

JAPANESE LESSON STUDY

EXPLORING JAPANESE LESSON STUDY AS A MODEL OF
PEER-TO-PEER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

EFFECTIVE MENTORING WITHIN
PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER EDUCATION

DOMESTIC ABUSE

DOMESTIC ABUSE - USING ARTS-BASED EDUCATION TO
HELP STUDENT TEACHERS LEARN ABOUT THE CONTEXT
AND IMPACT ON CHILDREN



Three reports for the **Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS)**

SCoTENS
THE STANDING CONFERENCE
ON TEACHER EDUCATION,
NORTH AND SOUTH

August 2012



Exploring Japanese Lesson Study as a Model of Peer-to-Peer Professional Learning

Effective Mentoring in Physical Education Teacher Education

Domestic Abuse: Using Arts-based Education to help Student Teachers learn about the Context and Impact on Children

Three reports for the Standing Conference on Teacher Education
North and South (SCoTENS)

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Exploring Japanese Lesson Study as a Model of Peer-to-Peer Professional Learning

John Gardner, Debie Galanouli, Gerry Devlin, Mary Magee, Kathryn McSweeney, Mary McHenry, Ita McVeigh and Stephanie Mitchell

Background

In 2009, a major Northern Ireland government policy document, *Every School a Good School: A Policy for School Improvement* (DE, 2009, p 25) placed 'self-evaluation leading to sustained self-improvement ... at the core of the new policy'. It recognized that self-evaluation among departmental or key stage groups of teachers, and among individuals, was an important dimension of the overall whole school improvement strategy. In that same year, the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI), in conjunction with the Regional Training Unit (RTU) and the School of Education at Queen's University Belfast, sponsored a report by Debie Galanouli¹ highlighting the benefits of Japanese Lesson Study² as a model of peer-to-peer professional learning. This report stated that Lesson Study 'is a relatively new approach to professional learning [in the UK and Ireland] and focuses on collaboration among teachers and the creation of learning communities of practice' (p 18).

According to Fernandez (2002), Lesson Study, known as *Jugyokenkyu*³ in Japanese, has arguably been a feature of Japanese education since the beginning of the last century. Stigler and Hiebert (1999) tell us that, as soon as they embark on their career, new teachers in Japan engage in school-based professional development groups as part of their job. Watanabe (2002) in turn explains that these groups may be within the same school, between schools or may even operate at a local city or national level. Often the groups organize special events. For example, schools might hold open days, enabling lessons on specific areas to be observed and discussed by a wide range of visiting teachers. As a culturally embedded process, the essence of Lesson Study may be best considered as a rounded and long-term approach to teachers' professional development, and not simply the study of a lesson or lessons. The improvement of classroom pedagogy is its central pursuit and in contrast to mentor-mentee and coaching contexts, the core of the Lesson Study process is its peer-to-peer approach. Its key features are self and collective reflection, experimenting with teaching techniques and sharing experience.

The efficacy of Lesson Study in promoting professional development and professional learning has been claimed by a number of researchers⁴, most notably by Stigler and Hiebert (1999) in the United States, who attributed the 1999 TIMSS success in mathematics in Japanese schools to its regular use, over some 100 years, by Japanese teachers. Other researchers such as Fernandez and Yoshida (2004) and Cerbin and Kopp (2006) have

¹ Later published as 'School-Based Professional Development' (Galanouli, 2010) - available on the GTCNI ARRTS research repository, <http://arrts.gtcni.org.uk>

² The original draft of this paper used the term *Research Lesson Study* but this name has now given way in the literature to the simpler form *Lesson Study*, or sometimes *Japanese Lesson Study*. This more up-to-date nomenclature has been adopted for this final version of the paper.

³ A useful glossary of Lesson Study-related terms may be found on the US-based Research for Better Schools website: <http://www.rbs.org/Special-Topics/Lesson-Study/Glossary-of-Lesson-Study-Terms/212/>

⁴ See for example the resources on the US Lesson Study Research Group website: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/lessonstudy/articles_papers.html



extended the research base, primarily in the area of mathematics education in the United States, with strong endorsements of the potential of Lesson Study to effect improvements in pedagogy and, as a consequence, student learning and outcomes. On foot of such research, Lewis and her colleagues in the USA (2006) described how, within just a few years, more than 330 schools were using Lesson Study across 32 states and it had become the focus of many conferences, reports and articles.

Collaborative approaches to professional development have been used and reviewed in the UK for many years (see for example the systematic reviews on the EPPI-Centre website⁵) and the evidence points to considerable potential for school improvement initiatives. In relation to Lesson Study specifically, several researchers have examined its use in mathematics teaching in schools including Burghes and Robinson (2009) and Tall (2008). However, it was arguably the work of Pete Dudley (2005, 2008a, b) that initiated the broadening of the focus across the whole school curriculum and across the primary and secondary school sectors.

It was this much broader base, for example including science, literacy and behaviour, which underpinned a 2010-2011 GTCNI pilot study involving eight schools in Northern Ireland. The success of this project was evident in feedback from the schools and led to the Council and RTU subsequently agreeing to widen the scope of the innovation so that in late 2011 an additional 30 schools took up the initiative. An addendum to this current paper⁶ examines some aspects of these new schools' perceptions of Lesson Study in advance of their engagement with the new phase of the work.

It was also in the context of the success of the initial GTCNI pilot study that it was decided to explore Lesson Study in a cross-border project funded by the Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS). Two secondary level schools joined the project: one in Cavan (Loreto College) and one in Belfast (St Louise's Comprehensive College). The work of this project is the primary focus of this paper and was a joint venture between colleagues in the School of Education at Queen's University Belfast and in the Department of Home Economics in St Angela's College, Sligo. The project adapted the GTCNI's guidelines and supporting resources (Galanouli 2010, Dudley 2008 a, b) to initiate the developments in the two schools.

Aim and research questions

This small-scale study aimed to examine this relatively new approach to professional learning in two secondary level schools, one in the Republic of Ireland and the other in Northern Ireland.

The key research questions were:

1. Can Lesson Study offer an effective school-based and peer-to-peer approach to staff development in schools?
2. What factors facilitate or hinder the improvement of pedagogy and ultimately learning through Lesson Study?

⁵ EPPI-Centre, Institute of Education, London <http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Default.aspx?tabid=274#intro>

⁶ Undertaken as a baseline study by Stephanie Mitchell on behalf of the School of Education at Queen's and the GTCNI.

Methods

Data collection

The full working phase for this project (data collection) was undertaken from the autumn of 2010 through to September 2011. The schools were approached early in the process and the consent of the principals was sought and received. The Belfast school had the advantage of having been involved in the earlier GCNI pilot and having the research team nearby at Queen's. In contrast, this was a new experience for the Cavan school and it took time to embed the concepts and principles of the approach.

The project proceeded through planning visits by both teams to each other's locations in Sligo and Belfast and visits to the participating schools in Cavan and Belfast. Team members also met throughout the project at events such as the Lesson Study conference organised by the GTCNI on 4th March 2011 in Bangor, Northern Ireland. This conference allowed the teachers a direct opportunity to work with Pete Dudley on each school's goals and aspirations. These events included meetings between the teachers from both schools to facilitate the professional development aspects relating to participation in the project and the sharing of experiences.

Data analysis and reporting

Data analysis was an on-going process from the beginning of data collection. The two schools had their own mechanisms for data collection throughout their work with Lesson Study (for example jointly planned lessons, group and self-reflections, and focus group sessions with students) and this was complemented by one-to-one and focus group interviews between the research team and the teachers in each school.

Data collection themes

At the beginning of the project, background details were established for both groups of teachers and the principal (or senior nominee) in each school to identify a baseline for approaches to professional development. The central questions for teachers in this baseline included:

- What sort of professional development have you participated in over the last 2 years?
- What do you feel you need in terms of professional learning support?
- Do you share teaching sessions at the moment?
- Have you involved students in any aspects of your work up until now? Are you thinking of doing this?

Each school identified their own project coordinator and Lesson Study team(s) and the theme(s) they chose to work on. The project was explained in detail to both groups of teachers and their consent was sought and received. The consent of their students was also established on the basis that they would also become participants, albeit indirectly.

Themes for the Lesson Study project

In both cases, the schools were well known for their successful teaching and student outcomes and the chosen themes reflected areas related to specific areas of interest of the school or the teachers concerned. School 1 (Belfast) had two teams of three teachers involved in Lesson Study work on the themes: Assessment for Learning (AfL) and Literacy Development (LD) respectively. The teams work 'vertically' with students from different year



groups (range: Year 8 - 11); and across the subjects: drama, history and sociology for the AfL team and science, English and geography for the Literacy Development team. School 2 (Cavan) chose the teaching of aspects of microbiology as the home economics teaching theme for their group of three teachers with classes in the same 6th year student group.

Plan of action

School 1 was one of the schools that had started earlier in the original GTCNI pilot study. They took a focused approach to the study from the outset by establishing:

- a clear mission for the project:

'The development of learning and teaching strategies across the a range of curricular areas linked to collaborative planning and increased participation of others in lesson observation and evaluation in order to improve pupil outcomes and experience with the overarching aim of improving classroom practice.'

- ground rules for the team, based on:
 - trust
 - confidentiality
 - professionalism
 - respect
 - listening
 - taking risks
 - accountability
 - openness to improvement
 - constructive criticism
 - positive reinforcement
- a lesson template comprising:
 - learning intentions
 - connection and activation
 - demonstration and consolidation

They also developed comprehensive data collection instruments based on:

- Questions for focus groups with students, including the identified 'case pupils' whose participation was specifically observed by the observing teachers
- A post-lesson discussion record template

School 2 became fully engaged in the project later than School 1 as logistical arrangements needed to be put in place, for example time to plan together and observe each other teaching. They too worked collaboratively and came up with an approach to lessons on microbiology, which were taught in turn by all the teachers in the group. They also consulted with the students and sought their views on the success of the lesson.

Data were collected at appropriate points in the project from:

- Planning meetings (notes from the Lesson Study teams)
- Observations (notes from the Lesson Study teams)
- Student evaluations (notes from the Lesson Study teams in School 1)
- Video capture of taught lessons (DVDs from School 1)
- Focus group and one-to-one interviews with the teachers in both schools



Data analysis and interpretation were based on thematic areas of the study. These themes were generated both from the early analysis and from experience in the earlier GTCNI pilot study.

Findings

This project focused on the Lesson Study method as an approach to staff development in schools and the data collected by the teachers have confirmed the method's effectiveness in generating collaborative attention and collegial engagement on improving aspects of classroom practice. The findings below are illustrated by comments⁷ from teachers in both schools, with acknowledgement that most of the detailed feedback came from School 1 as they had been engaged for much longer in the process of data collection and analysis. The teachers' feedback provided substantial information on the way Lesson Study can be employed in the classroom by a group of teachers and also on ways the students can be involved in the process. The themes of the findings are set out as follows:

- Teachers' views of the project
- Lesson Study effectiveness in peer-to-peer professional development
- Comparing Lesson Study to other methods of teacher professional development
- Impact on student learning
- Impact on classroom practice
- Observing and being observed
- Involving students in lesson evaluation
- Lesson Study effectiveness in promoting self-evaluation of learning and teaching
- Developing as a team
- Factors facilitating or hindering the Lesson Study process

Teachers' views of the project

All of the teachers agreed that the project was a worthwhile and rewarding experience. Sharing good practice and the collaborative nature of Lesson Study were crucial for its effectiveness as a professional development method. According to the teachers' feedback:

We were all able to take ownership of the topic and enjoy using a different learning methodology to be involved in and enhance our own learning. School 2, Teacher 1

The idea of working with others to plan and design lessons is a very beneficial way to share good practice and to broaden your own teaching experience.
School 1, AfL Teacher 1

As a teacher we continually evaluate our teaching methods. However, this project is ensuring that we have the time to analyse our techniques at a much deeper and more meaningful level. School 1, LD Teacher 2

This is an excellent opportunity to contribute to and observe another teacher's practice. It has created a culture of meaningful reflection and discussion about how children learn between subjects that would normally not observe each other's lessons.
School 1, LD Teacher 3

⁷ The comments are presented verbatim from interviews or have been transferred from written feedback. Minor typographical and grammatical corrections have been made where these were felt appropriate to the sense of the comment.

Lesson Study effectiveness for peer-to-peer professional development

All of the teachers praised the Lesson Study approach as an effective model for professional development for both experienced and newly qualified teachers. Not only did they find the collaborative nature of Lesson Study beneficial, they also reported that involving students in the project gave them valuable insights in their own practice from the students' perspective.

We found this very effective as we soon realised that we should be doing this all along! We are all teaching the same subject matter based on a common scheme and while we would check in with what the other teachers were doing, we were not focusing on their methodologies. It gives an opportunity to share expertise and resources and to bounce ideas off one another. It is more valuable than subject workshops as it's based at ground level. School 2, Teacher 1

As a result of this project I have gained an invaluable insight into my colleagues' teaching methods and ideas and I have been able to implement these in my own teaching. I have been inspired by certain strategies that my colleagues employ in their classrooms so this has allowed me the opportunity to learn from fellow professionals and continue to develop and grow. In addition and perhaps most importantly it has highlighted the thoughts and opinions that my pupils have regarding my teaching methods. Through focusing on the pupil voice it has ensured that my evaluation of my teaching is much more worthwhile. School 1, LD Teacher 2

[Planning of the lesson] ... involved a class discussion on what strategies and methodologies they would find helpful for learning microbiology. They made some excellent suggestions and their input was very valuable. School 2, Teacher 3

This is the most effective model of staff development I have been involved with. The planning, observation and debrief have been insightful and worthwhile and the impact on all concerned has been tangible. School 1, AfL Teacher 1

Comparing Lesson Study to other methods of teacher professional development

When the teachers were asked to compare Lesson Study to other forms of teacher professional development, they recorded their preference for the Lesson Study model. They explained that its flexible and ongoing nature was better than other models of professional development, which tend to have a much prescribed and limited impact. Student focus was another positive element of Lesson Study that distinguished it from other forms of professional development for the teachers concerned.

Lesson Study⁸ has been an excellent experience for me. It has been different to other forms of professional development as it is ongoing. Sometimes I have found that previous development is not given time to 'bed in' and as a result the training is not used or has less impact on my day to day teaching. Since it is ongoing and I have an input into how it progresses I feel there is a sense of fluidity about it, e.g. it is not confined to meeting times – it can take place while chatting on the corridor. School 1, LD Teacher 3

⁸ The 'RLS' nomenclature originally used in the respondents' quotations has been replaced by Lesson Study to be consistent with the rest of the paper.



We had good fun while planning the lessons and it reignited our enthusiasm for that particular topic. ... You can really focus on your own subject and as each person is an expert on their own subject two heads are better than one when planning the classes. Recently our professional development has been in the form of passive learning where we have attended talks from the Home Economics Teachers Association (ATHE). In Home Economics the professional development aspect has been focusing on sharing resources lately which is very beneficial and much appreciated; the Lesson Study means that we are taking it one step further! School 2, Teacher 1

*Lesson Study is very focused on pupil experience which sets it apart.
School 1, AfL Teacher 1*

The process of Lesson Study encourages constant self-reflection, not only when planning lessons but in the production of resources etc. School 1, AfL Teacher 2

Impact on student learning

There was no formal attempt in the project to try to assess impact on student outcomes through examinations, tests etc., but the reflective comments of the teachers revealed their professional opinions that learning had been improved by the pedagogical tactics that they planned and tried out.

From observing the students they were able to identify their strengths and weaknesses and outline areas that they needed further work on. School 2, Teacher 1

I feel that pupil outcomes have improved in the vast majority of those who were involved in this process. School 1, AfL Teacher 2

There is more focus on how the students are learning and in simplifying the material being presented to make it more relevant to everyday life. School 2, Teacher 1

*One of the main observations of the class was how well the very academic and less academic students worked together. The weaker students did not feel over-challenged and were able to keep up with the pace of the class and its activities.
School 2, Teacher 3*

Impact on classroom practice

Many aspects of Lesson Study were reported to have impacted on classroom practice. Some of those mentioned include adopting strategies and teaching methods observed during Lesson Study lessons; the teachers receiving student feedback on their teaching methods, and being afforded the time and opportunity for deeper reflection about classroom practice.

I have been inspired by certain strategies that my colleagues employ in their classrooms so this has allowed me the opportunity to learn from fellow professionals and continue to develop and grow. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, it has highlighted the thoughts and opinions that my pupils have regarding my teaching methods. Through focusing on the pupil voice it has ensured that my evaluation of my teaching is much more worthwhile. ... lesson observation is allowing us to focus more meaningfully on the engagement and learning of our pupils. It continually highlights the utmost



importance of differentiation and the necessity of implementing a range of teaching activities within our lessons. School 1, LD Teacher 2

I gained a great deal from thinking deeply about my classroom practice and from observing another member of their team and their practice. School 1, AfL Teacher 1

During the course of the Lesson Study project I have noticed improvements in a number of areas. I have included many new AfL strategies in my planning and I feel this has had a positive impact on all the students I teach. I have had the opportunity to go into other teachers' classrooms and pick up new ideas and strategies. I feel this has made my teaching more varied and dynamic. I have developed excellent relationships with teachers who are not from within my subject area. I feel this has been hugely beneficial as I would not have had the opportunity to learn from their expertise without Lesson Study. School 1, AfL Teacher 2

Observing and being observed

One aspect of Lesson Study which had the potential to cause difficulty was the core process of the teachers being observed by their colleagues while delivering the jointly constructed lessons. However, all of the teachers confirmed that being observed or observing was very valuable and that they enjoyed it despite at times being apprehensive about it. It was emphasized from early in the process that it was not the teacher who was being observed but the learning and teaching process and its impact on the students. Other teachers pointed out that although they were concerned that the presence of more adults in the classroom could have a negative impact on the students, in the end the students benefited as they became more aware of their own contribution to the classroom.

Being observed

Initially I was somewhat anxious about my colleagues coming in to 'analyse' my teaching. However this is not the case. My colleagues are there not to focus on me but to analyse the learning and development of my pupils and through close liaison with them I am able to enhance my own teaching methodologies. School 1, LD Teacher 2

Initially we thought it would be like being back on teaching practice by being observed, but as we got more into it we soon realised that we all were accepting ownership of the lessons as we had planned them together and as a result we didn't feel nervous or inadequate. School 2, Teacher 1

In terms of being observed, I was anxious in the beginning. However I was a little more confident when I realised we planned the lessons collaboratively and therefore felt that I was more of a facilitator of our lesson as a group. I am an EPD teacher though and am therefore used to being observed. School 1, AfL Teacher 3

Initially I was apprehensive about being observed. However as the Lesson Study process developed I felt more secure and confident with this aspect of it. I felt the lesson itself was being observed and the impact of the lesson on the students. This made being observed just a part of the lesson planning process. I also enjoyed the experience of observing the lessons, especially as the lesson was in a different subject area. I had the opportunity to learn from another teacher's learning strategies, and then employ these



in my own teaching. Watching the pupils as an observer was very useful as we got to focus on the learning from another perspective. School 1, AfL Teacher 2

Observing

I really enjoyed [observing] and found it most enlightening. I learned a lot from the sessions particularly in relation to the engagement of the pupils and the dynamics in the room. By watching the teacher I could see what really worked and what could improve, this inevitably helps your own practice. School 1, AfL Teacher 1

As the person observing I have both enjoyed the experience and found it very worthwhile. What has been most beneficial to me has been the variety of approaches and strategies used which I believe has enhanced my practice. When observing also we have been observing the pupils' learning not the actual individual teacher. When discussing the lesson before and afterwards, we discuss the effectiveness of the strategies used and the pupil learning, not the individual teacher. School 1, AfL Teacher 3

Involving students in lesson evaluation

The data from the teachers suggests that involving students in the Lesson Study process makes it stand out as an effective method of developing teachers' professional learning and practice. Arguably this is because the involvement of the students more strongly grounds the professional development in classroom practice and is more explicitly relevant to the classroom process than conventional professional development away from the classroom. The Lesson Study method focuses on student learning as well as the teaching process and recognises students as important stakeholders. This is also apparent in the observation process, as those observing the Lesson Study classroom do not observe the lesson delivery as much as the student learning by focusing on students of different abilities.

