

## **Continuing Professional Learning in England back in February 2005**

***It could have become coherent, cogent,  
comprehensive and consensual***

A few years earlier Secretary of State Estelle Morris launched her CPD Strategy<sup>i</sup>. It promised an opportunity to develop professional learning by, with and from professional educators. In my mind I connect this with the proposal from Denis Lawton in 1975<sup>ii</sup> for the profession to develop a national curriculum and, in the same year, Lawrence Stenhouse's encouragement of schoolteachers to perceive themselves as researchers<sup>iii</sup>. Perhaps Estelle might have been reviving (a little) what I now describe as professional proactive autonomy<sup>iv</sup>.

Just over a decade after the books of Lawton and Stenhouse the Conservative government began the development of a national curriculum complete with its own system of assessment backed up by high stakes inspection. These were, however, initiatives imposed upon educators and learners by government: not what Lawton meant at all and totally against the philosophy of Stenhouse who even envisaged inspectors supporting researching schoolteachers.

Morris's initiative faded from the scene. She resigned. Reading Tony Blair's book<sup>v</sup> reveals that she did not fit his template for a leader. For him leaders do not ask and learn. They instruct. They are followed.

Two governments, formed by what were supposed to be political parties with opposing values, each preferred to impose their views and not to listen and learn from the stakeholders<sup>vi</sup> before constructing policy.

Below is a piece that I wrote in 2005 for *Breaktime Magazine*. I believed that I was seeing the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) being transformed. It had been hostile to universities and anyone who might venture out of the legal/inspectorial/instrumental/official framework. Now it was beginning to become the Training and Development Agency (TDA) for schools led by someone more open minded and willing to lose an argument from time to time.

Almost five years on from Ralph Tabberer's speech the TDA had made noticeable progress despite the appointment of Ruth Kelly as Secretary of State. She was not a listener and unlike her predecessor, Charles Clarke, lacked the capacity to learn from losing arguments. Later we had Ed Balls as Secretary of State. Unfortunately, his inexperience coincided with and

compounded a huge miss-step by the TDA. This was the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL).

The Executive Committee of the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET) greeted with enthusiasm the news that England was to benefit from a compulsory masters degree for all newly qualified schoolteachers. I was at the meeting but was less enthusiastic. We already had a really good scheme that was annually evaluated and reasonably well subsidised<sup>vii</sup>. MTL, by contrast, was cheap and cheerless. In order to inject good quality, academics would have to work their socks off at great cost. They did. In commercial terms it was the equivalent of increasing the production and sale of a commodity that lost money on each item. Eventually the TDA put in a competent, experienced and deservedly well thought of director for MTL but that did not alter a business model that led to academic and financial insolvency.

The 'A' in TDA stands for Agency. It was an agent of government. That gave it some leeway to deploy relevant experience and expertise. It also provided a bridge between government and professional educators. On this occasion the TDA by-passed staff with relevant knowledge at a point when government was losing civil servants that knew their stuff and appointing a Secretary of State with no experience<sup>viii</sup>.

In 2010 we were given a different government. Education was handed over to Michael Gove and nothing mattered anymore because the professional learning, even the qualifying, of schoolteachers became of little importance as he set about fracking the school system.

## **Notes**

***In places below I have inserted comments (written eleven years after the original) in bold italic.***

***I never asked Ralph Tabberer what he meant by using the word 'continuous' when we might have expected 'continuing' (I make a further reference to this below).***

***CPD continues to be generally thought to stand for Continuing Professional Development.***

***By the way, by the time of MTL Ralph had left the TDA.***

***His actual speech was almost 3,300 words long so what I wrote for Breaktime Magazine was based on a personal summary. The full speech can be seen in the ANNEX. Back in February 2005 I emphasised what I felt was significant. Doing the same at another time and in another political/educational context I might have done this differently. Reading it now so might you.***

