as his actions have a direct effect upon the lives of individuals.

The consistent use of data tallies with the sentiment echoed by

teacher B. Data and monitoring procedures were part of the normal discourse of middle leaders. This is reinforced by Harris (2008) who proposes that having access to data is a fundamental part of school improvement. Data, the surrounding discussions and literature all aggregate to form part of the apparatus to which teachers belong.

Another part of the discourse contributing to the apparatus included marginalisation, in the form of intervention strategies. With the process of marginalisation, groups are identified, categorised, labelled and treated in a different way to others. Teacher C described the introduction of intervention as one way in which he secured success:

> We started with year 9 first and year 11 and we moved onto other years. So, the intervention programme wasn't easy to start with because we needed the financial support from the head plus we needed time as well to organise the intervention programme, which basically targeted pupils and taking them out of lessons, some of the lessons, to give them the intervention programme. Plus, the financial support to recruit somebody to do it, took time to convince the head, but eventually he agreed and we started with Key Stage 3 and we had significant improvement over the years at Key Stage 3 so now we ended the last year with 67% which isn't bad (Teacher C, Appendix C2).

The point of having to convince head C that this was an initiative worth spending money on is interesting. However, the fact that the intervention idea became accepted provides an example of where the leader of the school actually listened to and acted upon ideas from the middle management and this disagrees with my earlier comments that this did not appear to be the case. Here is an example of the power circulating within the system and the voice of teacher C being heard. These data are contrary to that of teacher B who ascertained that mere lip service was being paid to his

opinions. Once again, here in this excerpt lies the docile acceptance of limiting structures such as timetabling, curriculum design and accounting measures such as examination results.

Accepted practices

Teacher B's data include the use of value judgements. His use of the words 'exceptional', 'good' and 'better' suggests a common language across education. This language forms part of the dominant discourses and could be attributed to Ofsted inspectors and the terminology they use to judge performance. The influence of Ofsted was verified in the data when teacher B went on to discuss that the other school had received a Grade 1 for leadership from Ofsted where his current school had received a Grade 3: 'and you can see why' (Appendix B2).

Within the comments of teacher B there is an unquestioning acceptance of the hierarchical structures throughout the school with a head teacher at the top of the pyramid and department leaders below this level. This 'head at the top' model is not replicated throughout the world so therefore it is a culturally-developed phenomenon. Neither do all secondary schools operate team structures or have the capacity or need to organise staff into distinct teams (McCall and Lawler, 2002). The circulation of power in such a hierarchy either constrains or releases the voices of the people contained within. Foucault urges us to lower our 'threshold of acceptance in relation to entrenched forms of injustice and exercises of power' as we are freer than we think (Foucault, 1988, cited in O'Farrell, 2005:116).

The impact of leadership on middle leaders

In this section, I start to look for discontinuities in the data from

senior level to middle leadership. The discourses of the head teachers departed from the middle leaders in two ways: putting a vision into practice and strategic planning.

Head B had conveyed a view that he had driven standards up by his ability to 'walk the talk, so staff can mirror. If you don't, the staff won't' (Appendix B1). This made me wonder how it had taken so long to raise standards as he had been in position for seventeen years at the time. Teacher B's data suggest school X had more effective practices of raising achievement than school B as school X was 'exceptional at teaching and learning and honing down at pupils' progress and how you could change what was good into even better' (Appendix B2).

This suggests that the 'smashing of the myths' of underachievement, reported by head B, was coming as a direct result of teacher B's experience in another school, at least in mathematics, rather than from his current one. This led to the consideration that the improvement of the school may have been as a result of some other phenomena. Perhaps for school improvement to occur, a head teacher needs to be able to attract, recognise, appoint and retain suitable people.

A further point of departure from the head's data was observed regarding strategic planning. Teacher B noted that at school X there was 'a focus on what they were doing and why they were doing it', whereas in school B there was 'too much 'off the cuff' stuff happening, which is disappointing' (Appendix B2). This tends to disagree with the head B's opinion that teaching and learning had been a major focus of his and he intimated that he had brought it out 'of the dark ages' (Appendix B1).

This was emphasised further by the comment:

> Our action plan, three months later is not worth the paper it is written on. New ideas get jumped on. There [school X] they make decisions which are detailed and considered and thought through (Teacher B, Appendix B2).

One way in which to remedy this situation was to have a strong vision and well defined strategies: 'You need to be clear of what you want and stick to your decisions' (Teacher B, Appendix B2). This supports the research data gained by Brown et al. (2000:246) who reported that the 'School Development Plan (SDP) was labelled as either a "folder in a cupboard" or as "the SMT's plan"'. Hatch (2009:151) refers to this as 'mission drift' whereas Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991:8) maintain:

> If one change does not seem to have the desired effect, the temptation is to introduce further innovations. From the teachers' point of view, this can produce a paralysis: they become exhausted and demoralized by trying to do too much too quickly, but with nothing done properly.

Conversely, teacher B mentioned that head B had a strong vision and was 'inspirational' and a good talker and he had brought them from 'the worst of the worse to average' and 'it's good to see uphill improvement, beating targets and seeing the effect'.

The whole school improvements reported by teacher B were mechanistic and systems-based and resonated in a similar fashion to those mentioned at department level. They included registration times, change to key stages, curriculum changes, uniforms, reports, clear behaviour strategies and improved examination results.

Teacher C reported that 'the school mission statement is so vague' but was always referred to when writing the school improvement plan with head C, identifying the issues to be worked on: 'they are

basically given to us' (Teacher C, Appendix C2). This suggests that lip service was being paid to the mission statement, rather than it being the guiding vision for the school. It would appear that it was only used as a token rather than having clear reverberations throughout the school. Anything that is described as 'vague' is unlikely to be translated into a powerful transformative tool.

Conclusion

Here, these data provide examples of how middle leaders work within hierarchical or vertical systems with their inherent constraints, structures and demands, which they seem to accept without question or complaint.

Their descriptions reflect the dominant discourses of the educational arena in which they must operate. There were numerous references to hard positivist, measurable and accountable criteria and their discussions mostly surrounded pupil behaviour and improvement.

Overall, there is a sense that the teachers truly cared for their pupils' learning. Nevertheless, the external pressures being foisted on the school and subsequently down through the hierarchy are clear. The circulation of their power seems to be severely limited within these data. The only real autonomy evident, surrounds aspects such as choosing schemes of work and technological equipment to use in lessons.

Within this limited array, further limitations exist. For example, their choices would have to comply within the statutory confines of a national curriculum and examination requirements. The choices these teachers describe could therefore be considered as a 'game of choice', as described earlier. The teachers are being

swept along by the waves involved in the historic progression of the educational story. This involves 'opening out' and 'closing in', ebbs and flows.

How and when this occurs largely depends upon the political views of the government of the day. The teachers must comply with the various education acts, including the introduction of the National Curriculum, numeracy strategy, Ofsted, 'superheads', school policies and development plans. In many ways, they are more constrained than the pupils they teach. The pupils have five years at secondary school whilst these teachers have full careers to complete.

The supplementary research question which this chapter is aimed at is: 'What impact does leadership have at middle management level?' This chapter suggests that middle leaders are rendered virtually powerless in a hierarchical structure. Top-down initiatives from government and senior leaders have restricted their autonomy and middle leaders have developed a fear of speaking out and when they do, they do not feel that their voices are being heard. They also believe that senior leaders often do not have a clearly-communicated vision and the ability to put this into practice.

This contributes to the overall argument of the thesis by highlighting the importance of leadership in schools. The teachers in these data appeared to be fearful of speaking out. The disciplinary systems impact on them through measures such as accountability. Leaders need to, not only be able to develop a clear vision, but to possess the ability to put this into practice. Deciding on and maintaining a clear focus on important aspects and initiatives, rather than jumping from one to another, is seen as beneficial. Clear systems of communication are also considered important and ought to be a two-way conversation between middle and senior leaders.

Chapter 8 The pupils' views

Introduction

This chapter continues to implement what Foucault would call a vertical system to discuss the research data, which now considers the pupils (Gillies, 2013). Seeing education through the eyes of the children provides a unique insight into their lives.

These data build on the theme of power and voice, diminishing as we get older, as suggested in the previous chapter. They also highlight parallels in aspects such as the importance of good teachers, permanent teachers, discipline, architecture and the docile acceptance of practices within school life.

The aim here is to examine the fourth supplementary question: 'What impact does leadership have at pupil level?' The argument put forth by this study is that children are innocent recipients of governmental interference, however well intentioned. The recent call for new grammar school heads to lead schools in deprived areas will have an impact upon pupils such as these (DfE, 2016). This chapter highlights the human dimension at play. The pupils' use of language offers a naivety, freshness and innocence which makes the case much more poignant.

Pupil voice

The pupils selected from year 8 (school B) and year 11 (schools A and C) provide an excellent contrast in both age and experience. They had all attended schools that had been improved or transformed. Two schools, A and C, had experienced a 'superhead' being drafted in and all three schools had seen an upward turn in examination results. The data collected allow an essence of the children's voices to emerge:

student voice can give all learners a voice to transform education for the better. It can give young people power and choice over their own learning rather than just accepting what politicians, teachers or parents say (Islam, 2012:164).

If pupil voice is worth any merit, then it should result in tangible evidence of quantifiable outcomes. When asked for concrete examples of having their views listened to, the pupils from school C could recount two examples: running a trip to Blackpool for year 7 and year 8 pupils and organising a fund-raising concert (Appendix C3). The pupils quite easily recounted the above examples of their views not only being listened to, but action taking place as a result. This contrasts with their teacher C who had mentioned some of his ideas being bypassed. This could indicate a situation that the pupils actually have more power than their teachers, their voice having more real power than the adults. However, as head girl and deputy-head boy, the two interviewees had a privileged status within school C's hierarchical tier and this may have resulted in their voice becoming more dominant than others.

Without having undertaken this process these data would have not have been gathered. The voices in the data help to emphasise that pupils from challenging schools often have only one chance at education. For instance, one pupil from school A acknowledged the improvement that had occurred at his school since the 'superhead' had arrived but noted that it was too late for him to really benefit. He commented that the improved conditions would be 'good for other kids, e.g. my brother' (Appendix A2). This seems to suggest an acceptance that 'something went wrong and it is too late to catch up' (Chambon et al., 1999:252).

Conversely, seeking pupils' voices may be viewed as a disingenuous attempt to flatten the verticality of the pyramid to

which the children belong:

> student voice balances precariously between forces
> associated with social justice and democracy, and
> those belonging to a neo-liberal agenda embodying
> tokenism, instrumentalism and, the enhanced
> competitive positioning of schools (Czerniawski and Kidd,
> 2012:93).

Nevertheless, my rationale behind seeking pupil data was to provide an opportunity for the pupils to 'have their say' in an otherwise busy, often adult-dominated day. This suggests that the adults in the school context hold the power to make the decision to allow the pupils such an opportunity. This gives some indication of how power is organised in relation to voice. It also serves as a reminder of whom the change agents are within the educational arena.

The pupils

In school A, 117 pupils from year 11 were surveyed using a questionnaire, whilst interviews were conducted with 4 pupils from year 8 at school B and 2 pupils from year 11 at school C. An analysis of the data gathered shows some parallels emerging. These are delineated below, with the first being how important good teachers and permanent teachers are to pupils. The majority of comments in the data include some reference to teaching and/or teachers. The desire to have lessons fun and interesting is also evident here. These parallels are also echoed in the data gathered from senior and middle leaders. Other correspondences in these pupils' data are discussed below and include diminishing power, disciplinary structures, architecture and accepted practices.

In schools B and C the interviews were designed to try to 'get inside the heads' of these pupils and to observe what life is like for the average twelve to sixteen-year-old from the area (Schostak,

2006). Whilst an impossible task, the process did provide guidance to aid my understanding for this research. Here, the usual hierarchy manifest in many schools was inverted, with the child talking and the adult listening.

> Encouraging students to speak out about matters that concern them in school… helps teachers to see the school world through the eyes of the main actors in school and adapt their practices accordingly, albeit within the contexts of internal and external school policy discourses and teachers' own value-laden perspectives of practice (Busher, 2012:114).

Although by using semi-structured interview questions the locus of power was retained to some extent, I genuinely wanted to know what their lives were like and to get a real chance to experience the stories they wanted to share. However, by the sheer nature of the questions, I clearly had an agenda. For example, to help ascertain what had occurred in the school to bring about its renewed profile I asked: 'Do you think things have changed across the school – if so what are they?' (Appendix B3). I wanted to find out how the school mission and the work of the head teacher translated into the lives of the pupils; or as Thomson et al. (2013:155) suggest, to look for the 'correspondence between the words of senior leaders and what was happening in their schools'. Whilst the pupils had some liberty to choose how to answer, this was within the confines denoted by the parameters of the questions. This was probably an unlikely discussion point for any of the pupils to be involved in unprompted.

Diminishing power

In the first few minutes of the school B interview, the pupils mentioned features of being in year 8 and school life. The list that follows here provides some indication of the unquestioning compliancy to the extent that the pupils had 'accepted their lot', as

discussed below. This would certainly have been part of the apparatus that would prepare them for the hierarchical nature of organisations both in school and beyond. The list included feeling more mature, better teachers, better facilities and being closer to home. They recounted some of their fears arriving into year 7. They had heard stories of bullying, 'of being bog washed', 'people being fenced and benched' and concerns that 'I thought I would get lost' (Appendix B3).

In school C, as mentioned earlier, the head of department remained in the room whilst I interviewed the two allocated year 11 pupils. I felt that this may have restricted their responses somewhat. He continued with his work but referred to the type of questions I had asked them when I interviewed him later. Their data recount the fear of moving to a new school, which was also evident in the transcripts from school B and the fact that the school was chosen due to its location near to home rather than for any other reason.

The male pupil (M) had come to the school with a large number of his primary school peers but he reflected that this may have been a 'kinda set back because when we came here we already had friends and we didn't have to make new friends' (Appendix C3).

The female interviewee (F) quite quickly started to mention the diminishing freedom, which was a feature of the interview that surprised me. Whilst the younger pupils from school B had related examples of increased independence (although they did say they felt the school was like a prison inside) that getting older brought to them, pupil F had a very different story to tell. Her fondest memory from primary school was the freedom:

…it's not as regimented you know like now, you've

> got adult peer pressure… because you've got to wear certain clothes, you've got to look a certain way, you've got to act a certain way with friends, but in primary school you've got like, when you're out you can play all different games, tiggy off the ground and all these fun games but in high school you're just like no, you just stand around, it's not cool (Pupil F, school C, Appendix C3).

And,

> Yeah, I think it is because in primary school you're a kid, you're still a kid and you have more fun I think where in high school you've got a lot more work, you've got peer pressure from people and it's more stressful than primary school (Pupil F, school C, Appendix C3).

Pupil F tends to exemplify everything that Foucault protests about in relation to how we are culturally conditioned to accept restricting practices. The reduction in freedom over time corroborates Foucault's idea that, '[i]n a system of discipline, the child is more individualised than the adult' (Foucault, 1977:193). The pupil's saddened recollection of how much better things had been in her younger years suggests a diminishing sense of freedom. The normalising pressures of her peers reflect the systems to which we belong or, as Foucault (1977:182) writes, so we, 'might all be like one another'.

Pupil F was acutely aware of the constraints placed upon her personal freedom. She could have chosen to resist this pressure and wear what she wanted to, but she would then run the risk of appearing 'uncool' and perhaps attract bullying. The group mentality had decided what was acceptable and to fall outside of this was not to be recommended. This is an example of where the costs of resistance must be considered and whether it is thought to be too high a price to pay. This is similar to the 'spiral of silence' as discussed in Chapter Six (Noelle-Neumann and Peterson, 2004).

Pupil F was exposed to pressure from the school's dress and conduct codes as well as from her peers. This is evidence of how power circulates throughout an organisation and 'distributes individuals in this permanent and continuous field' (Foucault, 1977:177) in a rhizomatic manner. In Foucauldian terms, this pressure to conform is one type of 'governmentality', namely the 'social contract' that contributes to the apparatus. Governmentality is the,

> ensemble found by institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power (Foucault, 1979:20).

The social contract is where we agree '…to give up certain freedoms in order to benefit from banding together' (Danaher et al., 2002:83). However, what actual real choice did pupil F really have? It may have been a case of conform or be totally isolated or bullied. This is what I referred to earlier as a 'game of choice'.

Pupil F acknowledges that her options were becoming increasingly more restricted the older she became and as the need to conform increased. In this respect she makes very mature, sophisticated and insightful comments. Teenagers who see themselves as belligerent and vocal in striving for independence are often merely being manipulated and orchestrated by factors in their lives and these are mostly unseen by the majority. The fact that this girl was aware of the subtle pressure placed upon her to conform, conflicts with that of Lukes (1974), who describes this as the third face of power where:

> victims fail even to recognize that their real interests are at risk, and consequently make no attempt to defend those interests… from this insidious form of power. They are not aware of the external influences on their thoughts and desires and they are unaware of its effect (Lukes, 1974:23).

Pupil F, nonetheless, was intelligently aware of her subjection to the 'dominant discourses that tell people what to do' (Chambon et al., 1999:183).

One noteworthy aspect of pupil F's data was the contradictory evidence from school B. Whereas pupil F reported her reduction of freedoms as she got older, the younger pupils told a different story. They seemed to be looking forward to growing up and saw themselves as more independent than when they were at primary school. This was signified by statements such as: 'Making new friends, growing up' (Pupil C, school B) and 'I was given a house key so feel more responsible' (Pupil A, school B). However, there was a hint of cultural expectations bringing pressure to bear within pupil B's statement: 'You feel like you are growing up, everybody is trying to fit in' (Pupil B, school B).

The importance of teachers

Teachers featured heavily in all the pupils' data, with 62 comments from school A mentioning teachers and one third listing the quality of new teachers, including the new head and the reduction of supply teachers as the best change that had happened to their school:

> …the fact that we have maths and science teachers who can teach… influx of new, better quality teachers… getting better teachers in… best… is them getting new teachers… (Appendices A2, A3).

School A pupils also commented on the need for permanent staff and the irritation caused by using supply teachers was evident: 'the fact we have permanent teachers not a new teacher every lesson', 'now we have proper teachers, no supply' and 'supply teachers cut down' (Appendix A2, A3).

A parallel to this was visible in school C:

> Because in years 7 and 8 I had altogether about 10 different teachers in years 7 and 8 but that was for English. Yeah, my teachers were swapping round all the time, new ones coming in. That was quite a strange thing also when I came into the school because in my school [primary school] we only had one teacher to a class and that was each year (Pupil F, appendix C3).

