

**Co-ordinating Subjects in the Primary School: perceptions of
Subject Leaders, their implementation of the role and the influence
of external factors.**

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of
Liverpool for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy by Linda Jane Fletcher.

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This work is original and has not been submitted previously in support of any degree, qualification or course.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Linda Jane Fletcher', enclosed within a large, horizontal oval shape. A long, thin horizontal line extends from the right side of the oval.

Linda Jane Fletcher

Co-ordinating Subjects in the Primary School: perceptions of Subject Leaders, their implementation of the role and the influence of external factors.

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Abstract:

The roots of Primary Education are found within broadly progressive ideologies. These philosophies have become subject to challenge with attempts to apply business management models to schools. Ideals of education for an economic role led to the development of the Education Reform Act (1988) which established a number of provisions, radically altering the management of schools. These requirements promoted greater school based management emphasising teachers' autonomy and the development of collaborative working patterns. Paradoxically this was within a framework that reduced schools control over the curriculum, and represented a considerable move in government policy and an alteration in the context of planning and implementation, thereby creating a tension.

A major thrust of re-organisation in primary schools has been to encourage them to deploy staff in order to make best use of available subject expertise. The introduction of a National Curriculum, more formalised inspection procedures and standard attainment tests have raised school accountability and the necessity of developing pupils subject knowledge to an ever greater extent. Consequently Subject Leaders have become a serious consideration central to the quest to effectively meet the needs of the National Curriculum. It is this apparent paradox between centralist prescription and devolved control with the imposition of business management styles on primary schools that makes the role of Subject Leader such a complex issue. This research explores the roles of Subject Leaders in the context of the tensions that exist between the traditional primary school teaching values and cultures, and the new managerial systems being imposed on them.

It is argued that the Subject Leadership role is influenced by three major factors. Firstly are factors external to the school such as legislative change and inspection reports. These act to shift school priorities dramatically. Legislation may also raise the importance of particular curriculum areas and act to undermine feelings of progress made in other subjects thus creating a hierarchy of subject responsibility. Secondly primary school management styles and structures are demonstrated to have a significant impact on the role. They are shown either to undermine or encourage Subject Leaders in playing an active role in the development of the curriculum. It is suggested that flat management styles are more successful as they are likely to value individual contributions. Thirdly factors are raised related to the Subject Leaders themselves showing clearly the importance they attach to communication and good relations with colleagues. In addition the culture of the school is shown to have a marked and interactive influence over all these factors Subject Leaders preferring to work in collaboration rather than seeing themselves as 'leading'. As a consequence it is argued that the language of leadership should be abandoned as encouraging division between colleagues and failing to capture the basic communal culture of primary education.

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Abbreviations

DES:	Department of Education and Science
DfEE:	Department for Education and Employment
ERA:	Education Reform Act
HMI:	Her Majesties Inspectorate
INSET:	In service training
LEA:	Local Education Authority
NCC:	National Curriculum Council
OFSTED:	Office for Standards in Education
SAT:	Standard Tests of Attainment
SCAA:	School Curriculum and Assessment Authority
TGAT:	Task Group of Assessment and Testing
TQM:	Total Quality Management
TTA:	Teacher Training Agency

Chapter One: The Context of Primary Education in the UK - a brief overview.

Introduction:

British primary schools have their own unique culture and as Cullingford (1997) pointed out British primary teachers have taken on a responsibility not only for the delivery of the curriculum but for the social, moral and emotional welfare of their pupils. Campbell (1996) described primary schools as institutions committed to generalist teaching where care and conscientiousness are encouraged. The ethos of primary schools is one that attempts to avoid friction, a necessity because of the close working conditions of teachers. It is for this reason that, as Southworth (1996) observed, interactions between teachers are more often conducted at a social level rather than in discussion about pedagogy. During the 1980's and 1990's pressures built up on teachers to take on an increasingly broad scope of activities challenging the generalist stance described above. For example as Campbell (1996) pointed out teachers were being asked to become subject specialists in order to meet a new emphasis on cognitive achievement and to adopt a more collaborative practice, discussing educational issues, approaches, research and theories. At the same time other pressures were building up that stressed market forces which as Nias (1999) argued, emphasised cost effectiveness and accountability. These changes were embodied in a series of Education Acts passed in the 1980's and early 1990's that meant schools becoming responsible for their own budget and having the ability to 'opt out' of Local Education Authority (LEA) control (Power and Whitty 1999). Further Power and Whitty (1999) pointed out that parents were freed to decide which school their children would attend. It was: -

...a market system of parental choice which elevates education as a private good...over education as a public good...

Hargreaves and Fullan (1998) p viii

These changes represented approaches that were to some extent in tension. Firstly and as Bell and Rhodes (1996) claimed, as the LEA's influence reduced so more

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managerial power and responsibility was placed with the staff in schools. This would suggest an increase in the autonomy of schools. Secondly, alongside these moves was an increase in the extent to which schools were held responsible. As Cullingford (1997) suggested, the primary school culture of openness and responsiveness towards pupils and parents, attracted not only attention but also criticism. Consequently the expectations placed on teachers by government and public opinion greatly increased (Gardner 1998). These increased expectations became formalised as a result of the imposition of a National Curriculum, pupil testing and increased school inspection. In the opinion of Hargreaves and Fullan (1998) drastic change had been inflicted on the teaching profession resulting in teachers having to comply with an exhaustive and intrusive National curriculum, address standards of competency developed by the government appointed Teacher Training Agency (TTA) and to submit to external inspection. As a consequence judgements are being made about schools through the published results of Standard Tests of Attainment (commonly referred to as SAT's - national tests which schools are required to conduct at particular points in their pupils' education). These are combined with the results of examinations and external inspections, thus encouraging competition between schools to attract pupils (and subsequently funds). As the Task Group on Assessment and Testing (TGAT-DES 1988) reported, assessment evidence can serve as a means of evaluating the work of a school or local authority. Waterhouse (1993) felt that the tension developing in primary education posed a threat to unity. Certainly primary schools are vulnerable to many seemingly contradictory pressures. As Nias (1999) pointed out: -

...the conditions under which practitioners work are at odds with both their belief in education as an interpersonal process and their willingness to take on fresh burdens.

Nias J (1999) p 80

In order to gain some insight into these complexities this chapter will briefly outline the history of English primary education, highlighting significant points of development and

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will thus provide a context within which the following chapters and debate, are set. The aims of this chapter are: -

- To outline the establishment of primary education.
- To consider subsequent developments within primary education.
- To establish the importance of the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The Establishment of Primary Education:

It was the Hadow Report (Board of Education 1931), which established a rationale for a distinct Primary phase of education. It built on an earlier report of 1926 to replace the existing Elementary Education. It contained recommendations on teaching, organisation, curriculum and staffing. This was within a philosophy encompassing learning through activity and experience, whilst acknowledging the need for acquiring knowledge and facts, (Richards, 1997a). The Hadow Report and the later 1944 Education Act represented the culmination of a move away from elitist classical humanist ideologies of education for the privileged few, towards a new reconstructionist ideal, of education to benefit the whole of society (Gardner 1998). Further Gardner (1998) argued the education system was regarded as a unified national system of education for the first time. The 1944 Education Act assumed an enormous political and social significance commanding cross-party support (Batteson 1999). These ideologies will be discussed in detail in the following chapter. As Carr and Hartnett (1996) suggested whilst educating people for work was important, it was education for social change which was stressed in this period. The war had engendered feelings of community and the 1940's brought with it post war ideals of a new "educative society" meritocracy being seen as a way of combating threats from movements such as fascism (Lawton 1983). According to Mathieson and Bernhaum (1991) the elementary education system had not been engaging pupils in this egalitarian learning process. Blenkin and Kelly (1987) understood elementary education as preparing the child for

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later life and primary education as a process valuable in its own right. Further they argued that the primary education curriculum was based on pupils experiences and the acquisition of knowledge for which the children themselves could see some significance. The 1944 Act provided a basis for education until its reformation in 1988 (Batteson 1999).

As part of the 1944 Education Act curriculum control was passed from central government to LEA's (Local Education Authorities) and governors of aided schools (Maclure, 1989). In reality control was left to heads and senior staff.

Even then the responsibility for the quality and content of teaching was, in practice, handed over to the heads and teachers of the respective schools. The curriculum was seen to be a professional matter, and thus to be left in the hands of those who had been trained to develop and to implement it.

Pring (1989) p 4

Whilst this was a period of considerable teacher autonomy there were some challenges to this. Gardner's (1998) research suggested that a challenge developed from the new relationships being built between teachers and parents and teachers and children. Post-war meritocratic ideals brought with them a belief that parents were justified in taking an interest in their childrens' education. This led to greater debate and scrutiny of education. Further Gardner (1998) argued this relationship impinged on teachers' freedom of action as central government could claim teacher recalcitrance to policy change was a betrayal of children and parents. This then led to the later legitimisation of a change in the relationship between teachers and the state, the state taking an increasingly central role. Following the 1944 Education Act, teaching was based on a set of dubious though common assumptions (Chitty 1993a). It was thought that educational outcomes could be measured in terms of IQ. According to Chitty (1993a), such arguments were used to justify the existence of the eleven plus, an exam which aimed to place eleven year olds in appropriate secondary education through the measurement of IQ (grammar, technical or secondary modern – though the technical

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school was never fully realised). Children could be divided into three groups, those who wanted to learn for its own sake, those gifted in arts or sciences and those who preferred practical and concrete knowledge. In this way it was expected that disadvantaged pupils would have an opportunity to achieve greater success and enter grammar school education, but as Eggleston (1990) argued, in reality the great weight of evidence shows educational disadvantage persisted. Further Eggleston (1990) asserted that there was little questioning of the desirability or appropriateness of an elite grammar school education. There were in addition factors, which acted to constrain the curriculum, such as the examination boards. They did, after all, set the objectives by which means students would pass or fail as they left school, (Pring, 1989). Moreover, Her Majesties Inspectorate's (HMI) reports and visits, parental demands and University entrance requirements all had some impact on curriculum development.

The 1944 Education Act had divided schools into a primary, secondary and further education sector, through which pupils would progress. The primary sector was subdivided between the infants (now Key Stage 1) and the juniors (now Key Stage 2). Pring (1989) argued that infant schools were based around five basic ideological criteria summarised below: -

- To develop abstract understanding through sensory experience.
- To develop personal and social abilities.
- To develop literacy and numeracy skills.
- Infant schools should develop an understanding of basic skills and concepts.
- To develop the creative skills that help interpret and communicate interpretations of the world.

The junior school was similarly child-centred. Pring (1989) further indicated the break between primary and secondary schools, usually at the age of eleven (apart from areas

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with a middle school system), enabled the primary sector to move away from the strong subject orientations of the past.

The development of Primary Education:

Carr and Hartnett (1996) argued that growing belief in democracy and egalitarianism meant that earlier, reconstructionist ideals of societal improvement through education, developed into progressive ideologies of education, which stressed the importance of individual development. These ideologies will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter. Democracy was inextricably linked to the need for an educated populace. Carr and Hartnett (1996) went on to argue that during the 1960's educational debate increased about the status of public schools and privilege. Moves were towards progressive and comprehensive education to deal with inequalities of class, race and gender. Blenkin and Kelly, (1987) pointed out that child centred progressive philosophies had developed a significant influence on all primary education, (though not all primary education, could be classed as "progressive").

Progressivism with its emphasis on the individual and the processes by which they learn, became viewed as characteristic of English primary education in the 1960's and 70's, (Blenkin and Kelly, 1987). A modified progressivism became an almost acceptable official view of primary education with the publication of the Plowden Report (CACE 1967). The report stressed the importance of meeting individual pupil's needs.

Whatever form of organisation is adopted, teachers will have to adapt their methods to individuals within a class or school. Only in this way can the needs of gifted and slow learning children and all those between the extremes be met.

Plowden: The Report, (1967) para. 1232

The Plowden Report also commented on the value of discovery through experience, "finding out' has proved to be better for children than 'being told'" para. 1233. However, Golby (1989) suggested that such models have a tendency towards chaos unless handled very skilfully. Allegations of softness, inefficiency and a lowering of standards

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were among the criticisms levelled at progressive practice (Cullingford 1997). In addition Golby (1989) argued that whilst an open and less judgmental approach than previous practice, it did little to directly challenge existing imbalances of class, race and gender, acting more as a gentle moderator between the teacher and the taught. An independent body, the Schools Council, established in 1964, was designed to review curricula, teaching methods and examinations. Funded by the Department of Education and Science (DES) and the LEA's it constituted a significant influence on curriculum development (Kirk 1989). Kirk added that the Schools Council recommended maintaining teacher control over the curriculum and developing curriculum diversity. However as curriculum renewal became associated with such organisations, the influence and power of managerialism grew. Handy and Aitken (1986) predicted, management "will become a more prominent feature of school life rather than a poor relation to teaching", (p 126). Further for Handy and Aitken (1986) opening up schools to market competition and self management may have the effect of teachers working more closely together to gain parental support, but equally it may divide schools and teachers as competitiveness rises. Stenhouse (1983) argued tension also grew between school-based curriculum development and centralist curriculum prescription. Kirk (1989) pointed out that by the early 1980's, the Schools Council, with its prevalence of teacher members, began to be regarded by central government as too political and giving teachers too much control over the curriculum. Consequently the Schools Council was replaced with the School Curriculum Development Committee, the members of which would be nominated by the Secretary of State. This shift in political ideology was demonstrated in the Black Papers (1969-75), albeit representing a more extreme view. The vehement attack on the egalitarian threat to educational standards expressed in these papers was initially treated as reactionary. However Carr and Hartnett (1996) argued that by the 1980's attitudes had altered enough for the threat to be taken much more seriously.

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Attacks on progressive education continued with sections of the Bullock Report (DES 1975) arguing that reading standards must be improved followed by a number of reports criticising "child-centred education". Amongst the recommendations made by the Bullock Report (1975) it was suggested that a specialist teacher in the school (and at LEA level) should support English language development in schools. This suggestion represents the first move away from the notion of the purely generalist primary teacher towards one of using or focussing on specific subject expertise in individual teachers. Although an HMI Primary Survey (DES 1978) did acknowledge that reading standards were improving, it also highlighted the fact the societal demands were likely to rise. Unease about child centred teaching methods were brought to the fore in a speech by the then Prime Minister James Callaghan in 1976, (Kirk 1989). This represented an unprecedented intervention in the curriculum by government. In this the Ruskin College Speech 1976 Callaghan talked of the need to raise standards and thereby legitimised the content of the curriculum as a matter for public debate. According to Kirk (1989) this speech encouraged accusations that schools had shoddy standards in reading, writing and arithmetic. Pring (1989) claimed there were arguments that children were ill prepared for the future on a psychological and personal basis and a perceived lack of discipline in schools was blamed for increasing violence and vandalism. Moon (1990) argued that this promoted debate about the structuring of the curriculum and a desire for more central control. Moreover Carr and Hartnett (1996) suggested that whole person development was replaced by education for an economic role, creating a new emphasis on the entrepreneur, enterprise and wealth creation. Links were made between the curriculum and its relevance to the advancing technological world of work (Hough 1991). The creation of a "good society" was condemned as dangerous utopianism. However the extent to which progressive methods had been adopted and therefore tested, is subject to some debate. Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI), (DES 1978) reported that only 5% of schools had wholeheartedly developed an exploratory

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approach to learning. Didactic teaching was by far more prevalent. Also Blenkin and Kelly (1987) argued that the ideals of Plowden were not practised everywhere.

For here, as in every other sphere of human activity, there is much variety and the gap between the ideal and the reality, between theory and practice and even between particular theories and practices is one that must be acknowledged.

Blenkin and Kelly (1987) p 9

The Ruskin College Speech of 1976 was significant as it represented a change in attitude about the justification for a government to interfere in educational issues (Kirk 1989). Increased interest was being taken over standards and the content and control of the curriculum. The national and educational press, the Department of Education and Science (DES) and various secretaries of state, entered the discussion, a period referred to as The Great Debate 1967-77 (Kirk 1989). Moreover Kirk pointed out that looking at the objectives and content of the curriculum was considered by government to be a step towards improving standards. Thus began a period of what Fullan (1991) described as, "intensification" with a gradual increase into the 1980's of state level influence, the government moving towards a greater involvement in: -

....definition of curriculum, mandated text books, standardized tests tightly aligned with curriculum, specification of teaching and administrative methods backed up by evaluation, and monitoring...

Fullan, (1991) p 7

For Carr and Hartnett (1996) by the 1980's political ideology was linking economic problems and moral decline with egalitarianism. Hough (1991) agreed that Britain's industrial decline led to links being drawn between the national economy and the education system.

By 1985 DES recommended that the primary curriculum should include nine areas of learning in addition to religious education, (DES, 1985). Maclure (1989) stated that the 1985 White Paper on *Better Schools*, heralded a time when curriculum policy was being considered at three levels. At the national level, the Secretary of State issued policy

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statements; at the local authority level, each authority was required to produce policy statements; at the school level, governors were required to produce a school policy. The 1986 Education Act strengthened the role of the governors in this process, increasing parental representation on the governing body. Maclure, (1989) made the point that there would be vast problems should government, LEA's and schools all pull in different directions. This concern further reinforced moves towards centralist control.

The 1988 Education Reform Act and its legacy:

The 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) established a number of provisions amongst which, several were significant for primary schools. The relevant provisions are summarised below (from Statham *et.al.* 1991): -

- It gave legal control of the curriculum to the Secretary of State, prescribing a new National Curriculum with set attainment targets for pupils at ages 7, 11, 14 and 16 years, which would be assessed.
- The National Curriculum Council (NCC) was set up to implement and evaluate the National Curriculum.
- Local Education Authorities (LEA's) were required to delegate financial management and the ability to appoint and dismiss staff, to school governing bodies.
- It enabled schools to opt out of LEA control and be given Grant Maintained Status (grants coming directly from central government).
- It established open enrolment so that parents could choose where to send their children to school, schools having to accept as many pupils as the buildings catered for.

As Kirk (1989) highlighted, several factors combined to provide the conditions in which the setting up of a National Curriculum could be achieved. The Conservative government had just been elected for a third term and were eager to make ever more

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radical reforms towards the transformation of the social order. The centralisation of control of the curriculum had the added advantage of reducing the power of LEA's significantly. This not only wrested authority from LEA's that were often in the control of other political parties, but it also sent out a strong signal to them to comply under threat of further reductions in their power. In addition Kirk (1989) argued that the National Curriculum provided a way to iron out variations in practice between schools. This increased their accountability as one school could then be measured against another and against a national standard. Therefore for Kirk (1989), the National Curriculum acted as a powerful constraint on teachers work. Whitty (1991) argued that the National curriculum provided a framework that held the autonomy of teachers in check, thereby causing a tension. Fullan (1991) also saw this tension. The movement Fullan (1991) described as "restructuring" was at philosophical and political odds with intensification (the increase in state level direction). Restructuring had promoted greater school based management emphasising teachers' autonomy and the development of collaborative working patterns (Fullan 1991). The resultant "tug of war" had produced combinations of both elements. Littledyke (1997) agreed that although collaborative and democratic approaches to curriculum development are encouraged, these processes are inhibited by over prescription and directive management. Teachers need autonomy to feel they are valued and to give them the flexibility to respond in innovative ways to enhance pupils' development (Littledyke 1997). Webb and Vulliamy (1996) argued that greater co-operation between teachers has been seen. They found evidence of this shown in such developments as joint planning and policy making, school based Inset (In Service Training) and an acceptance of the role of the curriculum co-ordinator (a role in which teachers were encouraged to take on an area of subject responsibility). However Webb and Vulliamy (1996) went on to claim that strong forces were working to undermine such developments. These forces included the pace and amount of change, the increased prominence of the Headteacher in leading and providing the vision for school

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development and the headteachers increased accountability to parents and governors together with the requirements for greater monitoring.

The implementation of the National Curriculum began with the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The foundation subjects (history, geography, technology, art, music and physical education) followed later. The formula used for developing the various curriculum areas was one of setting up working groups to report to the Secretary of State (Maclure, 1989). The Secretary of State would then draw up proposals based on this information, which were referred on to the National Curriculum Council (NCC). Next the NCC would consult with local authorities, teacher's bodies, governors representatives and other interested parties and report back to the Secretary of State, adding any other advice they felt necessary. The report was then published and the draft order drawn up. Maclure, (1989) pointed out that whilst this process was intended to work as a constraint on the Secretary of State's power, he was in a position to ignore any advice given as long as reasons were provided. Her Majesties Inspectorate (HMI) and officers of the NCC monitored progress towards the implementation of the National curriculum (Richards 1997b).

Extending quality education to all was an enormous task, which successive governments felt was expensive with only slow returns. Stenhouse (1983) pointed out that the answer they found was to emphasise accountability. The National Curriculum involved programmes of study against which attainment targets were set. Teachers were then required to combine their own assessments with standardised external tests (SAT's) to measure pupils' progress at ages 7,11,14 and 16. As Gipps (1993) suggested, teachers were to be encouraged to attend 'moderation' sessions to bring their individual assessments into line with a common standard. Whilst individual pupils' results were confidential, the results of the school as a whole were published. These

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results, published in the form of league tables, were designed to inform parents about a schools performance and would allow them to make an informed choice about which school their child would attend (Power and Whitty 1999). Consequently performance tables were about accountability rather than, for example, to provide a means for the diagnosis of schools in need of support, financial or otherwise.

...an emphasis on public accountability of teachers and schools through published assessment results has put teachers under increased pressure by an implied scrutiny and potential criticism of their performance via the results of their pupils.

Littleddyke (1997) p 244

In addition to the overhaul of curriculum control, ERA introduced a new level of school-based assessment. Gipps (1993) claimed that the concerns about educational standards included the range of curricula experience offered, the rigour of teaching basic skills and levels of expectation regarding pupil performance. Consequently in addition to the National Curriculum the school inspection framework was revised to look at the quality of teaching following up a low grade performance with further visits (Southworth 1996). This enabled government to develop an influence over pedagogy together with that of the organisation and management of schools. The DES report *Curriculum Organisation and Classroom Practice in Primary Schools* (1992) sought a re-appraisal of the organisation of teaching methods, staff deployment and curriculum. More formal inspection procedures followed with the establishment of the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) in 1992. OFSTED is a body of Inspectors set up to evaluate and set criteria for schools successes and failures. This stress on accountability, national standards and measuring a schools' success (or otherwise), falls into the behaviourist models of the reconstructionist movement, which will be discussed in the following chapter. As Golby (1989) stated process approaches were all but eliminated. For Horton (1990) these changes have often seemed to be

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overwhelming for teachers who gained little comfort from the knowledge that other countries were also making substantial reforms.

In 1993 the NCC (National Curriculum Council) advised the Secretary of State that the National Curriculum was too complex and over prescriptive. They recommended a rolling programme to review and reduce the content of each subject order (NCC 1993). Webb and Vulliamy (1996) argued that the process of National Curriculum revision was to achieve manageability and structural consistency between subjects. In addition SAT's, which were initially unwieldy and time consuming, were made shorter and standardised into paper and pencil exercises. Gipps (1990) claimed that they were now seen as more objective, reliable and cheaper (though they tested a narrower range of attainments). A revised version of the National Curriculum was introduced in 1995. As Webb and Vulliamy (1996) stated, the new orders kept the subject framework mostly intact (though information technology was made a separate subject). These shifts in emphasis had an effect both on the autonomy of teachers and the culture of the education system within which they worked. For Littleadyke (1997) post-1944 classroom teachers enjoyed a period of relative curricula freedom, accountable only to the Head. However this changed with the increase in central control brought about by ERA.

...in a new period of central control over the curriculum and increasingly over pedagogy, the erosion of professional autonomy has been perceptible...

Gardner (1998) p 38

So in order for change to take place on a wide scale it is necessary to change the approach of individual teachers.

Schools are complex social systems that, despite the most frantic legislation, do not change overnight.....The people most affected by change, by the mass of legislation and the mountains of documentation, are the teachers themselves. The most significant shifts of emphasis are in the role of the primary school teachers.....

Cullingford (1997) p 9

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Thus moves toward greater accountability gave way to a dramatic increase in central government control.

Conclusion:

Education has been subject to far reaching reforms since the Education Act of 1944 (Batteson 1999). It was this Act together with the influence of the Hadow Report, which heralded the beginning of a distinct phase of primary education as part of the expansion in social provision (Board of Education 1931). These reforms were largely inspired by the communality that war had engendered (Batteson 1999). The 1944 Education Act passed curriculum control to Local Education Authorities through which teachers and Headteachers gained control (Pring 1989). Further Pring (1989) argued that primary schools left behind the strong subject orientations of the past. Progressive ideologies that stressed the importance of the development of the individual became a characteristic of primary schooling (Blenkin and Kelly 1987). In the late 1960's and early 1970's curriculum emphasis was very much on pupil autonomy supported by reports such as Plowden (CACE 1967), though Galton *et al.* (1980) argued that progressive teaching was rarely put into practice. However as Kirk (1989) claimed belief in the egalitarian society and progressive teaching principles came under fire and Callaghans' Ruskin College Speech in 1976 brought such concerns into the public arena. This opened debate on the structuring of the curriculum and encouraged moves toward centralist curriculum control (Moon 1990). Consequently progressive ideologies gave way to a much greater emphasis on control and accountability. Green (1983) described the 70's as a period where, in opposition to the widely practised autonomy model of education, there was a growing feeling that balance needed to be restored. The Curriculum had become a list of subjects with their cognitive content. This reflected a move away from a view of an autonomy led curriculum to a knowledge led curriculum.

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These moves culminated in the 1988 Education Reform Act, which introduced a National Curriculum. This not only formalised what was to be taught but also the procedures for inspecting schools. For Gardner (1998) this accountability stems from the changes in 1944, which attached a greater importance to serving the interests of pupils and parents. Although the introduction of a National Curriculum was extremely significant, it was only one component of the 1988 Education Reform Act which had profound effects. Alongside the prescription of the curriculum there were moves toward greater autonomy, through the increased powers of school governors and open enrolment. These contradictory pressures for the centralisation of control over policy and direction, together with pressures for the decentralisation to local control of implementation and resource management, led to tensions which have made it difficult to make a real difference to the quality of schooling (Hopkins and Lagerweij 1996). The complexity of educational management had increased rapidly from the 1980's and into the 1990's with autonomy, accountability and market forces all being thrust at schools, (Bullock *et.al.* 1995). Education had been placed "under the microscope" and was likely to be so for some time to come.

The following three chapters will, through a review of current literature, look in detail at these changes in the curriculum and the ideologies underlying them, the culture and management of schools and the role of the Subject Leader, who holds a curriculum responsibility. Set against the context of the development of Primary Education these chapters intend to give a thorough background and insight into the complexity of this research area. From such a literature review the position of the Subject Leader can be understood in respect of the developments in the role and the pressures being brought to bear on schools. These pressures include the external forces of legislation, curricula requirements and accountability and the internal forces of school management systems

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and school cultures. It is within this complex and changing landscape that teachers are asked to offer their colleagues subject leadership.

Chapter Two: The Nature of the Primary Curriculum

Introduction:

The curriculum in Primary Schools has, in recent years, come under increasing pressure to change (Hargreaves and Fullan 1998). Further Hargreaves and Fullan (1998) argue that these quite dramatic shifts have been inflicted on the teaching profession rather than developed within it. A major part of this has been the imposition of a centrally prescribed National Curriculum which represented a considerable move in government policy and an alteration in the context of planning and implementing the curriculum (Webb and Vulliamy 1996). It would be simplistic to assume that the provision of a list of subject knowledge which children must be taught could fully explain the remarkable moves that have been observed. The shift, it seems, has involved an alteration in the underpinning curriculum model on which teaching in primary schools rests. As Hunter (1997) stated the vehicle used for this has been the market. In order to understand how this change in emphasis has come about, in addition to what it means in terms of a philosophical and structural change in primary school education, it is necessary to look at the background to primary curriculum development in some detail. Further as Cullingford (1997) argued it is necessary to consider the factors which influence, determine and constrain the way in which curriculum aims are translated into practice. As Campbell suggested in 1985, the reality of practice means that policy guidelines are not always practicable or rigidly followed.

For Kelly (1980) education can never be value neutral. The ideological constraints placed on curriculum planning are as important as any other constraints, more so if they are difficult to identify or understand. The National Curriculum is heavily based within behaviourist traditions with a stress on measurable outcomes, (though Meighan 1986 questioned whether outcomes were truly measurable). It is forcing changes on primary

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teachers who have to re-think their approaches and structures. As Golby (1989) pointed out: -

The curriculum is what school is for. Whatever other functions and purposes the school may serve, what it sets out to teach and what it does teach lies at the heart of its existence.

Golby (1989) p 29

Goodson (1990) argued that an emphasis on distinct subject knowledge at an earlier age means that primary school teachers have to expand their subject specialist knowledge. It is also acknowledged that individual teachers cannot expect to teach the whole curriculum to the standards expected by the National Curriculum without specialist help. One important outcome of this emphasis has been the increased focus on Subject Leaders. This chapter aims to: -

- Discuss the notion of curriculum and what is meant by it.
- Examine major influential ideologies involved with curriculum development.
- Review the National Curriculum and how it is being developed in primary schools.
- Consider the impacts and consequences of the National Curriculum.
- Identify issues in relation to the role of Subject Leader.

The Concept of Curriculum:

The curriculum is the medium through which education in schools is conducted (Lofthouse 1990). At its basis it is developed in order to teach people to survive in society more successfully. Dearden (1968) claimed that in developing learning and understanding, structures and experiences are acquired over time, aided by someone who already has this understanding. For example, Hirst (1974) believed that essentially a curriculum must have objectives, which lead to an intended outcome, that can be planned for. As a consequence consideration must be given to the content of the knowledge to be taught, academic or social, and to the methods by which this content will be transmitted. A lack of objectives would therefore render a curriculum invalid.

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If curriculum planning is a matter of planning means to specified ends, and an educational curriculum therefore serves educational ends, the clearer we are about those ends and their nature the more adequate the planning can be.

Hirst (1974) p 16

Stenhouse (1983) saw education rather, as the transmission of culture, the teacher transmitting values that perpetuate social ideals. Kelly (1980) argued that the particular ideologies held will affect the choices made when planning a curriculum. In addition Blenkin and Kelly (1987) believed that a curriculum must be flexible enough to provide different kinds of educational diet. Further, people come to education from a variety of background experience and with differing pre-dispositions that need to be catered for.

Pring (1989) argued that a curriculum has to view education as a continuum through all educational stages, and aspects. There are several forms of curriculum. Sometimes planning is stressed and sometimes spontaneity (Meighan 1986). Further Meighan suggested that a curriculum can be viewed in terms of developing long or short-term aims, it could be imposed, or be the result of negotiation. A curriculum can also be divided between the formal and the hidden curriculum. Reid *et al.* (1989) asserted that the formal curriculum is that which involves the stated aims of a given area of study whereas the hidden curriculum involves the values and opinions which underpin that study and which can also be transmitted to pupils. Another view of the hidden curriculum is that it can involve everything that is learned in addition to the official curriculum (Meighan 1986). Consequently as Campbell (1985) stated there is a distinction between learning as part of a planned curriculum and learning which is accidental or unplanned. Meighan (1986) argued that the consequence of a hidden curriculum might be that outcomes differ to those intended or expected. However as awareness about the hidden curriculum has grown, values such as those that are social and moral are transmitted more explicitly, leading to a shift towards a more open control over these messages. Moreover for Morrison and Ridley (1989) the curriculum

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encompasses not only the formal programme of what is taught in schools, but the informal programme of extra-curricular activities and those cultural aspects involved in promoting a school ethos.

The notion of what is meant by a curriculum may vary from a narrow view involving the content of what is taught, to a wider concept encompassing the how and why of teaching (Morrison and Ridley 1989). Lawton (1983) stated that as the content of the curriculum involves making a selection from culture, it is consequently dependent on the underlying philosophies, or values and ideals, of the culture within which it is developed.

Most contemporary theorists draw attention to the idea that the curriculum incorporates, or should incorporate, knowledge (including values, skills and attitudes) considered to have high value by society.

Campbell (1985) p 15

Whilst planning can happen without those active in the planning process being fully aware of their own pre-conceived curriculum values (whether they be teachers, local government officials or central government departments) the choices made in the process of planning will betray the set of values or theories they hold. Lawton (1983) stated that in the 1950's curriculum developers who were revising science curricula did so from a stated position of being unbiased, but inevitably their values were being brought to play in the decision making process. If the curriculum does indeed have an inevitable value basis, curriculum planners need to expose these values in order to understand fully what underpins and directs the curriculum in what it tries to achieve (Morrison and Ridley 1989). Meighan (1986) highlighted several factors that might influence curriculum development, summarised below: -

- The content and structure of knowledge which is judged important and worthwhile. This includes the status afforded to particular forms of knowledge and the breadth of information presented.

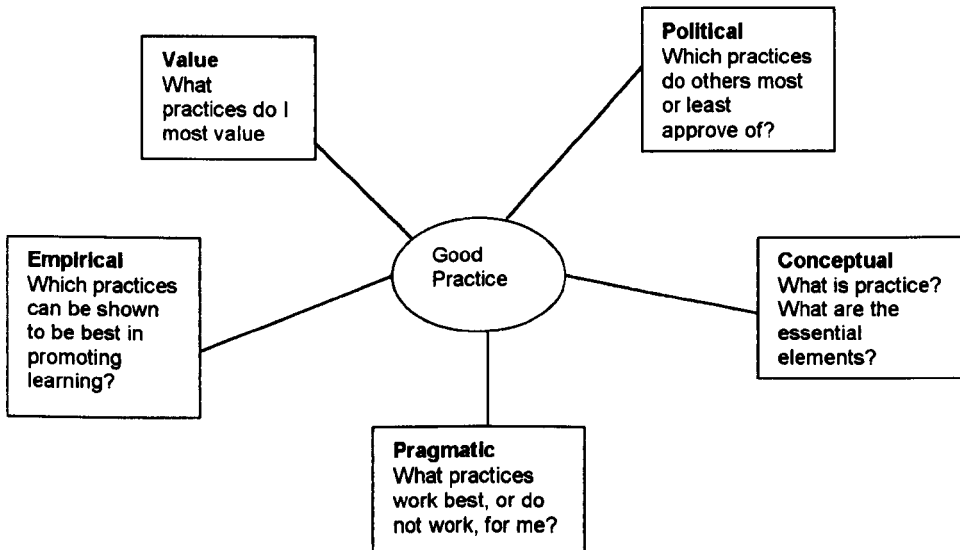
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- The theory of learning adopted and perceptions of the learners role. For example, should learning be competitive; should pupils be able to engage in discussion with the teacher; and how are pupils enabled to make use of the knowledge acquired?
- The theory of teaching and the role of the teacher. For example, how expert are the teachers and on what principles do they operate?
- Theories about what is considered appropriate resourcing for learning in terms of both the environment and ease of access to resources.
- The theories about the organisation of learning situations. Whose responsibility is it, how are groups organised and what are the criteria for timetabling?
- The theory of assessment adopted and by what methods pupils are considered to have learned? For example, whether through continuous, formative or summative assessment, or criterion referenced exams such as Standard Tests of Attainment (SAT's)? This factor also involves theories about the purpose of assessment.
- Consideration of the aims and objectives of education. What view of society are pupils being prepared for?
- The ideas held about the location of education. Does learning happen in the classroom or perhaps on the street?

In addition teachers themselves will have views and be influenced in a way that effects their delivery of the curriculum. This is demonstrated in a model (figure 2.1 below) designed by Alexander (1992). As Qualter (1999) pointed out, Alexander's model indicates that teachers are likely to be influenced not only by their own beliefs but also by outside opinion. Consequently changes in political, educational and curricular thinking will in all probability effect primary practice. Therefore the curriculum has a complex mix of influences upon it. Not only is judgement involved about setting aims and developing what to teach, but it involves theories about how people learn, the place of the teacher in this process, the resourcing made available, how learning is organised

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Figure 2.1



Alexander (1992, p.186). The model shows the factors that influence primary teacher's practice.

and assessed as having taken place plus where it should happen. All these philosophical forces combine in various ways to affect the development and direction the curriculum will take (Meighan 1986).

Behind any educational enterprise there is an ideological or philosophical force or forces pushing it forward, which provide a context or set of parameters in which to consider that form of schooling.

Reid *et al.* (1989) p 106

These ideological components vary in emphasis according to the particular ideological stance adopted, some being knowledge driven, others driven by the individual learner and some society driven (Morrison and Ridley 1989). Consequently educational ideology and policy will change in relation to broad and complex socio-cultural movements (Skilbeck 1989). For example, the political will and climate, birth and death rates, working pattern's, family structures and the economy, to name but a few, have all had an impact on educational policy, thus leaving schools to cope with a vast array of issues. In this way the curriculum must draw together a large number of legitimate interests and needs and accommodate as many of them as possible (Golby 1989).

Ideologies involved with curriculum development:

The complexities of ideological and political forces over the curriculum can be seen throughout curriculum development, different perspectives coming to the fore at different times. Following is a brief introduction to three major ideologies underpinning the curriculum development of British primary education. These demonstrate standpoints which can still be recognised and show the build up and creation of the current educational landscape, within which great importance is placed on subject knowledge and skills.

Classical Humanism:

Carr and Hartnett (1996) asserted that in the eighteenth century European societies were based on hierarchies which did not encourage the lower orders to think for themselves. Social relationships preserving the power and privileges of the landed aristocracy continued into the nineteenth century and as the educational system became established in Britain, it reflected the class divisions with secondary education remaining the preserve of the middle and upper classes. Examination systems acted as a filtering device, allowing only those with appropriate academic and intellectual skills to reach stages of increasingly valuable knowledge. Stenhouse (1983) claimed that this view has led to a private education system of privilege to educate for leadership. Carr and Hartnett (1996) pointed out that teachers in elite schools were usually products of an Oxford or Cambridge University education and that this in turn influenced the curriculum they offered in such schools. This curriculum included religion, the classics, canonical texts and team games. The Clarendon Report of 1864, looking at education in public schools argued that "national character" and leadership, discipline, freedom and order are among the qualities shown by the boys who experience such privileged education. The central tenet of such education was to develop the character rather than the intellect (Carr and Hartnett 1996). As Bantock (1980) had argued, a truly liberal

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education should involve effort without immediate gain. Further, the elitist education of public schools had its basis in liberal values, offering freedom from vocational obligation aiming instead for educational breadth (Bantock 1980). However (Morrison and Ridley 1989) a truly "liberal" humanist culture would open this high culture to all.

Bantock (1980) believed an increased demand for specialism had made true "liberalisation" more difficult to achieve. Nevertheless the language of democracy has made it less acceptable to support such an obviously privileged education system and as Lawton (1983) indicated this ideological stance runs directly counter to purported current attitudes about equality and social justice. Nevertheless Stenhouse (1983) thought that such ideologies left behind a legacy demonstrated by the existence of two educational systems in place in England that of the private and that of the public sector.

Progressivism:

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was a philosopher of the Enlightenment period, a movement which believed the existing social order was unjust and argued in favour of the development of democracy enabling people to satisfy their aspirations and needs. In Rousseau's book *Emile* (1762) he articulated some of the major features that later formed the basis of progressive educational theories. These ideas can be very briefly summarised as a belief that education is valid for its own sake as well as for future developments. By the twentieth century Carr and Hartnett (1996) believed that the basis of educational segregation had changed. No longer based on class and social exclusion pupils were now segregated on a meritocratic basis each pupil being judged on their merit or individual worth. These changes represented a shift in emphasis towards more egalitarian and progressive ideals highlighted in the Plowden Report (CACE 1967). Eisner (1969) argued that this encompassed two types of educational objective, the instructional and the expressive. Instructional objectives are part of a predictive model

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where objectives are formulated and activities selected, which enable children to develop a specific behaviour. In contrast expressive objectives are ones in which both teacher and pupil can explore, with no pre-conceived ideas about the outcome of that experience. It is an evocative rather than pre-determined experience in which issues of interest or importance to the pupil can be explored. For Eisner (1969) it was the expressive objective that was more likely to provide a basis for sophisticated intellectual work and which provided the emphasis in progressive thought. However it is a mix of these objectives which is advocated by progressive ideologies as: -

Instructional objectives emphasize the acquisition of the known; while expressive objectives its elaboration, modification, and, at times, the production of the utterly new.

Eisner (1969) p 17

Consequently learning can then be developed through constructive play in an educational environment. Progressive theories allowed space for free expression and a flexibility of response in non-interventionist conditions within which a child can learn through its own experience (Blenkin and Kelly 1987). The teacher then acts as a guide in the growth of knowledge and understanding. Therefore as Blyth (1984) stated, such ideologists are as interested in the creative process of learning as the outcome given their emphasis on the individual learner. Blenkin and Kelly (1987) suggested that the value placed on particular forms of knowledge is influenced by current ideological stances. Moreover the educational experiences of pupils promote particular processes of development. Education should consequently be viewed as a negotiation between curricular provision and the processes of development. Stenhouse (1975) used the language of "educational encounters". Further he stated that: -

Education as induction into knowledge is successful to the extent that it makes the behavioural outcomes of the students unpredictable.

Stenhouse (1975) p 82

Therefore as Golby (1989) argued, planning the curriculum involves providing opportunities for learning and for Kelly (1981) the curriculum is planned on the basis of

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the development needs and requirements of the child, consequently the curriculum is seen as unified.

As was highlighted in the previous chapter arguments against progressive ideologies grew in the late 1960's and into the 1970's. Morrison and Ridley (1989) pointed out that progressive attitudes were "dangerously loose". Bertrand Russell is reported to have observed much to his regret, that children left to their own devices became "barbarians"¹. As Lawton (1983) believed at its extreme this approach could be viewed as a curriculum derived on the basis of pupil whims, leading to a situation where social order gives way to freedom. The critics of progressivism could be said to have misunderstood and even misrepresented the philosophy. Moon (1990) thought that the spread of these ideas had been limited and the curriculum continued to reflect subject traditions. It is phrases taken out of context that have implied the teacher's abdication of responsibility. In reality there was recognition in both the Plowden Report (CACE 1967) and progressivism in general, that some teaching by prescription, was necessary and that consolidation and reinforcement were vital (Richards 1997b). Moreover despite criticisms progressive approaches did serve to show the advantages of allowing some choice to children and for Morrison and Ridley (1989) discovery, problem solving and experiment are valuable planning tools derived from progressive ideals.

Reconstructionism:

This ideology encompasses ideals about improving society through education. Blyth (1984) characterised reconstructionist ideology as having two alternative areas of emphasis. One concentrates on economic need such as the production of a skilled

¹ This as a result of running the Beacon Hill School, shown as part of the series, *Reputations* BBC Television June 1997.

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workforce, whilst the other emphasises views of education as a force for changing society encompassing an ideal of what "should be". This latter view was promoted in the post-war period as there was a perceived need to change and improve society. As Morrison and Ridley (1989) argued in order to reconstruct society there is a need for an educated populace. Such reconstructionist ideologies led to the development of behaviourist models of education. Lawton (1983) pointed out that models based on this approach always look at the outcomes of educational encounters in terms of measurable changes in student behaviour, these changes being open to pre-specification (this is similar to Eisner's instructional objectives in which specific outcomes are achieved through planned activities). The curriculum is viewed as a preparation for the specific activities of life. Tyler (1950), in an early attempt to identify a procedure for formulating behavioural objectives, developed a curriculum model set around four stages: -

1. Developing the educational *Objectives*.
2. Working out the *Content* in terms of educational experiences necessary to fulfil the objectives.
3. This was followed by the *Organisation* of these experiences in terms of teaching.
4. Finally there is an *Evaluation* stage to ascertain whether the objectives were met.

As Reid *et al.* (1989) state the simplicity of this approach is appealing therefore it has been widely adopted and applied to curriculum and lesson planning. However there is no explanation as to where to draw the objectives from. Even with the addition of a needs assessment stage to identify issues and therefore develop and clarify new objectives, Reid *et al.*, (1989) believe the problem still remains. Eisner (1969) had doubts about such high-level specification of objectives. Firstly they overestimate the degree to which outcomes are predictable. Secondly, all subject matters are regarded as warranting the same degree of specificity. Thirdly, making judgements and the

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application of a standard often get confused. Lastly, formulation of objectives comes first in curriculum development rather than the philosophy (Eisner 1969). Another aspect of the model, which has caused concern, is the evaluation stage. It implies that success can only be considered if some observable behavioural change has taken place. For Reid *et al.* (1989) in order to accurately judge this there would need to be a series of test stages. The initial stage to ascertain where pupils starting point was, then to ensure the curriculum and teaching methods met the objectives and finally to check what pupils had learned after the process. Reid *et al.* (1989) further argued that rarely have all these testing procedures been followed, nor are the objectives clearly defined. Nevertheless as the previous chapter on the context of primary education suggests, current trends are very much in this direction. Eisner (1969) pointed out that a danger of an education based on observable change in behaviour is that it makes the development of abstract thought unnecessary.

Reid *et al.* (1989) also made several criticisms of behavioural models.

- Firstly the nature of knowledge is trivialised to a “parrot-like” recitation of facts, the deeper meaning of a subject being lost. Consequently it suits only particular forms of knowledge.
- The predictability of the set of outcomes may suit some subjects, but narrows the more creative subject areas.
- Patterns of teaching and learning are more spasmodic and random than behavioural models suggest.
- The quality gained in performance is questionable though it may improve the clarity of the educational programme.
- Finally no questions are asked by this model about the justification for what is taught and why.

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This led Reid *et.al.* (1989) to suggest giving this model a more flexible and reflective basis where, through a process of review, the curriculum is adapted and adjusted to suit needs. However Stenhouse (1975) argued that behaviourist models assume people are like products on an assembly line and that life can be reduced to specific sets of components. There is little room for an individual response. Golby, (1989) was concerned that the aims and objectives of behaviourist programmes might be accepted without question. Additionally Golby (1989) stated that behaviourist models are based on the belief that teachers should mould learners into a pre-determined shape. This therefore poses the danger that the objectives of the curriculum become more important than the subject matter. Reconstructionist ideology requires someone to set themselves up as "knowing best" thereby relying on centralist, even indoctrinal policies. For Morrison and Ridley (1989) it also lays social reconstruction at the doors of education and it can be questioned as to what extent formal education alone is, or can ever be, the answer. It is interesting that despite such a climate of criticism, the educational models of the 1990's have a strong behaviourist element, a situation that will be discussed later in this chapter.

The National Curriculum and its development in schools:

In 1979, documents from Her Majesties Inspectorate (HMI) began to suggest that the teacher's subject expertise was important to raising standards (Goodson 1990). A subject basis for curriculum has long been popular and dates back to classical humanist ideologies. As Moon (1990) claimed, the Newcastle Report of 1861 and the revised code in 1862 laid stress on basic subjects that would be related to age in programmes of study. In addition the Clarendon Commission of 1864 advocated the inclusion of mathematics, modern languages and the natural sciences with the study of the classics. Leading Black Paper writers had argued that each subject has its' own intrinsic merit (Galton 1995). Further it was argued that traditional teaching, using a subject emphasis

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was more successful. Galton (1995) questioned this argument though he acknowledged that there is some correlation between effectiveness and traditional methods where effectiveness is judged purely on the basis of standardised language and maths tests. However he went on to argue that teaching methods and how these are related to success were more significant. Dearden (1968) stated that each discipline has a structure within it which determines the way knowledge evolves or is produced in that area of learning. Curricula could therefore be formulated on the basis of the same methods the discipline makes use of. Moreover Dearden (1968) argued that subjects should be presented in such a way that they are made simple or straightforward enough so that anyone can come to understand them. So knowledge is presented in its simplest form in the primary school and becomes gradually more sophisticated and complex as the learner progresses through education.

Primary education has its roots within broadly progressive ideologies where generalist class teaching and an emphasis on "finding out" has been the norm (Blenkin and Kelly 1987). As challenges to progressive ideologies increased a new era of reconstructionism began. Goodson (1990) argued that the National Curriculum initiative shows remarkable historical continuity with the Regulations of 1904 and it is therefore not quite the revolution it has been reported to be. However in contrast to the post war period that emphasised education as a force for changing society, stress was now placed on the importance of education for a thriving economy. According to Carr and Hartnett (1996) education was expected to contribute to economic development, therefore marketable skills and vocationally relevant subjects gained higher status than critical evaluative skills.

As discussed in the previous chapter the National Curriculum prescribed what was to be taught in schools along with set attainment targets which pupils should reach at

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particular ages. The National Curriculum was intended to iron out inconsistencies in curriculum practice and alleviate variation in the quality of education schools provide (DES 1992). Graham (1993) argued that the entire curriculum has been preserved and enhanced, countering fears that only the subjects that are examined would survive. However Moon (1990) argued that the National Curriculum has combined heavy subject prescription with testing, thus creating a proposal that many perceive as worrying and forceful. Sullivan as long ago as 1969 looked at objectives based evaluation and decided that two conditions were essential if teachers were to use pre-specified objectives for evaluation and review. Firstly, the procedures must be simplified without too many extra demands being made on teacher time. Consequently the use of prepared instructional programmes (such as a national curriculum?), would reduce the demands on the teacher (Sullivan 1969). This implies teaching could be turned into a technical exercise where teachers are malleable and act purely to deliver the prescribed curriculum. Secondly training and practice in the use of these procedures should be provided for teachers. This training should be regularly re-enforced (Sullivan 1969). Barber (1993) asserted that the National Curriculum was introduced in haste and lacked a period of consultation with teachers. Further he claimed that there was also lack of resources to support it. It was a curriculum provided on the cheap (Graham 1993). It was also a severe blow to the professionalism of teachers and teaching. In response to the National Curriculum the right wing think tank, the Institute of Economic Affairs (1989) argued that market control and flexibility should be preserved. They stressed that uniformity between schools could be damaging, reducing the standards of the best schools and their freedoms to set higher standards. The National Curriculum would not, in their view, stop "dangerous nonsense" being taught (such as peace studies). A curriculum which is likely to be set in stone for some years, they argued, would not have the flexibility of response to the ever higher standards of skill and knowledge, being demanded in the outside world. The Institute of Economic Affairs (1989) further argued

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that teachers are and should be treated as professionals. This view indicates a persistence of classical humanist ideologies.

Weston (1994) claimed that before 1988 schools had a view of the curriculum as an integrated whole, each subject related to another and to social and moral values. The Education Reform Act (1988) changed this. This led Weston (1994) to argue strongly in favour of viewing the National Curriculum as a coherent whole an aspect often lost behind issues of resourcing and accountability. Moreover Weston (1994) recommended a strategy whereby school development planning should ensure cross-curricula design and give consideration to the development needs of all. However, Stannard (1995) viewed the National Curriculum as a valuable tool for drawing together the varied parts of the curriculum. The Department of Education and Science (DES 1989) stated that it is a curriculum based on the provision of moral, spiritual, cultural, mental and physical development, together with preparation for the opportunities, experiences and responsibilities of adult life. Nevertheless for Stannard (1995) this process has been hampered by the absence of a clear rationale for managing the curriculum, the piecemeal introduction of subject orders and the amount of work schools are expected to cover. The National Curriculum was presented to teachers as here to stay and they therefore went about its implementation yet it has been subject to perpetual modifications and alterations. Consequently teachers have been uncertain which version to implement or whether to wait for the next adaptation (Whitaker 1997).

Despite all of these issues the National Curriculum has been implemented and is in action, due to the support of several bodies (Barber 1993). Barber argued that these bodies consisted of firstly the LEA's, despite threats to their future existence. Secondly they involved the quango set up by government, the National Curriculum Council (NCC) who acted professionally and gained the respect of teachers. Finally support came from

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the skill and professionalism of the teachers themselves, despite constant challenges to their competency. Nevertheless the National Curriculum has not gone un-challenged.

The impacts and consequences of the National Curriculum:

Campbell (1994) suggested that in 1993 government agency reports were forced to acknowledge that the statutory curriculum was undeliverable for three reasons: -

- Unrealistic demands are made of teachers in terms of the range and level of subject knowledge, pedagogical skill and techniques necessary for reliable assessment, expected.
- Primary schools have a less favourable teaching ratio than the secondary sector, despite staffing needs being comparable.
- There is a mismatch between idealistic time allocation of the National Curriculum and the reality of fitting everything on to the timetable.

Nias *et al.* (1992) as part of research into curriculum development in five schools, found staff overloaded with work which distracted attention and energy from the curriculum. This could be alleviated by staff enthusiasm and motivation, which was helped, through attending courses. There were however several issues for Nias *et al.* (1992), which affected the development of whole school curriculum: -

1. The extent to which institutional values were shared such as a pressure to work together. These values were influenced by the headteacher.
2. The organisational structures, in particular the formal ones and whether they facilitated interaction.
3. The resources available in terms of time, money and people.
4. The formal and informal leadership such as a clear division of responsibility or parental help in setting something up.

These findings are in direct opposition to those reconstructionist values supporting a technical curriculum that reduces the teacher's ability to become involved in what is

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taught. According to Chitty (1993b) Dearing has also argued that the curriculum was overloaded and that testing should be reduced as it took up too much time. Barber (1993) believed that despite the 1992 reforms in assessment and testing, teachers were still concerned about the consequences to pupil education of labelling them and their schools. But for Waterhouse (1993) one positive issue is that the National Curriculum provided a structured framework, which allows for the planning and reporting of pupils' progress. There have been two features of the elementary education system that were preserved throughout many of these changes. DES (1992) pointed out that the concentration on developing basic reading, writing and mathematical skills (though through the reduction of the curriculum) and the class teacher system, had proved a cheap and efficient method of delivering the curriculum. Also research by Plewis (1996), of 22 inner London schools, suggests that the National Curriculum had indeed, as intended, led to a greater uniformity across schools and year groups (this does not however apply within the individual class as there is still a wide range of pupils' ability). Further Plewis (1996) asserted that this is supported by evidence showing a decrease in variation of curriculum coverage in the year two age group and an increase in the influence of pupil attainment effecting curriculum coverage, this also promoted a more consistent approach between teachers. Stannard (1995) believed curriculum management structures should combine curricula breadth, balance, progression and integration. These aspects can be developed through the process of planning and using schemes of work. Nevertheless there is a danger that the gap between the least and most effective schools is widening (MacGilchrist 1993). Galton (1995) pointed out that middle class parents are increasingly moving into leafy suburban areas in order to have their children educated in schools which are well resourced and have good results. In addition some schools have found the assessment arrangements difficult to manage alongside the many other innovations. At the same time MacGilchrist (1993) pointed out that schools are relentlessly undermined in the media. As a consequence the National

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Curriculum has led to a culture of resistance, greater professional discussion and a desire not to “be beaten” amongst teachers.

Lawson (1979) had noted that it was also the case that in many areas, the curriculum works at odds with the stated aims of the school. Hargreaves and Fullan (1998) point to cumulative research that has shown teachers and schools may resist the worst aspects of reform. Moreover they actually turn these around to serve their own purposes, integrating the more positive aspects into their own practices and improvements.

...it is one thing to produce a curriculum blueprint on paper but another to ensure the implementation of that blueprint in a wide variety of school contexts.

Galton (1995) p 2

Galton (1995) has argued that the imposition of the National Curriculum and testing processes has reduced teachers to the role of technician, rather than professional educators in a highly complex environment. Teachers with little choice but to carry out the dictates of others, become de-professionalised (Schon 1983). However Galton (1995) further believed there is a resistance to making change amongst teachers when their existing practices are apparently working, especially if they do not feel they understand or were consulted about such change. As Woods (1995) pointed out in 1993 teachers did boycott national assessment tests. However with weakening LEA and union power, schools were left isolated. Woods (1995) also emphasised the enormous demands, resistance places on teachers' physical, emotional and mental powers. Nevertheless The National Curriculum has led to a collaboration, where teachers, forced into a position of discussing and reviewing educational policy and practice, have reached a high level of agreement about their basic values, approaches and educational beliefs (Woods 1996). As a result educational management has achieved much more importance with pressure for a sound and effective delivery of the curriculum. In addition teachers are moving towards a whole school perspective on the

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curriculum. Nevertheless government drives to “raise standards” and ensure “value for money” have led to pressures for change.

The Education Acts of 1988, 1992 and 1993 have both generated, and in part reflected, these pressures. Primary Schools have been, and are being, challenged to review long-held assumptions and long practised procedures, including those related to curriculum organisation, staff deployment and pedagogy”.

Richards (1994) p 40

A major thrust has been to encourage schools to use staff deployment to make best use of available subject expertise. Therefore Subject Leaders have become a serious consideration in order to effectively meet the requirements of the National Curriculum (Richards 1994).

Conclusion:

The curriculum is not a system that is closed. There is much potential for conflict in decision making. There have been three major ideological influences on the development of the educational curriculum, which have changed in emphasis and status over time. Classical humanists believed in providing an elite education for the privileged few and promoted a curriculum based on the classics and providing a sound moral and cultural background (Carr and Hartnett 1996). This ideology became less popular with the advent of war where according to Gardner (1998) a developing belief in democracy and egalitarianism came to the fore. In an attempt to democratise education Reconstructionist ideals concerned with changing society for the better through the education system, emerged. A combination of this more egalitarian ideal and the setting up of a distinct primary education encouraged progressive ideologies to develop and prevail. Blenkin and Kelly (1987) felt that this supported ideals around being child-centred and encouraging children to learn through experience. Progressive ideologies became synonymous with primary education. However as Moon (1990) argued evidence suggests that the more didactic teaching methods of the elementary system still maintained some hold and that the ideals of progressive education were not always

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put into practice. Nevertheless concerns grew in the late 1960's and 1970's that progressive teaching encouraged a lack of rigour. Evidence (though heavily debated) was gathered to suggest the need for educational reform. As Webb and Vulliamy (1996) pointed out central government began to take a more direct interest in the curriculum and by 1988 the Education Reform Act (ERA) had imposed a new National Curriculum on schools. This directed the content of what was to be taught. This shift of control represented a new form of Reconstructionist ideology that, as Carr and Hartnett (1996) argued, stressed market forces and the relationship between education and work. Behaviourist ideals became more influential suggesting educational outcomes could be planned for and measured through testing and evaluation. Consequently pressures rose for schools to meet governmentally imposed standards and to make schools accountable if they did not. Golby (1989) believed that advances in technology have turned the development of curriculum into a technological exercise vulnerable to governmental political pressure. Therefore politicians, who have come to view curriculum development as a technological exercise, have enabled a reconstructionist viewpoint to prevail. Golby made a direct challenge to this stance: -

By contrast, a view of curriculum as a cultural artefact emerging from a social negotiation between generations and classes offers hope of intellectual grasp at a time when education is patently a matter of struggle between the perspectives of professional educators and their political masters.

Golby (1989) p 39

Drummond (1997) believed that statutory assessment programmes satisfy only the political masters. Nevertheless, although teachers' principles may be under attack, statutes will not remove them (Drummond 1997).

Alongside this movement, as Barber (1993) argued, teachers professionalism became the subject of criticism by both the government and subsequently the media. Consequently teachers and schools have undergone considerable pressure to change both their philosophy of education and their practice. However according to Hargreaves

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and Fullan (1998) there are indications that teachers may adapt some of these changes, modifying them to suit their pupils and their schools. As Cullingford (1997) put it while expectations grow higher without the close involvement of teachers in decisions, reforms are unlikely to work. Further Cullingford (1997) claimed teachers carry on teaching (and pupils learning) in spite of, rather than with the support of, outside interference. Consequently for Galton (1995) top-down educational initiatives and reforms are rarely implemented in the way originally envisaged. Therefore individualities can still be seen between and within different schools.

The result of all these complex trends has been a: -

....concentration of policy and dispersion of responsibility for action....
accountability is the connecting mechanism which is increasingly seen as the
means of linking these two ships that might otherwise pass in the night.

Skilbeck (1989) p 7

With growing official emphasis and inspection focused on teaching, primary practitioners have found themselves faced with a formidable range of topics and content to cover. Teachers may often only feel confident in some curricular areas (Southworth 1996). The stress on programmes of study in the National Curriculum have been broadened into schools individualised schemes of work and the development of each individual curriculum area (Clayden 1989). As a result, subject leaders have gained in importance especially given the interest in their activities shown by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED). Quicke and Winter (1996) argued that ideas of curriculum have become divorced from ideas of pedagogy. So, current demands are for a high degree of specialisation at an increasingly earlier educational stage. Political involvement in education has increased dramatically. The constant demand for subject specialism is, for Blenkin and Kelly (1987), likely to undermine pressure for a unified approach, (an issue this research will consider). Recent moves and arguments have been that school improvement rests upon developing the subject knowledge of teachers. However, in 1979 Schiller had this to say: -

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Curriculum has for long been used as a collective noun to denote a collection of subjects. But in the field of primary education we are becoming increasingly doubtful whether 'what we do in school' can be conveniently described in terms of subjects, since it has become increasingly clear that for young children 'subjects' have very little significance.