As teachers we don't often get the opportunity to listen to the pupil's perspective on the lesson. Suggested improvements to the lesson were often excellent ideas. The pupils also enjoyed giving their opinions and it gave them ownership of their learning. School 1, AfL Teacher 2

I am totally in favour of pupils' involvement in the evaluation process reflecting on both their own learning and the teacher's teaching. So far, we have gathered some very useful information from the pupils as observed into what could be taught and done differently, consequently giving the pupils empowerment of their own learning. School 1, AfL Teacher 3

I have found this aspect most enlightening. I had never considered involving students in the planning or evaluation of my lessons, but through this study I have been able to identify the positive impact that it can have on teaching and learning. School 1, LD Teacher 1

When asked about ways to improve the students' involvement, teachers offered various views, including the use of a diary and involving them right from the planning stage. Suggestions also included introducing the students to the different stages of a lesson:

The pupils would be asked to complete a diary entry as part of their Home Learning activity associated with the lesson. This might act as an aid to helping them reflect more deeply on their participation and learning. School 1, AfL Teacher 1

We feel it would be important to set guidelines/rules before carrying out each activity to make sure everyone is involved and maximum use is made of time. School 2, Teacher 1

The pupils could become involved in the lesson planning process. If they have suggested valid points/ideas they should become integrated into lesson plans/schemes in future. School 1, AfL Teacher 2

If pupils were more aware of the stages (Connect, Activate etc) in the lesson, and they understood what they are, then they could perhaps offer more meaningful suggestions on how they would improve the lesson. This could perhaps be done during a pastoral or previous lesson. School 1, LD Teacher 3

Lesson Study effectiveness in promoting self-evaluation of learning and teaching

Self-evaluation and reflection are widely considered to be at the heart of good practice (for example see ETI, 2005; GTCNI, 2007). The observations and lesson deconstructions that take place as part of a Lesson Study cycle can be very important tools in developing these key techniques.

It is great to have a chance to stop and think about the learners and how our students will interpret the information presented. It's not just about the delivery of the lesson but rather making learning fun and observing the students as they learn. School 2, Teacher 1

The study encourages self-reflection and evaluation due to the feedback that teachers receive. School 1, LD Teacher 1

I think this project is proving to be an invaluable means of self-evaluation. We are enabled to truly reflect on our teaching strategies and through working as part of a team we are able to share good practice in an attempt to ensure that we achieve quality learning and teaching. School 1, LD Teacher 2

Having done a couple [of lessons] on microbiology I have concluded that students love working in groups as they learn from each other (peer to peer learning). School 2, Teacher 2

I feel this is a highly effective way to self-reflect about different aspects of my teaching. I feel I have also begun to reflect more deeply about the learning of the pupils, and more specifically how they learn. The process of LRS encourages constant self-reflection, not only when planning lessons but in the production of resources etc. School 1, AfL Teacher 2

I believe undoubtedly this is the way forward in terms of self-evaluation, learning and teaching as I have been given the opportunity to plan, prepare, observe and evaluate



alongside teachers who are from different departments and who are at different stages of their teaching careers than me. I believe we all benefit from this experience. We have strived to focus upon pupil learning and teaching strategies used which undoubtedly is improving teaching and learning' School 1, AfL Teacher 2

Developing as a team

All of the participants agreed that working together in a team was a very beneficial and enjoyable experience. They found sharing practice with teachers from other subjects/ classrooms particularly useful and valued the time they spend together planning the lesson. Some also expressed the wish to spend more time as a group developing resources etc. As teachers tend to be quite isolated in their own classroom contexts, this seems to be an interesting development.

Within our group of three, I feel we have worked very well together. I think we would have benefited from more time together to not just lesson plan but also develop resources together. I feel we became more comfortable working together in the second round of lesson planning as we knew what to expect. I felt secure and supported within my team, but this only came with time spent working together and building working relationships. School 1, AfL Teacher 2

We had a clear plan for 8 specific lessons. The workload was shared between all teachers and we were very excited and re-energised when it came to teaching it. We were able to bounce ideas off each other and talk through suggestions where two heads were definitely better than one. We enjoyed learning from each other's expertise.

School 2, Teacher 1

I have enjoyed and found beneficial working with other teachers from other departments and hierarchies much more closely in the process. I feel as a group we have taken ownership of the work our group (AfL) has done. At no point, I believe, has anyone felt that they are going through this process on their own, it is a group initiative.

School 1, AfL Teacher 2

Because it was a lesson that we had planned as a team, I felt that we were all able to take ownership of the topic and enjoy using a different learning methodology for the students to be involved in and enhance their own learning. School 2, Teacher 1

Through this project we have been afforded the time to 'connect' with our colleagues and to make valuable links with colleagues from other departments. The whole idea and concept of 'connected learning' and of ensuring that our students develop transferable skills has been implemented. Such team work has enabled us to share ideas and initiatives to ensure that such requirements are met. ... [Working as a team] is invaluable as it allows professionals to work closely and effectively with each other. Through this we have been able to share good practice to ensure that within our lessons we achieve optimum results. School 1, LD Teacher 2

I have really enjoyed working with the team. I feel we are able to give constructive feedback in a meaningful way that supports and encourages staff to really think about

what they are teaching and how they are doing it and most importantly how the children will learn. School 1, LD Teacher 3

Obstacles hindering the Lesson Study process

Many of the teachers reported that the major obstacle to adopting the Lesson Study method was that enduring problem in all types of professional development: time – time for engaging with colleagues, time for trying out new ideas etc. Another factor mentioned was that telling the students who are being observed about their role in this process can make them self-conscious and possibly distort their performance during the lesson.

Time availability for planning, observing and debriefing – implications for cover. School 1, AfL Teacher 1

Our big issue is the lack of time for planning these classes as our timetables do not incorporate time for subject planning. We have been spending our lunchtimes and free class periods working on planning and also doing some work at home which is difficult. ... To involve the entire staff in Lesson Study we feel we would need to give a workshop and presentation through our staff development days. The support of management would be essential for this. School 2, Teacher 1

Time is an issue. Due to the demands of school life, observation feedback was not immediate after the actual lesson. Therefore the lessons learned could not be implemented in my teaching in the lessons following the observed lesson. Additionally some teachers may find the observation aspect of Lesson Study challenging. School 1, AfL Teacher 2

As mentioned previously, one of the observers agreed for the first lesson we observed that the pupils who knew they were being observed were continually looking at us as observers to gauge our reaction and therefore we questioned whether this was this a true representation of their engagement and learning. School 1, AfL Teacher 3

Time – it has been difficult to meet with our teams outside of our directed meeting time. It has also been difficult meeting with the focus group children soon after the lesson due to timetable constraints. School 1, LD Teacher 1

Time –for further development it is necessary to implement this project at a whole school level. School 1, LD Teacher 2

Time – being able to find opportunities to meet and discuss with the pupils so that it is within the time requirements. School 1, LD Teacher 3

Concluding remarks

The project set out to explore whether Lesson Study can offer an effective school-based and peer-to-peer approach to staff development in schools and the feedback data from the participating teachers roundly endorses the view that it can and does. The teachers' reflections on the processes in which they were engaged included positive perceptions of the Lesson Study approach directly or indirectly:



- promoting self and collective reflection on classroom practice and student learning;
- enabling a non-threatening and constructive peer-to-peer process of improving classroom teaching;
- promoting successful collaborative professional development on classroom pedagogy across a range of school subject areas, specific learning challenges (e.g. literacy development) and student age ranges;
- enabling opportunities to experiment with teaching approaches, resources and lesson planning;
- engaging students more actively and directly in their own learning, and in the planning and evaluation of teaching methods and classroom activities.

The feedback also strongly points to the main factor operating against the likelihood of success through Lesson Study approaches: namely the enduring problem of insufficient time in a working day and week for teachers to work collegially, to plan and evaluate and to experiment with new techniques.

Lesson Study arguably offers *'that objective quality'* of opportunity to look at a lesson structure that has been jointly planned. This tends to render personal qualities and judgements less significant since the emphasis is not on watching the person delivering the lesson so much as on the whole effect of the delivery, its design and content, and its impact on the learning of the pupils. As professional anxieties melt away, barriers that have long been in place can be dismantled as Lesson Study enables a clearer focus on the collective *'highest intention'* of improving pupil outcomes.

Lesson Study is claimed to work for a number of reasons: because it helps experienced teachers selectively to 'switch off' enough the filters on their experience to see their teaching more clearly; because it enables teachers to learn something new about this teaching and their pupils; and because it helps teachers appreciate, through the eyes of their colleagues and the reflective process, the individual needs of all the children. Perhaps most importantly in these communities of practice, it makes teachers' practice visible to each other in the group, enabling them to create joint solutions to the enduring challenge *'how best to teach x better to y.'*

Overall the project is considered to have addressed its objectives and to have added a formal evidence base to the growing literature on using Lesson Study to improve classroom teaching, and student learning and outcomes.

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Addendum – perceptions of schools embarking on the Lesson Study initiative in 2011-2012⁹

Following the success of the GTCNI pilot study and the SCoTENS study reported above, 30 schools in Northern Ireland accepted an invitation to join a second main phase of the GTCNI's initiative in promoting school-based peer-to-peer professional development. This section of the paper examines some of the perceptions of a selection of teachers and principals from a mixture of eight primary, secondary-level and special schools, who were interviewed as they were poised to launch their own Lesson Study initiatives.

Professional development before Lesson Study

The recent experience of the interviewees' professional development encompassed a wide range of activities both within their own school settings and elsewhere. A number of them were engaged in academic study while others were pursuing professional qualifications at various levels including those for leadership such as the Professional Qualification for Headship (PQH). Some had undertaken training in information and communications technology (ICT); some used facilities on the online resource *Learning NI*; and others reported learning about Applied Behavioural Analysis online through the Centre for Autism and Related Disorders in the USA. Several were responsible for disseminating training related to the Revised Curriculum and its assessment among their colleagues.

A number of the schools had previously been trained in the use of interactive white boards (IWB) and were now involved in disseminating learning to others by a variety of means. These included publications such as the *iTeach* magazine for Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB). Many had attended conferences, seminars and courses or summer schools at the Regional Training Unit (RTU) or the Ulidia Resource Centre in Belfast, and beyond, on such subjects as Understanding the Brain, Thinking Skills, Creativity in Science, Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs), Brain Gym in Special Schools, Team Management and the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS).

Subject-specific courses were mentioned, including those offered by the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) and others on subjects such as Essential Skills training, Money Management, Improving Learning in Maths, Running an Effective Maths Department, Language Controlled Assessment for GCSE, Approaches to Literacy Comprehension, and Hockey and Football Level 1 Coaching.

Professional development of a more pastoral nature included courses on Drugs and Bereavement, and school-based 'Baker Days' featuring such subjects as Linguistic Phonics, Internet Safety, Teamteach, Play-based Learning, Developing Communications Passports and Enhanced Makaton. Staff from several of the schools had had the opportunity to take part in collaborative initiatives including a course on Mediation and a Cross-Border Literacy Project.

Involvement of pupils

There was wide-ranging experience of involving pupils in classroom activity and this was most frequently reported in the primary schools. 'Learning journals' had been successfully

⁹ Adapted from a report by Stephanie Mitchell as schools embarked on the second phase of the GTCNI Lesson Study initiative.



introduced for all pupils and teachers in one setting and gave *'good insight into what they enjoyed.'* In the same school, pupils from years 1-7 routinely evaluated all their classwork and homework by the use of 'smiley faces'. When introducing a new topic staff would usually do a 'planning board', asking pupils what they knew already, what they wanted to know and how they would find out. Teachers also planned to involve pupils in the Lesson Study project *'just to see what they think would be good'*.

Elsewhere, there was acknowledgement of the need to involve pupils more. In one case, there was a desire to evaluate what had been learned in a better way than the usual feedback gathered 'mostly orally', to enable *'tailoring some work to the individual child.'* One example of using assessment to support learning (AfL) to good effect concerned a performance by some of the pupils who were due to appear at a launch for CCEA. This was evaluated by whole school feedback, generating helpful comments that could not have been predicted either by the performers or the teacher herself.

In another setting, whole school questionnaires had been used previously and it was felt that pupil comments were not as challenging in their opinions as might have been expected. Since then, there had been more of a push to build confidence to give an opinion, *'open up the dialogue'*, elicit individual assessments and find out *'what pupils feel about it.'* One teacher commented that the more this was done, *'the more they see that they can help you to help them.'* With this in mind, the school was planning to consult pupils in their Lesson Study work. Some inclusive and creative methods were mentioned in another setting such as the use of visual imagery and video, which elicited *'very honest'* feedback from most of the pupils.

Evaluation sheets were used quite widely in some of the post-primary settings for different purposes, along with some interviews, and there were plans in one school to interview pupils in the context of the Lesson Study project. At departmental level in another secondary-level school, the focus was on a different year group each year, some of which were asked about what they had enjoyed and found positive about the subject whilst other pupils studying ICT gave feedback through the online Survey Monkey system.

Elsewhere, although a school inspection had called for more consultation with pupils in the planning of lessons, one teacher commented that compared to younger pupils he would have to *'take pupil feedback more seriously at KS4'* in terms of anything that he felt hindered their learning in class. These reservations were echoed in another setting where built-in student assessments at the end of each topic focused on learning rather than the delivery of lessons. Here, teachers wondered whether or not pupils would *'have the maturity to critique your lesson'* or be *'genuinely constructive.'* One teacher admitted feeling that the process could be intimidating.

Teacher attitudes to Lesson Study

Some schools had made participation in the project available to the teaching staff as a whole whereas others had identified departments or individuals, most of whom had responded positively to the offer. Time, or the lack of time, was identified as an enduring issue in terms of preparing resources, implementing and evaluating work to best effect. The Lesson Study initiative was therefore seen as *'the gift of time'*. In one school, one head of department observed that in an ideal world there would be time to plan, explore and develop things, whereas staff had been *'bogged down'* over the past year due to the new controlled



assessments, making it difficult to get staff together. As for Lesson Study, he considered that staff being confident with the whole process was important.

In a different school, due to the recent inspection, a group of staff remarked that *'we're overworked totally in terms of paperwork'*. Despite this, there was keen interest in the project since it contradicted their usual circumstances as single person departments with *'nobody to bounce ideas off.'* There was recognition that, due to isolation, teachers might have developed *'a few bad habits'* or, conversely, *'be doing something brilliant that others don't know about.'* In another school, team teaching had previously existed, which one teacher well remembered because she *'really enjoyed it.'* Although initially unsure, she was quite enthused about Lesson Study at the time of the interview.

In some contexts, there was an existing culture of staff *'popping in'* to one another's lessons; in others only the principal was likely to visit. In one large school a teacher described her room as a *'corridor'* and the *'totally informal'* culture as being one of constant flux in terms of noting new approaches in one another's classrooms. She considered this to be a clear benefit since *'you sometimes pick up a really good idea'*. Joint working on the project was welcomed in one primary school where a teacher remarked that *'targets are easier when they're shared.'*

Some saw the project as a good opportunity for their own professional development and remembered the benefit of being evaluated and observed, recalling teaching practice and the chance to watch someone else as being *'where you learn the most'*. One teacher reflected that she had not done so since, not noticing how far she had moved away. However, this flux was not attractive to all and some teachers had reservations about the prospect of being observed – *'since usually with observation people feel they're being judged'*. With increasing familiarity, however, observation was felt likely to become less threatening.

There was a focus in one primary school on generating conversations around mathematics, and various strategies had been implemented including a competition during which posters showing mathematics usage in real life were displayed. The culture among the team was very much one of sharing ideas and resources with other, non-specialist teachers, to help generate *'a buzz.'* These activities served to knock down barriers and raise staff confidence by degrees to bring about a more positive approach and *'a bit of excitement.'* One teacher commented that Lesson Study was a good vehicle *'that would allow the profile of maths to be explored and discussed'*, although moving towards Lesson Study was seen as an affordability issue due to its perceived expense.

Senior management team attitudes to Lesson Study and its promise/legacy

There was widespread recognition that the spirit of Lesson Study was contrary to the usual *'top down'* model of professional development. This was considered often to result in *'professional indigestion'*, when ideas and concepts are conveyed during training but with insufficient time to absorb, consolidate and apply the learning afterwards. One principal explained the rationale behind these *'top down'* methods as a lack of classroom context embedded in a very theoretical framework.

Some principals and senior management teams were proactive in finding out more about Lesson Study, having read or heard about it elsewhere. This was usually because the potential



'fit' with existing goals was immediately apparent to them. Lesson Study was seen to stimulate good practice by invigorating and exciting people and as the way forward in terms of professional development rather than sending people out of school. It was a 'lovely' model of professional development for one principal who interpreted the Lesson Study cycle as action > reflection in action > reflection on action > reflection on future action.

It was widely acknowledged that participation of staff was '*very much a voluntary thing.*' The hope for one principal was that the project would be '*organic and self-sustaining*' and enable the 'plan, do, review' cycle to become embedded, thereby allowing staff to exchange ideas and learn routinely from each other. Lesson Study was also seen as conducive to experimentation and taking risks '*because you'll have the support of your colleagues.*' The opportunity to think about the '*mechanics*' of it was also appreciated, as was the opportunity to watch pupils in more depth.

'*We're serious about this*' declared one principal who had released a colleague from her position as subject head in order to lead on their project. '*You tap into best practice*', she observed, and working together always benefits from the expertise that individuals bring since '*we is very powerful*' and, in that sense, Lesson Study is a '*revolutionary process.*' In another setting, Lesson Study was seen as an opportunity for capacity building through bringing to light a high degree of expertise, which staff may not realize they have, and feeding this into the school's professional development model, thereby reducing the isolation felt by many teachers. The Lesson Study project represented '*quite an important trial*' for one school in developing a focus on the 'process' of feeding into improvements in learning and teaching.

The peer-to-peer approach of Lesson Study was seen as unaffected by other agendas since, as another principal observed, '*the bit in the classroom should come first (as) everyone pretends that it does.*' *Sharing expertise 'on a level'* – i.e. on the basis of equality – established ownership of the process, which was seen as '*the key to things you really care about.*' *For this respondent, Lesson Study was seen to have 'eminence, pertinence and relevance.'*

Through ongoing dialogue, Lesson Study was seen as raising the professionalism of teachers through its emphasis on research and development. For the senior management team in one setting, the management roles of all three teachers in the project potentially lent themselves to modelling or training others in the application of Lesson Study 'downstream' and might even give rise to cross-departmental groups. The team in another setting, were also '*not starting from ground zero*' and were viewed as '*pathfinders in best practice*' by the principal, who expected them to continue their engagement as individuals in between Lesson Study sessions.

The project was also identified as an opportunity to collaborate and become '*less territorial*' which, in one setting, had been helped by the arrival of young people on the staff '*being open about their experience and challenges*'. This increase in self-reflection and openness to new ideas was attributed to an increase in the quality of initial teacher education over recent years. The openness, which was seen as 'central' for the process to work, also promised to expose fascinating and '*very revealing*' details in analyses of lessons. One interviewee commented that in a previous school the culture of openness meant that teachers '*shared everything*' and benefited accordingly from the mutual support, from

tapping into one another's expertise and from not duplicating work, all of which impacted positively on pupils' experience of learning. From this it was a short step to Lesson Study, with its non-judgemental ethos of peer-to-peer collaboration, not only saving time but also countering the isolation experienced by many, since *'teachers don't like to admit that they can't do something or don't know something.'* Already *'sold'* on Lesson Study, she saw it as a natural means of focusing on the best experience for every child.

The opportunity to do something different was also appreciated and one principal observed that *'we don't often get the chance to do a little bit of research.'* Where Lesson Study represented an opportunity to see one another in action, and although the prospect of this was daunting for some teachers, the senior management team saw the opportunity as uniformly beneficial since good teachers, in their view, will only see 5% of what is happening in their lessons.