***I have altered font size a little in places and corrected what I believe to have been some slight grammatical errors without, I hope, changing my meaning.***

## **Regime Change for CPD**

**(Breaktime magazine February 2005)**

**“Teaching as a People Business” was the title of the speech made to the North of England Education Conference in January by Head of the Teacher Training Agency Ralph Tabberer. It adds to a number of speeches, talks and articles coming from Ralph Tabberer recently as he builds up the picture of what CPD in schools will look like in the next few years.**

There is a point in his speech where Ralph Tabberer talks of establishing “a regime for everyone’s training and development.” He says that he prefers the word “regime” to the word “culture” when discussing the changes ahead. So, we have been warned, regime change is on its way.

He begins his speech by asserting that schools and the workforce are in “good shape” but then outlines the challenges for those engaged in what he sees as “*the people business*”.

Over the next five years we need to make progress in:

- developing a whole new way of thinking about all the other adults in schools;
- raising our expectations that every member of staff is engaged in *continuous* professional development, within the fabric of every school day;
- realising that we shall bear more responsibility for strengthening children and family services.

Forthcoming changes involving workforce re-modelling will have considerable impact upon the way in which CPD is managed within schools. The TTA itself is likely to become the Training and Development Agency for Schools with a remit that is likely to expand to include responsibility for the whole school team, not just teachers as at present.

The TTA has been asked by government to do more for CPD. This means working with the DfES, the General Teaching Council for England, the National College for School Leadership, LEAs, subject associations and universities and colleges. It also means bringing some coherence to what can be a very confusing, fragmented and unfocussed CPD world.

***DfES stood for Department for Education and Skills. The history of changes to the nomenclature of what we might think of as the Ministry of Education is a subject all of its own<sup>ix</sup>.***

**As the notion of 'Child' came to the fore so Local Education Authorities (LEAs) merged their work with other relevant government services. There was a clear strategy for this and gradually more and more CPD related policy meetings took place in the offices of the TDA rather than in the ministry<sup>x</sup>. There are no LEAs any more.**

**There is also, courtesy of Michael Gove, no longer a General Teaching Council for England, unlike the rest of the UK and the Republic of Ireland.**

**The leadership college (NCSL) and the TDA engaged in a sort of merger during which they became the National College for Teaching and Leadership and subject to much more governmental gravitational force.**

Ralph Tabberer wants to see more sustained CPD for all. He believes that effective programmes of CPD have the following characteristics.

- The training and development should be based on a common and clear vision of what teaching should look like.
- Well-defined standards of classroom practice should be used.
- There should be a subject, or other sharp classroom, focus to the development work.
- The programme should adopt a problem-based approach to achieving improvements.
- The programme should be sustained, probably over 20 to 30 days, or more.
- Support should be secured in the form of coaching and mentoring throughout, from experienced and skilled teaching colleagues.

And the key point for him is that there must be an impact upon teacher behaviour and pupil performance. "There will be new criteria developed this year for Excellent Teacher Status and we should make it clear that people who wish to achieve such a status have been actively engaged not in the bits and pieces of CPD that predominate now, but in sustained programmes, of whatever form".

**The term Problem-Based Learning had become fashionable. Some years earlier I had discovered it while evaluating medical education programmes at the University of Liverpool. The big surprise was that it was perceived to be new rather than merely one of a variety of approaches to learning employed by most schoolteachers, particularly in primary schools, during the course of an average day.**

**It seems to be a feature of professional learning that when a profession discovers a technique it never occurs to them that another profession might have been using it for years. What Ralph Tabberer was advocating in terms of cross professional working might have done something to ameliorate this problem. But once one profession has stuck a label on a technique or a concept and shouted loudly enough about its great 'discovery' it controls the discourse. The notion of the classroom as a**

**'black box', for example, owes much to systems theory in particular but its origins are seldom acknowledged. Political scientists would be surprised to know that educationalists 'discovered' it.**