Schiller (1979) p 93

This is in direct contrast to current governmental philosophy. Bollen (1996) argued that improvements towards more effective schools rely on teachers adopting different cultural and organisational views of their own profession. For Bollen (1996) the teachers' role is an important determinant in effectiveness.

It is within this complex momentum of shifts and change that the necessity for greater subject expertise has been stressed at the primary level. This has led to the highlighting of the role of Curriculum Co-ordinator, which has been developed by the governmentally appointed Teacher Training Agency (TTA 1998) into the role of Subject Leader. This position involves skills in both management and leadership. Therefore the following chapter will develop an understanding of these notions against the background of an ever-changing primary school situation.

Chapter Three: Leadership and Management

Introduction:

Traditionally schools have been based on a strong loyalty to the headteacher who "led" the school in every sense of the word. As Bell and Rhodes (1996) pointed out schools worked in partnership with the Department of Education and Science (DES) and the Local Education Authority (LEA). The 1986 Education Act no.2 increased the power of the governing body together with its accountability to parents. Governors' responsibilities increased further with the implementation of the Education Reform Act in 1988, which as Bush (1995) argued had meant great changes in the requirements made of school management. Funding and resource management was devolved to schools together with the ability to opt out of LEA control, whilst at the same time a National Curriculum was imposed, as was a nationally controlled inspection regime. For Bennett *et.al.* (1992) these shifts meant changes in the structure of educational provision and significant alterations to the culture and the expectations made of schools. Such "...radical externally imposed change has fundamentally affected the roles, relationships and accountabilities of primary and secondary heads..." (p 1 Day *et.al.* 1999). Additionally, whilst implementing these external mandates, individual teachers have developed strategies with which they hope to influence the impacts of change on the structure and culture of their schools (Bennett *et.al.* 1992).

Teachers have been actively encouraged by such bodies as the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED 1994a), to assume more involvement in any decision-making processes, especially around development planning and the curriculum, (albeit within limited, externally imposed parameters, such as the National Curriculum). As Bennett *et.al.* (1992) pointed out, almost all teachers have some responsibility beyond their own classroom. The resultant increase in educational debate has, according to Torrington and Weightman (1993) made management based purely on a loyalty to the head,

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unworkable, whilst at the same time increased the insecurity of the profession. This insecurity is exacerbated as schools are subjected to the demands of: -

increasingly powerful lay audiences and consumers whose expectations of schools and the benefits of education have been dramatically accelerated in recent years...

Macbeath *et al.* (1995) p 21

Further as Day *et al.* (1998) pointed out teachers have absorbed and integrated extensive change only to find themselves victim to accusations of blame for 'the state of the nation'.

Teachers could always be considered managers in the sense that they manage the learning experience of pupils. Teachers may also have a responsibility over the work of other teachers, together with some aspect of the school structure such as a curriculum subject area (Earley and Fletcher-Campbell 1989). Briggs (1997) claimed that pressure has grown dramatically for teachers to lead areas of the curriculum. Taking on a curriculum responsibility is now a requirement for all teachers entering the profession. Within primary schools, teachers who are what the Teacher Training Agency (TTA 1998) now describe as Subject Leaders, have been asked by bodies such as OFSTED and the TTA to take a pro-active role in the development of the curriculum area/s for which they are responsible. Briggs (1997) explained that this means developing schemes of work and subject policy, which must tie in with the National Curriculum requirements and relate to other subject areas, prepared by other curriculum leaders. Teachers are therefore being encouraged to work more closely together. These Subject Leaders may take a variety of different stances and apply different levels of enthusiasm to any given educational innovation. As a consequence, the management and leadership style adopted, its inclusiveness or exclusiveness, or the authoritarianism or liberalism of the stance, can make a very great difference to the effectiveness and

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quality of improvements or change. For example the effect of leadership style on independent working may be as found by Lewin *et al.* (1939) in a study of boys hobby groups. In this study the boys worked hard for a leader adopting an authoritarian stance, but only while the leader was present. Autocrats also engendered aggressive, or alternatively, apathetic responses to their leadership style. Leaders taking a laissez-faire approach achieved little and had an unmotivated group, whilst a democratic leader produced a group that was more self-motivated and worked steadily. Despite criticism of the research (such as the contrived setting, small scale and single gender make up of the group), it does highlight the point that leadership style is likely to make a difference to the outcome of team efforts. Day *et.al.* (1998) when writing about the leadership of headteachers argued that “management style is the biggest single factor in making quality improvements in school”, p 53.

This research is looking at the Subject Leadership role. Consequently there is a need to develop an understanding of the management and leadership styles which might be adopted by the Subject Leaders and which in turn are affected by the management and leadership styles adopted within the school as a whole. In addition it is important to explore the links between school management and the increasing influence of business management styles. Through developing a greater understanding of management and leadership in both industry and in education, this chapter will look at the ways in which management structures, leadership styles and school cultures develop and the models that might be employed within education. This chapter will: -

- Look at what recent changes in educational requirements and expectations have meant for the management of schools.
- Define the term's “manager” and “leader”, exploring the differences between what these two roles mean.
- Consider the management of primary schools.

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- Explore the importance of cultural factors in the structuring of management for schools.
- Conclude, showing how this understanding of school management structures relates to a development of the context and position of a school subject leader.

Recent changes in the management of education:

As the previous chapters indicated, primary education was, in the 1960's, associated with notions that teachers acted as facilitator enabling pupils to find out for themselves. Rogers, writing in 1962, advocated that people who worked to help others should aim to enhance the personal development and psychological growth of their "clients" in order to develop the clients socialised maturity thus illustrating what was a prevalent attitude at that time. However, after the Ruskin Speech (James Callaghan 1976) making a call for greater educational accountability, all major legislation resulted in an increasing number of externally imposed innovations, which have needed to be managed. As Webb and Vulliamy (1996) asserted, the Education Reform Act (ERA) of 1988 and subsequent Education Acts are having fundamental impacts on primary schooling. For Hopkins and Lagerweij (1996) such legislation has created a tension between centralisation, with increased governmental control over policy and direction, and a decentralisation, with greater responsibility for resource management, implementation and evaluation, at the local level. According to Day *et.al.* (1990) schools are finding themselves increasingly answerable to parents, governors, LEA's and the DES for the quality of education being delivered. Further the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) will assess whether these requirements were being met.

Since the Education Act of 1986 there has been in place a national system for school government, which clearly sets out the responsibilities of governors. Sallis (1988)

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pointed out that this Act also ended the dominance of LEA representatives on governing bodies, as there would now be equal numbers of parent representatives. In addition the 1986 Act emphasised the process of debate and consensus and increased the accountability of governors. For example governors' non-confidential minutes became matters of public record, as did their finances. Governors have been given involvement in all aspects of school management. Mahony *et al.* (1998) claimed increased governor power is acting to increase school accountability and reduce the strength of the headteacher's power. These powers can therefore lead to tensions developing and so it then becomes important to develop mutual respect and trust between the school and its governing body. OFSTED (1994a) found that governing bodies who became more involved with school planning (and therefore better informed), were more effective having gained a better understanding of the process of education. Nevertheless despite this decentralisation of power, headteachers are still seen as leaders. They are ultimately responsible for the school community and form the boundary between school and the outside world. Southworth (1987) stated that heads also develop a sense of identity with the school and feel a responsibility for developing the school ethos and its underlying philosophy.

Scott (1989) believed this emphasis on accountability, responsibility and responsiveness to be a part of a re-imposition of conservative values and practices. However, he claimed these qualities were in place prior to the legislation but that the emphasis has been renewed in the light of attacks on progressive values and practices. Further Silver (1994) argued that in contrast to the 1960's and '70's this dynamic push for effective change originated in social and political market driven forces, rather than forces within the profession itself.

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Conservative educational policy in the 1980s and 1990s was aimed at developing national structures and procedures, which would change the control and content of schooling and simplify judgements about schools.

Silver (1994) p 131

Schools could now be judged by their responses in a more market-orientated context. Consequently whilst there is a pressure for schools to demonstrate effectiveness through strong leadership, at the same time they are being told of the importance of collegiality. Southworth (1987) argued with presentations of these two stances as compatible.

For Bush (1995) there have been implications for school management from legislation allowing parents the choice to determine the school their child will attend. As Westoby (1989) asserted, in state funded schools competition is based largely on what is perceived as the quality of education being delivered. Because the funds of schools are determined by the number of pupils they can attract, schools are under pressure to market themselves and cultivate a positive public image (Power *et.al.* 1999). To look effective and therefore attractive, schools will feel a need to maintain and improve the resourcing of both staff and equipment, which has obvious implications for the budget. Also the future funding and supply of pupils is in a constant state of uncertainty. Schools are now obliged to publish National Curriculum assessments, public examination results and attendance rates, ostensibly to allow parents to make an informed choice though as Dean (1998) indicated there is some evidence suggesting that parents are less influenced by test results than might be expected. Bush (1995) argued that schools are consequently tempted to make decisions based on short-term need, despite current pressure for long-term planning. Finally Bush (1995) pointed out, as schools become increasingly vulnerable to outside pressures, power becomes concentrated in those who interpret, mediate and control communications with the outside environment; in most cases this will be the headteacher. If this is the case it adds further tension

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between pressures for strong leadership alongside messages about the benefits of collegiality.

Scott (1989) saw two major reasons for the rise of managerialism in education. The first was the increasing sophistication of the curriculum combined with the constant pressure to acquire new skills, which pushed up the cost of education. The subsequent pressure to be cost effective lent itself to a strengthening of management in order to take tough, perhaps unpopular, decisions and seize new opportunities. Secondly for Scott (1989) it served to replace or subsume professional and collegial values. Consequently it represents a change of structure and culture. The early 1990's saw a trend for placing quality (and improving quality), at the top of education agendas. However quality is a very difficult concept to define clearly. For Sallis (1993) quality carries two concepts within it. One of these is an absolute, implying an elite or luxury status. Alternatively, it is a relative concept about when goods or services meet the specification laid down for them. This is combined with the notion of meeting the requirements of the customer. According to West-Burnham (1992) there has been a shift from a view of quality as an ideal to be obtained to the notion of quality as a relationship to be managed. Sallis (1993) argued that quality in business means primarily customer satisfaction, listening and responding sympathetically to their needs. Translated into education he went on to cite a mixture of factors such as, well maintained buildings; excellent teachers; high moral values; success in examinations; well provisioned resources; new technology; meaningful leadership; specialisation; care and concern within the community; and parental, business and community support. Further whilst quality mechanisms have been in place for some time, (i.e.: Her Majesties Inspectorate - HMI and local inspectors), institutions are now being asked to develop their own quality control systems (such as teacher appraisal). The publishing of inspection reports and compiling of league tables based on examination and test results has enabled government to

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measure success or failure and make comparisons between schools. However as Silver (1994) pointed out, these criteria have been defined by government, often in spite of relevant research recommendations, and additionally the outcomes are often seriously misrepresented in the media.

For Sallis (1993) Total Quality Management (TQM) is a philosophy and a methodology, which helps institutions manage change. Scherkenbach (1982) explained that Deming, Shewart and Juran, were the originators of TQM in the 1930's and 40's. They developed their ideas based on the elimination of waste and delay from industrial processes using statistical methods combined with studies of human relations. The Japanese were receptive to ideas of TQM; manufacturing industry being the first to become interested followed by the service industry. Sallis (1993) pointed out that as the Japanese began to take over the markets in the late 1970's, the United States started to take an interest in TQM along with Western industry. TQM has several imperatives highlighted by West-Burnham (1992) and summarised below: -

- Quality is defined by the customer (any one who makes use of the product).
- Quality is assured through meeting the customer's standards and requirements and continuously improving on that, (thus preventing production of sub-standards goods).
- Quality, though driven from the top of the management structure, is the responsibility of all.
- Quality is measured statistically from the gap formed between expectation and delivery.
- Education, training and effective teamwork ensures quality.

TQM only began to be of real importance to schools after 1990 since the Education Reform Act (1988), which emphasised monitoring and measurable outcomes. It is still

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relatively untried and untested in the school environment and therefore its relevance (or otherwise), has not been fully explored. However, there seem to be some real difficulties for TQM when applying the ideal to education. Perhaps most importantly as Drucker (1974) stressed pupils can not be considered products. They are not standardised as they come into school, nor can they be as they leave (even if this were desirable). In addition neither is the delivery of the service standardised as it is from person to person, each interaction being different from another (Torrington and Weightman 1993). Additionally the quality of the delivery is hard to assess as it is consumed immediately unless it is assessed by the more indirect means of feedback and evaluation (West-Burnham 1992). Arguments raised that teaching is usually conducted in isolation rather than in the teams advocated by TQM, are to some extent challenged by the National Curriculum and movements towards integration and collaboration. But the issue of "customer satisfaction" is a thorny one. Whilst getting the service right first time is almost impossible due the variance of human interactions, experience and performance, it is equally difficult to articulate what is being delivered or what the consumer desires. Consequently as Handy and Aitken (1986) suggested measuring the success of something as intangible as education is extremely difficult. Customers make judgements based on their own perceptions of what they receive, against their own expectations of what that should be. In this case reputation, which is often based on the care and concern shown to pupils, can play a vital role (Torrington and Weightman 1993). Can educators meet the expectations of every parent and/or pupil? There is also the question about who in education, is the customer. Is it the pupil, the parent, the taxpayer or perhaps the government and its agencies? West-Burnham (1992) argued that TQM would regard all of these claims as valid. However, there would inevitably be tensions between these claims that would need to be reconciled. Finally if educationalists perceive education as a liberalising process rather than a standardising one then TQM would seem to be alien to this ideal.

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When comparing school management with commercial management it becomes clear that the culture and ethos of each is very different. For Torrington and Weightman (1993) commerce is interested in production and products whereas the pastoral interest and concerns of schools set them apart from this. Schools have a commitment to the integration of education with intellectual and emotional development, regarding themselves as a community within which this can happen. The school is therefore not about economic production. It is involved with the development of the whole person, the outcome of which process is unpredictable and extremely problematic to measure. Consequently, if recent re-organisations are viewed as being driven by economic expediency, then it is possible to sympathise with the view of Torrington and Weightman (1993) that this cultural "wholeness" is under threat.

Managers and/or leaders:

Managers are the stewards of what already exists and the creators of the future. They "manage" organisations and institutions which: -

...do not exist for their own sake, but to fulfil a specific social purpose and to satisfy a specific need of society, community, or individual. They are not ends in themselves, but means.

Drucker (1974) p 36

In satisfying a managerial role Drucker (1974) identified three dimensions of management summarised below: -

1. To work out the specific mission and purpose of the institution or organisation. A business institution unlike others will have economic performance as its specific mission. For all other institutions such as hospitals, schools and universities (the service industries), economics acts as a constraint.
2. To achieve productivity from the work and the worker. This involves organising work logically whilst considering the needs of the human resources in order to achieve

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their co-operation. Drucker (1974) felt it was a serious misunderstanding to consider people in the same light as other material resources, as the productivity of people can be developed through job satisfaction.

3. To manage social impacts and responsibilities. All organisations are a part of society and cannot operate without regard to it. In order to operate successfully organisations must contribute to society in some way, whether through provision of goods, or of services. This is especially true of schools, who are answerable directly to parents, governors and the community, not to mention governmental agencies.

Managerial roles are concerned with holding organisations together (Bush 1995). They are involved in the activities of determining the aims of the organisation, allocating its resources, whilst also evaluating the effectiveness of these actions on the organisation as a whole. Managers are expected to pursue the goals of the organisation, employing all its resources, (both human and physical) in the most effective way, alongside effecting change. Managers are also expected to maintain and develop the organisation's resource base (Everard and Morris 1990).

Management is concerned with achieving goals through collaboration between people. Mintzberg (1973) suggested that managers have ten roles falling into three categories of responsibility. Firstly the inter-personal category, within which are the roles of a figurehead and leader and which support liaison with others in the organisation. Secondly, the information category includes the roles of monitor, disseminator and spokesperson. Lastly, there is the decision category that encompasses the entrepreneur, disturbance handler, the resource allocator and the negotiator. Handy (1993) claims that the mix of these roles varies with position, those nearer to the top of the organisation having a greater concentration of the leadership role.

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So Handy (1993) indicated that leadership qualities are part of the management role. Whilst he felt that the term leadership has a somewhat dated air of privilege about it (it implying one person being set above another), a leader, in whatever form they come, is the person that holds groups together. The leader provides a focus and a representative for the groups actions and should according to OFSTED (1995) show clear educational direction. As Hayes (1997) stated, leaders are the people who develop a vision and direction, which should inspire others to follow. Ideally in schools, the whole school community shares this vision. Subject Leaders must do this through what OFSTED (1997b) identified as careful management and through finding strategies to enable them to have influence over the whole school.

Outstanding leadership has invariably emerged as a key characteristic of outstanding schools.

Beare *et.al.* (1993) p141

Leadership involves a complex array of qualities. Beare *et.al.* (1993), define leadership as including a mixture of formal authorities; such as decision making, setting goals and effecting change, transmitting meaning and purpose to others, with less formal qualities; involving transmission of values (perhaps their own) and the unifying of the values of people around them. There are therefore two dimensions of leadership. The desire to fulfil the needs of the organisation coupled with the desire to develop the relationships between the people in the organisation. Consequently the leader is acting in the interests of management, by using personal skills to persuade, develop or encourage others to work towards management goals and ideals.

Leadership is a personal relationship, in which one person directs, coordinates, and supervises others in the performance of a common task.

Fiedler 1965 p 115

On the basis of their research into the issue of school leadership Day *et.al.* (1999) have argued that the information available through literature, media presentations and advice has encouraged a common view of what characterises the successful school leader.

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These characteristics involve bravery, good decision making, honesty, skills with people and having a vision. However it was also true that the different aspects of these leadership skills varied in importance according to where particular individuals were positioned in relation to the leader (Day *et.al.* 1999).

Whilst it has been shown that the emphasis on particular skills changes between that of a leader or a manager, in the school context teachers are often utilising both. They are employing management skills in the classroom, and with colleagues in monitoring change and development, sharing information, dealing with dissension and allocating resources. This in the context of additional responsibilities they might carry such as that of Subject Leader. In a Subject Leadership context leadership skills are used to develop a vision or direction towards which they must lead or persuade their colleagues, in the light of internally and externally imposed recommendations and requirements. For West-Burnham (1992) leaders are involved with vision, values and people, whilst management is about implementing and translating the vision into practice, monitoring, budgeting and developing. Bennis and Nanus (1997) argued that organisations are often over managed and under led and that people prefer to be led rather than managed. Research by Bell (1992) looking at the role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator (now Subject Leader), found that Co-ordinators were reluctant to lead colleagues as they were concerned that to do so would be seen as an unwelcome intrusion on colleagues' professionalism.

Management Structures:

To manage a school is an awesome enough task these days. It is as though the government has decided to distract school management by regularly lobbing hand grenades of externally-imposed change into the daily business of schooling.

Brighouse (1994) p9

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Management principles have only come to schools relatively recently. OFSTED (1997a) recommended that Curriculum Co-ordinators (Subject Leaders) “develop their role as managers for their subject” p 35. Bennett (1974) argued that there has been increased recognition that schools were always managed (though not economy driven), that the vocabulary of management has become the “norm” and with this the concept that managers can be trained. Bush (1995) stressed that as practitioners perceive management as a largely practical activity, there is a tendency in schools to dismiss theories and concepts as being too remote from reality to be of much practical use. In addition, within education, theories are developed to explain what is an ever-changing reality, the complexity of which can lead to several different perspectives being true of any given moment.

Organisations (such as education), that provide services, have been subject to many criticisms about their performance. Drucker (1974) believed that there were three commonly held misconceptions that explained this. Firstly as has already been argued, educational quality is difficult to measure. Also schools can not be perceived in the same way as businesses. Service industry including schools are criticised for being non-business-like but this is because they are not businesses. The inefficiencies that service industries are accused of are more properly described as a lack of effectiveness, which improvements in efficiency will do nothing to solve. In fact, he claims that many of these institutions are very efficient. Secondly there is an outcry that more business-like people should run these organisations. In reality the numbers of entrepreneurial people needed to do this do not exist. In addition there is no need to doubt the commitment or capabilities of the people currently in post. Further Drucker (1974) argued that managers, who have been brought in for such purposes, have quickly become part of the bureaucracy anyway. Nevertheless current government moves are towards sending in consultants or what have been referred to as ‘super

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heads' to turn schools with poor results around. Third and finally service industry is criticised for a lack of clear objectives and thus clear results. Definitions encapsulating what any business is about are intangible though measurable goals and targets could be derived for services industries, given thought. Attempts are being made to do precisely that in education through the imposition of a National Curriculum and the setting of attainment targets against which pupils are tested and assessed.

Murgatroyd and Morgan (1993) emphasised the importance of teamwork in successful management. They claim that all the members of learning organisations need to perceive themselves as continuously learning and improving as teachers and as team members. Without this, it is difficult to improve standards and performance, (Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1993). Teams provide an environment within which learning can be expressed, tried, improved and evaluated. Teams also have the advantage that they can examine issues across a wider spectrum than individuals tend to. They can act and plan independently and be effectively self-managing. Additionally, developments by a team belong to the whole organisation rather than becoming one individuals' "baby". They can therefore exist beyond the time spent in the organisation by any one individual. However, in primary education the extent and numbers of any teams will be limited, as primary schools are small institutions. They may be better described as one large team.

It would seem that all the management models, which are applied to, and adapted for schools, are flawed in that none fully describes the situation found particularly in primary education. Schools are different to industry in several important ways, as Handy and Aitken (1986) point out: -

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- They lack offices for management (and perhaps in the case of primary schools, the people to manage). As schools view themselves as teaching establishments they devote less time and space to management tasks.
- As highlighted earlier, education encompasses a whole range of tasks, the success of which is hard to measure and not evident for some years.
- Another characteristic is what Handy and Aitken (1986) refer to as “role switching”. As teachers become more expert they tend to be promoted to positions with more managerial responsibility. Further they argued that the underlying premise, that a good teacher is necessarily good at other skills, is flawed. A similar point is made by Everard and Morris (1990), who asserted that teachers' initial success is built on their own ideas and talents. However, in the role of a manager, success is based on the work of the team. Therefore, the criteria for success are fundamentally different. Consequently there is the possibility that teachers who are often employed in both roles may forget that strategies which work in the classroom will not necessarily be successful in, or transferable too, their management role.
- The final issue in terms of a managerial picture is where the pupils fit into the model? Handy and Aitken (1986) suggested that pupils are perhaps, a mixture of worker, client and product, but that this mix alters throughout their academic life.

These dilemmas begin to illustrate the complexity of the educational environment in terms of how difficult it is to find a management or leadership model, which fits the situation with any degree of accuracy. For example Day *et.al.* (1999) found in relation to the studies they had made of school leaders, leadership involves a complex and untidy mix of what can sometimes be described as value laden, value driven and seemingly irrational activity. They went on to argue that it is this complexity which current leadership literature has failed to acknowledge.

Cultures – why they are important:

Handy (1993), described cultures as encompassing all parts of an organisation from its architectural form, through to the psychological characteristics of the individuals it employs. The culture of schools has developed over long periods; each school's particular history having some impact on the way that school culture will develop. The culture along with its rituals and conventions gives the people who are part of it a sense of security, (Torrington and Weightman, 1993). Bush (1995) claimed that maintaining a culture is a central feature of good leadership.

There is a growing literature on the culture of organizations, for it has come to be realized that the customs and traditions of a place are a powerful way of influencing behaviour (ecologically).

Handy (1993) p 183

A strong culture acts in a cohesive manner engendering feelings of community within it.

Mintzberg (1973) explained the development of organisational cultures in terms of ideology: -

The roots of the ideology are planted when a group of individuals band together around a leader and, through a sense of mission, found a vigorous organization, or invigorate an existing one. The ideology then develops over time through the establishment of traditions. Finally, the existing ideology is reinforced when new members enter the organization and identify with its system of beliefs.

Mintzberg (1973) p 353

Culture is influenced by factors that as a result of their research Nias *et.al.* (1989) summarised as firstly, the layout of the buildings and whether or not its design leads people to communicate with one another easily. Secondly the structures of organisation and whether or not they encourage people to work and communicate together. Thirdly the personalities involved and their willingness to make an effort with each other, skills that Nias and her colleagues think are essential for a head. The final factor is the school's history and the lengths of time people have been there. Over time people develop shared meanings and shared rituals, (such as bringing in cakes for birthdays). They may also develop cliques, often around a common interest or issue, which over

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time becomes exclusive, sometimes in opposition to the rest of the staff. However Nias *et.al.* (1989) saw the primary influence on culture as the headteacher. Developing a culture carries with it certain dilemmas, for example the ethical justification for imposing one culture over another, the assumption that cultures may be controlled and the possible consequent underestimation of other forces in schools (Bush 1995).

Torrington and Weightman (1993) have shown using the example of four schools the close links between school cultures and management styles. Their studies conducted in secondary schools serve to demonstrate some of the cultures and management styles applicable within schools.

- The first school highlighted a style where commitment and cohesion amongst the staff was high. This was displayed through the regularity of meetings and the willingness of staff to be involved with extra-curricular activities and extra tutorials. The management style did promote a reliance on the headteacher but also a mutual support between staff and regular discussion about all aspects of the schools management.
- The second school ran in an atmosphere of calm co-operation. Staff had good relationships with each other and the pupils, which demonstrated a high level of respect. Additionally staff maintained good relations outside school. However, the headteacher and the deputy were more remote. This was also the case in a physical form as, although the building was designed around a quadrangle through which all could circulate, the head and deputies offices were housed separately from this more communal area. There were some complaints about the lack of communication between the senior management and the rest of the staff.
- The third school demonstrated a complete contrast as the staff suffered from a very low morale. This was combined with poor academic results and poor pupil behaviour. The staff rarely met up as a group. In this school it was a common perception that the staff had been in the school for a long period, were resistant to

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change and had little chance of finding jobs elsewhere. The researchers found this perception to be inaccurate. In addition whilst they had similar problems to other schools, the outcomes were not the same. Torrington and Weightman (1993) felt the history of the school had led to a lack of willingness to overcome their problems. Professionalism was undermined as were feelings of community.

- The management in the final school researched was of a disjointed nature. The headteacher discussed management issues with some members of the management team and not with others leading to feelings of isolation and resentment amongst some staff members. Additionally the discipline policy was not carried out consistently throughout the school.

These examples serve to demonstrate the importance of considering the culture/s already present in the school and their effects on the attitudes of teachers. Whilst the headteacher may have a considerable influence over the way a school culture develops, the relationship between staff is crucial to their perceptions about their various roles and the value of them. Where that culture is one of support and valuing contributions it would appear that the staff are more likely to embrace all aspects of school life in a positive light.

In business Harrison (1972) highlighted four main types of organisational culture, which may have some application in schools: -

- The power or club culture: There is a central power source, which radiates power and influence. Effectiveness is built on trust and empathy, and communication is based on personal conversation and instinctive knowledge, (Harrison 1972). The people at the centre (Handy and Aitken 1986 suggested the headteacher), choose employees who think in the same way as themselves, therefore everyone can be left to get on with the job. However, the organisation is vulnerable to the centre; if the centre stagnates so does the organisation. Handy and Aitken (1986) argued that

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primary schools run to some extent as a benevolent club culture. Their communication systems can be informal and almost instinctive. This form of communication has become more formalised as the TTA (1998) require Subject Leaders to have knowledge of the interrelationship between curriculum subjects and to discuss the implementation of their own curriculum area in this light, thus keeping everyone informed of the latest initiatives. However this may challenge the structures that are already in place and working well.

- **The role culture:** Developed on a basis of logic and rationality, role cultures rely on a conglomeration of specialist parts within the organisation, which are governed by an overarching management and procedural rules. The senior management team then co-ordinates these procedures. For Harrison (1972) they offer security and predictability of roles and promotion but they can lack flexibility and opportunity for individuals who want to expand beyond the remit of their set task. Handy and Aitken (1986) identified some parallels between this culture and secondary education with its separate departments and department heads. However it has little in common with primary schools where division between roles is blurred and where, because of their small size, collegiate responses are more likely. Nevertheless the delegation of subject responsibility and the increasing level of expertise demanded of Subject Leaders, together with the necessity of following a National curriculum aligns very closely with the features of a role culture. Whether it can be imported successfully into primary schools is another matter.
- **The task culture:** This is a job or product orientated culture. As the emphasis is on getting the job done it is a matter of bringing the right people together at the right level of the organisation and letting them do the job. Influence is based largely on expertise in given areas, though position and power is not entirely without effect. It relies on a unified team working together in a way that overrides individual differences and nuances. Harrison (1972) believed this has the advantage of

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adaptability, teams forming adapting and reforming to suit the task in hand. For Handy and Aitken (1986) this culture, with its collegiate response and use of expertise, is perhaps the most relevant to primary education. The development of subject areas has involved discussion between staff with a particular staff member leading the debate and negotiation for particular curriculum areas. Subject areas are visited in turn according to both internal and external requirements.

- The person culture: This is a culture not often put into practice, but some of its values are nevertheless upheld. This puts the individual at the centre, the organisation being structured around and for the benefit of the individuals within it. As Harrison (1972) stated individuals might band together for mutually beneficial (or self-interested) reasons, therefore structures are minimal. The ethos of education is one for the benefit of all the individuals within it. However for Handy and Aitken (1986) person cultures will tend to give way to task or club cultures, as primary schools are small and there is little room for the extremely independent professional. In addition the scope for such an individual has been reduced since ERA and the necessity for working towards common negotiated goals.

Consequently all four cultures may to differing degrees, have some influence on schools. Green (1994) believed a culture of open discussion around issues about the schools 'reason for being', develops wide ownership of actions taken, thereby strengthening the organisation. Achievement of aims is then a cause for general celebration and feelings of satisfaction. This shared vision is often held up as the key to many successful organisations.

Conclusion:

Over recent years (the late 1980's and the 1990's) there has been a rise in managerialism in schools. ERA (1988) and the subsequent Education Acts have led to a greater control of the curriculum whilst at the same time promoting the values of good

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leadership and collegiality. As a consequence the management of schools has become more complex with a rise in the power of governors, parents being able to choose which school to send their children to and an increased stress on school accountability through tests and inspections. Headteachers form the interface between schools and these external forces for change and accountability. They are therefore in a position of power in the mediation of such pressures. However, the management style they adopt will have an effect on the success or failure of new initiatives or the development of new cultures and philosophies.

In the quest for a better quality of education some business management styles have been promoted as an appropriate way to manage education. Notions such as Total Quality Management (TQM) suggest education should perform like a business treating pupils and parents as the consumers of the educational product. However, this idea raises issues and problems around the applicability of such a model to a service industry such as education, especially given the problems with taking a measure of when education has 'happened'.

There is a distinction between leaders and managers the leader providing the vision and direction whilst the managers achieve goals through collaboration. Subject Leaders (the focus of this research) need to acquire both these skills in order to carry out their role. Teamwork is regarded as a positive way to manage and improve standards and performance. Schools are complex entities to describe in management terms. In addition schools have strong cultures which act to influence and mediate change. Consequently managers and leaders need to take these individual cultures into account when planning for change. As Torrington and Weightman (1993) stressed different schools may exhibit different cultures even if the circumstance, in terms of the buildings, catchment and the make up of staff, is similar. Therefore it would seem that

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personalities have a marked impact on cultures. Cultures range from those that are cohesive and committed, to those that are disjointed and disenchanting. Businesses also exhibit a variety of cultures, those with a central power source, those who act as a group of specialist parts, those who group together on the basis of the task to be done and those that place importance on the individual. Again none of these provide the entire picture in a primary school.

Therefore effective leadership can be described as: -

... the result of a complex interaction between style, prevailing staffroom learning cultures, uses and perceptions of power and authority, and individual and group relationships as applied to particular tasks.

Day *et.al.* (1990) p2

Looking at the management structures of schools has begun to indicate the complexity of its organisation. It is both hierarchical, the headteacher bearing ultimate responsibility along with, to some extent, the governors, and yet is expected to allow for a more flat management style, with an increasing stress on the participation in management of teachers with curriculum responsibility. Management of any organisation is involved with setting aims and objectives, working on the processes which achieve this, organising the human and physical resources, monitoring progress, plus setting and improving standards (Everard and Morris 1990). Added to this, Brighouse (1997) recommends that in schools, all those with posts of responsibility should have some share of leadership, actively contributing to the schools vision. Day *et.al.* (1998) also describe the relationships in schools as moving toward more equal partnerships. Consequently a leader must act as a steward rather than the "omni-present" person at the front. They need increasingly to use their personal skills to motivate, influence and gain the commitment of others toward mutually agreed goals (Day *et.al.* 1998). Certainly, with the rise in importance of Subject Leaders, the headteacher is

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increasingly being placed in the position of a facilitator who must encourage leadership amongst the whole staff.

The next chapter will deal in detail with the specific roles, skills and commitments involved with the position of a Subject Leader and the development of their curriculum role within a highly complex set of cultures. As Fiedler (1965) pointed out the skills needed to lead require careful consideration, different styles being appropriate in different situations. In a primary school the staff numbers are likely to be small and almost all, if not all staff will have a Subject Leadership role. Staff are likely to see more of each other than in a larger organisation, therefore communication will tend to be informal and regular (Handy and Aitken 1986). Consequently as Nias *et al.* (1989) have shown, it would seem sensible for teachers to collaborate, sharing knowledge and skills which most of them will need to fulfil these responsibilities.

Chapter Four: Subject Leadership – the process of development

Introduction:

In the previous chapters it has been argued that since the Education Reform Act (ERA) of 1988 there has been an increase in centralist prescription of the curriculum, an increase in the accountability of schools together with an espousal of the benefits of collegiality and the centralisation of school management. As Clayden (1989) pointed out, school staff were being encouraged to work collaboratively and critically to effect development and change whilst developing a rational approach to planning and managing curriculum development. However as the curriculum is now centrally imposed, this autonomy is not total. The National Curriculum has set out level descriptors and targets of attainment that pupils are expected to meet at particular stages of their development. Teachers had long been taking responsibility for particular areas of the curriculum, particularly since Her Majesties Inspectorate (HMI) reported on the activities of postholders carrying special responsibilities (DES 1978). Nevertheless the advent of the National Curriculum has placed more emphasis on this role by increasing curricular demand and accountability and shifting the emphasis towards subject learning rather than the more general cross-curricula work such as topics.

As Webb and Vulliamy (1996) pointed out, the first role of the primary teacher taking responsibility for a particular curriculum area was to translate the subject orders of the National Curriculum in such a way as to put the subject into practice. Moves toward developing an informed overview of the curriculum which is rooted in classroom practice is "a significant and potentially very threatening undertaking" (p 220. O'Niell 1996a). O'Niell went on to argue that this means that Subject Leader's need to become involved with colleagues practice and develop understanding through discussion and observation to the point where policy becomes practised in the classroom day-to-day. As Bush (1995) pointed out, teachers who carry a curriculum responsibility are in a unique

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position within the school to set an example of good practice, initiate and develop policy, and to instigate subject related activities. This involves curriculum innovation and building relationships with other staff. However this would appear to ignore the fact that Subject Leaders are not necessarily in the role because of any expertise or even subject knowledge in the area.

Since 1998 when the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) published a set of requirements for teachers with particular curriculum responsibility, the role became known as that of a Subject Leader. There have been a number of titles used to denote the teacher with this responsibility such as consultant teacher (CACE 1967), posts carrying special responsibility (DES 1978), curriculum co-ordinator (DES 1975/82), curriculum post-holder (Campbell 1985) and subject manager (OFSTED 1994a). For the purpose of this research the title most appropriate to the historical context will be used. In respect of this data collection and other research conducted in this area this was Curriculum Co-ordinator. Subject Leader will be used to refer to events after the TTA used the term in 1998.

It is the intention of this chapter to: -

- Provide a brief history of the development in the role of the Subject Leader.
- Consider what duties the role of Subject Leader involves.
- Evaluate the challenges involved with Subject Leadership.
- Look at the impact of school cultures on the role.
- Consider some research findings on the role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator.

The Development of Subject Leadership in Primary Schools:

The idea that teachers in primary schools should provide support for colleagues in subject areas for which they have an expertise is not new (Bell 1996). Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the development of the Subject Leader role. The Board of

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Figure 4.1: Timeline to show some of the significant landmarks in the development of the primary school Subject Leaders role.

1956	Introduction of differentiation in primary education teaching roles.
1963	Stratification of posts eg: Head of Infants.
1967	Plowden Report refers to Consultant Teacher.
1970	DES advises on the role of curriculum post holder.
1975	Bullock recommends language co-ordinator.
1978	DES elaborates on role of co-ordinator.
1982	Cockroft Report recommends mathematics co-ordinator.
1987	School Teachers Pay and Conditions Order includes the requirement that all teaching contracts involve a responsibility beyond that of classteacher.
1988	Education Reform Act emphasis on subject knowledge.
1992	Debate on specialist teaching 'Three Wise Men' Report.
1994	OFSTED refer to subject manager.
1998	Teacher Training Agency set out requirements for Subject Leaders.

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Education Handbook (1905) recommended making use of individual teachers' expertise. However more explicit role differentiation and professional stratification began first in grammar schools, moving through the secondary sector between 1906 and 1956. Role differentiation meant that there was an extension to the teaching role beyond that of class teacher. As West (1995) pointed out at that time professional stratification referred to increased status or salary levels. Posts of responsibility were given to teachers as a reward for general competence or long service, (Campbell 1985). This was a strategy recommended by the Assistant Masters Association and adopted by London County Council in 1906 and spread through the secondary sector with the backing of the teaching unions. As West (1995) pointed out differentiated teaching posts in primary schools developed after 1956. Elementary school teachers had taken strike action during 1918 and 1919 to fight for a national scale of remuneration, which had led to a 1944 Act securing a national pay scale. West (1995) argued that graded posts in primary schools were a by-product of these salary negotiations with the Burnham Committee (founded in 1919). West (1995) went on to state that in 1956 the Burnham Committee proposed replacing graded salary scales with graded posts of responsibility, though the availability of allowances was weighted in favour of schools with older pupils. Consequently most primary schools did not qualify for graded posts. Nevertheless, the principle had been established and these posts progressively expanded into primary education. However, the designation of duties for such posts were nominal and as Campbell (1985) argued, the salary allowance which accompanied such posts was allocated to the person rather than the position.

By 1963 the spread of stratification was almost complete, primary schools being able to appoint heads of department (usually given for overseeing the infant department - key stage one). Blyth (1965) in a study of primary education in England and Wales, gave an early hint of the possibility that a teacher could take responsibility for a subject. In an

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analysis of the roles held in primary schools Blyth (1965) noted that the graded posts were useful only in respect of a teacher acting as a kind of subject librarian, however, sometimes a member of staff could be useful in advising the whole school on one subject area. Nevertheless he considered graded posts badly adapted to a class teacher system. By 1967 the Plowden Report (CACE 1967) was referring to “consultant teachers” who held a post with some curriculum responsibility, but this was still very much subordinate to that of the headteacher and local authority advisers. Their role was that of managing resources, assisting the head in writing schemes, and possibly teaching in another class to help raise standards. They could also be given time free from teaching to guide other teachers (CACE 1967). Plowden also recommended that older children could be taught by “expert teachers” to provide in depth coverage of some curricular areas, an idea that has continued to be voiced (for example OFSTED 1993).

In 1970 the Department of Education and Science (DES), who were considering the development of middle schooling, gave a more detailed prescription for “curriculum postholders”. Their report suggested that schemes of work should be devised with reference to the teachers with appropriate expertise and should also contain objectives, resources and evaluation. Additionally postholders should act as consultants in their subject, involving leading a team of teachers, consulting with other schools and advising and working with colleagues (DES 1970). Professional stratification grew throughout the 1970's though as West (1995) pointed out the process of promotion continued to lack rigour, teachers being promoted on the basis of long service and loyalty to their school.

The recommendation that each primary school should have a specific “language co-ordinator” was made in the Bullock Report, (DES 1975). Whilst this report did not describe in detail what would be expected, it did state that the teacher should act as

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consultant to colleagues; assess and discuss diagnostic procedures and special help required by individual children; be involved in re-grouping arrangements; and should keep up-to-date with reading and language developments and materials (DES 1975). By 1978 as a result of Her Majesty's Inspection (HMI) surveys between 1975 and 1977, DES was associating higher standards with the presence of curriculum postholders who implemented a particular role. This included planning and supervising programmes of work, advising, leading and supporting colleagues. Consequently DES (1978) recommended improving the status of the postholder, the development of an assessment process to monitor schemes and visit other classes to see work in progress and also to allocate time for some of these duties. The inspectors had also stressed the need to keep up-to-date with subject knowledge, teaching approaches and materials, in addition to developing a leadership role whilst working in co-operation with their colleagues, making the best use of everyone's skills. However DES (1978) expressed concern that there was little evidence to show that the influence of teachers with curricular responsibility went beyond the work of their own classes.

The Cockcroft Report (1982) was quite explicit about what was expected of the co-ordinator. Looking at the teaching of mathematics the report claimed that the effectiveness of mathematics teaching was greatly enhanced if one teacher is given responsibility for planning co-ordinating and overseeing mathematics throughout the school (Cockcroft Report 1982). These duties were identified as: -

- The preparation of a scheme of work in consultation with the head, colleagues and feeder and future schools.
- To support and guide the implementation of the scheme.
- To organise and procure resources, monitor, assess and record mathematics throughout the school.
- To assist in diagnosing and remedying learning difficulties.

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- To arrange school based training.
- To liaise with other schools and the Local Education Authority (LEA).

Consequently by the mid-1980's subject advisors (experts within the LEA) passed down knowledge to advisory teachers (teachers employed by the LEA to advise schools) who then passed information to the school post holder, (Galton 1996). Despite such expectations research by Mortimore *et al.* (1988) indicated that the major role carried by teachers with a curriculum responsibility was for resources.

As part of the Schools Teachers' Pay and Conditions of Employment Order (1987) all teachers' contracts were required to carry a responsibility which was over and above that of class-teaching duties. Consequently as Day *et al.* (1998) pointed out additional pay allowances would now only be awarded should teachers have a responsibility beyond this new basic level. With the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) and Local Management of Schools the role of post holder or co-ordinator assumed more importance. In 1992 the Department of Education and Science (DES) commissioned a discussion document to debate issues such as the role of subject knowledge and subject specialism in primary education which became known as the 'Three Wise Men Report'. Whilst acknowledging the impact that co-ordinators had on school planning and resource management they were concerned that their impact on classroom practice was more limited. Consequently the report argued in favour of rigorous planning, sharply focused topic work and increased single subject teaching, (Alexander *et al.* 1992). The report by Alexander *et al.* (1992) also pointed out that there was an acute shortage of subject expertise recommending that ideally schools should have access to specialist teachers in all nine areas of the National Curriculum and religious education. Further, subject expertise in teacher training should be strengthened. Later reports in 1993 by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) and the National Curriculum Council (NCC) re-emphasised these issues and further promoted single subject and

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whole class teaching. John Patten (then secretary for education), and later OFSTED (1994b), were highlighting the need for improved subject teaching in primary schools and the role of the curriculum co-ordinator became much higher in profile. They also found that few co-ordinators had a role that extended to monitoring and evaluating quality. OFSTED (1994b) recommended that Co-ordinators should "contribute to the overall evaluation of work in their subject against agreed criteria, to evaluate standards of achievements and to identify trends and patterns in pupils performance" para 38. They also suggested the name co-ordinator was too limited a description and proposed instead subject manager, though it was not widely adopted.

The first role of the co-ordinator is to translate the subject orders for their area of responsibility into a form that other staff find easily accessible (Webb and Vulliamy 1996). They should then be involved with the planning of that subject throughout the school ensuring all the National Curriculum requirements are covered. OFSTED (1994b) clarified an expectation that subject managers would have a central role in curriculum development and should: -

- Understand the nature of their subject and how it relates to the wider school curriculum.
- Help the teaching of the subject through the provision of advice and documentation.
- Ensure that the statutory requirements are met through the organisation of teaching and resourcing.

These were regarded as issues that required little time and could be done outside the teaching day. However it was acknowledged that monitoring and assessment would require non-contact time to be made available, (OFSTED 1994b).

What is required of a Subject Leader in the late 1990's:

Since ERA the value of collaboration has been highlighted alongside these pressures for staff to take on leadership roles (West 1995). This has meant that headteachers and Subject Leaders have needed to become managers of change, recognising cultural features which are well adapted to the new situation of schools and adapting or changing those which are not (West 1995). This directly challenges the autonomy that comes with teaching in relative classroom isolation. As Webb and Vulliamy (1999) found in research looking at the management of curriculum policy change, Curriculum Co-ordinators were taking on more managerial tasks especially in larger schools. Also the monitoring linked to OFSTED reports gave them greater control over the subject but it added to the erosion of classroom autonomy. West (1995) believed such autonomy has arisen through years of teaching without benefiting from constructive feedback or alternatively from developing impossibly high self-expectations which has then drained staff of the energy to collaborate with colleagues. Nevertheless primary school teachers must plan and monitor progress to ensure progression (Aubrey 1994). In addition Merry (1996) argued that the Co-ordinators role as a support to newly qualified, student and returning teachers should not be ignored. Further whilst the needs of each of these groups may vary considerably much can be gained from the experience, such as the value of making their own aims, values and ideas more explicit and open to debate (Merry 1996).

The context and role of the Subject Leader has been subject to rapid change and continues to be so. Teachers with a responsibility for an area of the curriculum: -

.....have taken on a role, which involves research, resource maintenance, communication, advisory work and diplomacy.

Taylor (1989) p 51

West (1995) argued that rather than explore different ways of achieving curriculum management, monitoring and evaluation, OFSTED reports have promoted the

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continuation and improvement of current methods. In West's view the development in school of task or team cultures may have proved a more productive direction to move in. Schools are required to implement a National Curriculum under the guidance and help of OFSTED and the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA which has since become the QCA). At the same time the powers of the Secretary of State were greatly increased. Webb and Vulliamy (1996) argued that the impact of the National Curriculum has been to both reduce teacher autonomy and to create a need for the delegation of subject responsibility to Curriculum Co-ordinators. Consequently the role of Curriculum Co-ordinator has become increasingly important as the breadth of the curriculum has increased (Webb and Vulliamy 1996).

..those co-ordinators who work collaboratively with colleagues will enrich and deepen children's understanding by helping them to make connections that transcend subject boundaries.

Taylor (1989) p 52

Webb and Vulliamy (1996) pointed out that the influence of OFSTED has had considerable impact on the co-ordinators role through highlighting the importance and expectations that the inspectors have of the teacher performing that role. Featherstone (1996) suggested there were several points about which Co-ordinators must be clear. These include the purposes of the school and their curriculum subject, its successes and where they as Co-ordinators stand in that process. However most staff in primary schools spend the majority of their time in the role of class teacher (West 1995). Neither is it likely that any one school will possess teachers with expertise in all areas of the National Curriculum. Kitson (1996) highlighted the importance for any Co-ordinator whatever their particular subject of being a good classroom practitioner thereby demonstrating through example preferred teaching techniques and strategies. There should also be a willingness to try out and offer new ideas. They must also make themselves aware of what is being taught in their subject throughout the school and how this relates to other areas of the curriculum. The Co-ordinator should be aware of any policies and planning documents that exist and supplement, review, devise or adapt

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them as necessary. Once these aspects have been taken into account Kitson then recommends devising an action plan acknowledging current strengths and weaknesses and prioritising especially in the light of the budget. The co-ordinator can then look at the development needs of the staff and plan for appropriate training whether on an individual, whole school, internal or external basis. Kitson (1996) further warned about attempting too much too quickly. He recommended co-ordinator's start with their own practice, then work at the documentation, moving on to developing a continuity of approach throughout the school, finally introducing change in a way in which all those affected feel ownership. However the key to success is to show enthusiasm and make the curriculum exciting.

O'Niell (1996b) suggested that the way to develop the role of the Co-ordinator and move forward is firstly to develop a policy for learning. Priorities should be set for the development of curriculum areas in line with school development plans. This, Rose and Parsons (1998) believed, should encompass the needs of all pupils and will make the monitoring process much more effective. Priority areas should then receive the funds and resource support necessary for its development and finally Subject Leaders must be given a substantive role and the trust of their colleagues (O'Niell 1996b).

Debate around the role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator culminated with the Teacher Training Agency's (TTA 1998) publication, after a period of consultation, which set out the requirements for Qualified Teacher Status, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, Headteachers and Subject Leaders (formerly known as curriculum co-ordinators). Bell and Ritchie (1999) argued that the change from co-ordinator to Subject Leader is indicative of a change of emphasis in the role from that of maintaining the status quo to a more active participant in bringing about change. Now Bell and Ritchie (1999) argued, Subject Leaders have a key role in the raising of standards and enhancing quality in

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primary schools. The aim of the TTA requirements was to support governmental drives for school improvement through improving professional development and the quality of teaching, leadership and consequently pupils' learning. This set of national standards would provide a basis of clear expectations and development for each of these roles.

The core purpose of a subject leader is: -

To provide professional leadership and management for the subject to secure high quality teaching, effective use of resources and improved standards of learning and achievement for all pupils.

TTA (1998) p 4

The TTA have identified four key task areas of Subject Leadership: -

- 1. Strategic direction and development of the subject:** In this area Subject Leader's should develop and implement policy and practice; establish a positive and shared understanding of their subject role; identify and support underachieving pupils; keep informed; and use information and colleagues to plan for the short, medium and long term.
- 2. Teaching and Learning:** Subject Leader's should ensure curriculum coverage and the continuity and progression of all pupils; guide support and monitor the delivery of the subject using appropriate assessment and recording; set high standards and expectations; and establish effective links with the whole school and wider community.
- 3. Leading and Managing Staff:** Subject Leader's should support constructive relations between the staff and also between the staff and pupils; keep all motivated, well trained and informed as appropriate.
- 4. Efficient and effective deployment of staff and resources:** Subject Leader's should establish and meet resource needs; develop and manage resources effectively; create stimulating subject environments; and ensure safety and the reduction of risk.

Summarised from TTA (1998) pp 10-12

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For the TTA (1998) effective Subject Leadership can be summarised as resulting in improved pupil attainment, enthusiasm and attitudes; collaborative work patterns between teachers who support the aims of their subject as part of whole school's aims, who are raising standards, are enthusiastic and develop and provide support for their subject; parents being well informed about their child's experience, achievements and expectations of the subject; headteachers and senior managers giving appropriate support in the achievements and further development of the subject; all members of the school and community understand the achievements and priorities of the subject. In addition Subject leaders must have knowledge and understanding of their leadership role and that related specifically to their subject. They must also remain up-to-date with both subject and general educational developments.

In 1998 a governmental summary of the green paper (DfEE 1998) states that: -

Every teacher has a duty to keep their skills and subject knowledge up-to-date and a right to high-quality professional development.

DfEE (1998) p 11

This again emphasises a pressure for teachers to have high levels of subject knowledge. However no extra time and finance is made available to support professional development. The TTA have further itemised a number of requirements on Subject Leaders' professional knowledge and understanding. For example, they should have knowledge and understanding of, the school aims and how their subject relates to this (and other subjects); how teaching and learning are best practised and developed; how the use of evidence can improve standards; the management of people, finances and the subject; how to integrate information technology and communication into their subject; and the implications of guidance and information received. Whilst not an exhaustive list of TTA points, these examples illustrate the thrust of the TTA towards teachers having a clear understanding of their subject, how best it might be delivered and how it fits into the school-wide situation. This implies that teachers must spend time considering current practice, deciding on the most effective way forward for their

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subject, convincing colleagues of the need for change and/or improvement and in keeping their own knowledge up-to-date. In addition to these requirements the TTA (1998) also list a number of skills and attribute a Subject Leader should demonstrate: -

- **Leadership and Professional Competence:** through developing clear aims, priorities and planning; encouraging teamwork and high standards through example; working sensitively with people and using their skills appropriately; delegating tasks; and through being prepared to both give and receive advice.
- **Decision-making skills:** Subject Leader's should make decisions alone or in consultation as appropriate; and use information and data to develop their subject.
- **Communication skills:** through communicating effectively throughout the school and its community; chairing meetings; and ensuring good communication between all those involved in that subject.
- **Self-management:** through the best use of time to manage their leadership and classroom role; and take responsibility for their own professional development.
- **Attributes:** Subject Leader's should use their personality to further the role, ie: presence, enthusiasm and commitment.

Summarised from TTA (1998) pp 7-8

The standards and skills itemised in the TTA (1998) document provide the definitive requirements for subject leadership at the time of this research. Nevertheless as Bell and Ritchie (1999) point out this clarification of the role involves the provision of a daunting list of requirements. Neither would the alternative of a few general statements be adequate as they lead to confusion. This has further led Bell and Ritchie (1999) to suggest the Subject Leader has many roles and therefore treating it as a single role is inadequate.

The challenges of Subject Leadership:

...the role of co-ordinator is very diverse. It varies across schools from that of resource gatekeeper to planning and resource facilitator, to subject consultant and critical friend who works alongside other teachers in the classroom.

Kitson (1996) p183

Harland (1990) identified some of the methods by which advisory teachers provided subject support. These are also relevant to the role of Subject Leader: -

- Provisionary mode – this involves the provision of resources and advice on their use, procurement or construction.
- Hortative mode – where information is passed to colleagues through staff meetings or training.
- Modelling mode – involving demonstration lessons or working alongside colleagues with the expectation that good practice will be “absorbed” by the class teacher.
- Zetetic mode – this involves looking at teachers’ practice and negotiating positive changes.

These points closely match some of the requirements highlighted by the TTA (1998).

Research by Bell (1992) looking at the role of science co-ordinators indicated that Curriculum Co-ordinators were active in the provision of resources and there was some evidence of information sharing through training days and meetings. However the modelling and zetic modes were more problematic, in terms of opportunity and a reluctance to be seen to interfere with colleagues practice. Bell (1992) developed a model of the co-ordination role suggesting it involved five interactive functions. Although drawn from research with science co-ordinators, Bell (1992) argued they were generic to the role. The functions Bell (1992) highlighted were that of: -

1. Initiator – involved with developing the teaching and learning in a subject area.
2. Facilitator – making this development possible.
3. Co-ordinator – organising the subject throughout the school.
4. Evaluator – looking at and assessing how the subject is working in practice.

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5. Educator – developing the subject through raising colleagues awareness and knowledge about the subject.

This model of curriculum co-ordination was further developed by Bentley and Watts (1994) who suggested there were functions that cut across these roles. These describe where co-ordinators are involved in: -

- Working with people (i.e.: colleagues, governors, advisors and the community).
- Working with the subject matter, (involving subject knowledge, structure and development).
- Dealing with whole school issues (i.e.: resourcing, time, planning and monitoring).

The interaction between these functions builds into a model demonstrating the complexity of the curriculum co-ordinators role. West (1995) designed a model of curriculum co-ordination, which expresses the key elements of the role and is based on a wheel (Fig 4.2 below). This model, based on OFSTED documentation, reflects many of the same issues and roles raised by Bell (1992) and Bentley and Watts (1994). Nevertheless there is one point of difference at the hub of wheel where West has placed the pupils surrounded by a teaching and learning policy, an issue he felt to be important for schools to develop as it will influence and form the basis of subject policies. What the TTA (1998) have developed is in effect a collation of these roles and descriptions of the tasks they expect to be encompassed within them. However they have placed greater emphasis on the importance of the Subject Leader as an individual in this process. It is the responsibility of the Subject Leader to ensure that these processes take place, the TTA laying weight on the importance of enthusiasm, personality and organisation. This albeit subtle shift is nevertheless important as it reflects an increasing pressure on individual Subject Leaders and their subjects rather than engendering a feeling of collective responsibility for the curriculum. In addition if subject areas fall behind the Subject Leader can be 'blamed' whilst colleagues may feel little sense of

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Figure 4.2: Key elements of the coordinator/subject manager role, West 1995 p 12.



responsibility for that failure.

...it is extremely difficult for middle managers (Curriculum Co-ordinators) to undertake such roles in the individualized manner urged by successive reports since 1967. What is needed is a whole-school framework which informs action together with the adoption of a mixed economy of task and role structures which are in keeping with the culture of primary schools.

West (1995) p vii

Therefore Subject Leadership in primary schools is about the strategic development of the subject, ensuring the process of teaching and learning runs smoothly, managing colleagues and leading them in the subject and developing resources to the best effect, All issues around which there is broad agreement.

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There are also issues around the monitoring role, which has increased in emphasis and that West (1995) has included as forming the circumference of the wheel. Rose and Parsons (1998) pointed out that monitoring progress to ensure progression is an area which is a source of anxiety to Subject Leaders. They lack time to observe colleagues and sometimes the support structures, which would make management of their role easier. This has led Bennett *et al.* (1994) to argue in favour of subject specialists working alongside colleagues with the aim of lending support.

Assessing the effectiveness of the curriculum and ensuring a match with pupils' needs are only possible by teaching alongside and observing colleagues at work, by linking planning and target setting to monitoring and evaluation. Yet, These more threatening aspects of the co-ordinator's role are governed by the openness of colleagues rather than the aspirations contained, for example, in a formal job description.

O'Niell, J (1996b) p27

Whitaker (1993) pointed out that situations in which co-ordinators go into colleagues classrooms to monitor their subject can be enormously beneficial. However he warns that such situations must be handled carefully in order to avoid feelings of being threatened or criticised. O'Niell (1996b) argued that if teachers feel threatened by the prospect of the co-ordinator observing and commentating on their lessons then this aspect of the role will become largely meaningless. Subject co-ordinators also have a reluctance to give colleagues direct instruction, though their own (albeit limited) training may have involved this (Galton 1996). This is partly a result of power relationships, the Co-ordinator wishing to be seen as united with their colleagues, in the interests of both harmony and promotion. However, Galton (1996) suggested there may be an additional aspect involving the co-ordinators' lack of deep understanding of the issues of curriculum change, how expertise may be developed or how different in service training (INSET) approaches can foster development. He argues that INSET rarely caters for teachers who are themselves at varied stages in their development offering instead a blanket approach to development. Such issues are exacerbated by the fact that the

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curriculum reforms which Subject Leaders are having to implement have been imposed on them by government and its agencies.

...external pressures, especially OFSTED inspections and Key Stage 2 testing, brought about changes even though these were often in conflict with teachers beliefs.

Webb and Vulliamy (1999) p 134

Consequently external agendas are acted upon through fear or to protect the image of the school (Webb and Vulliamy 1999).

For Bell and Ritchie (1999) good Subject Leaders establish their credibility as colleagues who are prepared to learn, discover and listen. Consequently there are aspects of the TTA model of Subject Leadership that may have problems in their application. Questions need to be addressed about how the monitoring role is being implemented and whether the emphasis on individual responsibilities is acting against more communal ownership of change. However it seems likely that different schools may develop different solutions and outcomes to these issues as all new initiatives are liable to be mediated by the particular circumstance and culture of the individual school.

The impact of school cultures:

O'Niell and Kitson (1996) pointed out that schools were told of the benefits of curriculum co-ordination in terms of having experts at hand who are confident, well motivated and will lead by example. However, such benefits are restricted by a lack of time and money, a lack of support for the Curriculum Co-ordinator, or the Co-ordinator's lack of confidence. In order to become effective several pre-conditions need to exist, namely that of openness, trust, clear guiding values and supportive colleagues.

Collaborative, democratic approaches to curriculum development encourage ownership of the changes, so that effective translation of policy into practice is more likely. Conversely, an over-prescriptive curriculum and an instrumental, directive managerial style can inhibit process development...

Littleadyke (1997) p 259

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Therefore it can be argued that the culture of the school is of crucial importance to the success of the Curriculum Co-ordinator. Not only that: -

It is possible to argue that any definition of the role of the co-ordinator will prove inappropriate and, indeed, ineffectual, unless it is modified and adapted to meet the particular needs of the school in question.

