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The Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education

E-NEWS

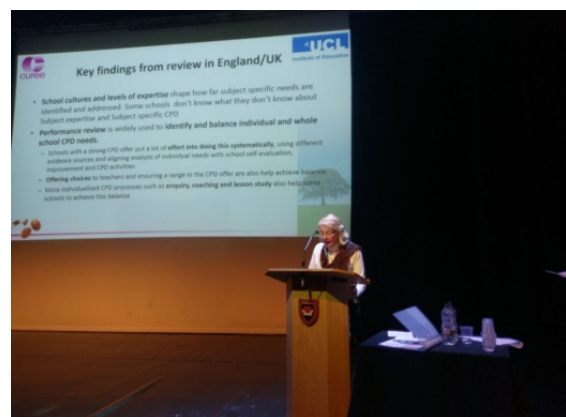
CUREE Enewsletter, March 2018 Edition



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The Philippa Blog

Spring is coming, allegedly - even though we are still battling with new snow whilst catching up with things that got postponed by the last snow. But as the days lengthen, horizons expand. So here is a question expanding my thinking this Spring - arising from our exploring our recent research with schools and teachers across the country. *Why do international, large scale surveys (and in local English ones, suggest teachers in England are much less enthusiastic about exploring how **subjects** can be brought alive, than their peers in other countries- especially high performing ones?*



ITE in England is unusual in offering only one initial training year.

Unsurprisingly, trainee teachers who have just spent three years exploring a subject in depth want to focus on developing skills and knowledge about pedagogy and classroom management. Schools and universities focus there too. But in other countries, students of teaching use knowledge of pedagogy and the curriculum to interrogate subject knowledge as it develops - and vice versa. For example, when I visited South Korea as part of An OECD Expert group evaluating initial teacher education just before Christmas, I was fascinated by a course students followed across all four years of training - in critiquing text books. This seemed to be a very practical lens for integrating subject, curriculum and pedagogic knowledge. *Are we failing our teachers by over separating these three important fields of knowledge?*

Once qualified teachers carry on accessing around three times less subject/curriculum specific CPD than their international peers. As **our new research** shows, practice in England is out of kilter with the rest of the world. Even though teachers in England say they would like a little more subject specific CPDL than they get, what they are looking for is still only a small fraction of the content specific CPDL that teachers in other countries get - and value greatly. For example, while just under 50% of teachers in England had participated in curriculum-related CPD in the 12 months before TALIS, almost 90% of teachers in Shanghai and 80% of teachers in Singapore had done so. Our research suggests a number of reasons for this including:

- The fact that a lot of subject specific CPD is external - which makes links with the day job and differentiation hard
- Competition for teachers' attention and external pressures drive teachers towards CPD focussed on practical and immediate ways of responding to urgent demands (from legislation e.g. re safeguarding, from assessment changes, from accountability measures). Changes in examinations and assessments were one of the most common forms of CPD for teachers in England to surface in our research. But too much of this was really briefing rather than CPD to help teachers work with their peers on the implications of those changes
- The quality of a lot of CPD is relatively weak. The focus is on CPD support offered to teachers by internal or external CPD facilitators who are too often divorced from the ongoing embedded professional learning (CPDL) needed to apply what they learn in classrooms; a disconnect linked with a cycle of low expectations

Does it matter? Well the new research and the review of reviews it builds on our report on **Developing Great Subject Teaching** both suggest this really matters. If we don't contextualise generic pedagogic CPD e.g. about mind sets, meta cognition or assessment, for different curriculum contexts, it is

unlikely teachers will be able to own those strategies. In particular, generic pedagogic CPD it makes it much harder for teachers to use new strategies effectively and efficiently. So generic CPD on its own adds to the time pressures we all know have to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Better CPDL, properly contextualised for subjects and sustained over time might take longer to bear fruit but it can save time – and a great deal of wasted effort

MasSSIF, PaSSIF or CurSSIF?