**The term 'improvement' could not, however, have been problematised. Not even semi-independent agencies of government would have the courage to do that. By 2005 the concept of 'improvement' had long been captured by governments who reserved to themselves the power to define and re-define it.**

**Ralph Tabberer spoke about sustained programmes of twenty to thirty days. It has always been a problem that what we used to call In-Service Education and Training (INSET) was perceived as a set of events or short courses. His use of the word 'programme' indicates altered official thinking, though thinking that lagged far behind members of the profession, LEAs and universities. He also prompted us to wonder if we were moving yet further from 'continuing', as in a later stage beyond 'initial', to 'continuous', as Stenhouse saw the role of the teacher/researcher.**

**'Excellent Teacher Status' was also known as 'ET Status'. That must have been why it was so hard to discover any ETs in the system.**

His speech leads us to expect changes to the Threshold criteria and possibly to Advanced Skills Teacher status and leadership progression.

"And we will do well when we make clear, nationally, a simple message for all teachers-from the beginning of their careers-that if they make a difference in pupils' lives, if they invest in their own development and if they actively support development of others, they will progress well."

But the schools in which teachers do all this will change. It is not only workforce remodelling that will affect the way that teachers work but the Children's agenda. The stakes in training and development are about to be raised<sup>xi</sup>.

We know that the TTA have written to Ruth Kelly, the new Secretary of State, about how they see the future for CPD. We must wait to see how its vision fits hers and, if it does, how other stakeholders can be drawn in.

**The relationship between the TDA and a Secretary of State (in public at least) was choreographed. Towards the end of a calendar year the Director would send a letter summarising the previous twelve months and asking for 'a steer' regarding anticipated developments. In response would be a friendly letter containing the phrase, 'I am minded to'. This was a form of words that might signify considerable leeway regarding the future or disguise compulsion to strictly follow a government line. 'Or else' was not a phrase that you would see but from time to time you might detect it lurking behind much nicer phrases.**

Meanwhile, you may wish to ask yourself if you have the human and financial resources to manage the sustained continuing professional development of the staff of a school that includes a range of services for children. Making a “regime change” in CPD, as in other government policies, is probably the easy part.

Cliff Jones February 2005.

*The last sentence was my second attempt at a subtle reference to Tony Blair’s interventionist foreign policy, particularly in Iraq. I was also somewhat disheartened by Ruth Kelly. Shortly before she got the job her predecessor had not only admitted at a face-to-face meeting that he was learning from losing arguments but also arranged for more such meetings. Kelly cancelled them all<sup>xii</sup>.*

*To return to my title, whatever chance we had of becoming coherent, cogent, comprehensive and consensual disappeared in 2010.*

### Some useful links

The link below is to the current governmental standard for what it continues to see as ‘professional development’ not learning. It is not statutory and only applies to England.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standard-for-teachers-professional-development>

After the government opened consultation for the above standard I wrote the piece in the link below. I am aware that I sent far too much material. In my defence I enter the plea of insufficient time to write a short response. I also have the sense of belonging to a future that is being overtaken by the past.

<http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/SupportOrConstraintForSchoolTeachersInEngland.pdf>

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### Endnotes

Be warned, they contain some of my poetry.

i

I now feel that I was insufficiently appreciative of Estelle Morris at the time. She was, after all, a fellow member of the National Union of Teachers (NUT) and probably back then I had less understanding of the extent of Tony Blair’s ignorance of how to combine government and politics. Here is a link to what she was offering in terms of professional learning.

[https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/200\\_5.pdf](https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/200_5.pdf)

ii

Denis Lawton's *Class, Culture and the Curriculum* (1975) proposed a form of National Curriculum based upon prior collective professional discussion of social values. Lawton was a member of the Politics Association, set up in 1971 for teachers of politics. Emerging from that Association was the 1978 Report on Political Literacy.

iii

In 1975 Lawrence Stenhouse produced *An Introduction To Curriculum Research And Development*. It was an Open University set book. The Times Educational Supplement called it 'a profoundly important book' and predicted that it would be read widely. That was a time when thinking and experimenting about what and how to teach and what and how to assess were regarded as proper activities for professional educators and when universities appointed professors of curriculum development: a time when at least some educational policy was made on the ground.