It is difficult for pupils to feel safe in a constantly evolving environment. To develop a productive learning environment, trusting relationships must be established and maintained. The constant turnover of teachers would make this hard to achieve. Parallels in the data included opinions surrounding the use of supply teachers in school. Pupils in schools A and C said that the worst memory of school life was substitute teachers. This might suggest that the hierarchical vertical structure in schools is so constraining that anyone who does not belong to it is viewed as an unwelcome intruder. This would correlate with data gained from school A, where the pupils reported not wanting new teachers to be drafted in from outside to come and work in the school: 'kick some teachers out who don't belong' (Appendix A2) with the worst changes being, 'bringing in teachers from different schools to try and run this school' (Appendices A2, A3). This aspect towards teachers however, was not reflected throughout all the data from school A, with 'some of the teachers that were brought into the school' being listed in the questionnaire returns as a positive change (Appendix A2).

There is also a sense of the importance that some pupils place upon developing working relationships with staff. Pupils from school B spoke in a regretful manner about losing some of their former teachers who they felt had left for better jobs, a pay rise or

promotion (Appendix B3), whilst pupil M from school C said:

> Yeah, I suppose it's also more like as we've gone into different years we've changed teachers so we've got to know most of the teaching staff, but quite a lot of them have left. A lot of them left when we were in the younger years, so I suppose we didn't really know them that well, so we just kind of expected a new teacher (Appendix C3).

The development of mutually respectful relationships was reported:

> …I suppose now we're in year 11, they do actually treat us like adults and you can have a mature conversation with them (Pupil M, Appendix C3),

> I think the attitudes, because they talk to you as if you are a friend but also as a pupil as well, they're more friendly and offer advice (Pupil F, Appendix C3),

> We know most of them now (Pupil F, Appendix C3)

and

> here we have more teachers and better teachers [whom you can] feel close to them' (Pupil F, Appendix B3).

School A data called for 'people [to] have more respect for the teachers and pupils, everyone would treat each other the same' (Appendix A2).

The tone the teachers set for learning was also deemed important. Many pupils wanted lessons to be fun, practical and active and for their teachers to have a good personality. This meant that the lessons would be enjoyable and pupils treated with respect: 'To treat you like an individual student, you know, but not like everyone else, you know [that] you're specific' (Pupil M, Appendix C3).

Pupils from school B attested that their best mathematics lessons were, 'fun, interacting with the Promethean Board [interactive white board] and making things, because you feel part of the lesson'

(Appendix B3). However, the worst lessons were:

> boring… [involved] fractions, cover teachers and work sheets. Now teachers do games and it's better now. I don't like sitting watching – want to get out of my desk – work in teams. I want to do fun things to break fractions down (Appendix B3).

These data correlate with that found by Busher (2012) where students welcomed teachers that provided:

> clear explanations of the work, support in understanding when they needed it and a clear structure to their work. The classroom culture that students preferred was a collaborative and trustful one where people could 'have fun' while working purposefully (Busher, 2012:115).

Of the 102 pupils from school A who responded to the 'best teachers' question, 37% reported the 'ability to listen' as the most important factor, almost one fifth described 'clear explanations' as a factor and almost 15% said teachers who 'act like the pupils' best friend' (Appendix A2).

In relation to the supplementary research question as to the impact of school leadership upon the pupils, these data do not make much reference to the school's leadership. There is, however, a very firm response directed towards teachers. Only 5% of School A respondents mentioned the introduction of the new head teacher. This would suggest that the actual person leading the school is of less importance to the pupils than the visible signs of their leadership, including their ability to recruit and retain excellent teachers.

Disciplinary structures

The importance of establishing a disciplined working environment was borne out in the data from school A with 21.6% of the students listing 'firm and fair' as an attribute of what makes the 'best teachers'. No pupils indicated that 'good teachers' allowed them to mess about in class but neither did they indicate that being too harsh was an attribute either, with under 7% opting for 'tolerate no nonsense' (Appendix A2). This view is supported by Gore (1995) who maintains that 'unless teachers can effectively exercise power to present and reinforce particular norms, teaching would not be a purposeful endeavour' (Gore, 1995:172).

Devine reports student complaints surrounding the lack of discipline visible in some New York schools:

> They complain that they cannot learn because teachers who are too permissive or too inept, cannot control their classrooms, and they complain that teachers look the other way in the cafeterias, corridors, and public spaces of the school in order not to see student misbehavior (Devine, 1996, cited in Chambon et al., 1999:253).

The pupils seemed to appreciate that if they wanted to have their views listened to by teachers, there were appropriate ways in which to do this:

> If you give attitude to the teachers, you won't get listened to; the teachers listen to our views. You need to put your hand up. If there is a problem, you can go to a teacher or head of year (School B, Appendix B3).

This indicates an acceptance of 'the system of values that you are taught', which is 'an instrument of power in the hands of the bourgeoisie' (Chambon et al., 1999:96). It also suggests an understanding of the hierarchy of power structures within the school.

It is clear that the students demonstrated a clear understanding of the school's systems and the repercussions when they were abused. There was an unquestioned acceptance that misdemeanours would be punished. In an attempt to recreate 'new and improved' behaviour, schools have developed ways to quantify behaviour. The mechanisms of control that the children described, could be seen as being helpful in deciding 'what steps will have to be taken to destroy [his] old habits' (Foucault, 1977:126).

For instance, in school B, the pupils mentioned a 4-tier method for teachers to deal with inappropriate behaviour: 'The old system didn't work well now there is C1: warn, C2, C3, C4: Remove [from lesson]' (Appendix B3). Here, C1, C2, C3 and C4 are descriptors used to describe increasing levels of belligerent behaviour of pupils.

In a similar way, Foucault describes four classifications of behaviour in the 1700s as the very good, the good, the mediocres, and the bad. Whilst the children in school B were subjected to being awarded a code for their behaviour, those described by Foucault were dressed in different attire, the worst of them being forced to wear sackcloth (Foucault, 1977).

The previous system in school B involved the use of a form, which they reported pupils simply ripped up and:

> If they were stood outside [the classroom] they did a runner. Pupils wagged in the toilets, now we have cameras. [Travelling] from Upper to Lower school [on the split site] pupils went to the shops, bought ice cream and smoked. One building helps (School B, Appendix B3).

This would suggest that constancy amongst teachers in enforcing the school's policies is important for the pupils to take the rules seriously. 'Consistency in schools must be obtained at the receiving end not the delivery end' (Fullan, 1992:37). Here the power seems

to emanate from the adults in the schools. Fullan employs a utilitarian input-output business-type model in his description, which serves to uphold the dominant discourses of the hierarchical structures involved. Teachers are typecast as enforcers of policies and rules, which the children are the recipients of.

Pupil M from school C, resented the 'idiots in class, they were just kind of messing about' (Appendix C3) and suggested that he would:

> make it more strict, because all the kids that are naughty always get the attention but the kids that are actually doing well, showing off their abilities, they just get no attention. I suppose we're getting the attention now because we've moved into a different form and have been put into awards evenings and stuff (Appendix C3).

This comment correlates with school A's data where the pupils would change 'the way the kids talk to the teachers' (Appendix A2) and suggests that a level of indiscipline still existed in spite of its apparent improvement and this was frowned upon by some of the children.

Architecture

One large part of Foucault's work surrounded the design of buildings to enable the disciplinary gaze to normalise and control behaviour. For Foucault, modernity introduced institutions such as schools, universities, mental hospitals and prisons which meant that '[s]lavery is no longer needed as a method of exercising power, modernity is far more efficient' (Foucault, cited in Chambon et al., 1999:251). Schools, however, were not formatted upon the model of prisons; rather, prisons were informed by that of schools (Foucault, 1977). It would be fair to suggest that the better the facilities, the less like a prison the school becomes. The advent of BSF funding (2005-2010) has helped to some degree, to improve the quality

of buildings that some schools occupy.

In the pupil data from all three schools, architecture was mentioned. It featured quite high in the pupils' responses from school A. In total, 38.9%[4] referred to the facilities including the fabric of the building. These included more computers, the new canteen, PE and drama areas, the 'new corridor' and classrooms, in particular. This contrasts with 11.1% who mentioned behaviour.

For pupils from school B there was a clear sense of pride apparent in the data, that they attended the 'best school' and they could easily relay stories of the old regime in the old building they had attended the previous year. The new building, improved standards and an increase in pride seemed synonymous. It seemed that whilst standards had been improving before reaching the new building, it had taken the new accommodation to really embed a new, improved regime for pupils. This was replicated by data from school C that suggest the new school buildings reinforced the school's improved profile.

Whilst Foucault may have believed that 'school may be a space deliberately designed for supervising, hierarchizing, and rewarding' (Gillies, 2013:42), the pupils in school B held a much more positive view of their buildings: 'I am proud of telling others you are in the best school. It has a soccer centre. The other schools are scruffy like our old one' (Appendix B3) and 'I wasn't as proud of the old school, pupils smoked in the toilets' (Appendix B3). This appreciation of better facilities was replicated in the data gained from pupils in schools A and C. There were also references in the data to the use of fencing and points of entry to schools A and B, making the pupils feel restricted, as if in a prison. The new reception in school B was impressive and head teacher B said he wanted it to

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[4] Including those who listed 'everything' as being better.

feel like a hotel reception. Somehow, the luxury of the accommodation upon arrival was overlooked by the pupils who only saw it as a means of restraining them. They reported the worst aspect of school as not being allowed out to the shops: '…feels like a prison once you are in, you can't get out. The late doors are locked and you have to sign in at reception' (School B, Appendix B3).

The data include the use of the word 'security' and the meaning here is unclear whether it should be increased or reduced (School A). In Foucauldian terms, the mention of buildings alongside security is thought-provoking and could be equated to prisons, cells and guards. The correlation between various regimented institutions which act as an apparatus for transforming individuals is a strong Foucauldian assertion: 'The prison is rather like a rather disciplined barracks, a strict school, a dark workshop, but not qualitatively different' (Foucault, 1977: 233).

Accepted Practices:

Lining up for lunch is one example of how pupils accept the dominant practices inherent in daily school life. Both schools B and C data recounted memories of long queues for the canteen and when in year 7 'not lining up in the rain' and being a prefect 'reminds you of year 7 a little bit because you can just walk in' (Appendices B3 and C3).

The privileges attached to prefect status goes unquestioned and harks back to the public schools of the 1800s when prefects were treated in a superior way, highlighting 'the differentiation of rank and hierarchy in the school's micro-society' (Meadmore and Symes, 1996:213). Here we see evidence of the 'apparatus' being upheld by the everyday practices.

It is also visible in the duties such a privileged position brings and their acceptance of situations is an indication of their cultural normalisation. In many ways, it would appear they had come to accept their position and had come to like it:

> I'm head girl, I go round to primary schools and talk to the kids about what it's like in ** and why they should come and show them experiments, and also go to universities and give talks about what we do (Pupil F, school C, Appendix C3).

Pupil M added, 'I wear the badge' suggesting some level of pride in his wearing of his deputy head boy's badge (Appendix C3). This is what La Boetie (1975) would describe as 'voluntary servitude':

> Men are like handsome race horses who first bite at the bit and later like it, rearing under the saddle a while soon learn to enjoy displaying their harness and prance proudly beneath their trappings (La Boetie, 1975:60).

In school A, in spite of their experiences attending a school in special measures, when asked if they would send their own children to the school, there was a distinct 50:50 split who said 'yes' and 'no' (Appendices A2, A3). Whilst 50% would not send their children to the school, 50% said they would and it is on these data that I now speculate. This could indicate an example of the construction of the self within the normalising influences of the family and surrounding milieu. It indicates an unquestioning acceptance of doing what their parents had done, i.e. they would eventually have children themselves who would grow up in the same streets as they had done. The influence and socialising effects of parents upon the behaviour of their children is beyond the scope of this study. Suffice to note that whilst teachers can assume pastoral power, as a shepherd would have with his flock, so too can parents. This has an individualising power on the lives of people (Faubion, 1994).

Conclusion

These data allowed a rich site to draw upon to help illuminate aspects of Foucault's work. By archaeologically digging into the data, parallels were sought and exposed some 'taken-for-granted' practices.

They allow the pupils' voices to emerge. This is a seen as a positive aspect of school life as it helps students to develop learning as it is 'not only about what students know but also who they are learning to be and become' (Thomson, 2012:96). It helps children to learn how to cooperate with each other (Thomson, 2012:96). Listening to students' views acknowledges their right 'to influence and shape their own learning' (Busher, 2012:113) so they can become 'expert witnesses of teaching and learning' (Busher, 2012:113). Having mechanisms in place to ensure that pupils get heard helps to reduce the hierarchical nature of schools, thus allowing the locus of power to circulate to include the children (Mitra et al., 2012).

The importance of having excellent teachers that are a permanent feature of a school is echoed throughout all these data. It stands out in stark comparison to the lack of discussion surrounding school leadership. This indicates that, whilst the leaders are charged with the task of recruiting and retaining excellent staff, the pupils as end-of-chain receivers, are mostly concerned with the impact of this. In the current climate of importing heads from other schools this is an important detail.

Pupils also reported their desire for teachers to be approachable, friendly, fun and respectful as well as being able to teach. There was of course a greater opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with permanent staff. Supply teachers came under

considerable criticism throughout. The influx of new teachers into schools received a varied response, with some pupils applauding it and others being critical.

The mention of reducing independence as the pupils get older is an important aspect of this chapter. In some cases, it might appear that the pupils have more autonomy than the middle leaders. The subtle external influences from school and peer expectations is clearly verbalised within the pupils' voices. This contributes to the overall argument throughout this thesis about how individuals are culturally constructed to become docile unquestioning beings.

A further interesting facet of these data is the pupils' references to the quality of the fabric of the school building. This was highlighted throughout as an important feature and seemed to assist with the school's overall discipline and the self-respect of those who attended it. New buildings seemed to make the school become a place to be admired and appreciated. Having access to better facilities is a feature of this aspect and this too was highly reported.

The school disciplinary section aims to highlight the processes and structures that pupils are privy to and foregrounds the subsequent section on the acceptance of such practices. The data provide the pupils' viewpoint of unruly pupils. Middle leader C also discussed this aspect in Chapter Seven, but reported that his suggestions were never acted upon. The frustration that poor behaviour causes is evident at both levels of the data, with teachers and pupils. Perhaps that is why some pupils conform unquestioningly to systems, as they can appreciate their benefits.

This chapter contributes to the overall argument of this thesis by highlighting the extent to which pupils are impacted upon by external pressures from school and peers. The argument that people are influenced by their cultural milieu is emphasised by the data showing how pupils modify their behaviour in order to belong, i.e., they become increasingly normalised. A further contribution to the overall argument is that the pupils tend to accept practices and structures of school life without question.

Overall conclusion

Introduction

This thesis takes a walk-through history from the present, to the past and back to the present in a circular journey. It has aimed to set up an argument predicated upon exposing the effect of culturally-constructed practices being blindly followed. In doing so it has problematised the toleration of the intolerable. It mobilises Foucault's tools to unearth and examine archaeologically some 'taken-for-granted' practices in schools. One such practice is underestimating the complexities attached to transporting a school leader, in the form of a 'superhead', into a school from another. The thesis considers themes that it returns to throughout. These include power and the formation of the apparatus in sustaining elite relationships. One major part of this is the use of mainstream literature and training models. I employ this notion when comparing two leadership styles, transformational and distributed, to indicate the power structures at play therein. By placing a focus on such aspects, I am giving credence to 'micro-events with their ripples and interactions, in order to understand macro-phenomena' (Lynch, 2011:23).

The formation of the 'self' is created as a result of the subtle pressures of the apparatus. This aspect informs my discussion on the methodological choices made in the research process. The formation of the participants in my research is discussed by examining how they docilely accept disciplinary structures and accepted practices. The commentary on the diminishing voices of pupils and teachers serves to exemplify this aspect.

One other important theme that presents throughout the data is the need for excellent and permanent teachers in our schools and the unease that pupils sometimes display towards strangers such

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as supply teachers and newcomers (Appendices A2, B3, C3). This is a consideration that is often underestimated when Ofsted closes a school and imports new leaders and teachers.

Themes of the thesis

The examination of power within the thesis brought with it a notion of how it circulates and operates sometimes overtly through brute and disciplinary power and other times covertly through pastoral power. I have looked at how my own personal biases have been formed in order to help me to become more critically aware of the dominant discourses at play in mainstream literature, school leadership and everyday interactions which surround these systems. I have deliberated upon how all these aspects combine and congeal to form the apparatus. This is such a subtle formation that a strong level of objectivity is required to notice, not only its existence, but its effect. Like Foucault, I am not suggesting that power relations and the apparatus are necessarily negative features of normalisation. Instead, I suggest that acknowledging its existence is one part of problematising and questioning taken-for-granted assumptions.

Discipline was achieved, in part, through exclusion from school and the insistence that pupils wear school uniforms. There was a degree of pride both in the uniform and the schools' reputation indicated in head C's data as well as in the pupils' data (Appendices B3, C3). The example of school uniform exemplifies and acts as a useful reminder of how the brute power of the government is translated into the disciplinary power of the school (Foucault, 1977). I introduced the notion of ' games of choice' as a reminder that in many cases people do not possess any real level of choice in their lives. The fact that children are reporting to be proud of their uniform is testament to the socialisation and normalisation processes to which they

have been subjected. There is mostly an unquestioning, docile acceptance that for everyone to dress exactly the same is a normal practice. Those children who do not conform run the risk of being punished. In this way, they are subjected to pastoral power. The pressure to wear the correct clothing is not merely extended from the teachers. Pupils' peers also place an expectant dress code upon each other (Pupil F, Appendix C3). This all results in what Foucault would call the 'conduct of conducts' (Foucault, 1982, cited in Faubion, 1994:341).

A further way in which the apparatus is maintained is by using elitist literature to train future head teachers. My incorporation of mainstream competency frameworks, i.e. NPQH (NSCL) and EiML tools jarred with the Foucauldian analysis. Texts, in the form of courses or training materials, do not arrive 'out of the blue', they have 'an interpretational and representational history… [nor do they] …enter a social or institutional vacuum' (Ball 1994:17). They form part of the surrounding apparatus. In Chapter Six, I situated these frameworks within a historical continuum in order to highlight the importance of looking to the past when dealing with the present and anticipating the future.