O'Niell, J (1996b) pp 20-21

The culture of primary education is subject to continuous change with more recent pressures for change coming in large measure from the public arena, generated and reflected by the Education Acts of 1988, 1992 and 1993 (Richards 1994). In order to meet such change there is a need to understand the deep organisation and cultures of schools (Hopkins *et.al.* 1997). According to Day *et.al.* (1993), school teachers are having to review long held assumptions and practices, are anxious about coping with future requirements and the organisation of new knowledge, and are struggling to adapt and survive. Primary schools have been expected to mirror the differentiated roles of secondary schools but this expectation ignores the different cultural features of primary education (West 1995). O'Niell (1996b) argued that for anyone who has taught in schools it is apparent that the norms, behaviours and ways of working vary from school to school. The familiarity of day to day routines, values and expectations lends security to teachers' within their own school environment (O'Niell 1996b). Consequently the National Curriculum, which has altered perceptions about the way in which the curriculum is planned, delivered and assessed, has threatened this security as it has caused teachers to question their personal educational values and judgements. He further argued with the notion that direction and leadership provided by the Curriculum Co-ordinators' would provide an entire answer.

Hargreaves (1994) argued that the notion of teachers sharing a mission is attractive as it encourages commitment, loyalty and confidence within the school community. School effectiveness is repeatedly linked to shared decision making and staff consultation.

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By showing leadership, teachers will feel more ownership of and commitment to decisions. And by providing teachers with leadership opportunities, one accords them recognition. Therefore, they will work harder and better and longer.

Barth (1990) p 130

However this means that those who question the mission may be regarded as heretical.

Hargreaves identified four broad cultures that can be found in schools and which have very varied implications for educational change. These are summarised below: -

1. Individualism: Teachers are mostly isolated when teaching in classrooms. Sometimes this privacy is welcome but it can reduce the amount of adult support and praise. Despite efforts to break this isolation, individualism prevails. Hargreaves (1994) suggested that this may be attributed to teachers' diffidence and defensiveness or because of their failings and uncertainties. As a consequence individualism becomes associated with a fear of criticism. However Hargreaves (1994) offered an alternative explanation relating to the physical and architectural impediments to breaking that isolation. Teachers are often based within a cellular organisation of the buildings. In addition the rise of prescription in teaching means that teachers have less to collaborate about. Hargreaves (1994) also claimed that the negative associations with individualism in teaching may be inaccurate. Some positive qualities are apparent such as the need for autonomy and the ability to build close relationships with the pupils in the class. However For O'Niell (1996b) the reductions in teacher autonomy demanded through school planning, the National Curriculum, teacher appraisal and inspections is likely to be resisted if faced with a culture of individualism.
2. Collaboration: This is a culture based on consensus building. Nias *et al.* (1989) explained collaborative school cultures as built on four interacting beliefs; that the individual should be valued; that individuals form groups which should be valued and fostered; that values are promoted effectively through openness; values are promoted through mutual security. This culture of collaboration is primarily involved with personal relationships and is evident in shared individual and school-wide

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beliefs, values, customs and behaviours (Nias *et.al.* 1989). Consequently collaborative cultures produce consensus within schools about teaching methods, through constructive discussion in which a majority view emerges. Those teachers with extreme viewpoints tend to be marginalised. The curriculum content and practice is effected through a central belief in the uniqueness of individuals whilst also promoting actions which benefit the collective, such as treating others with care and concern. Collaborative cultures develop a strong commitment to a common task, valuing the contributions of all staff in moving towards that goal and recognising the interdependence of each on the other. This for Nias *et.al.* (1989) adds to a common feeling among the staff of being different to other schools. In addition this culture of sharing a common task, teaching methods and respect for the individual, working together on and communicating about teaching, happens relatively easily.

3. **Contrived Collegiality:** This culture is based on the exercise of organisational power. For Hargreaves (1991) contrived collegiality is a culture that allows for greater control as it is compulsory, administratively regulated (meetings are at fixed times etc.), orientated around implementing mandates and the outcomes are relatively predictable. He further expressed concern that collaborative working relationships could become relationships built on contrived collegiality. Collaborative cultures are spontaneous, voluntary, unpredictable, orientated around particular developments and pervasive, becoming a way of life. However the pressures of centralisation of curriculum control and evaluation make such unpredictable practices incompatible with school systems. This can mean collegiality is imposed on unwilling teachers or that it becomes a method of co-opting teachers into implementing external and administrative mandates through developing common values which may mean they have to abandon firmly held beliefs, thereby reducing criticism and deliberation of issues. Hargreaves (1991) describes this aspect as the micropolitical perspective of

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collegiality. His research report on initiatives to develop collaborative planning showed that a result of this initiative was contrived collegiality which resulted in inflexibility and inefficiency, demonstrated by teachers meeting when there was nothing to discuss or not meeting when they should.

4. **Balkanization:** Staff in this situation work neither in isolation nor in collaboration, but in small sub-groups (Hargreaves 1994). For example this might be a divide between Key Stage one and Key Stage two (the infants and the juniors). Balkanized groups differ from other sub-groups in that they are insulated from each other, teachers identifying strongly with one particular group. They become a group with a high degree of permanence, the group sharing assumptions about a range of issues such as the nature of learning. This subsequently begins to undermine their capacity to empathise or collaborate with other groups. For Hargreaves (1994) these groups promote self interest in the quest for promotion, status and resources. In such cultures it becomes difficult for all teachers to agree. Consequently balkanised cultures lead to teachers working in pockets of like-minded colleagues creating common practice only within that group.

Whilst all four of these cultures are applicable to schools it is collegiality that is being advocated as the great force in teacher development as it makes a significant contribution to the effective securing of curriculum reform through building commitment and understanding (Hargreaves 1991). However as Campbell and Southworth (1990) argued, despite pressures to become less independent and more interdependent, teachers still teach largely in private. Moreover collegial approaches can, they claim, lead to a loss of identity for teachers and headteacher alike. Such an approach is based on the conviction that agreements can be reached through negotiation. However it takes time for a group to mature to the point where this can happen (Campbell and Southworth 1990). Also as Hargreaves (1991) warned, the imposition of collegial values

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may in fact result in a situation where teachers find themselves imposing mandates they don't believe in and working in a situation that lacks flexibility. Imposed values may fail to recognise the informal organisation of the school. Informal groupings can be a source of psychological support and the nurture of resistance thereby creating a tension (West 1999).

OFSTED Reports:

The Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) was established in 1992 and consists of a body of inspectors who evaluate and set the criteria for schools successes and failures. A number of reports have had a direct influence on the role of what is now termed the Subject Leader. In 1996 OFSTED referred to the criteria which made what they then termed the Subject Co-ordinator effective. Effective co-ordinators were those considered by OFSTED (1996) to write and review policy, plan for raising subject standards in the whole school, plan for continuity and progression, monitor and evaluate these processes, support colleagues through provision of advice, methodology and resources, and to assess and record the progress of pupils. OFSTED (1996) concluded as a result of their inspection findings of 1994-5, that schools which had developed the role of subject co-ordinator as a curriculum manager had improved the quality of their subject work. In addition they acknowledged that teachers may be required to take responsibility for additional subjects and/or subjects in which they lack a specialism.

The role of the subject co-ordinator is therefore vital. Most primary schools do not have sufficient staff for the management of each subject to be undertaken by a different, experienced subject specialist. Therefore, teachers are required to assume responsibility as subject co-ordinators in one or more subjects, sometimes subjects other than their main specialism.

OFSTED (1996) p 34

This may in fact understate the issue as it is likely that many teachers are not specialised in the subject or subjects they are responsible for. To achieve success OFSTED (1996) advised observing, working alongside and providing feedback to colleagues, organising staff INSET and discussion on their subject, managing

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resources, attending relevant training and reporting back to colleagues together with liaising with other schools. They felt issues such as the development of the co-ordinators managerial role, enabling co-ordinators opportunities and time to be successful and supporting the co-ordinators in developing their own and their colleagues specialist knowledge, were important for schools to consider.

Whilst an OFSTED report (1997b) argued that the subject co-ordinator alongside the headteacher was an important part of assisting classteachers, with their planning, it also claimed that the subject needs at key stage 2 were not being met in all cases. The publication by OFSTED (1997a) of a specific report on subject specialism at key stage 2 pointed out that the curricular demands on primary school teachers was far wider than subject teachers in secondary education with less subject support and less non-contact time. OFSTED (1997a) found teachers were increasingly well qualified and subject specific training was provided but the use of this expertise outside their own classroom was limited by primary schools' organisation. Nevertheless a good subject knowledge and expertise was linked to higher pupil achievement. They also found that subject specialists were being used to teach some (occasionally all) other classes and/or the school was finding ways in which the specialist could influence whole school practice. However, it was noted that exchanging classes had little influence beyond the class involved. Nearly all the high standard lessons observed were taught by the specialist or teachers with a sound subject knowledge and subject specialists could rarely bring the quality of non-specialists teaching up to their own standards (OFSTED 1997a). However they acknowledged that schools were making considerable efforts to organise and plan the curriculum.

The overwhelming picture is one of well-qualified teachers with subject specialist skills finding it extremely difficult to influence practice throughout their schools.

OFSTED (1997a) p 9 para 30

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In 1998 OFSTED claimed that whilst teachers subject knowledge was more secure, assisted through in-service training and schemes of work, subject expertise was still underused. Further links were made between subject expertise and raised standards. OFSTED (1998) also highlighted a need for policies (now mostly in place) to be backed up by detailed schemes of work which had not always been the case. They further noted that classroom observation was increasing though there was a continued lack of opportunity for subject co-ordinators to monitor other classes and evaluate the effectiveness of their curriculum planning.

The effect of such reports is significant, OFSTED inspections being of crucial importance to schools and their reputations. Consequently OFSTED recommendations are taken very seriously, but in general they have to be put into practice without the benefit of extra funding. In addition OFSTED impose particular models of education, for example highlighting the benefit of Subject Co-ordinators teaching in years 5 and 6 and the importance of the co-ordinator's subject knowledge in raising pupil achievement.

Some research evidence on Curriculum Co-ordination in practice:

Research by Kinder and Harland (1991) demonstrated the lack of status, time and opportunity there was for co-ordinators to work on their professional development or consultancy role. They suggest a range of outcomes from high quality In Service Training (INSET) such as providing new knowledge and skills, but found that only low order outcomes such as resource provision, were being observed in school. This was because the kind of high quality, sustained INSET was not being provided. Further research by Edwards (1993) indicated that teachers viewed the role of the co-ordinator in a limiting way, with a lack of emphasis on the developmental aspect of their subject role. However in direct contrast research conducted by Webb and Vulliamy (1995) found a relationship between the teacher's depth of subject knowledge and the range of

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teaching techniques they used, better knowledge being linked to more teaching techniques. They also noted that co-ordinators played a major role in planning and policy making, catering for the National Curriculum requirements, which helped raise their colleagues' confidence. However the co-ordinators ability to change a colleagues subject pedagogy was limited. Pedagogical issues were raised and discussed through the introduction of new resources giving co-ordinators the excuse to question and change teaching and organisational methods and monitoring was conducted through examining colleagues plans, pupils work and class displays. Their influence on classroom practice was limited to offering support, advice and ideas, with only rare opportunities to work alongside colleagues. Nevertheless the co-ordinators considered a large part of their role involved resources being non-controversial and appreciated by colleagues, although heads differed about whether they gave their co-ordinators a resource budget. Webb and Vulliamy (1995) showed that whilst valuing the class teacher system most co-ordinators believed there were advantages for pupils in having some specialist teaching. Although the level of co-ordinators subject expertise varied considerably according to the opportunities presented to attend courses and the depth of their prior knowledge of the subject. Webb and Vulliamy (1995) also stated that headteachers' still valued classteaching skills above that of subject knowledge. In addition because of the pressures of time heads were conducting some of the classroom monitoring, co-ordinators being more reluctant to take it on. However co-ordinators would give advice to colleagues during lunchtimes or breaks. Also while some co-ordinators did their planning in consultation with the head many used whole staff meetings to gain ideas and feedback throughout the process. The effect this had was that co-ordinators were gaining confidence in leading meetings (something which they initially felt apprehensive about).

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Reynolds and Saunders (1987) carried out research looking at the way in which curriculum change was influenced by curriculum co-ordinators in one authority. They concluded that factors such as informal and regular discussion of planning with colleagues; leading by example and demonstrating good practice themselves; supporting colleagues through provision of curricular knowledge and materials; having the open support of the headteacher in terms of the person, time allocation and resourcing; and by making themselves available in a non-threatening way worked to enhance the co-ordinators effectiveness. However they also noted that these commitments had to be fitted in to an already busy day which led to periods with no co-ordination activity, when other school commitments took precedence. New policy requirements were integrated as far as possible within the existing school values so as to be as unobtrusive as possible and thereby involving negotiating with colleagues rather than giving them advice.

The research evidence suggests that Curriculum Co-ordinators have acted to assist their schools in meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum. They have produced policy, schemes and plans that have combined the National Curriculum requirements together with the requirements of the school, which has helped to raise the confidence of their colleagues. Co-ordinators have gained experience in leading staff meetings, entering into discussion with their colleagues about the curriculum needs of their subject. However, this role is limited by constraints such as the lack of time available, the status of the role, the extent of the Co-ordinators subject knowledge and the view the Co-ordinator holds of the role, this often involving placing priority on resource issues. However as found by Bell and Ritchie (1999), resource issues can provide a good starting point from which Co-ordinators can move on to develop and deal with wider issues. In terms of this research it is important to consider the factors which are considered to act as constraints in more detail.

Factors which act to constrain Subject Leaders:

Webb and Vulliamy (1996) highlighted three aspects, which act to constrain the role of the co-ordinator: -

1. **The co-ordinators level of expertise:** Headteachers may have looked to appoint new staff with particular subject expertise, but their chief criteria was to appoint an effective classroom teacher. Co-ordinators had, in general, been appointed on the basis of expertise, experience or interest in the subject they had taken on. In small schools staff will invariably carry multiple subject responsibilities. They must also conduct this role alongside that of class teacher without any extra recompense. Studies by Harland (1990) and Alexander (1992) indicate that teachers complained of a lack of leadership training, a skill they deemed necessary for the co-ordinators role.
2. **The lack of time available for carrying out the role:** As classteachers co-ordinators have experienced an exponential growth in paperwork. They have to plan both at the class and the whole school level. They are also developing knowledge of the National Curriculum and looking at issues of differentiation and pupil assessment. Consequently co-ordinators feel a divide between what is achievable in reality and what is being asked of them. This lack of time to carry out the tasks of co-ordinator is further complicated by the lack of time to meet with other members of staff (because they all have heavy commitments). OFSTED (1997a) also showed that the lack of non-contact time acted as a powerful constraint on the specialist as did the lack of “extra” teachers, who could be used to “free up” subject specialists.
3. **The nature of the power relationships in the primary school:** Many co-ordinators and teachers lack confidence and experience of sharing classroom practice. Power relationships that existed in the school could effect this. For example young co-ordinators expressed concerns about trying to influence older and more senior members of staff. Newer teachers were also less confident about having their

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classroom practice observed. Some co-ordinators regarded monitoring in colleague's classrooms as a form of surveillance. OFSTED (1996) highlighted the problem of the co-ordinators role being ill defined and lacking status and West (1995) argued that they are also dependent on the headteachers' willingness to delegate power. Day *et al.* (1998) added that power relationships act as a problem in three ways. Firstly the co-ordinator may be managing a subject in which they are less capable or knowledgeable than another member of staff. Secondly they may be managing a subject in which they have less experience than other members of staff particularly if they are newly qualified. Thirdly, it may be difficult to manage others, most of whom have the same status and salary as the co-ordinator. For Day *et al.* (1998) despite the rhetoric of co-operation, co-ordinators work largely in isolation having responsibility that is different to other members of staff. Also some subjects will carry a greater workload than others, or a higher status than others. Research by Thornton (1996) found that higher status subjects, such as the then core subjects of English, Maths and Science tended to be co-ordinated by higher status teachers, often male, who's classroom responsibility was likely to be with the older children. This is further complicated as demarcations of roles in schools have become blurred as all teachers are likely to have an area of subject responsibility, the management of which overlaps that of class teacher. In addition subject boundaries are less clear cut than in the secondary sector, (Bell and Ritchie 1999).

Briggs (1997) made the point that in small schools Subject Leaders may be responsible for several areas of the curriculum, some of which are likely to be areas the Subject Leader is less comfortable with. Further the class system could also differ from the usual year groups, involving vertical grouping of mixed ages. This adds another dimension to curriculum planning in such schools (Briggs 1997). Equally in large schools there may be a problem getting to see particular members of staff and enabling

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everyone to feel involved. However as Briggs (1997) pointed out, there may be opportunities for sharing a subject responsibility between two teachers and for some release time. Whitaker (1997) pointed out the crucial significance of current pressures on schools. There are macro-pressures representing the world wide advances in science and technology. These have had an enormous impact leading to concerns about ecological change, changes in social and political life and the development of information technology. This has placed specific demands on schools by demanding a curriculum that must change and adapt rapidly in order to reflect changing situations. This requires a great deal of flexibility. As Whitaker (1997) argued schools are also asked to be a creative force in the change process in tune with emerging developments and trends. In addition there are micro-pressures involve a steady stream of educational changes such as devolved budgets, the introduction of new types of school and increased systems of accountability and systematic inspection. For Whitaker these pressures have increased demands on an already under resourced service whilst undermining professional authority and creating a culture of suspicion and mistrust. Alongside this are the psychological challenges of uncertainty, complexity and constant change which Day *et al.* (1998) argued has led to shortening time scales and targets thereby losing sight of "the big picture".

Such pressures and demands, which include the mounting centralisation and prescription of the curriculum and pedagogy, must make it more difficult to react flexibly and creatively to need. In these circumstances it is possible to sympathise with Day *et al.* (1998) who argued that schools seem to have become the scapegoat for a society that is changing rapidly and confused about its future direction. According to Whitaker (1997) these pressures have created two forms of complexity. Firstly in the mounting information which is increasingly difficult to store or accommodate. Secondly this information requires both internal and external human resources to process and make

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sense of it. This is a thankless task as once completed new updates arrive. Whitaker (1997) suggested that few people have been educated to deal with this level of complexity, or the idea that there are no absolute solutions to such problems. In addition much of the information supplied is ambiguous requiring some degree of research to check interpretations of it. With rapid change comes uncertainty about the future and confusion. Whitaker (1997) argued that this is one of the greatest challenges of leadership in schools and as a consequence of these pressures teachers have become a high risk group, vulnerable to occupational stress. Day *et al.* (1998) argued that confusion is caused by changes that are too many and too rapid. The workload on individuals is increasing in weight and complexity and varies with the status attached to different subject areas. Time is lacking for training, preparing and adapting to change. The pressure to cover ground is leading to insufficient attention to detail and the erosion of professional time into personal time is at the expense of family life and well-being. This for Day *et al.* poses a serious threat to emotional health. Change and development is a continual process of adaptation and modification. Day *et al.* (1998) recommend that teachers reclaim some power and authority for aspirational change back into the school. In other words the teachers, who are extremely committed to the welfare of their pupils, need to plan and develop their schools based on their own values, beliefs, visions and principles. They also suggest re-developing the trust, support and confidence in those who have a real stake in the school and its future. This involves overhauling assumptions about teaching, learning and what makes a good school and effective leaders (Day *et al.* 1998).

Hargreaves and Fullan (1998) argued that schools cannot ignore change and must continually adapt, shift and change. Teachers need to find better ways to work with others and better structures to work within to benefit the interests of their pupils. Therefore they suggest that change can be creative, active and rewarding. For

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Wilkinson (1990) more effective time management has become more important especially with the greater involvement of all staff in decision making. As a consequence, identifying and establishing priorities and goals is essential. Day *et.al.* (1998) recommend the concept of a heterarchical management where the management structure continuously changes and re-configures through a variety of teams to tackle specific tasks. This would give greater flexibility in dealing with complex change. Development would be linked to School Development Plans and could therefore be taken on by appropriate teams either consecutively or concurrently (Day *et.al.* 1998). It is important to remember that leaders are not mechanistic but are human with all that involves. Bell and Ritchie (1999) suggested that the Subject Leadership role, though complex, is not impossible, and by adopting a dynamic and proactive approach Subject Leaders can meet the challenges. They highlight the need for Subject Leaders to get together and have discussions with colleagues as a group of Subject Leaders. They can then address issues generic to Subject Leadership such as approaches to assessment, recording and reporting, schemes of work, together with looking at cross curricular issues. This in a sense, is a physical representation of the development of the 'policy for teaching and learning' recommended by West (1995) here conducted through discussions about their approach. Bell and Ritchie (1999) also pointed out that this may well prove to be more easily achieved in small schools where Subject Leaders have multiple responsibilities and smaller numbers of staff to draw together.

Conclusion:

Reference to the idea of supporting colleagues in particular subject areas can, as Bell (1992) points out, be dated back to the Board of Education Handbook in 1905. However, curriculum support, which is more specifically related to primary education developed slowly through the 1960's and 1970's until a new emphasis was placed on the role. This was as a result of firstly legislation (the School Teachers Pay and

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Conditions Order 1987) requiring teachers to take on a responsibility beyond that of classroom teacher (with no extra pay). Secondly the Education Reform Act (ERA 1988) introduced a National Curriculum which increased the focus on subject teaching. Ten years later the Teacher Training Agency (TTA 1998) had produced a set of criteria that the newly named Subject Leaders were expected to fulfil.

Throughout the late 1980's and the 1990's the role of Curriculum Co-ordinator was becoming more complex. Co-ordinators were being asked to manage the curriculum whilst monitoring and evaluating progress. Along with the National Curriculum came a greater focus on achieving a high standard in all subject areas. This served to increase the emphasis on teachers who took on a subject responsibility. The TTA (1998) summarised what had become, as Bell and Ritchie (1999) pointed out, a generally accepted view of what Subject Leadership should involve, however this drew in a formidable list of requirements.

Several models have been developed in an attempt to illustrate the complexity of the Subject Leader role. However the effectiveness of any such model is mediated by the particular culture of the school in which it is placed. The cultures of schools can be broadly divided into four categories (Hargreaves 1994). That of individualism where teachers remain isolated which might be exacerbated through the architecture or through their own volition. Collaborative cultures are where everyone is valued as are all contributions and mutually agreed values are promoted. There are cultures of contrived collegiality where it is attempted to enforce and regulate a collegial culture. Finally there are balkanized cultures where there are separate sub-groups of teachers who may undermine attempts to achieve school-wide change.

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These variations in culture make the role of subject Leader more complex as these teachers will need to adapt their strategy to suit the situation in which they find themselves. Research evidence suggests that the role of Curriculum Co-ordinator has developed significantly in schools but it has also highlighted concerns such as the impact of power relationships, time available and levels of subject expertise. Nevertheless indications are that although the role was initially viewed by Co-ordinators as a resource management role, these Co-ordinators/Subject Leaders have moved on to develop policy and schemes of work through discussion through to advising colleagues on practice. However, the extent to which colleagues practice had changed as a result was subject to some debate.

Given the significant anomalies between schools, such as size, the number of curriculum responsibilities carried by teachers, resourcing etc, little has been done to address how these demands and challenges can be made both effective and equitable across all primary schools Day *et al.* (1998). Day *et al.* (1998) further argued that current models of management roles and responsibility lack the robustness and flexibility needed to cope with the demands of primary education. The National Curriculum has, on the basis of little debate, divided the curriculum up in order to ensure continuity and progression. Briggs (1997) argues that this reduces potential for an integrated view of learning and fragments the experience of pupils. Therefore Subject Leaders need to recognise links and gain a broad (rather than narrow) conception of their subject.

So the role of the Subject Leader is in part aiding the implementation of external mandates, but also acting to mediate change and help adapt it in a way that fits particular situations and cultures. Questions arise about how Subject Leaders are able to manage what is such a daunting list of responsibilities alongside their role of class

Subject Leadership – the process of development

teacher and behind which lies the threat of OFSTED who will inspect and report on their success or failure. Equally questions are raised about the effect of taking on separate roles and separate responsibilities in what is a small community. Does this increase the isolation of Co-ordinators as Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) suggest? Questions have also been raised about the willingness of Co-ordinators to conduct a monitoring role; the extent to which the Headteacher will delegate power to the Co-ordinator; the power relationships between Co-ordinators based on the subject responsibility they hold or their personal status; and finally the time afforded to Co-ordinators to perform the role adequately. These are all issues this research intends to address.

Chapter Five: Methodology

Introduction:

In chapter one on the context of primary education it was argued that education has been subjected to a period of wide ranging reform. Moves toward greater central control of the curriculum were fuelled as parents began to take an increasing interest in their childrens' education (Gardner 1998). Such shifts culminated in the imposition of a National Curriculum by the government as part of the Education Reform Act (ERA 1988). This act also increased the accountability of schools by providing a structure upon which impositions could be made, through imposing national testing and through open enrolment. Thus schools were exposed to market forces. Centralisation of control over the curriculum conducted together with a decentralisation of control over responsibility for the budget, resources and the management of schools created tensions (Hopkins and Lagerweij 1996) and a dramatic increase in the complexity of school management (Bullock *et.al.* 1995). In chapter two looking at the nature of the primary curriculum, child centred philosophies were argued to have played a central role in the development of primary school education (Blenkin and Kelly 1987). As demands for greater accountability and the importance of subject knowledge increase, so does the focus on the position of the Subject Leader. This leads to a question about what extent the new emphasis on this role represents a change in the philosophy of primary education? Chapter two suggests that moves are away from child centred education towards a more behaviourist stance where educational outcomes can be planned for and measured. The conclusion reached was that teachers have therefore come under considerable pressure to change both their philosophy and their practice (Barber 1993). However, it was also acknowledged that teachers might to some extent adapt and modify change to suit their particular circumstances (Hargreaves and Fullan 1998). Nevertheless teachers are now faced with a formidable range of topics and content to cover. In such a high pressure environment questions are raised about what

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management and organisational structures are implied in order to develop the Subject Leadership role.

Chapter three on leadership and management suggests that managerialism has risen in schools and with it the promotion of the values of good leadership. Suggestions that schools should be managed along similar lines to businesses have led to attempts to apply business management models to schools. However they do not adequately describe the complexities found within school structures. Alongside leadership and managerial pressures is a stress on greater collegiality. Consequently leadership must provide direction in given areas without threatening the autonomy of individuals. Subject Leadership is promoted as a method of moving toward more equal partnerships within schools. But again this seems to create tensions by emphasising leadership and management alongside that of collegiality. The organisation of schools is therefore both hierarchical and expected to allow for a more flat management style, which begs the question of whether such management and organisational structures are workable?

Given the recent focus on Subject Leadership it is important to discover how this role developed and to consider the factors have led to the development of the role. Chapter four on Subject Leadership argues that notions of teachers supporting their colleagues in particular curriculum areas is not new (Bell 1992). However the role has increased rapidly in importance since ERA (1988). Throughout the 1980's and 1990's the role became more complex as reports by the Department of Education and Science (DES) and the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) demonstrated. This leads to the question what do the government and educational agencies say Subject Leadership should involve? Increasing focus on the role and its requirements led to the Teacher Training Agency (TTA 1998) producing a set of requirements for the role of the Subject Leader. The list produced was daunting and served to highlight some of the complexity

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of the role. However the effectiveness of this model of Subject Leadership is suggested to be influenced by the culture of the school. In addition chapter four highlighted some debate on the ability of the Subject Leaders to change colleagues subject practice. It was also asserted that Subject Leaders might in part aid the implementation of external mandates and act as mediators of change. Limited information could be gathered about the reality of Subject Leadership as there has been little recent research into this role. Further chapter four argued that the role was initially seen by what were then termed, Curriculum Co-ordinators, as a resource management role. The role has since evolved to include such tasks as the development of policies and schemes of work through to advising colleagues on their practice. Add to this the complexities and variations between schools such as their size, the number of subject responsibilities carried by individual teachers and the quality of resourcing then different Subject Leaders may experience quite different issues in relation to their role. This then begs questions about how Subject Leaders perceive their role and what the realities of Subject leadership involve. Further questions are raised about how far these perceptions and realities match and interact with the criteria set by governmental and educational agencies?

Introduction to the Research Questions:

The apparent paradox between centralist prescription and devolved control with the imposition of business management styles on primary schools makes the exploration of the role of Subject Leader a complex issue. Little research has been conducted which has been specifically related to the role of Curriculum Co-ordinator. The most recent research has been that conducted by Bell (1992) and that by Ritchie (1997) who have both looked at the role of the Science Co-ordinator. Since that time the role has undergone some dramatic shifts and changes of emphasis and expectation. Consequently the focus of this research is the roles of Subject Leaders in the context of these tensions existing between the traditional primary school teaching values and

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cultures, and the new managerial systems being imposed on them. This involves looking at the external forces of changing legislation, curricular requirements and accountability; the internal forces of school management systems, school cultures and individual approaches; together with examining the tensions created around leading and managing whilst at the same time collaborating and communicating. Issues are raised about the delegation of power to Subject Leaders, the complexity and manageability of the requirements made of them, the mediation and then monitoring of change and development and working to develop expertise and confidence in others in addition to themselves. These issues have led to the formulation of the following research questions.

Research Question:

The Roles of the Subject Leader in Primary School: a comparison between the roles adopted by Primary Subject Leaders and those prescribed by government and education agencies; how far is a perfect match possible or desirable?

Sub-questions:

- 1) What do the government and educational agencies say Subject Leadership should involve?
 - a) To what extent does this represent a change in the philosophy of primary education?
 - b) What are the factors that have contributed to the evolution of Subject Leadership roles?

- 2) What forms of management structure or organisation might this imply?
 - a) What forms of management organisation have been imposed or suggested?
 - b) To what extent are these structures workable?

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- 3) How do Subject Leaders conceive of and put their role into operation?
 - a) How far does the reality of what Subject Leaders do, meet their expectations?
 - b) To what extent do Subject Leaders expectations of the role, meet their ideals?

- 4) How far do questions 1, 2 and 3 match?
 - a) To what extent does the role the Subject Leader performs, meet the criteria set by governmental and educational agencies?
 - b) What role does the context of the school play in this relationship?

Background to the Data Collection:

At the time of the data collection period Subject Leaders were commonly referred to as Curriculum Co-ordinators. Consequently the term Curriculum Co-ordinator will be used in relation to all information collected during this period. This section will provide a brief overview of the data collection period before moving onto a more detailed account of the methodologies used.

The data collection period set out to: -

- a) Identify a sample: as will be explained later in this section the schools identified were an opportunist sample known to the researcher and to staff at Liverpool Hope.
- b) Discover what Co-ordinators think about their role and what they see the ideal being: this information was collected through a series of interviews which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.
- c) Look at how Co-ordinators ideals compare with the reality of their role: an aspect of the question dealt with in the findings and analysis chapters through a comparison of the data collected from interview, diaries and observations.

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- d) Discover what Co-ordinators actually do in relation to their role: this information was gathered through a combination of the researcher's observation and diaries kept by the Co-ordinators themselves, discussed later in this chapter.

Identification of the sample:

The gathering of such detailed information not only lends itself to qualitative methods but also implies a considerable commitment of time. Therefore the number of schools that could be investigated by one person was necessarily limited. It seemed reasonable to set a period of one academic year to collect the data not only in terms of the time limitation of conducting a PhD but also that an academic year would cover all the standard events in the school calendar. It was therefore the intention to present a rounded view of the differing demands made of Co-ordinators, over one academic year. Given this time-scale it was decided that twenty Co-ordinators would be an appropriate number from which to gather information. This would provide a reasonable balance of views and experiences. Also to combat the possibility of being given a distorted view of a particular school it was decided to identify two Co-ordinators from each school, therefore ten schools were involved. To further extend the range and experience encompassed schools were chosen from two Local Education Authorities, which provided a range of geographical contexts such as rural and urban areas together with a range of school size, varying from forty-nine pupils to five hundred and fifty pupils. In addition the schools represented a mixture of outcomes based on OFSTED inspections, one of which being placed in special measures. Special Measures is applied to schools who have failed an OFSTED inspection and are then given specific targets to be met within a given period. These schools are also subject to more frequent inspection. However other schools in the sample were performing extremely successfully against OFSTED criteria. Unfortunately another school was placed in special measures during

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the data collection period thereby somewhat altering the balance of the sample. In addition the Co-ordinators identified encompassed a variety of ages, experience and subject responsibility. Two Co-ordinators were male and eighteen females.

The schools identified were an opportunist sample from those who had previous connections with Liverpool Hope or were known to the researcher, a system also used by Webb and Vulliamy (1999). In the first instance the headteacher was approached informally and once having declared an interest these heads were asked to identify Curriculum Co-ordinators who would be willing to become involved in the study. The headteachers were asked to select two Co-ordinators of varied experience (if possible). Co-ordinators were then selected on the basis of providing a reasonable mix of subject responsibilities, age and experience. Most of the teachers involved had other co-ordination responsibilities and they were therefore asked to select one area of subject responsibility to concentrate on. However one school (school J) had only 2.4 teachers and so the two full-time staff shared the majority of the subject responsibilities between them. They were also in the early stages of developing schemes and policies. Consequently it was too complex to ask them to separate out a particular area of responsibility so they were included in the study by simply referring to the key stage for which each was responsible. Such information provided a valuable contrast to include when for example one other school was large enough for subject responsibility to be shared between two staff, one at each key stage. All those schools approached were happy to take part though in one case the headteacher took early retirement and recommended an alternative school. The next step was to meet the Curriculum Co-ordinators involved and the headteachers as a group in order to make introductions, explain the research aims and the methods that would be used. It was decided to make individual visits to those Co-ordinators who were unable to attend the meeting. Sanger (1996) recommended a procedure of open discussion as a means of overcoming some

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of the ethical issues around the invasion of privacy. For example there is always a danger that the researcher could exploit those who have become her/his subjects (Seidman 1991). All the Curriculum Co-ordinators involved confirmed their continued interest in taking part in the research. As the researcher I made a commitment to the anonymity of Co-ordinators who would not be identified as individuals through the research process. As Manion and Cohen (1994) explained, informed consent is the process by which those being researched are informed about what data the researcher is collecting and what the aims of the research are and then being given the option of refusing to take part at any point if they so desired. In this case one school withdrew from taking part in keeping the diaries as they felt this would be too great a time commitment for their school. They were the small school already mentioned (school J) where the two Co-ordinators identified were the only two full-time staff (one being the Head). Feedback was given throughout the course of the data collection in the form of informal group discussion. A final report (appendix 1) was delivered at the university after completion of the initial findings and copies of papers produced as a result of this research will be sent to the schools involved.

A brief overview of the methodologies:

In order to collect data that would establish some background to the Co-ordinators role, the first step was to send out questionnaires. The questionnaires were used in a very specific way to gather information such as the size of the school, the experience of the teacher, what curriculum responsibilities were held, what other responsibilities were held and what duties were expected of a Curriculum Co-ordinator (copy of questionnaire appendix 2). Therefore the responses provided a very general context and background to the research. Questionnaires were distributed to and completed by all the teaching staff with a curriculum responsibility in the research schools prior to more detailed investigation. However as this research is intended to build a model rather than test one

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it was necessary to gather more in depth information than the questionnaire could provide such as information about the various perceptions and realities of the role. The need for such in depth data lends itself more readily to research of a qualitative nature. As Sarantakos (1998) argued, qualitative research leads to the development of a rich and detailed account. To build a more in depth picture information was gathered through semi-structured interviewing. As May (1997) asserted semi-structured interviewing allows focussed and pre-specified information to be collected but at the same time has the advantage of allowing the interviewer to probe beyond those answers in order to clarify and elaborate on the response. Whilst a single set of interviews could provide much needed extra detail it was necessary to build in enough flexibility to gather more sustained information, allowing for and recognising that situations change over time. Therefore it was important to develop a good relationship with the Co-ordinators. As a result three interviews were conducted, one in each of the three terms over one academic year. As for Nias *et.al.* (1989) this system of repeat interviewing allowed for re-focussing at the end of each set of interviews and the development of questions through issues raised by the Co-ordinators themselves.

Whilst interviews could provide information on what Co-ordinators do in relation to their role in order to gain a more detailed day to day account of their experience, Co-ordinators were asked to keep diaries and record the tasks they conducted. The diaries were to be kept for four weeks of each of the three terms. Such records have the advantage of accounting for hours that a researcher couldn't track. This was asking for a considerable commitment of time from Co-ordinators but monies laid aside specifically for the purposes of this research were used to financially compensate schools for their time. As the Co-ordinators role may include what seem relatively insignificant or easily achieved events or a complexity of different aspects to focus on it is possible that events may be missed or forgotten in these recordings. Consequently the Co-ordinators

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were also observed for a day each term allowing for some independent corroboration of what the Co-ordinators thought they were doing whilst at the same time providing some background information and a context within which Co-ordinators were working. Observation notes also have the flexibility to allow for some reflection by the Co-ordinator to be recorded. Whilst immersion into the role as a participant observer (as in Nias *et.al.*'s 1989 study) can give the observer insight into the experience of those observed, it does have some disadvantages. For example it is necessary to spend enough time in the role to become familiar with the every day experience of those being observed (May 1997). This would be very difficult in the case of this research where there is only one researcher and a limit on the time allowed to collect the data. Also there is a possibility that the researcher may lose their objectivity as they become more involved (Sarantakos 1998). Also the literature had suggested there was a wide range and variation of practice to consider because of management issues, leadership styles and school structures. Therefore in this case observations were conducted by tracking the Co-ordinators for one day of each term and recording their actions. However there were limitations around this technique as some aspects of the role might be conducted outside school hours or simply on a day other than the one observed. Nevertheless through the use of this combination of methods (similar to those used by Webb and Vulliamy 1995), it was possible to gather a very wide-ranging and in-depth coverage of all aspects of Curriculum Co-ordination. Figure 5.1 below shows a timeline of different methods used. The reasons for the selection of the particular methods and details of the specific strategies used are described more fully in the following sections. Woods (1986) has argued in favour of the benefits of using more than one method of data collection. Using one method of research acts to filter or select out particular views and experiences. Using two or more methods extends the information collected and counters to some extent the bias of any one particular method (Cohen and Manion 1994). Therefore in this study different approaches were used to broach different

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Figure 5.1: Timeline to show where the research methods were used

March-April 1997:	Identified schools.
May 1997:	Sent out questionnaires.
June-July 1997:	Questionnaires returned and analysed.
August-September 1997:	Prepared first set of interview questions, met Co-ordinators and distributed diary pro-formas.
October-December 1997:	Conducted first observations and semi-structured interviews and collected diaries.
December-January 1997/8:	Brief analysis and preparation for second term. Develop second set of interview questions.
January-April 1998:	Completed observations, semi-structured interviews, collected diaries.
April-May 1998:	Brief analysis and preparation for final term. Develop third set of interview questions.
May-July 1998:	Completed observations, semi-structured interviews and collected final diaries.

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aspects of the enquiry. Methodological triangulation involves using the same method on different occasions or, as in this case, different methods on the same object of study. It lends itself to complex phenomena giving a more detailed and holistic view of the situation. However in this particular research different methods are used to extract slightly differing forms of information in order to develop a wider picture and context for Curriculum Co-ordination.

Miles and Huberman (1984) explained that the research process involves decisions being made about the setting, the actors and the events and processes to be recorded. In terms of this study the setting is the schools. However, as the literature has indicated the role of Co-ordinator is a complex and time consuming one therefore there was an interest in gaining some information about where tasks were taking place. Decisions about the actors were relatively straightforward as it was information directly related to Curriculum Co-ordinators that was sought and so it was the Co-ordinators who were the focus of the investigation. In deciding which events and processes would be recorded it was necessary to consider all the actions taken by Co-ordinators as part of their Curriculum role. This allowed for the possibility that Co-ordinators may differ in some respects from each other in terms of what their role involved.

Figure 5.2 shows the range of schools and Co-ordinators involved in this research. Appropriate sections of this table were sent to Co-ordinators for comment. There were no reports of inaccuracy. There follows three short summaries of schools in order to give a sense of the variety of schools and situations included.

School B:

This was an suburban school of 550 pupils and 16 teaching staff and the headteacher, who was of long standing within the school. The assistant headteacher described their

Figure 5.2 Table to show background information about the schools.

School	Numbers staff (incl head)	No's pupils	Head's yrs with school	Area	Co-ordinator	Chosen subject	Other commit	Years teaching	Years with subject	How got subject role	Non-contact given	Head supportive	Colleagues supportive
A	13	330	6+	rural	A Eng	English	SEN	3-5	1*	Volunteer Career move	Yes	Very	Fairly
					A His	History	Geog PE	6+	6	Volunteer Interest	Yes	Very	Very
B	17	550	6+	suburban	B D&T	Design & technology	none	6+	2	Came with job	No	No	Fairly
					B Art	Art	none	2	2	Degree	No	Not very	Fairly
C	3.4	86	3	rural	C Sci	Science	Deputy ICT music assessment	6+	1st	Requested by Head	Yes	No response	Fairly
					C Eng	English	PE Health & safety	6+	1st	Degree Came with job	Yes	No response	No response
D	9	220	6+	Inner city	D Sci	Science	ICT recorders	3-5	3	Volunteer Area of need	No	Very	Very
					D PE	Physical education	KS2 manager	6+	4	Came with job	No	Very	Very
E	11	260	1 new head	urban	E Eng	English	KS1 Co-ordinator	6+	2	Degree Area of need	Yes	Fairly	Fairly
					E PE	Physical education	none	1	1	Degree Came with job	No	Fairly	Fairly
F	22	550	1 new head	suburban	F RE	Religious Education	KS1 music	6+	6	Requested by head	Yes	Very	Very
					F Ma	Maths	Mentor Phase leader	6+	6	Came with job	No	Fairly	Fairly

Figure 5.2 Table to show background information about the schools - continued

School	Numbers staff (incl head)	No's pupils	Head's yrs with school	Area	Co-ordinator	Chosen subject	Other commit	Years teaching	Years with subject	How got subject role	Non-contact given	Head supportive	Colleagues supportive
G	15	339	1 = 6+ 0 = new appointment during research	Inner city	G ICT	ICT	Staff development	3-5	2	Volunteer Career move	No	Not very	Fairly
					G Sci	Science	Assesmnt Acting Deputy	6+	1	Volunteer Interest	No	Not very	Fairly
H	13	220	6+	Inner city	H Ma	Maths	none	6+	5	Degree of Area need	No	Fairly	Very
					H Sci	Science	Deputy	6+	4	Came with job	No	Very	Fairly
I	11	270	1 new head	urban	I Eng	English	Deputy hist K&S2 co mentor assesmnt	6+	5	Degree Came with job	No	Fairly	Fairly
					I Ma	Maths	ICT	6+	5	Came with job	No	Fairly	No
J	24	47	1 new head	rural	JKS1	Not applicable	Deputy maths hist mus D&T RE SEN	6+	Not applic	Not applicable	No	Fairly	Not very
					JKS2	Not applicable	Head English art sci geog assesmnt	6+	Not applic	Not applicable	No	Not applicable	Fairly

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most recent OFSTED report as 'all right', another inspection being due during the period of the research. The two Co-ordinators who took part in the research were a recently qualified teacher in her first appointment and an experienced teacher who has worked in several schools. Both were responsible for their degree specialist subject, art and design and technology respectively. Neither considered the head to be supportive but they considered that their colleagues provided a fair degree of support.

School C:

This was a rural school of 86 pupils and a teaching staff of 2.6 and a teaching head. This was the headteacher's first school and she had been in post for two years. The head reported the most recent OFSTED findings as good with a further inspection being due, possibly during the research period. Both Co-ordinators taking part in the research were very experienced teachers. As both teachers had multiple subject responsibilities they were asked to identify one subject to be the focus of the research. One Co-ordinator was new to the school and had taken her subject responsibility identified for the research, English, when she joined the school. The other was asked to take her subject responsibility identified for the research, science, by the headteacher. This Co-ordinator was also the deputy head. Neither made comment about the supportiveness of the head and only one commented that colleagues were fairly supportive.

School I:

This was an inner-city school of 220 pupils and 8 teaching staff and an experienced headteacher. The head reported their recent OFSTED findings as having been excellent. Of the two Co-ordinators involved in this research one had three years experience and had volunteered for a curriculum area where there was a need for a Co-ordinator. The other was an experienced teacher who took her responsibility for physical education with the job. They both had another area of responsibility. Both also considered the head and their colleagues to be very supportive.

The Questionnaires:

Questionnaires are a relatively quick way of gathering information which, given the use of more closed questions in this context, can be analysed easily, (Munn and Drever 1990). They also reach a greater number of people than it would otherwise be possible to, especially in small-scale research. In the case of this research all the Curriculum Co-ordinators in those schools taking part in the research were asked to complete the questionnaires and were assured that they would not be identified as individuals. This involved the majority of the teaching staff. However this information was used for the purposes of developing the questionnaires only and therefore has not been included in table 5.2. Also the information gathered was used by Bell and Ritchie for their own research purposes. As Munn and Drever (1990) argued, using questionnaires with a group of people that are known increases the possibility of a high return.

The literature has indicated that Curriculum Co-ordinators may come from a range of backgrounds and experience and may not necessarily Co-ordinate a curriculum area linked to their degree specialism. As Alexander *et.al.* (1992) concluded there may be a shortage of subject expertise in schools. In addition Webb and Vulliamy (1996) pointed out that their research indicated that Headteachers appointed staff on the basis of their being good classroom practitioners first and foremost. In addition it was argued that schools differ on the basis of their history, culture and particular situation. For example research by Torrington and Weightman (1993) demonstrated distinct and variable cultures in the schools they studied which was based on management style, the history of the school and the attitudes of teachers. Consequently perceptions of the Co-ordinators role may differ as might the tasks undertaken. The intentions of using questionnaires was to help build a very general picture of how the research schools used and view the Co-ordination role and what variation of experience or expertise the Co-ordinators bring to that role. Consequently it was important to find out what tasks Co-ordinators were expected to complete, whether they had the support of the head and colleagues, how

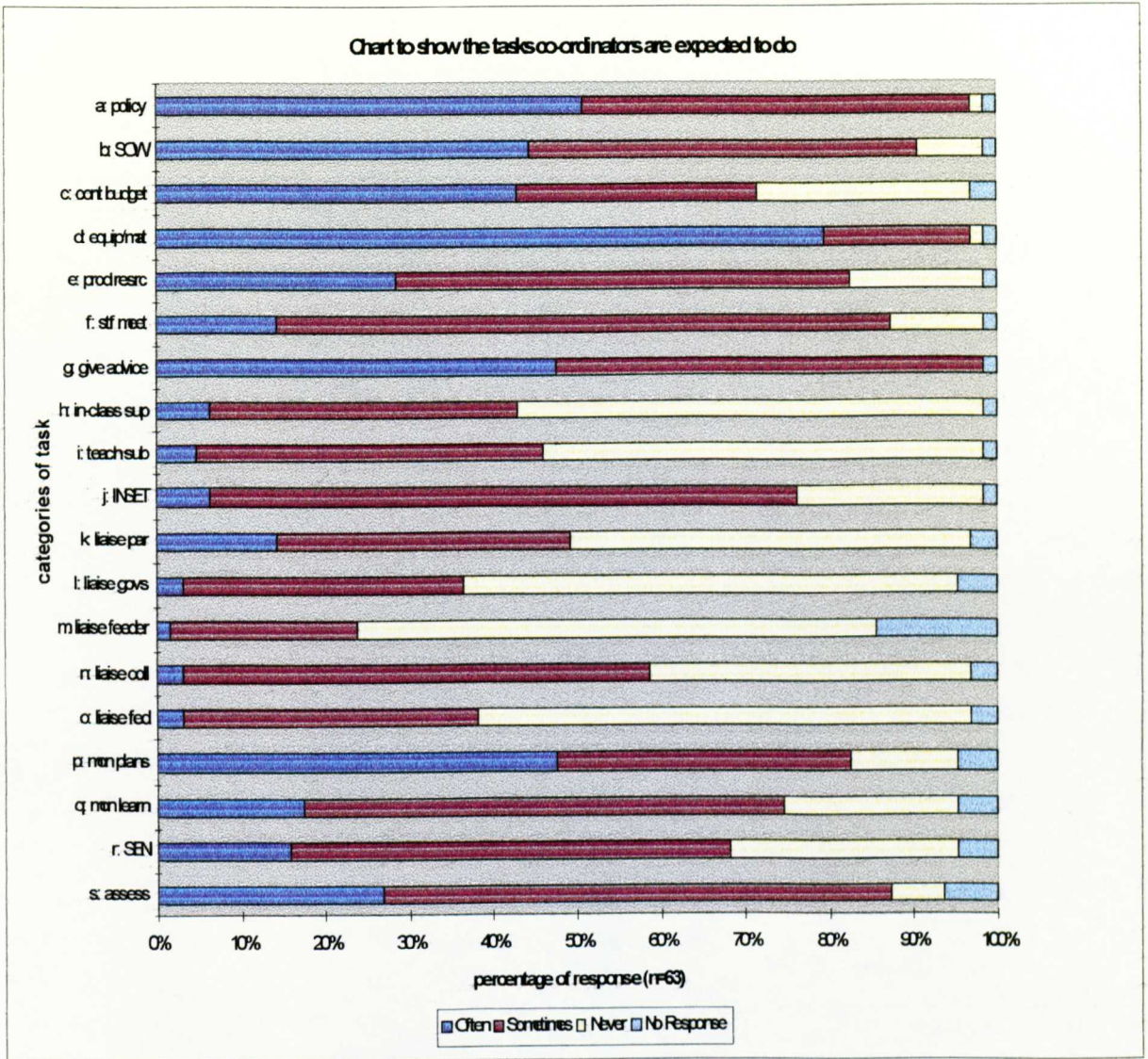
they came by their curriculum responsibility and such things as the size of the school and the experience of the co-ordinator. Questionnaires had been designed and piloted by Ritchie for his research into the role of Science Co-ordinators the early findings of which were presented at conference (Ritchie 1997). Drafting a questionnaire can take time (Munn and Drever 1990). Sarantakos (1998) argued that constructing questionnaires "is a very demanding task which requires not only methodological competence but also extensive experience with research in general and questioning techniques in particular" p. 226. Therefore given that the design of questionnaires is complex and that piloting needs to be conducted, using a previously designed and tested questionnaire was extremely valuable. It also allowed for the distribution of the questionnaire early in the research period giving much needed time to inform the next stage of the data collection. Ritchie's questionnaire needed only minor adjustments in order to use it in the context of this research and an agreement was reached that both parties could make use of the results (copy of questionnaire in appendix 2). One of the disadvantages of questionnaires is that the information collected tends to be descriptive and superficial (Munn and Drever 1990). However in this case superficial responses could be followed up throughout the data collection period in schools.

The questionnaire was designed to find out firstly something about the experience of the Co-ordinator in terms of their teaching, length of time at the school, how they came by their subject responsibility and how enthusiastic they were about it. Secondly it asked what tasks Co-ordinators were being expected to perform. Thirdly it asked about the support given to the Co-ordinator and finally about the constraints on the role. The questionnaire also asked how recently they had been subject to or how soon they were expecting an OFSTED inspection. Consequently detailed information was obtained about what Curriculum Co-ordination involved, how subject responsibility might link to expertise or interest and how support or constraints might affect this position. It was also important to know whether the school was going to be inspected during the research period in order

that the research period in school did not interfere with that process. The questionnaire was distributed through the Headteachers of the research schools and given to all teaching staff who carried a curriculum responsibility. Of the one hundred and seven questionnaires distributed sixty three were returned. It can be assumed that some of the teachers accounted for in the numbers of questionnaires distributed were not acting as Co-ordinators, also part-time teachers were not asked to complete the forms. In addition school I learned they had failed their OFSTED inspection during this period. Probably because of this there were only returns from three Co-ordinators from that school. Similarly the response from school G was low (three Co-ordinators) as the Head had announced he was leaving and a temporary appointment was being made during this period. The results were analysed through first coding the answers and then the production of tables and graphs showing frequencies of response. Consequently as figure 5.3 below demonstrates, it was possible to look at a number of issues such as the range of tasks Co-ordinators were involved with and the priority attached to these tasks.

The results indicated that paperwork such as writing policy and schemes of work, together with resource issues such as sorting out and buying equipment, were key tasks. However whilst providing some idea of the tasks involved in Curriculum Co-ordination, such information does not give detailed information about how these tasks are conducted, the time spent on them and what range of tasks are involved with for example dealing with equipment and materials. The same is true of information gathered such as what Co-ordinators perceived to be acting as constraints on their co-ordination role. Figure 5.4 below shows this information as a pie chart. From this chart it can be seen that the chief constraint noted by Co-ordinators was that of time and money. However this does not explain why these two factors are viewed as important. Therefore it was essential to gathered more detailed information from co-ordinators.

Figure 5.3



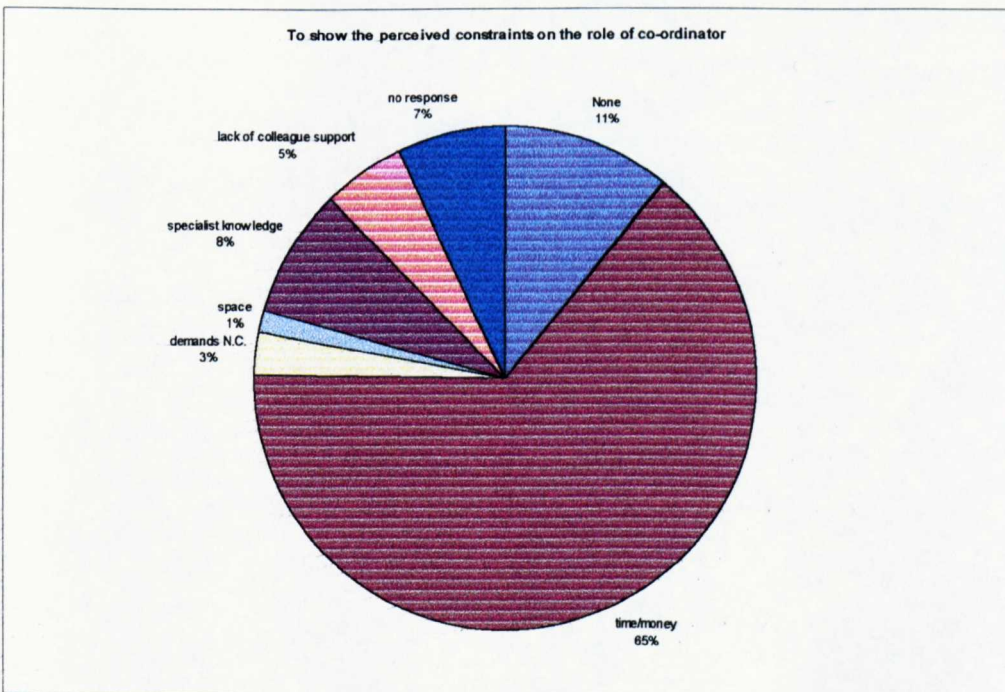
An explanation of the categories used above (fig 5.3) is as follows: -

- a) policy: Write or review a school policy
- b) SOW: Produce or modify a scheme of work
- c) Cont budget: Control a curriculum area budget
- d) Equip/mat: Be responsible for equipment and materials
- e) Prod resrc: Produce resources for colleagues to use

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- f) Stf meet: Organise subject related staff meetings
- g) Give advice: Offer colleagues advice
- h) In-class sup: Support colleagues in their classrooms
- i) Teach sub: Teach the subject to children in other classes
- j) INSET: Organise school-based inservice activities
- k) Liaise par: Talk to parents about the subject
- l) Liaise gov: Talk to governors about the subject
- m) Liaise feeder: Liaise with a feeder school(s)
- n) Liaise coll: Liaise with colleagues in other primary schools
- o) Liaise fed: Liaise with schools your pupils go on to
- p) Mon plans: Monitor teachers plans
- q) Mon learn: Monitor classroom learning
- r) SEN: Deal with concerns related to pupils with SEN
- s) Assess: Deal with assessment, recording and reporting

Figure 5.4



Such information provided background knowledge and a basis from which the interviews could be designed. The first set of interview questions followed up on these issues.

The Interviews:

Interviews help provide access to the world and experiences of others (Miller and Glassner 1997). In order to establish detail about the Curriculum Co-ordinators perceptions, experiences, thoughts and philosophies in relation to their role, audio-taped semi-structured interviews were used. Subject Leaders were interviewed once in each term of one academic year. This enabled development from one interview to the next, the earlier sets acting to inform the lines of investigation in subsequent interviews. Progressive focussing techniques have been used by Nias *et.al.* (1989) and Webb and Vulliamy (1999) as they allow the researcher to make some initial analysis and in subsequent interviews follow up issues and questions that arise from that analysis. The first interviews were piloted with two teachers who were not taking part in the research after which each set of interviews built on the experiences of the former interviews. This had the advantage of being less time consuming given the range and extent of data collection intended. However initial interviews proved more lengthy than expected taking around forty minutes. Consequently there was some pressure to complete the interviews because of the classroom commitments of the Co-ordinators therefore it was not always possible to pursue issues in the depth desired. More thorough piloting may have enabled the length of the interviews to have been more realistic. As relationships developed over the period of research and the Co-ordinators felt more at ease and it was possible to ask more probing questions in the later interviews. Also the length of the interviews became more finely tuned, the final set of interviews taking around twenty minutes, which proved more productive. Interviews were generally conducted either during the lunch hour or at the end of the day, although in one school (school C) the headteacher made time available for Co-ordinators interviews during the teaching day. There were a few occasions where interviews were conducted or begun during free non-teaching periods.

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In general interviews took place in the Co-ordinators classroom or occasionally the staff room. Exceptions to this are discussed later in this section. The interviews asked the same questions of all co-ordinators and issues arising were included as a generic question for all. In this way it was hoped to draw out differences or similarities between schools and Co-ordinators through the variations in their response. Over the period of interviewing the tone of the questioning became less formal and less prompting became necessary as my experience as an interviewer grew. This structured yet somewhat more conversational approach meant that the Co-ordinators' sense of humour became evident as they relaxed.

In depth interviewing is aimed at the development of some comprehension of the experiences of other people. It also involves coming to an understanding of the meaning they attach to those experiences (Seidman 1991). Whilst it is unrealistic to expect to understand another persons experience completely, interviews do allow actions to be placed in a context which will aid this understanding. The flexibility of the interview agenda is also an issue (Shipman 1981). There is a choice between sticking rigidly to the schedule or taking less structured approaches and following lines of enquiry which prove interesting. In this case it was necessary to provide evidence which could be compared and was collected along the same lines. However it needed some flexibility to enable the Co-ordinators to expand on their particular circumstances. Therefore a semi-structured approach to the interviewing was adopted. A semi-structured approach was used by Thornton (1996) which, as explained earlier in this chapter, has the advantage of collecting data which can be compared whilst at the same time allowing enough freedom for the interviewer to pursue issues of interest or which need clarification. Interviewing also requires sensitivity about the effects of the interaction between the researcher and the subject and the meaning that each person attaches to the situation (Shipman 1981). Therefore the questions must be chosen carefully and thought given to the circumstances and surroundings where the interviews take place. Interviews involve a considerable

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amount of time as participants need to be contacted, interviewed and the data transcribed and analysed (Seidman 1991). In the case of this research, schools are so busy and space at such a premium that interviews sometimes took place in less than ideal circumstances. Some of the more difficult venues ranged from an interview conducted in the hall cupboard used for lunchtime chairs with catering arrangements continuing outside; a 'greasy café' at lunch time with a radio playing in the background as the co-ordinator needed to 'get out of school' during the lunch hour; and a 'glass bowl' library in full view of the staff room with other members of staff interrupting at various points. This had implications not only for the quality of response but also the quality of the tape-recording. However, there seemed to be little option but to make the best of these less than ideal situations. Another issue as mentioned earlier, was the time Curriculum Co-ordinators could afford to give up for the interviews. Initial interviews were designed to take approximately forty minutes. This was quickly discovered to be too long and therefore there was some pressure to cut out some of the questioning, or not pursue issues one might under other circumstances have questioned more deeply. The second set of interviews were of a more comfortable length and by the third set the timing was about right at 20 minutes. This appeared to be an ideal amount of time for Co-ordinators to spare and yet still be able to talk about issues of importance. Copies of the interview schedules are provided in appendix 3. Fifty six of the sixty possible interviews were completed successfully all Co-ordinators being interviewed at least twice (some were missed due to such circumstances as illness).

