

Our educators need to be encouraged—as well as recognized and rewarded—for these professional endeavors, which have great potential to lead to much more engaged and empowered educators in our schools, as well as the improvement of instructional practice and, ultimately, student achievement.

Conclusions

The true benefit of engaging in classroom- or school-based action research is that educators can truly focus and direct their own professional growth and development in specific areas that *they* want to target, as opposed to having professional development topics thrust upon them. This allows for the emergence of professional development activities that are customizable in order to fit the needs of an individual educator, or perhaps even collaborative teams of educators (e.g., teachers of the students in the same grade, or teachers of the same content area). Specific areas of weakness or areas identified and targeted for improvement can serve as the focus of the personalized and customized professional growth and development through action research. Additionally, educators see this type of professional development as being much more meaningful since the focus of the activity is targeting areas of practice in which individuals want to improve.

References

- Burns, A. (2010) 'Action research: What's in it for teachers and institutions?' *International House Journal of Education and Development*, 29, pp. 3-6.
- Clauzet, K. H., Lick, D. W., & Murphy, C. U. (2008) *Schoolwide action research for professional learning communities: Improving student learning through the whole-faculty study groups approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- DuFour, R., DuFour, R., & Eaker, R. (2008) *Revisiting professional learning communities at work: New insights for improving schools*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.
- Ferrance, E. (2000) 'Action research'. In *Themes in Education* (series). Providence, RI: Brown University / Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Masters, J. (1995) 'The history of action research'. In Hughes (Ed.), *Action research electronic reader*. Sydney, Australia: University of Sydney. Retrieved on March 12, 2013, from <http://www.behs.cchs.usyd.edu.au/arow/Reader/rmasters.htm>.
- McNiff, J. (2002) *Action research for professional development: Concise advice for new action researchers* (3rd ed.). Dorset, England: Author. Retrieved on March 7, 2013, from <http://www.jeanmcniff.com/userfiles/file/Publications/AR%20Booklet.doc>.
- Mertler, C. A. (2012a) *Transformational innovation in education: Empowering educators and improving schools*. [Blog site]. Retrieved March 1, 2013, from <http://www.craigmertler.com/blog>
- Mertler, C. A. (2012b) *Action research: Improving schools and empowering educators* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mertler, C. A. (2013) *Action research and educator empowerment: A blueprint for transforming your practice*. [iPad 4 version]. Available in the iBookstore. Retrieved on March 5, 2013, from <https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/action-research-educator-empowerment/id610086739?ls=1>.
- Mills, G. E. (2011) *Action research: A guide for the teacher researcher* (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson.
- Oliver, B. (1980) 'Action research for inservice training'. *Educational Leadership*, 37(5), 394-395.
- Smith, M. K. (2001) *Kurt Lewin: Groups, experiential learning, and action research*. [Web site]. Retrieved on March 11, 2013, from <http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-lewin.htm>.

Special Feature Teaching and Learning Projects

Every year, the Centre for Learning Excellence (CLE) provides up to £4000 per project to fund practitioner research aimed at developing teaching and learning. A condition of funding is that each fundholder(s) writes a report to be published in the *Journal of Pedagogic Development*. This edition features three of the six reports written by 2012-2013 fundholders: Sarah Cousins and Ulrike Dunne (Teacher Education), Malini Mistri (Teacher Education); and Mark Waters (British School of Osteopathy).

Challenges of developing pedagogy through diversity and equity within the new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum

Malini Mistry, University of Bedfordshire
Krishan Sood, Nottingham Trent University

Abstract

A commitment to diversity and equity principles through social justice lies at the heart of many Early Years' practitioners working practices. However, the term social justice is complex, and this complexity manifests itself through its multiple meanings, in different cultural contexts. This paper investigates how diversity and

equity are linked through an understanding of social justice within the new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum. It also explores how diversity and equity is promoted through the Early Years curriculum and what remain the potential challenges practitioners. Interviews in multi-cultural and mono-cultural primary schools with Early Years age phases were conducted.

The findings showed that the principles of social justice through diversity and equity was interpreted differently in each Early Years setting, which is unsurprising given the complicated nature of its meaning. The multi-cultural schools appear to use a greater variety of activities to embed social justice principles that involved their diverse communities more to enrich the curriculum in contrast to the mono-cultural schools. In mono-cultural schools however, practitioners had to be more creative in promoting diversity and equity given the smaller proportion of their diverse pupil and staff population.