The culture of collaboration was seen to enrich the learning and teaching environment and to benefit children who come into contact with it, given that they would see *'different things in different rooms.'* One principal anticipated that learning would improve for staff as much as for the pupils and another anticipated wanting to extend Lesson Study to teachers who did not volunteer to take part this time. One principal reported having joined a cluster of local schools to which she planned to be *'disseminating left, right and centre!'* at their monthly meetings.

Lesson Study represents *'that objective quality'* of looking at a lesson structure that has been jointly planned. This tends to render personal qualities and judgements less significant since the emphasis is not on watching the person delivering the lesson so much as on watching the pupils. As professional anxieties melt away, barriers that have long been in place can be dismantled since Lesson Study can enable a clearer focus on the collective *'highest intention'* of improving pupil outcomes.

Perceived drawbacks to Lesson Study

No initiative or innovative practice can be devoid of uncertainties and even fears about how it might develop in any given context. Not surprisingly then, some of the respondents from the eight schools voiced some concerns and opinions on possible drawbacks from being engaged in the Lesson Study initiative.

For example, Lesson Study was seen by one principal as needing to deliver more than just process alone, which was viewed as *'an expensive one.'* Also necessary were *'organizational as well as personal outcomes'*, as were the means of understanding the process that produced them, since the determining factor of good practice must be the learning outcomes of children.

It was also suggested that *'a vocabulary to be reflective'* might have to be learned by some and that the potential existed to compound bad practice should a group go off together and *'away from the light.'* Where some schools were enthusiastic about appropriating and embedding Lesson Study as their way forward with continuing professional development, others saw the opportunity in more limited terms, as a discrete project and something of a luxury in terms of the time afforded. For one school, hopes about rolling Lesson Study out across departments were accompanied by worries about how to *'keep the momentum going'* and, given stretched budgets, how to continue once the project was over. The need



to find time was a '*big concern*' even though it fitted well with the ethos of the school. There was also concern about how 'in-depth' the experience would be first time around and there was a question mark over confidence levels in participating staff.

One principal observed that it was necessary to talk about shared experience and to establish shared norms about what is of value in the classroom since '*teachers are all at sea about this.*' In terms of good practice, 'some don't know what they're looking at' – an example given was the perspective recorded in a teacher audit that literacy standards were dropping due to an increased intake of working class pupils. Although most of the senior staff interviewed did not envisage any drawbacks with Lesson Study, several aired concerns about the experience becoming more pressurized than they expected and the practical difficulties of making it happen.

Where the equality of input into the process was seen as of benefit overall, this very equality was also recognized as having '*inherent dangers*' since schools are basically hierarchical organizations. An example was cited where a head of department might feel themselves challenged by the ideas of younger staff, in which case, '*what will they do? And what can they do?*' Indeed, resistance from some more conservative teachers was mentioned as a potential obstacle and the challenge was to get everybody 'on board' in the longer term, particularly those inclined to see Lesson Study as '*an added burden.*'



Effective Mentoring in Physical Education Teacher Education

Fiona Chambers, Sinead Luttrell, Kathleen Armour, Walter Bleakley, Deirdre Brennan and Frank Herrold

Introduction

Research on Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) programmes points to a central role of the school-based element of that programme. It has also been argued that the presence of experienced mentors in these formative field experiences is a vital component in ensuring meaningful work-based learning for pre-service teachers (McIntyre et al., 2005). At the core of such research is a belief that professional development and training are centrally about teachers' learning, learning how to learn, and transforming knowledge into practice for the benefit of their professional and pedagogical growth (Darling-Hammond, 2006b, Darling-Hammond, 2006a, Darling-Hammond and Rothman, 2011). Marable and Raimondi (2007) have suggested that mentoring is perhaps the most effective way of supporting the professional development of beginning teachers because it reaches both sides of the teacher as person-pedagogue (Armour Makopoulou and Chambers (2012)), helping to hone their personal and professional skills.

McIntyre and Hagger (1996) have outlined a plethora of potential benefits of mentoring for beginning teachers, including reduced feelings of isolation, increased confidence and self-esteem, professional growth, and improved self-reflection and problem-solving capacities. In addition, it has been argued that mentoring can sharpen classroom management expertise and personal time management skills (Malderez et al., 2007). In turn, this can lead to improved morale in pre-service teachers and the ability to both critique and attend to difficult teaching experiences (Bullough, 2005; Marable and Raimondi, 2007). More generally, mentors (experts) have been found to play an important role in the socialisation and enculturation of pre-service teachers (novices) by moving them from legitimate peripheral participation (Lave and Wenger, 1991) to the core of the community of practice (Wenger, 1998). This helps them to adapt to the norms, standards and expectations associated with teaching in general and in the context of specific schools (Edwards, 1998, Feiman-Nemser and Parker, 1992, Wang and Odell, 2002). Yet although there is a growing belief in the value of mentoring in teacher education, questions remain about ways to make the process most effective in action.

This report describes data from a cross-border study that investigated the ways in which mentoring is construed and implemented in PETE in three sites. The study was carried in 'Birchfield University' (Republic of Ireland), 'Rivermount University' (Northern Ireland) and 'Larkhill University' (England) between April 2010 and March 2011. The Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS) funded the research. Three central questions which directed the research were as follows: (a) what is known about the characteristics of 'effective mentoring' in work-based learning? (b) what is the nature of current mentoring practices in physical education teacher education (PETE) in three research sites (RoI, NI and UK) (how do they compare and is there evidence to suggest they are effective?); (c) in each of the three research sites, what are the mentor teachers' views of current mentoring practices and any additional training needs to support them to engage in effective mentoring? This report describes data on five key findings from this study and is

organised into five sections: **(i) Literature review on Mentoring (ii) Methodology, (iii) Findings, (iv) Discussion and (v) Conclusion.**

Mentoring: Literature Review

The concept of mentoring is quite vast. In the literature it is defined in relation to a number of parameters, e.g. styles and types of relationships involved in mentoring, perceived benefits of mentoring and mentorship (Patton et al., 2005). It is often referred to as a reciprocal relationship, i.e. mutually beneficial for both mentor and mentee. The *'reciprocal dimension of mentoring relationships can help us better understand the mentoring dynamic as the co-construction of new knowledge and understanding for both mentors and protégés'* (Ayers and Griffin, 2005, p.369) with mentors and mentees as *'co-learners on a voyage of discovery'* (Patton et al., 2005).

Within situated learning theory, the concept of Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP), as defined by Lave & Wenger (1991), seems to subscribe to the view of the mentor-pre-service teacher relationship as being that of expert-subordinate. In LPP, the newcomer (mentee) learns the practices of the community and eventually becomes an 'old timer', fully participating in his/her overlapping communities of practice within, for example, a school. The movement from newcomer to old timer is guided formally and informally by expert 'mentors' (old timers). According to Armour, Makapoulou and Chambers (in press), learning in communities of practice seems to offer the greatest potential for the development of teachers as learners who can learn continuously in and through practice, in addition to drawing upon external knowledge and developing it as required. In this view of professional learning, trainee teachers are nurtured in the community of practice framework, and universities have the clear task of developing teachers who can work effectively within such a structure.

Mentor suitability

Chambers (2008) contended that mentor suitability is controlled by mentor expertise and disposition. The expertise of the mentor may be decided by the position of the mentor in their professional life or *'phase in professional life'* (Sikes, 1992). Huberman (1989) plotted the professional life cycle of Swiss teachers and revealed that the disposition of a teacher altered as he/she moved through their professional lifecycles. It seems clear that mentors need to have a positive disposition, i.e. 'experimentation/activism' phase.

The Pedagogy of Mentoring

The Pedagogy of Mentoring is defined by Chambers et al (2011) as the ways in which mentees learn and the pedagogical knowledge and skills that mentor teachers need to support them to learn effectively. The key goal in mentoring is to encourage mentees to become autonomous learners (James et al., 2006). The first step in planning mentor pedagogical strategy is to identify the learning status of the mentee using Fuller's (1969) hierarchical three stage *'concerns theory'* which explains what pre-service teachers focus on at each point in their development (self, task and impact). Next, using Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon's (2001) three styles of mentoring (directive; non-directive and collaborative), the mentor may help the mentee to move toward a concern for impact on pupil learning. The mentor style chosen is *"shaped by the individuals, their goals and the school context"* (Patton et al., 2005, p.313). In moving the mentee toward professional growth, Daloz's (1986) model of mentoring describes how the mentor both supports and challenges the mentee in the mentoring process.

Methodology

In this research, the study analysed three cases, each located at PE teacher education sites at 'Birchfield University' (Republic of Ireland), 'Rivermount University' (Northern Ireland) and 'Larkhill University' (England) respectively. Pseudonyms have been used throughout to protect the identity of the participants. In each jurisdiction, university tutors (UTs) involved were research partners in this project and all mentors were self-selected research participants (see Table 1). All participants signed the consent letters.

Case 1: 'Birchfield University' Republic of Ireland	Mentor Teacher	Mentoring Experience	UT
	Conor	1 year	Abigail
	Nora	6 years	Lucy
	Tracy	10 years	
	Aoife	20 years	
	Laoise	32 years	
Case 2: 'Rivermount University' Northern Ireland	Mentor Teacher	Mentoring Experience	UT
	Matthew	10 years	Edward
	Georgie	20 years	Caroline
Case 3: 'Larkhill University' England	Mentor Teacher	Mentoring Experience	UT
	William	10 years	Simon
	Sarah	20 years	Evelyn
	Andrew	30 years	

Table 1: Case Study Details

Settings

This section outlines key features of Initial Teacher Education in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and England in order to understand mentoring across these three different contexts.

Mentoring in Teacher Education in the Republic of Ireland

ITE in the Republic of Ireland takes place within university and school settings employing two models of ITE: concurrent and consecutive. In the consecutive model, the student achieves a Bachelor's degree in chosen subjects over a three or four year term and attains a further one or two-year postgraduate teacher education qualification. Within the concurrent model, the student teacher completes a four-year Bachelor's degree programme where university tuition and school-based teaching practice are combined. Universities retain control over students during their in-school experiences: for example, in placement, guidance, supervision and assessment. Schools are requested by the university to cooperate with the TP process on a voluntary basis. The drawbacks of this system are twofold: teachers (known as co-operating teachers - CTs) are not trained as mentor teachers in schools and the school mentor or school principal has no official role in pre-service teacher assessment. It is argued, therefore, that wide variations exist within school cultures and in the support and advice offered by schools

to student teachers on TP (McWilliams et al., 2006, p.73, Coady, 2010). Formalised mentoring is a notion under development in ITE in the Republic of Ireland: e.g. (a) the Dublin City University Cooperating Teachers programme; (b) the University of Limerick Master of Arts in Educational Mentoring and (c) the University College Cork Mentor Training Programme for PE teachers. Mentoring at the Induction Phase of teacher learning is now in place at both national policy and practice level through the National Induction Programme (NIP). A strong, coherent national policy on mentoring in ITE has not been developed at this time. The Government's position is perhaps influenced by the teacher unions who have vetoed the introduction of formal mentoring in ITE. According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Report *Improving School Leadership* (2007), teachers in the RoI are highly unionized, with 91% of post-primary¹⁰ teachers belonging to a teacher union (p.16). The report describes how teacher unions since their inception have been highly influential in Irish education as they have both negotiated on behalf of their members in relation to pay and conditions, and have been pivotal in discussions regarding curriculum development and examinations and the new Teaching Council.

A rather ad hoc situation remains in the RoI where the choice of whether to engage and train as a mentor is left largely to the individual teacher. The ad hoc mentor system described has resulted in a dual system, with formal and informal mentoring operating side-by-side in ITE. The majority of ITE programmes subscribe to informal mentoring where cooperating teachers support student teacher learning during TP, but are untrained and unpaid to do so (McWilliams et al., 2006). However, the Teaching Council of Ireland (2011a), in a clear sign that policy may change in the RoI, recently claimed that learning support for pre-service teacher on teaching practice:

...should include mentoring, supervision and constructive feedback on practice. In that context, students should be afforded opportunities for critical analysis of the experience, as well as observation of, and conversations with, experienced teachers (p.16).

Mentoring in Teacher Education in Northern Ireland

There has been a long and constructive history of work-based learning support for beginning teachers in Northern Irish schools. All of the Higher Education Institutions in the province who have a remit for teacher education have traditionally valued the input from teacher practitioners hosting pre-service teachers when on school-based practice. It is important to note that the school-based placement arrangements described thus are not mandatory; schools have provided placement for pre-service teachers on a voluntary basis and the school-based support practices varied accordingly across the subject. Pre-service teachers are supervised directly by qualified physical educationalists most of the time.

The General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI) revised teaching competences and published them in *Teaching: the Reflective Profession* which underpins the teacher education programme in Northern Ireland (Department of Education for Northern Ireland, 2009). The GTCNI in this guidance document were strong advocates for the development and testing of mentoring practices in support of beginning teachers. They state:

In providing a common framework and language it will facilitate discussion and allow for teachers, acting in communities of practice, to more readily share experiences and

¹⁰ Also called second-level or secondary school level



understandings about the complex and value-laden process of education. In making explicit the knowledge, skills and values that teachers should exemplify, this publication will offer a foundation for those working as mentors or as school-based learning and development coordinators to support beginning teachers. (Department of Education for Northern Ireland, 2007, p.6)

The GTCNI commissioned another report, on foot of this guidance paper, into School Based Professional Development which formally introduced and defined 'mentoring' and 'coaching' in relation to the professional development of teachers at all levels of their professional induction and development. It is this more longitudinal perspective that is advocated in all or most of the guidance documents that prevail in Northern Ireland.

From the perspective of what is currently happening in Northern Irish Schools, mentoring in PE at the 'Rivermount University' Teacher Education programme follows the work-based model of practice (Anderson and Lucasse Shannon, 1995). It is important to note here that it is the UT who assesses the placement pre-service teacher's competency and not the mentor. At present in Northern Ireland there is no opportunity for training and development of teachers as mentors.

Mentoring in Teacher Education in England

The White Paper for Education (Department for Education, 2010) entitled *The Importance of Teaching* seeks to improve the quality of initial teacher education in England. There are two postgraduate pathways into teaching secondary school physical education: (i) Post-Graduate Certificate course in Education (PGCE) which is usually a one year course, delivered in partnership between a Higher Education Institution and schools; and (ii) Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) which is predominantly school-based also, in most instances lasting one year. Pre-service teachers who enter these programmes will have completed an undergraduate degree such as sport science, sports studies, sports development or sport and physical education. The structure and pedagogical content of such courses can vary significantly, which has a dramatic effect on the subject knowledge profiles of pre-service teachers (Griggs and Wheeler, 2005). This means that individual trainees' pre-training profiles have to be taken into account when designing effective teacher training strategies in PE (Herold and Waring, 2009). In this context, effective mentoring and high quality school-based learning experiences are pivotal if aspiring entrants to the professions are to make a strong start on their lifelong journey to becoming effective teachers of PE (Herold and Waring, 2010).

The requirements as set out in the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) Circular 4/98 were developed further by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), and adopted by Department for Education and Skills (DfES), resulting in the influential document *Qualifying to Teach* (Department for Education and Skills, 2002). From a mentoring point of view, the requirements state that pre-service teachers must: 'Act upon advice and feedback and be open to coaching and mentoring'.

School-university partnerships at 'Larkhill University' are strong, with most partnership schools having many years experience in mentoring trainee teachers from the University. In meeting a key requirement of all higher education (HE) providers of the PGDipEd, one teacher in each partnership school is selected as a 'mentor' and trained by the University.

Schools receive part funding from PGDipEd to support mentors to engage in the programme, e.g. timetabling provision for mentoring. The majority of mentors in the partnership are very experienced practitioners with several years of experience in teaching PE.

To conclude, the literature review has outlined the theoretical basis of mentoring and also shown how mentoring manifests itself within teacher education in the three jurisdictions. As can be seen, policy suggests that the pre-service teacher is likely to have a very different experience in each case, which is dependent on context and in particular how national policy manifests itself in each jurisdiction. The next section of the report explains the methods used in this study to explore mentoring in practice in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and England.

Methodology: Qualitative Data Collection Methods

The study utilised a range of qualitative research methods, both synchronous (open profile questionnaires, focus groups, collection, online Seminar) and asynchronous (online Discussion Forum) to engage in the process of triangulation (Begley, 1996) or crystallization (Richardson, 2000). The specific approaches used in this study included:

- (a) Open Profile Questionnaires:** One open profile questionnaire was distributed to the PE mentor teachers in each jurisdiction which allowed the mentor teachers to reflect on their careers to date and thus provide the author with a very detailed, potentially rich, individual profile of these participants (Armour and Yelling, 2004). The researchers posed questions in three key categories: Section A: General Information/biographical data, Section B: Teacher Role and Section C: Mentor Role.
- (b) On-line Discussion Forum:** From October to December 2010, this asynchronous method of data collection was available. It provided participants the opportunity to respond to key questions and statements posted online by UTs, at a time and location suitable to them. It provided a platform for professional dialogue between UTs and mentor teachers. Questions and statements were selected to prompt discussion and were extracted from research on mentoring practice; e.g. *'Mentors should be selected on the basis of suitability and not availability'* (Fletcher, 1998) or from open profile questionnaire answers. University Tutors from each jurisdiction were allocated a two-week period to put forward questions and engage with and screen the forum.
- (c) Online Seminar:** Using a conference call, a virtual seminar was conducted on 9th March 2011 connecting all UTs and mentor teachers at the three research sites (six UTs and ten mentor teachers). The merits of utilising this synchronous method of data collection reside in the fact that it facilitated visual, verbal and virtual communication in three different locations. *"The mechanical operation of the camera will document all that is before it in that moment...it is not selective once the shutter is opened"* (Stanczak, 2007, p.7).

The researchers acted as moderators through a semi-structured, spontaneous discussion about mentoring experiences in each of the three universities, utilising seven prompt questions, e.g.

1. What are the most important tools of the mentor? What do you consider to be your major strategies in supporting weak/strong trainee teachers?
2. What are the benefits of schools and Higher Education Institutions working in partnership to support trainee teachers?

3. Which main characteristics should trainee teachers have developed at the end of the mentoring period?

These prompt questions were derived from the open profile questionnaire responses and those retrieved from the Online Discussion Forum. The key challenges were to encourage all participants to engage in a dialogue in turn and to avoid the dominance of powerful personalities.

Data Analysis

The data analysis method used was that advocated by Charmaz (2009, 2006), a constructivist approach to grounded theory which allows the researcher to build an original analysis of the data. Charmaz argued that there are multiple realities in the world and “*generalisations are partial, conditional and situated in time and space*” (Charmaz, 2006, p.141). Therefore, the researcher co-constructs data with participants, recognizing subjectivity. Rich, accurate accounts of the participant’s narrative are valued.

Grounded theorists start with the data that we construct through our observations, interactions and materials we gather about the topic or setting. We study empirical events and experiences and pursue our hunches and potential analytic ideas about them. (Charmaz, 2009, p.4)

Grounded theory methods employ a specific set of guidelines regarding how researchers construct analysis of the data. Themes are constructed from the data during the process of coding and memo writing. During the coding process the researcher ‘*attaches labels to segments of data*’ (Charmaz, 2009, p.5) explaining the essence of the piece. In fact, Charmaz (2009) asserts: ‘*Coding distills data, sorts them, and gives us a handle for making comparisons with other segments of data*’ (p.5). Researchers emphasise the context when they are coding data. A number of codes were identified during this process, e.g. ‘Mentor provides safe learning space’. These were areas that were further explored in the data analysis process by comparing other data segments, to allow theory to be constructed. Charmaz (2009) posits:

Through studying data, comparing them, and writing memos, we define ideas that best fit and interpret the data as tentative analytic categories. When inevitable questions arise and gaps in our categories appear, we seek data that answer these questions and may fill the gap (p.6).