Both the literature and the questionnaire responses indicated that the Co-ordinators role involved a complexity of tasks and responsibilities. This is especially true more recently when looking at the TTA (1998) requirements for Subject Leaders which Bell and Ritchie (1999) described as a formidable list. The questionnaires had indicated that Co-ordinators were involved with a range of tasks. However this did not explore what Co-ordinators understood by each task category and there was only limited space to explore other tasks

not listed in the questionnaire. As a consequence the first set of interviews set out to discover what Co-ordinators' thought a Curriculum Co-ordinator was and what they saw the ideal as being. They were also asked about the reality of their role in terms of the tasks they performed and how effective they thought themselves to be. In addition Co-ordinators were asked about how their role was managed by the school. Questionnaire responses had indicated that schools varied in their organisation of the co-ordination role. Also the questionnaires had explored issues of support and constraints. Co-ordinators had not been very forthcoming about the support of colleagues and head though they had placed a heavy emphasis on the constraints of time and money. Consequently these issues were pursued further through the first set of interviews, Co-ordinators being asked about factors which helped or inhibited them in performing their role. Finally given the TTA were working towards the requirements for a Subject Leader (published TTA 1998) Co-ordinators were asked about their thoughts on the possible change of nomenclature. A number of issues worth pursuing arose from this line of enquiry: -

- Co-ordinators mentioned varied pieces of documentation but not in a way that gave consistent information about it, leading to questions about what each school held in terms of paperwork and the importance attached to it.
- A number of Co-ordinators mentioned subject knowledge as a mark of effectiveness raising questions about the extent to which they considered subject knowledge important to their role. Also the questionnaires had highlighted the fact that Co-ordinators may not necessarily have formal qualifications in the subject for which they were responsible.
- Co-ordinators appeared to place importance on their relationships with colleagues leading to questions about how exactly they viewed and managed these relationships.
- It became apparent that both internal and external pressures had some impact on the Co-ordinators role. Consequently it was important to establish how Co-ordinators negotiated change and its impact on their views.

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These issues were followed up in subsequent interviews the second set of interviews focussing on the recent and rapid changes highlighted in both the literature (Cullingford 1997) and by the Co-ordinators themselves. Co-ordinators were asked to comment on their personal educational philosophy and the impact on this of the imposition of change. In addition they were questioned about the documentation they held and the value they placed on it. Moreover they were questioned on the value they placed on subject knowledge in terms of their curriculum role. Again some questions were raised: -

- Co-ordinators appeared to have varied levels of autonomy leading to questions about the extent of their ability to affect change.
- Again emphasis was placed on the positive impact of supportive colleagues lending further significance to questions about how they might manage those relationships.

Given a new emphasis on collegiality and collegial styles of working highlighted in the literature (i.e. Campbell 1996) together with the significance attached to relationships with colleagues raised by the Co-ordinators the final interviews sought to discover how relationships with colleagues were managed. Also questions were asked about the extent to which Co-ordinators felt autonomous both in terms of their relationships with colleagues and in terms of their ability to have some input into school-wide change. They were also asked to identify their school's philosophy and about whether they had input into it.

One of the problems with interviewing is as Cohen and Manion (1994) stated, that of the reliability of the information the researcher is being given by the subject. It is possible that the Co-ordinators may have understated or exaggerated their position, or perhaps used the interview to highlight particular issues. It is also possible that information is forgotten or that what might be true for the Co-ordinator at that point in time is not true in general. One way of counteracting these problems is through collecting other data which might help throw some light on the validity or otherwise of the interview responses. In addition

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issues which seem to be common to all the interview responses would indicate the accuracy of that particular view or position. Equally the interviewer has to be careful to attempt not to lead or influence the questions and responses in a way which suits the researchers own bias. In this way the formulation of the questions must be made very carefully in order to make the meaning of the questions clear. In the case of this research it was noticeable that the interviewing technique improved over the three periods of data collection as my listening skills and non-committal responses developed. However it was equally noticeable that particular Co-ordinators were more responsive than others to the interview situation. In some cases Co-ordinators who were usually highly responsive became much less forthcoming as the tape was switched on. In such cases it was tempting to lead the response to some degree. Nevertheless even these slightly awkward moments dissipated as the research progressed. However, interviews alone could not provide a clear indication of what Curriculum Co-ordinators were actually doing. They were time consuming and ran a risk that some issues were missed or not picked up, or that the perceptions of the researcher and Co-ordinator were different (Bell 1993). Consequently it was important to use other methods to gather slightly different information which for example Co-ordinators saw as too trivial to mention.

The Diaries:

The diaries set out to gather detailed information about the Co-ordinators day to day experience and the commitment involved in their curriculum role, thereby producing information on: -

- When Co-ordinators conducted their tasks and what the time taken was designated for, such as playtime, assembly time or non-contact time.
- What the tasks they did were, who instigated them and why.
- Where the tasks were conducted, such as in the corridor or at home.
- What the outcome was and any thoughts or reflections on the task.

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The advantage of diaries is that they collect information that does not rely on the rapport between the researcher and their subject, or on interview type questions. They can be filled in with time to think and express thoughts more carefully thus providing an insight into the views of those completing them (Woods 1986). Not only is it less time consuming for the researcher but such accounts can include periods of time to which the researcher has no access, for example work done at home. Diaries are also a way of providing consistent and continuous accounts. In the case of this research some of the Co-ordinators time was spent working outside school hours and the diaries provided a way in which such information could be collected. In addition they provided more consistent evidence than could be achieved through interview and observation alone. Curriculum Co-ordinators were asked to complete diaries for four weeks of each term in one academic year, a total of twelve weeks. They were asked to give information on weeks 5, 6, 7, and 8 in the first term, weeks 7, 8, 9, and 10 in the second term and weeks 6, 7, 8, and 9 in the third term. Through this it was expected to establish in detail, the time spent and the tasks Co-ordinators were involved with. Initially the Co-ordinators were gathered together to explain how this information should be recorded, which was followed up with written advice. A copy of this advice and the diary pro-forma are included in appendix 4. The diaries were designed to record events or tasks Co-ordinators were conducting, the time spent on them, where the tasks took place and who instigated them. They also asked for notes about outcomes and how Co-ordinators felt about what they were doing. Consequently the diaries provided a rich source of evidence providing information which linked both to the observations and to the interviews. However unless the diaries are kept throughout the year there were inevitably some events that were missed or not accounted for because they happened outside of the scope of the diary period. Figure 5.5 below is a table showing which diaries were completed and reasons why others were not.

Figure 5.5: Record of Diaries kept.

School	Co-ord	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term	Reasons for non-completion
A	His	Y	Y	Y	
A	En	Y	Y	Y	
B	D&T	Y	Y	N	Had completed no tasks
B	Art	Y	Y	Y	
C	Sci	Y	Y	Y	
C	En	Y	Y	Y	
D	Sci	Y	Y	Y	
D	PE	Y	Y	Y	
E	En	Y	Y	Y	
E	PE	Y	N	Y	Off sick + personal problems
F	Ma	Y	N	N	Busy with other responsibilities eg management team and student teachers
F	RE	Y	Y	Y	
G	ICT	Y	Y	N	New head taken on and re-thinking whole school development which took priority
G	Sci	N	Y	N	Not identified until late in first term then made acting deputy which claimed time
H	Sci	Y	N	N	School informed would be closing in one to two years
H	Ma	Y	N	N	School closure expected so took another position in another school
I	Ma	N	Y	N	School failed OFSTED diaries a difficult commitment – some sick leave
I	En	N	N	N	School failed OFSTED diaries a difficult commitment – lot of sick leave
J	KS1	N/a	N/a	N/a	School very small and requested not to take part in keeping diaries
J	KS2	N/a	N/a	N/a	School very small and asked not to take part in keeping diaries

A basis for the diaries was adapted from a pro-forma, which had been used in the past by Liverpool Hope for the purposes of an MEd. teaching module on Curriculum Co-ordination. Members of this course were practising Co-ordinators and kept a diary in order to look at what they did and analyse how they might better understand, improve and broaden their role. These diaries recorded what tasks Co-ordinators performed, how long tasks took and when they took place. These were then adjusted to include information about where the tasks were performed and any observations. The adjusted diaries were

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piloted with a group of ten Co-ordinators also part of the same MEd. module, to establish what tasks Co-ordinators undertook as part of their role. After analysis of the results the proformas were further refined and adapted to allow for additional information to be collected about who instigated the task and what the time spent on these tasks was designated for, for example assembly time or non-contact time. The diary proforma can be found in appendix 4. The diaries proved useful as they are a method of getting a first-hand account written close to the event (Nachmias and Nachmias 1976). However as Nachmias and Nachmias (1976) argued, the problem with such diary information is that it may not be entirely authentic. The author may be trying to please the researcher or they may forget or exaggerate some of the incidents that happen. Also authors may modify their behaviour in order to complete the diary (Bell 1993). Therefore problems of bias could influence either the recording or the analysis (Bell 1993). Also the authors meaning behind statements might not always be clear or the diaries not completed. Consequently documents need to be read in the context of their production and their consumption (Atkinson and Coffey 1997). It was possible that Curriculum Co-ordinators wanted to be seen to be working on subject related tasks and therefore focussed on them. However some diaries handed in had no tasks performed in a particular period as for example the school was concentrating on literacy hour that term. This indicates a degree of honesty about what was done and lends legitimacy to the data. Other diaries were not completed for a variety of reasons including one school (school I see fig. 3) being given the news that they had failed an OFSTED inspection, which threw into doubt their continued interest in the study. Though they did decide to continue many of the staff had bouts of sick leave and the Co-ordinators identified for the research found the commitment of the diaries difficult. School J, as has already been explained asked not to be committed to producing diaries as they couldn't spare the time necessary thus highlighting the fact that Co-ordinators are extremely busy people. Nevertheless thirty eight diaries were completed over the year, which formed a sizeable and useful set of data.

The Observations:

Observations set out to provide information on the tasks and interactions conducted by Co-ordinators as part of their curriculum role. It was hoped by these means to collect information about how the Co-ordinators role fitted into the teaching day and to verify the diary information. The observations could also provide valuable information about the school situation that would help subsequent analysis and understandings. They could also provide a record of subject related conversation. Observation time was also used to build up a good relationship with the Co-ordinators. The second observation period included time to observe another class where the co-ordinators curriculum subject was being taught. However this strategy, as discussed later, was abandoned. In addition the second and third observation periods included a schedule to record Co-ordinators interactions with their colleagues. This helped gather information about the frequency of the Co-ordinators subject related conversations and as analysis at that time and later findings further demonstrated this was a problem area in the diary records, discussed later. Such non-participant study has the advantage of allowing observation of events as they evolve thus providing the researcher with first-hand information (Sarantakos 1998).

The process of observation alters with the perspective taken by the researcher (Shipman 1981; Cohen and Manion 1989). "Individuals enter situations with maps already established in their minds into which they fit the evidence of their senses" (Shipman 1981 p 75). There is also an ethical dimension as the researcher is asking for co-operation without the observed being in control of what is noted. The researcher is acting as a voyeur with the aim of reporting, in the interests of detailed study, as accurately as possible what is observed whether or not the observed would approve. In addition the very presence of the researcher will have an effect on the subject/s and situations being studied. In the case of this research it was decided to be as open as possible about what was being noted, whilst attempting not to be too omni-present in the classroom thus avoiding altering the natural flow of the Co-ordinators day as much as possible. However,

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it was almost impossible not to attract the attention of the pupils in the class who took a great interest in what was going on. Woods (1986) explained that it is a British tradition to employ the role of the non-participant observer, taking a 'fly on the wall' approach to research by sitting at the back of classrooms observing things as they happen. Woods further observed that it was very difficult not to have an effect on the situation being observed. In the case of this research teachers were often inclined to take the opportunity of moments when their pupils were occupied to come and have a conversation. Nevertheless as the focus of the observation was not strictly the teaching but the Co-ordinators role, this often provided opportunities to clarify aspects of the Curriculum Co-ordination experience and become more informed about the attitudes and expectations of staff.

Observations were made of the Curriculum Co-ordinators day in order to help validate the Co-ordinators perceptions about what they do. Each Curriculum Co-ordinator was observed for one day in each of the three terms, though in the third term one Co-ordinator had taken a job in another school. Whilst the majority of the day was spent observing Co-ordinators teaching there were opportunities to note some actions taken as part of their Curriculum role. In addition interruptions were noted and checked to see if they had a bearing on the Co-ordination role. This method was also informative about the reality of being both a teacher and a Curriculum Co-ordinator and the tensions which surround this. At the end of the first terms observations analysis revealed a distinct mismatch between diary reports about subject related interactions with colleagues and those reported in the observations. The diaries recorded far fewer incidents than the observations were suggesting. To this end the second and third observation period included an observation schedule where notes were taken about interactions conducted with and by the Co-ordinator with others, especially when they were related to the Co-ordinators subject responsibility. A copy of the observation schedule can be found in appendix 5. This schedule did not attempt to account for the time taken but just the numbers of incidences,

which were often rapid and in quick succession. It may be for this reason that Co-ordinators neglected to note such interactions in their diaries as they would prove difficult to remember. It was also possible that Co-ordinators did not think to mention casual subject related conversation as part of their role. This is a point, which, with hindsight, should have been made much more explicit when discussing keeping the diaries with the Co-ordinators.

Although detailed field notes were taken during the teaching day, these observations were extremely time consuming and yielded very little in the form of the information sought about the Co-ordinators role. With hindsight this aspect of the research should have been considered much more thoroughly in respect of whether it was indeed the best way of collecting such information. The temptation had been to get on with the data collection and consequently not taking the time necessary to think this through more thoroughly before commencing. Many hours were spent noting teaching events with only perhaps one or two incidents related to the co-ordination role in a day and sometimes none at all. Also the aims of the observation periods (appendix 6) were somewhat unrealistic and issues being observed not necessarily informative in terms of the Curriculum Co-ordination role. For example some attempt was made to observe the teaching of the Co-ordinators subject in another classroom. However not many teachers were willing to do this and it proved unhelpful in terms of the information gathered. Again the time necessary to think this strategy through had not been taken and last minute attempts to persuade schools to allow this to happen were unlikely to produce a fruitful result. Such tack-on initiatives are, I have learned, fraught with problems. Consequently this approach was abandoned. There were also problems related to the ability to note all that is happening within the complex situation of a classroom. There is a danger of being side-tracked and missing an important event. Hammersley (1984) highlighted the partiality of observation field notes. Attention tends to be drawn to particular aspects of what is happening. However observations can only provide a snapshot of events but they

did have the advantage of highlighting the issue that the Curriculum Co-ordination role has to fit into what is an already demanding teaching commitment. A copy of a page of the field notes is presented in appendix 7. It also became apparent that much of the role is conducted outside of the teaching day or through brief conversations with colleagues in the staff room or corridors. Another positive outcome was the advantage of becoming much more familiar with the individual school situations, which helped inform the interpretation of responses given during the interviews and in the diaries. Nevertheless the observations were the least effective method of gaining data in this case and acted merely to support the evidence collected through the interviews and more particularly the diaries.

The Analysis:

As Ely *et.al.* (1997) pointed out the analysis is a continuous part of qualitative research which involves writing, re-writing and thinking throughout the entire process of the research. This allows for assumptions to be explored, new questions to be raised and for increasing clarification of the issues being researched. They also recommend being honest about the perspective and stances taken and give enough examples of the data that the reader is able to understand how these opinions developed. The twin purposes of qualitative analysis is to describe and explain (Hessler 1992). This involves the selection of particular features to highlight. Further the analysis can be approached by pulling relationships and patterns out of the data and then developing the concepts and theories, an approach favoured in this research. The problems with analysing qualitative data is finding a way of classifying it, ensuring a reasonable coverage of the data and that enough is included to maximise understanding (Hessler 1992).

Miles and Huberman (1984) suggest that after each period of intensive field contact a summary contact sheet is developed. The contact sheet involves summarising responses, which answer the questions posed. The researchers thoughts and hunches

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should be added to this sheet. This sheet then guides planning for the next contact; suggests new categories that could be used; it re-orientates the researcher during periods of writing up; and serves as the basis of the analysis. In the case of this study, summary sheets were produced in the forms of data maps, the centre point of which was each central topic being covered and leading out from these the questions being asked. Around these questions the responses were summarised and recorded (see appendix 8). Also a data map was developed to record information and remarks made which fell outside the direct line of questioning. The sheets also acted to allow some considered analysis to be made that informed the next set of interview questions and observations. This was particularly important for this kind of research as it allows for flexibility in an ever changing area of study. Such flexibility within methods is crucial to research in education as it is continually subjected to the influence of change external to the school (Paechter 2000). Certainly during the period of this research literacy hour was introduced as was the TTA's list of requirements for Subject Leaders. Another important advantage of such data or mind maps is that as Buzan (1989) pointed out they act as memory aids in what he described as a "multi-dimensional mnemonic note-taking approach" p 139. In addition Buzan (1989) claimed that "the approach allows you to understand, analyse and think critically about whatever it is you are noting" p 139.

As an A level student I had been taught to use mind-mapping techniques as a way of exploring concepts and ideas and have subsequently found this a useful tool. As a consequence having read Miles and Huberman (1984) who suggested the use of contact sheets, I decided the information collected could be recorded in a mind-map format. This involved collecting responses, which could then be grouped on the basis of thoughts, ideas and emerging understandings, in the way Miles and Huberman indicated. Therefore these data maps were developed out of a content analysis of the texts. In respect of the interviews the questions and responses could be divided into main themes. A sheet for each theme was produced, the central issue forming the centre of the map with the

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questions asked radiating from it and the responses radiating from the questions. Each response was given an identifier so that it could be traced back to the original text. It quickly became apparent that the responses formed into particular categories and they were grouped and colour coded accordingly. The categories identified were those related to resources; paperwork; influencing practice; monitoring; staff training; professional development; and liaison. A definition of each category was developed to ensure consistency of categorisation (definitions will be dealt with more thoroughly in Chapter 6 – The reality of curriculum co-ordination). Within each category sub-divisions were made to identify more clearly different aspects of particular areas. For example the category of monitoring included issues related to assessment procedures and standards, subject display, checking work and the appropriateness of subject materials and lesson observation. This category was then sub-divided into firstly 'assess', that included work on moderation, discussion and establishing standards and procedures, checking results and coverage and making pupil reports. Secondly there was 'evaluate and review', which includes checking colleagues plans, pupils work, ensuring delivery, evaluating subject materials, visits and reviewing resource and curriculum provision. Finally there was the 'observation' sub-category which involved the Curriculum Co-ordinator observing another class being taught in the Co-ordinators own subject area and giving feedback to the teacher.

A similar approach was taken to the diaries, which were initially colour coded using the same categories used in the interviews. Again these were plotted on a data map with information about the time spent on them (see appendix 9). From this information box and dot plots were developed (Erickson and Nosanchuk 1979). These graphs showed plots of not only the average response and where the majority of responses fall but also the outlier positions. Consequently unusual responses could be identified and explanations sought. The researchers' observation notes were also colour coded but the incidents were too few to warrant detailed data map development (see appendix 7). Such

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groupings are inevitably open to the accusation of being subjective. This is unavoidable especially where the boundaries between categories is blurred or data can be placed in several categories and is subject to a decision. However to lend the categories developed greater validity three teachers who were independent of the research were asked to look at the original information, the summaries made of it and the categories this information was placed into. These teachers were then asked to add comments to the data maps in relation to how valid, in their opinion, the summaries and categories were. The teachers found the categories chosen to be reasonable and the summarised information to be accurately represented. Copies of data maps with the teachers' commentary can be found in appendix 8 and 9. As the analysis was conducted over three terms in one academic year, insights and understandings developed over the process of the research informed each subsequent period of data collection. As a result this involved some adjustment and re-categorisation of the data during the final analysis stage in order to express this alteration in understanding.

The system of analysis used in this research involved applying a form of what Miles and Huberman (1994) refer to as Pattern Coding, which has four advantages. Firstly it involves collecting the information together around themes thereby reducing the data into reasonable analytical units. As has been explained this approach was applied to all the data collected. Secondly it involves making some analysis of the data as it is collected in order to inform further work and issues coming out of each period of the analysis raised questions which informed the next stage of the data collection. A third advantage is that it helps illuminate the research through the development of a cognitive map or schema. As has already been explained the information collected was displayed in the form of data maps based around the questions asked and the themes identified by the researcher. These acted purely as a method of displaying information in a way that was easily read and cross-referenced by the researcher. Finally through developing the information in such a way that enables comparisons to be made across the study. Because the

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information was collected in an easily read pictorial form comparisons between the data sets and themes were relatively easily made. It was then possible to gain some ideas about the reality and the perceptions of the Co-ordinators role.

What made the data collected on Curriculum Co-ordinators interpretable was the use of my understanding as a researcher, making judgements on the basis of understandings developed over the period of the research and from personal experience in the world of education. Woolcott (1990) suggests that validity is increased by, among other things, listening, recording as accurately as possible, writing early to identify findings and gaps, including as much primary data as possible in the write up to allow readers to judge for themselves, making a note of issues which are not understood and by the researcher being open about their subjectivity. However a note of caution was sounded by Munn and Drever (1990) who argued "beware of being convinced you have the truth" (p. 65). As Phillips (1990) noted, total objectivity is unobtainable. The knowledge gained will always be incomplete and at best the research only provides a glimpse of what is taking place at a particular time in a particular circumstance. This is one of the main problems of this piece of research as circumstances and situations have already changed quite markedly since the completion of the data collection.

Finally I will conclude this chapter by taking on a more personal tone and reflecting critically on some issues around my position as researcher and the methodology used. As researcher I came to this area of study through an interest in education derived from having worked and lived amongst teachers. Whilst having trained as a secondary school teacher the majority of my teaching experience to date has been within primary education. I have also worked in primary schools as ancillary support and in addition as a chair of governors. Consequently this background means that I am culturally attuned to and sympathetic towards teachers' views. It should be acknowledged that my political perspective is such that I see teachers as being subject to impositions by the state and

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that at times I feel that such government interventions might have been managed in more effective ways. However despite such pre-dispositions I have attempted to reflect honestly and critically on my practice, grounded my work within the literature and sought critical opinion throughout the research process. In this way I have used my understandings and insights to advantage whilst at the same time keeping a wider overview.

In terms of the methodology used there are a number of things I would tackle differently with the benefit of hindsight. Firstly the initial literature review was too focussed. I had explored the area of primary schooling, curriculum and curriculum co-ordination but it was not until I got into schools that the importance of culture and leadership became apparent. This meant re-visiting and widening my exploration of the literature. Therefore I have learned that the initial literature search should be as wide as possible looking at all angles and issues, gradually narrowing and specialising as the research questions become more focussed. The observations could have been conducted spending half a day or even just lunch hours and breaks with the Co-ordinators. Whilst there were gains to be made from the time spent with Co-ordinators in terms of building up a relationship with them, especially in the light of conducting interviews which benefit from a more relaxed atmosphere, in general the observations did not achieve what was originally intended. In addition the quality of the interviews could have been refined more quickly had there been more detailed piloting prior to going into schools. This was particularly true in the case of the time teachers could be expected to give to an interview in the light of other demands made of them and in respect of the number of questions they could reasonably be expected to answer and develop in that time.

To some extent these methodological issues could have been solved by resisting the temptation to get into schools quickly and be actively collecting information, thus extending the period of background work prior to the data collection. Had I a more

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thorough grip on the theoretical material before I started I would have asked different questions. The result of gathering information without this process of greater refinement was the collection of a great deal of material. Whilst every effort was made to make use of the available information some could not be used as the theoretical underpinning had not been as well founded, a valuable lesson for my future research.

Chapter Six: The Reality of Curriculum Co-ordination

Introduction:

This study is concerned with the role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator in the Primary School. The complexity of the role and the varieties of approach that are likely to be taken to it means that qualitative methods of data collection are likely to be the most illuminating. As discussed in the previous chapter, Co-ordinators were interviewed at three points in an academic year, they kept diaries for four weeks in each of the three terms in the same academic year and all Co-ordinators were tracked for one day of each term.

The information collected is intended to illustrate the actual activities undertaken by the Co-ordinators, their views of the role and the aspects of it that they value. The aim of this chapter is therefore to present the findings of the study in such a way as to: -

- Explore the tasks that Co-ordinators carry out in the performance of their role.
- Determine what issues are of importance to Curriculum Co-ordinators in each task category.
- Look at how the Co-ordinators' time is distributed between the categories identified.
- Examine the factors that act to facilitate or inhibit the Co-ordinators in the performance of their role.

This research was formulated and commenced at a time that pre-dates the Teacher Training Agency's Standards for Subject Leaders (1998). Consequently at the time of the research Subject Leaders were being referred to as Curriculum Co-ordinators. Therefore the term Curriculum Co-ordinator will be used in relation to the research findings, as it is in this context that the interviews, diaries and observations were made. A letter, denoting the school referred to, an abbreviation, indicating the subject the Co-ordinator is responsible for and a number indicating the term in which the interview took

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place, will follow quotes from Co-ordinators. It should be noted that many of these Co-ordinators have more than one subject responsibility but have chosen one to highlight for the purpose of this research. In one school of 24 teachers the two Co-ordinators involved are identified by the Key stage they teach, (it proved too difficult to separate out particular subject responsibilities- see the methodology chapter).

Initial Analysis:

In order to look at how Curriculum Co-ordinators use their time and to discover what they consider to be the important aspects of being a co-ordinator, it is necessary first to examine the diversity of tasks they perform as a part of their role. This will help build an overall picture of curriculum co-ordination within which the individual Co-ordinator's experience can be set, as can detailed discussion of the various tasks considered to be a part of this role. A considerable amount of information about what Co-ordinators were doing was collected in the form of semi-structured interviews and diaries. Observations of the Co-ordinator's day (though only a snapshot and as the previous chapter points out, the least effective method of data collection) also provided some supporting evidence. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with, at maximum, twenty Curriculum Co-ordinators (from ten schools), in each of the three terms in one academic year. Two pages of transcript from interviews can be found in appendix 10. Co-ordinators also kept diaries for four weeks in each of the three terms. Whilst all Curriculum Co-ordinators were not always available for interview and diaries were not kept consistently by all (as discussed in the methodology chapter), there was nevertheless a large quantity of evidence collected: -

Term One	20 interviews	15 diaries
Term Two	17 interviews	13 diaries
Term Three	19 interviews	10 diaries

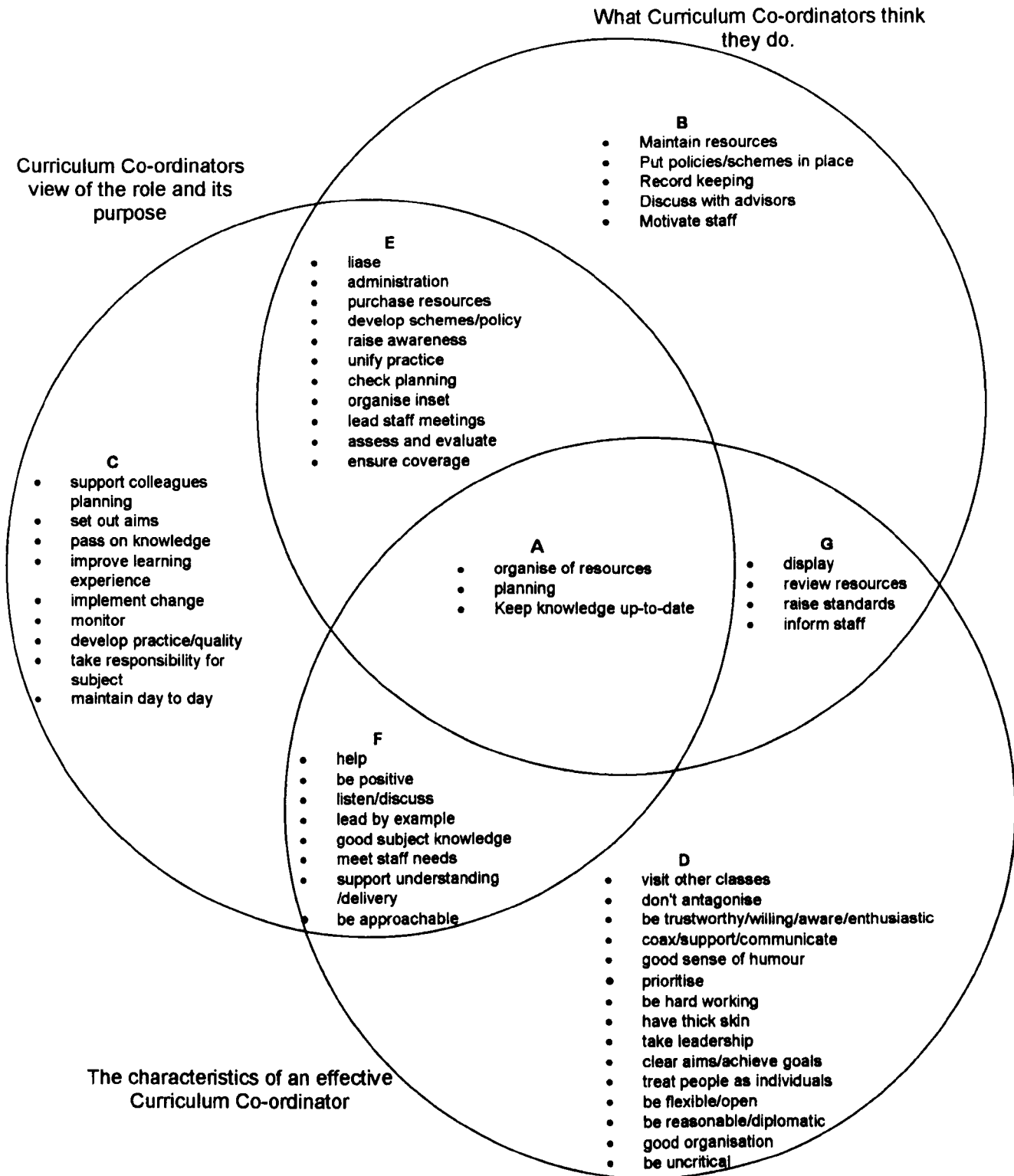
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Observations involved all Curriculum Co-ordinators in each term, during which the Co-ordinators were tracked throughout their day and therefore notes included their teaching role. Issues related to the value of such information are discussed in the previous chapter. Whilst the diaries provided continuous evidence about what Co-ordinators were doing as part of their role, the interview questions on this issue took place in the first term (in which all twenty Curriculum Co-ordinators were involved). The evidence collected provided a daunting list of tasks being performed. In order to deal with such a large quantity of information it became essential to categorise it in some way. As a result, through a process of content analysis (discussed in detail in the analysis section of the methodology chapter), these tasks identified by the Co-ordinators were organised into categories. Although the majority of categories were relevant to both the diaries and the interviews there were some differences which will be highlighted and discussed later in this chapter. In addition it became necessary to re-categorise some of the earlier work as perceptions about how this should be done became more sophisticated with the increase in understanding of the curriculum co-ordination role. The issue of the subjective nature of such categorisation is also discussed in the methodology chapter.

The diaries provided a detailed record of actual events that Co-ordinators considered were a part of their role. These records are therefore dependent on the individual Co-ordinator's understanding of their curriculum role. In order to arrive at some common understandings of what the diaries should include the Curriculum Co-ordinators were invited to a meeting to discuss this issue and written guidance about completing the diaries was derived from it (see diary proforma and guidelines in appendix 4). During the interviews Co-ordinators were asked to talk about their view of the role and its purpose, what they did as part of this role and what they considered to be the characteristics of an effective Curriculum Co-ordinator. Figure 6.1 is an example of the range of

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Figure 6.1: Relationship between what Curriculum Co-ordinators think they do, how they view the role and its purpose and what they believe to be characteristic of an effective practitioner.



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responses given to those three questions. Note should be taken that some of the issues shown in this representation may only have been pointed out by one individual.

From figure 6.1 it is possible to see some of the wide ranging issues raised by Co-ordinators and how these issues inter-link in terms of what they do, the purpose of the role and what is seen as characteristic of an effective Curriculum Co-ordinator. Whilst the majority of responses are included, it became impractical to list them all therefore the figure is intended to give a flavour of the range of views encountered. There were comparatively few areas where all three areas of questioning overlapped (fig 6.1 section A). Where they did, it seemed to involve tasks that were relatively easily performed. For example the organisation of resources is relatively easy to execute and is seen by the Co-ordinators as effective. Likewise, the current emphasis on keeping abreast of subject change and development (OFSTED 1994b) might explain why planning and keeping subject knowledge up-to-date is also seen by the Co-ordinators as something they do, see as their purpose and rate as effective. Co-ordinators' views of the purpose of the role seemed to centre largely around issues of subject development and moving the subject forward in a way that supports improvement in colleagues' understanding (fig 6.1 section C). It is interesting that where tasks seen as effective were also tasks seen as part of the purpose of the role, they invariably involved a heavy emphasis on encouraging and supporting colleagues (fig 6.1 section F). However, where tasks concerned with the purpose of the role crossed with those Co-ordinators actually did, a lot of responses concentrated on practical development such as purchasing resources and leading staff meetings (fig 6.1 section E). When asked about the characteristics of an effective Curriculum Co-ordinator the emphasis was very much on qualities that add to and encourage good relationships (fig 6.1 section D). For example to be trustworthy, enthusiastic, flexible and open. The number of responses that emphasised interpersonal skills and some managerial skills was very high. All Co-ordinators mentioned at least

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one such characteristic (and most raised several), which indicates the degree of importance they attached to relationships with colleagues; for example characteristics such as treating people as individuals, being uncritical and being diplomatic. However, when it came to what Co-ordinators were doing these inter-personal skills were less evident. When looking at what Co-ordinators did, responses concentrated very much on day to day practice such as maintaining resources and record keeping (fig 6.1 section B). This may to some extent be a function of the questions asked but this change of emphasis was nevertheless noteworthy. In addition there was very little mention of more intrusive leadership techniques such as monitoring, leading by example and setting out aims and targets. Leading by example may be meeting some degree of resistance, as elsewhere during the interview process Co-ordinators were indicating some reticence about the notion of telling others how it's done, even if only by implication.

...You don't want to go in and say to somebody who's been doing it for ten years, ... 'this is better than the way you're doing it'...

J KS1(1)

Detailed Analysis of Diary and Interview data:

Figure 6.1 provided some initial responses from interview about what Co-ordinators thought in relation to what they did, what they saw as the purpose of their role and what they thought characterised an effective practitioner. In order to examine the role of the Co-ordinator in more detail, the diary evidence was taken together with more in-depth interview responses to provide a more detailed account about what Co-ordinators were doing. A series of categories was developed to encompass various task groups. The task categories identified using content analysis in the form of data maps (see the methodology chapter) are Resources, Paperwork, Influencing Practice, Monitoring, Staff Training, Professional Development and Liaison. Diary data will be used to provide information on what Curriculum Co-ordinators were doing within each task category identified. This information will be presented in the form of a box and dot plot, which

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enables quick comparisons to be made between batches of data. It is a method recommended and explained by Erickson and Nosanchuck (1979). The tables give the range of times spent on tasks within a given category. The data is grouped to show where the majority of responses lie and indicate those responses forming an extreme position. The majority of responses fall between the upper quartile, indicated by a qu and the lower quartile, indicated by a ql . A line running through this grouping, labelled Md indicates the middle mean or average response. However, the average may not fall centrally between the upper and lower quartiles as extreme results will affect its position. Extreme positions are denoted by Xu , the upper extreme and Xl , the lower extreme. After considering the diary information responses from the semi-structured interviews will be used to explain, inform or expand on the diary data. Comparisons will be made between the categories looking at how Co-ordinators divide their time between these various aspects of their role and information from the observations will be included and compared to the diary data. Finally consideration will be given to the factors that Co-ordinators believe act to facilitate or inhibit them in their role.

A) Resources:

The resource category covers all tasks involving the organisation, development, administration, movement and purchasing of information, equipment or human resources. In order to view aspects of the task areas as distinct, several sub-categories were formed:

- **Organisation:** The storage, tidying and taking delivery of resources, the organisation of colleagues help with resource needs, along with administrative tasks such as checking mail, writing and delivering letters and copying of subject information.

Some of the organisational tasks noted in the diaries include: -

Asking student to start covering group reading sets before they can be used in the LKS2 (*lower key stage 2*) classroom.

C En

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Sorting / filing paperwork.

D Sci

- **Information:** The circulation of resources together with giving, receiving and seeking of information related to the subject. This could involve dealing with colleagues, advisors and messages via the telephone. This also includes the display of subject related material around the school. Information tasks included: -

need to phone, typical - not in will phone me back – left message saying phone me at lunch time.

G ICT

Check on Reception requisition that still has not arrived.

F Ma

- **Development:** Reviewing and meeting resource needs including designing and making resources as well as purchasing them. Development tasks included: -

Took Fisher-Price Technic home to find out how to use it and create some new design examples.

B D&T

Discuss and receive leaflets re-spending money of Government of £1000 for books

E En

The Diaries:

Of the thirty-eight diaries received overall, all except two mentioned resource-based tasks. Table 6.1a shows the amount of time spent in minutes on resources by the Curriculum Co-ordinators for four weeks of each of the three terms. Co-ordinators were spending between approximately 50 and 230 minutes on resources over a four-week period. However there were some significant extremes. In term one there was a Co-ordinator who was not involved with resources at all. At the other extreme a history Co-ordinator was busy preparing, researching and arranging trips as well as choosing new resources. A diary excerpt reads: -

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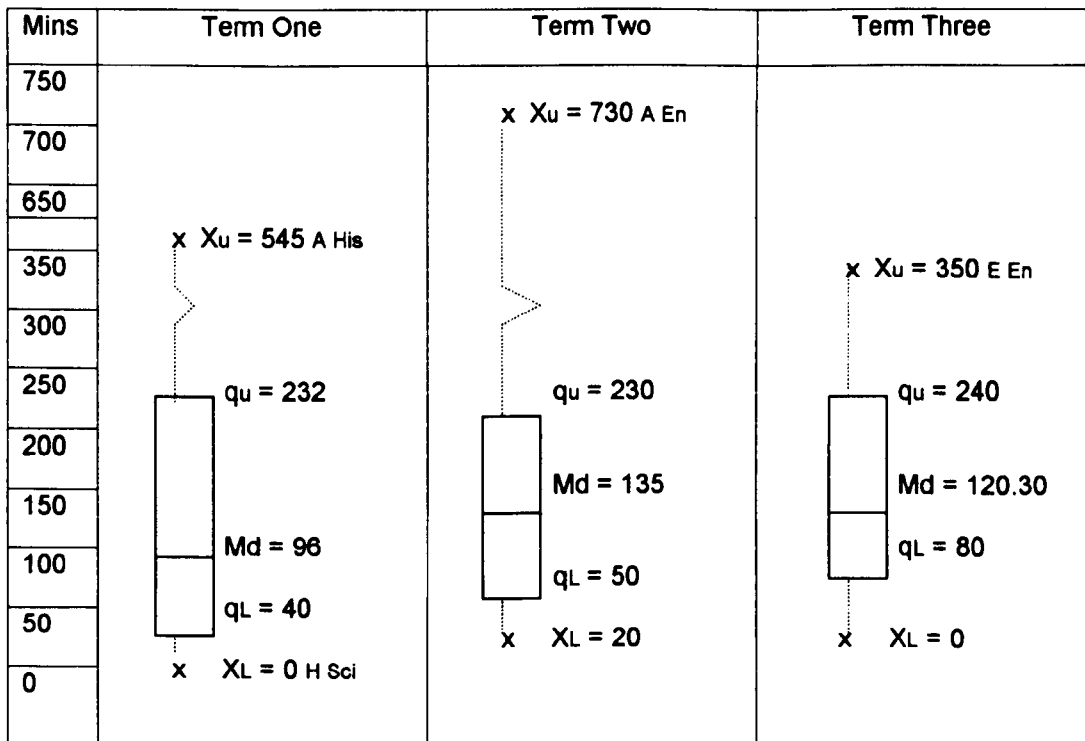
Visited bookshop to look for books and maps and various books for developing our work about ... town.

A His

By the third term the same Co-ordinator had not performed any resource tasks as the trips were over and the resources purchased. In term two and three the two upper extremes were two English Co-ordinators sorting out resources related to the introduction of literacy hour. Literacy Hour is a government imposed requirement for all schools who must deliver one hour of literacy teaching each day using a prescribed format. Additional funds for books had been provided to schools to

Table 6.1a

Time spent on Resources over four weeks in each of the three terms in one academic year



support this innovation. Excerpts from their diaries read: -

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Moved Eng books to photocopy room to wait collection from resources library.

C En

Meet Hienemann book rep select titles for lit hour and junior reading scheme.

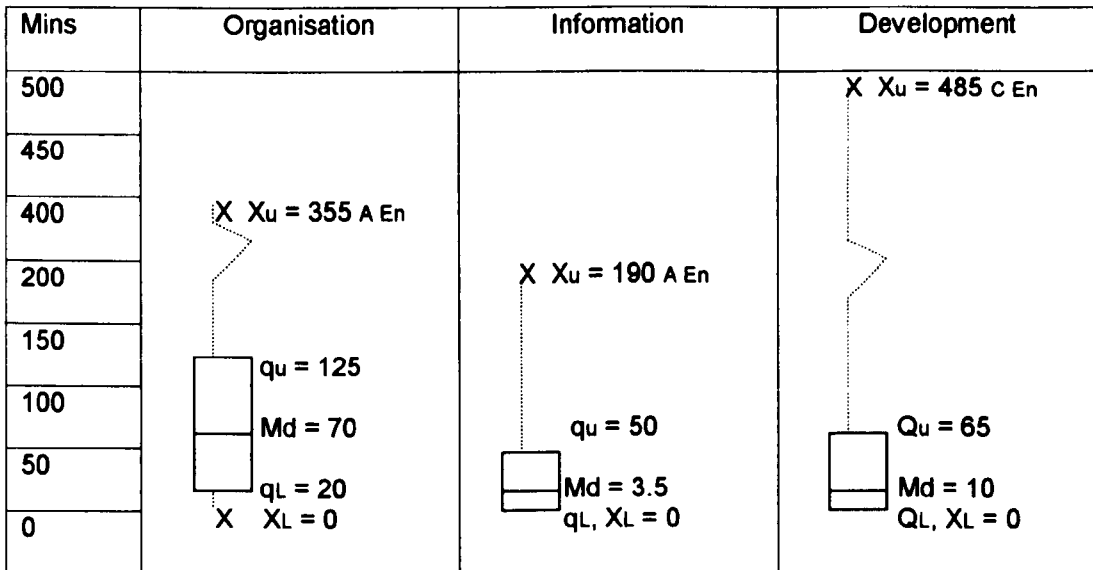
E En

Literacy hour was announced at the beginning of the second term during which period this study was being conducted. It was to be introduced in the following academic year. Numeracy hour (being of a similar format) would follow the year after. Consequently it was possible to see signs of an increased workload for English Co-ordinators as the research progressed. Evidence for this will be demonstrated at various points in this chapter.

Table 6.1b shows the distribution of time spent within the various Resource task categories in four-week periods over three separate terms.

Table 6.1b

Resource Tasks conducted in twelve weeks over three terms



The main focus of Curriculum Co-ordinators' efforts was spent on organising resources. It is interesting that in all the sub-categories it was English Co-ordinators who represented the upper extreme times, again reflecting preparation for literacy hour.

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Resources seem to provide Co-ordinators with something that they can do relatively easily and is a role that they can be seen to be doing. Of the ten Co-ordinators returning their diaries who had five years or more teaching experience, only one spent the majority of the time on resource tasks, whereas four of the remaining seven diaries concentrated more time on resources than other task categories. This indicates that longer standing staff, are spending less time on resources. According to Bell and Ritchie (1999) it is from these resource tasks that Subject Leaders (Co-ordinators) get drawn in to other aspects of their role. From this perspective resources can be viewed as a non-controversial starting block from which other role developments can emerge.

The Interviews:

During the interview process nineteen of the twenty Curriculum Co-ordinators mentioned tasks related to resource as something they did. For example: -

Q: how do you go about carrying out your role? How do you set about it, what do you do?

A: ...my role in the school...is I find that teachers very often send for things because they think if they send the children, 'could we borrow the compasses?' or 'have you got the atlases?' or 'can you tell me where the atlases are?' So... they that's constant, all the time throughout, and...I do see that as...my role to be able to help them out but it gets a bit sort of overwhelming at times. Very often it's sort of...I mean, I do it myself, in class lessons I suddenly think, 'Oh gosh, I never got the compasses can you go up to (*name*) and ask if I can have the compasses'. 'Can I have the clipboards?' and I tend to keep all that sort of thing so I do get constant interruptions that sort of thing, sort of, I generally give out equipment and...books and sort them back after school.

A His(1)

...number one, look at resources to start with, we've got to make sure that there are adequate ...resources...

A En(1)

Thirteen Co-ordinators considered their resource tasks to be a part of the purpose of the role: -

Q: How do you see the role of the co-ordinator? What purpose do you think it serves?

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A: ...The advice and helping people and taking lessons and getting equipment out for other people and things like that, it takes time, but they're the things that I don't mind doing at all really...

E PE(1)

Well there's a lot of purposes I mean co-ordinating it's endless isn't it? Um talking to staff organising the resources and ordering replacing if needed...

C Sci(1)

Also during interview an explanation for the inactivity of Co-ordinator, H Sci, in term one became apparent as she reported that Science was not a priority for that year

...because of this sort of over-indulgence with language and maths...the science bit is actually sort of taking a back seat.

H Sci(1)

This suggests that the extent and range of the work carried out by Co-ordinators is dependent on the development priorities not only of the school, but also those recommended by government.

B) Paperwork:

This category includes the planning, writing, development and reviewing of policies, schemes of work, action plans, job descriptions and any other paperwork associated with the curriculum co-ordination role. The sub-categories are: -

- **Planning and Preparation:** Development of policy schemes and plans, using them to plan either as an individual or collaboratively with colleagues, also copying and circulating schemes, policy and plans. Some diary entries related to planning and preparation read: -

Handed over draft spelling and handwriting policy to sec. (*secretary*) for typing and went through corrections.

C En

Filling in Art action plan for 1998 – 2000.

B Art

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- Review: Making reviews of the subject area approach, working on the definition of the Curriculum Co-ordinator's role and their job description. Review related entries included: -

Schools' Mission Statement to be reviewed by staff.

F RE

Staff meeting on Role of Curriculum Co-ordinator with a focus on Maths.

F Ma

The Diaries:

In the diary information collected, most references to paperwork issues were in the first term with no paperwork tasks recorded at all in the third term. Table 6.2 demonstrates that for these periods Co-ordinators were not often involved with tasks in this category.

In term one there was one Co-ordinator who spent a large amount of time developing a scheme of work for Physical Education (PE) and on completing the school policy for PE.

Her diary entries include: -

photocopying games section of scheme and pass round...scheme of work planning...write PE policy to get it completed.

E PE

Table 6.2

Time spent on Paperwork over four weeks in each of the three terms in one academic year

Mins	Term One	Term Two
1000	X $X_u = 1005$ E PE	
950		
900		
250		
200	$q_u = 105$	X $X_u = 75$ F RE
150	Md, $q_L, X_L = 0$	$q_u, Md, q_L, X_L = 0$
100		
50		
0		

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There were seven other Co-ordinators who reported accomplishing some aspect of paperwork but these involved much smaller amounts of time.

In the second term just four Co-ordinators mentioned paperwork, the greatest time being spent by a Co-ordinator for Religious Education.

To make hand written copies of Holy Communion Family Groups for school Chaplain and Parish Priest.

F RE

This information when divided into its sub-categories further demonstrated that most Curriculum Co-ordinators were not performing paperwork tasks at all and it was only the extreme upper quartile figures that registered. The category for planning and preparation represented most activity with ten reports in thirty-eight diary entries. The extreme upper limit of time was Co-ordinator E PE previously mentioned, who spent 1005 minutes on planning and preparation over four weeks. Only three Co-ordinators mentioned review tasks, the second of the sub-groups within paperwork, in four diary entries.

The Interviews:

Three-quarters of the Curriculum Co-ordinators from the semi-structured interviews said that paperwork issues were something they were involved with. Twelve thought it to be part of the purpose of their role.

Q: given that...structure how do you actually carry out your role what do you do?

A :Um right [laughs] it's a hard one that one. Well first of all I write the policy and the scheme so that's the first thing with the staff... and have you know discussions on what we think we should be doing in each year group so that it is not overlapping ...

F Ma(1)

...to be honest with you, when you're told, right, that you've got the maths co-ordinator's job, the first thing you think of, gosh, is there a policy in place?

H Ma(1)

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Therefore more Co-ordinators talked about the need to be involved with paperwork issues than the diaries showed were actually involved. This gap between what Co-ordinators say they are doing and what the diaries show as the reality may be explained. It is possible that few Co-ordinators were involved with recording paperwork related tasks because once the paperwork is in place it becomes part of the background, rather than something they constantly needed to consider or think about. Equally it is probable that the thrust of work in this area at the beginning of the term is in order to make schemes, policy and plans available to the staff as quickly as possible. It was nevertheless interesting that despite the fact that few co-ordinators appeared from their diaries to be involved in much paperwork, the overwhelming response during the interviews from all except two Co-ordinators was about the excessive amount of paperwork.

...We're always having to fill this in, fill that in, do this...that's it really, it's just you know, you need at least an extra day a week just to do the paperwork.

E PE(2)

People don't think your word is good enough, in many ways it's as though you've got to account for what you do and prove what you're doing...

I Ma(2)

Its gone silly and I feel that it's got to the stage where people are just writing things for the sake of writing things.

J KS1(2)

some of it is...done as a façade for the HMI's (*Her Majesty's Inspectorate*) to read, or for the OFSTED people to read.

H Sci(2)

One Co-ordinator seemed to sum up how many felt: -

there is a point to it, but there's too much of it.

C Sci(2)

During the course of the interviews it became apparent that Co-ordinators did value the use of paperwork, especially schemes and policies.

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Well I think that they...get things straight in...your mind they standardise things throughout the school...

J KS1(2)

This suggests that policy and schemes of work are aiding a consistent and coherent provision of the curriculum. Another Co-ordinator said of policies and schemes: -

...they have great value because they give you direction, they clarify what you should be doing in that subject and...they give you the guidance and the help and support you need.

D PE(2)

The most highly valued paperwork was the scheme of work, which carried the support of almost two thirds of the Curriculum Co-ordinators. They felt the schemes provided guidelines for lessons and valuable support for teachers who are unsure or in need of guidance.

The scheme I think is very good especially where you've got an NQT (*newly qualified teacher*) ...it makes it easier for them to plan.

D Sci(2)

Not only that but supply staff could use the schemes to look at and work out what needed to be taught at what point. Again this suggests a view that schemes of work help ensure or contribute to a consistency of approach and content.

Just under half the Co-ordinators thought subject policies were useful documents.

One of the realities of doing the paperwork is once you've done it, it's in your head anyway.

B D&T(2)

It was argued that policy allowed for opportunities to discuss subject policy in some detail with colleagues, to pool ideas and to gain general support for it.

...discussing it does make sure that everyone agrees...

C Sci(2)

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Concerns expressed about policies were issues such as their length and the amount of detail they contain.

I think a policy document is fine if it's not too long.

D Sci(2)

C) Influencing Practice:

This category includes issues that involve teaching other classes, advising individual colleagues on lesson content, demonstrating good practice and preparing for staff meetings. The sub-categories identified were: -

- **Teaching:** Taking extra curricula classes together with teaching their subject specialism to another teacher's class arranging to take classes and introducing visitors. (Taking extra curricular classes such as athletics, and religious ceremonies has been included as the Co-ordinators noted it as a subject responsibility). Some diary entries for the teaching category noted: -

Prepared Y2 (*year two*) children and KS2 (*key stage two*) readers for Sat (*Saturday Church Service*).

F RE

To supervise an indoor tennis session with Y6 and check Y5 were ready for session.

D PE

- **Advising:** Helping colleagues plan, sharing information, setting aims and discussing the subject and its requirements. Some examples of notes in the advising category are: -

Discuss plans – Y4 teacher needs help – help with SAT's revision – helped teacher.

D Sci

Spoke to member of staff re: Y4 reading tests.

A En

- **Planning:** Planning staff meetings, subject sessions and new subject arrangements. Planning tasks noted included: -

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Planning staff meeting

E PE

Meeting with...KS2 Maths Co-ordinator to discuss next staff meeting...

F Ma

The Diaries:

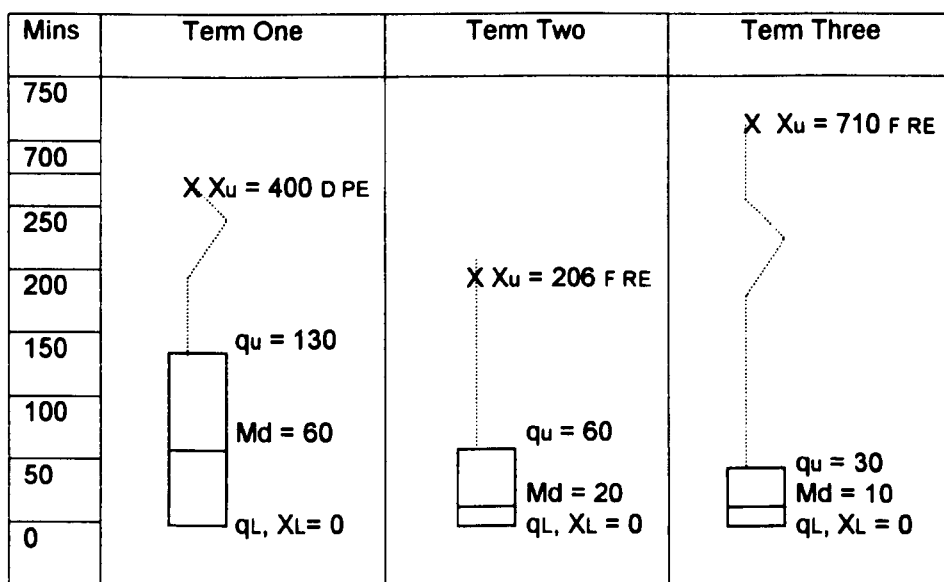
Table 6.3a, shows the time spent over four weeks on 'Influencing Practice' in each of the three terms studied. As with the paperwork category the time spent 'Influencing Practice' drops over the three terms from an average of 60 minutes over four weeks in the first term to 10 minutes in the third. The extreme upper times spent represent work done by two Co-ordinators, one of whom was involved with PE and the other RE. The diary for the PE Co-ordinator indicates that this time was spent taking extra curricula practice for, and taking part in, a local athletics competition.

To attend with athletics team the final...athletics practice for final of athletics competition.

D PE

Table 6.3a

Time spent on Influencing Practice over four weeks in each of the three terms in one academic year



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For the RE Co-ordinator entries in the diary indicate she was teaching other classes and preparing pupils for religious ceremonies.

KS1 (*key stage one*) RE music songs and hymns...prepared first communicants of St. B's for Mass on Sun pm.

F RE

When examining the breakdown of tasks by sub-category, table 6.3b below, although the RE Co-ordinator is still evident under the heading of teaching as the extreme upper time limit, it is an English Co-ordinator who has spent the most time on the tasks in the other two categories. This time is spent supporting colleagues' English lessons through discussion, planning and team teaching.

Final planning with (*colleague*) for tomorrow's group reading lesson KS2...discuss informally, plan presentation for staff meeting and next steps for GR (*group reading*) lesson

E En

Table 6.3b

Influencing Practice Tasks conducted in twelve weeks over three terms

Mins	Teaching	Advising	Planning
700	X Xu = 690 F RE		
650			
200		X Xu = 175 E En	
150			X Xu = 125 E En
100			
50	qu, Md, qL, XL = 0	qu = 20 Md = 7.5 qL, XL = 0	qu, Md, qL, XL = 0
0			

As suggested by the table above only six of the thirty eight diaries noted teaching or planning tasks though twenty three noted tasks encompassed in the advising category.

In spite of this the time spent on average within this category was only seven and a half

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minutes over a four week period, which would not indicate a significant amount of time being spent supporting individual colleagues.

The Interviews:

During the semi-structured interviews nine of the twenty Co-ordinators identified tasks within 'influencing practice' as something they did.

A: ...It's...making sure that there is continuity going through the year key stages and that...all the teachers are doing the same thing".

F RE(1)

Eleven thought influencing practice was part of the purpose of the role: -

Q: ...how do you see the role of the co-ordinator...what purposes do you think it serves?

A: Oh [sigh] now you see it is different here again because if when you have only got two roles it is so easy it is the person who keeps themselves up to date by going on courses by reading the literature by discussion with the teachers it is the person that you can turn to for professional help in areas you may not be sure of it's the person who has the expertise to...offer that help...

J KS2(1)

...you really have got to lead by example, your class has got to demonstrate...what you're doing...

I En(1)

D) Monitoring:

The monitoring category includes a range of tasks such as assessment procedures and standards, subject display, checking work and the appropriateness of subject materials together with lesson observation. Curriculum Co-ordinators had included a variety of tasks referred to as monitoring through the interview and diaries therefore in order to tease out these various strands the sub-categories include: -

- Assess: Work on moderation, assessment discussion and establishing standards, establishing procedures, checking results, coverage and making pupils reports.

Some examples of notes of tasks grouped within the assessment category are: -

Considering assessment and its place in informing future work.

H Sci

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Check Year 6 (*County*) Test Results – list formulated less able readers identified.

A En

- **Evaluate and Review:** Checking colleagues' plans, pupils work, discussions with colleagues and pupils, ensuring delivery, evaluating subject materials and visits, discussing subject display, reviewing subject progress and the appropriateness of resource provision and curriculum provision. Evaluate and Review' included comments such as: -

Review half term planning for Maths for 2nd half of Autumn Term.

H Ma

Go over Maths books with year 4 colleague – to ensure we are working along the same lines and highlight any problem areas.

F Ma

- **Observation:** Observation of another class being taught in the Curriculum Co-ordinator's subject area and feedback to the teacher. The observation category was only noted by one Co-ordinator and a diary excerpt reads:

Observe English lessons: MI – feedback to MI on lesson observation.

E En

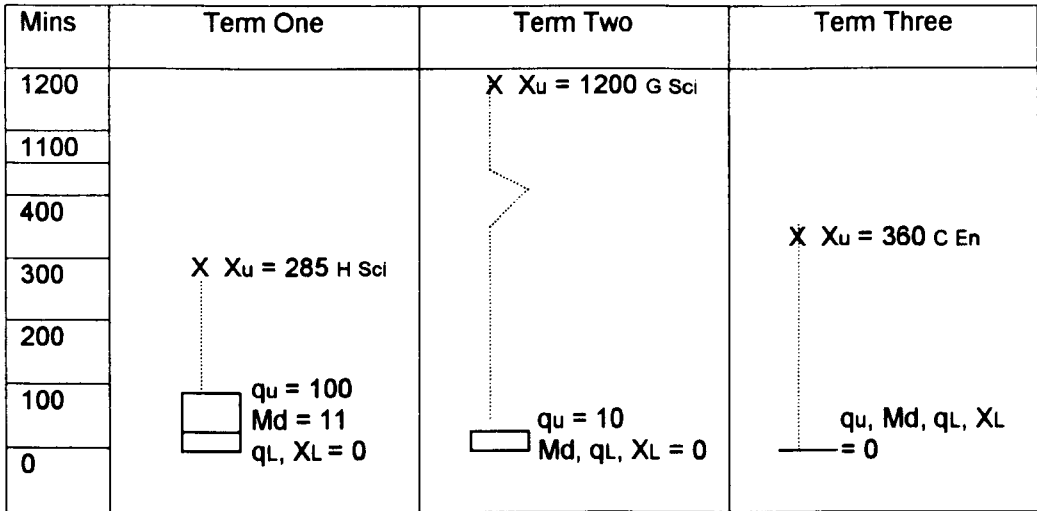
The Diaries:

Table 6.4a below shows the amount of time, (in minutes) that Co-ordinators as a group spent over the four weeks of each term on monitoring. The average time spent ranges from eleven minutes in the first term to nothing after that. Therefore for this period the majority of Co-ordinators were not involved with monitoring tasks. However of those that were, the three English Co-ordinators who kept diaries were very active participants. In term one an English Co-ordinator spent 110 minutes monitoring children's' reading school-wide, together with evaluating subject television resources.