The language of dominant literature contributes to the construction of power. 'Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also makes it possible to thwart it' (Foucault, 1990:101). One danger of mainstream texts is highlighted by Thrupp, who points out that the case studies contained with the NPQH's training manuals comes from a limited set of authors guilty of subtle or overt apologism and some whose work '…has been widely criticised for its simplistic support for neo-liberal reform' (Thrupp, 2005:16). He goes on to point out that:

> [c]onversely there are no examples here of anyone known for critical perspectives on leadership… My point is not that any of those who wrote essays should not have been invited to do so, but that there are unacknowledged politics to the work selected (Thrupp, 2005:16).

This then suggests that the NCSL's use of writings without inviting and incorporating critical examination allows them to become subtly integrated into the apparatus. The limited range of discussion surrounding the literature is another cause for concern:

> For example, in the NCSL sponsored document Everyone a Leader (Bowen and Bateson, 2008), just two sentences are given to considering inclusivity. The central issue of power surfaces only superficially (Lumby, 2013:583).

These accepted practices all circulate to produce powerful effects upon the opinions and beliefs of those exposed to them. Gunter discusses how Young (1971) argues that there is:

> an explicit relationship between elite groups and how knowledge is organized. Knowledge is stratified in the sense that the value of knowing one thing rather than another is linked to power structures that determine what is to be known, and what it is worthwhile knowing (Gunter, 2001:8).

'Discourses mobilise truth claims and constitute rather than simply reflect social reality' (Ball, 2008:5). Training materials such as NPQH and EiML both mirror the social and political reality in which they are located as well as act as agents of fertilisation and propagation. Whilst not referring to training texts specifically, MacLure reminds us that all forms of writing 'can be unsettled – shaken up, breached, disturbed, torn – so that new questions and meanings are generated (MacLure, 2003 :81).

The models themselves have become part of the dominant discourses of education and have led to the development of the apparatus constructed by the elite of which we are part. 'Its prohibitions are tied together with what can be said as much as what one can do' (Lynch, 2011:18). These combine to have the overall effect of restricting reality and action or in other words the 'logic of censorship' (Foucault, 1990:84).

Whilst acknowledging the frameworks as a limitation and restriction to the overall process, I found them to be a useful vehicle against which to check the data. They assisted me in developing my own frameworks through which to consider the data further and also employ them as a tool against which to compare my categories.

The various levels of strength of the participants' voices was another focus within this study. The data gathered from head B and C (Appendices B1, C1), indicated how confident our leaders are and how noticeably different those data were from the middle leaders whose data indicated quite high levels of fear. In comparison, the pupils appeared much more willing to share their stories and were not concerned with the consequences of their words (Appendices B3, C3). The pupils, however, reported apprehensions about the effect their peers had upon their actions. The data suggest that they have to perform in certain ways in order to 'fit in' (Appendices B3, C3). Overall, these data suggest to me that as people get older they become more restricted by the increasing demands and limitations of the apparatus, until they reach a point, such as that of school leaders, where they become surer of themselves again, and more able to speak their 'truth'.

The data from the leaders and teachers, indicated the

significance of having a clear vision and the ability to put it into practice using coherent structures and strategies (Appendices B1 and 2, C1 and 2). The importance of teaching was paramount in the data from the leaders, the teachers and the pupils (Appendices A2, B1-3, C1-3).

Architecture, a notable Foucauldian tool, featured in the heads' data as well as in the pupils where they discussed buildings and facilities. This aspect was not mentioned in the data gathered from the teachers (Appendices A2, B2 and 3, C2 and 3). The design of buildings contributes to the upholding of the apparatus by maintaining disciplinary powers. Data from schools A and C are a reminder that the use of surveillance cameras and fencing serve to make schools appear more akin to prisons than educational establishments (Appendices A2 and B3).

Both heads B and C focused on examination qualifications as a measure of success. This provides an indication of how education has become quantified into a penal form of accountancy. In order to make this aspect explicit, I discussed education and qualifications as a commodity and a currency that can be traded for work, promotion and such like. The literature mentioned above, that surrounds many qualifications, contributes to perpetuating the dominant discourses. For example, the head teachers' NPQH materials classify and quantify leadership practice into sections, suggesting a rather skill-based, mechanistic and fragmented approach to leadership. This qualification can subsequently be used in part as a trading device to obtain a leadership position within a school.

All the themes discussed above contribute to the overall argument of this thesis by outlining examples, which illuminate

how practices and structures can become accepted without question. The further that people are immersed into the normalisation process, the more difficult it is to view the apparatus objectively. Thus the status quo is maintained.

Limitations to the research

Within the research process, I under estimated the impact of my reflexivity in the research arena. My role as an insider-outsider researcher would have influenced the study as discussed in Chapter Four. Reflexivity recognises that researchers are in the world and of the world. As such the researcher and the research are inextricably linked. The researcher will inevitably have some effect upon the participants and the subsequent data acquired. So too, will the data impact upon the researcher. This notion sits comfortably within my social constructivist paradigm and the subtleties of the circulation of power within relationships, particularly when considering the insider-outsider nature of my role. Reflexivity considers the influence that researchers have on the process and that 'researchers are inescapably part of the world that they are researching' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983:14).

As mentioned above, the use of mainstream devices against which to compare and analyse my data greatly reduced the breadth of dialogue and discussion. The inherent categorisation and marginalisation that this resulted in, veered me away from Foucauldian techniques.

A third deviation from Foucault was in my use of mathematics as a vehicle to assist me in making a point. Foucault would maintain that mathematics is simply another form of discipline, as discussed in Chapter Two.

Fourthly, the overall hierarchical structure of my thesis might be considered as anti-Foucauldian as it contributes, supports and maintains the dominant discourses of the apparatus. For example, I have begun my writing by discussing aspects external to schools and, in particular, the political frameworks in which they exist. By doing so, I may have unintentionally foregrounded these external influences and gave them extra credence. In this way, I have backgrounded and reduced the importance of the players within the schools whose data comes later in the work. I have undermined the 'microphysics of power' at play (Foucault, 1977:26) that is the extent to which the collective individuals impact upon the surrounding environment and how much it impacts upon them.

The hierarchical nature of this study is reflected also in the manner in which I gathered and reported my data within schools B and C. Here, I interviewed the heads, the teachers and the pupils. Nevertheless, I did not privilege one group over another, although the order in which it is presented in this thesis, may suggest this. I aimed to treat all voices equally.

Overall though, there are more pupils' data within this study than that from adults. For example, in school A, I did not use this vertical hierarchical mechanism as I did not interview the head teacher or middle leaders. I sought only the views of the year 11 pupils, many of whom had been in the school throughout the changes both into special measures and back out again. The head and middle leaders and the majority of teachers had changed over this period. The major area of constancy was the pupils. I did however use my role and therefore my position of power within this school to access these data as discussed earlier.

However, in all three schools my data collection methods ensured I was using,

> techniques [that] merely refer individuals from one disciplinary authority to another, and they reproduce, in a concentrated or formalized form the schema of power-knowledge proper to each discipline (Foucault, 1977:226-227).

Thus here, I was employing what Foucault would term a 'disciplinary technology… [as a] procedure of investigation' (Foucault, 1977:227). Unintentionally, my objectification of those in my research had become the means of their subjection (Hoffman, 2011) or, in Foucault's words, the 'subjection of those who are perceived as objects and the objectification of those who are subjected' (Foucault, 1977:184-185).

The research questions

Foucault suggests that human beings set out to impose structures on the world through knowledge and social structures (O'Farrell, 2005). It is ironic that this thesis set out to do exactly that by employing instruments, which perpetuate the dominant discourses that contribute in upholding an elitist apparatus. I set out to examine how we might understand conceptualisations of leadership in transforming schools from 'challenging' to 'successful' by considering four supplementary questions:

- Could there be a rubric for leaders bringing a school out of challenging circumstances?
- How might leaders act differently?
- What impact does leadership have at middle management level?
- What impact does leadership have at pupil level?

In the following section, I will deliberate upon each of these questions in turn:

'Could there be a rubric for leaders bringing a school out of challenging circumstances?'

I would suggest that a rubric does not exist. The notion of leadership is too complex a role to be reduced to something as simple as a rubric. However, by listening to experienced head teachers, a lot of valuable information and insights can be gained. For example, learning how to attract, recruit and retain a high-quality workforce appears to be an essential skill for a head teacher (Appendices A2, B1-3, C1-3). This reinforces the importance of excellent teachers mentioned earlier.

Leadership in schools is a very important role. School leaders set the climate for learning within a school. Not only that, but they act as gatekeepers and decide what aspects of practice they allow or disbar from their schools. They set the tone. Their organisation of systems reflects their beliefs. The importance, or lack of importance of voice, will be inherent within these systems. Teachers and pupils are culturally impacted upon by the leadership style of the head. Head teachers who exhibit creative, dynamic ways of thinking and doing will encourage these traits across the school. Those who focus only on examination passes will transfer this limited and technical aspiration across the school. Knowledge, in this way, becomes reduced to a 'thing' out there waiting to be captured, weighed and traded.

From this work, there does not appear to be one rubric for a head teacher to transform a school. This indeed should be a welcome tenet so that 'blanket recipes' can be avoided

(Macbeath, 2002:144). The idea of a 'superhead' as someone who can be transported into a school to improve it seems to be a misnomer. Even experienced head teachers can and do make mistakes, as my writing has discussed.

New head teachers being transferred into schools are impacting upon the lives of the staff and pupils. These data describe heads and teachers who passionately care about the pupils they work with. They suggest that, for the most part, pupils tend to want to be respected and taught well in fun and exciting ways. They also are resistant to constant changes in teachers and a lack of excellent permanent staff. I suggest that this aspect needs to be highlighted when considering future interventions for schools in challenging circumstances.

'How might leaders act differently?'

The leaders in my study have suggested that they would assess their schools quite differently if starting again. Head B, for example, would ensure that he had appointed excellent teachers and start to develop the skills to do this (Appendix B1). Head teacher C, would not make hasty assumptions regarding teachers, confusing control with the ability to teach (Appendix C1). These statements suggest that even experienced heads reflect upon their practice with a view to improving it.

'What impact does leadership have at middle management level?'

The data from the middle leaders described professionals who cared deeply about the pupils in their care and wanted to provide them with the best opportunities possible (Appendices B2, C2). There was a sense that they were being compacted

upon from the top and not being listened to by their senior leaders. A sense of fear, powerlessness and diminishing voice is inherent within the texts (Appendices B2, C2). Pupils value excellent teachers and this perhaps needs to be permeated across and through the school structures (Appendices A2, B3, C3).

'What impact does leadership have at pupil level?'

The impact of school leaders upon pupils is very great indeed although the head teachers per se, did not feature highly in the pupils' data. However, the impact of the head teachers' decisions was keenly felt at pupil level. Decisions on the use of fencing, security cameras, rewards and sanctions ultimately impacted upon the pupils' experiences (Appendices A2, B3, C3).

In many ways, pupils' requests are quite simple: excellent, permanent teachers, interesting fun lessons, disruptive pupils to be dealt with and not rewarded for too little effort, less surveillance and shorter dinner queues.

For me, these data from the pupils resonate most strongly of all those gathered. Their words serve to remind me of their lives, their needs and desires. They are a poignant reminder of the reason I have continued to work in the educational arena. Despite the constant flow of initiatives being levied at educators, the rewards of working with children make it worth the effort.

Conclusion

By conducting the research, I allowed myself the luxury of sitting with the data, including that gained from the pupils

involved in the study. This aspect resurrected within me some of the adolescent rebelliousness that I once possessed. I felt empathy for the teenagers as they conformed to the accepted practices.

I also had empathy for the teachers. I can easily identify with the experiences of the middle leaders in my data and can understand their frustrations and worries.

Reading the works of Foucault has been instrumental in the shifting of my perspective from general acquiescent acceptance of the status quo to a more rigorous and critical examination. He recommends 'refusal, curiosity [and] innovation' (Foucault, 1988:1). I started this journey as a prospective head teacher and I would now enter the task with much greater criticality. I would refuse, as far as possible, to accept that this is the way things are done, simply on the premise that they have always been done this way. In this manner, I would endeavour to ask more creative and curious questions, as my part in developing an innovative education system, fit for the needs of children and adults, fit for the twenty-first century.

This thesis offers a pause in time, to stop the fast pace of the clock and examine a moment in the history of education. Whilst the notion of 'superheads' as a noun has been backgrounded once again, it seems that as a practice, it never truly left the political and educational agenda. It is simply reappearing in different forms, as executive heads, academy principals and leaders from newly-proposed grammar schools taking charge of those schools in challenging circumstances.

These data here are limited and provide only the merest hint of what school life is like for those heads, teachers and pupils

coping on a daily basis with challenging circumstances. The task to change their schools' profile is a huge and daunting one and not one that should be replicated without due consideration. A larger study would provide a much sturdier platform from which to make any claims. Researching the impact on those who inhabit schools when new leaders and teachers are transported into them, deserves greater attention. This is an important, but little researched area.

By undertaking this writing I assign it to the past and, according to Foucault, 'You write something when you've already worn it out in your head… What interests me is what I could write and what I could do' (Foucault, 1972, cited in O'Farrell, 2005:11). As this thesis concludes, it merely acts as an opening chapter to my next set of thoughts and readings.

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Appendix A1 Year 11 Questionnaire on schools in special measures

Thank you for taking the time to respond to the questions below. The survey is designed to find out the views of pupils who have attended schools which have been in challenging circumstances.

1 Gender

☐ **Male** ☐ **Female**

2 Which year did you join this school?

7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐

If you joined the school in the past two years please go to Question 15

3 During which year did you notice a decline in standards?

7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐

4 During which year did you realize the school had been placed in special measures by the Ofsted inspectors?

7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐

5 Did you agree with the inspectors' decision that the school should be placed in special measures?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

6 Did standards improve or decline immediately after this decision?

Improve ☐ **Decline** ☐

7 Which year were you in when you noticed an improvement in standards?

7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐

8 Which year was the happiest year for you at this school?

7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐

9 Which year was the unhappiest year for you at this school?

7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐

10 Did the fact that the school was in special measures adversely (badly) affect your education?

Yes ☐ No ☐

11 Did the fact that the school was in special measures adversely (badly) affect your happiness?

Yes ☐ No ☐

12 Are you pleased with the changes in the school which resulted in removal from special measures and attaining specialist status?

Yes ☐ No ☐

13 What was the best change?

_____

14 What was the worst change?

_____

15 Standards of discipline at this school should be

tighter (tick one box only)

Strongly Agree ☐ **Agree** ☐ **Disagree** ☐ **Strongly Disagree** ☐

16 Uniform standards should be tighter

Strongly Agree ☐ **Agree** ☐**Disagree** ☐ **Strongly Disagree** ☐

17 More homework should be set

Strongly Agree ☐ **Agree** ☐ **Disagree** ☐ **Strongly Disagree** ☐

18 Teachers should be stricter

Strongly Agree ☐ **Agree** ☐ **Disagree** ☐ **Strongly Disagree** ☐

19 From the list below tick the ONE box which you agree with most

The best teachers:

Give clear explanations ☐

Listen to pupils ☐

Are firm and fair ☐

Tolerate no nonsense ☐

Allow the pupils to mess about in ☐

class Act like the pupils' best friend ☐

20   Will you be pleased to be leaving school once your GCSE examinations are finished?

Yes ☐ No ☐

21 Do you intend going to college?

Yes ☐ No ☐

22   If you had children would you send them to this school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

23 If you were in charge of this school, what is the *first* thing you would change?

_____

_____

If you wish to make further comments please do so below. Your views will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you and good luck for the future!

Appendix A2 Questionnaire data in SPSS

No.	Level	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q 13	Q 14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22	Q 23
1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	3	4	-99	2	2	1	new teachers, building new part of change		4	3	2	3	2	1	1	2	classrooms, tables etc.
2	1	2	1	-99	3	1	1	4	2	5	2	2	1			4	4	4	4	2	1	1	2	some of the teachers
3	1	2	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			4	3	2	2	6	1	1	1	the uniform
4	1	2	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			-99	-99	1	3	2	1	1	2	
5	1	1	1	-99	2	1	1	4	3	-99	2	1	1	teaching		4	4	3	2	2	1	1	1	people
6	1	2	1	1	-99	1	2	4	-99	5	1	2	1	the teaching		4	2	3	3	3	2	1	1	some of the teachers
7	1	1	1	2	4	1	2	5	5	3	2	2	1	permanent staff	vip lounge	4	4	2	3	3	2	1	-99	behaviour of pupils

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8	1	2	1	2	3	1	1	5	1	3	2	2	1	Mr ** becoming head teacher		4	2	1	3	1	1	1	2	some teachers and what they learn about
9	1	1	1	5	1	1	1	2	-99	4	1	2	1	the ballday	some good teachers	3	3	2	2	6	1	1	-99	
10	1	1	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	3	3	2	2	1	1	1	
11	1	1	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	3	3	3	1	1	1	2	lots
12	1	1	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			4	4	4	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	
13	1	-99	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	
14	1	2	1	3	4	2	1	-99	-99	-99	2	2	1	the teaching	the cameras	2	2	2	2	4	1	1	1	
15	1	1	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	building
16	1	2	1	1	3	1	1	4	1	3	2	2	1	everything	don't know	2	2	2	3	2	1	1	2	
17	1	1	1	-9	3	2	1	4	5	-9	1	2	1	now we have proper		3	2	3	1	4	1	1	1	uniforms

ID														Text1	Text2									Text3
			9					9						teachers, no supply										
18	1	1	1	-99	2	2	1	4	5	1	1	1	1	supply teachers cut down	it was when we were leaving	3	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	
19	1	1	1	4	2	1	1	4	3	2	1	2	1	everything	don't know	3	1	2	2	2	2	1	-99	some of the teachers
20	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	3	5	4	2	2	1			2	1	4	4	1	2	1	1	football pitch out the back
21	1	1	1	3	3	1	2	4	2	4	2	2	1	I don't know	teachers	-99	4	4	3	2	1	1	2	kick some teachers who don't belong there
22	1	1	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			2	4	2	4	2	1	1	2	building
23	1	1	1	4	3	2	1	5	1	5	-99	-99	1			1	2	-99	2	2	1	1	2	the teachers
24	1	1	1	3	5	1	1	4	-99	4	1	1	-99	Mr **	Mr **	3	4	4	4	3	2	1	2	the school and stuff
25	1	1	2	-99	2	2	1	-99	5	3	-99	-99	-99			3	2	2	2	6	1	1	1	