In this study the researcher followed Charmaz (2006) coding process as follows:

1. Used line-by-line coding as an initial tool for opening up the data (Table 2)
2. Asked what is happening in each slice of data
3. Compared data with data (Table 3)
 - a. Statement with statement
 - b. Story with story
 - c. Incident with incident
4. Then compared code with code (Table 4)

Code	Memo
<p><i>Is a very nice mechanism of leading them in gently into it and there's a bit of a safety net and its okay if things go a bit wrong. Give pre-service teachers the permission to be a learner teacher because certainly in schools here sometimes it's believed that they're fully fledged, even as a student teacher, and they're not given the chance to learn the trade. The mentoring system allows them that cushioning. (Abigail, UT, 'Birchfield University', ROI, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)</i></p>	<p>The idea that student teachers can take risks in a safe environment i.e. the mentor supports them throughout. How might this occur? What is the nature of this support?</p>

Table 2: Grounded Theory: Initial Coding

Code	Memo
<p>The big benefit is to try out new ideas, try out new teaching styles helping the pre-service teacher to branch out. Often people that come into teaching think that you should already be a teacher before you've learnt to try those ideas out. (Matthew, Mentor teacher, 'Rivermount University', NI, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)</p>	<p>The student teacher has the freedom to try out new ideas in a safe environment. Their permission to test pedagogies with an experienced mentor by his/her side.</p>
<p>The real learning comes whenever they take those styles into real schools, real classrooms, real pupils, and then try and match the pedagogy with the learner needs. And that's where the experienced teacher comes into their own in terms of helping to support that styles initiative, comforting them when things don't work. (Edward, UT, 'Rivermount University', NI, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)</p>	<p>The idea that the focus is on student teacher learning and the mentor supports their exploration of teaching styles whether the outcome is positive or negative.</p>

Table 3: Grounded Theory: Compare Data with Data

Code	Memo
Mentor provides personal and professional guidance	Holistic approach to mentoring
Mentor provides safe learning space for pre-service teacher	Safe personally <i>and</i> professionally

Table 4: Grounded Theory: Compare Code with Code

A key feature of this report is the way in which many views of the same issue are presented in a process of crystallisation (Richardson, 2000). It can be argued that this process offers a rich understanding of both the case study contexts and the key themes which have been inducted through a comparative and interactive approach to inquiry that offers several open-

ended strategies for conducting emergent inquiry (Charmaz, 2006). It is through this process of crystallisation (Richardson, 2000) that a contribution to existing literature on mentoring in teacher education can be made. Five key themes were inducted through the process of constructivist ground theory:

1. Within the school-university partnership, the triadic relationship of Mentor-University Tutor-Pre-service PE teacher must be fostered and valued to ensure a robust and coordinated approach to pre-service teacher education.
2. The purpose of the mentor-mentee relationship is the engagement in professional sharing which should continue beyond the teaching practice experience.
3. The Mentor should provide support and guidance to the pre-service PE teacher both professionally and personally.
4. Mentor teachers need to be selected on the basis of suitability, i.e. disposition and expertise, and must be trained to mentor pre-service teachers effectively.
5. The Mentor teacher should ensure a safe learning space for the pre-service PE teacher where he/she is free to take risks and explore praxis in a variety of contexts.

Ethics

A number of mechanisms were used to satisfy procedural ethics. Firstly, ethical approval for the study was sought from 'Birchfield University' (Republic of Ireland). This involved providing a detailed report outlining all research instruments and consent forms to be used. This report was ratified by the Research Ethics Committee at the University in July 2010. Secondly, with regard to selection of participants, there were two key issues to consider:

1. In qualitative studies the participants are selected purposefully because they will be particularly informative about the topic (Cresswell, 2002). In this study mentor teachers in PETE programmes at each of the three research sites were offered the opportunity to take part in this study.
2. To obtain ethical and informed consent from the participants, the researcher must describe the research purpose and procedures, report foreseeable risks and expected benefits, offer to answer questions regarding the procedures, and explain clearly that participation is voluntary and that participants have the right to discontinue at any time (Anderson and Arsenault, 2000). This protocol was followed with all participants in this study.

Findings

Findings are reported through individual segments of data from the coding process which outline different perspectives of the same issue.

Theme One: Within the school-university partnership, the triadic relationship of Mentor-University Tutor-Pre-service PE teacher must be fostered and valued to ensure a robust and coordinated approach to pre-service teacher education.

Effective Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes are defined by a range of key characteristics, one of which, it is argued, is the value they place on the strength of the school-university relationship in supporting pre-service teacher learning (Darling-Hammond, 2006b). The findings support this view.

Example One: Case Study: 'Rivermount University', NI

Edward, UT, connotes the conditions for preservice teacher growth on TP:

It's absolutely essential that those relationships between the university and colleagues that are out in schools is fostered, maintained and valued. The best practice demands this. Pre-service teachers thrive in situations where we have a good professional relationship with placement colleagues and the university (Edward, UT, 'Rivermount University', Northern Ireland, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Two: Case Study: 'Larkhill University', England

Andrew, Mentor, espouses the fact that strong relationships between school and university personnel strengthen the quality of the teaching practice programme:

I do personally feel that the strength of the partnership between the school and the university is essential and certainly we enjoy that here. I think it is that strength that kind of secures the breadth and depth of the trainee's experience and it secures a coordinated approach to the process of training teachers (Andrew, Mentor, 'Larkhill University', England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Three: Case Study: 'Larkhill University', England

Furthermore, Sarah, Mentor describes how the triad of 'mentor-university tutor-pre-service teacher' provides a strong support for the pre-service teacher:

By the two organisations working together you've got that interrelated partnership, a real strength to the system. It's like that triangulation of support where you've got the trainee students, the university, and you've got the school provider (Sarah, Mentor, 'Larkhill University', England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Four: Case Study: 'Birchfield University', ROI

Abigail, UT, added that:

There's a two way thing going on where we're trying to give new ideas ourselves; student teachers are also doing that and the mentor teachers are telling us how this thing is working, if it's working, and how we can tweak what we're doing. It's actually been a really energetic process and it's been eye opening from my perspective (Abigail, UT, 'Birchfield University', ROI, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Five: Case Study: 'Birchfield University', ROI

Laoise, UT, sums up the value of a strong school-university partnership saying:

I suppose it's only through that support system that you can create a shared vision through consultation and communication between all three partners: the School, the University, the Mentor teacher (Laoise, Mentor, 'Birchfield University', ROI, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Theme Two: The purpose of the mentoring relationship is the engagement in professional sharing which should continue beyond the teaching practice experience.

Learning is a social process in which newcomers (pre-service teachers) and old timers (mentors) learn from each other in a multidirectional process within the community of practice (Wenger, 1998). This study's findings corroborate this.

Example One: Case Study: 'Birchfield University', ROI

Nora, Mentor, explains that she finds the mentoring relationship:

To be a two-way system of learning. Every time the trainee teacher comes out I'm

always learning new things from them, as well. They're coming straight from University with the freshest ideas so I found that it is a two-way system. (Nora, Mentor, 'Birchfield University', RoI, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Two: Case Study: 'Birchfield University', RoI

Aoife, Mentor, agrees saying:

It is definitely two way communication. So there are benefits to the mentors as well as to the trainees. (Aoife, Mentor, 'Birchfield University', RoI, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Three: Case Study: 'Rivermount University', NI

Georgie, Mentor, agrees saying it is:

A mutually beneficial relationship. It's an opportunity for us as professionals to obtain new ideas about practices and up and coming knowledge in the area that sometimes we don't get time and the students will come in and provide that. We thrive with students coming in (Georgie, Mentor, 'Rivermount University', NI, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Four: Case Study: 'Birchfield University', RoI

Nora, Mentor, enjoys being a mentor as it extends her own learning:

It allows teacher to reflect on own work as well as the student teachers. There is always something new to consider when working with student teachers and is a way to stay up to date with the latest advances in teaching (Nora, Mentor, 'Birchfield University', ROI, Online Discussion Forum, December 2010)

These views concur with authors such as, for instance, Ehrich (2008), who observes that *'for mentors, it is said to revitalise their career and to bring personal satisfaction'* (p.31).

Example Five: Case Study: 'Larkhill University', England

Simon, UT, believes that the mentoring relationship is a site for sharing of expertise within and beyond the PE hall:

The main purpose of mentoring from our perspective would be professional sharing. They've got an insider perspective of the role and function of Physical Education in the department in that school and the practitioners there share that insider knowledge with students on placement. That's part and parcel of the mentoring process (Simon, UT, 'Larkhill University', England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Six: Case Study: 'Larkhill University', England

The professional links with the mentor teacher extend beyond TP and to their induction phase. Pre-service teachers need to build alliances and networks with other professionals in the field that are utilised across the Continuum of Teacher Education (Teaching Council of Ireland, 2011b):

It is important to be part of a team. It is important to have that network of support and I think where people are working on their own, that is quite an infantile structure that is quite fragile and potentially quite vulnerable for people who are entering the profession (Sarah, Mentor, 'Larkhill University', England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Seven: Case Study: 'Larkhill University', England

Sarah, Mentor, added benefits of such a network of support to pre-service teacher, mentor

teacher and school:

Trainee teachers help to shape departmental and whole school vision as well. And that's really important because you've got people who are new to the profession who are helping to shape future vision alongside experienced colleagues (Sarah, Mentor, 'Larkhill University', England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Theme Three: The Mentor should provide support and guidance to the pre-service PE teacher both professionally and personally.

Findings from this study show that the mentor guides the pre-service teacher on both a professional and personal level (Nation and Chambers, 2011).

Example One: Case Study: 'Rivermount University', NI

Georgie, Mentor, explains that the purpose of the mentor is:

To support and guide them on their professional development and not only professionally but maybe personally because there may be some other issues like time management or conflict or preparation that you may have to support them with as well. Primarily the role is support and guidance (Georgie, Mentor, 'Rivermount University', NI, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Two: Case Study: 'Birchfield University', Rol

Laoise, Mentor, contends that this guidance should be:

All positive...keep feeding them the positive information and develop that confidence really...in order for those competencies to then grow and develop. (Laoise, Mentor, 'Birchfield University', Rol, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Three: Case Study: 'Birchfield University', Rol

Nora, Mentor, believes:

Confidence is key because they can find themselves getting wiped out throughout the year just poured with teaching and lesson plans and all that sort of stuff. The mentor must develop an approachable attitude but also be capable of providing criticism, advice and encouragement (Nora, Mentor, 'Birchfield University', Rol, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Four: 'Larkhill University', England

The quality of professional dialogue between mentor and mentee is paramount. Simon, UT, contends that mentor feedback helps:

Develop trainee teachers into critical practitioners, into reflective practitioners and empower them to actually develop into those. So, to develop into people who are reflective of their own practice and into people who are also prepared to take new things on board as they're finding their feet (Simon, UT, 'Larkhill University', England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Five: 'Rivermount University', NI

Matthew, mentor teacher, explained that often pre-service teachers need to be guided on their TP workload:

The importance of the mentor in protecting the student when they're on teaching practice – as I think when you go into a school you want to leave a good impression. You just become the 'yes man'. You say yes to everything, everybody asks you to do a wee job for them and before you know it you've a reef of jobs to get through as well

as your teaching, your planning, and your evaluating. So I think that there's a big role there in protecting people so that they don't get too many jobs and they can't do their teaching right (Matthew, Mentor, 'Rivermount University', NI, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Six: Case Study: 'Birchfield University', Rol

Conor, Mentor, was in agreement, having been a recent trainee teacher who had experienced this predicament:

I definitely agree with that. Coming from the trainee teacher point of view last year, to being a mentor this year, as a trainee teacher you kind of want to please everyone, you want to fit in, and very quickly you'll pick up jobs left, right and centre. So I think that's an important role of the mentor as well, just to even protect them from getting too much on their plate (Conor, Mentor, 'Birchfield University', Rol, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Seven: Case Study: 'Birchfield University', Rol

Abigail, UT, agreed that it was important that the Mentor advised on how to get the balance between quality of TP and trainee teachers' contribution to school life:

Advise them about it and stand up for them a bit because they're trying to create a CV as well as being out on their training. The most important piece of the jigsaw is getting the teaching right, actually (Abigail, UT, 'Birchfield University', Rol, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Theme Four: Mentor teachers need to be selected on the basis of suitability i.e. disposition and expertise and must be trained to mentor pre-service teachers effectively.

In this study it was clear some of the mentors were highly suitable as mentors while others were not able for their mentoring role.

Example One: Case Study: 'Birchfield University', Rol

Conor, a novice teacher 'coming from just after being in the mentor process as a trainee teacher' (Online Seminar, 9th March, 2011) was in his first year of teaching. Conor (mentor) stated that he 'badly needed mentor training' (Online Discussion Forum, November, 2010). Conor seemed to recognize that he might be not suitable for the role: 'School management picks the mentor, so it's down to who is available not who is suitable' (Online Discussion Forum, November 2010). Conor outlined how he 'concentrated on encouraging the pre-service teacher to learn the basics of classroom management i.e. rules, routines and expectations' (Online Seminar, 9th March 2011). As Conor put it: 'Although a mentor may be willing and available to mentor a pre-service teacher, they may not have the sufficient training or knowledge of the process'. (On-line Discussion Forum, November, 2010).

Example Two: Case Study: 'Rivermount University', NI

In contrast, Matthew, a mentor teacher with eight years of mentoring experience, but no formal mentor training, explained his mentoring pedagogical strategy: 'The big benefit is to try out new ideas, try out new teaching styles helping the pre-service teacher to branch out'. (Online Seminar, 9th March 2011)

Example Three: Case Study: 'Larkhill University', England

Simon, UT, agrees and describes a space where the pre-service teacher can 'try and see what

happens. Take that risk and try out different things. You can see what happens and how the pupils actually respond to that. It doesn't matter if the lesson goes belly up'. ('Larkhill University', England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011). Andrew has thirty years mentoring experience and has been trained as a mentor. Andrew posits that the most fundamental skill is: 'the key skill of adaptability' (Andrew, Mentor teacher, 'Larkhill University', England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011). Edward, a university tutor who works with Andrew agreed, asserting that expert mentors move the pre-service teacher toward higher cognitive endeavours, i.e. evaluation of pupil learning needs:

The real learning comes whenever they take those styles into real schools, real classrooms, real pupils, and then try and match the pedagogy with the learner needs. And that's where the experienced teacher comes into their own, in terms of helping support that styles initiative, comforting them when things don't work. (Edward, UT, 'Rivermount University', NI, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

The next theme reported describes how mentor pedagogy might influence the quality of mentee/pre-service teacher learning.

Theme Five: The mentor teacher should provide a safe learning space for the pre-service PE teacher where he/she is free to take risks and to explore praxis in a variety of contexts.

In this study, one mentor teacher outlined that it was important that pre-service PE teachers acknowledged they were not fully formed professionals, given they were in the first phase of their professional learning career.

Example One: Case Study: 'Larkhill University', England

A pre-service teacher recognises that however good that they are, that they're just on the second step of the ladder and that teaching is an ongoing learning process (Andrew, Mentor teacher, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011). Moreover, it was important that others recognised that they were beginner teachers and as such needed strong guidance from experienced teachers in a mentoring role.

Example Two: Case Study: 'Birchfield University', Rol

It is important to give pre-service teachers the permission to be a learner teacher because certainly in schools here sometimes it's believed that they're fully fledged, even as a student teacher, and they're not given the chance to learn the trade. The mentoring system allows them that cushioning (Abigail, UT, 'Birchfield University', Rol, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

The role of the mentor teacher in teaching practice was to help pre-service teachers to make concrete links between the theory and practice learned in the university setting to the praxis in the school context.

Example Three: Case study: 'Larkhill University', England

Andrew, mentor teacher, asserts that:

The core purpose of mentoring for me is supporting the trainee in making the link between perhaps a theoretical and performance background into the teaching environment (Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Four: Case Study: 'Birchfield University', Rol

More than this Aoife, mentor teacher, contends that the mentor allows the application of praxis to the school setting to occur in protected settings:

The university focuses more on the theory and the school allows the opportunity for the practical application of that theory to take place in a very secure and safe environment for the trainee (Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Data trails showed how the mentor teacher created this safe environment for pre-service teacher learning. Here the mentor teacher outlines observation of expert practice and team teaching as two key mechanisms employed to build pre-service teacher confidence:

Example Five: Case Study: 'Rivermount University', NI

Caroline, UT, explains how team teaching can offer a support to the pre-service teacher:

So, in order to address that and help them in one lesson we would facilitate the promotion of a different type of teaching style by allowing a team teach or by encouraging them to take the opportunity to get in and observe the staff teaching themselves and to formally write that up so they can observe how it's done from someone with a bit more experience (Caroline, UT, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Six: Case Study: 'Birchfield University', Rol

Abigail, UT, believes that using such mentor pedagogical strategies are 'a very nice mechanism of leading them in gently into it and there's a bit of a safety net and it's okay if things go a bit wrong' (Online Seminar, 9th March 2011). Furthermore, she asserts that mentoring of this nature allows the pre-service teacher the freedom to make mistakes under the watchful eye of a mentor and that making such errors are part of the learning process.

Example Seven: Case Study: 'Rivermount University', NI

Edward, UT, describes how effective mentoring allows the pre-service teacher to experiment with a variety of teaching styles. This experimentation is grounded in theory, with the mentor teacher using these opportunities to encourage the pre-service teacher to grapple with and test more learner-centred pedagogies, again in a (relatively) risk-free but realistic environment:

As part of the theoretical support for them is we would induct them into a range of teaching styles...the spectrum of teaching styles, because within each style there is an opportunity to shift responsibility away from the teacher to empower learners. Now, that's fine to do here (in the university) when you do it in practical sessions and in workshops. The real learning comes whenever they take those styles into real schools, real classrooms, real pupils, and then try and match the pedagogy with the learner needs. And that's where the experienced teacher comes into their own, in terms of helping support that styles initiative, comforting them when things don't work (Edward, UT, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Data indicated that mentor teachers in this study believed that experimentation was essential to pre-service teacher training.

Example Eight: Case Study: 'Rivermount University', NI

The big benefit is to try out new ideas, try out new teaching styles helping the pre-service teacher to branch out. Often people that come into teaching think that you

should already be a teacher before you've learnt to try those ideas out (Matthew, Mentor teacher, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

Example Nine: Case Study: 'Larkhill University', England

Trainee teachers have to really have a go at trying different teaching styles. Andrew is probably the first one to always encourage them to take a risk and say: try something else- try some guided discovery, try some reciprocal, try some teaching games for understanding, don't be afraid to start with a game. Try and see what happens. Take that risk and try out different things. You can see what happens and how the pupils actually respond to that. It doesn't matter if the lesson goes belly up (Simon, UT, 'Larkhill University', England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

The mentor teacher guides the pre-service teacher with regard to interrogating the optimum conditions for pupil learning in a variety of contexts. In other words, the pre-service teacher begins to focus on learner needs.

Example Ten: Case Study: 'Rivermount University', NI

Teaching Practice is an opportunity to ground the concept of teaching styles within various placement contexts, and the practitioner/mentor is there to oil the wheels of that process in terms of what works in their school with their learners and why do they think their learners work in that context (Edward, UT, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

By allowing pre-service teachers to experiment with pedagogy in a variety of contexts they begin to learn how to adapt to their teaching environment and to create a map of their future praxis.

Example Eleven: Case Study: 'Larkhill University', England

The key skill of adaptability – because these trainees are on the first step and what we're surely trying to do is to create a framework of their future working and teaching (Andrew, Mentor teacher, 'Larkhill University', England, Online Seminar, 9th March 2011).

In order to develop theory, a discussion ensues in the next section where these themes are linked to pertinent literature.