Keywords: Early Years, equity, diversity, multi-cultural/mono-cultural schools

Introduction

From September 2012 a revised EYFS curriculum became statutory in England for all government registered settings for children aged between birth and five (DfE, 2012: Online). The EYFS encompasses four key principles that shapes practice in settings and consists of: understanding that every child is a unique child, children learn to be independent through positive relationships, children learn and develop in enabling environments, and the understanding that children learn in different ways and at different rates (DfE, 2012: Online). The focus is on children's readiness for learning and on their healthy development. There is prominence on developing children's language and identities (Issa & Hatt) but little emphasis on how diversity and equity permeates the EYFS. We explore the latter in this paper.

Literature

All levels of the school system must hold the principles of social justice, and the valuing of diversity (Coleman and Glover, 2010) to ensure that equal opportunities (Coleman, 2002) is evident. The term diversity has 'many and different meanings' (Coleman & Glover, 2010, pp. 6), based on the context of the Early Years setting. Celebrating difference (Lumby & Coleman, 2007; Jehn *et al.*, 2008), valuing diversity (Coleman & Glover, 2010), cross-cultural perspective (Dimmock & Walker, 2002), and minimising the impact of discrimination (Fiske & Lee, 2008) lie at the heart of understanding diversity. Social justice in the form of rights, responsibilities and fairness constitutes the glue that drives pedagogical practice in Early Years within the settings investigated in this research.

We were looking at how practitioners in multi and mono-cultural primary schools build individual and organisational capability and how they lead with values, like equity, fairness, respect and tolerance (Bell and Stevenson, 2006), particularly in the Early Years age phase. We are reminded by Gold (2010, in Coleman & Glover, 2010), that there may be conflicting values and that we can never be sure if all practitioners hold the same values. So the challenge in Early Years is how best practitioners align different values in the interest of their children and educational practice. Lumby & Coleman's (2007) critique of diversity and equality in educational

settings offers a refreshing viewpoint, stating that, supporting diversity amongst practitioners may result in a 'redistribution of power' which may appear uncomfortable to a dominant group (p.79).

In Early Years settings, learning by doing and exploring the environment, has gained universal status (Curtis, 1998). She goes on to suggest that play is not the only means by which children discover the world; the whole of their spontaneous activity creates their psychic equilibrium especially in the Early Years. We believe the pedagogic orientation of Early Years is on learning to learn within a social and cultural context (Robins & Callan, 2009, p.11). Diversity presents challenges in achieving moral purpose, so we need to build relationships that encourage collaborative cultures (Fullan, 1999).

The varying and broader meanings of diversity have prompted a possible re-conceptualisation that takes account the complex nature of differences in children (Ng, 2003; Graham, 2007). We argue that Early Years practitioners need to move away from surface level tinkering of the curriculum to focus on the deep hidden curriculum values and acceptance (Petriwskyj, 2010: 195). With increased migration, changes to education will have an impact on the curriculum, and it is essential that Early Years practitioners discuss the implications of diversity and equity issues on their provision.

Placing their values at the heart of their leadership is a mark of outstanding head teachers, referred to as value-driven leadership (Gold in Coleman & Glover, 2010). Many have argued (Moore *et al.*, 2002; Gold in Coleman and Glover, 2010) that head teachers' values gave the moral compass (Fullan, 2003) to help them navigate 'a hostile wider environment' (Bell & Stevenson, 2006: 150). We suggest that such a moral compass is vital to promote radical changes and improvement in Early Years practice at an institutional level in relation to diversity and equity. Developing critical consciousness (Coleman & Glover, 2010) of children and staff, through education, offers one such strategic direction that encompasses access and entitlement through debate on issues of diversity and equity, and the potential for wider policy refraction becomes less. Developing a dialogue (Shields, 2009) with various stakeholders offers potential for EYFS curriculum reform in permeating the diversity and equity values. From analysing the literature, three main research questions emerged:

1. What is diversity and equity in Early Years?
2. How do practitioners develop their pedagogy through diversity and equity in Early Years?
3. Challenges faced by practitioners in developing pedagogy through diversity and equity in the Early Years?