26	1	1	1	-99	-99	2	1	-99	-99	-99	2	2	1	the canteen		2	2	3	2	-99	2	1	-99	the sport room and the grass
27	1	2	1	3	4	1	1	5	5	-99	1	2	1	drama hall and more teachers	supply teachers	3	2	2	-99	2	1	1	2	supply teachers
28	1	2	1	4	2	1	1	3	4	1	1	2	1	everything	toilets	2	3	3	2	1	1	1	1	the toilets
29	1	2	1	1	4	1	-99	5	-99	5	2	2	-99	dunno	dunno	3	2	4	3	-99	1	2	2	dunno
30	1	2	1	1	4	1	1	4	1	3	2	2	1	the activities		3	3	4	3	-99	2	1	1	the presentation of the school building
31	1	2	2	2	3	2	1	4	4	2	1	1	1	is them getting new teachers and the improvement		2	2	3	2	6	2	1	2	some teachers and the security
32	1	2	1	-99	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	
33	2	1	1	1	3	1	1	4	5	-99	1	1	-99	my attitude and behaviour	attitude in the relationship between pupil and teacher	2	2	2	2	6	1	1	2	I would change a lot of things but wouldn't know where to start
34	2	1	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	4	3	3	2	1	1	1	pupils should have summer and winter uniform

35	2	1	1	1	3	1	2	4	-99	-99	2	2	1	me leaving	me coming	2	1	3	3	-99	1	1	1	dormers
36	2	2	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	2	2	3	3	1	1	2	the layout of the school
37	2	2	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	uniform rules
38	2	2	1	1	3	1	1	4	5	1	2	2	1	more permanent teachers		4	2	2	2	-99	1	1	-99	
39	2	2	1	3	3	1	-99	4	1	5	2	2	1	the fact we have permanent teachers not a new teacher every lesson!	time, dinner time is too short and the big stupid queue	3	2	3	3	2	1	-99	-99	don't know
40	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	4	4	5	1	2	1	IT	PE	3	3	2	2	3	1	1	1	PE hall
41	2	1	1	3	3	1	1	3	5	1	1	2	1	cafeteria		4	4	4	4	2	1	1	1	the toilets
42	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	-99	3	-99	1	2	2	new building	substitute teachers for maths	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	everything

43	2	2	1	1	3	1	2	4	1	-99	2	3	-99			3	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	The state of the cooking classroom
44	2	1	1	1	3	1	1	4	5	1	1	2	1	modernising of buildings and teaching techniques	fizzy drinks taken away	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	
45	2	2	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			4	3	4	4	3	1	1	2	teachers and their attitudes, ways of teaching
46	2	-99	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	3	2	3	1	1	1	2	
47	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	5	5	3	2	2	2	more computers	painting the walls	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	I would build on astro turf
48	2	2	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	1	1	3	6	1	1	2	uniform
49	2	1	1	2	3	1	1	4	5	1	1	1	1	permanent teachers	no permanent teachers, not being taught	2	3	3	2	1	1	1	1	longer break time
50	2	2	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	3	3	-99	4	2	1	1	discipline
51	2	1	1	-99	2	1	1	3	-99	-99	1	2	1	getting better teachers in	supply teachers	3	2	4	3	4	-99	1	-99	always have good standards of teaching

52	2	1	1	1	4	1	1	4	5	3	1	2	1	more money, equipment, chances, experiences, quality of teaching	more geared to learning info to pass a test, not to learn it	3	3	3	2	2	1	1	1	the trip chances, the sports team more training, more extra curricular
53	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	3	5	-99	2	2	1			2	2	3	2	2	1	2	1	maths department
54	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	3	1	-99	1	2	1	new headteacher better rooms etc.		2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	
55	2	1	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			2	2	2	2	3	1	1	2	nothing
56	2	2	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			4	4	4	4	-99	1	1	2	some teaching
57	2	1	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	1	1	2	4	1	1	1	
58	2	1	1	3	4	1	1	4	5	2	2	2	1	cafeteria		2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	better facilities such as astro turf
59	2	1	1	2	4	1	1	5	1	5	1	1	1	teachers	don't know	3	2	3	3	1	1	1	2	equipment
60	2	2	1	-99	2	2	2	4	-99	-99	2	1	1	have a better maths teacher	still no new facilities	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	the yard

61	2	1	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	3	3	2	2	1	1	2	school facilities e.g. sports hall, playground
62	2	2	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	3	4	4	-99	2	1	2	bullying
63	2	2	1	1	3	1	1	4	5	1	2	2	1	teaching		2	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	longer break times
64	2	1	1	4	3	1	1	3	3	-99	1	2	1		school time endings	3	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	school time
65	2	1	2	5	5	1	1	5	4	2	2	2	1	PE hall and equipment		4	4	3	4	2	1	2	1	get stricter teachers and some fun teachers
66	2	1	1	3	2	1	1	4	1	4	1	2	1	the more money the school was given to buy better resources	fencing the whole place off	4	3	4	4	3	1	1	2	The way the kids talk to the teachers
67	2	1	3	4	4	1	1	5	5	3	2	2	1	classrooms and PE hall		4	4	4	4	1	1	1	1	the buildings
68	2	2	1	-99	2	1	1	4	-99	-99	1	2	1	good teachers and learnt more		3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	the pupils' behaviour towards each other

#																								
69	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	4	2	2	2	1	new computers and better school	playground, not allowed on grass	3	3	2	3	3	1	1	1	playground bigger
70	2	1	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			2	1	1	2	6	2	1	1	no uniform
71	2	1	1	2	3	1	2	4	5	4	1	2	1	teachers		3	3	4	4	4	1	1	2	probably the equipment and/or more trips
72	2	2	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	1	3	3	4	1	1	2	people would have more respect for the teachers and pupils, everyone would treat each other the same
73	2	2	1	-99	3	1	1	5	1	2	2	2	1	drama hall		2	2	1	1	3	1	1	2	the way it looks
74	2	2	1	3	4	1	1	5	5	2	2	2	1	the school canteen building	the uniforms	3	2	3	2	3	1	1	2	the food served in the canteen and the toilets
75	2	1	1	1	3	1	2	5	5	3	2	2	1	teachers have kids under control	teachers thought they had more power and authority than they actually had	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	the teachers' attitudes towards students

76	2	1	1	1	3	1	1	4	1	4	1	2	1	the food	cameras	3	4	4	2	6	1	1	1	the look from the outside
77	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	5	1	2	2	1	behaviour	stricter	2	2	2	2	3	1	1	1	building
78	2	2	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	3	3	4	1	2	2	2	
79	2	1	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	3	4	3	2	1	1	1	grass/field
80	2	1	1	2	3	1	1	4	5	1	2	2	1	everything that changed was best for me		3	3	3	3	-99	2	1	1	I would try to change the behaviour of students
81	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	4	1	2	1	new teachers	taking away the field	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	uniform
82	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	more computers	Illegible comment	3	1	1	3	-99	1	1	1	times
83	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	4	5	-99	2	2	2			4	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	I would put the bad kids in one class and the good ones in another
84	2	2	1	-99	4	1	1	4	-99	5	1	2	1	education	Miss **	2	2	3	2	2	1	1	2	change the uniform to classy and nice

85	2	1	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	3	4	4	6	2	1	1	I would try to change behaviour of the students. But the main thing: throw away all the junk food from the canteen!
86	3	1	1	2	3	1	1	4	5	1	2	2	1	influx of new, better quality teachers		2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	sports facilities
87	3	1	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	1	3	2	6	1	1	2	environment
88	3	2	1	3	4	1	1	4	3	1	2	2	1	more facilities	nothing	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	more lunch time
89	3	2	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	4	4	2	-99	1	1	2	
90	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	5	1	1	2	1	getting Mr **		3	3	2	3	6	2	2	1	school hours
91	3	1	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			4	3	3	3	-99	1	1	-99	everything
92	3	2	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			4	4	3	3	1	1	1	1	Nothing. Everything is good, like after school revision

93	3	1	1	2	5	1	1	4	1	4	2	2	1	that we are not getting the lowest test results anymore	don't have a worst change	3	2	3	4	2	1	1	1	that lack of equipment in the PE department
94	3	2	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			4	4	4	4	3	1	1	1	students bad behaviour
95	3	1	1	-99	1	1	-99	3	-99	-99	2	2	1			-99	1	-99	-99	1	-99	1	-99	
96	3	1	1	3	3	1	1	4	5	1	1	2	1	headmaster and Mr **	strictness	3	3	2	2	3	1	1	2	facilities
97	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	5	1	5	1	1	2	canteen	field / fencing	2	2	3	2	6	1	1	2	building, staff and the equipment
98	3	1	1	2	3	2	1	4	5	4	1	2	1	behaviour from the pupils		2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	
99	3	2	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	2	3	2	3	2	1	1	the rules
100	3	2	5	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	3	2	3	2	1	1	2	don't know

ID														Q (text 1)	Q (text 2)									Q (text 3)
101	3	2	1	1	2	1	1	-99	-99	1	1	2	1	better education	the cameras everywhere	4	4	4	4	3	1	1	1	don't know
102	3	1	1	1	2	1	-99	4	5	2	2	2	1	new teachers		3	2	2	3	1	1	1	1	facilities
103	3	1	1	2	4	1	1	5	5	2	2	2	1	the staff	letting Miss ** go	3	3	2	2	6	1	1	1	the field into a football or basketball pitch
104	3	2	1	-99	3	1	1	4	1	5	2	2	1	the permanent staff	all the security gates	2	2	3	2	2	1	1	2	the whole state of the building
105	3	2	1	1	2	1	1	5	5	-99	1	2	1	the fact we only have maths and science teachers who can teach, but it's too late for me but good for the other kids e.g. my brother	none, each one has benefitted as well	3	2	4	4	2	1	1	2	Kick out the kids which make life hard for others, not reward them. Thanks (teacher's name), just want to say thank you for pulling us through the last of my maths course, without your help I would have got nowhere, Claire
106	3	2		-99	2	1	-99	5	1	-99	1	1		none because you're waiting for this year 11 to leave	bringing teachers from different schools to try and run this school		2	3	2	2	1	1	2	the teachers' rights

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107	3	2	1	2	2	1	1	5	5	2	1	1	1	new facilities	learning	2	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	the way in which you learn
108	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	2	1	2	1			2	1	2	3	2	2	1	-99	the football pitch
109	3	1	1	3	4	1	1	5	3	5	2	2	1	some of the teachers that were brought into the school	too much discipline	3	2	3	2	3	1	1	2	bring in more good teachers
110	3	1	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			-99	3	1	4	6	1	1	1	I don't know maybe the building and the sports hall
111	3	2	1	2	3	1	1	4	-99	2	1	2	1	class rooms		3	3	3	3	1	2	1	2	uniform
112	3	1	1	2	2	2	1	4	1	3	2	2	1	the new corridor they should fix up the others as well	teachers going on about the school being a specialist school as an excuse to be good	2	1	3	1	3	1	1	2	the lunch break would be an hour

113	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	4	5	2	1	2	1	painted the PE hall	teachers	3	2	1	2	3	1	2	2	a lot of the teachers
114	3	1	3	4	4	2	1	5	5	1	2	2	1	don't know		4	3	4	4	-99	1	2	1	nothing
115	3	2	4	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99	-99			3	3	3	3	3	1	1	2	stricter discipline
116	3	1	3	4	4	1	-99	5	5	-99	2	1	1	nothing		3	3	2	4	6	1	1	2	
117	3	1	1	1	3	1	1	3	5	1	1	2	1	the lunch break should be an hour		3	3	2	3	2	2	1	2	

Appendix A3 Selection of responses from SPSS

Qu 2 Which year did you join school?

N	Valid	116
	Missing	1

Qu 2 Which year did you join school?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7	76	65.0	65.5	65.5
	8	4	3.4	3.4	69.0
	9	3	2.6	2.6	71.6
	10	18	15.4	15.5	87.1
	11	15	12.8	12.9	100.0
	Total	116	99.1	100.0	
Missing	-99	1	.9		
Total		117	100.0		

Appendix A3 Qu 5 Did you agree with inspectors' decision?		
N	Valid	82
	Missing	35

Appendix A 3 Qu 5 Did you agree with inspectors' decision?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percen.	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	66	56.4	80.5	80.5
	no	16	13.7	19.5	100.0
	Total	82	70.1	100.0	
Missing	-99	35	29.9		
Total		117	100.0		

Qu 9 Which year was unhappiest year?

N	Valid	61
	Missing	56

Appendix A 3 Qu 9 Which year was unhappiest year?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7	17	14.5	27.9	27.9
	8	13	11.1	21.3	49.2
	9	10	8.5	16.4	65.6
	10	10	8.5	16.4	82.0
	11	11	9.4	18.0	100.0
	Total	61	52.1	100.0	
Missing	-99	56	47.9		
Total		117	100.0		

Appendix A3	Qu 14 What was the worst change?	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %	
Valid	All the security - gates	1	.9	2.2	2.2	
	Attitude in the relationship between pupil and teacher	1	.9	2.2	4.3	
	Bringing teachers from different schools to try and run this school	1	.9	2.2	6.5	
	Cameras	1	.9	2.2	8.7	
	Comment illegible	1	.9	2.2	10.9	
	Don't have a worst change	1	.9	2.2	13.0	
	Don't know	3	2.6	6.5	19.6	
	Dunno	1	.9	2.2	21.7	
	Fencing the whole place off	1	.9	2.2	23.9	
	Field/fencing	1	.9	2.2	26.1	
	Fizzy drinks taken away	1	.9	2.2	28.3	
	It was when we were leaving	1	.9	2.2	30.4	
	Learning	1	.9	2.2	32.6	

Letting Miss ** go	1	.9	2.2	34.8
Me coming	1	.9	2.2	37.0
	1	.9	2.2	39.1
More geared to learning info to pass a test, not to learn it	1	.9	2.2	41.3
Mr **	1	.9	2.2	43.5
No permanent teachers, not being taught	1	.9	2.2	45.7
None, each one has benefitted as well	1	.9	2.2	47.8
Nothing	1	.9	2.2	50.0
Painting the walls	1	.9	2.2	52.2
PE	1	.9	2.2	54.3
Playground, not allowed on grass	1	.9	2.2	56.5
School time endings	1	.9	2.2	58.7
Some good teachers	1	.9	2.2	60.9
Still no new facilities	1	.9	2.2	63.0

Stricter	1	.9	2.2	65.2
Strictness	1	.9	2.2	67.4
Substitute teachers for maths	1	.9	2.2	69.6
Supply teachers	2	1.7	4.3	73.9
Taking away the field	1	.9	2.2	76.1
Teachers	2	1.7	4.3	80.4
Teachers going on about the school being a specialist school as an excuse to be good	1	.9	2.2	82.6
Teachers thought they had more power and authority than they actually had	1	.9	2.2	84.8
The cameras	1	.9	2.2	87.0
The cameras everywhere	1	.9	2.2	89.1
The uniforms	1	.9	2.2	91.3
Time, dinner time is too short and the big stupid queue	1	.9	2.2	93.5
Toilets	1	.9	2.2	95.7
Too much discipline	1	.9	2.2	97.8

	VIP lounge	1	.9	2.2	100.0
	Total	46	39.3	100.0	
Missing		71	60.7		
Total		117	100.0		

Appendix A 3 Maths Level v Will you be pleased to leave school? Cross tabulation

			Will you be pleased to leave school?		
			yes	no	Total
Maths Level	Foundation	Count	19	10	29
		% within be pleased to leave school?	21.3%	43.5%	25.9%
	Intermediate	Count	45	7	52
		% within be pleased to leave school?	50.6%	30.4%	46.4%
	Higher	Count	25	6	31
		% within be pleased to leave school?	28.1%	26.1%	27.7%
Total		Count	89	23	112
		% within be pleased to leave school?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Appendix A4 Testing for significance Did you agree with inspectors' decision v Standards of discipline at the school should be tighter?

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Did you agree with inspectors' decision? v Standards of discipline at the school should be tighter?	80	68.4%	37	31.6%	117	100.0%

Appendix A4 Did you agree with inspectors' decision? * Standards of discipline at the school should be tighter? Cross tabulation

			Strongly	Disagree
Did you agree with inspectors' decision?	yes	Count	2	18
		Expected Count	2.4	21.6
		% within Did you agree with inspectors' decision?	3.1%	28.1%
	no	Count	1	9
		Expected Count	.6	5.4
		% within Did you agree with inspectors' decision?	6.3%	56.3%
Total		Count	3	27
		Expected Count	3.0	27.0
		% Did you agree with inspectors' decision?	3.8%	33.8%

Appendix A 4 Did you agree with inspectors' decision? v   Standards of discipline at the school should be tighter? Cross tabulation

			Standards of discipline at the school should be tighter?
			Agree
Did you agree with inspectors'decision?	yes	Count	31
		Expected Count	28.8
		% within Did you agree with inspectors' decision?	48.4%
	no	Count	5
		Expected Count	7.2
		% within Did you agree with inspectors' decision?	31.3%
Total		Count	36
		Expected Count	36.0
		% within Did you agree with inspectors' decision?	45.0%

Appendix A4 Did you agree with inspectors' decision v Standards of discipline at the school should be tighter? Cross tabulation

Standards of discipline at the school should be	Strongly agree			Total
Did you agree with inspectors'	yes	Count	13	64
		Expected Count	11.2	64.0
		% within Did you agree with inspectors' decision?	20.3%	100.0%
	no	Count	1	16
		Expected Count	2.8	16.0
		% within Did you agree with inspectors' decision?	6.3%	100.0%

Appendix A4 Did you agree with inspectors' decision v Standards of discipline at the school should be tighter? Cross tabulation

Total	Count	14	80
	Expected Count	14.0	0.0
	% within Did you agree with inspectors decision?	17.5% 0	.0% 10

Appendix A 4 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	
Pearson Chi-Square	5.620[a]	3		.132
Likelihood Ratio	5 .657	3		.130
Linear-by-Linear Association	4 .893	1		.027
N of Valid Cases	80			

a. 3 cells (37.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .60.