Although he began and did much of his work in Scotland it was in England at a time when the Teaching Council (not the later GTCE) was dominated by educators that he became part of, and a force for, professional research activity. He even saw school inspectors as collaborators with and enablers of schoolteachers undertaking research. We have moved far away from that position and now, monitored by inspectors, must hit targets set up by others.

iv

In the rather long essay in the link below I develop my thinking in terms of phases of change. 'Professional proactive autonomy' is one of those phases.

<http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/WebFor%20DH%20Lawrence.pdf>

v

Here is an extract from my review of Tony Blair's book.

*What does he have to say about Estelle Morris who resigned as Secretary of State for Education? According to him she is one of those people who are simply not fit for the top jobs. He takes no regard of the fact that she had to work with a boss (him) who was pushing policy in a direction that was the opposite of what had been agreed by the Party. He was lucky that she did nothing to build up opposition to him within the Party; an opposition that would have been based upon long-held, agreed and well-tested socialist values. She and the Party did not want university tuition fees or Academies but he did. He knows that he was a good leader because he could change his mind when it suited him and defeat his own Party. He seems to despise her and them for not fighting him hard enough.*

Here is the full review. Perhaps the title says it all.

<http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/bookReviewBlair.pdf>

vi

I think it is fair to say that these days Will Hutton is somewhat displeased that his notion of a stakeholder society was first welcomed and then distorted by Tony Blair. The following link takes us back to that time just before the General Election of 1997. I believe that Hutton has always argued for social fairness.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/tony-blair-puts-meat-on-the-stakeholder-bones-1324167.html>

vii

Here is the link to the original paper that established the means by which the postgraduate professional development programme (PPD) was annually evaluated. There is more about the programme on the *activities* page of the website.

[www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk](http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk)

<http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/ppd10.doc>

viii

The link below provides some history of how the numbers of civil servants have fluctuated. I believe that a problem is that governments either find it difficult or cannot be bothered to synchronise loudly proclaimed intentions to reduce the size of government with equally loudly proclaimed plans to make massive changes. They also tend not to consult people with knowledge when they do this and writing about it I have often used the phrase *No consultation but lots of consultants*. Who else takes up the slack when those that know are forced into early retirement?

<http://www.civilservant.org.uk/information-numbers.html>

Here is my review of a book describing a similar problem in the USA.

<http://www.criticalprofessionallearning.co.uk/assets/SEARReviewBrownJacobs.pdf>

ix

I wrote the following poem inspired by Britain's greatest poet, E.J. Thribb of Private Eye. It commemorated the closure of the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS). It had lasted two years.

### So Farewell Then DIUS (an epic poem)

'We shall achieve World Class Excellence'

that was your catchphrase

'We are building for the future'

that was another

'goodbye'

that was your latest

er....that's it

Kevin's mum says 'What was DIUS?'

Cliff Jones (67 and a bit) cont'd p94

First published in Post 16 Educator [www.post16educator.org.uk](http://www.post16educator.org.uk)

x

Meetings on CPD chaired by civil servants such as Richard Harrison clearly showed that inside the ministry there were people that knew a lot and, just as important, wished to talk and exchange. They did not, however, encompass all the professions contributing to the Children's Agenda and so it made sense to move things over to the TDA. Unfortunately, combined with a loss of civil service numbers this helped to disconnect the ministry from what was happening on the ground.

xi

The following poem may be a little unfair given that the meeting I had just attended three years after Ralph Tabberer's speech was a demonstration that we might be getting close to fulfilling what he hoped for. By 2008 I had, however, had more than my fill of New Labour phraseology. In order to write the poem, composed as I left the

meeting, all I had to do was to quote what came out of the mouths of anyone working directly or indirectly for the government.