Methodology

We chose two types of English primary schools. Those which were multi-cultural/multi-ethnic schools (with over 9per cent minority ethnic children) because their

intake represented the large plural communities they were drawn from and the other schools were mainly mono-cultural/mono-ethnic (less than 10% minority ethnic children) due to their under-representation from minority-ethnic intake. Our driving principles of ethical educational research were of 'commitment to honesty' (Sammons, 1989 as quoted in Busher & James, 2007, pp. 106), and 'respect for the dignity and privacy of those people who are the subjects of research' (Pring, 2000 as quoted in Busher & James, 2007, pp. 106).

There were sixteen case study schools in total of the original sample of twenty. Bearing in mind Bassey's definition on an educational case study research 'which entails being where the action is, taking testimony from and observing the actors first hand' (2007, pp. 143), this research can be classified as such since it satisfies all the criteria outlined that 'the researcher needs to collect sufficient data to allow him/her to explore features, create interpretations and test for trustworthiness' (Bassey, 2007, pp. 144). Each case study school was given a code, therefore, MCS1 – MC8 meant multi-cultural/multi-ethnic school 1-8 and MonoCS1 meant mono-cultural/mono-ethnic school 1-8. We interviewed sixteen Early Years leaders in the sample schools as they were the key curriculum leaders in the area being researched. We also interviewed four head teachers (two each from the multicultural and mono-cultural schools) of the sixteen schools who have had experience in the Early Years age phase in order to get the holistic picture about the ways in which they were meeting the challenges of embedding social justice principles within the Early Years curriculum. So our total sample was twenty leaders from the sixteen schools chosen. We chose interviews as this gave us an opportunity to think about educational phenomena and how to investigate them (Morrison 2007, cited in Briggs & Coleman, 2007, pp. 13).

Findings

We frame our analysis using the three research questions cited earlier. Based on the participants' perspectives, the findings emerged as descriptions of specific experiences of the concepts explored based on practice in each school. While there was presence of wealth of experience shared from the coded respondents, most appeared to give generic response to the questions posed.

1. What does diversity and equity in Early Years mean?

For some of the Early Year's leaders in each type of school sampled, **diversity** meant:

It is important to appreciate that everyone is an individual and has different experiences, interests and needs and when this is recognised then the best provision can be tailored to meet those individual needs. (MonoCS7)

Having a realistic not stereotypical view of other countries/cultures. (MCS6)

In contrast, the head teachers said:

We value diversity in all its forms and I am so lucky to have very good links with the local community to draw on expertise like language and cultural advice. Our role is to overcome cognitive and structural barriers faced by our members of the school community. (Head teacher mono-cultural school, 3)

We are encouraging all our learners to be active, questioning, inquisitive citizens and equipping them with such skills. (Head teacher, multicultural school, 4)

School leaders from both the mono-cultural and multi-cultural settings iterated that they 'found the challenges of the implementation of the EYFS very difficult whether it was managing with diverse staff or not'. In addition, these leaders cited the benefits of collaborations and partnerships with the local community to seek specific support or guidance on cultural issues and the ability to feel free to ask other leaders for help and support. The Early Years staff understood diversity as addressing and tackling issues of stereotypes, discrimination and ensuring their practices exhibited a level playing field for quality education that was personalised.

For some of the Early Year's practitioners in each type of school sampled, **equity** meant:

Making sure that all children have the same opportunity to access all learning experiences. (MCS2)

Children should feel valued and be free to express their beliefs and cultures. Equality is the right to feel equal. (MonoCS2)

Head teachers in the two contrasting schools thought the following as regards what equity mean for them:

To be respected and given the best opportunities to achieve and learn. This is achieved through establishing a provision that reflects the individual needs, interests and abilities of everyone. (Head teacher, mono-cultural school, 1)

Making children in the class feel that they are being treated equally so that they don't have the notion that certain children are seen to be the teachers favourite! (Head teacher, multi-cultural school, 1)

Meeting individual young person's needs was cited by all of the case study respondents and supported the concepts of the right to equal resources and fair treatment to all. The degree of equitable provision, however, could not be identified through this small scale study suggesting the need for further targeted research on policy, strategy and operational issues. In most cases, equity was described as respect and promoting human dignity that underpinned organisational ethos and culture.