Appendix A 4 Gender   v Which year was happiest year? Cross tabulation   Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Gender * Which year was happiest year?	68	58.1%	49	41.9%	117	100.0%

			Which year was happiest year?					
			7	8	9	10	11	Total
Gender	Male	Count	6	2	5	2	27	42
		Expected Count	10.5	1.9	4.3	3.7	21.6	42.0
		% within Gender	14.3 %	4.8 %	11.9 %	4.8%	64.3 %	100.0 %
	Female	Count	11	1	2	4	8	26
		Expected Count	6.5	1.1	2.7	2.3	13.4	26.0

		% within	42.3 %	3.8 %	7.7%	15.4 %	30.8 %	100.0 %
Total		Count	17	3	7	6	35	68
		Expected Count	17.0	3.0	7.0	6.0	35.0	68.0
		% within Gender	25.0 %	4.4 %	10.3 %	8.8%	51.5 %	100.0 %

Appendix A4 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.910[a]	4	.028
Likelihood Ratio	10.932	4	.027
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.877	1	.009
N of Valid Cases	68		

a. 6 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.15.

Appendix B1 Head teacher interview school B

Note: Interviewer in red font

Head teacher in black font
- Thank the head teacher (HT) for agreeing to be interviewed.
- Hand the HT the ethics sheet and a list of questions.
- Ensure the use of recording device and note taking are permitted.

Background- can you tell me a little about your experience before becoming a HT at this school?

I became a head teacher here 17 years ago. I have a maths degree from ** University and was 2nd in maths and then head of maths before becoming deputy head at *HS, for 7 years before becoming HT at *HS. You gain from every school you work at. Visiting a school is a privilege, you take something away- what you would do, wouldn't do.

How did you decide this was the school you wanted to lead?

This was a split site school and was financially sound but was in the dark ages in terms of teaching and learning. Curriculum is my passion. I felt that I could make a difference.

What were the first things you decided to do and why?

In the early days, the 5 A - C was 17% and they are now 56%. It was important to get the structures right and improve facilities and the ambience of the building. It was a harsh draconian environment then. We built the 5 A to Cs to the top 20s. The governors wanted to move the schools forward. In the late 90s, we raised 100K from ** Stadium - major LTA more by accident that by design. Sport- is a winner, few things can motivate as much as sport. This brings community engagement. It is nationally recognised that schools can raise achievement through sports.

We went for sports not maths specialist status.

Changes: (a) Created a structure which was more responsive to needs. The previous HT had tried and it didn't work. ECM[5] and pastoral – touched all children. Made a federation of departments, clusters, faculties. First Head of Department meetings – all were there.

(b) Curriculum – not elitist. I am learning every day and am not there yet, when I am it will be time to get out. Beliefs and values- Judge everything against 'Every Child Can Succeed'. We can improve upon basic intelligence and every child is capable of success.

Are there any things from this that you would now change upon reflection?

If I was starting again I would be much more aware, the 'superhead' idea- depends on what you are importing. A change of leader can be good whatever the ideas. Success – basic core values and then appoint staff to support these. I insisted on being involved in every appointment. Without staff you are dead in the water. It is not easy taking over a school as you have not done that (appointed the staff). You need a core of people to support that (core values) and you reach a tipping balance. I am constantly combing language and actions- What you say and what you do.

Can you describe briefly what your mission and vision are?

We have just changed our motto to encapsulate moving forward. **(motto)has links with ** and this encapsulates what we are aiming for. I need to walk the talk. Every decision has to be in line with parents, governors, everyone. In the beginning, it just happened.

What is 'improvement' and how can you measure it?

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[5] Every Child Matters (HM Treasury, 2003)

We measure success through exam results - deny that and you deny society. Also by the amount of students that want to come here. There is faith (in the school) in the community. [Whether it is looking at] 1 A* to G or 5 A* to G [we] move everyone forward - value added. [You get the] feeling going around the school [that everyone] feels safe and happy and making progress.

A hint (of a school's ethos?) is to find reception - [you sometimes] find a window [and feel that people] are hiding. [This is] quite unwelcoming. A school foyer should be like a hotel foyer. We didn't want it to feel like a school. [Our] parents come from a poor area. [our] parents have poor expectations. We want our school to be welcoming to parents.

A head needs to walk the talk so staff can mirror. If you don't the staff won't.

What are you most proud of?

I am most proud of the academic performance. When I arrived here and results were 17%, the expectation (of teachers) was that 20% was as good as it could get. I went about smashing that myth.

How do you view CPD for your teachers and how do you cater for it?

We conduct a training needs analysis annually. We address the needs of the whole school. We plan the training of staff with a mixture of courses and conferences. We go for quality. Sometimes the best training is done in house using our own expertise. If it doesn't improve learning then it is not worth doing. As a manager, you have to take risks and be at the cutting edge. Sometimes [this means] you will get cut - if you are going to compete. At present, we are conscious of being 'top dog', conscious of that perception and being oversubscribed.

Thank you for taking part in this interview. – END OF INTERVIEW --

Appendix B2 Head of mathematics (HoM) interview - school B

Note: Interviewer in red font

Head of mathematics in black font

- Thank the head of department (HoD) for agreeing to be interviewed. (The second in department deputising in this interview).
- Hand the head of department the ethics and question sheet.
- Ensure the use of recording device and note taking are permitted.

Background- can you tell me a little about your experience before becoming a HoD at this school?

I started teaching in 1998 in Hull and moved to *HS in 2001. I became second in department in 2004 - 2006 and left to go to another school in 2006 - 2007 as HoM. I came back to *HS in 2007 as second in maths again in Easter 2007. I have a young family and was not enjoying being HoD. The ex HoM was in the department and it wasn't working for a variety of reasons.

I am very comfortable working with ** (HoM). We have a good working relationship. I realised that I still have things to develop and will give it a couple of years.

Supplementary Question: What did you learn as HoM?

I learnt about monitoring lessons and staff. The school was more successful [than this one] so I have tried to transport these ideas and implement them into this school. The monitoring of lessons could be developed further. One site now makes things more feasible [had been a split site school] – [on a split site] things wouldn't work. There are things from the other school that wouldn't transfer for example GCSE statistics for year 10 wouldn't

transfer. [In the other school] sets 1 and 2 did GCSE statistics in year 10 and then did GCSE maths in year 11. I am a better 2nd in department than before and would be a better HoM.

It was having a secondment. The assistant HT was ex HoM. They were exceptional at teaching and learning and honing down at pupils' progress and how you could change what was good into even better. So [teachers were] more accurate when giving marks. I am a lot more confident [now and have had a lot of] training. There was a focus on what they were doing and why they were doing it. Here there is too much 'off the cuff' [stuff happening- which is disappointing].

There they had received a grade 1 in leadership from Ofsted where this one is grade 3 and you can see why.

Our Action Plan- three months in it isn't worth the paper it is written on. New ideas get jumped on. There, they make decisions which are not detailed and considered and not thought through.

For three years running we have been in the top 3 best improved schools. The English and maths results are not all down to the leaders of the schools but to the leaders of the departments. You need to be clear of what you want and stick to your decisions.

How did you decide that you wanted to lead a mathematics department?

(not applicable in this context)

What were the first things you decided to do and why?

The first thing was to change from AQA to Edexcel (exam boards). Early entry at KS 4 (not sure if this was introduced or abandoned) Revamped the vision of using ICT.

Introduced Maths Alive at KS3 and other packages at KS4. We wrote new schemes of work and ditched Key Maths at KS3. Maths Alive could and should be used more and supplemented with other materials. It is not suitable for lower attainers.

Our KS 3 results are about 75-77 % Level 5 and 46% level 6.

KS4 about 42% A* to C (2007) we expect better this year (2008) possibly around 50%.

We have a high turnover of staff, weak staff have left.

We put strong staff at KS4 (unclear comment)

Low percentile 29th percentile

Are there any things from this that you would now change upon reflection?

Not applicable as the interviewee was not the HoD.

Can you describe briefly what the school mission and vision are and how this is translated into practice?

There are problems with communication. [There needs to be] mechanisms to sort it out. Things are constantly changing bottom up and top down – slightly better 'Quality through Partnership'.

What changes have taken place across the school which you feel have made things better/ worse?

Registration has been moved to the end of the day. The HT has a strong vision. KS3 moved so KS4 is 3 years.

Year 7 has merged subjects so they have fewer teachers so in some subjects they see the same number of teachers e.g. technology. It is better than 6 years ago. Uniform: pupils wore coats in class. Reports: simpler and more transparent now, easier to

understand for parents. Behaviour: more strategies in place and results have gone up. In 2004, KS 4 was 19% A* to C (maths) and now is in the 60s.

The introduction of new deputies and assistant HT.

- Lengthening KS 4 to three years
- Getting rid of key staff.
- Employing younger more energetic staff
- Using 1 year contracts

Are there any changes which you would make across the school which you feel would improve things further?

Focus on learning. Reduce pulling kids out of lessons. The biggest part of the budget is on salaries for teaching. Far more monitoring is needed. Far more mentoring too. 'Significant Learning Days' to do activities – 3 per year- get rid of these

Cluster managers feel less empowered and are only asked opinions as a matter of courtesy.

The HT is 'inspirational' and a good talker. [Brought us from] the worst of the worse to average.

It feels good to be going uphill to see improvement, beating targets and seeing the effect. There is a feeling that coordinators' heads are on the block if targets are not met.

What is 'improvement' and how can you measure it?

The amount of teaching and learning that takes place on a day to day basis by the students relative to their ability.

Through CPD of staff. Releasing data to staff. By more monitoring and accountability. Should consult students' views. Pupils' voice and student council.

What are you most proud of?

The ethos and the culture. When ** was first head of maths, pupils' motivation was low and he couldn't get the kids into the classrooms. Results from 4-5 years ago to now. Kids understand the importance and the relevance.

How do you view CPD for yourself and your teachers and how do you cater for it?

We have a [whole school] coaching programme which only kicks in if you have had a few poor lessons. It is seen as derogatory and is voluntary. It is linked to performance management but shouldn't be.

[Suggests that there is] a magic answer rather than [encouraging teachers to be] reflective.

External courses e.g. SSAT and those run by Uni of **. Also Monday night training for NQTs with a different focus each time.

Observing lessons will identify CPD needs of the teachers. CPD – for example, behaviour management or planning- [for teachers with] probably a number of years under their belt.

New teachers: PGCE v GTTP- stronger maths banks and questioning techniques. Behaviour management is roughly equal. PGCE –Better quality of planning and they eventually overtake the GTTP students generally. They are taught at university how do you learn and how to do this problem.

GTTP mirroring- a good mentor is essential. [Sometimes you can

get one who is] unprepared to mirror and not prepared to cement.

PGCEs are taught to think more and consider 'what happens if?' 'what would you do if…?' and then to try it.

GTTP - more mechanical process e.g. simultaneous equations- a gap exists between knowledge and understanding. We need GTTP – necessity in order to recruit and get bodies into the classroom. Mouldable. We have had 7 here: one we didn't employ and went to another school, one left teaching, two gone for promotion, three still working here.

ITE- we obtained two teachers through this avenue.

Thank you for taking part in this interview.

-- END OF INTERVIEW --

Appendix B3 Pupil responses school B

Note: Interviewer in red font

Female pupils in black font

Male pupil in blue font

- Thank the pupils for agreeing to be interviewed.
- Hand the pupils the ethics sheet.
- Ensure the use of recording device and note taking are permitted.

Year 8 pupils: S, C, A and R (3 girls and 1 boy).

Supplementary opening question- What is it like being in year 8?

C: Feel more mature, it was weird moving buildings, loads more equipment, Promethean Boards, better facilities e.g. theatre, Promethean is used in most lessons- [teachers] learnt quickly.

R: Closer to home (than previous building).

C: Good reviews from ex pupils and friends coming.

S: Came to the school half way through year 7. Went to ** but put name on the waiting list for *HS. Pleased to get a place, glad to have moved. I still see my old friends from **.

C: I am proud of telling others you are in the best school. It has a soccer centre. The other schools are scruffy like our old one.

A: I like being closer to home and the new building.

C: I wasn't as proud of the old school, pupils smoked in the toilets, here we have more teachers and better teachers.

A: I was scared [coming here] I thought I would get lost.

C: I had heard stories of being bog washed and bullied.

R: Worried about getting to know the place. My best friend went to ** but I've

A: (nods to agree still in touch with old friends). I saw people (in old building) being fenced and benched.

R: Making new friends.

A: You feel like you are growing up, everybody is trying to

fit in. C: Making new friends, growing up.

A: I was given a house key so feel more responsible.

C: The head of year [all nodding –to suggest that they all seemed to really like their head of year.

Do you think things have changed across the school – if so what are they?

A: Discipline [better] 30 minute detentions.

Old system didn't work well; now there is C1- warn, C2, C3, C4 – remove [from lesson].

It works well, people are more sensible and mature.

[In the previous building] no IRF (internal referral form)- [in place] there were forms for detention, they were ripped up (by pupils) if they were 'stood' outside [the classroom] they did a runner. Pupils wagged in the toilets, now we have cameras. [Travelling from] upper to lower school [on split site] pupils went to the shops, bought ice- cream and smoked.

One building helps.

What have been the best and worst changes to the school?

A: Better roof now, in the atrium we could feel being rained on, it still leaks.

R: Lockers. The musical instruments weren't safe in the storeroom. You can put your coat and bag into the lockers – they have better locks now so are safer.

If you were running the school what changes would you make?

S: Want more choices at dinner time.

S: There are long [dinner] queues.

C: We should be allowed out [at dinner time].

R: We go to a club and go to the shop in the morning.

A: Would like to go out at dinner but understand why- so don't care [unclear].

Do you feel the pupil views are listened to and acted upon?

S: If you give attitude to the teachers you won't get listened to, the teachers listen to our views. You need to put your hand up. If there is a problem, you can go to a teacher or head of year. Lots of teachers are leaving for better jobs, promotion, pay rise.

What have the best and worst memories from this academic year been?

A: (Best) Walking into a new school, good teachers, feel close to them [after 2 years].

C: (Worst) Not allowed out to the shops, feels like prison once you are in you can't get out. The late doors are locked and you have to sign in at reception.

Tell me about the best/ worst mathematics lesson you have had and why?

R: (Best maths lesson): Fun interacting with the Promethean Board. Making things (cards).
Why?
R: You feel part of the lesson.

A: (Worst) Boring: Fractions- Cover teachers and work sheets. Now teachers do games and its better now.

C: I don't like sitting watching - want to get out of my desk - work in teams.

R: I want to do fun things to break fractions down.

What makes a good mathematics teacher?

R: One you can speak to.

C: Is fun and like a friend.

S: Strict - they have to be strict so you can learn.

C: You can have arguments with them but they know you are only messing about.

R: When teachers are in a bad mood it affects the lesson.
A: Mr * is always happy; he explains things and goes over it. He checks that we understand.

We had a diary with red on one side and green on the other (where they hold the red or green side up to indicate understanding).

S: The whole school planner idea was a very good idea.

R: Good teachers are laid back and not too strict.

S: Weak teachers are not strict or are too strict they let us mess about and take the mick. They remove the disruptive ones or put them on the computer. They do not apply the C1 – C4 system correctly.

How do mathematics teachers become really good at their job?

R: They should observe fun lessons and see how teachers and students react to each other. They want to have more fun and should not be too strict.

How would I recognise a good mathematics teacher - what would I see?

S: When you walk into the lesson you know you will learn something and have a good lesson. If you are bored you won't learn and won't listen. They will have a starter on the board – shows good organisation and puts your brain into maths mode.

C: You trust that he knows what he's on about.

A: Interactive, laughter.

R: Pupils working.

S: Equipment ready and fun.

A: Board organised – Ready and set for work.

Thank you for the interview.

-- END OF INTERVIEW --

Appendix C1 Head teacher Interview school C Transcript

Note: Interviewer in red font

       Headteacher in black font

- Hand out ethics form and interview questions sheet.
- Check that the use of recording device is permitted.

Am I ok to take notes?

Yeah of course you are.

So as, as you have read there it's really just ...I am doing this research on how headteachers (HTs) with the notion of the 'superhead' getting drafted in and changing a school around and what that means and how you do it. A sort of like a format that if you were writing your own book you'd say this is how you do it.

[Laughs].

[Discussion about visitor who I met in hallway who had come to help improve the school].

So that's what you want to …

Yes, just to get the feeling of what leadership is; what it means to you, the values the vision and how you communicate it. If I was walking around the school, how would I see evidence of it sort of anecdotally, the types of things…

Do you want me to do that first question?

Do it as you want.

Background, this is my third headship. Right. I became a head when I was 39 - my first school I had always worked in urban environments in inverted commas that was quite a middle-class school. I didn't find it easy cos I was the head but we did very well so that went basically in

five years from 44 % to 71 in the old fashioned method right.

 44 % to 71 five A to Cs.

Yeah, I started then looking for larger schools in the local authority I went for --- but didn't get the job – [laughs] but the local authority asked me to go to a failing school, a dropping school which was about to implode. Went in and ran both the schools for a term.

You ran both schools… you mean the one you were at and as well as…?

Yes, I was seconded – and ran both schools for a term which is why I find [laughs]…

I can imagine what you are thinking.

…Are we sinking?

I see it from the other side with me coming in to ask you how to do it and you have got someone else coming to …maybe not tell you but...

 Well yes that's the idea ... [inaudible].

Supplementary question: How does his school compare with this?

They have done very well they have got BTECs in - got about 77 %. We are in family group ** in the (city) challenge.

Yeah, there are ** families, isn't there?   We are family ** and he is family **.

Right and family 1…

Family 1 is the, you know grammar schools basically and family ** is B* and P* (school names) and we, just us and N* are family 10.

Family ** out of **.

Yeah and we are also an EAL family now cos we have got such-yeah, we have got 25 languages.

Wow that is a bit of a difference.

Yeah isn't it just?

Supplementary question: Your whole demographics have changed then, haven't they?

We have over 40 Polish kids in the school and 2 Polish TAs.

Right, that's massively changed - since I was here [as a consultant].

Yeah oh yeah absolutely.

Have you had walked around - been upstairs yet?

Yes, I have just been up to Maths department.

Lovely isn't it

Pardon?

Lovely isn't it?

Oh, yeah beautiful and spacious.

The kids were well behaved? The colours are lovely as well. I don't like this one here (taps on the wall). It was light blue but this is too dark of light blue aah I'll sort it later it's only a colour. Its er... yeah so, and the school went into special measures eh basically, I got there in September and it went into special measures in the Easter, just after Easter and got it out of special measures within 18 months, and we got up to 34% 5 A* to C, no tricks, just 34%. And I did what I said I would do which was basically I'd stay there until we had an Ofsted. Two years after coming out of special measures and we got the full all clear. And eh, the numbers had gone up from 600 to 920 and I looked around and by chance I saw

this one which said that the school served the most deprived ward in the country, this one, which was B* at the time, it's no longer. So, I thought I'd have a crack at that, a school with serious weaknesses. This was very different because it had a history of union problems, it had been a good school in inverted commas in the sort of early 90s, er had poor accommodation did I mention union problems?