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Table 6.4a

Time spent on Monitoring over four weeks in each of the three terms in one academic year



Reading with J1 (*junior class one*) hearing children read – monitoring...Head asked if I would evaluate 'Look and Read' TV programme for J1.

C Eng

Even so the extreme upper time of 285 minutes spent in term one was a Co-ordinator who was monitoring planning.

Monitor medium-term plans for second half of Autumn term...check weekly plans against MTP (*medium term planning*).

H Sci

She explained in her diary that these duties were: -

To comply with orders in our Monitoring Policy.

H Sci

In term two an English Co-ordinator spent 580 minutes making lesson observations, feeding back to teachers and conducting a: -

curriculum audit and evaluation...preparation for OFSTED.

E En

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The extreme upper time of 1200 minutes was a Co-ordinator who spent three days of this time developing a computerised assessment procedure for Science.

To develop simple ways of basing our assessment of Science by narrowing options so that the activity is clearly related to the target and so is easier to assess.

G Sci

The third term includes the work of two English Co-ordinators, one of whom spent 350 minutes preparing for the oncoming literacy hour.

Rest of day spent compiling literacy audit for National Literacy Strategy...Not Easy!

A En

The other Co-ordinator C En spent 360 minutes completing English reports and selecting poems for a competition.

Table 6.4b

Monitoring Tasks conducted in twelve weeks over three terms

Mins	Assess	Evaluate and Review	Observation
1100	<p style="text-align: center;">$\bar{X} X_u = 1080$ G Sci</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">$\bar{X} X_u = 330$ A En</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 50px; height: 20px; margin: 10px auto;"></div> <p style="text-align: center;">$q_u = 55$ Md, qL, XL = 0</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">$\bar{X} X_u = 280$ E En</p> <p style="text-align: center;">$q_u, Md, qL,$ XL = 0</p>
1000			
400			
300			
200			
100			
0			
0			

When the monitoring category was sub-divided, table 6.4b above, it became clear how few Co-ordinators were involved with monitoring tasks and the majority of those who were, worked within the evaluate and review category. The observation category involved the work of just one Co-ordinator, E En.

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The Interviews:

Monitoring is a category that thirteen of the Curriculum Co-ordinators interviewed claimed to do and to be a part of the purpose of their role

...to look at planning and make sure that whatever is going on...is...co-ordinated and there's follow up and progression...

H Ma(1)

.....well it's a very necessary role there's a lot of administration in this eh within this role a tremendous amount of administration work which was if it wasn't done the school couldn't run smoothly. It's drawing up assembly rotas liaising with Priests ... overseeing the 'Here I am' which is our RE scheme monitoring the teachers' planning it's a very necessary role...

F RE(1)

A number of Co-ordinators raised issues of time restrictions which prevented them having opportunities to monitor.

...if I had non contact time...I would like to go into the other classes to work with the teachers you know I'm not going in to say right I'm teaching get out I'm just going in to work alongside to give them support to have a look at the Science that they're doing to help the children and ... just to get to know in depth what's going on in the classroom 'cos when you look at the work that's the finished product and not the process.

C Sci(1)

This may indicate that more Co-ordinators would take part in monitoring if time were made available. Eight talked about problems with finding time to organise monitoring as an aside during the interviews. Also monitoring classes was a responsibility on the minds of a number of Curriculum Co-ordinators. Eleven made the point that they needed to get into other classrooms, again unprompted, during the interview process.

Ideally we'd like to go into classrooms, it's something we've identified as a school but time and too many roles, that's stopping us from doing it.

D Sci(1)

The interviews indicated that the most obvious way in which Co-ordinators were checking on the progress of their subject throughout the school was through looking at colleagues' planning (12 of 20). Many of the schools employed a system whereby the Co-ordinators viewed colleagues' plans for their subject for the forthcoming term.

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...I...get the planning in and that's normally at the beginning of each term...and I just check through that to make sure you're following the guidelines in the scheme.

B Art(1)

This response emphasises issues around the problem with collecting diaries as the activities of Co-ordinators vary throughout the term as well as throughout the year (see the methodology chapter). After looking at the planning Co-ordinator's then had an opportunity to question or advise colleagues if they felt that adaptations were needed. Others just used the plans to keep a record of coverage in the subject. When asked what she did with the information once gathered one Co-ordinator said:-

Well just keep it in the stock cupboard, a copy goes down to the office for (*the head*) a copy goes into the computer for reference.

F Ma(1)

Policies and schemes were used as the benchmark against which planning was set. Some Co-ordinators were also using techniques such as looking at pupils work, picking up impressions through talking to colleagues and through general observation.

...looking at children's work...asking the children, the teachers what they're doing at the moment...

I En(1)

Less intrusive methods not only seemed to suit Subject Leaders better in terms of maintaining good relations with colleagues but they were also methods which were not too time consuming and could be conducted in the background on a day to day basis.

E) Staff Training:

The staff training category encompasses all the formal training needs of the staff whether delivered by the Curriculum Co-ordinator or external agencies. The sub-categories are as follows: -

- **Meetings:** Where staff are informed of practice, content and procedures through staff meetings. Tasks noted about Meetings include: -

Discussions about workshop – to introduce other staff to a different way of introducing topic.

A His

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Presenting A.S.E. magazine to staff and highlighting article of interest.

G Sci

- Planning: Planning for inset and reviewing the training needs of colleagues. Some examples of tasks noted in the Planning category are: -

An informal chat with Maths Inspector to plan for next INSET – what would be helpful to the staff for the next Maths INSET she was delivering.

H Ma

I spoke to (*colleague*)...to ask if she wants to attend...course with me.

A En

- Course: Training courses for staff whether provided on or off site: -

Inset day...part of SDP (*school development plan*) for this year.

C En

The Diaries:

Table 6.5 below demonstrates that relatively little staff training was happening over the period the diaries were kept. These included weeks five to eight in the first term,

Table 6.5

Time spent on Staff Training over four weeks in each of the three terms in one academic year

Mins	Term One	Term two	Term Three
600			X Xu = 530 C En
500			
400			
300		X Xu = 300 C En	
200			
100	X Xu = 150 C En		
0	qu = 5 Md, qL, XL = 0	qu = 40 Md, qL, XL = 0	qu = 60 Md, qL, XL = 0

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weeks seven to ten in the second term and weeks six to nine in the third term (see methodology chapter). The extreme upper time limits for each term are the work of Co-ordinator C En. Her diaries show that for terms two and three she was working towards literacy hour and on supporting materials.

Staff meeting- literacy hour – staff examined planning documents for use in Autumn term... Inset day English the teaching of grammar.

C En

Overall, the time spent rose over the three terms, the majority of this time spent being accounted for by the three English Co-ordinators who completed diaries. In addition to Co-ordinator C En, Co-ordinator E En was involved in explaining group reading in term one: -

explain and discuss organisation and content of group reading lesson.

E En

She also noted in term three that she had presented the completed policies and schemes. Also in term three Co-ordinator A En was: -

keeping staff informed re: progress of literacy hour.

A En

In the sub-categories only three Co-ordinators were involved with planning, each having spent ten minutes over four weeks. In addition the only diary entry in the course category was the Inset organisation that was mentioned above by C En. Ten of the thirty-eight diaries had mentioned tasks relevant to 'meetings'. Although this does not represent thirty-eight different Co-ordinators it does show that a major part of the time noted was spent on informing colleagues of changes in content, procedures and techniques.

The Interviews:

Six Co-ordinators considered themselves to be involved with the provision of staff training.

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...I did get a PE advisor in who...talked to us, he did one staff meeting and I arranged for him to take a lesson for each class...

E PE(1)

Also ten Co-ordinators felt that responsibility for training was part of the purpose of their role.

Q: how do you see the role of the co-ordinator what purpose do you think it serves?

A: Um I think basically to support the staff and ensure that the subject is being delivered as it should be delivered in national curriculum terms...to look at resources basically as well in PE there's a lot of resources...and I think just delivering in-service...

D PE(1)

...also to help with any INSET activities, to meet any needs, to...listen to people who, perhaps, have problems in certain areas, and to try and do something yourself get somebody in get an expert in...to help meet those needs...

G Sci(1)

There was in addition some commentary from Co-ordinators that there were sometimes problems finding time for feeding information back to colleagues after attending a course, while the ideas were still fresh in the Co-ordinator's mind. Co-ordinator D Sci explained that there were also problems with time when sending staff on a course as

...you very rarely get them to come back and tell everybody what the course was about.

D Sci(1)

F) Professional Development:

This category encompasses the Curriculum Co-ordinator's professional subject development whether through attending courses, through literature or through talking to other Subject Leader's or advisors. The sub-categories are: -

- Inset: Applying for and attending formal courses. Examples of diary entries in the Inset category include: -

Science course on Experimental and Investigative Science for KS1 and 2.

C Sci

Attended maths Course – Numeracy Project at KS2.

H Ma

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- **Meetings:** Meetings of staff or local teachers' groups related to the subject role of the Co-ordinator. Tasks noted in the Meetings category include: -

Area Co-ordinator meeting - to discuss implications of Literacy Hour.

A En

Meeting of IT Co-ord (*Area*) Educational Trust - presentations on use of internet – plans for dev. (*development*) of IT

G ICT

- **Information:** Becoming familiar with subject information, requesting information, talking to advisory staff or receiving feedback on their performance. Some tasks mentioned in the Information category are: -

Read through energy pack

D Sci

CL brought literacy hour / group reading materials used in the NLP...interested in structure of literacy hour – which endorses what we are trying to achieve here

E En

The Diaries:

Half of the thirty-eight diary entries included some aspect of professional development. Table 6.6a below shows that during the first term a number of Co-ordinators reported tasks related to professional development in their diaries, spending on average 30 minutes on such tasks over a four week period. The extreme upper time was a maths co-ordinator.

Attended Maths Course – Numeracy Project at KS2.

H Ma

Co-ordinator H Ma also noted watching an OFSTED maths video and getting feedback from a Maths Inspector. During the second term whilst the majority of Curriculum Co-ordinators did not record any involvement in professional development a few spent a considerable amount of time on it. Maths Co-ordinator I Ma spent 1170 minutes on: -

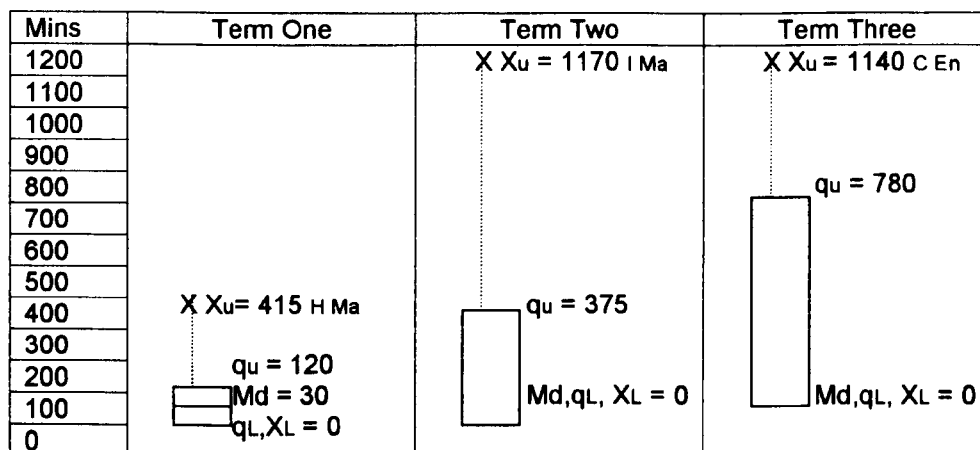
Training on Maths Specialist Course – Residential.

I Ma

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Table 6.6a

Time spent on Professional Development over four weeks in each of the three terms in one academic year



In term three Co-ordinator C En spent 1140 minutes on: -

Literacy Hour Training with head and Literacy Governor

C En

She also reported reading through literacy information. Of the three other diary entries for this period, the other two English Co-ordinators who kept diaries accounted for a significant portion of the time spent. Co-ordinator A En spent 810 minutes on two literacy training days and reading literacy information whilst Co-ordinator E En spent 780 minutes to: -

Attend 2 day conference on Literacy Hour

E En

Obviously when the Co-ordinators attended courses supply cover was bought in to cover their absence in the school. Table 6.6b below shows the sub-category breakdown, demonstrating that few Co-ordinators were involved in the 'meeting' task category. Of the three Co-ordinators involved one diary reads: -

Area Co-ordinators meeting to discuss implications of Literacy Hour

A En

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Table 6.6b

Professional Development Tasks conducted in twelve weeks over three terms

Mins	Meeting	Inset	Information
1200		X $X_u = 1170$ Ma	
1100			
1000			
900			
800			
700			
600			
500			
400			X $X_u = 420$ c En
300			
200			
100	X $X_u = 130$ G ICT — $q_u, M_d, q_L, X_L = 0$	$q_u = 120$ □ $M_d, q_L, X_L = 0$	□ $q_u = 30$ □ $M_d, q_L, X_L = 0$
0			

The extreme upper times in both the Inset and Information categories, have already been mentioned. It is interesting that in general the higher amounts of time spent within these categories are from two core areas perhaps reflecting the emphasis on them as essential parts of the curriculum. Nevertheless, the extreme upper time limit of the Meeting category is an ICT Co-ordinator meeting to discuss the future of ICT with other ICT Co-ordinators from the area. OFSTED (for example their report in 1998) has picked out ICT as an area of weakness in many schools and so schools are seeing this as an area it is necessary to develop.

The Interviews:

Looking at the first round of semi-structured interview responses twelve of the twenty Co-ordinators asked, referred to professional development as something that contributed to the effectiveness of curriculum co-ordination.

...you do the training...and obviously you become knowledgeable in that subject area.

A En(1)

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A further seven similar responses indicated that Co-ordinators felt subject knowledge was important to their role. Consequently in the second round of interviews they were asked directly about what value they placed on subject knowledge. Whilst most felt a basic subject knowledge was important, four Co-ordinators thought being a good teacher was of more significance.

Q: I'm interested to know your opinion about the value of subject knowledge to the co-ordinator, you know, what emphasis would you place on that?

A: Well at primary level...I would say at primary level I don't think degrees are required, a degree is required in pure maths. In maths I think the most important thing is really... being able to teach it, and you can know as much as you want but if you can't teach it you'll get nowhere...

I Ma(1)

Another Co-ordinator made the point that Curriculum Co-ordinators may not have prior subject knowledge if they're given a subject at random.

I think (*subject knowledge is*) extremely important but it doesn't work that way because...I mean, people are co-ordinating subjects that they didn't think they would be co-ordinating...

H Sci(1)

Another thought the level of knowledge required could threaten confidence: -

I think teachers are feeling threatened by the fact that they have to have the knowledge of that subject...

J KS1(1)

There were other indications that some Co-ordinators felt less confident about their subject knowledge.

I could put down that knowing the subject (is important for effectiveness) that wouldn't really apply to me so I'm talking myself out of success.

D Sci(1)

Half the Co-ordinators thought professional development was a part of the purpose of their role.

...keeping up to date with the latest developments so that at the national numeracy project, and we aren't legally bound to introduce it as yet, but, I

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mean, we know about the mental methods, so if you are inspected now they will say, 'Well why aren't you doing mental methods?' and they'd all have mental methods it is in the numeracy project, so it's up to me to bring that in and, sort of, tap anything there I can learn.

H Ma(1)

Despite this and the view that it aided being effective only five mentioned 'professional development' related tasks in interview as something they were doing. This may reflect a pressure for Inset money to be spent on the areas of government focus such as literacy and numeracy. A possible result might be a more limited funding for the development of other subject areas, which in turn might affect the confidence or enthusiasm of those Co-ordinators.

G) Liaison:

This, the final category related to diaries includes discussion with the Headteacher, together with informal subject related conversation with colleagues, parents, pupils, governors, visitors and other schools. In order to look particularly at discussions with the Head and Colleagues the following sub-categories have been developed: -

- Head: Informing, reporting and discussing of issues with the Headteacher. Some examples where Co-ordinators talked to Heads are: -

Completed swim policy – met with (*Head*) to show what I've done so far.

E PE

Discussion with head re: alteration to KS2 RE assembly rota.

F RE

- Colleagues: Informal discussion of subject related issues with colleagues. Reported events in the Colleagues category include: -

Reported depletion of D & T (*design and technology*) wood stocks to Dep (*deputy*) Head.

B D&T

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Chat about History / Geog (*geography*) and other areas of curriculum taking back seat from Sept (*September*) although we shall be still keeping our same schemes. (*This reflects concerns about the implementation of Literacy Hour*).

A His

- Others: Subject related discussion with parents, pupils, governors, secretaries, caretakers, visitors and other schools. Tasks noted in the Other category include: -

Individual interviews with parents...discussed the differences in Science tasks they could expect (*at secondary school*) their chn (*children*) to meet.

H Sci

Present English Policy to Governors.

E En

The Diaries:

Interestingly Table 6.7a below indicates that Co-ordinators are spending an average of only around 5 minutes on liaison over four weeks in each term. Co-ordinator F RE spent the most time on liaison in both the first and second term. She was the only RE co-ordinator involved in this study, she had a responsibility for organising a number of religious events and negotiating arrangements with priests.

Table 6.7a

Time spent on Liaison over four weeks in each of the three terms in one academic year

Mins	Term One	Term Two	Term Three
250	<p>X Xu = 228 F RE</p> <p>qu = 60</p> <p>Md = 5</p> <p>qL, XL = 0</p>	<p>X Xu = 173 F RE</p> <p>qu = 30</p> <p>Md = 7</p> <p>qL, XL = 0</p>	<p>X Xu = 210 A En</p> <p>qu = 70</p> <p>Md = 5</p> <p>qL, XL = 0</p>
200			
150			
100			
50			
0			

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Spoke to deputy head about poppies – Remembrance Sunday...Meeting with priest re: service of Dedication for First Communicants...Spoke to the head re: arrangements for Ash Wednesday...

F RE

In the third term it is A En who is represented by the most time spent. She had held a number of discussions with the head about literacy hour.

Discussion with (*head*) re: parents and literacy hour...Arranged details for tonight's staff meeting with (*head*) in preparation for literacy hour implementation.

A En

Table 6.7b

Liaison Tasks conducted in twelve weeks over three terms

Mins	Head	Colleagues	Others
250			
200	X Xu = 155 A En		
150			
100	qu = 15 □ Md, qL, XL = 0	X Xu = 43 F RE □ qu = 15 Md, qL, XL = 0	X Xu = 132 F RE qu = 15 □ Md, qL, XL = 0
0			

Table 6.7b shows that the majority of Co-ordinators in each sub-category spent at maximum 15 minutes (the Colleagues category) on liaison tasks over four weeks. Again it is the same two Co-ordinators who form the extreme upper time limits. Just over half the diaries collected mentioned liaison tasks. What is interesting is that considering the status of Headteachers in schools, some Subject Leaders spent little or no time consulting them.

The Interviews:

Although there are no direct links between this category and the interview questions asked, eight of the twenty Co-ordinators mentioned liaising with colleagues, sharing ideas, meeting their needs and supporting them through change.

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Q: ...are there any other opportunities for you to discuss your subject area or would it...?

A: In...actually a lot goes on during half-termly review meetings and... that is excellent. I mean, I must say it is difficult sometimes to make sure that you meet, but it's my responsibility to make sure that we meet and when we do meet we discuss the work that has gone on and there's often an exchange of ideas, and then I've found that useful and a lot of people have said to me they've found it useful.

H Ma(3)

People know I'm the English co-ordinator and, if in doubt, they'll always come and ask - they'll come and ask what they should be doing - perhaps you'll be in the middle of a lesson you just...quite often now we're congregating here at the end of the day as well, what should we be doing with this, what should I be doing with that? So, it's informal chats, quite often one person comes in in the middle and comes out there's a lot of that ... but, yeah, we do have formal staff meetings.

I En(3)

I talk to other members of staff in a snatched five minutes here and there eh about what they are doing...

C Sci(3)

This does indicate that in general the Co-ordinators have not recorded their less formal conversations in their diaries, despite some suggestion of time constraints acting as a restriction on liaison. The observations would seem to confirm this as four incidences of subject related conversation were noted whilst observing twenty Co-ordinators for one day each, in the first term (See example appendix 11). These conversations two with colleagues and two with Headteachers, totalled twenty-one minutes. In order to compare these figures with the diary evidence the total number of incidences and the total number of minutes were multiplied by twenty to arrive at an estimate giving the number of incidences and the time involved, which might occur over four weeks. Consequently the observations suggested that Co-ordinators could be involved in up to eighty discussions taking up four hundred and twenty minutes over four weeks in the first term. This figure is almost double that reported in the diaries. As a result of this mismatch in figures during the first observation period, for the second and third terms a simple tally chart was kept to record the frequency of both subject related conversation together with other conversations held by the Co-ordinator (See example chart appendix

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5). Whilst these tally charts did not record the time spent in conversation they nevertheless provided a more detailed and accurate record of subject related interactions (see methodology chapter for further discussion). In the second term of observations thirty-four subject related conversations were noted seven of which were with the Headteacher. This was from a total of four hundred and eighty conversations in total. In term three twenty-three conversations were noted, three with the Headteacher. This indicates a likely incidence of six hundred and eighty and four hundred and sixty conversations in the second and third terms respectively. Many of these conversations were quick and ran in succession and were therefore difficult to remember, which may account for the disparity in the diary records. As a consequence it seems reasonable to suppose that Co-ordinators were holding subject related conversations with both the Headteacher and their colleagues on a frequent basis.

During the interviews half the Curriculum Co-ordinators considered supporting colleagues to be an important part of their role: -

it's making sure that everybody all the members of staff...are aware of the policies that are in place, schemes of work..."

A En(1)

When asked to talk about the qualities which made Curriculum Co-ordinators effective Co-ordinators mentioned employing tact and diplomacy, being supportive, trustworthy, a good communicator, being enthusiastic, approachable and willing.

...it is putting your point of view in a non-antagonistic way...

J KS1(1)

...you've got to be organised...and you've got to be diplomatic...

I En(1)

...it's somebody who can treat different people in different ways...

G ICT(1)

...being willing to drop things and go and help people...

E PE(1)

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...sensitivity I think because you're dealing with... people...

D PE(1)

...flexibility, good humour, availability.

C En(1)

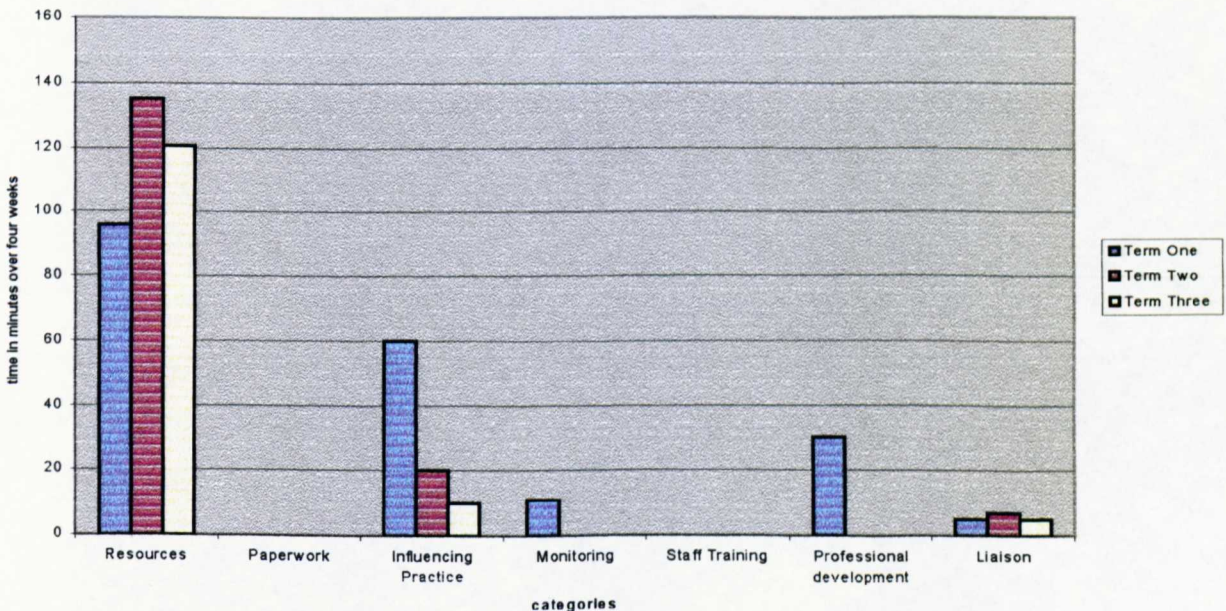
This was clearly an area about which Co-ordinators felt strongly, which would further suggest that communication is a very important part of Curriculum Co-ordination.

Summary of the Diary evidence:

Figure 6.2 below shows a comparison of the average times spent as recorded in the diaries for each category for the four weeks of each term. What is immediately apparent is the amount of time spent on resources (particularly their organisation), by comparison with any other category. Equally the time spent remains high over the whole period of data collection. This ties in to some extent with the findings of other research such as Bell (1992). Nevertheless it was shown in the resources section of this chapter, that the

Figure 6.2

Average time spent as indicated in the diaries



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more experienced Co-ordinators were likely to spend less time on resource based tasks. Whilst paperwork related tasks were mentioned frequently during the interviews, in reality it was apparent that issues of paperwork affected only the minority of Co-ordinators during the periods the diaries were kept. This may reflect the pressure that particular schools have been under to get paperwork in place in preparation for OFSTED Inspections. As a result, most schools had recently re-written or newly developed policies and schemes of work. Moreover this possibly meant that paperwork still felt like a current issue to Co-ordinators who had invested a lot of time and energy in its preparation. In addition the introduction of legislation committing schools to the provision of a School Development Plan has meant that subject action planning is included to some extent within this process.

...planning...should be reflective of the aims and the policies so that we know that at the end of the year we've done what we've said we would achieve within that year...

F Ma(2)

Both Influencing Practice and Monitoring categories fall off in terms of the time spent on them after the first term. Monitoring, as has already been pointed out, was to some extent controlled by the time made available to do it. While many Co-ordinators mentioned the need to be involved with classroom observation less formal methods were favoured generally. Co-ordinators used less intrusive methods of collecting information. In order to influence practice it seems probable that the main energy and thrust for leading, developing, changing and unifying practice is likely to come early in the academic year so that it is in place as soon as possible. This is also likely to be a time when the Co-ordinator's energy and enthusiasm is at its greatest. Moreover, some of the evidence already discussed has shown that as the year progressed and schools came under pressure to prepare for Literacy Hour and other subjects were put aside.

...now with this new...sort of idea that we're going to be looking at literacy and maths, already you can hear comments...so we won't have to do it then so it's

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pointless and you know, a few negative comments...which is going to be hard...that's what I'm dreading really...

A His(2)

Science suffered a bit because we're concentrating on literacy, I think that's the way it's got to be...

H Sci(2)

Similarly, with staff training and professional development, resources of time and money seemed to be concentrated on English and Maths. Courses can be lengthy and costly for schools who have to pay for the course and supply cover for the member of staff on the course. Nevertheless, given the amount of recent change it is interesting that very little staff training was recorded. The Liaison category remained stable throughout the year. This seems reasonable in the light of it encompassing informal conversation with colleagues and others, which might be expected to be at a similar level throughout. What is interesting is that the average time recorded was so low. It would appear from this information that Curriculum Co-ordinators were not holding extended conversations with their Headteacher about their subject. However, as already pointed out the accuracy of this category is in question. This evidence is also questionable in the light of the Co-ordinators' deluge of responses to questions about the characteristics of effective leadership, which would seem to indicate that Co-ordinators' view their position very much in terms of building strong relationships with colleagues.

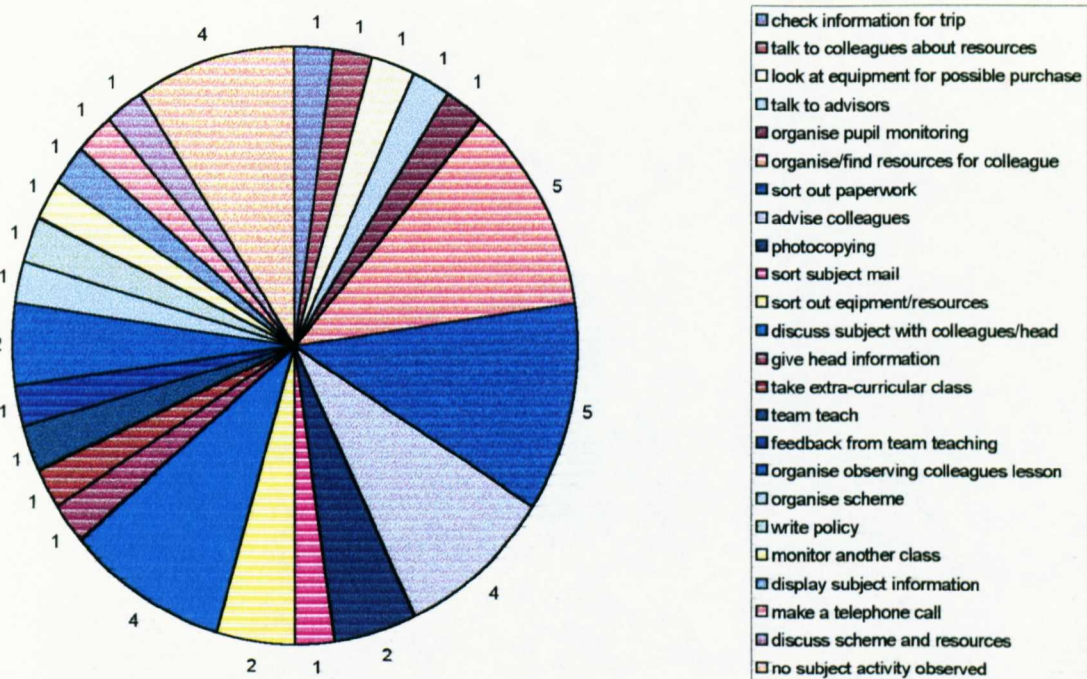
Observations made through spending a day with each Co-ordinator in each of three terms confirm much of the diary information. Notes were made with special attention given to any activities associated with the post of Co-ordinator rather than that of class teacher. Because of the nature of these observations, Co-ordinators were being observed during their normal (teaching) day and it was not always possible to witness them working on Curriculum Co-ordination based tasks. Nevertheless observations were noted of the subject related tasks that were carried out. Through a process of

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content analysis the observations were read and the tasks related to Curriculum Co-ordination highlighted (see example in appendix 7). The tasks performed in the first term were then used to form a pie chart showing the range of curriculum co-ordination activities observed. Figure 6.3 below represents the observations made of twenty Co-ordinators for one school day each, in the first term.

Figure 6.3

Observations from one day spent with each of twenty Curriculum Co-ordinators in term one



N.B. Figures represent number of observations noted.

This does not include tasks carried out outside school hours. The range of tasks noted forms a list very similar to many of the tasks mentioned in the diaries. This information would therefore seem to confirm the general accuracy of the diaries and interviews. The majority of tasks noted fall within the Resources category as identified for the purposes of the diaries. Nevertheless as already mentioned there was one area in which the

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accuracy of the diaries was called into question. Observations that on four occasions Co-ordinators were noted having subject related discussion with colleagues raised awareness that this was an area for which the Co-ordinators were not keeping an accurate record. Having established what Curriculum Co-ordinators were doing in terms of the tasks they were performing it is helpful to look at the context within which these tasks were being performed. Data from the semi-structured interviews will be used to enrich the picture of this role. Asked directly about whether or not they were effective as Co-ordinators, fourteen said they were (or hoped they were).

Q: Do you feel you meet these (*effectiveness*) criteria?

A: Yes, I think so [laughs]. I hope so anyway he's (*the head*) given me a second lot (*another curriculum responsibility*) so I must be doing the first lot all right. [laughs].

A En(1)

I think so yes, one member of staff said to me once 'have you got a degree in psychology?'

F RE(1)

Three Co-ordinators explained they were effective for some of the time.

A: I think I meet some of it, but I'm human.

Q: Which criteria do you meet?

A: Well, I've done the staff meetings. I've done the...courses and I think...I am, ...accessible to people. They do, sort of, come and ask me things...but I don't...I try not to be too bossy. I'm not really that sort of person to go round...ordering people around and laying the law down, but I, I think I get my point across and then I hope I, I'm seen to help people and being supportive.

E En(1)

However another three claimed they were not effective.

...I probably don't (*meet the criteria*)...if I have the time I don't think I'm bad but sometimes people come to me with problems which I...can't do anything about...

G ICT(1)

These examples, with the implication that a degree in psychology is helpful and that supportiveness and being helpful are necessary again emphasise the importance Co-ordinators place on managing relationships. The final example raises questions about the time afforded to Co-ordinators and why this Co-ordinator is unable to meet the

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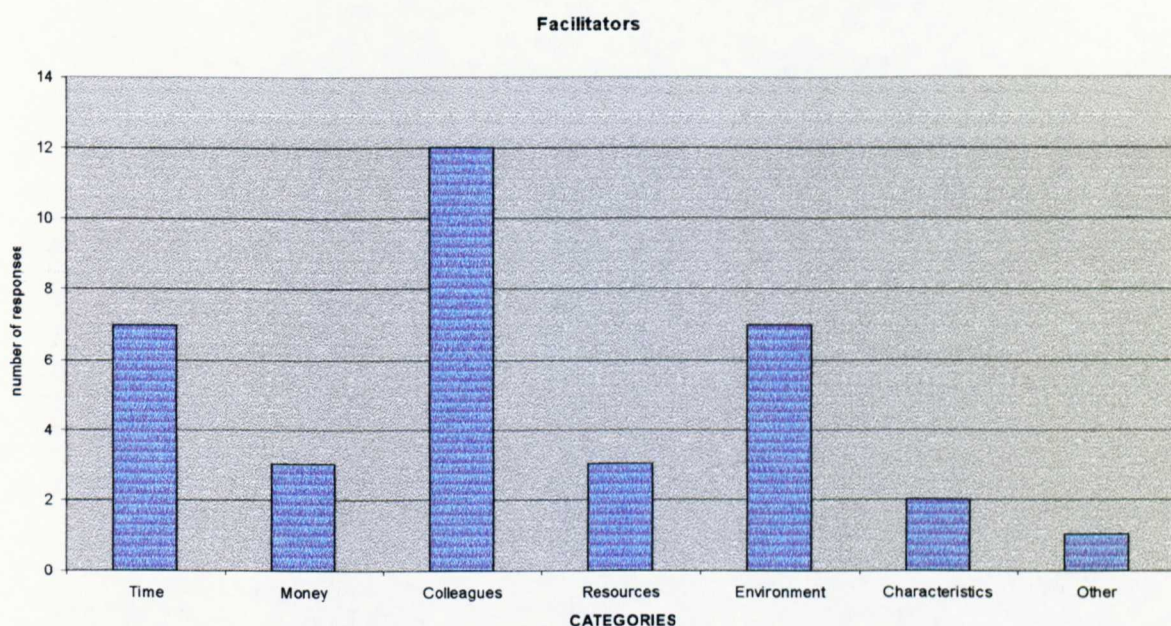
needs of her colleagues. This leads to questions about what facilitates and/or inhibits the Curriculum Co-ordinator in their role.

Facilitators and Inhibitors:

As a part of the interview process Curriculum Co-ordinators were asked to identify factors which they felt either helped facilitate or inhibit them in performing their role.

Figure 6.4 below shows those factors identified, which facilitated Co-ordinators in their

Figure 6.4



role. They raised issues of time at many points during the interview process. When asked specifically to identify facilitating factors it was the time to organise, to support, to manage, and to observe that they felt to be important.

Q: ...what makes life easier for you as a co-ordinator? What sort of support is helpful?

A: Time. Time.

Q: Right and that..

A: Yeah... it's just need - sometimes almost crisis that things have to be done.

E En(1)

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What support would be useful is if somebody took my class and relieved me with non-contact time to do ... things like monitoring...

C En(1)

Money was an issue as something that could buy time, resources, training and advice.

...having money as well to put things into place such as getting training done, finding supply cover, finding money for resources...

I Ma(1)

...money when it buys time...

B D&T(1)

Over half the Co-ordinators raised the issue of colleagues' support, whether that be the Head's backing, having co-operative and approachable colleagues or just colleagues who listen to and act on advice.

Q: ...what kinds of...things help you in the role of a co-ordinator what sort of support is useful?

A: Well...good staff...I mean I'd say the staff are very good and very supportive to change. I know when I first came here we used to use the Scottish primary maths and I found that pretty awful really for infants and...so I was coming in saying well that we're not going to do it that way any more and the staff were great fine. They were quite happy to do any changes that you put forward to them and they're very approachable so if they do have a problem of if there's something they don't like or it's something they don't feel they should be doing they will come to me and say to me. So it's that nice relaxed atmosphere it does help...

F Ma(1)

...the Head supports you if you were really stuck and you know within a particular aspect of it...and the staff would...

D Sci(1)

Of the three Co-ordinators who thought more resources were helpful one simply wanted to buy resources that suited her needs rather than the Headteachers'.

...The Head orders the majority of resources and...it would make my life easier if I could order what was needed...and it would make everyone else's lives easier...

B Art(1)

...finding money for resources um that's seriously lacking...

I Ma(1)

Co-ordinators felt advice in terms of advisory help, documentation and attending courses was beneficial.

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...I did a ten-week course...it certainly sort of clarified a lot.

H Sci(1)

...when you are on a course, to talk to other co-ordinators is good, often to find new ideas or to...even if it's simple things such as how do you store the batteries or the bulbs and the wires...and people are saying 'ooh I can't manage to do that all the time' and you think neither can we and you're relieved to know somebody else is in exactly the same boat.

C Sci(1)

Two Co-ordinators felt confidence and enthusiasm in the subject were characteristics that were important.

First and foremost it's having a personal interest in the subject...

J KS2(1)

I think being confident in your own subject knowledge...

H Ma(1)

Finally one Co-ordinator thought formalising procedures for the leadership role would be helpful.

...somebody in senior management actually making the whole thing more formal and then it's not really me forcing my views on what I should be doing on everybody else...it's already understood that's what a Subject Leader does, so you can go ahead and do it without actually ruffling any feathers because it's not me, this is the management...require this.

G ICT(1)

Figure 6.5 below shows the factors identified as inhibiting Co-ordinators in the performance of their role. Almost two thirds of the Co-ordinators interviewed identified issues around the lack of time, which reflected closely, those aspects raised as facilitating factors. However, they also mentioned needing time for subject related staff meetings, time to follow initiatives through and time to be both a teacher and a Co-ordinator.

...there's not enough hours in the school day to be a teacher and be a co-ordinator.

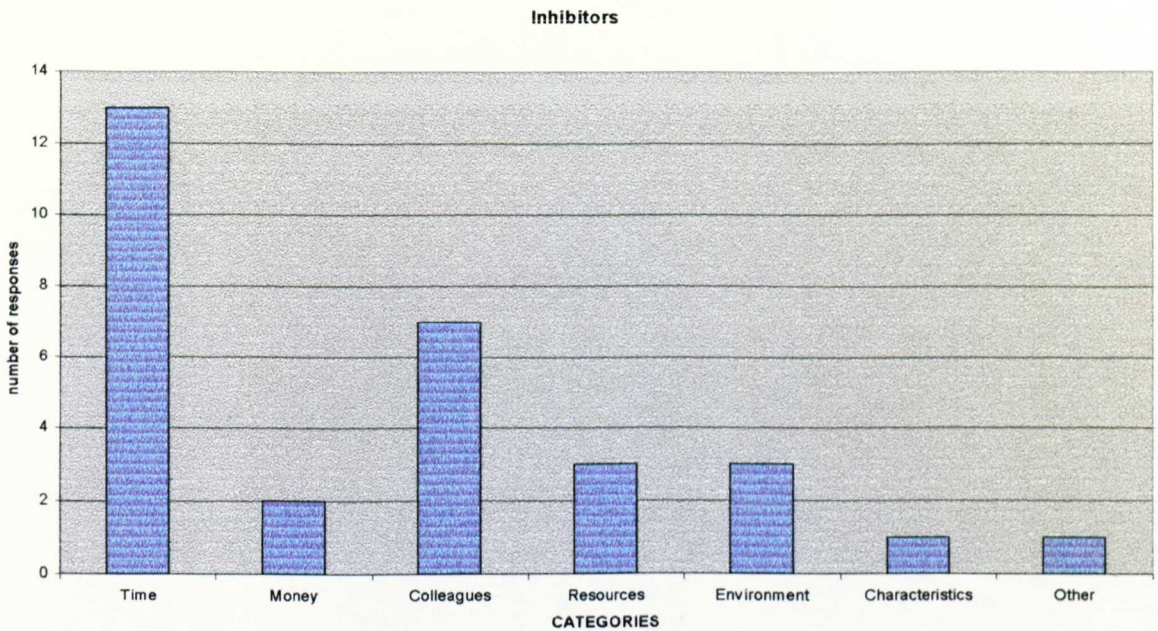
E PE(1)

Time of course...the time to follow things through straight away...

A En(1)

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Figure 6.5



Money was raised again in terms of providing resources and time.

...we would like more equipment, we would like more texts brought in, but it is all down to funding...

F Ma(1)

...it's got to be money because you can be a damn sight more effective if you have the resources...

H Sci(1)

Colleagues were identified as possible inhibitors from the standpoint of staff who refused to listen, were not treating the subject seriously, who were absent or negative, where there was power relationship problems or simply too few staff to bounce ideas off.

Q: ...what about the factors which inhibit your effectiveness?

A: staff illness, underlined, underlined, underlined... We were supposed... to be going off to get resources or visit another school and then someone's off and you just can't do it O r you can't raise the standard in your own class because you've got seven or eight from another class coming in frequently... And changing staff attitudes...

I En(1)

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Other ones would be...staff who aren't willing to listen 'oh I've always done it this way and I see no reason to change' and that is a hard one to overcome...

J KS2(1)

A lack of resources was raised as an issue.

...you see lots of things in the catalogue and you just know that you can't get them.

D PE(1)

Also co-ordinators identified the environment as an inhibitor in terms of class size, space and interruptions to non-contact time.

Where ever you are...in the school it's a busy place...you really want to go away and write that part of the document...not (*be*) going into classes and seeing teacher's and discussing things.

A His(1)

...I think environment, I'm finding I'm negative because we've literally got all sorts of obstacles in trying to deliver a curriculum that really needs a lot more space, you know with a big field...you know I'm always amazed at how well the children look after things...

D PE(1)

A Characteristic one Co-ordinator referred to was being inhibited by the limitations of his energy and enthusiasm.

...my own personal energy and health, I'm not...on the ball all the time, I don't get things done if I don't feel like, well enough...

I Ma(1)

In the Other category one Co-ordinator felt strongly that being a teacher came first and that was where her priorities lay.

...I do know that people say language is important and policies are important and I know they are and I know they have got to be there but to me the children are the important thing. I don't care how many pieces of paper you push around from one place to another and...how many times you write down what you are doing and they expect me to write it down about four times...why re-invent the wheel? Why write that down four times? I mean it's time which is being taken away from the children, but I didn't say that!

J KS1(1)

Another felt the problem was:-

...the fact that we are not monitoring regularly. I haven't been in the juniors now for twelve years...I don't know the quality of it. I don't really even know the

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format now...so I suppose it could be said that I as the co-ordinator for that area I am not fulfilling my role as regards quality of teaching...

F RE(1)

To conclude some of the major issues highlighted by Co-ordinators in this chapter are firstly that of relationships. Co-ordinators constantly stressed the key value they attached to having the support of both their Headteacher and their colleagues. These relationships could have a significant impact either positively or negatively. Secondly issues related to the time available were frequently raised. This affected whether or not Co-ordinators could perform their role in a way that they considered effective. They also needed time to carry out the increasing demands of their role that many felt to be very difficult to perform without at least some non-contact time. The value of subject knowledge was another factor that is significant in terms of the Co-ordinators' confidence. Finally the impact of legislation and government agency demands and changes affects the pressures on Co-ordinators (sometimes related to their subject responsibility), and the extent to which they are supported through change. Underlying all these factors are issues around the varied impacts the cultures of each school have. The next Chapter will look at these aspects of the Curriculum Co-ordination role in more detail.

Chapter Seven: The Factors which Influence and Impact on the Role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator

Introduction:

The previous chapter, The reality of curriculum co-ordination, developed some understanding of the kinds of tasks Curriculum Co-ordinators were involved with, the value they attached to different aspects of that role, together with some exploration of their attitudes towards these tasks. It also looked at those factors that helped to facilitate or inhibit the Co-ordinators in the performance of this role. Throughout this investigation it was apparent that there were a number of influences on the role of Curriculum Co-ordinator. These influences can be broadly described as factors related to the external forces of Government agencies, those related to the structure and management of the Co-ordinators role in terms of the school organisation and those related to the attitudes and philosophies of individual Co-ordinators. In addition these factors interrelate with school cultures which were underlying all these factors and were about promoting the importance of good interpersonal relationships, acting to mediate forces for change. This chapter will take each of these influences in turn and give examples of how the role affects and is affected by firstly the Co-ordinators themselves, secondly by management structures and thirdly by external factors. Cultural issues will also be highlighted. However it is important to point out that these influences are interrelated, interacting in a complex manner and therefore the influence of each can be seen throughout the discussion. As a consequence the final section on the external factors will draw on aspects raised in earlier parts of the chapter as well as highlighting new ones. In order to explore these issues more fully. This chapter aims to: -

- Demonstrate through example the three main factors that influence the Co-ordinators role.
- Look at the views and philosophies held by the Curriculum Co-ordinators.
- Explore the management structures of the school and how the role of Curriculum Co-ordinator is placed within it.

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- Examine the influence of the external requirements by government agencies.
- Consider the importance of school culture.

Key Influences on the Curriculum Co-ordinator’s role.

Evidence on the variation between the roles carried out by individual Co-ordinators and in particular school circumstances is highlighted through diary and interview evidence.

Figure 7.1 Diary Evidence

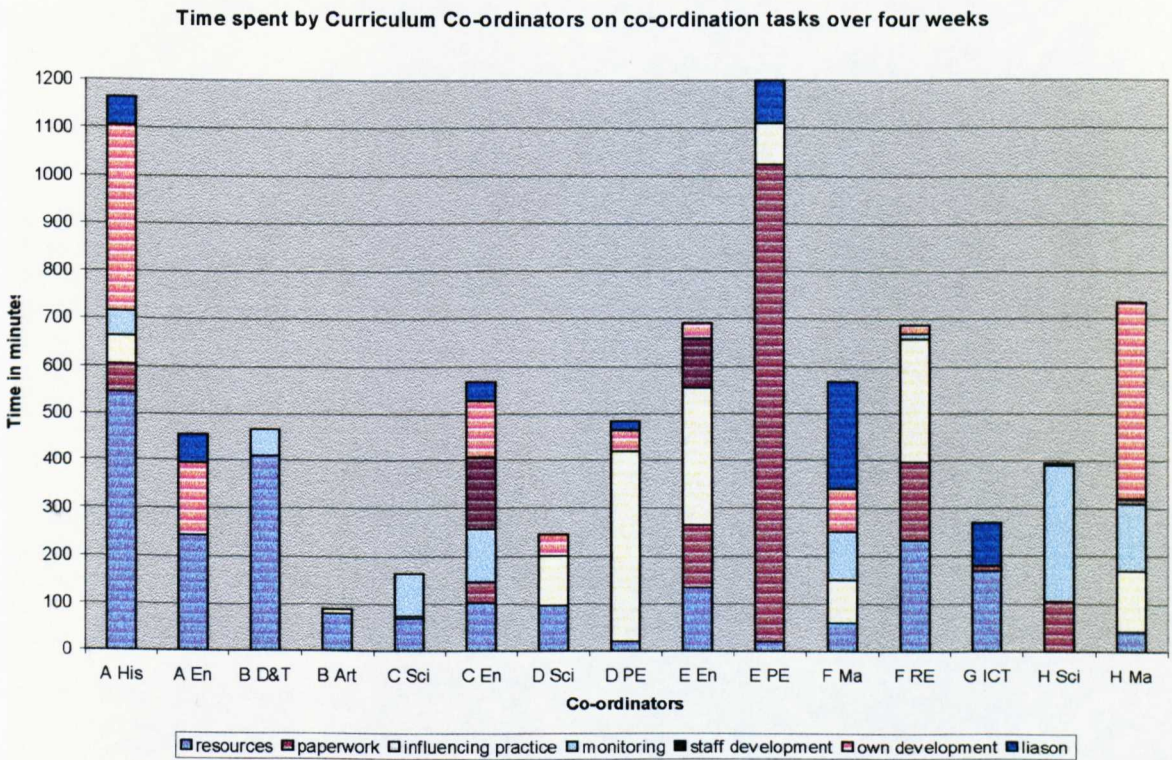


Figure 7.1 shows the tasks recorded in the diaries of fifteen Curriculum Co-ordinators over four weeks of the first term of the data collection period. The first letter denotes the school. Letters identifying the Co-ordinator by indicating their subject responsibility follows this. Each bar shows the work of one Co-ordinator, which is then segmented into the different tasks performed over the four week period. Looking first at time spent on resources it is interesting that Co-ordinators B D&T and B Art appear to concentrate

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more of their efforts on resources than any other activity, a trend followed through in
their subsequent diaries. They work in a school which Co-ordinator B D&T described in
interview as managing its Co-ordinators: -

Badly...No it's, no that's a bit unfair but only...through the years I've been here
it's improved the view of what a co-ordinator is and what they do and how they
should do it...we still basically have the same job descriptions...but they don't
actually reflect changes in the way that people have...that have taken
place...even significantly you know...there was two of us that had these areas,
key stage one and key stage two between us, well, when that was seen not to
be working...and having inherent problems they (*the senior management team*)
did re-organise it to three people to doing three jobs...for that period we were
shown some understanding um...it's obviously really hard, it's more...our
deputy head... she is appearing to have an understanding of these things
eventually um she's just not particularly...consistent.

B D&T(1)

When asked about whether the school provided guidance for the role Co-ordinator B Art
replied: -

I haven't been given any, I haven't apart from a job description...(*which says*) to
take responsibility for art four to eleven years.

B Art(1)

She was also concerned that: -

we don't seem to have money enough to spare for courses and things well I
mean, I mean not just Art...

B Art(1)

The implications from these statements were that the school management team had not
taken the Curriculum Co-ordinators role seriously and were not giving their Co-
ordinators the opportunities to develop their role or to ensure their own professional
development in the way they would like. Job descriptions did not reflect change and the
senior management team appear unsure about what they expect of Co-ordinators.
Whilst the deputy might be more responsive there was a concern that her support was
inconsistent. In addition Co-ordinator B Art was only in her second year of teaching and
already seemed a little disillusioned.

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In contrast the Co-ordinators in school E spent a considerable amount of time over the year developing their subjects, which meant Co-ordinator E PE was under too much pressure to be able to hand in a diary for the second term. Their school, under the leadership of a new Headteacher, was just beginning the process of developing practice, policies and schemes through negotiation. Co-ordinator E En was asked about whether the school had structures and guidelines for Curriculum Co-ordinators.

This has been thrashed out in staff meetings and well discussions and sort of... pooling of ideas until we've all arrived at this common understanding, (*but*) no there's nothing, nothing written down as yet.

E En(1)

The individual enterprise of Co-ordinator E PE could be seen as she developed her subject paperwork.

because we're in such a stage as writing everything, there's been a lot of staff meetings on English because that was first and Maths... The PE... I started over the summer you see... really no I won't say by choice, but I wasn't told to have it ready by September but I knew there was no policy and I knew that we'd have to get one before OFSTED basically...

E PE(1)

This is a school which appeared to be trying to develop a culture of communication and support whilst attempting to meet the requirements made of them. Although policies and guidelines were not necessarily on paper, time was being given to discussion and debate in order to develop them, thus involving all the staff in this process. Such examples begin to highlight the complexity of individual school situations and cultures and the impacts such situations might have on the Co-ordinators role.

A further example of influences on the Co-ordinators role can be found in school A. In term one the time spent by Co-ordinator A His was high as she developed resources and her own subject knowledge. Nevertheless the time she spent dropped considerably over the next two diary periods whilst the time spent by Co-ordinator A En, shown in figure 7.1 as spending just over a third of the time spent by Co-ordinator A His, rose considerably. This reversal of positions in respect of the time spent by each Co-ordinator, was directly attributable to the announcement of Government plans for the

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introduction of literacy hour. As quoted in the previous chapter (here quoted in more detail), Co-ordinator A His explains: -

Now with this new...idea that we're going to be looking at literacy and maths, already you can hear the comments...“We haven't got to do it (*history*) any more” and...“so we won't have to do it (*history*) then”, “so it's (*history is*) pointless” and you know a few negative comments... which is going to be hard...That's what I'm dreading really, and the fact that I'm going to have to say to them “Well lets have a talk about what we're going to do”...Some of them...will be positive but you always get somebody who's perhaps a little bit negative and says “well...if I can only do the...three R's that's...what we have to do, I wont have time to do all that I'm sorry”.

A His(2)

These concerns were to some extent confirmed by the shift in workload and emphasis on English demonstrated in term three. The comments of the English Co-ordinator add strength to this view, as in term three her workload was high and given a greater priority.

Well I was on a one-day course last week...involving the guided reading side of the literacy hour which was really good...the thing is you come back all fired up don't you...I've got a two-day training course coming up which is the two-days set you know, by the Government, for myself, the Head and the Governor...and then we've got the training pack come into school last Thursday...which then we're supposed to go on the two-day training course, come back, use the training pack ...to filter the information through to the rest of the staff which of course, leaves it a bit short time wise because we're into the end of term and reports and parents evenings and what-have-you...

A En(3)

Here the extent of the influence of events external to the school are apparent. The English Co-ordinator appeared to be actively involved with leading change whilst the History co-ordinator was feeling a little disillusioned about the work and effort she had put into her subject which may, in her view, have been pointless in terms of her colleagues attitudes towards teaching the subject.

Whilst these examples of the variations between Co-ordinators and schools are only snapshots in time they do nevertheless indicate some of the complexities and extent to which different factors influence the Co-ordinators role. In the case of school B the management system and culture was not encouraging to the development of the Co-

The Factors which Influence and Impact on the Role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator ordination role. School E in contrast was encouraging and establishing whole school development in league with Co-ordinators, re-enforcing communication as a way forward. In addition individual Co-ordinators were able to act on their own initiative to develop their curriculum area. School A demonstrated the direct effects of pressure external to the school and its impact on individual Co-ordinators and how they feel about their role. This clearly demonstrates the three main factors identified as influencing and impacting on the Co-ordinators role. Firstly are those factors related to the Co-ordinators themselves and how they as individuals manage and negotiate their role. Secondly are factors involved with the management of the Co-ordinators role. Thirdly there are those factors external to the school such as legislative change and the judgements made of them through testing and inspection. Overarching all these issues and interrelating with them is the culture of the school themselves. For example school E encourages communication, negotiation and involvement whereas in school B, communication channels are unreliable and understandings are not shared.

The Co-ordinators:

Research by Nias *et.al.* (1989) has demonstrated the importance of school cultures in both the way schools function and the way they deal with change. Further Day *et.al.* (1999) have argued that school leaders act to mediate change. As leaders of the curriculum, Co-ordinators may themselves play some part in this mediation process. This is especially important if, as Bush (1995) has suggested, Co-ordinators are in a position to set good examples of practice and initiate policy development and subject related activities. Therefore in relation to this research it was important to develop some understanding of the educational philosophies and cultural preferences and perceptions held by the Curriculum Co-ordinators. Consequently they were asked a number of questions during the semi-structured interviews, which attempted to draw these opinions out.

The Factors which Influence and Impact on the Role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator

Educational Philosophies:

Co-ordinators were asked to identify the approaches they felt were important in order to get children to learn. Eleven of the seventeen Co-ordinators interviewed in the second term believed in giving children a lot of hands on practical experience.

Q: Stepping back a bit from the sort of day to day, what do you feel your approach or one's approach should be to educating children?

A: ...a lot of it I think has got to be first hand experience, either by giving them a stimulus of some kind...or by...telling a story using various books, it's that sort of thing...By making it interesting. I think if the children see things, solid things in front of them...they're more aware and they're quite interested, I mean, they can't help but touch for a start and they want to get involved straight away.

A His

Oh by doing rather than being told, with plenty of experiences, plenty of hands-on working ideas, interesting and exciting and not necessarily all the time in an ideal world related to the National Curriculum...you would plan your work, but you could also, you have that freedom within it to follow the children's interests, so if they went off at a tangent, you could follow and allow that to develop and it's harder to do that.

J KS2

I suppose the bottom line is that you've got to make it...you've got to be sort of enthusiastic, if you're reasonably enthusiastic...then yes, they will sort of toddle along and if you listen to them...you've got to start from what they know and basically value what they know and then sort of build on that...I prefer to do it, sort of, lets find out for ourselves...

H Sci

These examples show clearly the importance these Co-ordinators attached to working on their pupils' interests through activities the pupils could do themselves in this way getting them involved, excited and willing to learn. Excitement and interest was raised as important by thirteen of the seventeen Co-ordinators interviewed. Moreover the example of JKS2 also demonstrated the importance Co-ordinators as teachers placed on the freedom to follow up the pupils interests. Co-ordinators like H Sci and J KS1 went on to point out the importance of treating their pupils as individuals.

Yes, I mean it's partnership I suppose isn't it, it's...totally against what the Government is saying, well no it's not, because you start off as a whole class and then, yeah, I mean, I don't know...I think it's horses for courses, I don't think that any one way suits...suits everybody and any one way doesn't suit any child does it...this is what I find is difficult when it's sort of prescriptive... You've

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got to sort of use judgement at some times and sometimes not even judgement, it's just instinct, isn't it.

H Sci(2)

Another Co-ordinator agreed that different methods suited different children.

...you could say that there, there would be eighteen philosophies in here because not every child would...would learn in the same way...you've got to find a happy medium between encouragement and praise and prodding and coaxing and it's really knowing your child as to the best way to get the best out of them.

J KS1(2)

This demonstrates the importance Co-ordinators attach to people, in this case pupils, as individuals and their concern with the imposition of systems, which might threaten their ability to deal with the particular needs of a particular individual. There is also an emphasis on their own need to be flexible and adaptable in order to gain the interest and enthusiasm of those they teach. Other Co-ordinators added to this mentioning the importance of having a good lesson structure that reinforces and builds on current understandings. This was combined with a need to be a teacher who is caring, approachable and willing to listen.

...I think at this age too the children are naturally curious so you're already on a plus, but it, it does depend on how you present your lesson and also getting the content just right, if it's not sufficient, the brighter one's won't be learning or really interested and if it's too much you can also make them switch off...

F RE(2)

...well motivation, I try and bring things, make things relevant to their own life... things like in maths when they do decimals, we were looking at...prices of petrol because that's always in decimal and they go out 'Oh yeah I noticed that'. Making them aware of things around them I suppose and high expectations...

D Sci(2)

These responses would seem to indicate that these Co-ordinators as teachers believed in the importance of the individual, of teaching through engaging pupils interest, by making lessons relevant and interesting and that encourage pupils to find out for themselves. Moreover they valued the ability to respond to pupils needs and interests rather than purely following the directives of legislation. Consequently when asked their

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views about recent change such as testing and OFSTED Co-ordinators responses were a complex mix of positive and negative factors.

...I think in this school change is definitely necessary. We've been in the dark ages, we didn't move forward for various reasons...but now we have to do it, I think a lot of them were necessary for the sake of the children to improve standards. I think children are capable of a lot...more than you ever imagine, help them to fulfil their full potential...But it seems to be happening to such an extent that I do wonder really if it's this business of childminding isn't it, rather than allowing their personal development...

E En(2)

...the more recent ones in the SAT's I...think are good, I do think we need to narrow the curriculum down. I think there was an awful lot of pressure on um, key stage one in particular to do...a whole range of subjects, when we had always been doing that, we had always used history to teach reading and writing. We'd always used geography to teach aspects of number, we'd included it in our topic work...