2. How do practitioners develop their pedagogy through diversity and equity in Early Years?

Diversity approaches in the Early Years could be developed in these ways:

We already have a diverse setting with many different first languages. (MCS7)

We have many activities that support the different cultures of our class. I want to learn and understand more about various cultures and customs. (MCS8)

The new EYFS focuses even more on meeting the needs of the children and therefore the play initiated through children's interests is paramount. We encourage role play and teach our children how to argue persuasively. (MonoCS5)

We use our theme of the term to address aspects of diversity, currently our topic is ourselves and therefore we are looking at all different kinds of people. (MonoCS7)

The head teachers commented about diversity:

Encourage more volunteers to come in and help – therefore using their knowledge of how to make settings more diverse. Staff need additional information to update their knowledge and understanding so that multicultural practices can be delivered effectively. (Head teacher, mono-cultural school, 4)

We promote the diversity of our school by recognising celebrations of other cultures, encouraging children to share key phrases in their home language with their class/school. (Head teacher, multi-cultural school, 4)

Many respondents of the case studies were able to showcase examples of good practice of diversity in education and how they prepared young people for the globalization of the twenty-first century. Practitioners at all levels discussed their vision of a democratic society and how their school structures and systems would help to ensure that the vision and values could be carried out through in promoting the EYFS principles.

Equity approaches in the Early Years could be developed in these ways:

We use values based education where we recognise differences within the school community and the wider world and examine how everyone should have basic rights. (MCS8)

EAL children are often disadvantaged because of the expectation they should be assessed in English. A child may be absorbing English and be able to understand it enough to efficiently access and learn within the environment. (MonoCS3)

The head teachers commented about equity:

We as staff need to provide so many experiences to make learning as equal as we can, especially for those children who lack certain experiences. We have high expectations of all our learners. (Head teacher, mono-cultural school, 2)

Ensuring our vision and values promote equity in everything we do, our curriculum, teaching, learning, staffing, monitoring, recruitment, training, links with the parents, the home and others. (Head teacher, multi-cultural school, 3)

Mono-cultural schools, like the multicultural schools, provided quality Early Years education and the practitioners told us their practices were driven by values and behaviour that promoted diversity and equity mostly through play and stories. They were focused on staff development and endeavoured to mainstream diversity and equity, which meant that this was central to all aspects of policy and practice in their organisations.

In multicultural school settings the main advantage appears to be the diversity of population. In such schools, many of the respondents told us about the celebrations and activities they undertook further enriched the curriculum. One head teacher told us why their school values of social justice and democracy underpinned his leadership actions and decisions. The head teachers were keen to 'grow' their own leaders, so recognised the importance of mentoring and role models. The Early Years practitioners described the importance of understanding other languages and cultures so that they could reach out to their learners and meet their individual needs better.

3. Challenges faced by practitioners in developing pedagogy through diversity and equity in the Early Years?

Some of the challenges identified by Early Years practitioners consisted of: getting help from other people such as parents, specialists and other members of the community (MCS7); spending time doing a little research into the needs of the diverse groups in my class (MonoCS7); and a lack of time for preparing visual resources, sign language (MCS8). Comments on some of the personal challenges in meeting the needs of diverse children centred on 'not knowing if what you are doing is right or not' (MonoCS4); 'wishing I could speak every language that is represented in my classroom (13 at last count)' (MCS6).

For the head teachers, some of the challenges they faced were: 'Multicultural schools have more opportunities to show they are promoting equality but this may not always be the case if we don't monitor our successes'. (Head teacher, multi-cultural school, 4). 'Mono-cultural schools are not promoting diversity and equity as their population is not diverse therefore they

may feel that they don't need to cater for anything else — this is a false view that we need to challenge at every stage'. (Head teacher, mono-cultural school, 2).

It is not surprising to see a range of needs and issues presented in these comments. This suggests that schools in our sample were at different stages of promoting their practice through the values of diversity and equity. Every member of the respondent we interviewed valued the importance in underpinning their practice or leadership actions and decisions through the issues of diversity and social justice. The emphasis however was on personalised, child-centred and holistic notion of curriculum provision by all the case studies. There were formal and informal structures and systems in place in the case studies that promoted the diversity and equity dimensions. Reaching out to parents was a priority for those schools who felt more explanation was needed about the values of diversity and equity.

Discussion of findings

The evidence presented examined how diversity and equity was promoted through the EYFS curriculum and what remained the potential challenges for practitioners. The results of the case studies analysis reveal an overall thrust to underpin practice in the EYFS through values based principles of diversity and equity in both the mono-cultural and multi-cultural schools. The main strategies found in the case studies were linked with deploying diverse staff (Lumby & Coleman, 2007), where available, to assist in the teaching, resource preparation and assessment of children. In the mono-cultural case studies, out-reach resourcing was the main strategy. Leadership in all schools was strong and very much founded on values-led (Gold in Coleman & Glover, 2010) and modelling good practice to community of learners.