You did yeah.

Poor accommodation, union problems, entrenched staff and had gone into serious weaknesses in [year] and I arrived in Sept [year] and it stayed in serious weaknesses when we had the Ofsted in November of [year].

So, it went into serious weaknesses in [year].

And then there was - the head that left, the next head came for * weeks, obviously Mr **.

That was that guy, wasn't it?

Yeah then *** came for the rest of the year then eh I came in Sept (year). We did well but we didn't get out of the category then which was 'serious weakness' and became 'notice to improve' and we stayed in that for an extra year in total we got out of it in Jan [year]. So, in total the school had been in category for 6 years, are you with me? It was just too long but we managed to get it out, er and we'd gone up from basically 24 in the old-fashioned way to 51 and we're now up to 37% 5 A to C including English and maths. Back in [year] [inaudible], it was in the low teens, 17 or something like that. So that's the history of ** [school name], really so that's the background. The numbers are now stable at 745, 750 or something like that. Whereas at one time we were looking at 550, the way it was dropping and our biggest year group is year 7 which is 117.

That shows the confidence.

Yeah so hopefully that…well we don't know about next year. We are not over confident but hopefully we'll be ok.

Yeah that's good.

So that's your, your background and some of that you have told me before whenever I have been up here so it's just getting it sort of written down getting some details. So, you mentioned that…

Basically, yes, I'd done the 5 years and I wanted another school for 5 years. And I thought right, I needed to find somewhere where my wife could get promoted as well, so this job came up and we moved to *(town name). She got a deputy headship and I got a head ship, with the intention of doing five years and then retiring, which is now!

You're not going anywhere are you?

Don't know, [laughs], don't know.

Right and then next question what was the first thing you decided to do and why? Question 3 [reading from question script:
Er how did you decide that this was the school you wanted to lead?

Basically, it was a lovely challenge. I didn't really want to go, it was either go to a big 11-18 school with a very well established team.

I had taught in big schools with a big VI form before so it was either go back to that or go for this one. This one came up first so it was either a big challenge at either end. First thing I had decided to do, the first thing I had to do was to establish a senior management team so I appointed two deputies one who is still with me and one who has moved on. Thoroughly analyse the teaching and learning and the results. But the reality was I had to sort out the behaviour 'cos the behaviour was dreadful and the whole ethos of the school was less than Christian, very

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confrontational, with a few islands of sheer tranquility with some excellent staff. For example, S* stood out - we had good people such as J*, S*, N*, A* [teachers' names]. Really good staff who lived in some sort of vacuum. Build on them really, keep them and they've all stayed.

That was that really. You look at the systems, put in common sense approaches and build consistency.

Walk down corridors, have objectives to lessons, three part lessons, four part lessons - didn't matter as long as it was effective.

Use the data to er, blast the myths both positive and negative that is that the kids were much brighter than people gave them credit for. And the people…and the people who thought they were good teachers were clearly teachers who could control rather … that those who could er, what I'm trying to say is to ensure effective learning. So, there is that big difference between oratory that is, teaching, control and learning and that's still a battle, that's still, still…

Supplementary question: When you say oratory what do you mean?

Er, some people could go in and talk to the kids and could control the kids and the kids would be reasonably interested or very interested but in actual fact at the end of the lesson they wouldn't be asked to do homework, books wouldn't be marked, effectively there was no progression and then results would, would naturally you know, come through. And that came through to me gradually cos at first these people were some of my greatest supporters, cos I could control the kids. You know, I knew how to weigh in with the vast majority of them er, and that was a gradual process of realising after the first exam results, hold on minute, you know I thought you were a good teacher. I've not had time to check all your books and all the rest of it, how often you were doing practice questions or essays or what your

coursework's like, you're not very effective.

So, I had to sort of like readjust you know, get people in. We had, as you know we had horrible buildings as well. So, the other thing was we painted it, carpeted it, put shelves up, took shelves down. Put barriers up, put barriers down, made things safe, improved the toilets all of that but we were stuck cos that was quite limited.

Then there was working with the local authority really, to get the school out of the category and to get better facilities. So, I made sure that I was er…I would do whatever I could to get closer to the local authority so I got myself a good working relationship with a lot of people at the local authority who I thought were the movers and shakers. There was a lot of moving and a lot of shaking [laughs], and as such I have a really good relationship with the LA and I am chair of the *.

I was nominated for that. I thought it would take ** years Liz, cos there's ** schools but 5 people nominated me, you do it for 2 years and that's quite good recognition really.

I was also determined to get people out of this school and to see good practice elsewhere - balanced with the need to having good people around me all the time so there's tensions there you know. So how do you get effective CPD, well you have sort of choose bits carefully like yourself coming in obviously helped the maths department. Other people would come in and help the English department to try to win people over not just as consultants but sleeves rolled up in the classroom type of people. Put in things which were positive like the awards evening, at the forums, head teacher's awards, the awards system, positive news in assembly, positive news in staff briefings, positive recognition of GCSEs by having a separate evening an achievement evening, are you with me?

All outside of school. And really encouraging, getting new people into the school er the kind of people who are really bright and lively not necessarily young but you know, bright and lively, often young as well who would get theatre trips going, up the ante of school productions, visits to the art galleries, all of that sort of thing. Build on the strengths of the school like P.E. who get good results but also strengthen the, er, you know strengthen the PE department in terms of giving them enough people to run the football matches and you know engage with the kids so we had a better working relationship.

We had to take back the playground and corridors which meant me leading, being out there at break, lunchtimes after school, giving people the confidence and the kids the confidence to make sure there were no sort of no go areas or smoking areas or crime areas so all of that put together, right if you call it a sort of vision…cos in the end what I wanted was the kids to be basically, you know with the 'Every Child Matters' agenda which is annoying cos lots of us had thought about it before, but we hadn't articulated it as well.

The first thing I wanted was to make the kids safe cos by going round the primary schools - before I even started, the * primary schools the feeder primary schools I went round * of the * and had an interview with the heads. None of the heads mentioned the results first, they all mentioned bullying, bullying and discipline. So that's why that had to be tackled to start with so that's how we developed the safety net concept er, you know the school has its own safety net. So we have got a school counsellor fulltime, full time social inclusion officer, 2 EWOs, 5 heads of year, 2 assistant key stage deputy heads, enlarged special needs department, EAL, you know, nurture groups for years 7, 8 and 9. All of that hopefully …all of that pays dividends in terms of

atmosphere in the school so you're going from a confrontational school which the staff perpetrated, to survive….or because they liked it, through to a self-caring school where we still will stand up to kids if we need to but the ratio which was once 10 : 1 is now 1 : 10, are you with me?

My greatest frustration is we have not made enough progress in terms of the curriculum areas… and… and taking on board the BTEC exams so that all this is reflected in the examination results… although… although they've improved, they've not improved enough.

[off the record comment]

Schools have journeys and lifetimes and commitments and I think that's not really understood and this school is now a completely different entity, educational entity than it was 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 years ago.

That's why I'm here.

Yeah, completely different entity. We haven't cured the kids… they are still coming from the same deprivation levels which are very, very high, as you know. We… I think we are in the bottom *%, so whichever way we look at it by national statistics we are there…we do not have to talk about deprivation because we are there. We haven't cured the kids but we have found better ways of managing their talents and negating their difficulties.

The question on here - What am I most proud of?

This term I am most proud of the fact that in terms of fixed term exclusions. We have only had twelve *days*, and I think that's five kids.

Supplementary question: Cos when you came there was a lot of exclusions wasn't there?

A lot. I'll check the figures it might be 14 days. I'll check the figures but two kids make up 9 days and one of those was one I excluded this morning when you were waiting for me, so if you had come yesterday I would have had even better figures.

– and that was for a series of assaults on staff but she comes from a criminal, difficult background which has a lot of violence and she got herself thrown out. It's interesting that her mum thought I was going to permanently exclude her - it's not what we do. No way are we doing that not unless we see her as dangerous. We have staff to think about.

We had an awards evening last night with 350-400 people up in the * And we're 9 days into a new school and it is settled.

Yeah

There's a lot to be, to be sort of ….proud of. It's a collective pride rather than
my pride that sounds *really really really* twee.

 Aah yeah.

But being around with that headteacher today and I asked all the kids put one hand up if you really like this new school and they all shot their hands up. So now put two hands up if you think it is really, really, great, virtually all [inaudible] put their hands up so the kids deserve it. A long time in trying. So, to see things like big wide corridors and the atrium and things that we wanted that they put into it [inaudible]. It's not finished yet but to have a sports hall for the first time.

You've got a question in there about mission and vision (referring to the question sheet).

The mission statement – is pretty straight forward- it's very hard to say but it talks, right… about the way that pupils grow and you've got up there, compassion and personal and spiritual growth and academic growth and you've got all those things we talk about the inestimable work of every individual and that's the important thing really [tannoy call].

You wouldn't survive in this sort of environment unless you actually, really try hard. Difficult as it is to see …even though it is difficult to see how you can help every individual and get over sometimes the personal attacks, verbal attacks or angst that these kids have because they have been let down by a lot of adults. The other side of it we have a lot of really, really, nice kids in school who won't cause any problems whatsoever.

Having an awards evening last night is saying thank you to them. Some get all the attention, whereas last night 120 kids walking across the stage they were getting their 30 secs of attention.

Focus on what you want to see.

So that's really important. To measure …how do we measure improvement? Number 1, I think being able to take people around or let people into the school without worrying to death about what is going to happen like what you've done this morning. Number 2 is 5 A* to C including English and maths. CVA (Contextual Value Added). Attendance figures, turnover of staff, number of exclusion of pupils, number of pupils coming in. How many breakages, are you with me? On call requests as you will

remember.

I do [laughs].

Put these all together and you can judge the school. The numbers of kids who will come back for achievement evening. The number who go to the prom and way they behaved at prom. All of these, together tell you about the school. How many kids come back for achievement evening in year 11. The number of teachers prepared to take kids to the theatre, football, art galleries, museums university all of that etc.

The fact that we raised £12,500 to take 13 children to Orphanage in Thailand.

I noticed that.

And £1,500 left for orphanage. The head wrote to me and said 'Do you realise that that this will keep three staff in this school going for next year?' Are you crying? And that wasn't me it was *. That's how you judge a school. We got her as a learning manager – her work.

We got her on her GTP (Graduate Training Programme) year when she was being told how to be a teacher – she organized that. 40 years old, 40 ish, you've got to be careful. She's young from where I'm standing. She's really, really good, and the fact that we have a school council.

We didn't say we were changing the school uniform what we said is we were giving you more options. We introduced new uniform options – not changed. We kept the sweat shirt but said they could wear a tie with shirt and v neck sweater. 85% overall went for that probably nearer 90% maybe higher. In year 11, over 90 % went for it. The year you would think wouldn't go for it was actually the highest by doing that. 95%.

Yes, that's right. They were part of it, they had the choice. We modelled it with the head boy and head girl so all the kids went for it. We didn't have a head boy and head girl [before]. We put those in as well but they can still have the sweatshirt if they want. It will be interesting to see what happens next year. Really, really, really, good.

Yeah got you there [laughs].

CPD you've got on there as well. Er we've got * in charge of CPD. CPD is something we've got to work on. It seems to me that the people who need the least CPD are often the ones who get the most appropriate CPD [laughs]. And we go through the school and look at good practice and look at other schools. Some go on relevant courses and restrict themselves to the right courses. And I'm still trying to crack the people who I need to move on and that's a slow chip, chip, chip, away thing.

So CPD is like, it's a huge area, CPD. On the one hand, you have to get people on the GCSE courses. The moderators' courses, the necessaries, the child protection courses, you know the er, courses for first aid, the absolute essentials. Then you've got to look at the desirable ones which will move people on and keep people motivated and then you need to look at, for want of a better term, the coercive ones, where you will try and get people on that course. It might do them some good. Knowing that by getting them on that course will not do them that much good. That one visit to another school won't do that much, but gradually by changing the culture in the school they will also want to er you know get involved.

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A typical day I arrive at a quarter to 8 and see people as they arrive. At 8: 20 I have the senior staff. I'm really hard on the senior staff. Everything is our fault. Everything is my fault, so everything is their fault. I know that is unfair but they bought into that 90-odd percent of things that happen in the school we actually control and other 10 pc we got to have a plan B, a plan C or a plan D ready for it.

I always go to briefing every day. I always try to give good news. We start with a prayer, a thought for the day and try to give them the best of things if I can. Very, very rarely do I ever admonish without bringing it back on myself or the senior staff you know. Not you it is 'we' and 'us' however sometimes I wish I could say it's *(unclear) but I can't.

Leave door open get around. Join in teaching for six weeks. Three periods a week for geography, which I'm good at, or a couple of RE lessons which I did last year. So, I can show them how it's done. I am basically around not so much at break times now. Stand at the year11 door, say hello, smile at people, so people, staff know where I am. So, if they need to have a meeting with me. See pupils out (at end of school) so parents can see me and it gives me a breath of fresh air and reminds me what I am here for.

I enjoy being at certain meetings but there is a limit to what I can engage with. Primary heads once every half term. I can engage with the * secondary heads. *(town name) engage with the * heads

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and we have a planning meeting of which I am chair. Every month. Heads every month, * district heads once a month and then I am struggling. Are you with me? I'll do other things such as [unclear] which I enjoy but they are late at night and they are pleasant [inaudible]. There's a limit to how many things I can engage with properly.

Lead by being around and present

(Head teacher starts to get ready to leave the room to go on break duty).

Yes. I delegate a lot based on their success. The more successful they are the more I delegate to them. Simple as, really. Fits in with CPD model, make sure they are successful by showing them what to do and then wean them off and hopefully they will become better at it than you.

Which is what you're after?

Yeah is that ok?

Thanks for interview – (mentions returns visit for interview with Head of Department).

Thanks for coming. See you then.

-- END OF INTERVIEW --

Appendix C2 - Head of department interview school C –Transcript

Note: Interviewer in red font.

Teacher in black font.

-   Hand out ethics form and interview questions sheet.

- Check the use of recording device and note taking are permitted.

I don't want to take up too much of your time, obviously it's all anonymous so you know the school, and people won't be identified

So, can you just give me a little bit of your experience, a little bit about what you did before you became head of department at this school?

Well obviously, I started as a maths teacher, then I was key stage 3 coordinator for a few years as well in ** so it was like a natural progression for me from a key stage coordinator to head of maths.

Supplementary question: Have you always taught here?

Yeah, because I was working in industry first after my degree so it was sort of a change of career from engineering to maths.

That's got to give a good insight in to…

Yes, oh yeah, I find it a lot easier, and maths teachers when you speak to maths teachers you know some of the stuff, because I've got an engineering background I've got more to offer than people who've had experience straight from university to teaching.

Supplementary question: Good, thank you. So how long have you been here?

Altogether, it's my 19th year.

Basically, when I was key stage 3 coordinator, my first aim was to focus on and raise achievement at key stage 3 level, so I did that and I raised achievement over the years from around 45 to 59 (%), I remember that was before I became head of maths. So, I raised achievement but I did see that I could raise achievement even more, you know, especially at key stage 4, we were sort of stagnating at around 25 – 26%... over… well since I joined I suppose. I always remember every single year 24, 25, 26, 22, 23 so that was the maximum we achieved was around 26. When I could see, there was potential there and I could raise achievement, there were many changes that I could introduce to raise achievement, that was my main aim.

So, you decided to apply to be the head of maths and you were appointed. What were the first things that you did when you came to post?

Well, the first changes … my first change was to set up a tracking system that was the first thing because there was absolutely no way of knowing how the children were doing before that. They were basically getting grades and the grades were recorded in record book and they were tested and that was it. There was nothing done with the data in our note books so I set up a tracking system that could be shared by all teachers electronically that they could all access, so they can see how children are progressing over the year and from year to year, and we used to meet … and I started meeting with staff.

(INTERRUPTION)

So, it was shared by all staff and basically from then we started the intervention programmes for all years. We started with year 9

first and year 11 and we moved onto other years. So the intervention programme wasn't easy to start with because we needed the financial support from the head plus we needed time as well to organise the intervention programme which basically targeted pupils and taking them out of lessons … some of the lessons, to give them the intervention programme. Plus, the financial support to recruit somebody to do it took time to convince the head, but eventually he agreed and we started with key stage 3 and we had significant improvement over the years at KS3 so now we ended the last year with 67% which isn't bad [inaudible].

Level 5 plus, Level 6 plus we were around 40%.

Great!

So that was the first thing really, the second thing I did was looking at teaching and learning which is very important because the teaching was basically text book teaching. So we started to plan, working in pairs and sometimes in groups of 3's and 4's and plan units together in detail and try to incorporate everybody's experience on what a good lesson is and we tried as much as we can to make it a little bit more fun, practical activities, using ICT, using interactive games and graphing calculators because I'm quite advanced with graphing calculators because with TI83 I run a course outside school and I'm quite an expert on the TI83s and we managed to buy a set. They're very expensive but we managed to buy a set and we planned some lessons around the TI83, you know on algebra, on handling data, on shape and space, because you can simulate all sorts of things with it, they can do most of what a small computer can do and we introduced some activities. The kids love them because they don't do much writing which they hate. They just go and do the same question again and again, there is a lot of thinking

skills, a lot of interaction, working in groups and they are very enjoyable. So, we try to look at the teaching and learning, making lessons more enjoyable, more hands on, more interaction and more consistency across the department. So basically, we had some good teachers like ** he's a good teacher, paired other teachers with him to share good practice as well. It wasn't a proper coaching system, I wouldn't call it a coaching system but it was pairing people, working towards that, you know.

Yeah, that's good thank you. So that was the first thing the [inaudible].

That was the second thing. Yeah.

If you were looking back, if you were going to do it again, would you do it differently or did you get it right?

No, I think it was fine. Maybe I would have done a little more. If I had to do it again, maybe I would introduce assessment for learning earlier, I've only introduced assessment for learning in the last 2 years because whilst most people have heard about assessment for learning they never knew how. They thought it was just about testing and when I looked at it and we started talking to the members of department they thought assessment for learning was basically…

(INTERRUPTION)

They thought it was something to do with testing people. So, I introduced a whole package for the strategy which is basically objective led lessons, questioning and self-assessment. So, we did the whole bit, we did the three main ones and we implemented them and we watched each other teaching, basically on focusing on each one of the three each time to sort of learn from each other and we try now to say a good lesson should incorporate all the features for

assessment for learning. That's how we define now a good lesson. If you incorporate all the features for assessment for learning you'll most likely get a good lesson, so that's how we started to measure what a good lesson is.