**Lines on the Inaugural Meeting of the National Advisory Group for Professional Development for the Children's Workforce in Schools on the 24th September 2008 at 151 Buckingham Palace Road London**

**Born of the bullshit  
Risen from the rhetoric  
Smug in their certainty  
The policy pushing people**

**Calling for coherence  
Driving out dissenters  
Keeping to the message  
The policy pushing people**

**Lengthening the lever  
Looking for the fulcrum  
Applying the forces  
The policy pushing people**

**Targeting the outcome  
Measuring the impact  
Climbing the league table  
The policy pushing people**

**Following best practice  
Hiring consultants  
Dreaming of the honours list  
The policy pushing people**

**Implementing strategy  
Broadening the remit  
Reforming and developing  
The policy pushing people**

**Transforming the culture  
Building capacity  
Enforcing entitlement  
The policy pushing people**

**Emphasising relevance  
Embedding procedure  
Committed to improvement  
The policy pushing people**

**Going on for ever  
Adapting to each minister  
Seeking preferment  
The policy pushing people**

**So it's....**

**Back into the bullshit  
Returning to the rhetoric  
Devising further strategies  
The policy pushing people**

xii

I wrote the briefing paper for UCET's meeting with Charles Clarke when he was Secretary of State. It was a very satisfying meeting at which he accepted all our points and (I paraphrase) said that he was learning so much from losing arguments that we must have lots more such meetings. Imagine how good that felt to the body representing all the universities engaged in the education of teachers. We were going through the textbook channels. Very soon afterwards Ruth Kelly replaced him and cancelled all the meetings. She received her instructions about policy from the sofa! We had no access to the sofa. Under New Labour the text book channels of politics were silted up.

## ANNEX

*Here is the full speech*

### Teaching as a People Business

Ralph Tabberer  
Teacher Training Agency

#### Confidence

We ought to start this year confidently. There are strong signs that our schools are in good shape, not just because there have been continuing improvements in pupil achievement but because the workforce is in better shape too.

To any industry, there is no more important resource than the people who make up its workforce. This is particularly true of teaching. Research and inspection evidence across the decades has emphasised that in schools, it is the quality of the teaching that is the most important influence on pupil achievement.

Everything about schools cries out that ours is a people business. Perhaps, *the* people business. If you ask most teachers what motivates them, it will be the difference they know they can make in young people's lives.

One signal of the greater strength of our schools is the state of teacher recruitment. We are in our sixth successive year of rises in recruitment to teacher training. In 1999, recruitment was under 27000 for the year; in 2005 it will exceed 41000 – more than 50 per cent better. There are more people on our conventional undergraduate and postgraduate training courses than at any time since 1975, when Harold Wilson was Prime Minister. And there will be more than 6000 people this year on the Graduate Teacher Programme and our other 'on-the-job' training options.

These data are better than opinion polls for representing the improved status of teaching over the last six years. These figures arise from real career choices by real people, in a very competitive labour market. With more than 14000 of those coming in aged 30 plus, no wonder the Guardian refers to teaching as the 'second career of choice in the economy'.

The TTA's new recruitment campaigns reflect the improvements I am talking about. You may recall the advertisements shown in 1997, which filmed famous people reciting the names of the teachers that most influenced them. This was a part of the 'No-one Forgets a Good Teacher' campaign. In 2005, we do not need to borrow famous people to promote teaching

and our schools. In our new advertisements – our research has shown us – we can again use real children, and the excitement and energy that they bring to our working environment. Seeing schools as they are is enough to keep recruitment numbers high. As is the new strapline, 'Use Your Head'. The status of teaching has risen significantly over the last few years.