Discussion

The mentor is a critical friend (Brooks and Sikes, 1997). Mentors must be comfortable in this role:

If mentor teachers are unwilling to criticize, perhaps out of fear of negatively affecting the relationship shared with the student teacher, progress will be slow. Unless student teachers know where their areas for improvement lie, they are likely to flounder with no direction. (Glenn, 2006, p.91)

Yamamoto (1988) concurs, saying the key function of the mentor is '*iconoclastic in nature so as to throw the [mentee] off his or her comfortable and customary perch...making the familiar unfamiliar [forcing] a re-examination of the known world (p.187).*

Findings show that mentor teachers must have key characteristics to build the professionalism of the pre-service teacher, i.e. mentors should be both willing and able to mentor, having the correct disposition and expertise (Chambers, 2008). A suitable mentor has certain



interpersonal traits with high levels of emotional intelligence; are intentional role models (Gilbert, 1985) and are well known as scholars and professionals (Manathunga, 2007). In this study, it was evident that mentor teachers were intentional role models (Gilbert, 1985), i.e. they *wanted* to mentor pre-service teachers. This is supported by the fact that no mentor in this study fell into the reassessment/self-doubt category or the 'conservatism' category in Huberman's (1989) study. Successful mentor teachers are those who volunteer to mentor and who also want to enhance their own career development (Kram, 1985). In this view both mentor and mentee careers flourish:

Mentoring is seen as a reciprocal relationship in a work environment between an advanced career incumbent (mentor) and a beginner (protégé) aimed at promoting the career of both (Healy and Welchert, 1990, p. 17).

Equally, it is deemed both philanthropic and self-serving as the mentor-mentee relationship can be a conduit for achieving midcareer 'generativity' (Erikson, 1963): '*A transcendence of stagnating self-preoccupation via exercise of an instinctual drive to create and care for new life, whether in the form...of productivity or of creativity*' (Erikson, 1977, p.1). In this way, being a mentor is a positive influence on experienced teachers who are in need of renewed impetus in their careers (McCaughy and Rovegno, 2003).

The study indicates that mentor teachers must also be trained in how to mentor effectively in this way, developing the mentee's career and psychosocial skills. Fromm's (1956) view is that the mentor is '*not only, or even primarily, a source of knowledge but his function is to convey certain attitudes*' (p.117). This links with the notion of the mentor developing the person-pedagogue (Armour and Fernandez-Balboa, 2001). In this holistic view of the mentee development, Kram (1995) outlines the key role of the mentor: sponsorship, exposure and visibility, providing challenges, protection and training in ethical procedures, fostering competence, identity and self-efficacy through role modelling, counselling and friendship. In this study, some experienced mentor teachers observed that when holistic development of the mentee is attained, mentee confidence is exhibited both personally and professionally, with mentees, for example, trying out different pedagogies and new content areas, a view mirrored in the research literature:

To reinforce the skills of building rapport and trust with their students, pre-service teachers should be assisted by experiencing slightly risky pedagogies, for example, in pursuing more self-directed learning (Wan et al., 2010, p.287).

In this study, the willingness to encourage mentee innovation depended on the disposition and expertise of the mentor. An inexperienced mentor teacher, Conor ('Birchfield University', Rol) is in the 'Career Entry' phase of his Mentor Lifecycle; a mentor preoccupied with surviving the early mentoring experiences. Such a mentor, who is a novice teacher himself, is constantly discovering new territory (McCormick and Barnett, 2006) and experiences moments of 'reality shock' (Veenman, 1984) as he is confronted with the complexities of mentoring. Teachers in this phase need to be mentored closely themselves to overcome difficulties encountered as a beginning teacher (Odell, 1990). Conor, novice mentor and novice teacher, was 'concerned about self' as mentor (Fuller, 1969), and was capable of high mentor support/low mentee risk (Daloz, 1986) pedagogical strategies which involved modelling and directive practice (Glickman et al., 2001). Therefore Conor could perhaps only

encourage pre-service teacher learning at the most basic level of Bloom's (1956) Taxonomy of learning domains which did not involve encouraging the mentee to take pedagogical risks. In contrast, Matthew, a mentor teacher from Rivermount University (NI) with eight years of mentoring experience, but no formal mentor training, was on the intersection of two of Fuller's Levels (1969), the concerns about tasks/concerns about pre-service teacher learning levels. Matthew used a collaborative learning style (Glickman et al., 2001) and described how he encouraged mentee learning at the middle levels of Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) (application and analysis/valuing and organizing/developing and articulating). In this study, the most experienced mentor teachers suggested they had moved to being 'fully concerned with impact on pre-service teacher learning' in Fuller's (1969) Concerns Model. Andrew, a trained mentor teacher from 'Larkhill University' with thirty years of experience in mentoring, was able to offer a range of mentor pedagogical strategies with low mentor support/high mentee risk (Daloz, 1986), thus encouraging more innovation in erratic teaching situations through a non-directive mentoring style which could support pre-service teacher learning at the highest levels of Bloom's Taxonomy (1956).

These findings led to the creation of a 'Continuum of Factors Influencing Mentor Pedagogy' (see Figure 1). This continuum shows a meeting point of five theoretical frameworks which together may illustrate the factors which shape the mentoring pedagogies employed by the mentor during TP. The assertion is that a mentor teacher's:

- Teaching expertise and disposition (Huberman, 1989) and mentoring expertise and
- Position in the Concerns Model (Fuller, 1969) influences
- The pedagogies employed by the mentor within the 'Model of Support and Challenge' (Daloz, 1986) e.g. mentoring styles (Glickman et al., 2001)
- To support pre-service teacher learning across Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning domains (Bloom et al., 1956).

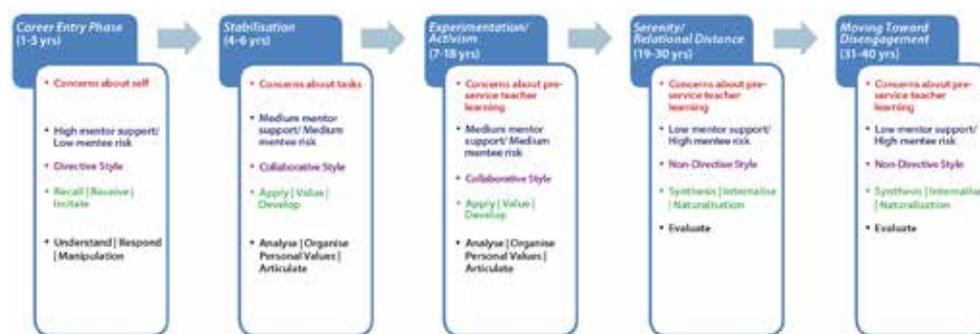


Figure 1: Continuum of Factors influencing quality of Mentor Pedagogy

Trained mentor teachers focusing on the impact of their mentoring on pre-service teacher learning in Fuller's (1969) Concerns Model use particular mentoring pedagogies both supporting and challenging pre-service teacher learning (Daloz, 1986) across Bloom's (1956) Taxonomy of learning domains. More than this, mentor teachers move fluidly between particular mentoring styles (Glickman et al., 2001) depending on the mentee learning needs at a given time.

Conclusion

This report outlines data from a cross-border study that explored the ways in which mentoring is conceptualised and practiced in ITE within PE teacher preparation programmes.

Using a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis, the study investigated effective mentoring practices in three universities located in the Republic of Ireland (RoI), Northern Ireland (NI) and England respectively.

Specifically, this report highlighted a range of factors which appeared to influence the mentor pedagogy employed by mentor teachers in this study. These are outlined in a 'Continuum of Factors Influencing Mentor Pedagogy' (see Figure 1). The findings assert that a mentor's (a) teaching expertise and disposition (Huberman, 1989), mentoring expertise *and* (b) position in the Concerns Model (Fuller, 1969) influence (c) the pedagogies employed by the mentor within the 'Model of Support and Challenge' (Daloz, 1986), e.g. mentoring styles (Glickman et al., 2001), (d) to support pre-service teacher learning across Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning domains (Bloom et al., 1956). The quality of mentor pedagogy employed appeared to be linked to the positioning of the mentor teacher on this continuum.

Clearly, the findings support the need for a change in policy and practice in pre-service teacher education, particularly in NI and the RoI, where mentor teachers should be selected on the basis of their disposition and expertise and should also be trained to mentor pre-service teachers. The current practice in England where the mentor is selected and trained by the university results in a very strong mentoring programme for pre-service teachers, i.e. one that encourages the pre-service teacher learning progression by taking well-planned pedagogical risks in the security of dynamic and varied professional teaching contexts.

In order to extend knowledge in the field of physical education teacher education, this study recommends to following pathway for future research: (a) Identification of effective mentor pedagogical strategies; (b) An evaluation of the impact of effective mentor pedagogical strategies on pre-service teacher learning across Bloom's Taxonomy (1956); (c) Research on the impact of effective mentor pedagogies on pupil learning; (d) An analysis of how, when and why mentor teachers transition from simple to more complex mentor pedagogies; and (e) Effective training for mentor teachers which enhances mentor pedagogical strategies.

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Domestic Abuse: Using Arts-based Education to Help Student Teachers Learn about the Context and Impact on Children

Bronagh E.McKee and Steph Holt

Executive Summary

It is well known that domestic abuse can impact negatively on children's learning, behaviour and relationships. Schools have access to the child population, placing teachers in an ideal position to recognise when children are exposed to violence and more importantly allowing them to respond and intervene early. Yet domestic abuse education is negligible in many undergraduate programmes and there is limited research available to guide teacher educators in domestic abuse education content. This study is the first comprehensive examination of student primary teachers' preparation in domestic abuse recognition, response and prevention during Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Ireland and Northern Ireland. A primary aim of the study was to design and deliver a low-intensity tailored programme to address domestic abuse through arts-based education. Adopting a mixed method approach of Audit, Multiple Choice Questionnaire, Vignette, and Learning and Teaching Evaluations, the report introduces arts-based education as an alternative to traditional learning and teaching in higher education to explore a sensitive yet much needed topic.

An audit was conducted in one of the participating institutions to identify the extent to which the topic of domestic abuse was included in the undergraduate primary teaching curriculum. This informed programme design and the creation of a Community Partnership between a Further and Higher Education Institution's Performing Arts Department in Northern Ireland, and two institutions for Initial Teacher Education (ITE), one in Northern Ireland and one in the Republic of Ireland.

Participants in this study were third year students from the Northern partner institution engaged in a four-year Bachelor of Education degree in Primary Teaching (n=66); final year students from the Southern partner institution engaged in a three-year Bachelor of Education degree (n=85); actors with arts-based education experience from the Community Partnership institution engaged or recently qualified in a two-year National Diploma in Performing Arts (n=5), and a post-graduate social work student (n=1) from the Republic of Ireland acting as understudy. Data were collected relating to participants' knowledge of four domestic abuse themes – context, risk and impact, response and prevention – before the programme was delivered (pre-test) and after the programme was complete (post-test). Data were then collected on student perspectives on programme content, the use of arts-based education, and self-perceived understanding, knowledge and confidence development.

Findings indicate that student primary teachers' knowledge of key domestic abuse themes increased significantly following participation in this tailored programme and that arts-based education is seen as a creative yet safe methodology to address sensitive issues such as domestic abuse. Participants unanimously expressed an expectation that ITE would prepare future teachers for their role in domestic abuse recognition, response and prevention in schools. The data also suggest that simply providing domestic abuse education to student primary teachers does not increase future teachers' confidence to deliver in practice. Furthermore, a more comprehensive evaluation of current education policy and legal



requirements is needed to inform teacher educators of their legal and moral duty to prepare future teachers on this topic. This report concludes with recommendations to address these shortcomings in ITE, including the urgent need to develop programme content and policies to guide teachers and students' decision-making in relation to domestic abuse identification, assessment, response and prevention in schools more effectively.

Contributors

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Community Partnership, Collaborators and Consultants

Cast – Louise: Sarah Quigley and Jo McLoughlin; Mum: Taylor McKee; Tom: Adrian Duncan; Emma: Patrena Boyd; Mr McCann: Joel Jones-Lapsley

Production Team – Producer and script: Bronagh E. McKee; Directors: Gemma Shannon & Bronagh E. McKee; Stage Manager: Aaron Davis; Performance Consultant/Dramaturg: Doug Holton & Gemma Shannon; Costume: Gemma Shannon; Audio, Visual and

Communications Officer: John Trainer; Video and Recording: Philip Boyd & Greg McCready; Lighting and Visual: Collette White & David Kennedy; Drama Theatre Technician: Roy Gawley

Stage Crew – Colin Irwin, Gail Norris, Niall Uprichard, John Catterson, Mark Wilson, Colin Wilson, Louise Orr, Avril McConnell

Communications and Security – Rae Gibson, David Edgar & Tom Irwin

Venue and Facilities – Stranmillis University College, Belfast and Marino College of Education, Dublin

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Introduction

There are a number of reasons why domestic abuse education should be included in the undergraduate teacher education curriculum. Pre-service teachers may come into contact with children exposed to domestic violence during the course of their study. Learning about the topic, including risk factors; strategies for identification; knowing how to respond appropriately, and understanding their legal responsibilities in education, will potentially enable students to contribute to the protection of pupils and enhance students' future professional work. Children access support through a variety of ways and even though teachers are in an ideal position to help, children often do not want to disclose adverse home circumstances with them (Holt, Buckley & Whelan, 2008).

Improved understanding of domestic abuse and violence, and the impact of exposure on children's learning and development, can lead to more effective responses and more appropriate decision making and support services for children and families (Reid & Gallagher, 2009). Because of their access to the child population, teachers are in a unique position to contribute to abuse prevention and early intervention (McKee & Dillenburger, 2009), particularly given the length of time children spend in the classroom and the opportunities teachers have to identify difficulties children may present with, including exposure to domestic abuse (Buckley & McGarry, 2010). Education is an essential component of the effort to prevent violence and in reducing the consequences to children exposed to it (DHSSPS, 2008). Unfortunately, training and education in the undergraduate curriculum has not kept pace with the demands for expertise in abuse and violence prevention in the school context (Buckley & McGarry, 2010; OFMDFM, 2009).

It is for all these reasons that this study set out to explore the pre-service preparation of teachers in relation to domestic abuse context and the impact on children. The study focused on raising awareness among student primary teachers on issues related to domestic abuse prevalence, risk and impact, recognition, response and reporting, the legal and policy context, and an introduction to preventative education. Since domestic abuse is a very emotive subject and it is well known that drama is an excellent medium for raising awareness about sensitive topics in a powerful yet easily understood format (Cahill, 2006; 2008), a community partnership with performing arts students was used to develop an arts-based education approach to domestic abuse education in the undergraduate teaching curriculum.

Domestic abuse and children

The field of domestic abuse has long been a topic of international, social, psychological and family research. This research, primarily conducted in the US (Edleson, 1999), Canada (Jaffe & Crooks, 2004), Australia (Brown & Alexander, 2007) and the UK (Mullender, 1996), with more recent research activity in Ireland (Buckley, Whelan & Holt, 2006; Devaney, 2010; Kelleher & O'Connor, 1995), has led to a number of important findings regarding the experiences of those involved in domestically abusive relationships and the implications of this experience for their physical, emotional and mental well-being.

Significantly, the lens of research and practice interest has, in recent years, expanded to include a consideration of the scope and consequences of children's exposure to domestic abuse, resulting in a depth of empirical knowledge about its prevalence, and the impact this experience has on its youngest victims (Barrett, Chang & Walker, 2011; Hazen, Connolly, Kelleher, Barth & Landsverk, 2006; Stanley, 2011). This increased awareness of children's needs, and their heightened visibility and prominence in the context of domestic abuse,



has been slow to develop, as has their status within the research community. However, the emergence of a more sharply focused lens of research and practice interest on childhood and children's experiences is reflective of the core ethos of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989). Although domestic abuse education is not specifically referenced within the UNCRC (1989), the Convention highlights that state parties shall take all appropriate educational measures to protect children from all forms of harm (Article 19). Failure to provide such education will impact on the child's right to receive, and to have access to, information and material aimed at promoting well-being and physical and mental health (Article 17). Children exposed to domestic abuse will react in different ways and while not all children will experience long-term difficulties, all children have the right to protection and should have access to information and support.

Research conducted in the Republic of Ireland by Watson and Parson (2005) found that the risk of severe abuse for both men and women was found to increase with the presence of children, with this enhanced threat significantly higher for women when compared with men. This, the authors suggest, may arise from the increased stress of parenthood, greater difficulty leaving a relationship or restricted options for moving on when children are involved. This report also notes that nearly three-quarters of women seeking refuge from domestic abuse are accompanied by children and that the risk of severe abuse for women who have children increases by more than 50% at the point of separation (Watson & Parson, 2005).

The available international research evidence suggests that many abusive households contain children (Mullender, Hague, Iman, Kelly, Malos & Regan, 2002; Weinehall, 2005), with US research estimating that almost four-fifths (78%) of abusive households include children (Buckner, Bearslee & Bassuk, 2004). Such children are neither 'untouched' by domestic abuse, nor merely passive bystanders within the abusive family system, and can be involved on a number of levels. Research with police officers to develop a standard validated protocol to gather information on all reported domestic abuse incidents in one particular US state, established that children were in households in almost half of all domestically abusive events, finding also that there was a correlation between the presence of children and high risk factors such as the use of weapons and increased victim injury (Fantuzzo, Fusco, Mohr & Perry, 2007).

Building on this research, Fantuzzo and Fusco (2007) found that children in households investigated for domestic abuse events were more likely to be under six years of age. More recent research by the same authors (Fusco & Fantuzzo, 2009) established that 43% (679) of the households investigated for domestic abuse contained children at the time of the event, with 95% of those children exposed by either hearing or directly witnessing the abusive event. UK data suggest that at least 750,000 children in England and Wales and 11,000 children in Northern Ireland live with domestic abuse (Cleaver, Unell & Aldgate, 1999; Department of Health, 2002; Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 2001).

A more recent NSPCC national survey on child maltreatment (Radford, Corral, Bradley, Fisher, Bassett & Howat, 2011) identified 6.2% of the sample of 6,195 children and young people under 18 years of age had witnessed at least one type of domestic violence in the previous 12 months while a further 7.6% of the same sample reported ever witnessing an incident of severe violence. These findings echo those of Meltzer, Doos, Vostanis, Ford and Goodman's earlier (2009) national UK study on children and young people's mental health, with parents



reporting 4.3% of the sample of 7,865 witnessing severe domestic abuse. Across the UK and Ireland, it has been estimated that at least one million children experience domestic abuse either as a witness or directly (Barrett *et al.*, 2011; Devaney, 2008). Of concern is that prevalence rates usually grossly underestimate the extent of the problem (Perry, 2001) since crime statistics of this nature can only quantify what is reported (DHSSPS, 2007). Understanding the nature and extent of domestic abuse is important as the risks to children are all too clear in research.

For example, two studies conducted in the Republic of Ireland have to date explored the impact of exposure to domestic abuse on children (Buckley *et al.*, 2006; Hogan & O'Reilly, 2007). Joining an established and growing body of international research, these studies suggest that children who live in households where their mothers are abused by partners or ex-partners are significantly affected and experience 'considerable distress' (Cleaver *et al.*, 1999; McGee, 2000; Mullender *et al.*, 2002; Stanley, 2011). There is also clear empirical evidence that children are at risk of being injured, particularly if they intervene in order to prevent an abusive incident or to protect their mother during the attack (Stanley, 2011).

Furthermore the presence of domestic abuse has also been associated with an increased risk of physical and sexual abuse by their mother's abuser (Hester & Pearson, 1998; Weinehall, 2005). This relationship between child abuse and domestic abuse has also been explored in Northern Ireland. Devaney (2008), for example, investigated the characteristics of children involved in the child protection system due to a prolonged period of registration, more than one period of registration or who suffered harm while registered. Out of 190 children involved in the study, 151 lived in a household where domestic abuse was a known common factor.

The impact of domestic abuse on children: a developmental perspective

The empirical evidence suggests that growing up in an abusive home environment can critically jeopardize the developmental progress and personal ability of children (McIntosh, 2002; Martin, 2002; Roseby & Johnson, 1998), the cumulative effect of which may be carried into adulthood and can contribute significantly to the cycle of adversity and abuse (Levendosky & Graham-Bermann, 1998). Exposure to domestic abuse may have a varied impact at different stages (Cunningham & Baker, 2004), with early and prolonged exposure potentially creating more severe problems because it affects the subsequent chain of development. In the context of primary school aged children, it is important to recognise that they may be starting their school career with many years of exposure to domestic abuse which will have impacted significantly on their ability to engage with the learning and social environment of the school.