G Sci(2)

There's so much hindrance because of bureaucracy and the time it takes to do things...I'm finding it more difficult to do lesson planning, to do my displays in the classroom, because of the work I need to do as a Co-ordinator. So...I haven't done what I want to do yet. The planning isn't up to scratch, but I'm doing the Co-ordinating. If I wasn't doing the Co-ordinating I'd have a lovely classroom, plans sorted...but I'd have nothing done as far as getting the scheme of work up and running and I can't get a balance between the two...On the positive side it is making us think a lot more about our teaching practice and our effectiveness as teachers...and it's making us look very closely at what we actually teach, in the classroom...And are we missing any thing, are we teaching it badly, are they gaining experiences they should have, so there's that positive side.

I Ma(2)

These examples illustrate the fact that the Co-ordinators as individuals hold very mixed feelings about the benefits and disadvantages of change. They appear to agree that some change is necessary and some re-thinking of what they are doing is beneficial. However there is also an element of cynicism in that some change is viewed as enforcing practices they had always been involved with. Other change just involves bureaucracy which takes time away from the classroom. However the main message appeared to be about the extent of change and the pressure such change placed on them as individuals. just over half the Co-ordinators thought they were suffering from

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increased workloads, pressure on themselves and their time and a loss of freedom
occasioned by the increased formality of what they do.

I think there's more of a workload, it's all gone very...formal you know...it
seems to be very straightforward you do this, this and this but in actual fact it's
not like that...I don't find it so anyway...

B Art(2)

(I view change) With a very jaundiced eye sometimes because, I mean, I don't
know, when do people expect you to actually carry on a normal life that enables
you to do the job that you're supposed to do in school, because I don't care
what they say about workaholics anonymous, there comes a time when they do
go out to lunch...

H Sci(2)

...I find it a tremendous pressure...because I've got a SAT's class, I mean, I
sometimes feel I'm teaching to the tests...

H Ma(2)

I think some of them are very positive but...others. For example OFSTED, I
think could be tackled in a different way maybe...being accountable, I mean, I
think being accountable is important, you've got to be accountable, but I think
OFSTED puts a very stressful aspect on inspections...

D PE(2)

This does suggest that whilst the Co-ordinators thought change brought benefits such
as sharpening their teaching skills and clarifying what should be taught, it also meant
pressure in terms of workload, greater formality and greater answerability. They also
seemed to be facing choices about what to prioritise, as many of them believed they
would not be able to do everything required of them as a class teacher and a Co-
ordinator. All of these factors appear to be exacerbated by the frequency of changing
curriculum requirements.

...we really worked hard and spent a lot of money and then they changed
it...they've changed again and now it's supposed to be a period of no change
(to the national curriculum) but it's a very strange sort of no change...

G Sci(2)

Concerns were raised about the impact of literacy hour by ten of the seventeen Co-
ordinators interviewed in the second term.

Well...you're going to have to have a fixed time every day for teaching the
literacy hour and that has a knock-on effect on all sorts of things, like assembly

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time and whether we should continue having it in the mornings...or afternoons...and of course the large effect it will have on the...other curriculum areas. The actual amount of time that's spent teaching those other subjects will be greatly reduced.

C En(2)

Therefore evidence from this research indicates that Co-ordinators place importance on the individual and on individual educational development. They believe in taking a flexible approach to teaching and are consequently open to the idea of change and development if it acts to strengthen their own practice. Kitson (1996) suggested that the strength of the Co-ordinator as a classroom practitioner was important as they employ techniques and strategies that strengthen their ability to make suggestions about possible subject related approaches. However as what West (1995) described as managers of change, Co-ordinators appeared anxious about the extent and impact of it. In general Co-ordinators favoured a broad curriculum that allowed the flexibility to encourage classroom enthusiasms. They therefore had concerns about the impact of initiatives such as literacy hour which might squeeze the time spent on other areas of the curriculum with a possible consequence of reducing the importance of a non-literacy related Co-ordination role.

The Management of Relationships:

In the previous chapter (The reality of Curriculum Co-ordination) it was argued that co-ordinators placed great importance on their relationships with colleagues. As Taylor (1989) argued Co-ordinators working collaboratively with colleagues acts to aid childrens' understanding. Therefore it was interesting to discover what methods the Co-ordinators used to develop and maintain these relationships in terms of their curriculum co-ordination responsibilities and also how they would deal with a particularly difficult or unresponsive colleague. Consequently as part of the interview process one of the questions Co-ordinators were asked was to explain what approaches they used to persuade their colleagues to listen to them. Fourteen of the nineteen Co-ordinators

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interviewed in the third term claimed that the main way of introducing subject issues would be through staff meetings or one-to-one contact with the teacher concerned.

Q: What sort of approach do you take with colleagues when you want them to listen to you?

A: ...usually it's done...it depends whether it's individually or...whether it's at a staff meeting. In a staff meeting, obviously everybody is OK...they don't really have any difficulties. The majority of staff are open to advice and listening to, you know, the new things that we've got...If I'm leading a staff meeting it's focused very much on to me...If it's...an individual more often than not they've requested the information from me so they are obviously going to listen...It's not very often I would go to another member of staff and suggest something...

A En(3)

Well if it's the whole staff, I'd do it in a staff meeting, so if it was a staff meeting on another subject and I'd either ask to have a staff meeting on Science depending on how big the thing was that I wanted to discuss...But if it's just a quick thing it would be oh I'd do it in a staff meeting when they're all here. If it's just on a one-to-one I'd just speak to that member of staff in the classroom after school or lunchtime or before school or at sometime in the day.

C Sci(3)

...you need a staff meeting, go through (*the head*) first, go and see (*the head*) talk to her about it, decide what you are going to do, what you are going to say, she'll give you advice or assistance, whatever and then you lead the meeting.

E PE(3)

These examples suggest that the Co-ordinators would tend to approach subject related issues through staff meetings where there can be open discussion and everyone will be informed of issues at the same time. There were also occasions where it was more appropriate to talk to colleagues as individuals although co-ordinator A En indicated a possible reluctance about talking to another member of staff without them first having initiated the conversation. Co-ordinator E PE was a newly qualified teacher and was therefore more reliant on the headteachers support, which seemed to be readily available to her and helped enable her to lead a staff meeting. This does however highlight the issue that the experience of the Co-ordinator may have an impact on how they might approach colleagues and the extent of support they will need to do that. Another more experienced Co-ordinator (A His) pointed out that she acted to pre-empt possible opposition by sounding out some of her colleagues prior to a staff meeting.

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...if there's something that I...think that they are going to have a go at I tend to sound them out first a little bit...before I go in to a staff meeting, sound them out and say 'Hey have you seen this?' or 'I've been on a course and this is how we did this' and I tend to also go to the staff who are...more positive than the negative ones to really get them on my side...

A His(3)

Primary Schools are relatively small institutions where everyone knows each other and feels some responsibility for each others well being (Blenkin and Kelly 1987). This might help explain the desire to avoid conflict. Therefore Co-ordinators believed in encouraging change in practice through demonstration. In this way Curriculum Co-ordinators could prove that their suggestions would work.

By doing short snappy technology projects which had a positive outcome, my class taking Friday morning assemblies so that people could see some technology and the staff were in there, the pupils were in there and in the script the kids were working from, slip in when you do your technology creating...it doesn't have to be particularly noticeable I don't think. It creates a feeling that perhaps you should have been doing technology as well...

B D&T(3)

In addition to leading by example Co-ordinators also suggested that there was a need to change colleagues attitudes through suggestion and persistence.

...if they see something working in your class then of course they want to take it on board, as long as you don't barge in with 'You're doing that wrong'...'Have you thought of doing of this way?' is always a good one, 'Oh I had a really good lesson today, we did this', is another good one...But it's not ramming it down throats as well, it's that balance isn't it.

I En(3)

However one Co-ordinator thought the only way forward in some circumstances was to insist on change and another two suggested using legislation as a last resort to impose change.

When push comes to shove, then shove comes into operation, but I would rather that, you know, it doesn't come to that. I like to be democratic as far as possible. J KS2(3)

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Nevertheless, as this example suggests, these were mentioned very much as a last resort. In contrast one Co-ordinator talked about the difficulties she had with making changes.

Q: If you wanted to change something about your subject school wide, how would you go about approaching that?

A: Well, I'd have to OK it with the deputy, who would OK it with the head. In fact, I probably wouldn't have...I probably wouldn't have anything changed, to be honest, because it would be too much...I don't mean that, like, I'm trying to get out of it, but it would be a hassle, because if things needed changing then the deputy would probably sort that out.

Q: Right. So when you talk about it being a hassle, is it because of the number of processes you'd have to go through?

A: Yes. Yeah, yeah...

Q: And is there any fear that that might backfire or not go ahead anyway?

A: Yeah, most of the time, yeah...I organised...an art competition one time and, well I don't have to but, you know, I like to organise these, and the head and deputy like them to be doing these, it's a lot harder in the infants because you don't get as much...time on your hands to do like this competition, if I did it would take over, and, you know...it's easy with the juniors, you can do it as part of a lesson, you know, a focus for that afternoon or something but in the infants, because there's so many other things going on as well, it's hard to fit it in...But in any case I organised this competition and...because I hadn't actually discussed it or mentioned it, I just sent out the letters and things, you know, used my own initiative, I...was sort of pulled up because it all had to be changed and I had to take the letters down and, you know, so...

B Art(3)

This relatively inexperienced teacher, unlike Co-ordinator E PE did not appear to have the support of the senior staff necessary to enable her to take the initiative. Consequently it was relatively easy to undermine her enthusiasm and make her unwilling to take such a risk again. As Littledyke (1997) argued a directive and instrumental managerial style can act to inhibit the process of development. Interestingly the other Co-ordinator from the same school was having problems because of the changes in subject emphasis.

Well, one of the problems is at the moment the blocks are on because we're waiting for a re-organisation of the National Curriculum, and one of the reasons is where people can't fit all the subjects in, um, people particularly in the infants are saying 'we spend so much time on literacy, on numeracy, we don't have time for.....' (*whatever the subject*)

B D&T(3)

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The Curriculum Co-ordinators in School B were argued earlier in this chapter, to be having problems carrying out their role. These quotes re-enforce this argument and add the problem of the Co-ordinators' role being put on hold while the school waits to see what new requirements and directives might be forthcoming. One Co-ordinator who seemed to sum up the general attitude of Co-ordinators toward making change said: -

...it depends what the changes are. I mean, some things you can introduce slowly by example, by doing, and proving that your practice works, through curriculum discussion. Some changes, such as if you're buying a new reading scheme, you're introducing a new reading scheme...there's the initial discussion, there's the examination of different schemes and then...a group choice has to be made, sometimes guided, but a group decision has to be made but it has to be something that people will accept.

J KS2(3)

When asked about how they would deal with a difficult member of staff, just under a half of the Co-ordinators claimed not to have found any staff difficult.

I haven't really had it...do you want me to imagine it had...happened? It's difficult until you're in the position isn't it.

C Sci(3)

...Oh I don't think I've been in conflict before...you'll have to give me a for instance...

G Sci(3)

Ironically, on the morning before this interview, Co-ordinator G Sci had been noted in the observation record as having an argument with a colleague about tidying up equipment and cleaning out the cupboards where mice had taken up residence. Though not a co-ordination issue it might indicate some potential for occasional conflict. This seeming reluctance to admit to conflict was an interesting issue and may again highlight the Co-ordinators desire to be seen as working in unison with their colleagues. Again when working in such a small community it may not be in the Co-ordinators interests to admit to such difficulties, though this does lead to the possibility of staff carrying hidden resentments. Others Co-ordinators claimed that most of their colleagues were fine.

They're not a bad bunch and we've all worked together for some time and it does make a difference.

H Sci(3)

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Despite this show of harmony most Co-ordinators could suggest methods of dealing with an awkward member of staff even if only on a hypothetical basis. These responses generally included mention of using persuasion and support in the first instance though around half thought they might need to move on to a point of insistence.

By having a quiet word, by suggesting, by offering to help, to work alongside, to provide Inset, to help with planning, to team teach, to offer the support, so that because sometimes it's fear, it isn't 'won't do' it's can't do' and it's defining which of these it is and if it's can't do then you go all out to offer support and then if it's won't do then you move another step down the road.

J KS2(3)

The more managerial stance taken by this Co-ordinator may be explained by the fact she was also the Headteacher of the school. The quote does however act to summarise the issues raised by other Co-ordinators. Other suggestions for dealing with awkward colleagues involved advice on training, persuading them to try out the Co-ordinators ideas and by convincing them that they wanted to do it.

...it would really be a training matter if it was to do with the subject wouldn't it, I mean advising them that way...

G Sci(3)

...by group discussions, really...getting other teachers' views and saying, 'well if the majority of people think that the Reception can cope with this type of work and the year one teachers feel they can cope with that and the year two teachers are happy with this policy, then we will do it, we will have to do it'... 'the Head wants both classes doing the same', so it's a case of 'we'll just give it a try and see, if it doesn't prove worthwhile we'll look at it again', but I knew it would work.

F Ma(3)

You could use psychology and tactics and try and...make it appear that it's their idea, that's what...I mean, I do it all the time with my husband.

A En(3)

What was interesting about the Co-ordinators responses in terms of the introduction of change was that none of them questioned its necessity. They were all working to meet their subjects requirements and possibly had little time to philosophise about the desirability or not of the aims behind the changes they were making. Hargreaves (1991)

The Factors which Influence and Impact on the Role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator was concerned that enforcing collegial values may result in teachers having to impose mandates they do not believe in. Also Webb and Vulliamy (1999) have argued that external agendas are acted upon through fear or a desire to protect the image of the school and not necessarily because the teachers believe in them. Whilst some Co-ordinators did mention compromise it was only in the sense of what method they would use to introduce externally imposed change. Another issue is around the experience of the Co-ordinators. It is doubtful that Co-ordinator B Art would have had the confidence or support to insist on change or the experience to manoeuvre her colleagues into changing their practice.

I've just gone, relied on what I know is right...and gone on ahead and, eh, done what I think is right at the end of the day, because of my experience...eventually you have to look for some common ground for compromise, eventually.

C En(3)

There was one Co-ordinator who admitted to having taken the unusual step of starting an initiative in a teachers' classroom whilst the teacher was absent, so that the children would know what was expected of them.

...I mean, there have been occasions where if...a member of staff has been off, I've used that to go and actually get things started with their children...I feel they should be doing...so on one occasion I actually assessed a class of readers and told them 'Oh you should be on red books and green books and things', it's a bit naughty maybe but it should have been done and when everybody else in school is going home saying 'I'm on red three' and then you've got one class that are not necessarily doing that, it sticks out, so I have yeah!

I En(3)

Curriculum Co-ordinators can be argued to approach subject development with colleagues first through staff meetings and discussion. They also believe in introducing change through using the example of their own practice and making suggestions related to positive practice they have become aware of. However there were occasions where it became necessary to insist in order to meet legislative expectations. An important element in the introduction of change was having the support of the head and deputy

The Factors which Influence and Impact on the Role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator head and Co-ordinators appeared to much prefer using supportive and persuasive approaches to colleagues.

The issues highlighted in this section suggest that in general Curriculum Co-ordinators have a teaching philosophy and culture that is based on the principles of making lessons interesting and exciting and of children being encouraged to find out for themselves. This should be achieved through a variety of techniques and with the recognition that all children are individuals and have different needs. Also lessons must be structured in a way which builds on the current understandings of the children in an environment that encourages and supports them. This child-centred philosophy is a strong influence on school culture and therefore new teachers, despite a big push against such Plowden type views. Woodhead (OFSTED 1998) argued in favour of moving away from a strong emphasis on the individual pupil. He also argued that while headteachers were able to "create a positive ethos, relate well to parents, set high standards of pupil behaviour..." (OFSTED 1998 p 14) he criticised them for not "providing proper educational leadership" (p 15). This again suggests that headteachers as well as their staff have a preference for encouraging positive relationships first and foremost.

The Curriculum Co-ordinators views of change are diverse, some change being seen as necessary and helpful whilst the extent, frequency and workload involved is more controversial. Undoubtedly some aspects of change have been welcomed including the clarification and tightening up of what needs to be taught. Nevertheless there were some concerns that change was imposing strictures which were too formal and therefore restrictive of teaching freedoms. Change was viewed as sometimes ignoring the benefits of previous practice. In addition the establishment of legislative change involved staff meetings and discussion in order to find ways of incorporating it in a way

The Factors which Influence and Impact on the Role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator suitable to the school involved. Therefore the impact of external factors to the school was marked and appeared to direct the activity of the Co-ordinator. The mediation of change involved a lot of time, planning and organisation on the part of the Curriculum Co-ordinator. Also this could be further complicated if particular members of staff were less co-operative than others. In these cases the Co-ordinator needed to try and encourage or manoeuvre their colleague into taking part. If this failed there seemed to be few options left to the Co-ordinator other than insisting, if it was a legislative requirement, or handing the problem over to the Headteacher. Nevertheless in general the Co-ordinators preferred to tackle issues in a collegial way seeking the support of colleagues. However these options were affected in turn by the experience of the Co-ordinator. The less experienced Co-ordinators were more reliant on the support of the headteacher, without which their ability to take initiatives or lead staff toward change was more limited.

The Management:

The Education Reform Act (ERA 1988) has made enormous changes to the management of schools (Bush 1995). This has altered both the culture and expectations made of them (Bennett *et al.* 1992). In addition the management culture of schools will differ from school to school, even in cases where the school circumstance are very similar (Torrington and Weightman 1993). Schools are therefore faced with a complexity of management issues which are in some cases general to all primary schools and in other cases peculiar to their own particular circumstances. Schools are also presented with mixed messages about the style of management to employ the headteacher bearing ultimate responsibility for the school while at the same time being encouraged by government to allow for more participation in management by teachers with curriculum responsibility.

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Management of the school ethos:

In order to arrive at a better understanding of the management styles and structures employed in the research schools, Co-ordinators were asked a number of management related questions as part of the semi-structured interview process. Firstly they were asked whether they could identify a school wide approach to learning. As Featherstone (1996) argued Co-ordinators should be clear about the purposes of the school as well as their curriculum subject. Twelve of the Co-ordinators interviewed in the third term mentioned documents that identified common approaches such as policies for discipline, subject policies, curriculum mapping and planning.

Q: ...In this school...are you able to identify anything that would be a school-wide approach, is there anything that I could find in every classroom done in a particular way?

A: Yeah, maybe how we read with children, I'd say - it should be, lot of input...reading diaries - every classroom's got reading diaries where the teacher writes in a reading book and the parent writes in the reading book, and writes comments in to improve the children's' reading. That wasn't going on initially, um, and why people hear the children read, we're aiming more and more...it's very difficult in a school this size to ensure everyone's doing it, you can lead a horse to water.....

Q: Right, yes.

A: ...but you can't drown it.

Q: And what about in more generalist terms, you know, away from English, is there anything else that's, sort of, a generally agreed approach?

A: Behaviour, assertive discipline, and the fact that, you know, we try and get to the cause of it, what's causing the behaviour and it's very positive how you approach the behaviour issues. I think that's a real strength of the school, the way that people are very calm. When you get someone on supply they quite often panic and go 'what do you do with this?' and the rest of us just take it in our stride if someone's 'having a day'. (*a pupil is behaving badly*)

I En(3)

... I think the discipline policy...makes a big difference, because... obviously the calmer they are the more ready they are to learn, I think the discipline policy makes a big, big difference.

D Sci(3)

...we have lots of policies. I mean, I suppose when I think about it, yes, we have lots of policies that we have discussed, but not lately, if you see what I mean, because a lot of our policies have been up and running now for some time.

A His(3)

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Others referred to aspects of the school ethos, philosophy and approach such as being child centred and involving the parents.

I think it's...the philosophy is now child-centred and to match the learning experiences to the needs of the child, so it's a developmental approach. I'm not sure that that is unique to (*the school*) but that is what we feel is our hallmark.

E En(3)

...I do think, in many ways I think that this school supports parents, you know, it's not like the parents supporting so much the school and, so that you do see... the childrens' families... almost part of your responsibility...

G Sci(3)

There were two Co-ordinators who felt that there were no identifiable school wide approaches to learning.

Q: I was wondering if there was anything that's particularly identified with this school as a way of thought, as a way of doing things?

A: No, not real...not that I can think of.

B Art(3)

No, not really. It's very much left to individual, um, methods, and, again, I think everybody uses a range of different teaching methods. I'm sure there must be some things that we all do and we do the same, but nothing...

A En(3)

These examples indicate that the Co-ordinators see school wide approaches in terms of school policies, such as the discipline policy and subject related policies. In school A where policies have been in place for some time the Co-ordinators seem less conscious of a school-wide approach. Again in school B the less experienced Co-ordinator was unable to identify a coherent approach. Only a few Co-ordinators identified such an approach in terms of a school philosophy, for example being child-centred, or encouraging supportive parents. Therefore in order to investigate whether other Co-ordinators could identify characteristics particular to their school Co-ordinators were asked if they could think of anything which would set their school apart from others. Ten Curriculum Co-ordinators talked about having a caring environment, a dedicated staff, supportive parents and a good environment.

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Q: ...Are there aspects though that perhaps identify your school, make it different to another school...?

A: I think it has very strong...church links, yes.

Q: What effect do you think that has, in what way does that make it different?

A: I think it...has the effect that the parents and teachers do work together from church community links...the parents' association is active and very supportive of the school, and the parents on the whole tend to be very supportive parents. There isn't a them and us situation that you might get in some schools, it's working together.

F RE(3)

...you want to make sure that every child has the best chance that you can possibly give them...(in) a small school you probably have more of a family atmosphere because of the small numbers...

J KS1(3)

...I've never come across an awkward member of staff or somebody that didn't want to do...they've always been keen...they'll try their best...

E PE(3)

...you always have the odd one or two in any class I've had and then I came to (*this school*) and I haven't got the odd one or two...so I think that is something that holds the school apart...and the fact that it's a small school with a family atmosphere and everybody knows each other and there's close family relationships with three classes, sometimes you have more than one child from a family in your class...

C Sci(3)

Others talked about having good policies and plans and high standards.

Good planning, I would say. The planning is excellent, the weekly especially, and the daily, and the termly. We have the three lots of planning - termly, weekly and daily forecasting, we do...because it's such a big school...and there's two classes or three classes, it means that there's continuity in all classes, so I would say that all children in all the classes are given the same opportunities to achieve, because of the planning.

F Ma(3)

These responses further illustrate the key importance Co-ordinators attach to the supportive and caring environment of the school. However there is also a stress on the importance of good planning in order to enable all the children to have similar educational opportunities. Such a philosophy is again based on the importance of nurturing individuals within the school environment. Having identified some aspects of their schools' approach to learning Co-ordinators were questioned about how these came about. Firstly they were asked whether they were involved with discussion about the school ethos and philosophy. Half the Co-ordinators thought the Head made such

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decisions after consultation with staff, sometimes including governors or senior management in the process.

Q: So do you actually discuss with the staff...ethos or philosophy to education at all?

A: In the time that I've been here we've never actually sat and discussed it as a subject...but, you know...things do arise in staff meetings, for example, it could be something to do with bullying, or behaviour, or you know what we think about parental intervention in school and...you know, so things will come up while we discuss them but...we've never actually sat down and said, you know, sort of, what is, you know...what do we perceive as the ethos of the school, I think it's just something that has built on...itself as the years have gone on.

Q: In that process then, it's building on itself, but who is at the root of that...Is it the whole staff, or is it the Head or is it Senior Management, or... ?

A: Um...

Q: ...how do you see that ?

A: I think it stems from the Head, initially...because, you know, there are some things that...I think there's a general consensus. I think I can say that...there are a few things that perhaps we don't agree with the Head on, you know...but then in general...we're all very much allowed to have our say about things without it being...adversely taken, if that's the right word, you know, so we can quite openly say what we think. I mean, he might not take any notice but, you know...but more often than not...he does take into consideration the staffs' as a whole opinion.

A En(3)

(The head) will make what he thinks best, but we have a structure where we go from...the head and deputy and the senior teachers who have...weekly meetings, will discuss major issues, but if we feel that it needs to go to the staff, then the staff will be brought in to discuss things.

F Ma(3)

I think when *(the head)* started, I think that she...sort of said what her goals and aims would be, well it became apparent that her goals and aims were perhaps different to the goals and aims that had been the goals and aims before so...but ...I don't think really that my philosophy has changed in any way I feel that even with the change over I more or less carried on as I was doing before. It's very difficult to make an old dog learn new tricks isn't it you know [laughs]. I mean, I just carry on regardless.

J KS1(3)

These examples indicate that in general the Co-ordinators saw developing the philosophy as the Headteacher's role alongside discussion with staff. In school F, one of the two largest schools, the senior management team made a lot of these decisions consulting staff only when they felt it necessary. This may reflect the fact that they had a large number of staff and some difficulty in gathering everyone together at the same time. However the final example, school J, illustrates some potential for difficulties if a

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member of staff decided to ignore the direction given by the head and carry on in their own way. This Co-ordinator indicated that her basic philosophy and approach remained the same despite a change of head and a change of goals and aims. This might indicate that in some cases the Co-ordinators basic philosophies remain the same despite the imposition of change. This was an issue that Galton (1995) believed to be the case particularly under circumstance where teachers do not feel they fully understand or were consulted about the change. However just under a half of the Co-ordinators claimed to be involved in both formal and informal discussion of their schools' ethos.

Q: ...So the ethos and philosophy of the school, is it open to general discussion?

A: Oh yes.

Q: And what form would that take, I mean, informal or formal?

A: Well, um, both, really. I think everyone's entitled to, eh, say what they think and the policy has been democratically...put together. But there were certain guiding principles such as the mission statement and the school aims.

E En(3)

...I mean, perhaps if you hear us where you've been listening in on our conversations it generally just become chit-chat normally...but having said that...in staff meetings something will come along and I'll say, 'Oh, by the way, I had some dealings with this,' ...and that's how it's done really.

A En(3)

This demonstrates that the ethos and culture of the school is very much alive in that it penetrates throughout general discussion and becomes an almost sub-conscious part of school life. Three Co-ordinators in particular talked of ethos being something that was absorbed into school life in various ways.

I think when we've interviewed and like, people have applied, we've looked for people who've got a similar philosophy. Because we've lost so many staff...we may have had people apply who we wouldn't particularly have chosen if there was a roomful of people to choose from. And, like, you can't choose who you're going to get in for a day, and that's when the problem usually is...

I En(3)

I don't think it's discussed as such I think everyone understands that we have positive behaviour policy where good work is promoted and...I don't know if anything's discussed I think everyone assumes that they're doing the same thing.

G ICT(3)

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It's difficult to say because it's always been here...and I think it's absorbed by people as they join, so it's difficult to actually pinpoint where exactly it has come from, although obviously the head teacher's views are very important, whereas so also are the clergy and the governors. But the Catholic ethos of the school is very important to the governors, so therefore I suppose that must...help to set the norm, the standard.

F RE(3)

In general the Co-ordinators seemed to believe that the ethos and philosophy was something which was there, underlying all the activities of the school, but it was difficult to describe or be certain about how it was developed. Nevertheless most Co-ordinators considered themselves to at least have some influence on its development. There were however three Co-ordinators who felt they had little influence over their school's ethos at all.

(Sigh)...I can't think that it's ever really been discussed anyway since I've been here...

I Ma(3)

...lots of it comes by dictat and whim of the Head and deputy, a lot of the time you're supposed to be told what we're going to do...

B D&T(3)

...we do have meetings but we're told...generally...(it's) decided and then it's brought back to us and this is how you're going to do it and this is what you do...

B Art(3)

Again the Co-ordinators of school B indicated their lack of ability to have any impact on the running of the school, indicating that the head and the deputy lead and control without consulting the staff. In the case of school I Co-ordinator I Ma felt particularly isolated from the rest of the staff and on occasions from the head. Such issues have implications for the performance of the curriculum role and the autonomy Co-ordinators possess. The feeling of not being able to alter the ethos has a dramatic effect on the morale of Co-ordinators. As was shown earlier in this chapter, the two Co-ordinators from school B rarely spent time doing anything more than resource related tasks. In addition the Maths Co-ordinator in school I has been quoted as feeling frustrated and lacking in authority. These cases indicate some management styles can have a

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detrimental effect on the role of Co-ordinator. As a consequence it is important to consider the management and structuring of the Curriculum Co-ordinators' role and the amount of autonomy each Co-ordinator is afforded.

Management of Curriculum Co-ordinators:

As part of the interview process Co-ordinators were asked about the school's organisation and structuring of their role. Responses were varied ranging from methods such as aiding the development of their role through discussion and negotiation, to attending Inset training, to advisors informing staff, to holding meetings through to developing job descriptions.

...originally we had a meeting, quite a few years ago...to decide what the role of the co-ordinators would be and...the Head obviously discussed it with us we gave our ideas and he had his and then...we also wrote down the interests that we had...that would enable us to take on perhaps a...leadership role within the school if we were asked to do so or should wish to do so...it really stemmed from that...

Q: So it was done in quite a co-operative fashion?

A: It was, yes... its as I say you know there's been quite a few changes in the staff now so it's never been done since really...it was done in initially and then that's just sort of been accepted, you know, you get your piece of paper that says the role of the co-ordinator.

A His(1)

...myself as a co-ordinator is part of my job description so it's written into that...

C Sci(1)

...people know I'm English co-ordinator and that's really probably it, we don't have a lot of time we've got things on the school development plan which says we will be raising standards in English...

I En(1)

I think a great deal of it is that the teachers make requests and then the head then tries to accommodate them...by allocating staff meetings or I suppose putting it in the school development plan if it is was seen as a priority I think a lot of the initiative does come from the teachers here apart from what might be focussed on by the media or the government at the...present.

F RE(1)

These examples illustrate that most schools organise and structure the Co-ordinators role through negotiation incorporating the needs of the subject into the development plans from the whole school. Co-ordinators negotiate for time and opportunities to

The Factors which Influence and Impact on the Role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator discuss their subject as a whole staff with the head. Nevertheless throughout this process the head was seen as a key figure. Consequently Co-ordinators were asked where they fitted in to the management structure. The majority of them reported a hierarchical pattern involving (depending on size) starting with the Headteacher, the deputy, senior management, Key Stage Leaders, core Subject Leaders, other leaders and finally class teachers.

...the Head, deputy head, head of infants...juniors...and then there's normal co-ordinators, I suppose being...core subjects a bit more emphasis...at the moment.

D Sci(2)

...it's quiet useful because all of the big three (*core subjects English, maths and science*) are all the management committee...

H Sci(2)

One Co-ordinator claimed the hierarchy in her school was not strong.

...everything is shared in the way of...we've got the Head and things at the top ... then the deputy but it isn't really see as a hierarchy.

C Sci(2)

This was a very small school with only 3.6 teachers and therefore perhaps it is understandable that in these circumstances the staff would discuss issues openly, sharing decision making. However four Co-ordinators described themselves as very low in the pecking order.

...at the bottom...us and the children about the same level...

B D&T(2)

I could give you an analogy of a doormat if you like, doormat, doormat level I think.

I Ma(2)

Once again these inequalities seem linked to school management particularly in the case of school B and in the case of school I, to some extent personality. The isolation of Co-ordinator I Ma has been discussed previously but is in direct contrast to his colleague I En who feels less frustrated as she is an English Co-ordinator and the deputy head. School I had additional issues to deal with as it had been placed in special

The Factors which Influence and Impact on the Role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator measures following an OFSTED inspection just as the data collection period commenced. This appeared to have had a detrimental affect on all those concerned with the school and was a severe blow to the headteacher who had only joined the school a year previously as her first appointment.

Co-ordinators were further asked if aspects of this management structure were particularly helpful or unhelpful. Ten of the seventeen Co-ordinators interviewed in the second term found the structures reasonably supportive, helpful or improving over time.

it works quite well...before the old Head wouldn't have entertained anything...
E En(2)

...it's quite a democratic place really and...you know everyone can have their say...
D PE(2)

Others were unhappy with the hierarchical structure.

(it's) easier not to question (*the Head*) that's just the way things are.
B Art(2)

sometimes I feel that it was like an exclusive kind of thing like all the management meeting an issue...the management structure is such that there is that element you know 'I know more than you'...
H Ma(2)

Interestingly Co-ordinator H Ma was part of the senior management team and it was her own position of having to withhold information that made her uncomfortable. Again this suggests that whilst Co-ordinators are happy to accept the heads authority beyond that they prefer to discuss and share ideas with their colleagues. Co-ordinators were also asked to comment about the extent of their autonomy and whether they felt it was reasonable. Five thought they had a reasonable amount of autonomy and a further six thought they probably had, most of the time.

yes I think so...I don't have any problem
C En(2)

...I feel I can voice my opinions in staff meetings and things like that...
E PE(2)

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Others pointed to the value of a supportive staff and a Head who allowed them the freedom to get on with the job.

...actually the staff is very bidable and...*(the Head)* will sort of say, well get on with it...

H Sci(2)

However, one Co-ordinator did say she had got the job without the power

...you're not actually given the power to do it I suppose...

G ICT(2)

Another Co-ordinator was also less sure.

...I don't know, you have to be very careful who you speak to and how you...comes across...and who you tell because sometimes it's not confidential if you wanted it to be...

B Art(2)

Also one Co-ordinator felt a loss of autonomy since literacy hour was announced.

...I suppose when the news came out last week I sort of felt a bit of a sinking feeling...a little...bit of...undermining I suppose.

A His(2)

Given the importance attached to school management Co-ordinators were asked about the approachability of the Head and/or Senior Management Team. Fourteen Co-ordinators, of the nineteen interviewed in the third term, claimed they would discuss and present subject related arguments to the head and an additional three were already part of the senior management team.

I'd come and talk to the Head and ask, this is what I want to do, then she'd set up a staff meeting, and...do it that way.

D PE(3)

...we've set out the plans for change, we've got the school development plan, we've got my maths development plan, they've been set out, and fed to the head teacher frequently she's well aware of the difficulties...

I Ma(3)

It seemed that in general Co-ordinators would approach the headteacher for advice and to act as a sounding board. The head would then arrange appropriate subject related

The Factors which Influence and Impact on the Role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator meetings for Co-ordinators. However the two Co-ordinators from school B had expressed difficulty in talking to the head and deputy.

...if they don't see it as a priority at that time, it's not going to happen, so you mention it to (*the deputy*), test the water to get her to go and sort it out, you should, but she's not bothered...

B D&T(3)

Whilst Curriculum Co-ordinators identified the management structure as generally hierarchical it was one which encouraged some level of open discussion around educational issues. Reynolds and Saunders (1987) have highlighted such open discussion as enhancing the effectiveness of Co-ordinators. The ethos of schools was mostly one of encouraging a culture of support in a caring and friendly environment within which children are enabled to develop, thus fitting in with the Co-ordinators predisposition's. The Co-ordinators on the whole felt they had an appropriate amount of control and autonomy in their role and they thought that their input was taken seriously. Barth (1990) suggested that providing leadership opportunities does accord teachers recognition and encourage ownership and commitment to decisions. Nevertheless the degree of emphasis placed on particular subject activity was influenced by external factors such as legislation, as was the priority attached to particular subjects by the school. However, there was one exception throughout, school B, which was notable as both Co-ordinators from that school expressed frustration claiming they lacked autonomy, had difficulties with the management team and had no impact on the school ethos. Similar feelings were expressed by one Co-ordinator in school I. Observations indicated there was some friction between the two Co-ordinators in this school and it seems probable that the experience of each was different to the other. This might suggest that in this case the school management was less of an issue than the personalities involved. Additionally one Co-ordinator in school J was apparently somewhat resistant to change, claiming to carry on as she always had. Co-ordinators also felt that the ethos of their school was difficult to define as it was underlying much of

The Factors which Influence and Impact on the Role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator what they did. Any more open commonality of approach was expressed through policy documents However Co-ordinators in general seemed to be happy with the degree of influence they had over the direction the school was taking.

External Influences:

The previous section of this chapter has already raised issues related to the impact of external factors such as legislative change. Co-ordinators had mixed feelings about change some benefits being improved standards, a necessity to re-think practice and to look at efficiency. On the other hand they found the pressure of change and the bureaucracy involved considerable. Also the workload created by change was high. In some cases change had involved radical adaptations to the curriculum and the school day only to find another change followed. Nevertheless legislative change sometimes acted to back up the authority of the Co-ordinator when asking for adaptations in current practice. In addition it was shown that legislation had a marked impact on the priorities of the school and the emphasis on particular Co-ordinators, in this case most notably the English Co-ordinators.

During the period of this research the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) were developing the requirements for the role of the Subject Leader. The TTA state that the core purpose of the Subject Leader is: -

To provide professional leadership and management for a subject to secure high quality teaching, effective use of resources and improved standards of learning and achievement for all pupils.

TTA 1998 page 4

Curriculum Co-ordinators were asked their opinions about the forthcoming change in nomenclature from Curriculum Co-ordinator to Subject Leader during the semi-structured interviews. Half the Co-ordinators said they preferred the term Curriculum Co-ordinator as it involved what they considered to be a more collegiate image than that

The Factors which Influence and Impact on the Role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator of Subject Leader. They also regarded the image of a leader as inappropriate for primary schools.

...curriculum co-ordinator sounds better, I think, I don't know why just is I can't say why really. Subject leader seems to suggest you lead the subject I suppose ...it's if perhaps you're taking more responsibility as a subject leader, where as a co-ordinator tends to suggest that you...that you are working with people rather than...

A His(1)

A: I think co-ordinator means...you're offering help and support and you're trying to put that subject together in a sense like is there a policy...making sure is there a policy in place, is there a scheme in place, you're sort of co-ordinating it. A subject leader gives the impression you're an absolute expert in that subject area and you ought to know everything there is to know about that subject.

Q: Right, so...which do you...?

A:...I would stick with co-ordinator. It's a more friendly...less threatening...title, I think, but...I think it was after the introduction of the National Curriculum...it was co-ordinator for this, co-ordinator for that, you know and we thought there's going to be a co-ordinator for Pritt Sticks [laughs].

H Ma(1)

....Well subject leader sounds a bit more formal...I mean to me that would sound like there was an awful lot more responsibility...to being a leader as opposed to a co-ordinator. Yeah.

B Art(1)

I like co-ordinator better actually um subject leader sounds almost military doesn't it you know it sounds...more formal whereas co-ordinator because you are working with the people and you rely on them just to deliver it well I think co-ordinator gives a better impression of teamwork I would say subject leader sounds a bit ...dictatorship you will do as I say.

F Ma(1)

I think co-ordinator is...a more user friendly...I mean, this, sort of, subject leader, I can sort of see the 'tweed' sort of marching through in the morning saying, 'Follow me, girls'.

H Sci(1)

Only one Co-ordinator expressed a preference for the title of Subject Leader but even then she was not completely convinced.

Subject leader - I don't know why I've got that in my head, because curriculum co-ordinator to me is somebody who co-ordinates the curriculum, all of it. So subject leader to do with subject...I think it's just clearer I mean subject manager, leader, manager...manager would probably be better, because you are managing things, it's a manager's role, leader sounds a bit unattainable.

G ICT(1)

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Seven Co-ordinators felt the terms were just labels and therefore thought it unimportant.

Q: ...which title do you prefer do you think there's a difference?

A: ... Bugs Bunny [laughs].

Q: [laughs] yes so it's just a name?

A: Yeah it's just a name yeah. all jobs get posh names now don't they?

D Sci(1)

One Co-ordinator was however more cautious.

Well it depends, I mean they're putting labels on to things, it depends what's underneath that label. Co-ordinator suggests being a co-ordinator throughout the school - subject leader, is that just changing the name co-ordinator to...is that just a name change like we often get, or is it a role change as well? I mean, it depends what's going to be...nobody clearly defines co-ordinator's role very often.

I Ma(1)

These responses do indicate some resistance to and reticence about, the notion of being a Subject Leader and concerns were raised about the suitability of a 'leader' in the primary school situation. The notion of directive leadership appears to be at odds with the more collegiate ideals of the Co-ordinators who prefer to discuss, debate and encourage. As West (1995) suggested the adoption of mixed task and role structures are more in keeping with primary school culture. Also all teachers in such small institutions are likely to be a Co-ordinators and as Briggs (1997) pointed out may possibly carry multiple subject responsibilities, therefore they might all be leaders.

Alongside this name change the TTA (1998) have made requirements of Subject Leaders some of which is similar to tasks highlighted by Curriculum Co-ordinators during their interviews, although it should be remembered that the Co-ordinators interviews pre-date the TTA requirements. One TTA category 'Professional knowledge and understanding' (TTA 1998) broadly encompasses issues around the Subject Leaders' subject knowledge and understanding.

Subject Leaders must have knowledge and understanding which is in part subject-specific and in part generic to the leadership role. The knowledge and understanding required will change over time and it is important that the subject

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leaders recognise their responsibility to remain up to date in their subject area and in other aspects of education relating to their role...

TTA (1998) p 6

As the previous chapter has indicated, subject knowledge was considered to be important to most Co-ordinators though points were made about the value of being a good classroom practitioner first and the sometimes unrealistic expectations made of Co-ordinators expertise, particularly if they were given a subject area at random.

I think (*subject knowledge is*) extremely important but...people are co-ordinating subjects that they didn't think they would be...

H Sci(1)

However professional development was geared to those subjects highlighted through legislation or school priority possibly indicating the need for further funding in order to allow more subject areas (or non-priority areas) to be covered.

As has been argued in the Subject Leadership chapter, OFSTED reports and inspections have had considerable impacts on the development of the Co-ordinators role. In 1996 OFSTED were expecting Co-ordinators to be involved with raising subject standards through policy writing, reviewing and planning, supporting colleagues and through assessing, evaluating and monitoring. Because OFSTED recognised that Curriculum Co-ordinators would not necessarily have a particular expertise in the subject for which they were responsible, they advised using classroom observation, inset and discussion to develop this. During the interviews Co-ordinators raised concerns about finding the time to observe colleagues.

...I would like to look at teachers teaching, you know, support them in the classroom... but that hasn't been...I was supposed to do that on Friday but we couldn't get any...cover, any supply cover, so I had everything planned and worked out and then on Friday morning I had to stay in my room unfortunately.

I Ma(2)

...But monitoring is another big thing which we have not, sort of, taken on board...I mean, we have, because I look at everyone's planning and I look at children's work every term, and...but what I've not looked at is lessons. I mean, I...I'm supposed to, like, go round the classes and look at how the resources are, for example, are they...in the policy that says they've got to be labelled and

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easily available, you know...use that sort of criteria to see if the resources...are the vocabulary words up on the wall for the kids to use, that sort of thing, but one thing that we've not done is look at... colleagues in action, actually.

H Ma(1)

...I'm not monitoring enough but I'm also waiting for that opportunity and I know the kinds of things I will do when that comes up.

G ICT(1)

Whitaker (1993) argued that observation of colleagues is beneficial but that it must be handled carefully to avoid feelings of threat or criticism. Also OFSTED (1997b) did find Curriculum Co-ordinators increasingly knowledgeable about their subjects but that this expertise was limited in use to the confines of the Co-ordinators own classroom. By 1998 OFSTED was highlighting the advantages of detailed schemes of work but again they mentioned the lack of opportunity Co-ordinators had to observe other classes. This would appear to be borne out by the data collected in this research.

In addition OFSTED (1996) had stressed the role of monitoring. Interviews with Co-ordinators produced a range of tasks which might be included as part of their monitoring role. These tasks included ensuring progression and continuity, ensuring curriculum delivery, checking planning, meeting targets, assessing and evaluating together with simply stating that they should monitor.

Q: how do you see the role of the co-ordinator?

A: ...it's making sure that everybody, all the members of staff anyway, are aware of the policies that are in place, schemes of work, and that it's been followed through in relation to...progression and continuity - those two lovely words.

A En(1)

Well it's a very broad one it...ranges from...organising the resources through to monitoring throughout the whole school each year group and its many forms.

C En(1)

...I think we need co-ordinators and it's a very good idea if we could do our jobs as we're supposed to cos you're really supposed to monitor the rest of the staff.

D Sci(1)

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What these examples illustrate is some of the broad range of tasks involved in monitoring are, together with the lack of opportunity most Co-ordinators have to observe other classes in action. The TTA's (1998) requirements about monitoring state that Subject Leaders should, as part of the 'Core purpose of the subject leader' : -

... evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning, the subject curriculum and progress towards targets for pupils and staff, to inform future priorities and targets for the subject. The degree to which a subject leader is involved in monitoring to provide the range of information for evaluation will depend on school policy and be influenced by the size of the school. Although the subject leader will undertake a variety of monitoring activities, headteachers in smaller primary schools may retain a larger proportion of that monitoring which requires direct classroom observation of teaching and learning.

TTA 1998 p 4

This passage refers to a variety of monitoring activities but is not explicit about what those activities might entail other than classroom observation, though this may include evaluation of effectiveness (it is not clear). Additional information is given as part of the 'Strategic direction and development of the subject'.

Monitor the progress made in achieving subject plans and targets, evaluate the effects on teaching and learning, and use this analysis to guide further improvement.

TTA 1998 p 10

This indicates that evaluation and monitoring progress are components of monitoring but again there is no specific information given. Therefore the criteria for monitoring are not explicit and where there is an element of confusion differences in approach might be marked. This is in direct contrast with the case of literacy hour where very explicit directives were given. The result was that all the English Co-ordinators recorded in this research took similar actions to each other in order to conform with these requirements. As the previous chapter demonstrated the Curriculum Co-ordinators were involved in monitoring activities which included assessment and evaluation such as looking at test results, planning and pupils books but there was only one Co-ordinator who was recorded conducting classroom observation. Moreover there was little information to say what the Co-ordinators were doing with this information once it had been collected. This

The Factors which Influence and Impact on the Role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator is another problem with the TTA requirements. They give no explanation of how to analyse the from monitoring activities, or how to apply them to influence future developments.

Cultural Influences:

Throughout this and the previous chapter "The reality of curriculum co-ordination" the influences of school cultures have been apparent. Figure 6.1, which looked at what Co-ordinators do, view as their purpose and see as effective, began to indicate the importance Co-ordinators place on relationships. Effective Co-ordinators were linked with being reasonable and diplomatic, trustworthy, willing, treating people as individuals and communicating with colleagues. This stress on maintaining good relations has continued to be emphasised throughout the findings with Co-ordinators stressing the need for discussion with colleagues for developing practice, for planning and for sharing information. Figure 6.4 also illustrated the importance placed on colleagues their support adding to the Co-ordinators effectiveness.

In terms of educational philosophies Co-ordinators were argued earlier in this chapter, to support child-centred approaches that encourage children to learn through discovery, experience and developing their enthusiasm. Co-ordinators also stressed the importance of seeing children as individuals and adapting to individual needs. This belief in encouragement also applied to their relationships with colleagues. In respect of educational change Co-ordinators were co-operative seeing positive advantages to change but feeling the pressure was at times somewhat overwhelming. However they preferred to try and carry colleagues forward with initiatives through discussion and support and were reluctant to insist on, or force change on colleagues.

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This emphasis on a culture of encouragement, treating people as individuals, building on enthusiasms and giving or receiving support creates an environment that Co-ordinators prefer to work in. Where such a culture was not possible Co-ordinators seemed to express frustration. For example in school B the hierarchy was strong, the senior management team and particularly the Head and Deputy were unlikely to enter into open discussion with staff. Consequently the two co-ordinators interviewed expressed frustrations about their lack of autonomy. In contrast school A had entered into discussion throughout all changes made and although the Head was seen as a leader the staff felt consulted. Such discussion continued throughout policy and decision making. However there were some indications that as new staff arrived some re-visiting of issues might be wise.

“...there’s been quite a few changes in the staff now so it’s never been done since really...”

A His(3)

Conclusion:

This chapter has demonstrated that the role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator is affected by a number of factors. Co-ordinators were asked about their educational philosophy and their management of their relationships with colleagues. They were shown to identify with philosophies that recognised the importance of all individuals, working to encourage and facilitate their learning. Therefore they favoured a flexibility of approach that encompassed the various needs and enthusiasms of all pupils. Whilst they welcomed some aspects of change they were concerned about the frequency and extent of change and its implications for the division of their teaching time. In terms of their relationships with colleagues Co-ordinators preferred to discuss, encourage and cajole their colleagues into subject developments. They were uncomfortable with the notion of insisting or directing colleagues. This is likely to be a result of the close working relationships school staff have with each other in such small institutions. The management of the school was another factor impacting on the role of the Co-ordinator.

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Co-ordinators were shown to identify more closely with school aims and values if they had opportunities to add to this and if they considered their opinions were valued. However school philosophy was something that was there, in the background, but not necessarily considered as something worthy of discussion in its own right. Whilst Co-ordinators saw school management as hierarchical they were happy with this situation unless it restricted what they were able to do in terms of their subject development. This appeared to be based on the strength of the hierarchy most schools opting for management styles that encouraged open discussion and the involvement of all staff. Finally the Co-ordinators role was subject to the impacts of external change in terms of the changing requirements of the role made by OFSTED and the impact of legislation such as literacy hour. Such external change enforced heavy agendas on the Co-ordinators in terms of the frequency of subject development and the status afforded to their particular curriculum area and therefore the emphasis placed on them by the school. Co-ordinators were also asked how they felt about the forthcoming TTA changes to their role title. Again their preference for less directive positions showed as in general they preferred the more co-operative sound of the Co-ordinator as opposed to the more directive sound of the Subject Leader.

These factors all act together to give an overall view of a school culture which believes in and values the importance of the individual. It is a culture borne out of a small community where everyone knows each other well and prefers not to antagonise one another. As a consequence opposition is more likely to be demonstrated through a reluctance to co-operate rather than through open arguments. The final chapter will attempt to draw these various elements together and show how Co-ordinators operate and perform their roles in the light of these findings and draw conclusions from the evidence presented.

Chapter Eight: Analysis and Discussion

Introduction:

The previous chapters have provided information both from the literature and from data collected for the purposes of this research in an attempt to provide answers to or explanations of the following question:

The Roles of the Subject Leader in primary school: a comparison between the role adopted by Primary Subject Leaders and those prescribed by government and educational agencies; how far is a perfect match possible or desirable?

Some aspects of this question such as: -

- What government and educational agencies say Subject Leadership should involve?

and

- What forms of management structure or organisation this might imply?

have been addressed through the literature review. In addition questions concerned with: -

- How do Subject Leaders conceive of and put their role into operation?

and

- How far do these match?

have been explored through the data collected and presented in chapters six and seven. This final chapter will bring all these perspectives and arguments together and draw conclusions from the evidence collected. Much of this evidence relates to the role of Curriculum Co-ordinator as this was what teachers with curriculum responsibility were called during the period of data collection. For such evidence the term Curriculum Co-ordinator will be used. The term Subject Leader will be utilised to indicate any reference to the TTA (Teacher Training Agency) standards and expectations where this is appropriate. Therefore this chapter will look at the evidence gathered about Curriculum

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Co-ordinators in the light of the new Subject Leadership requirements made by the TTA through: -

- Looking at the external expectations made of Subject Leaders.
- Consideration of the role of management philosophies and structures and their effects on the Subject Leadership position.
- Exploring Curriculum Co-ordinators concepts, philosophies and conduct in relation to their role.
- Examination of the role played by school culture and its relation to Subject Leadership including some discussion of the role of the headteacher.
- Concluding by making recommendations for the Subject Leadership role and for further research.

Governmental and Educational Agencies Expectations of Subject Leaders:

Schools are faced with a complexity of external pressures. They are being asked to address a new emphasis on cognitive achievement and to adopt collaborative working patterns (Campbell 1996). They are also expected to become cost effective and efficient (Nias 1999). This pressure has been increased with the introduction of a National Curriculum, the publication of test results and external inspections, all of which have forced schools into competition (Hargreaves and Fullan 1998). Such pressures can act in a contradictory way and may conflict with teachers beliefs about education putting strain on their willingness to take on the burden of yet more change (Nias 1999). Webb and Vulliamy (1996) have argued that the pace of such change together with increased accountability, monitoring and the prominence given to the Head in leading the school vision, have worked to undermine developments such as joint planning and policy making, staff training and the development of the Co-ordinators role. Emphasis is now placed on accountability, responsiveness and responsibility (Scott 1989). Also schools

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must market themselves and achieve a good public image in order to attract pupils (Power *et.al.* 1999). Therefore they are increasingly vulnerable to outside pressure (Bush 1995). This represents a marked change in the cultural traditions of primary education raising concerns that communal values may be undermined. Power and Whitty (1999) argued that this is of particular concern as market place values permeate the curriculum at both an overt level and through the hidden curriculum.

Subject Leaders are a necessary part of meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum (Richards 1994). Teachers are expected to take on curriculum leadership roles whilst at the same time working collegially in their management of change (West 1995). Progression and progress should be both planned for and monitored (Aubrey 1994). Consequently a responsibility for the curriculum means teachers becoming involved in subject related research and the maintenance of resources whilst being a diplomat, advising and communicating with other staff (Taylor 1989). Good communication is a factor that has also been highlighted in the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) reports. OFSTED is a body of Inspectors set up in 1992 to evaluate and set criteria for schools successes and failures. In 1996 OFSTED argued that success was dependent on communication through discussion, working alongside colleagues and sharing knowledge developed from training sessions. Thus these Subject Leaders or Co-ordinators must be aware of the purposes of their subject and have a view of how it fits into the wider school agenda (Featherstone 1996). The Teacher Training Agencies requirements for Subject Leaders (TTA 1998) served to increase the emphasis on those responsible for the curriculum, stressing their importance in school change, development and improvement. The TTA is a body that has developed requirements not only for Subject Leaders but also for Qualified Teachers Status, the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and Headteachers. In terms of Subject Leadership they have highlighted the necessity of personal skills such

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as enthusiasm and positive attitudes, of being well informed about their subject and of providing leadership in the subject, traits which Bell and Ritchie (1999) argued emphasises a new and pro-active stance.

Concerns about the curriculum have centred around the range and rigour of curricular experience and the expectations made of pupils (Gipps 1993). This has led to a need for teachers to expand their subject specialist knowledge in addition to making some acknowledgement that teachers can not be expected to cover all subjects to the desired level of expertise (Goodson 1990). A further complication is added when considering the fact that teachers may take responsibility for several subject areas, particularly those working in small schools (Briggs 1997). Of the twenty Co-ordinators involved in this research only four had no other responsibilities and nine had two or more responsibilities in addition to the curriculum area being studied. Also the subject areas for which teachers have got responsibility may be areas for which the teacher has little or no expertise. Only six of the twenty Co-ordinators in this study were responsible for a subject in which they held a degree. Again for teachers with multiple subject responsibility it would be unlikely that they would possess expertise in all these areas. In chapter six, "The reality of Curriculum Co-ordination", it was argued that most Co-ordinators thought subject knowledge was important. However they were less confident about whether they carried the appropriate expertise. "Teachers are feeling threatened by the fact they have to have the knowledge" (J KS1). The increased emphasis on subject knowledge with the introduction of the National Curriculum and subsequent OFSTED reporting might explain the Co-ordinators views on the importance of it. However OFSTED (1998) argued that teachers subject knowledge was improving through training and the development of schemes of work. Nevertheless the strain on schools is considerable. As Whitaker (1997) asserted there is a constant pressure on schools to adapt and take on board technological developments whilst at the same time

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having to absorb changes in demand, responsibilities and increased accountability. Such pressure was raised as an issue by a number of Co-ordinators reported in chapter seven, "I think there's more of a workload, it's all gone very...formal" (B Art). In addition these pressures should be seen in the context of the strong ethic of care and nurture within primary education (Hargreaves 1994).

The effects of external agendas on the Curriculum Co-ordination role:

Curriculum Co-ordinators involved in this study were asked what they thought the purpose of their role was. Co-ordinators highlighted factors such as the need to provide support for colleagues, to plan, develop, lead and implement change, to develop their own subject knowledge, to assess and monitor progress and to maintain and organise resources. This list of purposes closely matches those asked of them by OFSTED and those since published by the TTA. Early reports by OFSTED indicated that Curriculum Co-ordinators originally had a much narrower view of their role. Research by Mortimore *et.al.* (1988) suggested that at that stage Co-ordinator's viewed their role mainly in terms of resources, as was also reported in research by Bell (1992). This would seem to infer that OFSTED reporting has played an important part in developing Co-ordinators ideas about what is now required of teachers holding this position. As new issues are highlighted so the Co-ordinators have taken these on board incorporating them into their view of the role. Therefore the Co-ordinators interviewed for this research held a view of their subject role which matched reasonably closely that of the official view. Areas where there were mis-matches will be considered later in this chapter.

A factor heavily emphasised by the Curriculum Co-ordinators interviewed as important to their role was the issue of interpersonal and diplomatic skills. When asked about what made a Co-ordinator effective the overwhelming response was that of being supportive,

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open, flexible and tactful. It was immediately apparent that Co-ordinators placed great importance on good relationships with their colleagues. This is perhaps understandable when considering the school situation. As Campbell (1996) pointed out the primary school ethos is based on a belief in care and conscientiousness. Also teachers work closely together and therefore have a tendency to avoid friction which, according to Southworth (1996), leads teachers into discussion of the social, rather than the pedagogical. As the findings in chapter seven showed Co-ordinators were unlikely to admit to friction and worked to avoid conflict situations if at all possible. Even when faced with such situations, Co-ordinators favoured finding some amicable solution to the problem. Primary schools are in general small institutions; the largest involved in this study had five hundred and fifty pupils and twenty one teaching staff. As a consequence not only are the teaching staff likely to know all of the pupils but they will also know their colleagues very well. Teachers share their breaks and lunchtimes, attend staff meetings regularly, discuss their pupils and lessons, share training days and are usually well informed about each others problems and successes. In such circumstances it is probable that it is in teachers interests to maintain good relationships as a breakdown of good feeling would be likely to cause an atmosphere of tension throughout the school. Consequently it seems that conflict is either resolved quickly or put aside. This might mean teachers hold hidden resentments but they would still be likely to support ideals that preserve good relationships. Also any loss of individual autonomy through such open discussion may be more than compensated for through the gains of a group autonomy with joint planning and shared ideas. As one Co-ordinator put it "it's a small school with a family atmosphere and everybody knows each other" (C Sci). As Nias (1999) argued some schools pursue a culture of care which embodies trust, consideration for others, co-operation and tolerance. However in spite of this, public image plays a role in terms of schools being seen to do what is expected. Here the culture of care and consideration was put aside in order to meet external pressures.

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This was demonstrated somewhat unusually by one Co-ordinator in school I, I En going into another class in the teachers absence to change the reading books being used as they did not conform to other groups in the same age range. Nevertheless this expressed both the Co-ordinator's frustration with her colleague and her desire that her subject should be seen as organised. This was an exceptional act given the general trend towards the sanctity of the classroom and open communication.

Another example of the impact of externally imposed change was that around the demands of literacy hour. In chapter six, "The Reality of Curriculum Co-ordination", it was argued that marked changes could be seen in the workload of those who were responsible for English. At the beginning of the spring term's data collection period the forthcoming Literacy Hour was announced. Literacy hour is a government recommendation for all schools who must deliver an hour of literacy every day to a prescribed format. This was shown to have an immediate affect on the diaries kept by the English Co-ordinators who began to record literacy training events; area meetings of English Co-ordinators; running staff meetings and discussing the requirements for the new literacy strategy; assessing where pupils were with their reading throughout the school; together with purchasing and sorting out new books. However not only did it have an impact on the English Co-ordinators but was also shown to affect other Co-ordinators. One Co-ordinator discussed her feelings about her subject being sidelined after all her work on it and another talked about how all other subjects had to give way to literacy in terms of the time and money allowed for their development. Consequently not only was the imposition of Literacy Hour having an impact in terms of an increased workload on the Curriculum Co-ordinators responsible, it was also having an impact on school priorities and other Co-ordinators. This indicated that some Co-ordinators might experience feeling a little as though their work was no longer recognised or valued in the same way as well as this leading to subjects being viewed hierarchically.