And don't let any stories about retention problems distract you. The proportion of people we lose from the profession each year has barely changed over the last decade even though in the labour market as a whole, occupational mobility has risen significantly. We always want to do better, but at between seven and ten per cent of our workforce leaving each year, our losses are at a level that most other industries would die for.

Yes, this people business is in pretty good shape.

### **Pushing on**

The challenge for us and for our schools, however, is always how to do even more and even better. Every business, every industry, every public service faces that same challenge. In schools, it is all just so much the keener because of the vital economic and social role that schools play.

As a people business that wants to improve, it makes sense for us to look carefully at the ways we can bring about a significant step forward in our workforce – in its capacity, in its quality and in its impact. I believe that over the next five years, no longer, we need together to think about pushing on hard in three critical areas:

First, by making much more of our real numbers – that is by developing a whole new way of thinking about all the other adults in schools. This work has begun.

Second, by making much more of training and development – we ought to raise our expectations significantly about every member of staff being engaged in *continuous* professional development, within the fabric of every school day. This, we have circled for years but not yet achieved.

Third, in our reach – that is, we need to come to terms with the disproportionate responsibility we must bear in strengthening children and family services for the future. This is almost wholly new.

It sounds like a lot to ask but, as I have said, we are in pretty good shape and it is a not really a question of whether or not we should do these things, it is just a question of when.

### **The Numbers**

First, we must make much more of our real numbers. As a people business, we ought to be particularly sensitive to the massive increases going on in the numbers and diversity of school staff.

Recent progress has been stunning. The teaching workforce runs at about 430,000 people and has experienced a steady rise over the last five years. The support workforce on the other hand – from the caretaker and the midday supervisor to the classroom assistant and the learning mentor – now runs somewhere around 400,000 too, and the expansion has come very quickly indeed. The trick we need to pull here is to shift all of our thinking in schools from planning around a teaching profession to planning round the whole school team.

Consider these developments. It is now conventional for primary head teachers to invest in classroom support for all of their classroom teachers and we are, surely, fast approaching a time when being a primary teacher will mean having your own Personal Assistant. In

secondary schools, the time is quickly coming when every teaching team could have at least one full time, dedicated and skilled support assistant.

These will soon be expectations, and our new norms. Are we putting in the preparations we need to get the most out of these new workforce patterns?

There are fabulous experiments under way, to test new deployments of staff. For example:

My own organisation has been at the heart of developing a new senior classroom support tier, the Higher Level Teaching Assistant, and we are well on our way to having the first 7000 of these on course for recognition in this financial year. Next year, we aim to bring on 14000.

Secondary schools have been pioneering the imaginative use of many types of support staff – initially in administrative, cover supervisor and learning mentor roles, but more recently with new responsibilities such as a ‘progress chaser’, someone who saves the teachers work by pursuing the tardy (often, the boys) to complete their homework and coursework assignments on time.

The National Remodelling Team has a working partnership with every Local Education Authority, designed to deliver on improvements in staff deployment and teacher workload.

The benefits are many. Not only are we saving teachers time so that they can concentrate on what they are trained for, but we are also bringing the goal of personalising education that much closer. And there is the added bonus that we are adding significantly to the goal of creating a better qualified national workforce: more than 10000 school support staff are taking up Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications this year.

The challenge ahead is for all of us to see the wider school team as an integral part of teaching and learning. I am looking to the inspectors and the researchers in our system, for example, to turn their attention to this area of our schools, and not with sweeping generalisations. We know that any impact on raising standards will be gradual at first, with the results of schools that do not properly train and deploy their staff washing out the results of those that do. What we need to know from inspection and research is altogether more forensic, that is more about the conditions under which support staff make a difference. It's a time for the evidence to be collected and used formatively, rather than summatively. Such evidence will help us to make the most of the new numbers we have in our schools.