Lundy and Grossman's (2005) research with 40,636 children aged 1-12 years engaged with domestic abuse services found that toddlers actually seemed to exhibit emotionally distressed behaviour less often than older children, a finding resonating in Bogat, DeJonghe, Levendosky, Davidson and Von Eye's (2006) later, if considerably smaller study involving 48 infants whose mothers had experienced domestic abuse during pregnancy and indicated that their infants had also seen or heard one or more abusive incidents. While Bogat *et al.* (2006) found that only 44% of infants exposed to domestic abuse had at least one trauma symptom, compared with the majority of pre-school and school-age children, Lundy and Grossman (2005) found that more than any other age group, these youngest children



appeared to have difficulty separating from parents, perhaps reflecting problematic attachments.

Concurring with this, Martin's (2002) review of the literature suggests that the dynamics of domestic abuse undermine the child's developmental need for safety and security, potentially resulting in a difficulty developing a logical approach for getting comfort and in the development of disorganised attachments to their mother, who is simultaneously a source of comfort and fear for the child (McIntosh, 2002). If unabated, Martin (2002) concluded that such attachments result in the infant being chronically overwhelmed, and if uninterrupted, this pattern could have devastating developmental consequences for the child, underpinning much of the intergenerational cycle of domestic abuse (Zeanah, Danis, Hirshberg, Benoit, Miller, & Heller, 1999).

The effects of domestic abuse are amplified for pre-school aged children, whose developmental dependency on their parents for all aspects of their care may expose them to greater amounts of violence than older children (Huth-Bocks, Levendosky & Semel, 2001). Not surprisingly, research with mothers found this age group to exhibit more problems, with care-giving more difficult than any other age group (Levendosky, Huth-Bocks, Shapiro & Semel, 2003). Martin (2002) surmised that extreme fear may result in psychosomatic problems such as headaches, stomach aches and asthma, as well as insomnia, nightmares, sleepwalking and enuresis. The ego-centrism of children of this age may be reflected in a preoccupation with fear for their own safety and they may engage in mental and behavioural disengagements in an effort to cope with this distress (Cunningham & Baker, 2004). This has obvious implications for their ability to separate from their mother when starting school, over and above the anxiety many children normally experience, and to allow themselves to fully submerge in the early school life experience.

Primary school-age children (4-12 years) are able to think in more complex ways about the reasons for the violence and may try to predict and prevent the abuse based on this reasoning. Younger children in this developmental stage are still thinking ego-centrally and may blame themselves for their mother's abuse. They will also try to justify their father's behaviour on the basis of alcohol, stress, or their or their mother's behaviour. This helps them cope with the idea that their father is bad or imperfect in any way (Cunningham & Baker, 2004).

Academic and social success at school has a primary impact on children's self-concept. As they rely increasingly more on influences outside the family as role models and as indicators of their own worth (Daniel, Wassell & Gilligan, 1999), most children will hide their 'secret' from everyone, because if others found out, the shame would be devastating, further compounding the imbuing sense of sadness and vulnerability (Alexander, Macdonald & Paton, 2005). With the development and preservation of friendships a fundamental part of this developmental stage, Lundy and Grossman (2005) believe that social problems may make this developmental task unachievable.

They may either pick up on and react to aggressive cues in their interactions with other children and consequently be at risk of bullying, or tune out from such cues and be at increased risk of being bullied (Bauer, Herrenkohl, Lozano, Rivara, Hill, & Hawkins 2006). One third of Lundy and Grossman's (2005) sample of 4,636 children who were exposed to domestic abuse were described as frequently aggressive. The first US study to examine the



relationship between domestic abuse exposure and bullying corroborated this finding that children exposed to violence engaged in higher levels of generalised aggression (Bauer *et al.*, 2006).

Furthermore, the child's learning potential may be compromised by poorly developed verbal skills, competing demands for their energy, exhaustion or absenteeism (Moore & Pepler, 1998), or as Meltzer *et al.* (2009) found, the presence of conduct disorders in children exposed to domestic abuse. Difficulty concentrating and problems with attainment was identified in Buckley *et al.*'s (2006) study conducted in the Republic of Ireland, while Byrne and Taylor's (2007) study in Northern Ireland similarly reported finding children quiet and withdrawn or alternatively loud and aggressive. Conversely school may be experienced as a respite and engaged in fully, both to maximise the respite and to avoid going home.

Domestic abuse and teachers

A number of key messages from the literature that explore children's resilience to maltreatment more generally are of interest and significance to this study. Rutter's (1985) earlier identification of the child's self-esteem and self-confidence, self-efficacy and problem solving capacity as key characteristics of resilience continues to echo throughout much of the more recent literature, although this later discourse has identified further resilient features for consideration. These include IQ (Grych, Jouriles, Swank, McDonald & Norwood, 2000); a supportive relationship with a caring adult (Osofsky, 1999; Holt *et al.*, 2008); and peer support (Daniel & Wassell, 2002). The school community is quite obviously placed to cultivate the growth of resilience in children, where opportunities for academic achievement, social competence and success in non-academic activities have already been clearly articulated (Daniel *et al.*, 1999).

With access to the child population and a schools curriculum that aims to develop and strengthen character through the skills of critical thinking, decision-making, problem-solving and recognising social and moral responsibilities (CCEA, 2007; Government of Ireland, 1999), teachers can be critical in prevention and early identification of children affected by domestic abuse, but only if they are appropriately trained (NSPCC, 2009). Even though there is a clear role for schools, there is evidence that key frontline professionals such as teachers lack preparation to recognise and respond when children experience violence in the home and other forms of child maltreatment. Bunting, Lazenbatt and Wallace (2009), for example, reviewed the literature on barriers to reporting child maltreatment concerns among health, welfare and education professionals in Northern Ireland. The authors found that reliance on physical evidence and victim disclosures alone, and reluctance to base decisions on interpretations of emotional and behavioural symptoms, emerged as factors associated with non-reporting. Of concern is that these same professionals are unlikely to report domestic abuse since physical evidence in children and direct disclosure to teachers is rare (Alexander *et al.*, 2005; Holt *et al.*, 2008).

Similar conclusions were reached by Buckley and McGarry (2010) in their study on the compliance with child protection guidelines by newly qualified primary school teachers in the Republic of Ireland. This study identified both a deficit in knowledge on behalf of those teachers and also a general lack of commitment to the role of the primary school setting in identifying and reporting child protection and welfare issues, and to supporting vulnerable or abused children.



Another Northern Ireland study by Byrne and Taylor (2007) explored the perceptions of educators on domestic violence and pupils' educational attainment. Having identified three key themes – impact on children, services and support, and service improvement – they recommended greater investment in inter-agency training and the development of preventative education. The theme of preventative education and training initiatives for teachers was echoed in the work of McKee and Dillenburger (2009). Using a baseline assessment test and an internal child protection content audit (including domestic abuse education), the authors found that, among other child protection and safeguarding content, undergraduate teaching students were not provided with domestic abuse education during the course of their studies. They claimed that this lack of pre-service preparation contributed to student teachers' low level of knowledge on the topic and recommended the inclusion of arts-based preventative education in the undergraduate teaching curriculum (McKee & Dillenburger, 2009).

Prevention through education: an arts-based education approach

The use of arts-based education to explore and learn about a sensitive social issue such as domestic abuse has an established standing in international community partnership work, e.g. Everyday Communities, a family violence and child abuse prevention programme using theatre in education with communities in New Zealand (O'Connor, O'Connor & Welsh-Morris, 2006); Alternative Living Theatre, using folk drama and traditional songs to reduce violence against women in Bangladesh (Senthilnathan, Khokan & Guha, 2009); and Building Community: Building Blocks, using theatre in education to reduce family violence in Jamaica (Levy, Brown, Jarmen & Ward, 2009).

Training programmes with frontline professionals are also seeing an increase in the use of arts-based education to demonstrate and explore social issues. In England, for example, Lexton, Smith, Olufemi and Poole (2005) developed two of their interagency child protection training courses around the use of actors and role play. Employing two methods, the authors summarise the role of actors in the first as a method which involves 'acting out a story, introducing the characters in short scenarios and then inviting volunteers to join in the action, taking the roles of different professionals' (p198). In keeping with arts-based education approaches, they then describe how the more frequently used method of hot-seating takes place at the end of the scenarios, with actors remaining in role and being questioned by members of the audience about how they feel, their thoughts and any changes in behaviour (Lexton *et al.*, 2005). The UK organisation Respect also uses hot-seating in their domestic abuse awareness, assessment and intervention training courses. These approaches are viewed as central to their training work, as they bring the work to life and leave participants more confident to apply skills they learn in real world situations (Respect, 2010).

Other initiatives in the UK are delivered directly to teachers and pupils in schools, e.g. the Healthy Relationships programme delivered to 11-12 year olds in England (Bell & Stanley, 2006); the Zero Tolerance programmes for schools and youth groups in Scotland (Reid Howie Associates Ltd, 2001); the Expect Respect education tool kit for teachers in Bristol, UK (Norman, Harwin, Harding & Humphrey, 2008); and the Helping Hands preventative education programme for primary school aged children in Northern Ireland (Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland [WAFNI], 2010). As part of the UK Home Office funded pilot projects to reduce violence, all three primary prevention programmes deemed effective with



school aged children used dramatisation to explore and learn about non-abusive relationships (Hester & Westmarland, 2005).

In response to the Bristol Domestic Abuse Prevention project, Debonnaire, Walton, Muralitharam and Manley (2006) produced a preventative education and resources tool kit for teachers. This tool kit highlights how schools have a legal responsibility to educate children and young people about social and moral development, emphasises that domestic abuse education can help deal with other classroom difficulties such as bullying, gender identity or conflict resolution, and maps domestic abuse education directly to the existing primary and post-primary curriculum. In a similar vein, the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland schools curricula make it a requirement to promote personal, social, and health education (PSHE) (Government of Ireland, 1999) and personal development and mutual understanding (PDMU) (CCEA, 2007) respectively, both of which are ideal opportunities to address prevention through education. However, it seems unlikely that teachers will have the knowledge and confidence to deliver and develop such an approach without appropriate preparation and training.

As shown, there is increasing recognition that exposure to domestic abuse can be related to emotional, behavioural and social problems in school and community. Given the prevalence rates in Ireland and further afield, as well as access to the child population on an almost daily basis, it is inevitable that teachers will come in contact with a child who is living with or experiencing domestic abuse during the course of their teaching career. Yet domestic abuse education is negligible in many undergraduate programmes, and there is limited research available to guide student teachers in relation to domestic abuse recognition, response and prevention during school-based work and placement experiences.

Even though the use of arts-based education has been evaluated as an effective way to learn about domestic abuse recognition and response in training programmes for child welfare professionals, as well as raising awareness among children and teachers in schools, there is a dearth of research on the topic and the use of this approach with pre-service professionals. To address this gap, a community partnership between three institutions explored the role of arts-based education to help student primary teachers learn about and understand the context of domestic abuse and the impact on children.

Methodology

Aims

The aim of this study was to increase student teachers' knowledge of the topic in the hope that they would be more prepared to contribute to prevention during professional practice. From a 'prevention through education' point of view, this study explored three main questions:

- Does the existing undergraduate curriculum provide domestic abuse education to student teachers?
- Will student teachers knowledge and understanding of domestic abuse context, risk and impact, recognition and response, and prevention in schools change following participation in a low-intensity tailored programme of domestic abuse education?
- What are the views of student teachers on pre-service preparation in domestic abuse education?

Ethics

This study was ethically approved by both participating institutions. Guided by the principles of the British Educational Research Association [BERA] (BERA, 2004) and the British Psychological Society [BPS] (BPS, 2009), measures were taken to ensure the integrity of the research and responsibility for participants. Both investigators are qualified social workers with experience in child protection, safeguarding and domestic abuse response in practice, teaching and research. Permission was sought and gained from Programme Leaders prior to contact with participants who, once ethical approval was granted, were contacted and invited to take part. Participants were informed verbally and in writing about the nature, design and content of the study, that participation was entirely voluntary and that all data would be analysed collectively and remain anonymous and confidential. Time was allocated at the start of every contact session to remind participants of programme content and the voluntary nature of engagement, and at the end of every session for debriefing and to follow up unexpected issues raised during the programme. The methods employed were designed to address programme content and knowledge gains and not personal experiences of participants.

Design

A multi-method approach was used with both quantitative and qualitative components. These consisted of a pre- post- multiple choice questionnaire with a vignette, and a low-intensity 6-hour tailored education programme on 'Domestic Abuse Context and the Impact on Children'. Qualitative methods in terms of participant perspectives were explored through the use of learning and teaching evaluations. An audit was conducted as part of the pre- research preparation stage. The audit was used to help inform programme content and the creation of a Community Partnership with a Further Education Institution Performing Arts department.

Participants

Participants were third year students from the Northern institution engaged in a four-year Bachelor of Education degree in Primary Teaching (n=66); final year students from the Southern institution engaged in a three-year Bachelor of Education degree (n=85); actors with arts-based education experience from the Community Partnership institution engaged or recently qualified in a two-year National Diploma in Performing Arts from Northern Ireland (n=5), and a post-graduate social work student (n=1) from the Republic of Ireland as the understudy.

Research tools and procedures

Audit

During the pre- research preparation stage, an audit was designed to identify the level of existing domestic abuse training provided in one of the participating institutions (cf. appendix 1). It contained seven themes: context; impact on children; impact on families; awareness among teachers; responding in schools; teaching strategies; and supporting children and families. The audit was distributed using the participating institution electronic mailing list to all academic teaching staff. The audit required participants to indicate which themes they included in existing undergraduate curriculum content and to return it to the principal investigator using the same electronic mailing system.

Multiple choice questionnaire

The multiple choice questionnaire was designed to measure participants' knowledge and

understanding of the context and impact of domestic abuse and contained six themes: prevalence; recognition; response; legal and policy context; impact on children; and professional roles. A total of 24 multiple choice questions (MCQs) were devised to address each of these themes (4 MCQs for each theme). Each question had three possible answers, one of which was correct. Following a pilot with academic teaching staff from both institutions, some MCQs were removed due to repetition and some themes were merged due to potential overlap. The multiple choice questionnaire proper had 20 MCQs covering four themes: Context (6 MCQs); Risk and Impact (5 MCQs); Response (5 MCQs) and Prevention (4 MCQs). Participants were informed that only one answer was 'correct'. For example, under the theme Risk and Impact, participants were asked the following:

Which of the following statements do you think is the most likely to be true?

- (a) The risk to the child ends when parents/carers separate
- (b) Exposure to domestic abuse increases the risk factor for child abuse
- (c) Risks to the child increase with age

A vignette, describing an interaction between a teacher and a child, was also attached to the questionnaire. Participants were asked to outline an answer that best represented an appropriate response to examine students' anticipated decisions on a hypothetical case scenario. The anonymous multiple choice questionnaire with attached vignette was distributed, completed and returned in person during two specially convened half days: at the beginning of the first day, before the programme was delivered (pre- test), and at the end of the second day, after the programme was completed (post- test) (cf. appendix 2).

The programme

The low-intensity 6-hour tailored programme was designed to address domestic abuse context and the impact on children and delivered over two half days, i.e. 3 hours x 2 in both institutions. The first half day used lecture presentations, interactive discussions and exercises, and arts-based education such as role play and hot-seating to help consolidate learning and to prepare participants for the dramatisation performed during the second half day. The main component of the tailored programme was the dramatisation *Closed Doors, Open Minds* © written and directed by the first author of this report, co-directed by the Community Partnership Performing Arts Course Co-ordinator and performed to participants by the Community Partnership actors and understudy.

The script was informed, in part, by two Northern Ireland studies. The first was the Pastoral Pathways Programme, a doctoral research study carried out by the first author to investigate student teachers' knowledge of abusive experiences in childhood, including domestic abuse. Statistical analysis of participant knowledge development, coupled with focus group themes identified by experienced practitioners deemed to be in a position to influence policy and training, resulted in a recommendation to develop violence and abuse prevention content for student teachers in a creative way (McKee, 2009; McKee & Dillenburger, 2009).

The second influential factor was the evaluation of a Shared Learning and Teaching Experience between early childhood and social work students (McKee, 2008; McKee & Devaney, 2007). The focus of this experience was on child protection, safeguarding and communication between professionals and included a role play child protection case conference. The role play, performed by student participants, also explored the impact of



exposure to domestic abuse in the context of family. From the perspective of participants, this experience helped students to learn about and understand the context and impact of abuse and violence on children, assessment of need, and the importance of working collaboratively to meet the needs of children (McKee, 2008).

Participants in both studies advocated arts-based education approaches to learning and teaching as a means to convey sensitive yet important topics, and to allow time for consolidation and to reflect on their practice, supporting the theoretical viewpoint that professional development is characterised and enabled by the process of active participation and reflection (Boal, 2002). It seemed that the model of theatre as a training tool was a useful way to explore social issues and promote reflective learning with undergraduate students in a safe and supportive way.

As a result, a script was written and delivery of the dramatisation was piloted with final year teacher education students (n=62) in one of the participating institutions during academic year 2009-2010. In consultation with the participating institution module co-ordinator, a local further and higher education performing arts course co-ordinator and final year performing arts students with theatre in education experience, the first stage of the pilot was to establish a community partnership. The aims of the partnership were to ensure that the script reflected a true sense of the situation, was performed realistically, and was mapped directly to the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI, 2007) professional teaching competencies. For the latter, it is an expectation that student teachers in Northern Ireland are provided with the opportunity to learn about and understand factors that may impact on or hinder children's learning, such as abuse and violence (Professional competence 6).

The script was also written to reflect the tri-fold approach to child protection and safeguarding in the Northern Ireland curriculum (CCEA, 2007). This tri-fold approach requires that teachers recognise and respond to children who are at risk of violence and abuse and take the necessary steps to ensure their safety; schools create an ethos that promotes personal and mutual respect, invoking a culture within which children feel secure and confident; and schools offer children a curriculum to enhance their welfare and provide them with the skills and knowledge to protect themselves from danger (CCEA, 2007).

The dramatisation compared the experience and outcomes of one family based on two different personal circumstances. The first act, containing four scenes, portrayed how the family enjoyed a high quality of life attributable to the positive relationship between husband and wife and the positive influence this had on the child's learning and development in school. The second act, also containing four scenes, portrayed the same family but in a different way. Following repeated and severe domestic abuse, this part of the dramatisation demonstrated how exposure to domestic violence in the home impacted negatively on the child's learning, behaviour and social development with peers and adults in school, and the role of teachers in domestic abuse recognition and response. Aligned with arts-based education, a freeze-frame exercise was used throughout the dramatisation to highlight a silent power-point.

Two short interactive drama techniques were facilitated immediately after the performance. The first was a form of playback theatre, a role-play of a pupil disclosing abuse to a teacher, performed by the acting students. Participants were asked to watch the role play in full once



and then during the repeated role play they were to freeze frame the activity at the point at which they felt the teacher could provide a more appropriate response to the pupil. Student teachers were encouraged to direct the actors to replay the relevant frame.

The second activity was a hot-seating exercise whereby volunteers from the participating group were asked to sit in a semi-circle facing the audience and record a secret onto a sheet of paper. These were then collected by the facilitator who asked if one could be selected at random and read out to the audience for discussion. At this point, those in the hot seat were asked to describe how they would feel if their personal secret was revealed. While the volunteers remained in role, they were asked questions about their thoughts and feelings. Both activities were used to stimulate debate and further discussion about the effects of different behaviours. All participants completed an evaluation of the activity and were asked to rate the pilot in relation to content, methodology (arts-based education) and areas for development.

With an overwhelmingly positive response, it was decided to develop the pilot and integrate it into a compulsory element of teacher education. No major changes were made; however additional material was included in the programme for the current study. The low-intensity tailored programme addressed six out of the eleven training and support recommendations made by PricewaterhouseCoopers (2001) in relation to children, domestic violence and abuse. These were recognition, response, impact on children, impact on families, referral guidance, and the legal and policy context. The programme was delivered to Northern participants in November 2010 and Southern participants in January 2011 to accommodate timetabling directed by both institutions.