Becoming Leaders – What's in a name?:

Handy (1993) argues that the term leader has a dated air of privilege about it. Leaders are argued to provide vision and direction for all to follow (Hayes 1997). Leaders make decisions, set goals, effect change, transmit meaning, purpose and values (Beare *et.al.* 1993). Fiedler (1965) suggested that leaders are the people who direct, co-ordinate and supervise towards a common goal. Good leaders show bravery, make decisions, are honest, have people skills and have vision, (Day *et.al.* 1999). For Bell and Ritchie (1999) the change in nomenclature from that of Curriculum Co-ordinator to that of Subject Leader represents the creation of a new dimension to the post allowing the Subject Leader to take a more pro-active leadership stance. However it was interesting to find that the Curriculum Co-ordinators themselves had a slightly different perspective on this new view of their role, one which directly challenges the stance taken by the TTA's view of the Subject Leadership role. In chapter seven, "The factors which influence and impact on the role of Curriculum Co-ordinator", it was argued that the Co-ordinators interviewed about the forthcoming name change were unhappy with the idea of becoming 'Leaders'. They described the notion of leadership as worrying from a number of perspectives. For example it implied "you're an absolute expert" (H Ma), "you're taking more responsibility" (A His) and that it sounds "more formal" (B Art), or "almost military" (F Ma). Alternatively one Co-ordinator summarised what most seemed to feel about the title of Curriculum Co-ordinator, that it was "more user friendly" (H Sci). This implies that the term leader represents less negotiation and less team work to Co-ordinators whereas curriculum co-ordinator suggests someone who holds an overview and manages all the various elements of the subject. For the Co-ordinators this aligned with their pre-dispositions, ethics and beliefs about education much more closely than the notion of providing leadership. As Nias (1999) has argued, teachers who share frequent meetings and discussions related to the function of the school and its response

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to legislative change, develop interpersonal and informal relationships and an ethic of joint responsibility and support for each other. An emphasis on leadership would seem to act against this collegial culture. This was expressed not only through Co-ordinators unwillingness to embrace the Subject Leadership title but also through their reluctance to instruct or interfere in colleagues classroom practice. However Co-ordinators were much more positive in circumstances where the headteacher has encouraged a more collegial style of management, as for example in School D where Co-ordinator DPE explained "...it's quite a democratic place really...you know everyone can have their say".

It would seem from the responses of Co-ordinators that in general the title of Subject Leader encompassed a philosophy that does not sit easily with the way teachers with a curriculum responsibility prefer to work. Indeed the evidence collected about what they do would suggest that unlike the TTA recommendations they are not acting as leaders or indeed entirely as managers. Managers should translate and implement a vision, monitor, budget and work on development (West-Burnham 1992). Co-ordinators prefer to co-ordinate and to maintain good relationships with their colleagues whom they see daily. Being set up as a leader albeit just of a subject would seem to mark a divide or barrier being drawn between them. Even those who were uncertain about which title they preferred, seemed less enthusiastic with the title of Subject Leader than of Co-ordinator "I don't know whether I like...Subject Leader" (A En). From the findings presented in chapters six and seven, it would seem that the thrust of the skills related to being a subject leader are to some extent pre-ordained by government and educational body initiatives or from the head rather than the Subject Leader or Co-ordinator. For example the skills involved with developing vision, direction, meaning, purpose and values. All of these are more subject to government dictat and then mediation by the headteacher, albeit in consultation with the staff, than they are to do with what the

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Subject Leader or Co-ordinator does specifically. Co-ordinators are simply acting on and collating all this information in the development of schemes and policies, which are then taken back to the staff for approval. The diary evidence presented in chapter six suggests that what Co-ordinators are involved with is the organisation, collation of information and development of resources; the planning, preparation and reviewing of schemes and policies; helping with planning advice and teaching of other classes; assessing, reviewing and evaluating the subject delivery, including very occasional observation of other classes; organising or running staff training; keeping informed about their subject; and discussing subject related issues with colleagues. Again this suggests that teachers with curriculum responsibility are likely to be more comfortable with the notion of curriculum co-ordination than with that of subject leadership.

The process of applying change:

An issue over which Co-ordinators had somewhat mixed feelings was that of the process of change. Whilst they argued that change was necessary and healthy as "in this school change is definitely necessary" (E En) and "it is making us think a lot more about our teaching practice" (I Ma). At the same time Co-ordinators also expressed concerns and worries particularly about the extent of change. Many of the Co-ordinators discussed the pressure they felt they were under and the stress involved. As Hargreaves (1994) asserted teachers are faced with a number of forces, namely the intensification, open ended nature and increasing accountability of their role together with their commitment to a culture of care, nurture and a desire to perform their job well. This is complicated by the fact that they have little control over their role and the external expectations made of it in addition to their deep commitment to acting professionally which can lead to constant feelings of guilt (Hargreaves 1994). Also the conscientiousness of their approach means that teachers are constantly trying to meet ever increasing and changing obligations. Consequently Co-ordinators expressed

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distress about the frequency of change “we really worked hard and spent a lot of money and then they changed it (*the science curriculum*)” (G Sci). This quote also emphasises the financial commitment involved in implementing change which schools are often asked to make with no extra funding. In addition rapid change has left schools sometimes uncertain as to which version of curriculum change they should implement or whether to hold off and wait for the next adaptation (Whitaker 1997). This is demonstrated by school B when a Co-ordinator explained “One of the problems is at the moment the blocks are on because we’re waiting for a re-organisation of the National Curriculum” (B D&T).

In chapter seven it was argued that Co-ordinators tackled issues around change and development through consultation and discussion in staff meetings. Galton (1996) suggested that there is also some reluctance to giving colleagues direct instruction. Certainly the findings in chapter seven indicate that Co-ordinators prefer to encourage change through suggestion and persistence. It is only as a last resort they will insist on colleagues making changes and then only if they have legislative and the headteachers backing. Again this throws into question the thrust and emphasis placed on leading change and development by the TTA. Furthermore Galton goes on to argue that Co-ordinators may lack understanding of the issues around curriculum change. This is likely to be accentuated in a period of rapid shifts where little time is available for reflection or to take part in training. The requirements for subject leadership have been developed for schools rather than within them. In addition little opportunities have been offered to curriculum co-ordinators for training specifically related to their management role though certainly this research found that Co-ordinators did appreciate the benefits of going on courses. “I did a ten-week (*science*) course...it certainly clarified a lot” H Sci. However because money is an issue in order to be able to release staff for training, such benefits tended to be concentrated on the subject areas of most need often driven by government edict as in the Literacy initiative.

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Another factor, akin to those related to change is that raised by the amount of paperwork involved. This included developing policies, scheme and subject action plans. During the course of the interviews reported in chapter six, all but two Co-ordinators raised issues about the excessive amount of paperwork they were expected to do “we’re always having to fill this in, fill that in” (E PE). In addition they held a somewhat cynical view of the usefulness of some of the required information. However during the periods that data was collected for this research, very little activity on paperwork was recorded. This may be a consequence of the timing of data collection. It is possible that paperwork such as policies and schemes is completed early in the term to enable staff to make use of such information as quickly as possible. However such a discrepancy might indicate that given the mass of change schools have been faced with and the quantity of paperwork that has gone with these changes, issues of paperwork may still be very fresh in the minds of the Co-ordinators. Despite the fact that all but three of the ten schools researched had completed writing policies and schemes, such tasks had required a very involved input from Co-ordinators. In spite of this Co-ordinators did argue that they valued the process of developing schemes and policies and felt them to be useful documents. This seemed to be because the production of such documents involved discussion with colleagues, pooling ideas and gaining their colleagues support. A supportive headteacher could be extremely helpful in this process through offering guidance and advice throughout the development of schemes and policies. The process of development also helped the Co-ordinator re-enforce their own knowledge and thoughts about the direction in which they wished to take their subject.

Campbell and Southworth (1990) argued that time is necessary for a group to mature to the point where they can negotiate agreements. Therefore whilst such discussion may not always be so productive in every situation, the implication is that this will develop

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over time. Nevertheless Blenkin and Kelly (1987) asserted that the demand for subject specialism is undermining pressures for a unified approach. Therefore as each Co-ordinator has their own particular subject area to deal with they may be tempted to work in isolation from colleagues and feelings of joint responsibility for the quality of the curriculum may be lost. Certainly Bell (1996) argued that Curriculum Co-ordinators were preparing and writing policy largely in isolation and often at home. However evidence here suggests that this position may have changed and that Co-ordinators are working much more in collaboration with other staff. This should however be taken in the context that at the time of data collection most schools had completed the development and writing of policies and schemes and that little information was therefore gathered on this process.

A final point to be raised under the banner of external expectations is that there is a lack of clarity in many of the requirements made of Curriculum Co-ordinators and now Subject Leaders. In chapter seven the issue was raised in relation to monitoring. This is an area that has been controversial, meeting some resistance from Co-ordinators. Rose and Parsons (1998) suggested there were anxieties in relation to monitoring colleagues progress and the availability of time to observe colleagues practice. Again the data collected for this research indicated that very little monitoring was happening. In chapter six it was argued that whilst there was some activity related to evaluation and review there was only one incidence of direct classroom observation recorded. Further it was argued that classroom observation was something that Co-ordinators felt they should be doing but that they needed non-contact time in order to be able to carry it out. "I'm not monitoring enough but I'm also waiting for that opportunity" (G ICT). Monitoring is an issue taken up by the TTA and included as a requirement in the "Standards for Subject Leader". However the guidance gives very little real idea as to how this might be achieved stating only that it should involve evaluation of the effectiveness of the subject,

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teaching and learning and progress towards targets. This is to be done through a variety of monitoring activities. Consequently it would not be surprising if each school gathers information in a different way and thus collects information of varying quality, a potential problem in a period where stress is placed on measurable and comparable outcomes. Co-ordinators were however performing a number of roles that could be included as monitoring tasks. For example they were working on assessment procedures, looking at planning and looking at pupils work and subject displays. However they were less clear about what they would do with the information once gathered. The TTA state that such information should be used to inform future priorities and targets. Whilst Co-ordinators might pick out issues that needed to be covered or planing that needed adaptations, there was little evidence to indicate what happened to the information beyond this. In some cases it only seemed to be information that they kept for future reference if needed. However there appeared to be a lack of clear and positive steps to link such information to future priorities and targets.

To summarise, schools have been faced with a complexity of pressures and externally imposed change. There is a new emphasis on accountability and public image. Subject Leaders are expected to ensure that curriculum responsibilities are met and that subject delivery is of a consistent and high standard. They must also hold a clear view of how their subject responsibility fits into the wider framework of the school and its priorities together with any external requirements made in relation to it. As demand for subject knowledge increases so do the demands on Co-ordinators for increasingly specialised expertise. However Co-ordinators may be responsible for a number of curriculum areas. Thus they are not always confident about their curricular knowledge. Also whilst courses have been argued to be beneficial in terms of subject knowledge limited funds means that schools have to concentrate their efforts in areas of need, such as literacy at the time of this research. In terms of what is being asked of Subject Leaders to some extent

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the external view ties in closely with the Curriculum Co-ordinators expectations. This may be attributable to OFSTED reporting which has made frequent commentary on the Curriculum Co-ordinators role, the issues around which Co-ordinators have made great efforts to take on board. However above all Co-ordinators value their relationships with colleagues. The backing of the head and colleagues enables Co-ordinators to have open discussions, sharing knowledge, expertise and advice, support which Co-ordinators feel is of great importance. This seems especially so given that schools are small almost family-like environments where everyone knows each other well. But it is also possible that in order to avoid friction that might destroy this atmosphere, resentments may remain hidden. Nevertheless as discussion becomes more open then opportunities are presented for everyone's opinion to be voiced and considered. This culture in would seem to act against some of the requirements and philosophies behind the TTA's requirements.

The change of title from Curriculum Co-ordinator to Subject Leader was shown to be unlikely to express adequately what Co-ordinators did, or sit easily with their philosophies or cultures which emphasise working alongside rather than leading. Co-ordinators, it was argued, do not act as leaders or even managers rather they co-ordinate. The impacts of external change have the effect of altering school priorities, which then further impact on school staff. In particular literacy hour has had the result of raising the profile of the English Co-ordinator whilst undermining the position of other Co-ordinators and subjects. Co-ordinators argued that the frequency and pressure created by change is too great although they acknowledged a need for positive development and a questioning of practice. They were uncomfortable with taking the leadership stance recommended by the TTA, regarding this as an intrusion on the professionalism of colleagues. Equally some of the pressure seemed to stem from what Co-ordinators saw as vast increases in the demand for various forms of paperwork.

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However it is likely that this demand has now dropped as there was little activity recorded in this area during the research diary period. Nevertheless the debate and discussion around the development of policies and schemes was valued as a process that enhances the clarity of Co-ordinators thoughts and helped unify approaches. A final point was about the prescriptive nature of the TTA requirements for Subject Leaders whilst at the same time there being a lack of clarity about some of the steps necessary to develop information in the way requested. For example in chapter six issues around monitoring were discussed. The results of monitoring are meant to inform future practice but there seems to be some confusion as to how that might happen and limited monitoring was actually taking place. This seems odd in a period that stresses measurable outcomes and comparability. The issue of monitoring will be revisited later in this chapter.

Management Philosophies, Structures and Organisation:

Management issues and philosophies:

Nias *et.al.* (1992) argued that curriculum development depends on the extent to which values are shared throughout the school, the extent to which organisational structures facilitate interaction, the resources made available in terms of time, money and people and whether there is clear leadership and division of responsibility. Problems can emerge if, as Lawton (1979) pointed out, the curriculum works at odds with the stated aims of the school. When Co-ordinators were asked what factors acted to facilitate or inhibit them in their role there were a number of findings raised in chapter six which relate to the management style adopted. There was the issue of being given enough time by the headteacher to enable Co-ordinators to manage their role in terms of training, monitoring, organising, supporting colleagues, getting through paperwork and for subject related staff meetings. Another issue was that of money. Co-ordinators made

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the point that in order to have more time a financial commitment was necessary for such things as supply teaching cover, resources, or for attending training courses. In some cases the headteacher provided some lesson cover in order to release staff whenever possible but this was not the case in every school. An issue raised by over half the Co-ordinators was that connected to their relationships with colleagues. Co-ordinators felt the support of their head and colleagues was very important in terms of giving the Co-ordinator backing, co-operating with changes being implemented and being approachable. So in other words Co-ordinators were asking for recognition of their subject responsibility as important and therefore worthy of time, money, discussion and support. This was a factor in which the actions of the headteacher could make a considerable difference. It was demonstrated in both chapters six and seven that in School B where the headteacher did not value the contributions of the Co-ordinators they became disillusioned with their role and felt undervalued. In contrast School D gave examples of the headteacher valuing and encouraging contributions from co-ordinators. As Barth (1990) argued "when teachers are enlisted and empowered as school leaders everyone can win" p 128. Clearly the school's individual priorities, those of the headteacher and those introduced by factors external to the school had a bearing on the extent of support each individual Co-ordinator could expect. This was demonstrated dramatically with the advent of literacy hour which diverted attention of the headteacher and the school from all other subjects, turning efforts and concentration onto the English Co-ordinator with the inevitable knock on effect of some Co-ordinators feeling undervalued, a situation which was likely to shift again with the advent of numeracy hour. This demonstrates the importance of valuing and recognising the importance of what each Co-ordinator does in order to maintain their enthusiasm and support. However in an area where there is a constant change of emphasis, each shift represents danger that all those involved with the previous initiative feel they have been wasting their time and their contribution is no longer recognised.

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Chapter seven, "The factors which influence and impact on the role of Curriculum Co-ordinator", argued that in terms of a school philosophy and ethos Co-ordinators related these issues to school policy documents that outlined their approach to such things as discipline and subject areas. "I suppose when I think about it yes, we have lots of policies that we have discussed" A His. Some expressed broader ideas such as a belief in being child-centred or involving the parents in school life. However questions around a specific school approach to learning the Co-ordinators found difficult to answer. This perhaps indicates that they found identifiable philosophies difficult to pin down or they were just not used to thinking in those terms. There were two Co-ordinators who argued that there were no particular approaches to learning that they could identify. Given Nias *et.al.*'s (1992) argument that values need to be shared for curriculum development to take place, this was slightly worrying and backs the argument for schools developing a policy for learning. The development of a teaching and learning policy agreed by all teaching staff has been recommended by O'Niell (1996b).

A policy for learning specifies the sorts of approaches to teaching and learning which are valued by the school and which observers might legitimately expect to see in action in all curriculum areas. The policy sets out 'the way we teach and learn around here'.

O'Niell (1996) pp 29-30

Such an agreed policy would then be likely to become part of or embodied within the culture of the school and is important because the process of negotiation and discussion is extremely valuable. The data collected has indicated that in some schools such discussion is part of the school culture. For example in School A issues are debated openly and regularly. Nevertheless there were strong indications that this process had begun with the headteacher who introduced debate around all school issues. This notion of the importance of the role played by the headteacher in developing such an environment is further demonstrated in the case of School D where a head who is new to the school is actively encouraging and developing a culture of debate and discussion. In addition when this issue was pursued further through asking

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about factors which identified their school as opposed to others, Co-ordinators then talked about having caring environments and clear policies encouraging all to achieve. "You want to make sure that every child has the best chance that you can possibly give them" J KS1.

Another issue raised in chapter seven was the importance attached to the role of the headteacher in establishing the general ethos of the school. In most schools this was conducted in collaboration with the teaching staff. Such open communication worked to empower the Co-ordinators who felt they had some positive input and would at least be listened to "so we can quite openly say what we think" (A En). However what was interesting to see was that where this feeling of open communication broke down or was not present the Co-ordinators expressed feelings of resentment, powerlessness and frustration, or they were less willing to make changes where they felt they had been told rather than consulted. "She...sort of said what her goals and aims were...I more or less carried on as I was doing before" (JKS1). This has considerable implications for the management of Co-ordinators and of change. The imposition of changes whether by government or by a head who does not consult the staff, is likely to act to reduce the enthusiasm and support of staff. Therefore in order to make change effective it is essential to consult and draw on the co-operation of those people who are being asked to implement it. Otherwise the implication is that they will make changes in a superficial way because they have to, especially if they don't believe in, understand or support what they are doing, or they carry on as they always have done. In addition if schools do not have an explicit stance on teaching and learning, the negotiation and discussion around policy making is much more difficult. In order to work within a collegial structure the basic philosophy of educating children, needs to be openly discussed and agreed. After this policies can be developed with this basic framework in mind and common links and approaches will be seen throughout the school.

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Sullivan (1969) argued that the advent of an objectives based curriculum reduces the demand on teachers as they all follow a prepared instructional programme. Then all that is necessary is training and practice in procedures, teachers becoming malleable and acting purely to deliver the curriculum prescribed. Such a curriculum would remove all consideration of the teachers stance working to reduce their role to that of technician. It can be argued that this philosophy has parallels with the introduction of a prescribed National Curriculum and the changes since which have imposed ways of working with it. Hence Barber (1993) has argued that the National Curriculum has been a blow to the professionalism of teachers. But the evidence collected here indicates that in order to gain co-operation for change, teacher's beliefs and values need to be recognised and given merit. Moreover teachers need to be involved with the debate around change and the implementation of it. Again the evidence presented in chapter seven is that in general schools do discuss issues as a whole staff and they talk about how they are going to implement external requirements. Through this process they are in fact adapting the change to suit their own particular cultures and philosophies consequently the particular way change is implemented may vary from school to school.

As Bennett *et.al.* (1992) argued teachers develop strategies to mediate change on structures and cultures. Some schools in this research had laid down clearly defined requirements for the post of Curriculum Co-ordinator. As O'Niell (1996b) argued it is necessary to adapt the role of the Co-ordinator to meet the schools needs. However some schools offered much less guidance. Here the Co-ordinators seemed less confident about what they needed to do and they were less sure about how they felt they fitted into the schools management structure. Interestingly the Co-ordinators of the core subjects, English, maths and science, were treated differently to other Co-ordinators adding to the notion of a hierarchy of subject responsibility. This was expressed through Co-ordinators with these responsibilities being involved in senior

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management teams, or being deputy heads or more experienced members of staff. "All of the big three (*English, maths, science*) are all the management committee" (H Sci). The Co-ordinators who did not feel they had a strongly defined role described themselves as low down the management structure at what one described as "doormat level" I Ma. These were also Co-ordinators who felt less supported by the head or had suffered as a result of external pressures on the school. There was also some commentary from a Co-ordinator who was part of the senior management team who felt very uncomfortable with being in possession of knowledge that she could not share with the rest of the staff. This indicates again a preference for working in an atmosphere where information is shared.

There would appear to be three major factors emerging from this research that have an influence over how the Co-ordinators feel about their status: -

- a) **External Influences:** These include the notion of the position of core and foundation subjects together with the introduction of literacy hour and the prospect of numeracy hour. These initiatives have had the effect of demoting the importance of both Curriculum Co-ordination (or Subject Leadership) and other subjects.
- b) **Internal School Influences:** These factors involve the position given to the Curriculum Co-ordinator in the school management structure. And whether
 - i) they are offered moral support by the Head - which may go some way to compensating for their external status or
 - ii) they are offered respect and resources are made available to the subject.
- c) **School Cultures:** Co-ordinators have constantly referred to the importance they attach to a nurturing and caring working environment. The further they are from that ideal the more isolated and frustrated they appear to feel.

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These influences are inter-linked through a complex interplay of issues but a good manager creates the right balance between all three whilst a poor manager lowers the morale. Throughout the presentation of the findings, one school stands out as being different in terms of a less communicative management style and having Co-ordinators who felt oppressed and disenchanted, one of whom had only been teaching for two years. The Co-ordinators in school B have argued that the management team and especially the headteacher and the deputy carry out initiatives without consulting staff. "Lots of it comes by dictat and whim of the head and deputy" (B D&T). They have given no clear indication of what they would like their Co-ordinators to do and if the Co-ordinator should take an initiative this is quickly squashed as inappropriate. In addition even things such as ordering resources are not left to the Co-ordinator as the head is liable to change the order substituting items she feels she would like the school to have rather than trusting the Co-ordinators decision. The school also has an atmosphere where staff are concerned about what they say and who they trust. "You have to be very careful who you speak to and how you...come across" (B Art). Therefore the communication links appear to be extremely poor and the culture one of self-doubt, blame and guilt in an atmosphere of tension.

This is in marked contrast to other schools. For example in school E a new headteacher is in place and is encouraging a culture of discussion and support in all areas of the curriculum. Each new initiative is discussed by the whole staff and individual Co-ordinators are encouraged to support each other through team teaching (the head acting as teaching cover), feedback and sharing good practice. "I feel I can voice my opinions in staff meetings and things like that" (E PE). In these conditions Co-ordinator E PE decided to complete the PE policy of her own volition because she saw a need and Co-ordinator E Eng was enabled to do some lesson observation and lead staff literacy training events. Her diary read "Final planning with (*colleague*) for tomorrows

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group reading lesson" (E Eng). The head gave support to both Co-ordinators throughout all these developments. "Go and see (*the head*)...she'll give you advice or assistance" (E PE). Consequently the role played by the head and the culture she is promoting would seem to be a key factor in the success or otherwise of new initiatives. This also highlights the role hierarchy plays in these issues. A strong hierarchy that excludes those lower in the structure from information, acts to exclude staff from becoming involved. However the flatter more collegial styles of management make staff feel more included and part of the decision making process thereby having some ownership of developments.

In summary it is important that values are shared, resources are made available and responsibilities are clearly demarcated. Co-ordinators felt the availability of time and money were extremely important to the functioning of their role. Not only were financial and time commitments important but also the support of their colleagues. In this way management could show that they valued and respected the Co-ordinators position. In terms of commonly held philosophies Co-ordinators were a little unclear. They felt they had common approaches in that they followed specific subject policies and discipline policies, but they were less clear about a school-wide philosophy. There were some who mentioned general support for being child-centred or including parents. An argument was made in support of schools developing a teaching and learning policy recommended by O'Niell (1996) which could then inform all other policies and actions. In this way all teaching staff could be involved and feel committed to the wider aims of the school and be actively involved in the development of a positive culture. The headteacher was credited with establishing ethos, although usually in collaboration with staff. Such collaboration was considered important as it gave Co-ordinators the feeling that their views were valued and taken note of. Resentment was engendered where Co-ordinators were informed of goals and aims rather than consulted about them. In these

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cases changes were likely to be superficial as they did not have the whole hearted backing of the staff. Again here a common framework was seen as being a useful tool in order to gain co-operation.

The danger of highly prescriptive change was noted as this deprofessionalised teachers and was unlikely to command their support. It is therefore necessary to allow Curriculum Co-ordinators the opportunity and the means to mediate and develop change in a way suited to their own particular circumstances. This was even extended to the role of the Co-ordinator itself as some negotiation and structuring of the position was recommended. Those Co-ordinators who were less sure about their position and duties felt undervalued. It was also notable that in many cases more senior staff were associated with having responsibility for English, maths or science. There was some evidence to suggest that Co-ordinators were not entirely happy with holding a position of seniority over colleagues. Consequently it was argued that it was very important to recognise and respect the role within the school, especially against the frequent imposition of external change. Strongly hierarchically based management structures were again argued to create divisions between staff and the Co-ordinators in such situations felt frustrated, uninformed and unable to take action. In direct contrast the argument was reinforced that more collegially managed structures were argued to be more inclusive and supportive enabling Co-ordinators to feel they played an important role in school life and development.

Subject Leaders Concepts, Philosophies and the Conduct of their Role:

Chapter seven, "The factors which influence and impact on the role of Curriculum Co-ordinator", argued that on the whole Co-ordinators as teachers, based their educational philosophy on being child-centred, providing opportunities for children to discover for themselves and to act as a facilitator or guide in this process. They hoped to gain their pupil's enthusiasm and interest and have some freedom to follow the pupils interests. Co-ordinators also saw it as important to view pupils as individuals and adapt their teaching techniques to cater for that. Again this illustrates a culture involving a small community where individuals nuances are know to everyone and the environment is such that those individuals are catered for. This reinforces notions of schools as being an almost family-like community where attempts are made to include everyone. However these philosophies and views of learning do not appear to be translated into written policy. There would appear to be some expectation that such ideals are widely accepted and therefore all will teach in that way. Additionally there seems to be some reticence about writing any specific approach into policy that might somehow impinge on a colleagues autonomy in terms of the way they teach. This somewhat mixed set of notions in some way expresses the confused messages and conflicts of direction Co-ordinators have been subjected to. They are to some extent fiercely defensive of individual classroom autonomy, which they feel is under threat, but equally prefer to work in a collegial manner sharing responsibility and decision making. Again it would seem helpful if time was given to open discussion of their approaches to teaching and learning which could then inform policy development without threatening autonomy. Such an initiative would also provide the schools with a means of measuring and mediating the imposition of change in a way which best suited their own situation and philosophies.

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The emphasis placed by Co-ordinators on good relationships with colleagues led to questions being asked about how they dealt with them in terms of questioning and changing practice. It seemed probable that this would involve Co-ordinators in taking a stance and directing colleagues subject approach in the classroom, thereby potentially altering their relationships and crossing into the sanctuary of classroom autonomy. Co-ordinators showed some reluctance to enter and interfere with colleagues classroom practice preferring instead to tackle issues of changing practice through staff meetings and general discussion, though there might be points at which they would tackle this on a one-to-one basis. If Co-ordinators thought there might be some opposition to their ideas they were inclined to look at methods of avoiding this through compromise, discussion, using examples of good practice or using the pressures of numbers already complying. "Before I go into a staff meeting, (I) sound them out" (A His). Rarely did they like resorting to insistence though they sometimes found it necessary. "When push comes to shove, then shove comes into operation" (J KS2). In those circumstances the backing of legislation helped. However undoubtedly their preference was for coming to some kind of amicable agreement. This creates an interesting tension as while a school might develop its own philosophy and view of learning through discussion and negotiation, this view will be mediated by the Curriculum Co-ordinator in carrying out subject requirements and influenced by such things as legislation and inspection reports. So the negotiation of a general view is a complicated mix of all these factors together with the added element of the actual implementation of policy. Whilst the Co-ordinator needs to be able to look at the subject and the school view and marry these two perspectives in line with any legislative requirements, the school needs to take a wider view of school development and ethos together with how the subject fits into this more general picture.

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The emphasis placed on good relations make it less surprising that when being asked about conflict and dealing with difficult colleagues Co-ordinators appeared reluctant to admit they had such problems. This was illustrated by one Co-ordinator who claimed not to have been in any conflict with other staff and yet having been noted in the observation notes as having an argument with a colleague only that morning. Though this was not related to the Co-ordination role it may suggest that differences of opinion do crop up from time to time but that Co-ordinators, who prefer to be seen to be working in unison with their colleagues, tend to underplay such events. Therefore it was possible that Co-ordinators wished to give an impression of harmony though there were perhaps more difficulties between staff than they were prepared to admit. "I haven't really had it...do you want me to imagine it had...happened?" C Sci.

What Co-ordinators do:

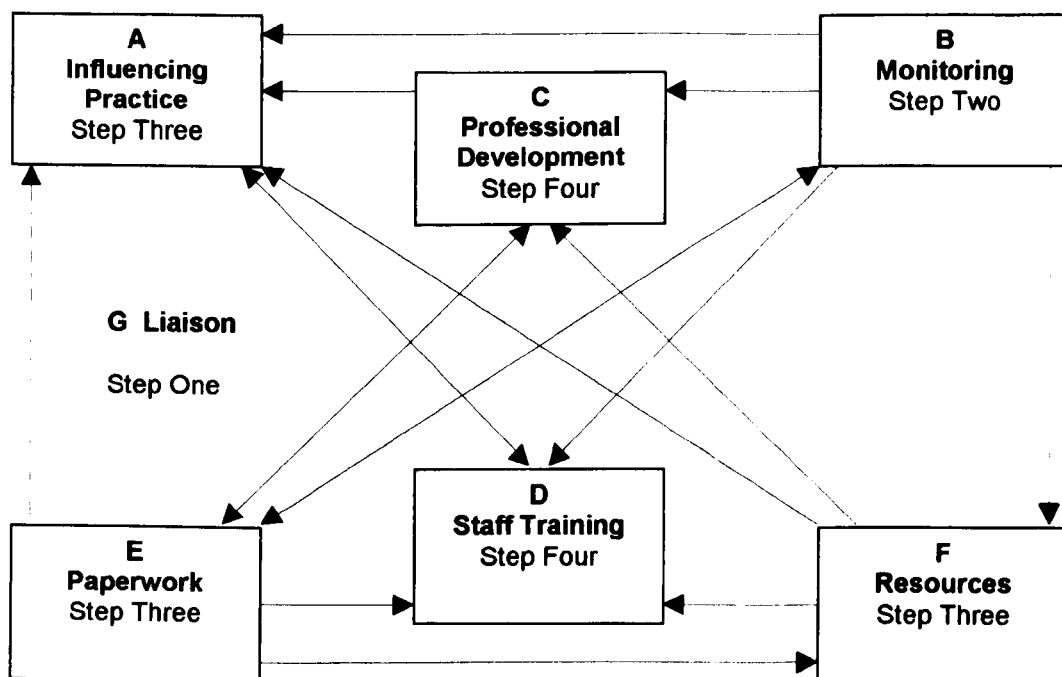
Chapter six considered in some detail the reality of the tasks undertaken by Co-ordinators. There are seven categories of task group coming out of this research and presented in Figure 8.1 below. Each task group is defined followed by an explanation of the recommended steps the co-ordinator should complete.

- A) **Influencing Practice:** this includes using subject expertise to teach other classes, inviting subject experts into the school, advising colleagues on planning and subject requirements and planning meetings. Influencing practice has an interactive relationship with staff training demonstrating training needs, which in their turn inform practice. Practice is also influenced by the paperwork available, the results of monitoring, the Co-ordinators professional development and what they might then regard as necessary change or development and by the resources available. In order to carry out this aspect of the role Curriculum Co-ordinators need to be given the time and opportunity to meet with other staff

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for discussion and developmental work. Therefore the support of the headteacher is essential as is support for the particular curriculum area within the school.

Figure 8.1 Model to show the tasks carried out by Curriculum Co-ordinators, the interactions between them. Suggestions are included about the steps to be taken.



- B) Monitoring: this task category covers a wide range monitoring tasks such as assessment, moderation, establishing standards, evaluating colleagues plans and delivery, reviewing subject provision and progress and observing lessons. The results of monitoring have an impact on practice, the Co-ordinators professional development, resources and staff training through identifying a need. It also interacts with paperwork informing its development while the paperwork provides a basis for monitoring. Again the availability of time is a crucial factor in being able to develop the monitoring role. There may also be some reluctance on the part of Co-ordinators to take on the more intrusive aspects of this role. The headteacher can play an important part by

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encouraging a view amongst staff of the developmental benefits the monitoring role rather than seeing it as a process criticism.

- C) **Professional Development:** this involves keeping up to date and informed with the subject area through Inset training and courses, becoming familiar with subject information and documentation and through meetings with other same subject Co-ordinators. Monitoring will inform the Co-ordinator about their own need for development as will to some extent the availability of informative resources. The Co-ordinators development will then be used to influence practice. Professional development will also have a bearing on the paperwork influencing planning as well as the planning informing the Co-ordinator of areas they will need to develop. Here the headteachers' need to balance the needs of their curriculum staff ensuring that all get a chance for curriculum development. However financial constraints and priorities set outside the school will each have a bearing on the reality of practice. Also where Curriculum Co-ordinators have little time or resources and are poorly motivated through low status, their professional development will suffer with knock on effects on the quality of the paperwork they produce and their ability to influence practice.
- D) **Staff Training:** addressing staff need through subject related staff meetings, reviewing staff inset and training course needs and providing training support. The resources available, the aims of the paperwork planning and the results of monitoring all act to inform staff training. Also practice both influences the training needs identified and the training, influences practice.
- E) **Paperwork:** involving the planning and preparation of subject documents such as policies, schemes and subject action plans and reviewing subject activity. Paperwork has an impact on influencing practice, staff training and the resources needed by setting the criteria by which the subject will be taught. Paperwork also has an interactive relationship with professional development

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and monitoring both being dependent on the subject planning and the subject planning being influenced and further developed from the results of professional development and monitoring. A problem with developing paperwork is the possibility of working in isolation. Therefore Curriculum Co-ordinators need to be encouraged by the head to work with the support of colleagues who are then more likely to support the policies and schemes being developed.

- F) **Resources:** involves organising resources, collecting information, maintaining a resource base, developing subject advice and equipment and informing staff of subject resources. Both monitoring and paperwork have an impact on resources as they highlight areas of need and set out the basic level of resources necessary. The resources available will also have some impact on influencing practice - it is difficult to take initiatives without resource backing, staff training – staff need to be aware of how to best use resources and professional development – supplies of literature and information are essential for the Co-ordinator to remain informed. The development of resources is perhaps the most straight forward of the Co-ordinators roles as long as they have the necessary financial support. It is a role that is directly supportive of colleagues and provides a less intrusive way of influencing what happens in classrooms.
- G) **Liaison:** this final category includes subject-related conversation with the headteacher, colleagues and other groups such as parents or governors. Liaison interacts and is important to all the other categories providing the basis by which all will be informed and become involved. It is important that all Curriculum Co-ordinators are involved with open communication and liaison with colleagues. The headteacher can assist this process by setting the agenda for formal subject discussion and developing a culture of informal conversation around curriculum issues.

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In terms of the process of implementing these roles developing liaison is the first step as without open communication the other aspects of the co-ordinators role are rendered less effective. Co-ordinators need to be prepared to listen and support colleagues efforts, praising accomplishments and be prepared to talk to people beyond the teaching staff about what they are doing. Having established open relationships the co-ordinator needs to discover what is happening within the school and where change and development needs to take place. This can be accomplished through such things as looking at planning, looking at completed work and wall displays and talking to colleagues and pupils. In order to begin the process of change the co-ordinator must be able to both provide appropriate resources and influence the practice of colleagues. The provision of resources will probably be within a limited budget but could enable the co-ordinator to approach the topic of how these should be used. This will have some influence on classroom practice. It is also important for co-ordinators to offer support and guidance in response to colleagues requests. This process should be supported through the use and development of written policy and schemes of work involving the whole staff in this process. Thus the co-ordinator is involved in a complex mix of tasks, each informing the other. Finally through this process both the co-ordinator and their colleagues' development needs can be identified and addressed. This presentation of the co-ordinators role should be viewed as a cyclical process, each cycle informing the next. It should also be recognised that the Co-ordinators role contains a strong administrative element. In this case the majority of administration which includes such tasks as photocopying, phone calls, finding information and writing letters, is included within the resources category. Such tasks were important to include and were grouped under resources as they involved gathering or producing subject related information that can be argued to provide a resource. However the subjective nature of all such decisions is recognised and discussed in more detail in the methodology chapter.

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It is interesting to compare the information collected from Curriculum Co-ordinators about what they do, with some of the authors opinions included in the literature review in which a number of views have been expressed.

- Co-ordinators translate subject orders and put them into practice (Webb and Vulliamy 1996). Co-ordinators in this study were translating or had translated subject orders into schemes and policies, which they considered to be useful documents informing colleagues of the content of what should be taught. Such policies were reinforced in terms of putting them into practice through subject related staff training and staff meetings.
- Co-ordinators are involved with their colleagues day to day practice (O'Niell 1996a). In this research Co-ordinators were involved in daily practice to the extent of seeing colleagues subject teaching plans, observing colleagues classroom displays and pupils books and through subject related discussion. Thus rather than a structural approach to involvement with colleagues practice, Co-ordinators involvement was for the most part largely opportunistic.
- For Bush (1995) Co-ordinators should set an example of good practice, initiate and develop policy and instigate subject related activity. Co-ordinators instigated new subject related activities mostly through the medium of staff meetings and discussion. Indeed they seemed to prefer working with whole staff whereas addressing an individual might be seen as interference. Whilst there were examples of Co-ordinators sharing good practice or team teaching, on the whole Co-ordinators efforts were confined to their own classrooms. They seemed to prefer to set expectations through a gradual drip on drip effect.
- According to a report by Alexander *et.al.* (known as *The Three Wise Men Report* 1992) Co-ordinators need to strengthen and develop their subject expertise. This was also picked up by OFSTED (1994b). This was an area within which the Co-ordinators themselves felt somewhat insecure. With rapidly rising standards of

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subject expertise being required, Co-ordinators relied heavily on courses and subject related training. However this was subject to the availability of school funds, appropriate courses and the priorities of the school development plan. In addition Co-ordinators may have been given a subject responsibility they would not have chosen or may be responsible for more than one subject area. Also if the Co-ordinator's subject is not the focus of attention, not only are funds likely to be diverted elsewhere but the Co-ordinators themselves may lack incentive to develop the subject area. For those Co-ordinators wishing to further their career it may seem prudent to develop expertise in areas being emphasised by external bodies, currently literacy and numeracy.

- Co-ordinators should be prepared to open up their ideas and values to debate (Merry 1996). The heavy prescription of subject requirements and the influence of constant change appears to have acted as a disincentive to Co-ordinators discussing their own ideas and values as these are being over ridden by legislative dictat. However there was evidence to show that Co-ordinators were discussing subject related planning and practice. Nevertheless this did not include discussion on the why's and wherefore's of such change as these were issues not open to debate.
- Co-ordinators are involved with research, resources maintenance, communication, giving advice and being diplomatic (Taylor 1989). The research evidence collected here suggests that all these factors were in operation. Certainly good communication is stressed by Co-ordinators and they were working to a significant degree on resources.
- Co-ordinators need to be clear about the purposes of the school and their subject, its successes and their own position in that process (Featherstone 1996). This was an area where Co-ordinators were uncertain especially in terms of having clearly formulated wider educational philosophies. There did not appear to be direct

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discussion or development of a school philosophy. However involvement in school development planning and the inclusion within that of the Co-ordinators subject development plans does indirectly rely on philosophy. There was some tendency on the part of Co-ordinators to view their own subject in isolation from others especially in the larger schools where they were less likely to have the multiple subject responsibilities carried by those in very small schools.

- Co-ordinators should develop planning, policy documents and action plans (Kitson 1996). All the Co-ordinators involved with this research had completed or were working on such paperwork. This process helped them clarify their ideas and memorise what was involved in the subject.
- Co-ordinators should keep their skills and subject knowledge up to date (DfEE 1998). The evidence suggested that Co-ordinators were keeping informed and honing their skills as far as possible given the restrictions on their time and the budget to allow for such developments. However they complained of a lack of time to share information with colleagues and that the priority given to their subject was dependent on both school needs and legislative requirements.

These examples demonstrate that Co-ordinators are proficient in producing policies, schemes and plans and believe in developing and maintaining good relation with colleagues. Whilst the Curriculum Co-ordinators in this study showed some under-confidence about their subject knowledge they were nevertheless developing skills and subject knowledge when able to do so. Co-ordinators were however a little reluctant to impose their ideals of good practice on colleagues and preferred less intrusive methods of finding out what colleagues were doing. There was an inclination to look at subjects separately thereby losing sight of the big picture of how each subject fitted into a whole school view. Also Co-ordinators were less sure about the wider philosophical stance taken by the school seeing it instead related more to daily commitments like subject

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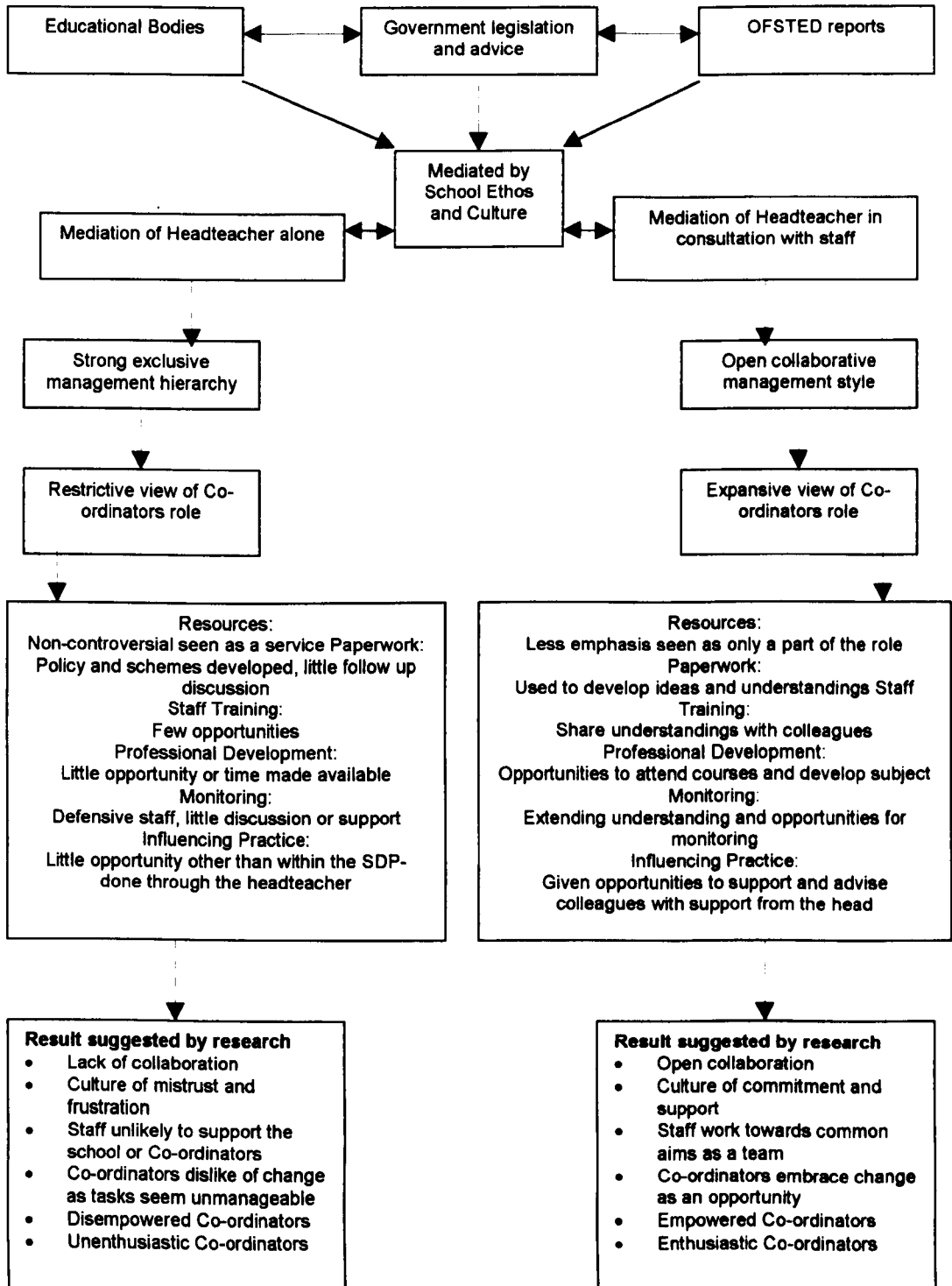
policy needs. Consequently this section has again raised the issue of a teaching and learning policy that could encompass child-centred philosophies and approaches but still give teachers autonomy in the classroom, an issue of importance to Co-ordinators. Given the value Co-ordinators attach to positive inter-relationships they seemed a little reluctant to discuss problems with colleagues instead emphasising diplomacy, encouragement and negotiation as ways around such issues. Co-ordinators were shown to be involved with a whole range of inter-related tasks ranging from developing resources to working on staff training. Throughout all these tasks liaison was an important issue. Also the administrative element of their role was stressed Co-ordinators being involved with such things as writing letters, making phone calls and photocopying.

Summary of Factors Influencing the Curriculum Co-ordinators Role.

The factors impacting on and influencing the role of the Curriculum Co-ordinator have been discussed in some detail. The role involves a complex and at some points interactive mix of issues. Figure 8.2 below summarises these factors and their interactions by developing the extreme positions. This model demonstrates the key importance of external factors such as legislation and OFSTED reporting, which have a direct impact on schools, their cultures and their staff. However these factors also act to mediate these external forces. Headteachers have a strong influence on both the culture of the school and the extent to which teachers are empowered as part of the mediation process. Consequently the cultures and beliefs of the staff in the school will act to varied degrees in the mediation of legislation and initiatives for change. In the case of curriculum development strongly hierarchical school cultures are likely to mean that Heads impose change or edicts on Co-ordinators whereas more collaborative management styles will encourage two-way debate. The more open and enabling structures allow Co-ordinators to develop a wider view of their role and to become more directly involved with the mediation of subject initiatives. Collaborative management

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Figure 8.2 To show how factors which influence and impact on the curriculum co-ordinators' role may be mediated at each extreme.



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styles are also more likely to enhance the Co-ordinators role through being supportive and valuing the Co-ordinators contribution. However more hierarchical styles operate to disenchant the Co-ordinator and act to restrict their view of the role. For example the Co-ordinators in school B it was argued in chapter seven, were working mainly on resource based tasks. They lacked opportunities to develop the role further and had little guidance in respect of how they should conduct the role. Also initiatives taken had been squashed by the headteacher. Therefore Figure 8.2 also shows this complexity of influences and mediators school B falling into the more restrictive view and several other schools such as school A and school D being situated in the more open styles of leadership. Other schools fell somewhere in between though tending towards the more open cultures than that represented by school B. The influence of these factors is seen in the context of the empowerment, commitment and collaboration of Co-ordinators, the more open management styles encouraging more positive and enthusiastic staff. Nevertheless it seems possible that as schools become subject to increasing numbers of external edicts, headteachers' may be pushed towards taking more a directive leadership stance in order to achieve the requirements made of their schools.

School Culture:

The development from taking a curriculum responsibility to that of being a Subject Leader has further raised some issues of interest. For example West (1995) has stated that the individualisation of such responsibilities is extremely difficult in a culture that is much more community based. This community based culture was demonstrated in chapter six where it was shown that when talking about factors which acted to facilitate them in their role, Co-ordinators stressed the importance they attached to having the support of their colleagues and the headteacher. Traditionally the responsibility for the quality and content of the curriculum was placed in the hands of the head and the teachers (Pring 1989). Also primary schools developed at a time when beliefs about

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education were, as expressed by The Plowden Report (CACE 1967), a belief in the recognition of individuals and an adjustment of teaching methods to include all individuals and also that discovery methods were a way of engaging pupils interest. The National Curriculum represented a change in emphasis where state intervention and control of the curriculum was increased at the same time as adding a pressure towards collaborative working patterns all of which held teachers autonomy in check and created tensions (Fullan 1991). This led to an erosion of professional autonomy (Gardner 1998). Making changes to teachers approaches takes time (Cullingford 1997) especially where these shifts and changes were imposed on the education profession rather than developed within it (Hargreaves and Fullan 1998). In addition the implementation of initiatives rarely works out in the way they were originally envisaged (Galton 1993). The language of leadership has become more predominant particularly since the TTA's development of the subject leadership role. This research has shown that support for curriculum change arises out of discussion between teachers who all become involved and jointly responsible for the changes they agree rather than through being told. Further schools may through a process of discussion and negotiation, resist or adapt change to suit them. Therefore in order to implement change successfully teachers support is necessary (Cullingford 1997). Consequently Southworth (1987) believed promoting expectations for showing strong leadership at the same time as collegiality to be incompatible. As Bennett *et.al.* (1992) argued teachers develop strategies to influence change on structure and culture but they go on to point out that extended responsibility has led to increased insecurity.

From the evidence collected for this research it is apparent that there are differences between schools in the way they respond to the curriculum co-ordinator role, the support they give the role and each other, the extent to which they communicate and the strength of the hierarchy that exists. These issues vary with the individual culture of

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the school. Traditionally primary schools were based on power centred with the headteacher and informal communication based on trust and empathy. In such situations everyone could be left to get on with their jobs. This was similar to Harrison's (1972) club culture. However with the implementation of recent change has come the formalisation of many of these inter-relationships. Such ad-hoc arrangements are no longer seen as acceptable and a total reliance on the headteacher is viewed with caution. Moves have been made towards what Harrison (1972) describes as role culture. In this case the organisation is based on the work of specialists who are governed by an overarching management and associated procedures. However, whilst such a model might describe the secondary school situation, primary schools are much smaller institutions with different philosophies. Also the imposition of such a hierarchically based culture has been demonstrated to be less effective than more collaborative styles, as will be discussed below. Perhaps more appropriate to primary schools is Harrison's (1972) task culture. This relies on collaborative efforts to work on particular issues drawing on the appropriate expertise needed for each particular task. Debate and negotiation are necessary for decision making led by the most appropriate member of staff. This is a culture which most closely reflects that found in the schools involved in this study. Curriculum Co-ordinators were the focal point, initiating subject development. This was accomplished through leading staff meetings where subject issues were discussed, debated and decided upon. Different curriculum areas were made a priority at different times. As Green (1994) believed, such open discussion develops wide ownership and general feelings of satisfaction when aims are achieved. However there was also evidence of the fourth culture mentioned by Harrison (1972), that of the person culture. This is a culture that stresses the importance of individuals and that the organisation should work for their benefit. Some elements of this philosophy were certainly reflected in the Co-ordinators emphasis on individual autonomy.

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The research evidence suggests that primary schools are a complex mix of all these cultures. Again it is likely from the evidence collected that co-ordinators prefer to work within the collaborative cultures identified by Hargreaves (1994), whilst at the same time preserving their classroom autonomy. It would also seem possible that the imposition of or an insistence on collegial practices could lead to balkanised cultures, sub-groups of like-minded people forming in isolation from each other. However in the schools researched this would seem to be less an issue than the isolation caused by heavily hierarchical situations. Good leaders maintain positive cultures and work to improve those which are not (Bush 1995). Moreover as Littledyke (1997) pointed out collaborative and democratic styles are more likely to achieve the effective transition of policy into practice whereas over prescriptive styles can inhibit this process. Culture adds security through the rituals it upholds (Torrington and Weightman 1993) and it encompass and engenders feelings of community (Mintzberg 1973). Consequently initiatives which alter perceptions and question educational values and judgements threaten this security. Nias *et.al.* (1989) highlighted several factors on which cultures are dependent. These were the extent of communication, the personalities involved, the history of the school and its layout, but the primary influence they argue is the head. The influence of the Headteachers leadership and management style has been noted in these research findings as an important factor in the Co-ordinators effectiveness. School A provides an interesting illustration of this. When the head arrived at the school he held open discussions with the staff in relation to the co-ordination role. He negotiated a curriculum co-ordination job description and teachers were asked to indicate whether they would like to be a co-ordinator and to choose a subject they would like to take on. Teachers requests were accommodated as far as possible and Co-ordinators enthusiastically took up their roles. These actions were reinforced through regular staff meetings and very positive OFSTED reports. However there is some

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indication from the Co-ordinators involved in the research that this process needs updating as new staff have arrived and subject policies have now been in place for some time. "There's been quite a few changes in the staff now...it's never been done since really" (A His). So once achieved schools need to be aware that such processes need constant reinforcement or there is a danger of them 'resting on their laurels'.

School cultures are a powerful influence on those working in schools. Curriculum Co-ordinators prefer cultures which are based on community and collegiality. However the reality of primary schools is that the cultures found within them are a complex mix and vary from one school to another. Nevertheless the overriding feature that makes a difference to gaining the support and loyalty of the Co-ordinators is the extent to which the culture encourages open collaboration. This is ever more important in a climate of increasing and changing obligations. Schools where everyone talks to each other both formally and informally have a stronger communal identity and are more likely to engender the support of all staff. However it is also important that individual autonomy is preserved allowing the freedom for teachers to make their own mark, albeit within a generally agreed format. Cultures which work to the exclusion of Co-ordinators, or act in spite of them are unlikely to be successful in the longer term as resentments build and enthusiasm and co-operation is lost.

How far do the recent TTA National Standards for Subject Leaders meet the reality of the Curriculum Co-ordination role:

As has been discussed earlier in this chapter, the change of nomenclature from Curriculum Co-ordinator to Subject Leader was an issue of concern. For Curriculum Co-ordinators the term Leadership implied a directive stance with which they were uncomfortable. Curriculum Co-ordinators are faced with a change not only of nomenclature but also in the requirements made of them. These requirements were

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established after the period of data collection for this research so findings are not directly related. However there are some issues which it is worth reiterating in relation to the TTA requirements. Looking at key areas of subject leadership this is broken down into four areas.

- A) Strategic direction and development of the subject. Whilst Co-ordinators were developing (or had developed) plans, policies and practise through discussion there was a heavy emphasis by the TTA on monitoring progress and using analysis to guide improvement. It has been argued that Co-ordinators need time to monitor and need to be guided in the analysis and use of such information to inform future practise otherwise this becomes a largely pointless exercise.
- B) Teaching and learning. Through the provision of schemes of work Co-ordinators were setting targets and aims for what should be taught and the coverage of their curriculum area. Co-ordinators were also involved with devising assessment procedures and methods of recording and reporting pupil's achievements. However there was some reluctance in becoming too involved with individual teaching methods, this being seen as an infringement of individual teachers autonomy.
- C) Leading and managing staff. Co-ordinators were certainly attempting to keep their relationships with colleagues constructive and offer support where necessary. They were also acting to support staff development and training. Also there was evidence to show that everyone was kept informed through staff meetings though contact with governors was unusual.
- D) Efficient and effective deployment of staff and resources in primary schools. In primary schools this area refers more accurately to deployment of resources than it does to deployment of staff. This is a task in which the Co-

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ordinators were involved for a considerable and perhaps excessive amount of their co-ordination time.

Consequently it would seem that Co-ordinators are involved with the majority of requirements being made of Subject Leaders. However it is the change of emphasis that is questioned. Co-ordinators do not see themselves as leaders nor do they wish to be so. The notion of leadership would suggest the creation of divisions between staff that Co-ordinators could not condone. Co-ordinators lacked clarity about the reasons for and the uses of assessment. They regard classroom autonomy as something that should not be interfered with too much. Also efforts put into such initiatives demand considerable commitment which can then be overturned by new legislative requirements which shift the focus and can make efforts made seem worthless. However some positive issues arise with the revising of subject areas its related discussion and collegial methods of approaching change and development. Changes in requirement have forced schools to look at whole school development and how individual subjects fit into that wider picture. Co-ordinators responsibilities have made teachers more aware of other methods and approaches to teaching and have in some cases opened up classrooms to the positive benefits of such things as team teaching where both the Co-ordinator and the teacher have gained insights into each others' experience. Nevertheless such positive outcomes need an environment of openness and are less likely to take place where Co-ordinators and teachers feel threatened and defensive. Consequently it is easy to understand why Co-ordinators linked effectiveness to such things as being open, flexible and non-judgemental and why therefore they rejected the language of leadership.

Conclusion:

The demands on Co-ordinators have risen rapidly since the introduction of the National Curriculum. They are increasingly expected to be held accountable for the extent of

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pupils subject knowledge and progress. The Co-ordinators role is not simple or straight forward. It involves Co-ordinators in a number of tasks ranging from developing resources to changing practice and initiating training. Throughout all this Co-ordinators need to be aware of the needs and concerns of their colleagues. A number of issues have been identified about which Co-ordinators are under-confident. Firstly they are concerned about meeting the ever increasing demand for subject expertise. This is even more problematic for Co-ordinators with a number of subject or other responsibilities in addition to their co-ordination role. Secondly Co-ordinators are unsure as to how they might use the results of assessment and evaluation to inform future practice. In a period of increasing prescription it is also possible that Co-ordinators are reluctant to take initiatives in case new guidelines or legislation come out which undermines actions they have taken. Thirdly Co-ordinators are unwilling to take on the language of leadership which may impinge on their colleagues classroom autonomy seeing this as an infringement on their professionalism.

By and large the evidence suggests that Co-ordinators are meeting many of the TTA's requirements of Subject Leadership but the emphasis is less on leadership and more on co-ordination. Co-ordinators were reluctant to be referred to as leaders and were argued not to be demonstrating the skills of a leader. Co-ordination styles fit more happily with the collaborative cultures preferred by Co-ordinators. More open and collegiate cultures were shown to be beneficial in terms of gaining Co-ordinators support, whereas strongly hierarchical stances that excluded Co-ordinators from contributing fully to school life were shown to act to disillusion and frustrate staff. The influence and support of the head was an important part of this process especially in the case of newer Co-ordinators who relied more heavily on the headteacher for guidance.

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A number of additional factors were demonstrated to have a marked effect on the Co-ordinators role. Firstly external issues such as legislative change or inspection results were shown to influence the importance or demands made of particular Co-ordinators. Secondly the management structure of the school, its general ethos and culture, treatment of the curriculum co-ordination role and the status afforded to Co-ordinators was very significant. It was important that the efforts of Curriculum Co-ordinators were appreciated and valued. Thirdly the attitudes and philosophies of the Co-ordinators themselves affected their view of their role. It was especially important that they viewed colleagues and the head as supportive of them and their role. Throughout this discussion the importance of having an agreed teaching and learning policy was stressed. This, it was argued, would provide a springboard from which all other initiatives could be viewed and dealt with. Also it was warned that the development of such agreed procedures and policies should be re-visited regularly as changing staff circumstances and philosophies can mean such ideals becoming outdated. Therefore all such ideas need to be kept as live debate and renegotiated periodically.

Therefore the recommendations of this research are that: -

- Collaborative cultures should be encouraged through genuinely open debate and discussion. In this way the view the Co-ordinator or Subject Leader takes of the role will be expanded and the tasks they perform valued and seen as worthwhile by everyone in the school.
- School philosophy and ethos should be discussed and a clear policy for teaching and learning developed. Everyone should have an input into this and the policy should inform all subject policies and debate. It is also necessary to re-visit such discussion of policy at regular intervals.
- The notion and language of leadership should be abandoned in favour of a more collegiate title and style. The idea of co-ordination fits more easily with

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teachers ideals. Also in a small community it makes more sense that people should act together for the good of the school and pupils through openly debating the way forward.

- The professionalism of Co-ordinators should be recognised and their values and opinions noted in the context of curriculum reform. If they are to be the subject experts in schools then they need to be trusted to have the expertise necessary.
- Schools should work together on change all taking responsibility for action rather than seeing it as the role of a particular member of staff. The person with curriculum responsibility should be seen as the person who keeps an overview of the subject area and organises the action of the school in terms of it.
- Co-ordinators should be given support in terms of time and the funding necessary to allow them to perform well and attend appropriate professional development courses.
- The monitoring process should be developed in terms of clear manageable steps which are linked to positive initiatives which everyone involved with the school see as a benefit, thus removing fear and the feeling of being judged.

Linked to this are areas and issues in need of further consideration, study and debate. These are areas that it was not possible to develop here due to the restrictions of time and the scope possible.

- The relationship between the headteacher, legislative requirements and the Co-ordinator needs further study. It would be extremely interesting to know where the headteachers felt they fitted into the process of developing curriculum responsibility and how they saw the management issues. Also it is important to establish whether

Analysis and Discussion

heads adopt a particular position in relation to the introduction of new initiatives in the curriculum.