The changes that are coming will affect every school, every LEA and every national body. There are proposals in the new Education Bill to rename and reorientate my own organisation, the Teacher Training Agency. Subject to Parliament, our name will be changed soon from the TTA to the TDA – the Training and Development Agency for Schools. This signifies that our new role will be, not to think about the teachers alone, but to work with partners such as the LGA and the National Remodelling Team to improve the effectiveness and deployment of the whole school team.

## **Training and development**

In a people business, we know it is not just the numbers that makes a difference, it is the quality. And if we are going to make a big step forward in quality, we ought to look into ways we can further improve training and development in schools.

For some reason, training and development is almost always a vexed area. Unquestionably, it's an expensive item, either in terms of cash or time, often both. I know few countries in the world where they think they have got the quality of it right. There are a wealth of different approaches and models; in fact, more than any other, the area is cluttered with initiatives. It's

not easy to show the impact of many of them on classroom behaviour or pupil attainment. It is easy to get stuck in arguments with the workforce about entitlements and responsibilities.

It is essential that we find a good way forward and I believe one of the tricks we need to take is to use our existing rewards and incentives better. Let me come back to this point in a moment.

Last September, Charles Clarke asked TTA to expand its role not just to include the wider school workforce but also to give more help in what is traditionally called CPD: the continuing professional development of teachers. We are working with a lot of organisations already – the DfES, the General Teaching Council, the National College for School Leadership, LEAs, subject associations, and universities and colleges, to name just a few – to try to understand existing strengths and weaknesses. What is coming over already is the fact that, outside of the National Strategies, which I think should be classified as government change programmes rather than CPD, a lot of training and development in this country has become fragmented: teachers taking up bits and pieces rather than being directed towards more targeted and sustained activities.

If we let this go on, it will be a big waste. Research is categorical that, organised properly, training and development programmes give schools the best ‘bangs for their bucks’ in terms of impact on school and improvement and pupil outcomes, better than reductions in class size, better than ICT initiatives, better even than the use of more classroom assistants. But if the training and development is in bits and pieces, research is equally clear that the effects simply disappear.

Somehow we need to tilt the balance in CPD back towards sustained programmes. I suggest there are two ways to do this. The first is to remind schools that what matters in training and development is to establish a regime for everyone’s training and development. Several researchers have clarified the key components of effective programmes for teachers. These characteristics tend to appear again and again:

- The training and development should be based on a common and clear vision of what teaching should look like
- Well-defined standards of classroom practice should be used
- There should be a subject, or other sharp classroom, focus to the development work
- The programme should adopt a problem-based approach to achieving improvements
- The programme should be sustained, probably over 20 to 30 days, or more
- Support should be secured in the form of coaching and mentoring throughout, from experienced and skilled teaching colleagues

The key point, however, is that for it to have an impact on teacher behaviour and pupil performance, the research says that training and development must display all of these characteristics. If any one element is missing, the chances are that the impact will be lost. That is why ‘regime’ is the right word, certainly a better word than ‘culture’.

And notice that there is nothing in these criteria about the starting point for training and development. It simply does not matter if the programmes start from within the school, maybe within a good networking initiative, or from outside, say through a Masters course. The important thing in training and development is not the starting point, but the tail.

Let me now come back to the second trick that we must take, which is surely to use our rewards and incentives better. I believe we would get across the right messages if we ensured that at every possible level in our profession, we made progress dependent not just on performance but on a solid record of sustained training and development. There will be new criteria developed this year for Excellent Teacher Status and we should make it clear that people who wish to achieve such a status have been actively engaged not in the bits and pieces of CPD that predominate now, but in sustained programmes, of whatever form.

Better still if we apply a third criterion, proposed within the DfES Five Year Strategy (page 66), published in July 2004: that those progressing should have acted as expert coaches and mentors as well.

We ought to re-write the rules for Threshold criteria so that they convey the same message. Then there are the rules for Advanced Skills Teacher status too, not to mention progression in the schools leadership channel. We can begin to make steps to improve training and development in schools when we recognize its central important to us as a people business and when we recall that people need to give time to develop and renew their skills.