Grand, Thank you. So, can you describe briefly what the school mission vision is and how this is translated into practice? Is that a tough one?

It's a tough one because the school mission statement is so vague.

Yeah.

And it talks about raising achievement. It talks about helping children to achieve their potential and obviously, the ethos, so that's what the mission statement is, and we try to link our school improvement plan obviously around this. We always have this mission statement in our mind when we start writing our school improvement plan. The school improvement plan is led by the head, obviously and he has his issues and they are basically given to us and most of the time they're [inaudible] … statement anyway. And we have our yearly plan with the school issues basically, so they are more directed and we have our own obviously.

Supplementary question: So, can you give me an example of what your leadership looks like on a typical day?

It varies obviously. Well you've got the operational role obviously, which is basically the day-to-day stuff which is like now, dealing with behaviour, being visible in classrooms, walking into classrooms during lesson time.

(INTERRUPTION – 5 MINUTE BREAK)

So, as I said the operation role looking at behaviour, monitoring

pupils' work, looking at pupils' books, making sure they are…they are working. Teaching and learning as well, looking at teachers' input. When I'm free usually I'm just walking into the classroom and people are used to it in a non-threatening manner, because I always explain to them I am doing this to raise achievement more than anything else. It's not to check on you or the children or anything like that. Just so I can have a feel for what is going on in the department and that gives me sometimes ideas on how to address certain issues rather than waiting for people to bring them to me. Obviously offering support to staff which is very important to keep the morale up and motivation. Working and liaising with the pastoral side.

OK, yeah

Yeah

Yeah, thanks.

So, what changes have taken place across the school, which makes you feel... Which have made things better or worse; you know the changes for better or worse?

I think there is more accountability since we had the new head. People are more accountable now, like especially the middle managers, I think the middle managers are leaders now rather than just managers because I think before the new head came people were just managing and they didn't think middle management should be needed, I think that is the most important one, so there is more monitoring and I think people are more focused on raising achievement across the school.

I'm putting that for the better? [Laughs]

Yeah, for the better

For the worse?

I think there are more positives than negatives; there is always an issue with behaviour. I think it's dealt with but I don't feel we are there yet. The minority I think, there is a minority, I'm only talking about 5% of the population so you're talking about the core group who are still not there and I think we haven't got any solutions for them. I don't think the school has found a solution how to address this problem. I think this is the only negative in the school now because the majority are now fine. I think because of 5% you would basically deal with it.

Yeah, would you have any suggestions if it was your school of how to tackle that? Because it's got to be [inaudible]…

Yeah, I think there has to be some kind of strategy obviously and I think these strategies have got to be agreed by the middle managers and the managers. You've got to have some kind of strategy, you cannot just fire fight you've got to sit down and come up with some strategies, I mean I can't come up with all the strategies myself but...

No, no.

You've got that as a starting point and then take it from there and then review, re-visit and review every so often and prove things.

So, would you get all your middle managers together and say 'right, ok, here's a problem let's see how we can deal with it?'

Yeah

In one of the meetings once, I said right … as head of department we can give you 5 names per year, not a lot, not talking about many people, maybe 5-6 pupils per year, the rest as middle management we can deal with them. Heads of departments with heads of years we can solve all of the problems with the rest of the population. These 5% have to be dealt with separately we need to have some

kind of fast track for them, we cannot follow the same procedure with these people. We've got to have some kind of fast track, we have to agree on certain subjects. The head was ok with it and then I think…

They would be the same; they are the ones that are sat in here during lesson times. Some of them they even wanted to walk in now to sit with me [Laughs].

Bypass the middle man, that's so funny isn't it, they so know it, don't they? [Laughs]. So, any other changes that you would make to improve things further? I think you've eluded to that with the 5% of the kids getting the strategies, is there anything you wanted to add there?

No I think that's the main point.

So, going back to basics again...

(SHORT CONVERSATION ABOUT QUESTIONS)

What is improvement? How do you know that you have improved your department?

Right, improvement. You are looking for change for the better so, when you progress, when you review strategies and you analyse what you've been doing and if you've made progress, some of them are obviously measurable and some others aren't. You can see if you've made progress when you evaluate, basically in your plans and some as I said can be measurable, like exam results are measureable, see if you have achieved your objectives that you've set out. Some others they cannot be measured so you could

measure them by interviewing people like you did yourself today. I talk to pupils like once a year I interview, sometimes up to 4 pupils per year.

Really, gosh.

And I do more or less what you are doing, talk about the lessons and what part of the lessons they enjoy.

Oh wow.

You know, how do you feel? What do you suggest to make the lessons more fun in maths do you like just working from books? Do you like working in groups? When you are working in groups do you like working with friends or do you prefer...? You know there is a certain number of questions I ask and I feed back to teachers in department meetings to give them the children's side, to give them a chance to have their say. Once a year as well, I do some kind of survey with the children, just a few questions and they don't have to write their names and it's basically tick boxes and I'll analyse them usually and I feedback to the teachers. We basically look at it as a department.

Wow.

Some of the stuff, some teachers, know that...You know we are all professionals and they know they are failing in certain areas and hopefully they can be addressed, you know.

Supplementary question: Is that right across the whole 5 years that you do that?

I do that across the whole 5 years, you know a sample.
A sample.
It's a sample.

I wonder how many schools do that. Thank you. And what are you

When I talk to children, first thing. If they are enjoying the lessons that is my first aim, if they are enjoying the lessons they can learn, if they can learn they can improve, if they can improve they can raise standards and we have better results and everybody's happy, even the government. So, we raised achievement above... KS3, raised achievement from around as I said in the 40's to now to the upper 60's. The KS4 from 25-26% to last year we were 48%, so in 4-5 years we've nearly doubled. So, we are trying now to maintain this rise, this level of attainment, because sometimes the years are different so sometimes it's a challenge to keep the levels of attainment. We have now, some kind of a plan, we review every year and improve and move on to raise achievement.

Thank you, and finally, CPD for yourself and your teachers, what do you think of your own professional development and that of your teachers?

We are all still learning and the first step is to learn from each other first. I learn more from my colleagues than going to courses. We try at least once a half term to have a meeting which has nothing to do with management. We are not allowed to talk about anything but teaching and learning and how to share good practices, so we try to have one meeting every half term to do that. So, learning from each other and sharing good practice, and obviously, everybody has the choice of going on courses once a year, sometimes twice, but it has got to be linked to our school improvement plan.

Thank you, it's so good and I'm so appreciative of your time because I know what it's like to have people wanting more and more of you.

-- END OF INTERVIEW --

Appendix C3 Pupil responses school C –transcript

Note: Interviewer in red font

Female pupil (year 11) in black font

Male pupil (year 11) in blue font

- Thank the pupils for agreeing to be interviewed.
- Hand the pupils the ethics sheet.
- Ensure the use of recording device and note taking are permitted.

Ok, we'll start it now, so can I just start with your name?

My name is **.

Well I'll just put ** because it's anonymous.

Right.

So, there will be no name or school reported on this so your surname and first name.

[Inaudible] so that means you can say what you like. Although it is being recorded, it's just for me to write it up again.

I'm **.

You are?

Repeats his name.

[Writes down spelling of name].

Ok, em, the sort of questions that I have are just really about your experience. Can you go back a little bit to your primary school and tell me just a little bit about your primary schools?

Well I went to **, that's next door.

And it was very basic, we had a head teacher. He was very kind and he taught us for the last year. He got involved with us and before as we were leaving they were starting building work on the school.

So, you chose **.

Yeah, because it was close to home.

Supplementary question: And were your friends coming?

Only a few. They were all going to **, that is the [inaudible] but because ** was closer my mum decided to send me here so not getting the bus, cos I was only very young, and then I hadn't really got the bus on my own.

Supplementary question: so, did you have to lose your friends then?

Yeah, I had to make new friends as I was coming here.

Supplementary question: what was that like?

Scary, as I hardly knew anyone.

Supplementary question: and do you still keep your friends that went on to **?

Yeah, I still keep in contact and I think I might be going college with them because I went to the open evening and saw them all.

Yeah, time to get back together with them.

Yeah.

And **?

I went to ** Primary.

Supplementary question: where is that?

Just off ** Road. Off?

** Road.

And my head teacher was… I'd say very involved.

Very involved?

Yeah, we had fundraisers and stuff quite a lot.

Sorry.

We had fundraisers quite a lot, and I don't know he just...

Supplementary question: was that a man or a woman?

Man.

And yours was a?

Man.

Supplementary question: so, who taught you in year 6?

Was that the deputy head? Not sure.

Was that a man or a woman?

Woman, she was the head teacher's sister.

Right.

Supplementary question: so, what about your friends did they come

with you to **? Yeah, I'd say quite a big percentage of year 11.

Was that a good thing?

Yeah quite a good thing.

There is a lot of ** in my year, more than any other primary school.

Supplementary question: right, does that make you feel like, 'oh I
wish my friends had come with me?'
Yeah, because they all talk about their past primaries and we can't

get involved.

Yeah, so it is a lack of history.

Yeah.

In a way though, it's kind of a set back because when we came here we already had friends and we didn't have to make new friends.

Supplementary question: Ok, so that's interesting isn't it? That you actually started maybe as not as positive as you [inaudible]. Because if you are on your own you have to go out and extend your network. Then you come back to your college and you've got friends you've made here plus your old friends, so there's pros and cons isn't there?

So, what's your fondest memory of your primary school?

The freedom I think, I think it's not as regimented you know like you've got adult peer pressure cos that's [inaudible], you know like you've got to wear certain clothes, you've got to look a certain way, you've got to act a certain way with friends, but in primary school you've got like, when you're out you can play all different games, tiggy off the ground and all these fun games, but in high school you're just like no, you just stand around, it's not cool.

It's not cool to play games.

Basically, you can't be yourself.

Supplementary question: you can't be yourself as much in high school as primary, would you agree with that?

Slightly, but I kind of agree more with the peer pressure.

Supplementary question: The peer pressure? The peer

pressure increases...

Yeah.

...When you go into high school? Definitely.
You have to look cool?

Yeah.

Is this it?

Yeah, you're expecting more.

You're basically yourself in primary, your own person but when you get to high school I suppose everyone changes.

That's interesting isn't it? Because you'd almost think it would be the opposite way round, you would think that in high school you would be your own person and in primary you'd be the little... It's actually the other way round and you think you're growing up.

Yeah, I think it is because in primary school you're a kid, you're still a kid and you have more fun. I think, where in high school you've got a lot more work, you've got peer pressure from people and it's more stressful than primary school.

More stressful than primary school.

Um.

Supplementary question: so it's more work here?

Yeah.

Supplementary question: do you think you've lost, this is going totally off here, I've gone off on a whole avenue, do you think you've lost a bit of who you are, or have you just become a different person?

I think it's more that when you do come into high school that your personality changes, I suppose you could say you lose a small piece.

You lose a small piece.

But there are good things like … you do become more mature.

Yeah.

Because you're learning different things and the adults are more friendly and they talk to you like adults yourself and not like a kid.

So that's good? Yeah.

You make your way to school and everything now and back, you have a house key.

Yeah.

And all of that lot, yeah?

You become more adult.

Yeah.

Like you're growing up.

Supplementary question: so, it's a bit like give and take isn't it? You're losing something but you're gaining something? Ok, that's good. So, you've already decided that you'd attend this school because it was closer and you didn't want to be getting the bus, despite of your friends going to another school.

And you went with the majority? Were there any other factors that guided you to choosing **?

Well I came here because my sister came here but I was applying for S** A*** but I didn't pass the entrance test, so I didn't get into there so I came to the same school as my sister.

Ok, that's great thanks.

And you've been here since year 7?

Yeah.

Yeah that's great. So your first week in year 7, I know it's going back a long time it's a huge chunk of your life when you think, well you're only what 15 now are you?

16

It's less than a quarter of your life, if you go right back in time. When you're nearly 80 a quarter of your life will be 60, you know a quarter of your life was when you were about 11, seems like a lot has happened since then.

So, going back to your year 7, what were your first impressions, you were in the old building?

When I first came, everybody else was really scared of going to high school but I was like really excited.

Scared, I found it very daunting; I thought I was going to get lost.

Supplementary question: did you get lost?

I think I did, I always had my little book out and I always wanted the map [laughs].

Supplementary question: and you had a form tutor I suppose?

Yeah.

And how did you feel about having that, was that helpful?

I think it was, because I made my friends there.

Yeah.

They were the first people I met and I made friends with them.

Supplementary question: are you still in the same form class or

has that changed?

I was until a couple of weeks ago because now I'm in a higher form, me and ** have been moved up into the higher form.

So the form structures have been changed? I'm taking it that [inaudible].

There is only one form class that is gifted and talented and we're in that.

You're in the gifted and talented.

All the forms are still the same. It's just they've made a new form for people who...

The best out of…

Yeah well, the best and the people who think they can be, the teachers think they can achieve to be the best [Inaudible]

Supplementary question: yeah, and you're prefects are you?

You're actually head girl?

Yeah.

Goodness, I didn't notice that [badge]. Well done, good, and you are a prefect?

I'm a prefect and deputy head boy.

You're deputy head boy. Oh my word … the best I didn't realise [laughs].

TEACHER ENTERS THE ROOM

I just figured out that they're deputy head boy and head girl.

[Inaudible – teacher speaking].

Yeah.

I really like my form, like we had the head of PE and he always gave us a laugh in form and all the friends I met first, they're all in there so we all talk about what happened in class in year 7.

Yes, getting... it's ok, it's just we've got to do work in form.

What about you **?

I do miss my old form because it's most of my old friends from primary school, but coming into my new form I've also got my old friends that I've made here, which I'd say I'm closer to, so that's why I kind of like my new form.

Yeah.

Ok, thank you.

So, year 7 again, best and worst memories?

Best thing, the best thing - that you can think 'God I loved that when I came to this school'.

I would say it's meeting all my friends that I've met and the worst thing…

Meeting your friends.

Yeah, meeting friends and the worst thing...don't know... think, it's

just finding my way round …with like the older kids and thought I'm gonna get [inaudible], it's just the fear of being in a different school with different people.

And what would you say for your best?

I think my memories would be meeting new people and making friends and being able to get to the canteen for the first two weeks.

[Laughs] Oh that's excellent; this just reminds you of what it's like to be year 7 doesn't it?

Supplementary question: can you get to the canteen first, now that you're a prefect?

Yeah [inaudible].

If only you could just keep that all year.

It reminds you of year 7 a little bit because you can just walk in

That's nice, that's good, it makes a difference when you're starving doesn't it?

[Laughs] Yeah, and not lining up in the rain, that's another thing.

And not lining up in the rain, so you'd agree with that?

Yeah.

The worst thing?

The worst thing would probably be trying to find your way around, knowing that the people around you are basically strangers, and I didn't know them.

Supplementary question: right so It's very similar, you know the boy, girl thing is not that different to be honest to how you... what you liked and didn't like, it's very similar. The gender thing is not relevant then at all really is it? That's interesting. So, [inaudible] so, you've been here quite a long time and you've obviously

seen some changes, can you just describe the changes for me?

Do you think things have changed in school and if so, what?

Do you mean like coming into the new school?

Well generally, since year 7 up to year 11 the new school is

going to be part of it, what sort of are the changes?

I suppose it's more as I've been growing up I know I've changed I've become more mature, and that the people around me have changed, and they've become more mature. I suppose each year it gets quite strange because new people keep on coming in.

Yeah, with the new people, you're meeting different friends and personalities.

Different friends [takes notes].

Ok, we're still going back to year 7, year 8, year 9, year 10, year 11 any other changes that you think were significant?

Teachers, I would say teachers. Because in years 7 and 8 I had altogether about 10 different teachers in years 7 and 8 but that was for English.

Supplementary question: just for English?

Yeah, my teachers were swapping round all the time with new ones coming in.

That was quite a strange thing. Also, when I came into the school … because in my school we only had one teacher to a class and that was each year but in other schools, you kind of move round from classes the same way you do in high school.

Yeah, we did that in year 6, towards the end for maths and English we would move round to other classes so it would give us

the feel of how it was in high school.

Yeah because we thought it was dead exciting at the time because we were moving round to different classes when the bell went – to give us a feel of high school. So then when we were in high school we were used to it.

I suppose that was the downside for me because I was used to my surroundings in year 6. Then when I came to this school it was just hundreds of different rooms which I'd just never seen before.

Supplementary question: you were less prepared. So, I'm kind of getting the idea that if you were in charge of the education system you would recommend this sort of pre-high school?

Yeah, especially in year 6 to give the kids a feel of what it is like in high school or even if they spend a day or a couple of days in high school at the end of year 6 to know what it's like.

Supplementary question: could you do that? Did you not come up for a transition day or can you not remember?

We did do it, I think about 2 days.

I think they do it more now than we did in year 6. I think because I only came here to watch a play or even just to have one class.

I came here to do a full day, and then I came here again and that's when we were doing experiments in science and stuff, don't you remember the cornflour ball? That bounced off the floor?

No I never did that.

Supplementary question: the … what was it … the what ball?

It was a cornflour ball, it was like a mixture, and then you squeeze it up into a ball and it bounces off the floor.

Supplementary question: really? It actually bounces? Do you have to let it dry first?

No, I think it bounces when it's wet.

Ooh I might try that [laughs].

I think I did the one where you have cornflour and you mould it to what you want and then you just leave it into your hand and it will melt in your hand. Then you do it all again and it will dry up in your hand.

Oh, I might go out and buy some cornflour.

(Laughs) It's really good to do with kids I think that would be good in primary school.

Supplementary question: have you done that here?

No, they took… because I do other activities in school, like I go to primary school and talk to the kids.

Do you?

Yeah.

What, now?

Yeah.

Oh, do you?

Yeah, I'm a sports ambassador for girls' PE, I'm head girl, I go round to primary schools and talk to the kids about what it's like in ** and why they should come and show them experiments, and also go to universities and give talks about what we do.

Gosh.

I wear the badge.

[Laughs]

Wow, I'm very impressed that's really good, getting 'ambassador'.

Yeah at the minute I'm sorting out the Christmas Fayre which is this Sunday and I've got a diary full of stuff that I've got to do each day.

Is that too much for you, or is it just about right? Can you cope?