These findings reinforce the findings of the numerous studies that have been conducted in the field of diversity and equity where diversity management was at the heart of good pedagogy (Coleman & Glover, 2010). In addition, these studies opened up the debate about diversity and equity in areas like the curriculum design, structures and systems (Norte, 2001); and people-relationships (Weiner, 2003). But to date, there are no detailed studies that map the link between EYFS with diversity and equity, although there are a few that look tangentially at theories on multilingual learning in Early Years settings rather than our focus (Issa & Hatt, 2013).

Implications for pedagogic development

Diversity and equity are part of the ideals of social justice and provide an impetus to overcome discriminatory behaviour (Coleman & Glover, 2010: 7) and stereotypical approaches to quality EYFS curriculum. Giving staff time for dialogue to discuss approaches to good pedagogy in promoting diversity and equity values was essential outcome of the research. The evidence shows that strong internal mentoring programme and peer group training and development were important strategies. But we need to be cautious as the business of

schooling has changed considerably as a result of accountability mandating a new (re)conceptualisation of the practitioner role in leading and managing for and with diversity (Lumby, 2010).

Conclusion

The most important contribution of the study is the reflective evidence showing that there are many innovative ways to implement diversity and equity ideals in the new EYFS curriculum from both types of settings. Development of critical consciousness (Friere, 1998) is only the first step change necessary to ensure that pedagogical approaches make a positive difference in the lives of all citizens (Fullan, 1999). Our evidence identifies how leaders and practitioners strive to make this difference through empathy, relationship building, interaction, and in the creation of mutual interest to encourage collaborative cultures with a commitment to the well-being of all. We require to look at pedagogical approaches through a cross-cultural 'lens' (Dimmock & Walker, 2002) and maybe through self-awareness, self-leadership and shared reflective review (Robins and Callan, 2010, pp. 23), know where and how to close the gap of inequality.

Acknowledgements:

The authors would like to thank all the staff in the sample schools for their valuable thoughts and comments. They would also like to thank their respective universities for their support.

References:

- Bassey, M. (2007) Case Studies in Briggs, A.R.J. and Coleman, M. (eds.) *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management*. London: Sage Publications. pp. 142-155.
- Dexter, L. (1970) *Elite and Specialized Interviews*. Evanston, IL: North Western University Press.
- Bell, L. and Stevenson, H. (2006) 'Citizenship and social justice: Developing education policy in multi-ethnic schools', in L. Bell and H. Stevenson (eds) *Education Policy: Process, Themes and Impact*. London: Routledge.
- Busher, H. and James, N. (2007) 'Ethics of research in education', in Briggs, A.R.J. and Coleman, M. (eds.) *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management*. London: Sage Publications. pp. 106-122.
- Coleman, M. & Glover, D. (2010) *Educational Leadership and Management: Developing insights and skills*. Maidenhead: Open University Press and McGraw-Hill Education.
- Curtis, A. (1998) *A curriculum for the pre-school child*. London: Routledge.
- Department for Education (DfE) (2011) *The Tickell Review – background*. London: DfE <http://www.education.gov.uk/tickellreview> (accessed February 2013).
- Department for Education (DfE) (2012) *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)*. London: DfE. <http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/e/eyfs%20statutory%20framework%20march%202012.pdf> (accessed January 2013).
- Dimmock, C. and Walker, A. (2002) 'School Leadership in Context – Societal and Organisational Cultures' in T. Bush and L. Bell (eds) *The Principles and Practice of Educational Management*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing. pp. 70-85.