And we will do well when we make clear, nationally, a simple message for all teachers – from the beginning of their careers – that if they make a difference in pupils' lives, if they invest in their own development and if they actively support the development of others, they will progress well.

## **Our Reach**

Third, let's consider our reach. Of the many challenges ahead of us, the one that stands out for me as the most demanding is the Children's agenda. The trick we need to take here is to make what appears to be a massive new demand on schools into a major new source of support for our conventional work – in raising pupils' standards of achievement.

In truth, our schools have already been faced with a dilemma. On the one side, they strive to raise standards and the evidence is clear that, to succeed, they will be unwise to be distracted from a strong academic agenda. On the other hand, the children who are now going to hold them back in their aspirations are those who have more significant learning difficulties: special needs, social disadvantages, language difficulties, and family disruption that causes them to have to move from school to school. These children are usually distinguished by the multiple setbacks they experience to their educational progress and they need more from our schooling system than a straightforward academic orientation. They need a different treatment.

Which way to go? Does a school become a fortress of academic excellence in their community, the drawbridge safely raised through the day so that external threats and disadvantage have the least possible impact on the learning environment? Or does a school try to work with its drawbridge down?

My answer is the same as that which is being given by a lot of schools and local authorities already. Of course, it is that we are a people business and we must address the needs of all children, not just the 75 to 80 per cent we are currently getting up to national expectations at 7, 11, 14 and 16. There are no easy answers for this group of young people, but there are roughly 15000 hours of formal schooling standing between the disadvantages they carry at the age of four or five and their prospects as they leave school at 16 or, we hope, later. Surely these hours will be better used if schools can call quickly on better integrated children and family support services.

And our system will be better still if we can extend what schools offer to those with particular disadvantages to a lot more than 15000 hours. We need schools and their staff to extend their reach down to children who are under four or five.

Unquestionably, a bigger reach for schools – to take on a greater role in removing barriers to children's learning, in ensuring their wellbeing, in safeguarding the child – will need additional resources and it strikes me that the new promises from the Treasury for a ten year investment in better childcare and early education, to add to the existing investment in Sure Start, are extremely important. Unquestionably, a bigger reach for schools will also bring many of them, and some of us, into less familiar territory, even more closely engaged with the targeted services, many of which find themselves sorely stretched.

It puts our school workforce recruitment and supply problems in schools in perspective when you realise that we worry about one to two per cent vacancy rates, while the under-supply of children's social workers in some parts of London peaks at over 40 per cent. This is why I suggest that schools will need to take a disproportionate part in the Children's agenda.

A classic case of threat or opportunity. I believe that if we grasp the opportunities offered by a broader investment in Children, we can use the investment to improve schools at the same time. Paradoxically, the new demands mean we must open our minds to taking responsibility for more extended services while we keep keenly focused, as teachers and in our support to teachers, on the need to deliver even higher academic, not to mention vocational, standards.

I simply cannot see how we will ever tackle some of the challenges of our cities unless we are prepared to deploy and resource our schools for this agenda.

## **People**

I began by describing the work of schools as a people business, perhaps *the* People Business. It is people who will raise standards in schools and who will see us through the challenges of the Children's agenda, the 14-19 reforms ahead and much besides.

I believe it is by thinking more about our way ahead in terms of people – how do we increase their capacity and their impact - that we can strengthen further a far more confident sector than we have seen for quite some time. A binding theme of this North of England conference is 'leading together'. That means that now, more than ever, we should recognise the needs and contributions of people. We should involve the greater numbers we now have better in our endeavours. We must raise the stakes in training and development, the better to ensure continuing quality.

I leave you with a slightly amended version of a well-known social anthropologist's most famous dictum. Margaret Mead died just over a quarter of a century ago but her words still have resonance now, particularly for their optimism about the human spirit:

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed **people** can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*

(Margaret Mead, 1901 to 1978)