I can cope with it; it's just I go through my daily routine in my head and I don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing but I like getting involved with the school.

I don't know how she copes, because I can't even cope with coming to school and then having to go to taster days for college, because that's more pressure that's on.

But I do like to be involved with school, to know what's going on and like voice my opinions, to what we should be doing and what we should be looking at, for the pupils.

Good.

See it from my point of view.

I can see why Mr ** has chosen you. For being able to articulate your view point.

So that was the question about the changes that you've seen, any other changes that you feel you've not managed to speak about or mention?

I suppose the most dramatic change would be coming to the new school.

Yeah.

Still don't know my way around you know but I'll find it soon, don't think I even knew my way around the old school.

I know, every day you would find a different place. Like when you're

in year 11 there is another part you can look into and stuff.

Supplementary question: because you've only been in a few weeks now, haven't you? Couple of weeks, two weeks, is it?

Yeah, it's two, three weeks.

Three weeks.

Still very new.

(INTERRUPTION FROM STUDENTS)

So, you've discussed the change of teachers and the new building [inaudible].

The teachers in general, I suppose now we're in year 11, they do actually treat us like adults and you can have a mature conversation with them.

Supplementary question: so, when you say the teaching staff, you mean the people have changed or their attitudes to you have changed?

I think the attitudes, because they talk to you as if you are a friend but also as a pupil as well, they're more friendly and offer advice.

Right, Yeah. Do you agree with that?

Yeah, I suppose it's also more like as we've gone into different years we've changed teachers so we've got to know most of the teaching staff, but quite a lot of them have left.

How do you feel about that?

A lot of them left when we were in the younger years so I suppose we didn't really know them that well so we just kind of expected a new teacher.

We know most of them now.

Ok then, this is probably the biggest question of them all really, if you were running the school what changes would you make? Because obviously, you know, you're intelligent and articulate so if you were in charge...There was a programme on TV where the kids took charge and they started to plan the lessons and teach them and if it was you and I said 'ok now you're in charge'.

I think I would make lessons be more practical, like in science do more, show experiments and be visual because I think kids take more in when people are visual.

(INTERRUPTION FROM PUPIL)

Supplementary question: so that would be your big focus, you would have your first staff meeting with your teachers and you would say this is what I want to do and I want you to really make an effort to be more practical and visual?

I think more fun.

More fun?

Yeah, I think that plays a big part if the teachers have got a fun personality and fun things to do I think the kids will like it and take to the teacher. Not shouting at the kids all the time, even though they may get a bit rowdy, just to take it calmly and do some activities.

I think I'd make it more strict, because all the kids that are naughty always get the attention but the kids that are actually doing well, showing off their abilities, they just get no attention. Suppose we're getting the attention now because we've moved into a different form and have been put into awards evenings and stuff.

Yeah.

Supplementary question: ok, so you're getting the attention now so maybe the climate has changed?

Yeah, I think if you, you'd have to take the naughty kids out, but you can't always do that so you'd have to just sit them down and talk to them and calm them down I think, and ask them what they like, what's not working with them.

Supplementary question: how?

We've got mentors in schools and we go to sessions with them and they tell us how to calm a person who's aggressive down and we do breathing sessions and relaxation sessions and I think it's really helpful.

Supplementary question: and have you had this training?

Yeah

Supplementary question: to help you deal with kids?

We did Western Sprit

Supplementary question: what's that?

It's a charity organisation and they help young kids with bad behaviour, but they teach other kids to help them in lessons and we've had that training, on how to deal with situations like that.

Supplementary question: brilliant, did you find that helpful?

Yeah.

Supplementary question: is it something you would recommend? Do you think every school should be doing that?

I think so because it's a good way to know your abilities and know how to deal with it.

I didn't get a chance to do it. I was a bit slow at applying, a lot of people wanted to do it, so I think even if I would of applied it would have been full because a lot of people wanted to do it.

Supplementary question: do you think if it came round again, you would apply?

Yeah, definitely.

Definitely.

Supplementary question: can you see skills in the people who have

been on the course?

Yeah.

Can you, really?

Yeah.

Gosh.

Because they do teamwork, they took us to em...

I think their attitudes have slightly changed they are going quite...

They took us to somewhere in the Lake District I think. I'm not too sure, but they took us on team working skills and we had to build rafts and work together as a team and even though we all began to shout at each other we all went 'no let's not shout, we've got to talk to each other in a quiet way' and we had to pass sticks along and in the end we did it, even though people got a bit angry, they calmed down and began to work again.

Good, amazing.

Supplementary question: so, is there anything else you would do? It's obviously a bit of a worry about the attention going to the kids who are naughty and you feel as if now this is the award system

Yeah, I also... the bit I don't like about school is when people with bad attendance … and when they come in for a couple of weeks they'll get rewarded for that and the people with good attendance they don't get rewarded.

Yeah.

Ok, anything you want to add on that?

(CONVERSATION ABOUT TIME)

So, you mentioned that you've been active in your school life, do you feel as if your views are listened to and acted upon?

Can you give me an example, this is something I've wanted and you've got?

I'd say it's more or less the other people have to have the same view as you to get your view heard.

So, you need a group of you?

Supplementary question: can you give me an example, you know, don't worry if you can't?

There was a trip to Blackpool with year 7 and 8's for a welcome to their new school and it was me and the head boy who decided to do that and we decided to do a big concert to welcome everyone to the new school with a big opening event and they took to that and they're going to do it to raise money for the school as well.

Supplementary question: it's very powerful, isn't it? So, it's your idea and that must be great, because when you leave school and you go out into the big world you know that your ideas are listened

There is a thing called the PTFA meeting that the school has [inaudible]. It's called the Parent Teacher and Friend Association and it invites everyone in and you can have a discussion. They decide on what is going on in the school and what's going wrong and how they can raise money for the school and events.

Oh no, I have been to it.

Yeah, that's good, excellent.
So, from this academic year what's your best and worst memories?

Best memories would probably be coming into year 11; I think as I've come into year 11 I've also made more new friends because people have become more mature. They're actually easier to get on with now. I don't think I've any worst memories I think I've just kind of anticipating leaving, which I don't want to do.

I think my best memory is because I'm head girl and it's such a big achievement for me, can't believe I did it and all the stuff that's going on in school and also I think I have a voice and put my opinions there, because when I came in I was shy, I didn't really want to do anything, I had my head down all the time but now I've got my head held high and I'm proud of who I am and what I do. My bad points, I think because I've become head girl, people have like turned and thought 'I don't really like her'.

Perhaps they're jealous?

Yeah, definitely jealous, they did the same thing to J* didn't they?

Yeah, ** is the head boy and he's...

He was the deputy head boy and he was trying to get him voted off because he was jealous.

Yeah they've become very jealous, it's not very good.

Supplementary question: so how would you have

dealt with that?

[Inaudible].

Well how would I have dealt with it? I suppose I would have been …
well one of them decided he didn't want to be deputy head boy.

[Inaudible].

Yeah, so he said I don't want the badge and he gave the badge
back.

Because he said I'm not being a slave to the head boy which I
thought was a bit of a lie.

And I suppose how we would have dealt with it was, when people
went to apply for head boy and head girl, people had to choose who
they thought would be the best head boy and head girl and most
people had chosen ** and ** so I think that was the evidence that
they had chosen the right head boy and head girl.

Supplementary question: and that was the kids' choice or the teachers?

Yeah, the kids' choice.

Supplementary question: the teachers didn't have a say?

No, they did, the teachers did have a say.

Oh, did they?

Yep.

But it was the people who applied for head boy and head girl they
had…

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Sorry say that again.

The people who applied for head boy and head girl they went into the interview because we had to write a letter to the head teacher and then you would go in for your interview and he would ask you a final question on who do you think is best for the role of head boy and head girl and you had to give your opinion.

Supplementary question: and then was it open to the school? And there was a bit of balloting?

No

It wasn't open to the school I think it was more it was like the open to the prefects, like all prefects in general, but I think the main decision was down to the people who applied for the role and the teachers. The teachers actually got into arguments over...

Yeah, yeah, it's such a teacher thing.

Supplementary question: ok, thank you. I'm just going to say to you, what's a typical day like if I had to...if I drank a cup of tea and I'm automatically transformed into your life like those films do, what are they called?

Yeah [Laughs].

What would I find apart from being blonde and gorgeous?

[Laughs].

[Laughs].

What would I do if had to become you for a day?

My day is busy, it's lots of coursework, a lot of work and we have

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stuff to do after school, we're skiing.

Skiing?

Yeah, I do skiing after school and I don't know, it's just work, a lot of work.

And then outside of school I know you've mentioned skiing, you go home, what's it like?

Revision, homework.

Yeah, homework but also watching TV [laughs].

Supplementary question: and what do you watch on TV?

I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here.

What do you watch?

I'm a Celebrity.

You watch that, oh right.

But also Coronation Street.

Right, they're your two big ones? And what about you?

Hollyoaks. I think in my day - you'd find lots of stress.

Stress?

Yeah.

So young to be stressed.

Yeah because at this time of the year you're trying to get, we're all getting the work piled onto us, from each subject and sometimes you can go home with like four pieces of homework or coursework to do that have to be in the next day or sometimes in a week.

You've got aprons and stuff thrown around your room, books, still can't find my books.

I think it's the best social life because when you've got a couple of weeks off I get really bored. I want to go back to school, even though it sounds a bit sad, but I really do. My friends are here, we've got stuff to talk about and what you did the night before and what's on TV. When you're outside of school you just, you're in bed, wasting the day away, it gets boring. Like now I think I want a job.

Supplementary question: so, what do you watch whenever you're off...do you watch TV?

Not that often, if I get any spare time I try to go out and see my friends.

Supplementary question: what - do you play football or, do you do any sports or just hang out?

Not really, it's more just going out to see people, because at the moment I don't really see my friends that much because I'm trying to balance all the work.

So, without (the head of department) listening to this one, tell me about a really good maths lesson that sticks out in your head, one that was really good.

I think every maths lesson is fine, well sometimes because the stuff we do, we all get involved with like starters, starter lessons. Everyone gets involved and we all join in together and at the end of the lesson we do a game together and before we start our work they explain how to do things, we write notes in the book and he shows us how to write the notes in the book and he explains it well. If we get stuck we just ask and we've got booster lessons after school if we want a higher grade, so I think that's very good.

There is also a nice atmosphere in the classes.

No.

[Inaudible].

So, would you agree with what * said there? Yeah? Being involved, fun?

It also makes you learn the work better as well because you're not just getting the work handed to you and you've got to do it out of a book, because it's explained to you.

Go back maybe, you might have to go back in time for this one, the worst one, can you remember, oh my goodness that was just the worst ever?

Substitute teachers [inaudible].

Is this just particularly in maths, is it?

No not just in maths, I suppose. This was a few years ago when we did have a few idiots in class, they were just kind of messing about.

It's just when people are really naughty and it doesn't give a chance for us to learn because the teachers are occupied with the naughty people so it just cuts down the lesson.

Supplementary question: you want to learn, do you?

Yeah.

Is that what you are here for?

Yeah, I want to get good grades and go to college and everything. I don't really want to be re-sitting an exam in college which I don't

have to.

Ok, so I'm just going to cut down the last few questions. If I was to design with component parts - what would make a really good maths teacher? An excellent maths teacher, can you tell me, how would I know when I had one - whenever I'd created it? What does a really good maths teacher look like?

I don't think it's really what they look like, I suppose it's more like...

The personality.

Yeah they've got to explain the work.

Supplementary question: explain?

And know how to speak to you.

Supplementary question: by that do you mean, respectfully?
Yeah.

Yeah, you're saying yeah.

Yeah, and to treat you like an individual student, you know, not like everyone else, you know you're specific...

Supplementary question: and that could be within any subject, I'm sure, you wouldn't say that's just maths? Is there anything in particular to maths?

I think it's more explaining. I think that's what helps as well. To learn the work and get it into our heads and figure out what we are doing, I think that's the most important thing.

Would you agree with that?

There's other things but I can't remember, can't put my finger on it. I think it's just personality; you've got to have a good personality.

Sense of humour.

Yeah, sense of humour, I think that cheers everyone up, especially with maths because it's not everyone's favourite subject and you look forward to it, people having a laugh, I think it's good.

Thank you so much, I'm so grateful for your time, it's like going deep into your brains.

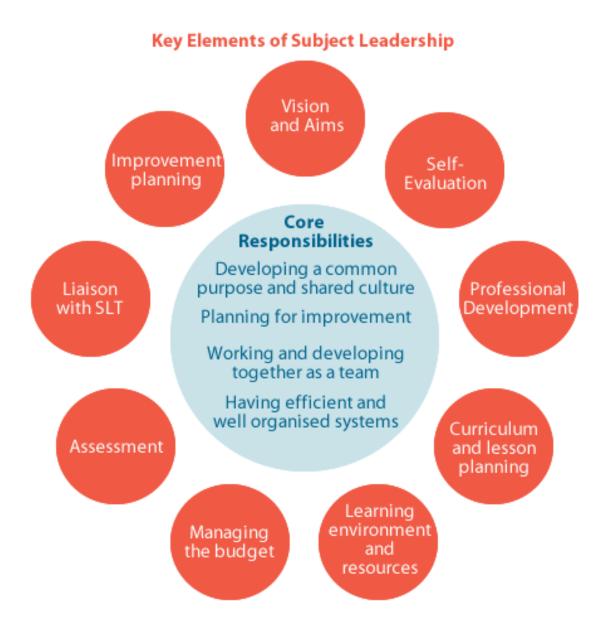Thank you so much, good luck with your studies. Is there anything you want to ask?

No, is that everything you needed?

Yeah, cheers, thank you.

-- END OF INTERVIEW –

Appendix C4 EiML Key elements of subject leadership

Key Elements of Subject Leadership

Vision and Aims

Improvement planning

Self-Evaluation

Liaison with SLT

Core Responsibilities

Developing a common purpose and shared culture

Planning for improvement

Working and developing together as a team

Having efficient and well organised systems

Professional Development

Assessment

Curriculum and lesson planning

Managing the budget

Learning environment and resources

Appendix D Research interviews information sheet for participants

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. The research is being carried out as part of my final doctoral EdD thesis. The area of examination focuses on how an individual head teacher can improve a school and how the continuous professional development of teachers (CPD) is identified and catered for.

In particular:

What 'improvement' means to them.

How this can be measured.

The need for vision and mission.

Transfer of experience from previous schools.

Whether CPD is a necessary component and if so how this is identified and catered for (with particular reference to mathematics).

The interview will be semi-formal and I would like to obtain some narrative of how the head teacher came to this position – the deciding factors when choosing a school to lead, the first important steps, upon reflection anything which s/he would do differently, transferable experience, factors which show success, how this is measured and how to decide where to go next.

The head of mathematics interview intends to see how the vision works in practice at middle management level and the key factors in bringing about a successful education for pupils in mathematics. Also, how the continuous professional development (CPD) of mathematics teachers is identified and catered for and if there appears to be any link between this and pupil success.

The pupil interview intends to see how the pupils have perceived the changes to the school from arriving in year 7, what has worked well

or otherwise, pupil voice and any changes that they would put in place themselves. I would also like to find out about the mathematics lesson which remains in their memory as being particularly enjoyable or otherwise and why

For this research to be as accurate and representative as possible, I intend to interview key people: head teacher, head of mathematics and 2- 4 pupils and to collect any relevant documentation. However, I understand that some of the information may be sensitive. For this reason, in so far as it is humanly possible, all efforts will be made to ensure the confidentiality of all data that are collected. The use of a recording device and the use of making written notes will be requested to assist me in writing up the interviews. If interviewees do not wish the interview to be recorded then this wish will be respected.

Unless otherwise agreed for particular purposes, names of people and places will not be used in the reporting process. Information will be anonymised. Data will be stored securely and no one other than me will have access to the identity of the school or people interviewed. This anonymised data will be the basis for the production of a written thesis which will be submitted to my supervisors at Manchester Metropolitan University and to the examination board. Part of the work may be used for appropriate academic publications.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me by email on:

Liz.henning@xxxxxx   or by phone on XXXX XXX XXXX

Thank you once again for assisting me in my research.

Liz Henning

Appendix Q1 Head teacher interview

Thank the head teacher for agreeing to be interviewed.

Hand the head teacher the ethics sheet and set of interview questions.

Ensure the use of recording device and note taking are permitted.

1 Background - can you tell me a little about your experience before becoming a head teacher at this school?

2 How did you decide this was the school you wanted to lead?

3 What were the first things you decided to do and why?

4 Are there any things from this that you would now change upon reflection?

5 Can you describe briefly what your mission and vision are?

6 What is 'improvement' and how can you measure it?

7 What are you most proud of?

8 How do you view CPD for your teachers and how do you cater for it?

Thank you for taking part in this interview.

Appendix Q2 Head of mathematics interview

Thank the head of department for agreeing to be interviewed.

Hand the head of department the ethics sheet and question sheet. Ensure the use of recording device and note taking are permitted.

1 Background- can you tell me a little about your experience before becoming a head of department at this school?

2 How did you decide that you wanted to lead a mathematics department?

3 What were the first things you decided to do and why?

4 Are there any things from this that you would now change upon reflection?

5 Can you describe briefly what the school mission and vision are and how this is translated into practice?

6 What changes have taken place across the school which you feel have made things better/ worse?

7 Are there any changes which you would make across the school which you feel would improve things further?

 8 What is 'improvement' and how can you measure it?

9 What are you most proud of?

10 How do you view CPD for yourself and your teachers and how do you cater for it?

Thank you for taking part in this interview.

Appendix Q3   Pupil interviews

Thank the pupils for agreeing to be interviewed. Hand the pupils the ethics

sheet.

Ensure the use of recording device and note taking are permitted.

1 Background - can you tell me a little about your primary school?

2 How did you decide that you wanted to attend this secondary school?

3 Have you attended this school from year 7?

4 What were your first impressions when you arrived in your first week in year 7?

5 Tell me what were things like in year 7- best and worst memories?

6 Do you think things have changed across the school – if so what are they?

7 What have been the best and worst changes to the school?

8 If you were running the school what changes would you make? 9 Do you

feel the pupils' views are listened to and acted upon?

10 What have the best and worst memories from this academic year been?

11 Tell me about the best / worst mathematics lesson you have had and why?

12 What makes a good mathematics teacher?

13 How do mathematics teachers become really good at their job?

14 How would I recognise a good mathematics teacher- what would I see?

Thank you for taking part in this interview.