Learning and teaching evaluations

An anonymous questionnaire was adapted from one of the participating institution's Learning and Teaching Evaluation forms. This questionnaire asked participants about the overall usefulness and relevance of the programme in relation to three themes: content; arts-based education; and self-perceived understanding, knowledge and confidence development. Boxes were provided for participants to add comments. It was distributed, completed and returned in person by both groups at the end of the second half day after the programme and post-test questionnaires were completed. Participants were asked to respond to statements based on a scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree (cf. appendix 3).

Results

The teacher education primary curriculum covered all seven themes contained within the audit as well as covering additional teaching strategies in the classroom context. At the time of this study, none of these themes were compulsory for students; rather they were embedded within existing elective modules such as Contemporary Issues in Pastoral Care and Working with Disadvantaged Children, offered to final year fourth year students only. During the year of the pilot, i.e. academic year 2009-2010, the subject of domestic abuse was embedded within the Education Studies component of the degree. This was offered to all third year students and while Education Studies was seen as a compulsory aspect of the undergraduate degree, there were no sanctions in place to ensure that all students attended. This helped to inform the programme design and methods used in this study and are presented in two main sections: multiple choice questionnaire and learning and teaching evaluations.

Multiple choice questionnaire

Figure 1. Comparison between pre-test scores and post-test scores for aggregate group (ALL students from both groups) for whole questionnaire (all 20 questions)



Students on average scored higher post-test (15.6) than pre-test (13.6). This difference was found to be highly significant when subject to inferential analysis ($t(292) = -9.007$, $p < 0.01$). Preliminary tests were conducted on the data for each of the 4 themes to identify appropriate statistical measures. The normality principle was found to be violated in each instance. The normality of the distribution was examined by comparing Histograms with associated normal curve, skewness and kurtosis values and the normality tests Kolmogorov-Smirnov / Shapiro-Wilk. The aggregate scores were found not to have normal distributions. The non-parametric Mann-Whitney test was identified as the appropriate statistical measure to examine differences between each of the themes pre-test and post-test.

Table 1. Comparison between pre-test and post-test scores for aggregate group (ALL students from both groups) for each of the 4 themes above (Context; Risk & Impact; Response; Prevention).

Theme	Pre-test Mean	Post-Test Mean	Mann Whitney U-value	Significance (one-tailed, $P < $)
Context	4.09 (68.2%)	5.59 (93.2%)	2604.5	0.001
Risk and Impact	4.36 (87.2%)	4.55 (91.0%)	9688.0	0.039
Response	3.50 (70.0%)	3.56 (71.2%)	10405.5	0.568
Prevention	1.60 (40.0%)	1.94 (48.5%)	8892.5	0.003

When subject to inferential analysis no significant differences were found to exist between pre-test and post-test for the themes Risk and Impact ($U = 9688$, $P > 0.039$) and Response ($U = 10405.5$, $P > 0.568$). Post-test scores were however significantly higher than pre-test scores for the themes Context ($U = 2604.5$, $P < 0.001$) and Prevention ($U = 8892.5$, $P < 0.003$).

Further examination revealed that not all questions within the improved theme scores (Context and Prevention) had increased between pre- and post- test. Therefore further examination was required (see *Table 2 below*).

Table 2. A single pre-test to post-test comparison for aggregate group (ALL students) for each of the individual multiple choice questions (MCQs).

Multiple choice question	Pre-Test Correct	Post-Test Correct	Chi X ²	Significance P <
1	95 (63.8%)	140 (96.6%)	49.267	0.001
2	108 (72.5%)	132 (91.0%)	16.867	0.001
3	132 (88.6%)	133 (91.7%)	0.812	0.368
4	89 (59.7%)	91 (62.8%)	0.284	0.568
5	84 (56.4%)	55 (37.9%)	10.030	0.002
6	124 (83.2%)	138 (95.2%)	10.821	0.001
7	133 (89.3%)	136 (93.8%)	1.939	0.164
8	130 (87.2%)	142 (97.9%)	12.114	0.001
9	92 (61.7%)	120 (82.8%)	16.134	0.001
10	68 (45.6%)	78 (53.8%)	1.955	0.162
11	127 (85.2%)	116 (80.0%)	1.405	0.236
12	139 (93.3%)	134 (92.4%)	0.085	0.771
13	92 (61.7%)	142 (97.9%)	59.240	0.001
14	89 (59.7%)	123 (84.8%)	23.012	0.001
15	48 (32.2%)	33 (22.8%)	3.392	0.070
16	146 (98.0%)	144 (99.3%)	0.960	0.327
17	142 (95.3%)	126 (86.9%)	6.440	0.011
18	9 (6.0%)	38 (26.2%)	22.252	0.001
19	136 (91.3%)	131 (90.3%)	0.076	0.782
20	36 (24.2%)	116 (80.0%)	91.975	0.000

Notes: Green = significant increase in post-test correct scores; Clear = no significant change in either direction between two test stages; Amber = decrease but not significantly in post-test correct scores; Red = significant decrease in post-test correct scores

Nine MCQs highlighted in green in Table 2 significantly increased in correct mean scores between pre- and post test but these were not within the same theme. MCQs 1, 2, 13 and 20 were in theme Context, MCQs 6 and 8 were in theme Risk and Impact, MCQ 14 was in theme Response, and MCQs 9 and 18 were in theme Prevention. Two MCQs, both in theme Response, had a significant decrease in post-test mean correct scores. The five MCQs highlighted in orange illustrate a lower post-test mean score but not significantly. MCQs 11 and 19 were in theme Risk and Impact, MCQ 12 was in theme Response, MCQ 15 was in theme Prevention and MCQ 16 was in theme Context. The remaining four MCQs, one from each theme, indicated no significant change between pre- and post-test mean scores. For these reasons, it is useful to revisit MCQs within questionnaire themes to consider areas that may need further consideration in programme content. Like all statistical analyses, a note of caution is required as will be shown in Table 3 to Table 6 below.

Table 3. Multiple choice questions (MCQs) in Theme CONTEXT Pre-test to Post-test change in frequency and percentage for aggregate group (all students)

Questionnaire Theme CONTEXT and Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)	Group % scores and significance Chi x2		
	Pre-test	Post-test	Sig. P<
Prevalence in schools	95 (64%)	140 (97%)	0.001
Legal and policy guidance for teachers	108 (72.5%)	132 (91%)	0.001
Child disclosures of domestic abuse to teachers	133 (89%)	136 (94%)	0.164
Children's awareness of domestic abuse	92 (62%)	142 (98%)	0.001
Women seeking refuge/help	146 (99%)	144 (98%)	0.327
UK and Ireland prevalence of domestic abuse	36 (24%)	116 (80%)	0.000

As a theme, there was a significant increase in correct scores between pre-test and post-test in relation to CONTEXT (Table 3). Four out of six MCQs increased significantly. These were related to the prevalence of children presenting with domestic abuse in school; legal and policy guidance for teachers; children's awareness of domestic abuse; and UK and Ireland prevalence of domestic abuse. While the remaining two MCQs related to child disclosures of domestic abuse to teachers and women seeking refuge/help did not increase significantly, the post-test awareness among students was still very high: N=136 (94%) and N=144 (98%) respectively.

Table 4. Multiple choice questions (MCQs) in Theme RISK & IMPACT Pre-test to Post-test change in frequency and percentage for aggregate group (all students)

Questionnaire Theme RISK & IMPACT and Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)	Group % scores and significance Chi x2		
Pre-test	Post-test	Sig. P<	
Multiple risk factors associated with domestic abuse	132 (89%)	133 (92%)	0.368
Domestic abuse impact on childhood trauma	124 (83%)	138 (95%)	0.001
Domestic abuse impact on behaviour and relationships	130 (87%)	142 (98%)	0.001
Domestic abuse exposure and risk of child abuse	127 (85%)	116 (80%)	0.236
Domestic abuse impact on holistic development	136 (91%)	131 (90%)	0.782

As a theme, there was no significant increase between pre-test and post-test scores for students' knowledge and understanding of RISK & IMPACT (Table 4). Two out of five MCQs increased significantly between pre-test and post-test; these were both related to the impact of abuse on children, i.e. trauma symptoms, and behaviour and relationships. MCQs related to the relationship between domestic abuse exposure and risk of child abuse, and the impact of domestic abuse on physical, emotional, and mental health had a slight reduction in post-test scores, e.g. pre-test N=127, 85% to post-test N=116, 80% and pre-test N=136, 91% to post-test N=131, 90% respectively. That said both post-test correct scores high.

Table 5. Multiple choice questions (MCQs) in Theme RESPONSE Pre-test to Post-test change in frequency and percentage for aggregate group (all students)

Questionnaire Theme RESPONSE and Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)	Group % scores and significance Chi x2		
Pre-test	Post-test	Sig. P<	
Whole school response	84 (56%)	55 (38%)	0.002
Multi-agency response	68 (46%)	78 (54%)	0.162
Professional responsibility	139 (93%)	134 (92%)	0.771
Early recognition/indicators	89 (60%)	123 (85%)	0.001
Procedures in school	142 (95%)	126 (87%)	0.011

Like the previous theme, there was no significant increase in students' knowledge and understanding of RESPONSE (Table 5). Two MCQs had a significant decrease between pre-test and post-test correct scores. These were related to a whole school response (N=84, 56% to N=55, 38%) and procedures to follow in school when domestic abuse is suspected (N=142, 95% to N=126, 87%). One MCQ related to early recognition/indicators of domestic

abuse which increased significantly between pre-test and post-test. One MCQ increased and one decreased but neither significantly. These were related to multi-agency response and professional responsibilities respectively. Correct scores for these latter two still remained high post-test.

Table 6. Multiple choice questions (MCQs) in Theme PREVENTION Pre-test to Post-test change in frequency and percentage for aggregate group (all students)

Questionnaire Theme PREVENTION and Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)	Group % scores and significance Chi x2		
	Pre-test	Post-test	Sig. P<
Through education and pre-service preparation	89 (60%)	91 (63%)	0.568
Children's developmental ability to understand	92 (62%)	120 (83%)	0.001
Integrating preventative education into schools curriculum	48 (32%)	33 (23%)	0.070
Capacity of teachers to delivery preventative education	9 (6%)	38 (26%)	0.001

Even though the final theme increased significantly in post-test scores, this is only in relation to desired responses in terms of preventative education (Table 6). In other words, while choice responses were neither correct nor incorrect, one option is recognised in international literature as preferred. To demonstrate, the first MCQ asked students whether the best way for teachers to learn about domestic abuse is through (a) pre-service/initial education and training; (b) single agency on the job training; or (c) multiagency on the job training. While the latter two options have historically been common occurrences in practice, as outlined earlier international literature recognises that teacher educators are in the prime position to prepare the future childcare workforce for their legal and moral safeguarding role in schools (including domestic abuse recognition and response). Thus while only 63% agreed, this does not mean that the remaining 37% students were incorrect. In terms of children's developmental ability to understand 'stay safe' messages, the number of students who agreed that all primary school aged children should receive preventative education increased from N=92 (62%) to N=120 (83%) between pre-test and post-test.

Very few students agreed that teachers can best contribute to domestic abuse prevention by integrating personal safety concepts into the primary school curriculum at either test stage, e.g. pre-test N=28 (32%), post-test N=33 (23%). The final MCQ in this theme asked students to consider the need for specialist training so that teachers had the capacity to deliver preventative education in practice. While there was a significant increase between pre-test and post-test in terms of students who felt no specialist training was required, the responses were still low at post-test stage (N=38, 26%).

Vignettes

Establishing a scoring system for vignette responses was based on relevant literature, government guidance and legal requirements in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Having read through all vignette responses pre-test and post-test from both groups (N=294), all correct responses were identified and coded (cf. Table 7).

Table 7. Vignette coding system

Code	Action point(s) demonstrating knowledge
0	Incomplete vignette
1	An inaccurate action point(s) recorded
2	Knowledge of Response
3	Knowledge of Report
4	Knowledge of Record and/or Observations
5	Knowledge of Preventative Education
6	Knowledge of Multiagency Collaboration or the role of Specialists for support

Incomplete vignettes were not included in final analyses. It was agreed that the only action point deemed to be compulsory to receive a correct score was knowledge of Report (code 3). Understandably, some vignettes had more than one code but if they 'failed' to demonstrate clear knowledge of code 3 Report, the vignette was scored as incorrect. To illustrate, one student provided the following response:

Talk to parent, ask her if there is anything you can do to help. Subtly give parent agencies' information that deal with domestic abuse next time you meet. Arrange an appointment.

Here the student demonstrates knowledge of response but not report, and while an appropriate response to parents is useful, it is not in keeping with legal and policy guidance in terms of reporting potential or suspected child protection concerns to designated personnel. This example was coded as 2 due to the Response to the 'parent' but scored as incorrect due to failure to demonstrate knowledge of code 3 Report.

Table 8. Participants who demonstrated knowledge of REPORT

REPORT	Belfast		Dublin		Both	
	Pre- N=66	Post- N=66	Pre-N=83	Post-N=79*	Pre-N=149	Post- N=144
Correct	61 (92.42%)	52 (78.79%)	68 (81.93%)	57 (72.15%)	129 (86.58%)	109 (75.69%)
Incorrect	5 (7.58%)	1 (1.51%)	11 (13.25%)	9 (11.39%)	16 (10.73%)	10 (6.94%)
Incomplete	-	13 (19.7%)	4 (4.82%)	13 (16.46%)	4 (2.68%)	26 (18.05%)
TOTAL	66 (100%)	66 (100%)	83 (100%)	79 (100%)	149 (100%)	144 (100%)

*Notes: One post-test vignette was unreadable therefore excluded in final analysis

Table 8 illustrates that the vast majority of students from both groups were able to demonstrate knowledge of Report both pre-test and post-test; therefore all other action points will be useful for future development of programme content. When the incomplete vignettes are removed, Table 9 highlights a breakdown of action points recorded where code



3 Report was in evidence. Codes 2-6 are deemed accurate action points; however no student recorded all 5 action points either at pre-test or post-test stage. Only a few participants made reference to preventative education (code 5) or multi-agency collaboration/specialists (code 6).

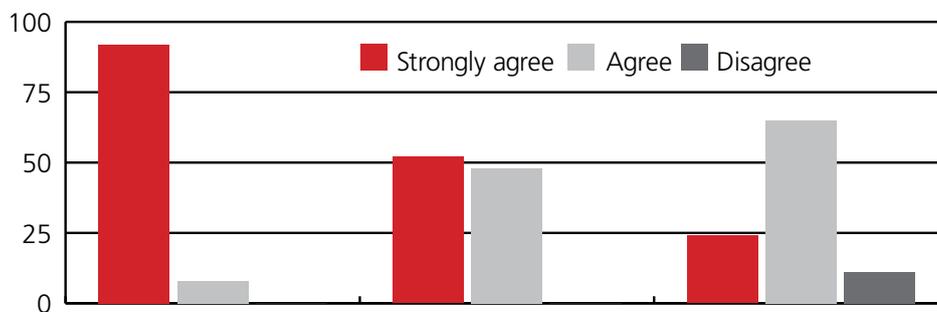
Table 9. Participants from both groups (ALL students) who demonstrated knowledge of REPORT only and REPORT with other action point(s)

Action points	Belfast		Dublin		Both	
	PRE- N=66	POST- N=66	PRE- N=83	POST- N=79	PRE- N=149	POST- N=144
REPORT frequency & %	61 (100%)	52 (100%)	68 (100%)	57 (100%)	129 (100%)	109 (100%)
REPORT only	27 (44.26%)	32 (61.53%)	26 (38.23%)	23 (40.35%)	53 (41.08%)	55 (50.46%)
REPORT + code 2	11 (18.03%)	5 (9.61%)	20 (29.41%)	23 (40.35%)	31 (24.03%)	28 (25.69%)
REPORT + code 4	21 (34.42%)	10 (19.23%)	17 (25%)	21 (36.84%)	38 (29.45%)	31 (28.44%)
REPORT + code 2 + 4	3 (4.92%)	1 (1.92%)	3 (4.41%)	11 (19.29%)	6 (4.65%)	12 (11%)

Learning and teaching evaluations

Participants were asked to rate several statements related to: the importance of the topic; engaging in arts-based education; and self-perceived knowledge development and confidence to deliver in practice (Figure 2.). Three key themes emerged from participant qualitative comments: pre-service preparation; expectations of initial teacher education; and effective use of arts-based education.

Figure 2. Aggregate group (ALL students from both groups) perspectives on the importance of the topic, knowledge development and confidence to deliver in practice (in percentages)



Pre-service preparation

The importance of pre-service preparation of this topic was very evident both in terms of the statement responses and additional comments provided in the boxes. Most of the qualitative comments indicated that students believe the topic to be so important in teacher education

that more opportunities to learn about and understand the issue are required.

Examples include:

Such topics are so important we should have them on a regular basis not just in one year group.

Definitely needed for teachers...more opportunities like this. Very worthwhile and meaningful.

Other students made reference to how the topic helped to improve their confidence or understanding of the topic, or helped prepare them for professional teaching practice:

Helped improve my confidence and understanding of how children may be affected by domestic abuse.

Very useful insight into a very important real life situation..helped me know how to deal with them in professional career.

A number of other qualitative comments were short and to the point yet still indicated recognition that engagement in the programme was worthwhile and beneficial:

Very informative and relevant issue

Was very beneficial, interesting and informative

Expectations on Initial Teacher Education

Three themes within this topic emerged as being important from the perspective of student teachers. These were related to the extent of provision, i.e. how long sessions should be; location of the topic in ITE, i.e. which year group it should be provided; and exposure, i.e. expectation that the topic should be a compulsory requirement in ITE. In terms of the extent of pre-service domestic abuse education, all students expressed the view that they would prefer to receive more content rather than change the content of the existing programme. Views expressed included the need for:

More regular throughout study and afterwards

More sessions needed throughout the degree programme for everyone

More regular classes on such topics which are so important

Students felt that they should be provided with some elements of pre-service child protection and safeguarding preparation from first year and that ideally content should be progressive:

Third year is perfect to get this but only as we got the background in first and second year.

First and second year should provide the basics like child abuse and emotional abuse and neglect; then get this in more depth in third and fourth year...will help for becoming qualified.

Was very happy but more training should be given throughout all years.

Where an indication of whether the programme should be compulsory or optional was made, all students felt that it should be compulsory in teacher education:

You just have to get this training.

This should definitely not be optional for anyone working with children.

Can't be optional...would mean some students go into classrooms without any knowledge on what to do and how to respond what to say to children; how to help.

Effectiveness of arts-based education

Students were of the view that the use of a dramatisation and other arts-based education

approaches to learning and teaching were beneficial in initial teacher education and in particular very useful when addressing sensitive topics like domestic abuse. Examples include:

Great way to address such a sensitive topic

An interesting and great way to deliver such a controversial topic

One student noted how the use of drama was a 'powerful' way to 'feel' more aware of domestic abuse context and impact as well as helping with their knowledge development:

Made me 'feel' more aware of the topic as well as 'know' about the topic – powerful.

Another student recognised the safety in arts-based education, especially when putting a sensitive topic like domestic abuse into context e.g.

The drama brought a serious real life event to us in a safe but meaningful context.

Most of the comments were related to arts-based education as a useful, interesting and effective learning and teaching methodology more generally. Students were also able to see how this approach might be transferrable to other learning and teaching opportunities in the undergraduate curriculum. Overall students appeared to welcome this approach, explaining that it helped to demonstrate practical examples that would be 'useful' for future practice and other learning and teaching topics:

Very effective and interesting way to teach a topic

This style of class should be used for other topics..hot-seating was class.

Useful way to see practical tips for when in the teaching environment

Address more issues through drama

Would like to see more of this drama for different areas of learning

Overall, participants did not see a need to change existing content of the programme but rather appeared keen to receive more of it, i.e. in terms of duration, and at an earlier stage of their pre-service learning, i.e. from first year of study. Any recommendations made for future development were related to learning more about how to respond to this issue in practice:

More practice examples on how to talk with children about these situations

Perhaps have more regular classes that deal with these issues within a school and examples of how they are dealt with.