- The issue of monitoring needs to be followed up by looking at methods to develop it in a way that does not threaten staff and is seen to be linked to positive and quality developments in schools. There also needs to be a study on the variations and varied success of different practices in different schools.
- Co-ordinators referred to training as positive and useful but needs were often neglected in terms of availability and cost. Also courses need to show the importance of making links between subjects and between a subject and whole school development. Therefore courses should be evaluated in terms of their quality and suggestions for development made in terms of these criteria.

The Research Question:

In terms of the research question **“The Roles of the Subject Leader in primary school: a comparison between the role adopted by Primary Subject Leaders and those prescribed by government and educational agencies; how far is a perfect match possible or desirable?”** consideration has been given to a number of different aspects of it. There has been detailed discussion about the extent of change in primary education and the development and increasing prominence given to the Curriculum Co-ordinators role. This has been linked to changing legislation and advice. Various management structures have been discussed and evaluated. Some of the changes imposed on school management have been shown to be problematic and suggestions were made in support of a flat management structure where all feel included and their opinions valued. Co-ordinators were shown to be meeting the expectations of most aspects of their role with the exception of tasks such as monitoring. Expectations were unlikely to be fulfilled to the Co-ordinators satisfaction without more support in terms of time, funding and greater recognition of their achievements. The role of Subject Leader

Analysis and Discussion

however introduces a new element and emphasis on leadership with which Co-ordinators were uncomfortable. Given that Co-ordinators were shown to prefer a culture where they share experiences and value communication the recommendation by the TTA of a leadership role would appear to pose a threat to this ideal. It is a role that could act in a divisive way by removing group responsibility and elevating the status of particular subjects and the teachers in charge of them. This would be likely to lead to resentments and resistance to change, acting in opposition to the more collegiate responses those in primary schools prefer. It has been demonstrated that the recommendations made by the TTA are unlikely to be desirable or to be met. Factors such as lack of time and finances, the threat posed to collegiate cultures and the unwillingness of Co-ordinators to monitor and direct their colleagues have been raised throughout this chapter. Therefore it is argued that the TTA ideal is neither achievable nor desirable and it is recommended that the role of Curriculum Co-ordinator makes more sense in the close community of a school. When considering the roles prescribed by government and educational agencies it is apparent that the cultures and philosophies underpinning them are very different to those held by primary school Curriculum Co-ordinators. Consequently it is unlikely that a perfect match is possible. School cultures, Heads and Co-ordinators will act to modify and adapt new initiatives in a way that will suit the ethos of their schools and individual situations. Neither would a perfect match be desirable as Co-ordinators co-operation is based on their ability to engage with and modify new initiatives.

Appendices

The Roles of the Subject Leader in Primary School

Linda Fletcher

- a comparison between the roles adopted by Primary Subject Leaders and those prescribed by government and education agencies; how far is a perfect match possible or desirable?

Sub-questions

- What do the government and educational agencies say Subject Leadership should involve?
- What forms of management structure or organisation might this imply?
- How do Subject Leaders perceive and operationalise their role?
- How far do these match?


Information has been collected about: -

- What Subject Leaders actually do, what they think they should do and what they consider to be effective practice
- Approaches to Subject Leadership
- The effects of school structure on the Subject Leaders' roles


Findings and Issues to date

- Background to Subject Leaders

Of 20 Subject Leaders only 3 are working in the area of their degree specialism

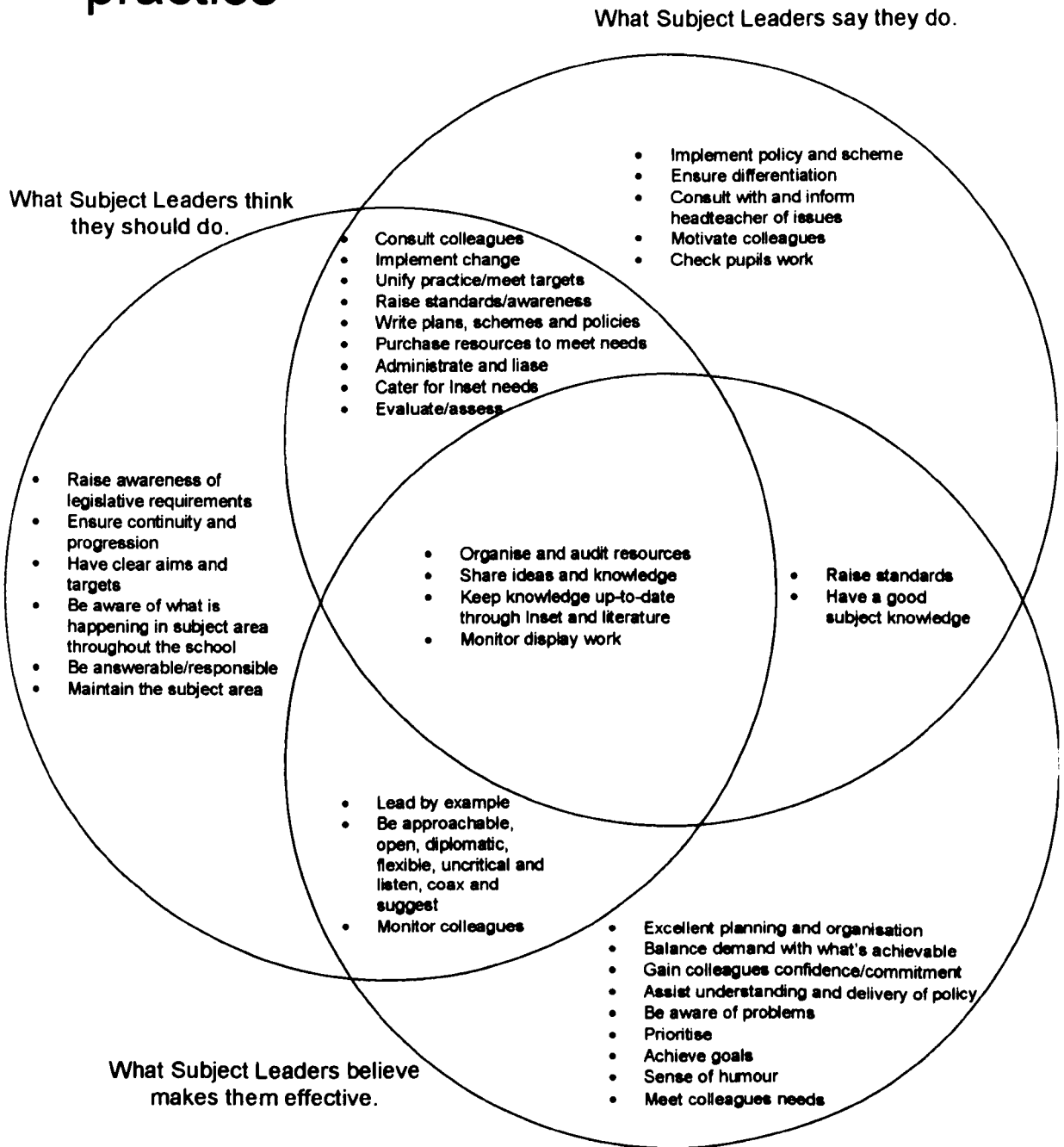


Only 4 Subject Leaders have one subject responsibility, 7 have 2 areas and 4 have 6 or more

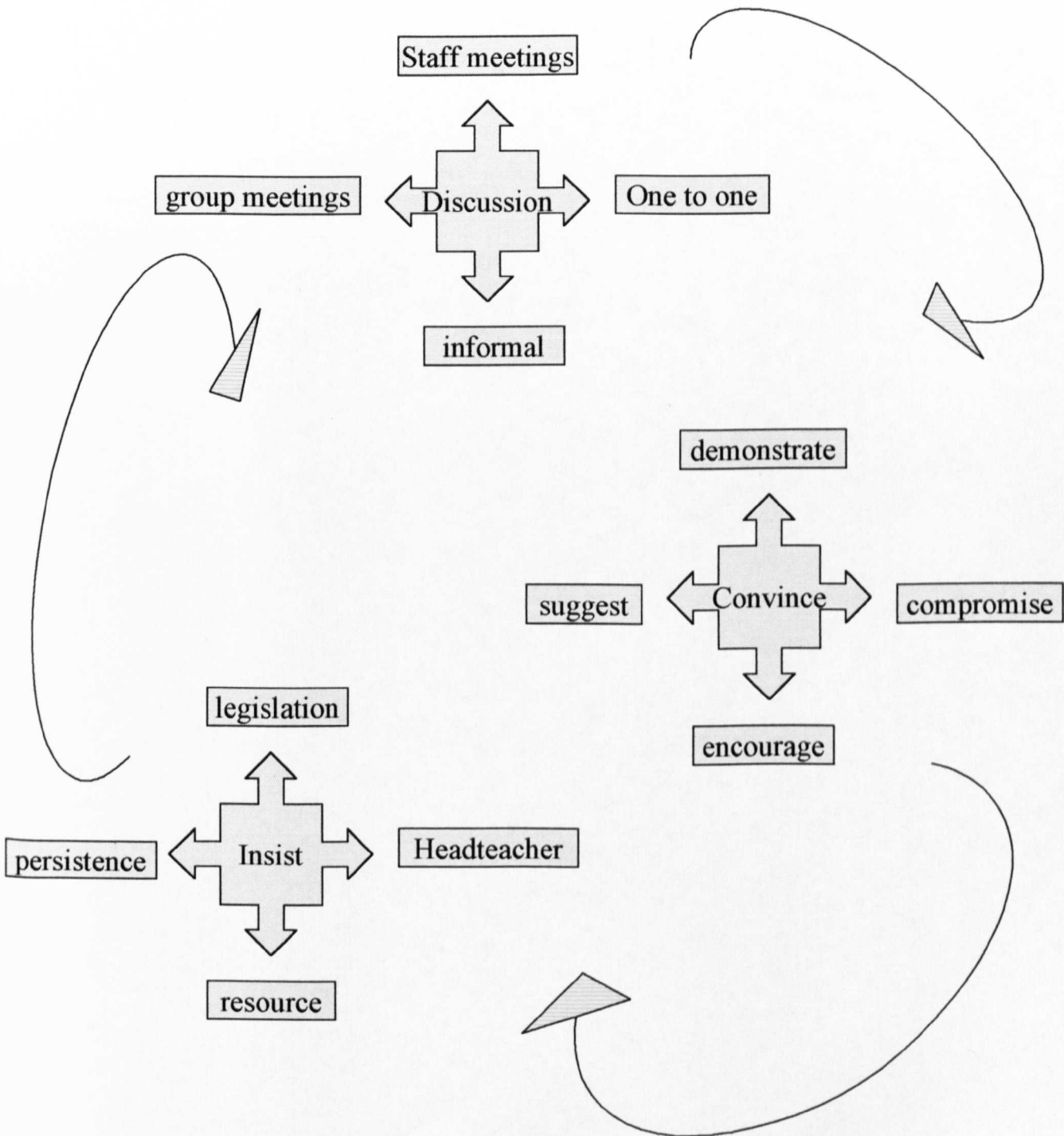


Length of responsibility for the subject area picked up by the project ranged from the 1st to the 7th year.

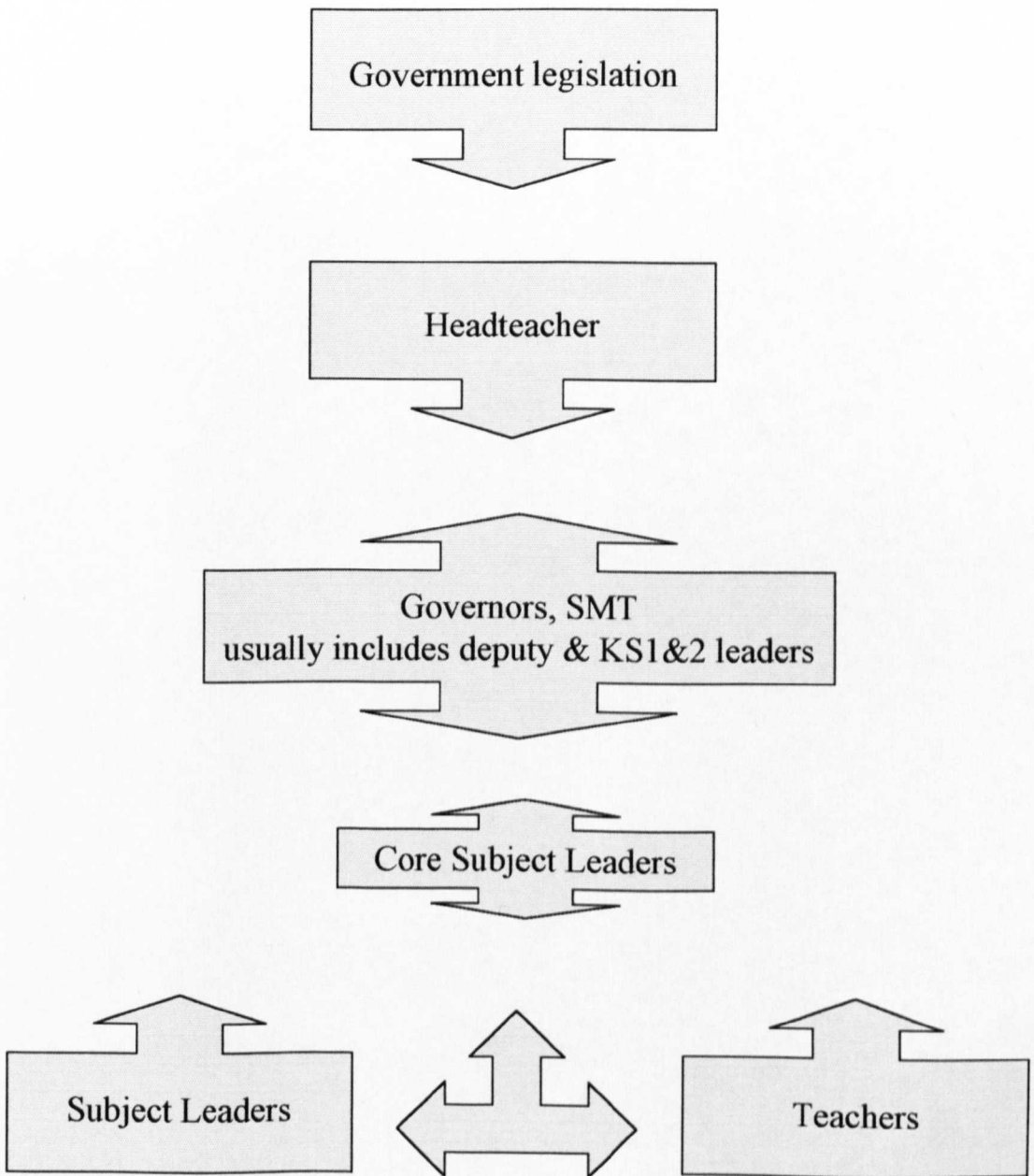
Comparing what Subject Leaders do, with what they think they should do and what they consider to be effective practice



Approaches to Subject Leadership



The effects of school structure on the Subject Leaders' roles



Issues of Interest

- **Complexity of the Roles**
- **Emphasis on relationships**
- **Discomfort with monitoring**
- **Resistance to over emphasis on Leadership**
- **Effect of school culture: the impact of Subject Leaders**

General questions

1. Selected Subject area co-ordinated: _____

2. Other current responsibilities: _____

3. Number of years teaching: less than 3 3-5 more than 5

4. Number of years in current school:

5. Number of years as a co-ordinator in current school:

6. Number of teachers in your school (incl. headteacher):

7. Did you formally apply for your co-ordinator's post? Yes No

 If yes:- As an external candidate As an internal candidate

8. Was the post advertised? Yes No

9. Were you interviewed? Yes No

10. Do you have a job description? Yes No

 If yes, was it negotiated? Yes No

11. Is your co-ordinator's role a permanent one? Yes No

 If not, how many years will you have the role?

12. Did your appointment lead to a salary increase? Yes No

13. What qualifications/experience did you have when appointed that were appropriate to the role?

14. How enthusiastic about the co-ordinator's role were you when you were first appointed?

 Choose from 1 (very) to 4 (not) 1 2 3 4

15. How confident about the role did you feel when you were first appointed?

 Choose from 1 (very) to 4 (not) 1 2 3 4

16. How confident about the role do you feel now?

 Choose from 1 (very) to 4 (not) 1 2 3 4

Questions about your co-ordinator's role:

17. Which of the following are you expected to do?	Often	Some- times	Never	How important do you rate this? (1 - very to 4 not)
a. Write or review a school policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Produce or modify a scheme of work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Control a curriculum area budget	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Be responsible for equipment and materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Produce resources for colleagues to use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Organise subject related staff meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Offer colleagues advice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Support colleagues in their classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Teach the subject to children in other classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Organise school-based inservice activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Talk to parents about the subject	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Talk to governors about the subject	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Liaise with a feeder school(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Liaise with colleagues in other primary schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. Liaise with schools your pupils go on to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
p. Monitor teachers' plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
q. Monitor classroom learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
r. Deal with concerns related to pupils with SEN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
s. Deal with assessment, recording and reporting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. List any other tasks that you are expected to carry out and complete boxes as above.

t. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
u. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. List the main priorities you have at present (by letter from the above list)

1st. 2nd. 3rd.

What support do you get in your role?

20. How well supported are you by your headteacher? *Choose from 1 (very) to 4 (not)*

1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | |

If 'well supported', in what ways?

In what ways (if any) could the support be improved?

21. How well supported do you feel by your colleagues? *Choose from 1 (very) to 4 (not)*

1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | |

If 'well supported', in what ways?

In what ways (if any) could the support be improved?

22. Do you get any non-contact time? Yes No

If yes, approximately how many hours a month?

How do you spend the time? _____

23. Do you get an annual budget?

Yes | | No | |

If yes, how much? _____

Any comments about this? _____

24. Have you participated in any inservice activities related to your role as a co-ordinator?

Yes | | No | |

If yes, please give brief details including date.

25. Have you received any support as a co-ordinator from outside school?

Yes No

If yes, please give brief details including date.

26. Are you a member of a professional subject organisation relevant to this curriculum responsibility?

Yes No

If yes, which organisation? _____

Other Issues

27. Are there any constraints that inhibit your work as a co-ordinator?

Yes No

If yes, please give brief details. _____

28. Has your school been inspected by OFSTED? Yes No

If yes, when? _____

If no, when is the inspection due? _____

If yes, please briefly outline aspects of the inspection related to your co-ordinator's role which you found:

a. Easy / straightforward

b. Difficult / challenging

29. Do you have any other comments related to the issues highlighted in this questionnaire?

30. Are you prepared to be interviewed for approximately 30 minutes (in school) about your responses to this questionnaire and your views about the co-ordinator's role?

If yes, please indicate on tear off slip below.

Name: _____

School: _____

Subject area of responsibility: _____

Appendix 3

Interview Schedule Term One

Explain tape is just for my purposes. Talk through form of interview and the time it's expected to take.

I will begin by asking you a little bit about your background.

1) How long have you been a co-ordinator?

2) How long have you been responsible for this subject?

3) How did you become the _____ Co-ordinator?

4) How do you see the role of the co-ordinator?

--

what purpose does it serve?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the head see the role in the same way? 	
---	--

<p>Is co-ordinating your subject area different to co-ordinating any other subject? why / what ways?</p>	
--	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do others in the school perceive the role? <p>are there particular views?</p>	
---	--

5) How does your school organise and define the co-ordinators role?

--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there formal structures in place? 	
---	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there opportunities to discuss your subject area? 	
---	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are co-ordinators expected to talk people other than colleagues about their role? 	
---	--

6) How do you carry out this role in relation to the structure which you have just outlined?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sort of things do you do? <p>could you give some examples?</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within that list how do you decide what to prioritise? <p>what criteria are you using?</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kinds of things help you in your role as a co-ordinator? <p>what type of support is helpful?</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can you as a co-ordinator offer colleagues? <p>what kind of support?</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you manage resources? <p>are you responsible for a budget?</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you find out about what is happening within school in your subject area? <p>what techniques do you use and why?</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you do with this information? 	

7) Following on from that are there any particular issues that you feel you need to address as a co-ordinator in this academic year?

<p>what issues and why?</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are any of these issues formalised into targets for the year? <p>are these negotiated aims?</p>	

8) What do you think are the characteristics of an effective co-ordinator?

why?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you feel you meet some of these criteria? <p>which ones?</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you measure your own effectiveness - what criteria do you use? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there factors which inhibit your effectiveness? <p>what aspects of time?</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you think of any ways in which some of these problems might be solved? 	

9) We have been talking about your role as a “co-ordinator”. You may have heard that the TTA have talked of developing a qualification for “subject leaders”. Which term do you prefer? Do you think there is a difference?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If this qualification is introduced do you think it would be useful? <p>would it interest you as a qualification?</p>	
--	--

10) Are there any issues about the role of the co-ordinator which you would like to raise or bring to my attention?

Very many thanks for your time. This information will prove very useful.

Interview Schedule - Term Two

The purpose of this interview is to gather a little information about your philosophies and attitudes towards education and in particular the co-ordinators role.

<p>1) I'd like to start by clarifying a few things from the last interview.....</p>	
---	--

BACKGROUND

<p>2) So following on from that can I ask what has happened since we last spoke?</p> <p>- What issues have you met or had to deal with? - Have you made any progress towards the targets you have set for yourself?</p>	
---	--

<p>3) I'd be interested to know about your aims for the next part of this year?</p> <p>- Have they been adapted or changed? - Do you foresee any possible difficulties in achieving this?</p>	
---	--

POLITICAL / PHILOSOPHICAL CHANGE

<p>4) I would like to step back a little from the day to day issues. Could you briefly outline how you feel one should approach helping children to learn.</p> <p>- How do you think that translates into what you're doing now?</p>	
--	--

<p>5) There have been a lot of changes such as the increased emphasis on accountability, the focus on co-ordinators, SAT's, OFSTED etc. How do you view these changes?</p> <p>- Have they modified your view? - Have they altered your approach?</p>	
--	--

<p>6) What effect do you think the push in literacy and numeracy might have?</p> <p>- Will this change the way things are currently set up? - How do you respond to this in terms of your personal views?</p>	
---	--

STRUCTURAL CHANGE IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

<p>7) I would like now to focus back on the structures and management of the school. Can you describe how you fit into the management structure of the school.</p> <p>- How do you feel about it. Do you have a reasonable amount of autonomy and power? - Are there aspects of the structure which are particularly helpful / unhelpful?</p>	
---	--

<p>8) What sort of impact do you think you have on the school as a co-ordinator?</p> <p>- To what extent are you consulted? - What sort of impact do other co-ordinators have? - Can you give me any evidence or examples to demonstrate these views?</p>	
---	--

<p>9) How, in your experience, has this impact changed since you started teaching?</p> <p>- Has the ethos of schools altered as a result?</p>	
---	--

PAPERWORK

<p>10) As a co-ordinator you hold, in school, various documents for example the :-</p> <p>.....</p> <p>(are there any I have missed?) Can you explain the value you place on this paperwork ?</p> <p>- Is it helpful / detrimental? - Is there too much emphasis on paperwork?</p>	
--	--

<p>11) What value do you place on schemes, policy and job descriptions?</p> <p>- How do these relate to what is happening in the school? - How do you know what effect the schemes are having? - How do you make use of other co-ordinators schemes and polices?</p>	
--	--

SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE

<p>12) I am interested to know your opinion about the value of subject knowledge to the co-ordinator.</p> <p>- What level of subject knowledge is required? - Would you prefer the role of a specialist teacher - if appropriately qualified?</p>	
---	--

<p>13) If co-ordinators are expected to become specialists in their subject does this have implications for classroom teaching?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- How are classroom teachers enabled to teach all subjects?- Are class teachers undermined or empowered through this process?	
--	--

<p>14) Finally I would just like to ask whether there is anything you would like to ask me or bring to my attention?</p>	
--	--

Very many thanks for your time.

Interview Schedule - Term Three

The purpose of this interview is to gather information about how you establish your subject in the school and how this relates to school ethos

BACKGROUND

<p>1) Can I ask whether there have been any developments in your subject since we last spoke?</p> <p>- What issues have you met or had to deal with (internal / external)? - Have you altered or adapted any of your longer term aims?</p>	
---	--

SCHOOL ETHOS

<p>2) In this school are you able to identify a schoolwide approach to learning?</p> <p>- Are there things that all the staff in this school do in common / or have a common attitude to? - Are there things about this school which make it different to others? - How do you feel about this?</p>	
---	--

<p>3) Is the educational philosophy or ethos of the school subject to open discussion (either formally or informally) by the whole staff?</p> <p>- If not who decides on it? - Does everyone adhere to a common practice when agreed? - Is it possible to see a common philosophy reflected in all policy documents (especially the SDP)? - Are there open discussions about approaches to teaching your subject?</p>	
--	--

COMMITMENT TO COLLEAGUES

<p>4) Could you explain what kind of demands are made on your time by colleagues.</p> <p>-What sort of issues are you expected to deal with?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- How do you feel about these demands?- Are they ever unreasonable in your opinion?	
---	--

<p>5) What sort of approaches do you take with colleagues when you want them to listen to your ideas?</p> <p>- How might you effect their classroom teaching?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Are there particular staff who are difficult / easy?- How do you respond when there is a conflict (examples)?	
--	--

FURTHERING THE SUBJECT

<p>6) Following on from that how do you make changes in your subject schoolwide?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Are you required to convince other staff / SMT of the benefits of your view?- When / if you perceive a need for change how do you go about effecting that change?	
---	--

<p>7) I would be interested to know what plans you have for your subject over the next two years.</p> <p>- What changes might I see? - What difficulties / obstacles do you think you might need to tackle?</p>	
---	--

<p>8) Finally I would just like to ask whether it would be possible to conduct a follow up interview with you next year?</p> <p>Is anything you would like to ask me or bring to my attention?</p>	
--	--

Very many thanks for your time.

Appendix 4

Explanatory notes for use with Co-ordinator's diary

The following notes detail the information expected under the headings on your diary sheets.

REF:

- Complete the reference with the number we give you. The purpose of this is to allow us to identify who wrote the diary in order to clarify information if necessary.
- This information will not be used for any other purpose.

DATE:

- Date of task.

TIME OF DAY:

- The specific time of day this task was performed and how long you spent on this task. For example 10.15am to 2.15pm, 4 hours.

TIME DESIGNATION:

- Please state whether this time was during class time, playtime, lunch time, before school, after school, during assembly, formal co-ordinator time, non-contact time or a snatched few minutes.

NATURE OF TASK:

- What exactly did you do? Explain in as much detail as you can i.e. what were you doing with the resources, what did the policy review involve? Also indicate whether others were involved.

REASON FOR TASK:

- Who instigated this task - was it the Head, yourself, a colleague or someone else?
- How was this task instigated?
- Why did you perform this task - was it a planned event, an opportunist event, or did it just become urgent?

SETTING:

- Where did you carry out this task? For example was it work you did at home, in the school office, in the corridor, in the classroom or perhaps in the car travelling home etc.?

OUTCOME AND COMMENTARY:

- What was the outcome of this task - is it completed - what follow up is needed?
- Also use this space to air any thoughts or reflections you may like to add related to this task. Please be as open as possible. The content of the diary will be kept confidential. We are interested in both positive and negative comments.

OVERALL COMMENTARY

After each four week diary period could you write a brief overall commentary putting the diary information into a whole school context. This should include:-

1. General factors influencing the situation. For example is the school preparing for OFSTED?
2. Priorities and factors leading up to the period covered by the diary. For example is your subject high or low priority within the school at the moment?
3. Priorities and plans for the period between this diary record and the commencement of the next in week five of the term.

This commentary should only take one, or at most two, sides of A4 paper.

DATE	TIME OF DAY	TIME DESIGNATION	NATURE OF TASK	REASON FOR TASK	SETTING	OUTCOME AND COMMENTARY

Ref:

Appendix 5

	Classroom Activities	Subject Related	Discipline Pupil Incidents	Timetable Related	Personal
Friendly					
Managerial Professional					
Offhand Dismissive					
Informative					
Confidential					

Appendix 6

Co-ordinator Tracking

I will track each co-ordinator for one day to provide information which will serve to back up diary information. I hope to gain an idea about the commitment involved in being a co-ordinator through:-

- 1) Keeping a timed record of **all** the co-ordinators interactions and tasks during the day.
- 2) Making a note of all the co-ordinators conversations / interruptions during the day and the content of them.
- 3) Note co-ordinators perceptions of these interactions and explanations of why they happened.
- 4) Note the co-ordinators thoughts on their role and its perceived position in school.
- 5) Note how and whether the co-ordinator uses schemes of work to inform the delivery of their lessons.
- 6) Note my own perceptions of the day.
- 7) Use the time to get to know the co-ordinator.

Appendix 6

The purpose of this observation period is to supplement earlier observations (giving a more evenly balanced picture of the co-ordinators day over the period of the year). It will enable the establishment of some early indicators of how co-ordinators interact with other members of staff. This will inform work for next term.

The tasks are:-

- 1) To observe the co-ordinators lessons, looking at their approach and pupils responses plus noting all interruptions as was the case on the last set of observations.
- 2) To observe one lesson in the co-ordinators subject, taught by another teacher. Note will be taken of the content, approach and pupil response in addition to a quick conversation with the teacher to establish :_
 - a) How the lesson related to the scheme
 - b) What input the co-ordinator had (if any) into the lesson observed
 - c) What input the co-ordinator has in general terms (if any)

I will then track the lesson back to the scheme of work.

- 3) Using a tick box format I will observe conversations the co-ordinator has indicating the broad approach used by the co-ordinator and the type of conversation held. The categories used will be:-

approach

Friendly
Managerial/Professional
Offhand/Dismissive
Informative
Confidential

type of conversation

Classroom activities
Subject related
Discipline / pupil incidents
Timetable related
Personal

- these broad categories have been arrived at by looking at the results of the observations made last term. However they are inevitably selective in order to make a manageable set of criteria to observe and will only serve as indicators for further investigation through interview next term.

Each box will be initialled to show who the co-ordinator was talking too:- H indicates Headteacher, D indicates Deputy Head, C (1,2,3 etc) indicates teaching colleagues, A indicates ancillary/classroom assistant, P indicates parent.

Observation Schedule - term two

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE - TERM THREE

Appendix 6

The purpose of this final observation period is to compliment earlier observations made of the co-ordinators day. Additional observations will be made of a colleagues lesson in each co-ordinators subject. This information will help to give an insight into the co-ordinators daily activities, how this might change over the period of a school year, similarities and dissimilarities between the approaches of different schools and different co-ordinators along with some indications about how the co-ordinator approaches colleagues and affects their subject in other classrooms.

The tasks are:-

- 1) To make detailed observations of the co-ordinators lessons, looking at their approach and pupils responses plus noting all interruptions.
- 2) To observe one lesson in the co-ordinators subject, taught by another teacher. Note will be taken of the content, approach and pupil response in addition to a discussion with the teacher to establish :_
 - a) How the lesson related to the scheme
 - b) What input the co-ordinator had (if any) into the lesson observed
 - c) What input the co-ordinator has in general terms (if any)

Lessons will later be tracked back to the scheme of work.

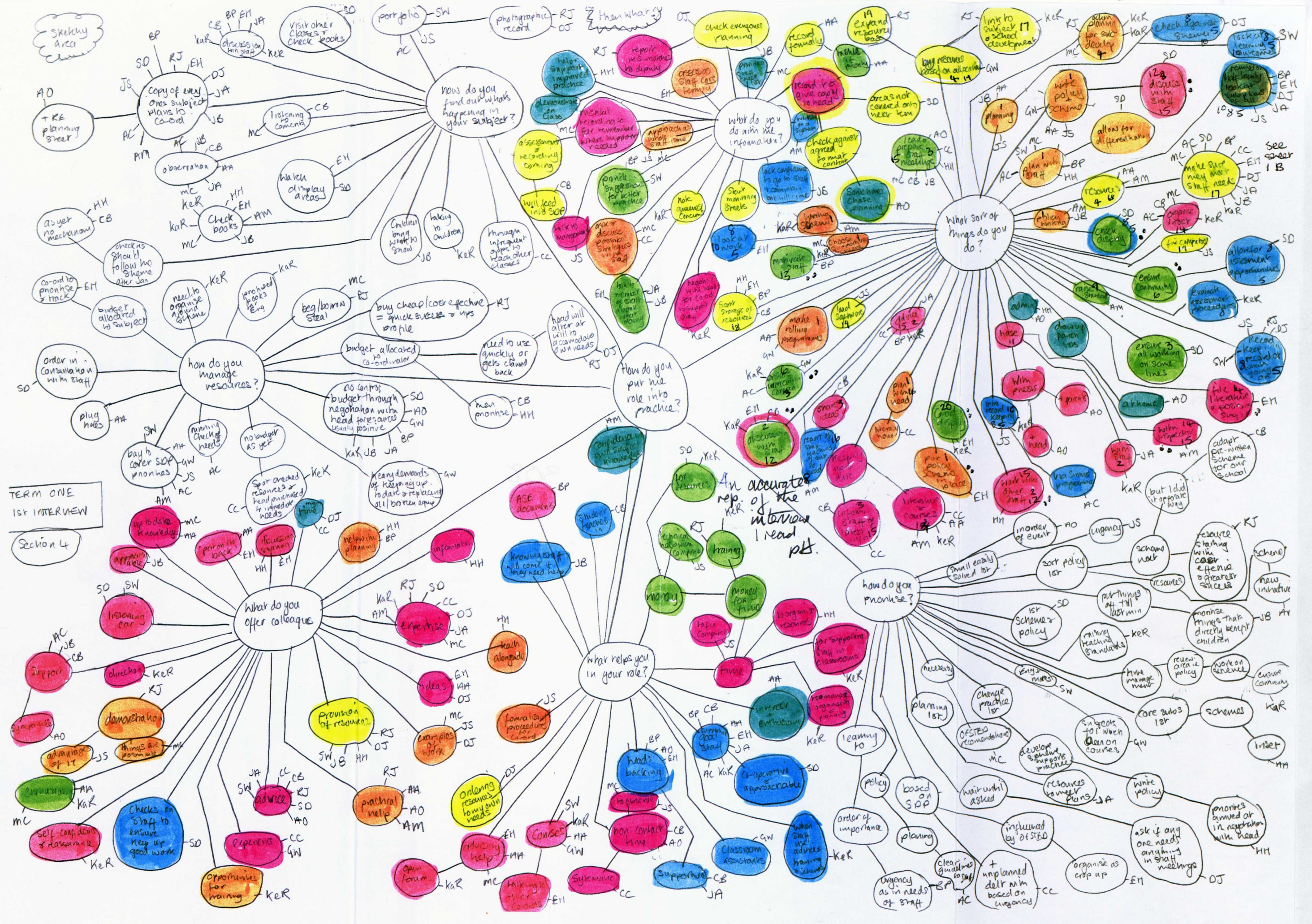
- 3) Using a prepared schedule I will observe conversations the co-ordinator has indicating the broad approach used by the co-ordinator and the type of conversation held, using the same categories as term two. approach

Appendix 7

- 1.20 Head comes in - talks to chair of govt takes pupil out to ~~go~~ organise new book.
- 1.21 Juniors sent back - pupils put books & folders away
- 1.23 Rest of class returns. Sit on carpet work out who has house points
- 1.26 2 Pupils to ask to borrow Elmer books (from am junior govt ^{colour marker in milk bottles})
- 1.28 Sorting who is going to compose music with Gov. Rest are going out to stretch school. Talk through what wanted - get jumpers on - books to lean on - pencil - paper. Sit when ready.
- 1.32 Another teacher informs Htl her class passing by along corridor - apologises for any intemtion. Talks about drawing filling page. Line up.
- 1.35 Go outside - walk and look for views
- 1.40 Find view of school to draw from within grounds - start Htl also drawing.
- 1.41 2 pupils return & 2 others go for music
- 1.50 Go in to finish off
- 1.55 back in class - details & finishing for 5 mins
- 2.00 Books away - handwashing places Htl overseeing
- 2.01 Board eg of handwashing "who" ~~ready~~ joined up
- 2.06 checking pupils
- 2.10 next word on board "two"
- 2.12 checking pupils
- 2.14 Start packing up.
- 2.15 Let pupils go by tables for play. Some pupils stay to ask about letter formation - Others have found a spider.
- 2.17 Pupils gone - sorting out books for pupil
- 2.21 Photocopying work for me + extras for new staff (in staffroom)
- 2.33 Back to class - Head came in to talk about Eng lesson his am with Htl & Carl (class ^{NOT} teacher) + what she did with Htl's class
- 2.36 Pupils come in in silence & sit on carpet. Head asks pupil about leg - takes him outside to talk about it. Drong Organ

PE.

- 8:40 I arrived - smokers corner - staff discussing role of Co-ord & new behaviour policy (v. hard work it requires)
- 8:50 Another teacher requests CB's whose + asks when coming to observe her^{PE} lesson. Can't today as reporting / observing on student - next week will do
- 8:55 Parent talking about something happening in + note from pupil about injured arm - + student arrives. CB teaches 1st lesson (Maths) only - observing one + overseeing singing for christmas another. + 10 mins ^{PE} planning meeting
- 8:56 Pupils arrive. CB speaks to caretaker + pupils
- 9:01 Caretaker comes to collect lottery money. Register (quiet)
- 9:02 Pupil to return register talk through what doing after assembly. Talk about parts which will be auctioned next week (in Annemas story).
- 9:05 Ready for assembly - allowed out in tables
- 9:06 Speaking to another mens staff while getting pupils in hall.
- 9:07 Back into class - check student OK for lessons today - discuss pupil CB advises. **Sov schemes - writing policy.**
- 9:15 Goes to staff kate at request of teacher - covering beauty swimming in order to get through all out of extra 20% curricular time **Athletics 1/2 term in summer term**
Out door adventure - some (CB initiatives) Each year
folder what need to do. - Cross curic possibility heavy side
CB labelling individual year group folders
- 9:30 Pupils back from assembly CB handing out Maths books
- 9:32 Called for their attention. Intro to mental maths product, average, double, triple, quadruple recap on previous lesson. (quiet)
- 9:35 Another teacher comes in for equipment.
- 9:40 Try 1st example ^(product), close books when finished - check answers & process as group.
- 9:41 Try 2nd example.

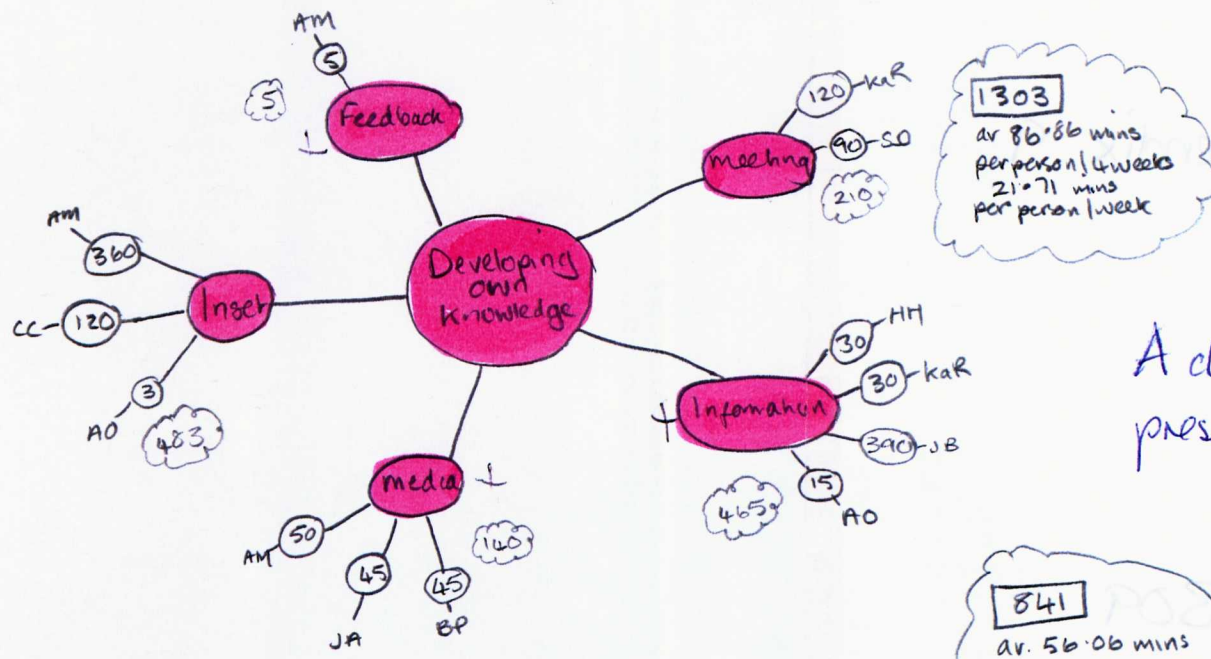
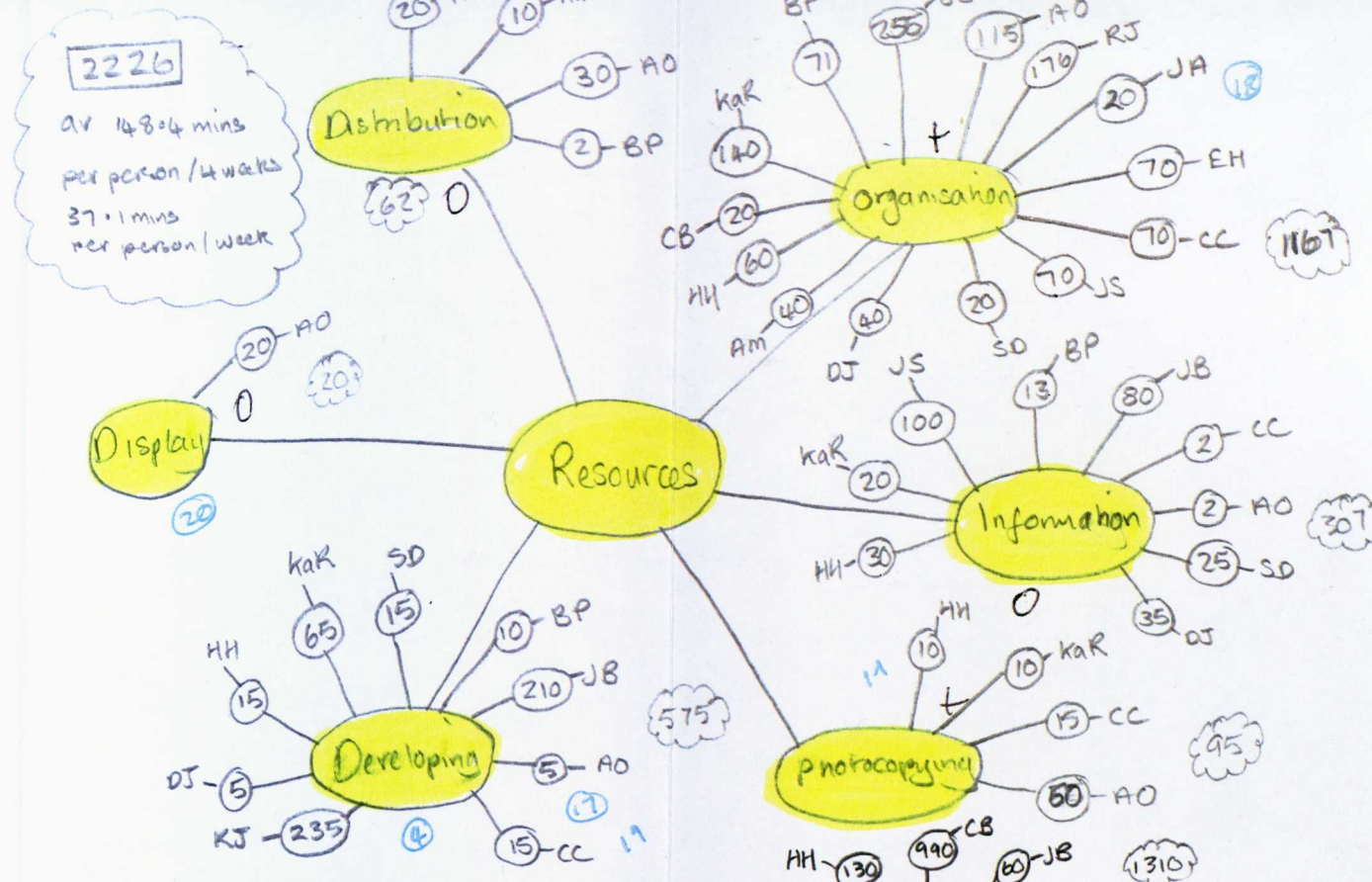
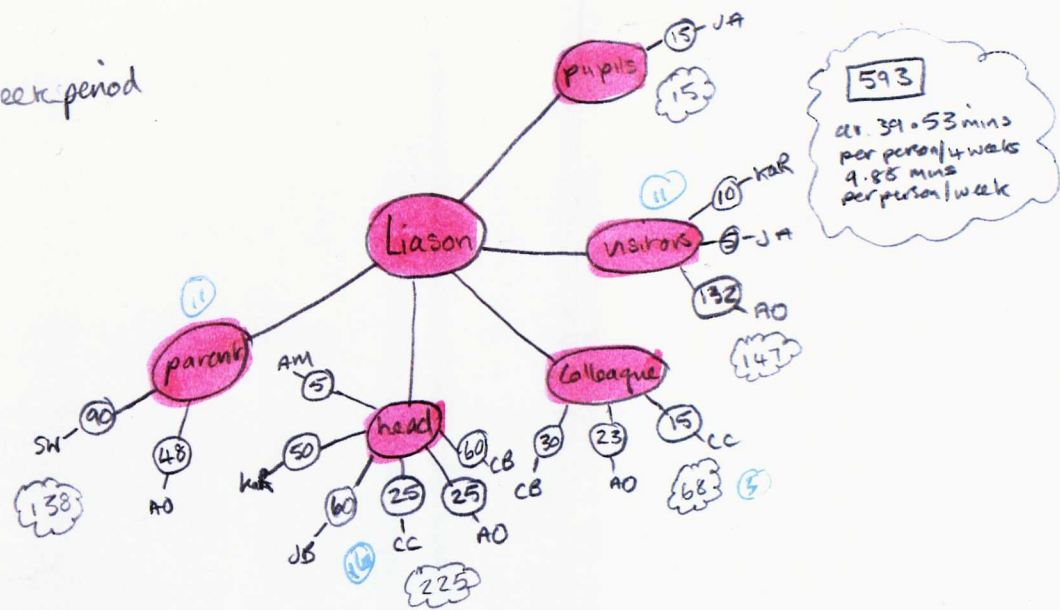


TERM ONE 1st INTERVIEW

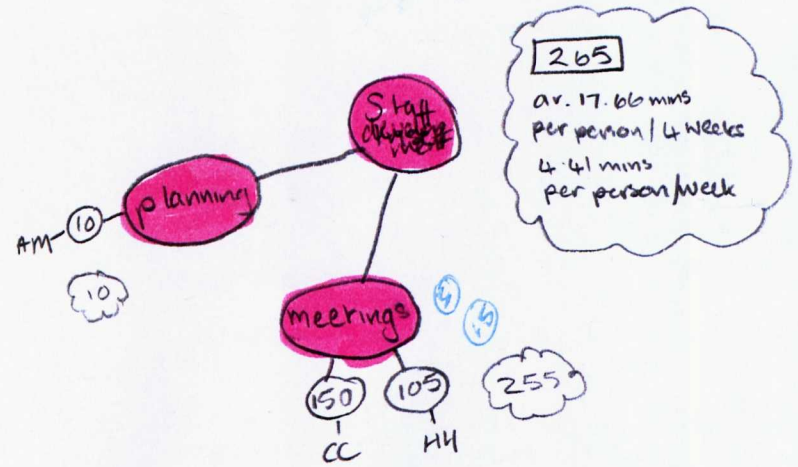
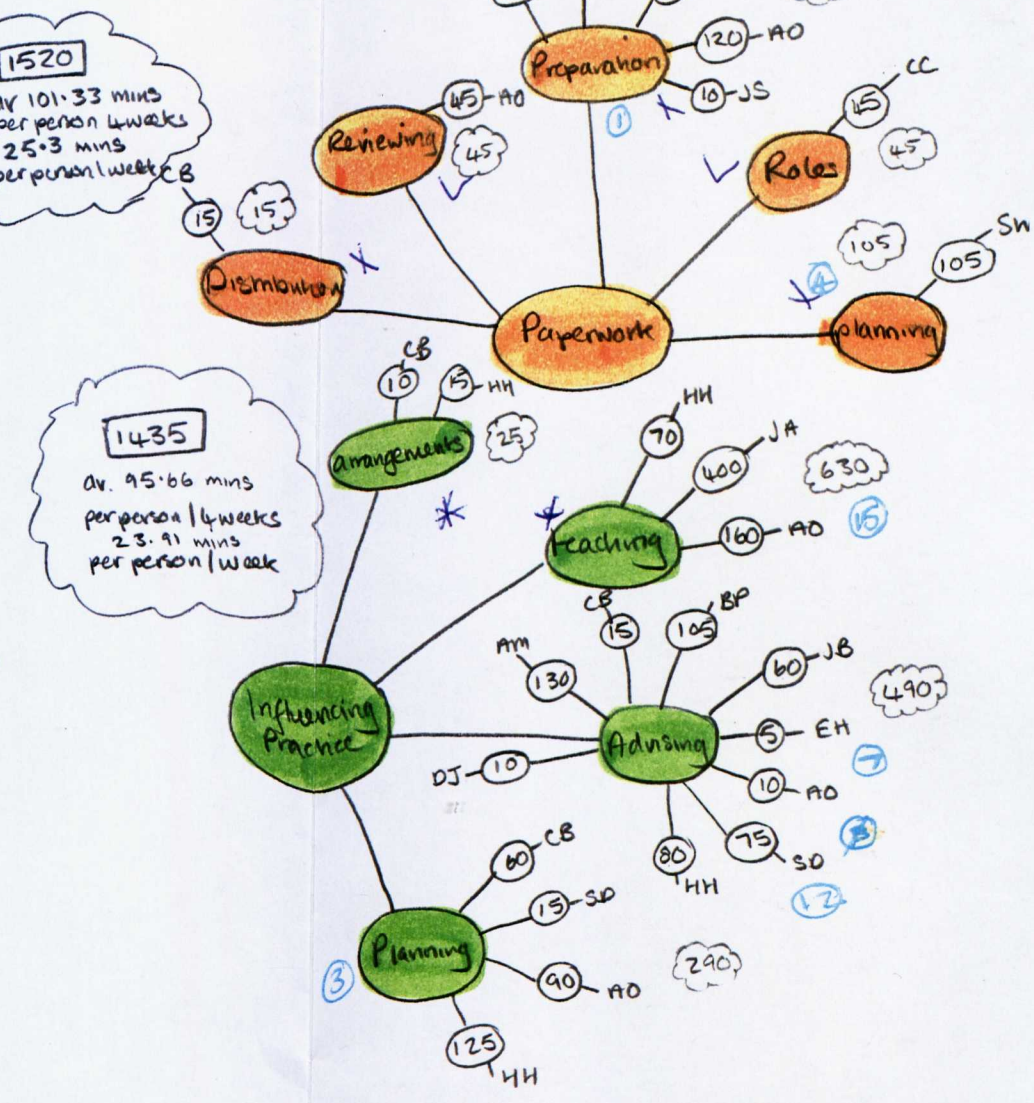
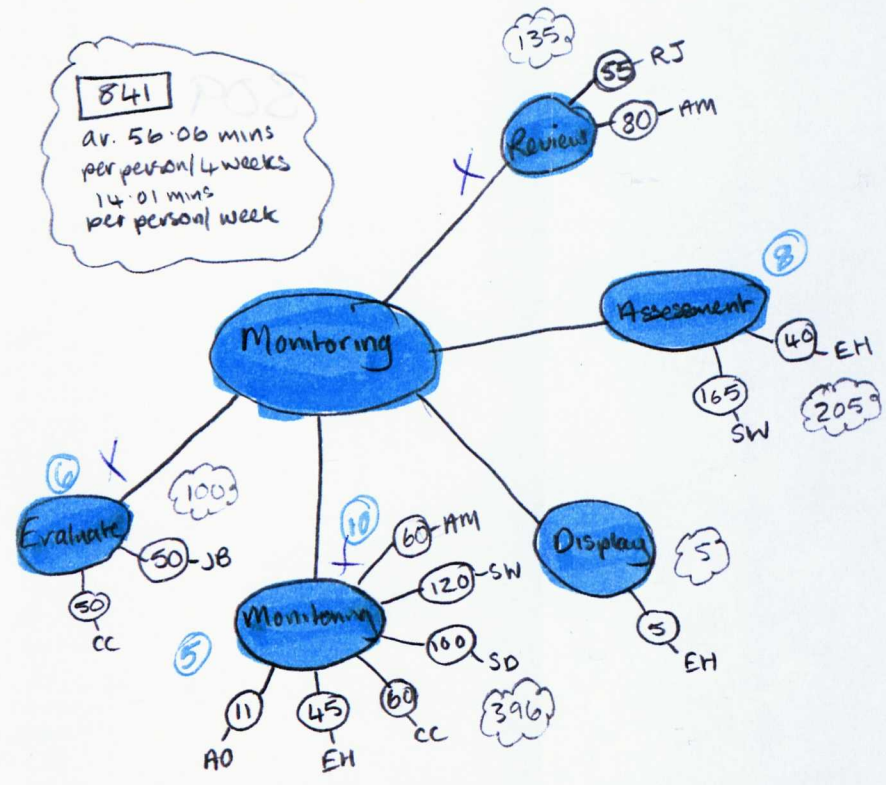
Section 4

4th accurate rep. of the interview I read pt.

TERM ONE
 15 classes
 covering 4 week period
 $\div 15 \div 4$



A clear way to present information.



Appendix 10

Int: HMa(2)

- Q. Um, moving on to structures, and school management type things, um, can you describe how you fit in to the management structure of this school?
- A. Well, it's changed over the years. I mean after Ofsted, I mean, you've got different kinds of Head, haven't you? You've got Heads who like to delegate and you've got Heads who like to do everything on their own interests in. Personally, I would like to work for a Head who delegates because then you learn as well, and I think (*head*) has changed the management style. I mean, in the beginning she...she felt that your area is the classroom and you work in the classroom, and she...she was, um...she'd rather run the rest I mean, I'm going to be frank actually, she'd rather do the rest of it herself. I mean, I think she didn't trust anyone to do it to the standard that she would like us to do, but you didn't learn anything, you just stayed in your classroom. But now she's changed a bit and we have got a management team and we meet every Thursday and she shares, you know, the issues she's got to deal with and she brings us in and asks for our views. I think that's very helpful, it gives you a picture of, eh...and you're growing as well, you're learning and discovering, and she shows us the documents that she gets, and really if she doesn't let us see it we'll never see it, you know, eh, and then she'll ask us, one of us maybe, you know, to look through it, 'What do you think, is there anything we could sort of pick up and do it in our school?' sort of thing.
- Q. On what basis do you become part of the management team?
- A. If, eh...right now, as it stands, if you've got a B allowance then you're part of the management team.
- Q. Right. And what would B allowance be given for?
- A. Things like staff development, curriculum development, um, deputy...the deputy headship is part of the senior management team anyway. Um, I'm trying to think, um, Special Needs Co-ordinator, that sort of thing is a B allowance. It depends on the school. In a school like ours they give the allowance, and when you find...some authorities hand out allowances for curriculum co-ordinators for subject areas, maths and English. I think in Liverpool they don't. Um, I mean, right now, I mean I've got the maths, (*name*) got English and (*name*) got science, so we've all got the four subject areas involved. I mean, (*head*) feels quite comfortable with that because she thinks we're forced to do more than in the other subject areas.
- Q. Um, so basically you're saying that you're beginning to feel that you've got more power now than you did have perhaps is that right?
- A. Yeah. When we were two separate schools, I mean the Junior School, as soon as I got my B Allowance I felt that you know, my views were being listened to and I was being sort of yeah you know, (*head*) would sort of involve me in a lot of things as soon as I got the B Allowance, but when we amalgamated and June took early retirement and Judith came in and her style of management is different again and, you know, she sort of, she would rather run the ship, but now she's changed now, and, eh, we're working in teams more. But again I feel that...sometimes I feel that it was like an exclusive kind of thing like all the management meeting an issue, maybe work in teams with the rest of the staff, people to be drawn in more, but then I think it's part of career development to be involved and sort of tackle these issues.
- Q. Yes. OK. So you'd like to see a slightly more communal approach where everybody's involved?
- A. Mm. I would. Yeah. It's not like...I hate it when, eh...some people feel they have power when they've got more information than you have, or what anybody else has and the management structure is such that there is that element, you know, 'I know more than you.' I mean, we meet () management (*head*) does tend to think that the rest of the staff aren't told, that does happen. I mean, I don't feel totally comfortable with that.

Appendix 10

Int: AEng(3)

- Q. Could you explain the sort of demands that are made of you by your colleagues?
- A. Eh, ranges from obviously, um, collecting resources together, which is a big thing at the moment.
- Q. Yes.
- A. Um, staff, obviously, ask you know what I'm doing they might want, eh, a particular book that goes with a topic - 'I'm doing a topic on rivers,' or whatever, 'is there anything to go with that?' So I advise on suitable material, um, whether it be a written book, text book, fiction book, whether it be activities linked with, um, another topic. We still try and teach in a topic-based approach, even through, um, English and language do a lot through...through books. Um, so it's advice and resources mainly in what to use and what's appropriate to use. Eh, the reading's not so much a problem because, that's, you know it's, all ticking away quite nicely - we seem to have a good system whereby we've got the Reading Scheme and then it's supplemented with everything else, and that seems to work very well. So really people don't worry me too much about actual reading unless they've got...you see, again, the Special Needs crosses over with that, where the reading might come in if somebody has got something with a child that's struggling, whether it's reading or written work, eh, they'll speak to me which, it's, you know...you'll think, is it English or is it Special Needs - it's combined, the two go hand-in-hand, don't they? So that would occur as well.
- Q. Right. Do...do you feel the demands are reasonable? You know, is it what you'd expect?
- A. Yes, yeah, don't think it's, eh, that bad. The staff, you know, the staff are pretty good, that's OK. It's just all the paperwork, it creates more other work.
- Q. What sort of approach do you take with colleagues when you want them to listen to you?
- A. Um, usually it's done...I mean, it depends whether it's individually or, eh, whether it's at a staff meeting, in a staff meeting, obviously, everybody is OK. Um, don't really have any difficulties, the majority of staff are open to advice and listening to you know the new things that we've got, so [interruption], um, where was I, yeah, I mean, at a staff meeting that's not a problem because obviously you're...if I'm leading a staff meeting it's focused very much on to me. Occasionally, you need to bring people back onto task on what we're actually talking about instead of getting side-tracked onto other things, so I do that because we limit our staff meetings. We have them at lunch-time, which is really good, so that it's got to be finished for 1.00 o'clock, so we don't have time to digress. Um, you know, it's a case of, 'Look, I've got twenty minutes to get through this so,' you know...so it's very much a case of if people do start to digress, it's just, 'Can we get on because I need to get through this.' And that's in a staff meeting situation. If it's, um, an individual, more often than not they've requested the information from me so they are obviously going to listen, which isn't...
- Q. So it's mostly at their request.
- A. It's mostly at their request. It's not very often I would go to another member of staff and suggest something unless they came and asked. Um, one or two um members of staff who I've wanted information from them, eh, it's not really getting them to listen but it's getting them to respond to what I've asked them to do - I suppose it's the same I think - um, and perhaps because they didn't feel the necessity of doing it, eh, I've had to ask several times but got there in the end, you know, sort of eventually it's just, 'Look, I really do need this information by...' I was given a deadline.

Appendix 11

Liverpool Hope University College

Observation Schedule - term three

	Classroom Activities	Subject Related	Discipline Pupil Incidents	Timetable Related	Personal
Friendly	P				C ₂ C ₂
Managerial Professional	H C ₁ C ₁	M C ₁ H A C ₁ C ₂ C ₃	C ₁ C ₂ C ₃ C ₄ C ₅ H C ₆ S ₁ S ₂ C _{ols}		
Offhand Dismissive					
Informative					
Confidential					

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