- Fiske, S.T. and Lee, T.L. (2008) 'Stereotypes and prejudice create work-place discrimination', in A.P. Brief (ed.) *Diversity at Work*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Friere, P. (1998) *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Fullan, M. (1999) *Change Forces: The Sequel*. London: Falmer Press.
- Fullan, M. (2003) *The Moral Imperative of School Leadership*. London: Sage.
- Gosetti, P. and Rusch, E. (1995) 'Re-examining educational leadership: Challenging assumptions', in D. M. Dunlap and P.A. Schmuck (eds) *Women Leading in Education*. Albany, NY: State University of New York.
- Gold, A (2010) 'Leading with values' in Coleman, M. and Glover, D. (2010) *Educational Leadership and Management: Developing insights and skills*. Maidenhead: Open University Press and McGraw-Hill Education. pp. 23 – 39.
- Graham, L. (2007) 'Done in by discourse ... or the problem/s with labelling', in *Schools and diversity*. 2nd edn. M. Keefe and S. Carrington (eds), pp. 46–53. Frenchs Forest: Pearson.
- Issa, T. and Hatt, A. (2013) *Language, culture and identity in the early years*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Jehn, K.A., Greer, L.L. and Rupert, J. (2008) Diversity, conflict and their consequences, in A. P. Brief (ed.) *Diversity at Work*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lumby, J. and Coleman, M. (2007) *Leadership and Diversity: Challenging Theory and Practice in Education*. London: Sage.
- Lumby, J. (2010) 'Leadership for diversity and inclusion'. In *The Principles of Educational Leadership and Management*. 2nd edn. T. Bush, L. Bell, and D. Middlewood. London: Sage. pp. 145–57.
- Moore, A., George, R. and Halpin, D. (2002) 'The development role of the headteachers in English schools: management, leadership and pragmatism', *Educational Management and Administration*, 30(2): 175-88.
- Ng, R. (2003) 'Towards an integrative approach to equity in education', in *Pedagogies of difference: Rethinking education for social change*, ed. P. Trifonas, pp. 206–19. New York, NY: Routledge Falmer.
- Norte, E. (2001) "'Structures beneath the skin:' How school leaders use their power and authority to create institutional opportunities for developing positive inter-ethnic communities', in *Journal of Negro Education*, 68(4), pp. 466-485.
- Petriwskyj, A. (2010) 'Diversity and inclusion in the early years', in *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 14(2): 195-212. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13603110802504515>. (accessed 6th February 2013).
- Robins, A. and Callan, S. (2009) *Managing Early Years Settings*. London: Sage.
- Shields, C. M. (2009) 'Transformative Leadership: A Call for Difficult Dialogue and Courageous Action', in *Racialised Contexts, International Studies in Educational Administration*, 37(3), pp. 53-68.
- Weiner, E.J. (2003) 'Secretary Paulo Freire and the Democratization of Power: Toward a Theory of Transformative Leadership', in *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 35(1), pp. 89-106.

Peer Support for Technology-Enhanced Learning: developing a community of learners

Sarah Cousins & Ulrike Dunne, Faculty of Education and Sport, University of Bedfordshire

Introduction

The landscape of Higher Education is changing, and within it, the technologies that are to hand are new and rapidly evolving (Salmon, 2011). University lecturers are required to navigate new platforms and learn new systems in accordance with institutional practices. These new technical developments need to be swiftly applied to existing courses and aligned to meet the diverse needs of students and match individual pedagogical approaches. This study explores academics' resistance to change. The authors have met academics who express a sense of being overwhelmed by the pace of change. Some colleagues report that they apply new technologies more because it is a top-down requirement than through any conviction, or belief in their worth.

This paper sets out the aims, stages and outcomes of a Peer Support for Technology-Enhanced Learning project. It suggests that the process of adapting to change is significantly eased with the support of other people. As Sharpe and Oliver (2007) suggest, there are no simple solutions to match the full complexity of the task in hand. They emphasise the importance of 'peer processes' (p.124) that allow people to talk through, share and test out new approaches with each other. This project grew out of peer support arrangements between two colleagues, and expanded to incorporate a group of self-identified colleagues ready to engage in peer

support activities and move their practice forwards, together.

The authors put forward a pattern that may be applied by other departments and institutions for adapting to change. The spiral shape, they suggest, evokes a gentle, recursive motion, allows for off-piste explorations, has a force of its own, is cumulative, grows in strength, becomes more visible, is outward facing. Such a pattern, they propose, might support faculties to develop strategies for adapting to change in the digital age.

Digital beings

The authors of this piece did not grow up in a digital world, and have become accustomed to fast change in this respect throughout their adult lives. They are, as it were, programmed to move with change because they have learned that they must. They have experienced in their minds and bodies how digital technologies have affected their lives at every stage. New devices, programs and applications have altered the way they approach their work, connected them to wider professional communities, extended the modes through which they communicate with students and other academics, and helped them to articulate their evolving pedagogical approach at every stage. They have 'incorporated' (Bourdieu 1997, p.136) new technologies