I would like to learn more about what actions should be taken.

More in-depth discussion on what teachers should do when they suspect domestic abuse

More info on how to react as a teacher

More classroom examples on teachers dealing with children experience domestic abuse

Discussion

Domestic abuse is an ongoing and complex social issue and the importance of educating both adults, and children about their right to physical and psychological protection in the home is all too clear (Hester & Westmarland, 2005). In this study, student teachers strongly agreed that programme content was relevant to their pre-service education and that attendance at and involvement in such education contributes to knowledge development and skills acquisition. They equally felt that learning and teaching opportunities specific to the domestic abuse context and its impact on children should be made available to the wider childcare workforce trainees, and that it should be a compulsory aspect of initial teacher education in particular. Results indicate that student teachers are now more aware



of a number of important domestic abuse themes and that there is a need to develop pre-service preparation for specific roles in domestic abuse response and intervention. This section is presented in two main parts: benefits of the study, and training needs of students. Limitations are included and recommendations for future research and practice are made.

Benefits of the study

How children cope with exposure to domestic abuse is largely dependent on the network of social support available to them (Byrne & Taylor, 2007). Student teachers in this study clearly recognise themselves as a supporting adults and understand the importance of pre-service preparation for this role. One implication of the current study is that the programme raised awareness of a neglected issue in the undergraduate teaching curriculum in the hope that the knowledge base of future teachers would develop. Participation helped pre-service teachers to keep abreast of and potentially influence future practice in response to legal and policy directives and the needs of children, young people and families. Teachers are not yet expected to make a clinical diagnosis of domestic abuse or family violence in Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland, but they are required to raise concerns and make reports where necessary (DENI, 1999; DES, 2001; McKee & Dillenburger, 2009).

In light of the unique position of teachers in terms of access to the child population (McKee & Dillenburger, 2009) and the opportunity to recognise early indicators of distress as a result of abuse or violence (Buckley & McGarry, 2010), it is heartening to see that student teachers realise the extent of domestic abuse both at an individual level in schools and within the wider UK and Ireland context. Students were also aware of the difficulties for women in seeking help (Watson & Parson, 2005) and that most children do not want their teacher to know of personal circumstances experienced at home (Alexander et al., 2005; Holt et al., 2008).

Of great importance, given the impact on children, is that student teachers in this study now realise that a significantly high number of children living with domestic abuse are aware of what is happening (Radford et al., forthcoming, 2011). It seems that engagement in this programme not only increased knowledge that should contribute to future professional practice, but helped also to dispel one of the commonly held myths about domestic abuse: that children are untouched and safe if they are not directly involved (Buckner et al., 2004; Fusco & Fantuzzo, 2009). Understanding the context of domestic abuse, as well as increased knowledge of the legal requirements contained within education and childcare policy, should help future teaching professionals respond more effectively in practice.

Following engagement in the programme, more student teachers knew that domestic abuse can impact adversely on children's holistic development, including academic achievement (Buckley et al., 2006), behaviour (Cunningham & Baker, 2004; Meltzer et al., 2009) and relationships (Lundy & Grossman, 2005). Furthermore, students also recognised that many children would display trauma symptoms following exposure to or experiences of domestic abuse (Bogat et al., 2006; Martin, 2002).

These findings are important because if teachers are unable to recognise distress among children in the first place, they may fail to make a report (Bunting et al., 2009). This in turn can prevent early intervention and support which, as already documented, can jeopardize the developmental progress and personal ability of children (Lazenbatt, 2010; McIntosh, 2002;



Martin, 2002). Perhaps of greater concern is that delayed interventions, as a result of lack of knowledge, can place children at increased risk of physical assault or injury (Fantuzzo *et al.*, 2007; Stanley, 2011), sexual assault (Weinehall, 2005), or other forms of child trauma more generally, e.g. distress (McGee, 2000; Mullender *et al.*, 2002; Stanley, 2011).

Regardless of where or when domestic abuse education should be provided, participants in this study clearly recognised the importance of training and preparation for domestic abuse recognition, response and prevention in the school context. The fact that the vast majority of student teachers also recognised that younger primary school-aged children can be provided with preventative education is also a welcome finding. Evaluations of domestic abuse prevention through arts-based education contribute to participant knowledge gains and indicate high success rates for changing attitudes positively (Debbonaire *et al.*, 2006); set out guidelines for teaching about healthy relationships (Bell & Stanley, 2006), and are known to be easily mapped against the school curriculum (WAFNI, 2010). The novelty of a different approach to learning and teaching may well have influenced student teachers' positive feedback in learning and teaching evaluations. Understandably, it is important to listen to key stakeholders, but when these personal viewpoints are considered alongside the significant measure of knowledge development of the domestic abuse context, it seems that the use of drama was an effective learning tool for participants in this study.

Children have the right to be made aware of interventions and support services available to them through the statutory curriculum; the right to talk about their concerns with a trusted adult like a teacher, and the right to feel confident that responses will be sensitive, safe, child-centred and informed (UNCRC, 1989). Obvious barriers to having these rights upheld is highlighted in research where the lack of pre-service preparation to develop professional knowledge and understanding of the topic contributes to limited confidence in family violence and abuse response in practice (Buckley & McGarry, 2010; McKee & Dillenburger, 2009) and lack of knowing when to make a report to other professionals such as social services or the police (Bunting *et al.*, 2009). Part of the programme content was to introduce the use of preventative education in the primary school curriculum and, while not tested in this study in terms of statistical measures, there is evidence to suggest that this topic is worthy of further research and consideration in the Initial Teacher Education curriculum.

The findings from this study also echo the work of Lexton *et al.* (2005), Norman *et al.* (2008) and Respect (2010) whereby the use of hot-seating, normally used immediately after a dramatisation, is deemed a creative and empowering way to encourage personal reflections from adult participants about a character's behaviour and feelings. In this study, student teachers felt that the use of arts-based education was a powerful learning and teaching methodology in general, and in particular when addressing sensitive issues such as domestic abuse. Post-test results from the multiple choice questionnaire theme Prevention, and learning and teaching evaluation findings, indicate that student teachers see the importance of learning about and understanding their role in progressing preventative education in schools. However, as expressed by many student teachers, while the importance of this topic is clear, they lack the confidence to deliver it in practice. Thus the importance of building teacher confidence seems to be of equal importance to developing their knowledge. A number of training needs of student primary teachers are identified.



Training needs of student Primary Teachers

More work is required in relation to the importance of a whole school approach to domestic abuse response, as well as multi-agency collaboration and direct work with and support from violence against women specialists (theme Response). Lack of additional responses identified in post-test vignette scores indicate that student teachers would also benefit from more time to consider their role in continued observations and record keeping following a domestic abuse concern. This was evident in learning and teaching evaluations, whereby a significant minority of student teachers did not feel confident to respond to the issue directly in practice and recommended more practical examples to help build their confidence and further develop their knowledge of response in practice.

Organisations, including schools, initial teacher education providers and the wider childcare workforce need to be aware that a trauma sensitive response in school is not only good practice but in some circumstances a legal requirement. If teachers are to contribute to children's well-being, recognise the risk factors that may impinge on their lives, and respond to the specific needs of children, it seems that there is a need to address this theme during initial teacher education. Of particular importance is that teachers need to understand the relationship between domestic abuse and child maltreatment. While the GTCNI (2007, p6) states that pre-service teachers need to learn about and 'understand what is known about the factors that hinder learning' and provide examples of 'abuse' and 'trauma', there is no direct mention of domestic abuse, the impact of exposure on children and families, or how teachers (and students) should respond to the subsequent physical, emotional and behavioural difficulties displayed by children. There is no policy documentation in either Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland to help direct teacher education providers in pre-service preparation of domestic abuse education. It seems unrealistic to expect teacher educators, in Northern Ireland in particular, to effectively prepare students for their abuse and violence response in schools when the topic is inadequately characterised in pre-service education guidelines.

Perhaps those deemed to be in a position to influence policy should consider the Republic of Ireland recommendation that a 'module on child abuse [including domestic violence] should be included in pre-service programmes for the professional training of teachers' (DES, 2001, p107). More importantly, there is an urgent need to explore the pre-service preparation and practice experiences of student teachers in relation to delivery of the preventative education curriculum in schools so that teachers can 'contribute to the prevention of child abuse through curricular provision' (Department of Health and Children [DHC], 2004, p51) more effectively. Clearly a consistent message is required to ensure that teachers in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are adequately prepared for this important role. Various researchers have highlighted the narrow understanding of and response to domestic abuse by the wider childcare workforce (Pricewaterhouse Cooper, 2001). Reid and Gallagher (2009) add to the training debate and argue that all professionals, including teachers, need to be aware of listening to children to form part of professional training around domestic violence. They add that children will be empowered to seek help when facing domestic violence through, for example, keeping safe messages taught through statutory strands of the school curriculum (CCEA, 2007; Government of Ireland, 1999). Another obvious example of preventative education initiatives that might benefit children is the Helping Hands preventative education programme currently being delivered in some primary schools in Northern Ireland (WAFNI, 2010). Teachers too would likely benefit from skills and



knowledge gained by participating in training to enable them to deliver this directly to children.

Limitations

While awareness raising of the topic is an important start to violence prevention, it is difficult to measure whether these pre-service teachers will assess and intervene appropriately in practice. Effectiveness of the dramatisation was measured from the perspective of students' own perception; therefore it can only be assumed that they were honest and objective. The study was small in scale and restricted to a convenience sample of third year teaching students from two institutions only. The perspectives of the groups might not be generalisable to other areas of undergraduate study or indeed to other countries, since legal and policy directives relating to domestic abuse response may differ.

In addition, it is possible that students who did not attend the sessions did not feel that the content was important. Had this group participated and completed evaluations as well as pre- and post-test questionnaires, results might have been different. While the multiple choice questionnaire assessed knowledge development, there is no way to determine conclusively if student attitudes towards domestic abuse prevention changed positively. Despite these limitations and the obvious scope for development, the main messages are very promising and merit further attention in research and practice.

Recommendations

Despite best efforts of government by way of a cross-departmental statement on Safeguarding Children in Northern Ireland (OFMDFM, 2009), the Regional Strategy to Tackle Violence and Abuse (DHSSPS, 2008), and National Guidelines in the Republic of Ireland (DES, 2001), children continue to experience violence and abuse and continue to have unmet needs (Lazenbatt, 2010). The education system in general and teachers in particular continue to rely upon child protection policies and procedures to help when responding to children living with and exposed to domestic abuse and violence. Policies and guidelines that clarify the role of education in domestic violence assessment, response and support to assist multiagency collaboration are needed. In light of this, the first recommendation is to:

- Develop Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland policy specific to the pre-service domestic abuse education preparation needs of student teachers.

In relation to the first research question, even though the Initial Teacher Education curriculum addressed some element of domestic abuse education, these topics were only offered to students on an optional basis. Without adding to an already crowded curriculum, there is a clear opportunity to embed these issues within existing modules and structures in ITE. On this basis, the second recommendation is to:

- Continue to include core domestic abuse education content for all student teachers. This core content should continue to explore domestic abuse context and the impact on children and be embedded, where possible, into Initial Teacher Education programmes both North and South.

Despite students' substantial areas of knowledge development in relation to the second research question, student teachers increased their knowledge of core content in varying



degrees. Lack of consistency in terms of subject matter has implications for programme design and development. Teacher education providers and key stakeholders (e.g. student teachers, violence against women specialists) should communicate so that pre-service domestic abuse education preparation can meet the needs of student teachers. The third recommendation is to:

- Develop specific content based on the learning needs of student teachers. This content should include: the relationship between domestic abuse and child abuse; the role of schools in supporting children and teachers; the importance of multi-agency collaboration; specific procedures to follow in schools; and preventative education.

Finally, in relation to the perspectives of participants in this study, it is important to consider the use of different learning and teaching methodologies so that sensitive issues can be addressed more fully and allow students opportunities to build their confidence to deliver in practice and have time to reflect on their learning. The fourth recommendation is to:

- Continue to consider the use of arts-based education and to develop opportunities to engage in smaller group work with students to help build their confidence in practice. These activities should be as creative and flexible as possible and include additional practical examples and case scenarios for exploration.

Concluding remarks

A key theme in the literature is that improved outcomes for children can be achieved by addressing domestic abuse and reducing family violence. Teachers understandably cannot create resilient happy families, but they should be able to understand the barriers to success faced by many children living with or exposed to domestic abuse. Taking a whole school approach, and working collaboratively with other professionals and violence against women specialists, teachers can also contribute to prevention through education, but only if they receive appropriate training and have the confidence to deliver in practice.

The experience of domestic abuse is complex and likely to contain a range of co-existing and shifting emotions. As an emotive subject, it is likely that pre-service teachers and teacher educators will find it difficult to tackle and illustrate effectively through traditional approaches in higher education, such as mass lectures. The present study revealed that an arts-based education approach to address sensitive issues in the undergraduate curriculum is an effective, empowering and creative method of learning and teaching. It also highlights the need to develop programme content and policies to guide teachers and students' decision making in relation to domestic abuse identification, assessment, response and prevention in schools more effectively.



Appendix 1: Audit

Programme (please tick):

Teacher Education Primary

Teacher Education Post-primary

Other

Module Co-ordinator/Contact Tutor:

Please tick the appropriate sections and/or add comments where applicable	Module Title	Contact time within module e.g. 2 hours, & exposure e.g. compulsory, optional	Year Group/Level e.g. YR 1, Level 3 etc
Domestic Abuse and Implications for Children and Young People			
The extent of the problem e.g. prevalence			
The impact on parents/carers and families			
The impact on children and young people			
Recognising indicators in a school/educational setting e.g. trauma symptoms			
Responding to domestic abuse in an educational context e.g. reporting responsibilities			
Effective teaching strategies e.g. role-play, preventative education			
Supporting children and young people through crisis e.g. response and interventions, working with other professionals			
OTHER			



Appendix 2: Multiple Choice Questionnaire and Vignette

PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME ANYWHERE ON THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Age (optional): Under 22-years 22-25-years 26-30-years 30+ years

Gender (optional): Male Female

Have you attended any previous domestic abuse training in the last 3 years? Yes No

If yes, please state when and briefly describe:

NB For each question please tick ONE answer only and that DA = domestic abuse.

1. Which of the following statements do you think is the most likely to be true?

- (a) The likelihood of me teaching a child who is living with DA is low
- (b) The likelihood of me teaching a child who is living with DA is high
- (c) The likelihood of me teaching a child who is living with DA is not known

2. Guidance on DA response is contained within:

- (a) Childcare only Legislation and Policy
- (b) Childcare and Education Policy only
- (c) Education and Childcare Policy and Legislation

3. The risk of DA increases when parents abuse alcohol or drugs, or there is a family history of abuse:

- (a) Mostly
- (b) Sometimes
- (c) Rarely

4. The best way for teachers to learn about DA is through:

- (a) Pre-service/initial education and training
- (b) Single agency on the job training
- (c) Multiagency on the job training

5. Which of the following statements do you think is the most likely to be true?

- (a) DA response in a school setting should come from the specific or designated teacher
- (b) DA response in a school setting should come from the teacher who suspects it
- (c) DA response in a school setting should be based as a whole school initiative

6. Which of the following statements do you think is the most likely to be true?

- (a) Living with DA can result in traumatic stress among children
- (b) The impact of DA on children's learning is not clear as it varies
- (c) Children living with DA usually function normally in school



7. Which of the following statements do you think is most likely to be true?
- (a) Children don't want their teachers to know about DA experiences
 - (b) Most children will discuss their DA experiences if asked by teachers
 - (c) Only older children will discuss their DA experiences with teachers
8. Exposure to DA impacts negatively on children's classroom behaviour and relationships:
- (a) Mostly
 - (b) Sometimes
 - (c) Rarely
9. Teaching about DA should be provided in primary school:
- (a) To 8-year olds and above
 - (b) When an incident of DA occurs regardless of age
 - (c) To all primary school aged children
10. Only the designated teacher will have to work in multi-agency teams in response to DA:
- (a) Agree
 - (b) Disagree
 - (c) Unsure
11. Which of the following statements do you think is the most likely to be true?
- (a) The risk to the child ends when parents/carers separate
 - (b) Exposure to DA increases the risk factor for child abuse
 - (c) Risk to the child increases with age
12. Understanding of, and responding to, DA is the responsibility of:
- (a) Health and Social Care professionals
 - (b) Professionals with a legal responsibility to respond to DA
 - (c) All professionals working with children and young people
13. Which of the following statements do you think is the most likely to be true?
- (a) Most children know when DA occurs in the family home even if they don't see it directly
 - (b) Most children do not know when DA occurs in the family home
 - (c) Most children know when DA occurs, only when it is directly witnessed
14. Within the school setting, DA is more likely to be identified when:
- (a) The abused parent/carer presents with physical injuries
 - (b) The child's behaviour has changed
 - (c) The abused parent/carer asks for help
15. Teachers can best contribute to DA prevention by:
- (a) Recognising and reporting DA concerns
 - (b) Raising awareness of DA support groups to parents/carers
 - (c) Integrating personal safety concepts into the primary school curriculum



16. Which of the following statements do you think is the most likely to be true?

- (a) Most women leave an abusive partner after the first abusive incident
- (b) Most women find it difficult to leave an abusive partner
- (c) Women are generally safe from DA when pregnant

17. If a teacher suspects that a pupil is living with DA, their first response should be to:

- (a) Seek advice from the school Principal or other designated teacher
- (b) Ask the pupil if they want to talk to you about it
- (c) Ask the abused parent/carer if there is anything you can do to help

18. Information about DA can be taught by any primary school teacher, even without specialist training:

- (a) Unsure
- (b) Agree
- (c) Disagree

19. The adverse effect of DA on children's physical, mental and emotional health and development:

- (a) Is high because children are usually fully aware
- (b) Is unlikely because the majority of children are resilient
- (c) There is no impact

20. The number of children in the UK and Ireland who witness DA each year is probably in or around:

- (a) 1,000,000
- (b) 100,000
- (c) 1,000

Vignette Please read the following before providing your response in the box below:

Six year old Sara is a pupil in your class. She lives at home with her mother, father and two older siblings. In recent weeks, you have noticed that Sara has become slightly withdrawn during play and class activities. Earlier this week, Sara slapped another child when he moved her art picture out of reach. You have not witnessed this type of behaviour before. Today, when Sara's mum Beth arrives to collect her from school, you notice that Beth has what looks like finger-print type bruises on her throat.

What, if anything, should you do?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire



Appendix 3: Learning and Teaching Evaluation

Using the scale SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree. Please rate each of the following by ticking the appropriate box:

General Content/Information Provided (both Sessions)

The information provided on both days:	SA	A	D	SD
Is relevant for ALL student teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will be useful to revisit during professional teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Should be introduced earlier in the Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helped to develop my knowledge of the topic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Should be optional for students to attend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Should be compulsory in Teacher Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Anything else about content/information provided:

© Closed Doors, Open Minds (session 2 only)	SA	A	D	SD
Drama is an effective way to address sensitive topics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to see more interactive sessions in my degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arts-based education should be included earlier in my degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Role plays helped to develop my knowledge of the topic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The delivery style/approach is motivating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The performers demonstrated the roles clearly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The silent power point during the drama was effective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Anything else about arts-based education:



Please rate your self-perceived understanding, knowledge and confidence after participation

	SA	A	D	SD
Increased my understanding of DA context for families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased my understanding of DA impact on children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased my knowledge of DA indicators in children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased my knowledge of DA response in schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel more confident that I would recognise a child living with DA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel more confident that I could respond to a child living with DA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel more confident that I have increased my knowledge of DA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel more prepared to discuss sensitive topics with children in school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please suggest ways in which these kinds of sessions could be improved or developed:

Please feel free to add any additional comments:

Thank you for participating in the sessions and taking the time to complete this survey



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