Since the new Strategic School Improvement Fund was put in place last Spring, writing or advising on draft proposals has become a regular feature of our lives here at CUREE Towers. Our success rate is pretty good – 100% with bids we actually wrote and 85% with bids we wrote *or* advised on in the first two rounds.

We have been working for several weeks now with a number of school groups assembling Round 3 proposals. DfE have learned from the previous rounds; they have provided more detailed guidance but they have also made the bidding requirements more specific and detailed (without lifting the word limits!).

As the deadline for submissions looms large, we are getting more approaches to help. We have a little (but rapidly diminishing) capacity to assist other projects so I have prepared a short list of tips and tricks for those we won't have the capacity to support directly. This is an excerpt from a much longer list based on our experience over two previous rounds; spotting the aspects of the bidding process people have the biggest difficulties with and building in feedback from the DfE team overseeing the process.

Paul Crisp - Managing Director

1. **Answer the “exam question”:** This might seem obvious but a surprising number of bidders don't provide the information the questions ask for
2. **Check your bid is eligible:** This is a school improvement fund. Though there is some flexibility particularly for SEND and Early Years provision, you do have to be working with schools to improve practice within them not setting up alternative provision or bypassing schools to work directly with the children
3. **It can't be magic:** to have to show explicitly why and how your solution will solve the problem you have identified. You have to provide the 'golden thread' linking outcome to problem and the evidence which underpins it
4. **Keep it simple:** yes, schools have complex problems but you shouldn't be trying to solve all of them in one go. Complex projects have a low success rate
5. **Think carefully about capacity:** be explicit about the nature and quantity of the expertise you bring to the project – bear in mind the capacity of the supported schools to make use of the support
6. **Be detailed and specific about your short and long-term outcomes:** and make sure your KPIs and your action plan tell the same story
7. **Put in enough project management:** This may be the biggest single project you have undertaken so you need to do it well and put in the right type and amount of project support

QTLS Consultation

Friday 9th March represented the closing date on the Department for Education's consultation which focussed on Strengthening Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and Improving Career Progression for Teachers. The consultation asked questions about how we can improve the experience for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) seeking to gain QTS and help them to feel more supported through their new learning journey. With the current climate of teacher retention and with CUREEs extensive experience of working alongside teachers we felt very strongly about this consultation.

The questions that we selected to focus on were based primarily on mentoring and CPD. Throughout our responses we address the importance of tools to support mentoring and CPD, how important contextualisation is to making effective use of both provisions and opportunities to use projects and programmes (e.g. SSIF) that are currently being rolled out nationwide to distil the learning and increase impact across schools for teachers and their pupils. We also spoke about the benefits of creating a CPD badging scheme to help schools make informed judgements about the kind of opportunities and providers they can use and raise expectations of high quality CPD.

To read CUREE's response to this consultation please click [here](#)

Niamh McMahon



Education International (EI)

CUREE are continuing our work with Education International on a research project investigating teacher professional identity in seven countries. The year got off to an exciting start with an article in The Times reporting on the results from our survey in Scotland in relation to the current teacher recruitment crisis (to read the article, visit: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/education-undervalued-in-scotland-teachers-say-hrz8znnbk>). The survey has since been conducted in Berlin, Sweden and Kenya, and we are looking forward to seeing how the results from this – and the surveys that will follow in Chile, Singapore & Ontario – will continue to build up our picture of what it means to be a teacher around the world today. Following on from the surveys, we will be conducting some country case studies around particular areas of interest, including teacher autonomy and voice in policymaking, networking and CPDL.

If you're interested in seeing some of the work we've been doing so far, you can find out more on the EI website, by visiting: <https://ei-ie.org/en/detail/15379/understanding-teacher-identity-in-the-21st-century>.

Megan Bradbury

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

CUREE have continued to work alongside the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to identify and review a range of policy-driven teacher evaluation systems and their constituent components. Systems included within the review are: England, Estonia, New Zealand, Ontario, Singapore and New Zealand. The countries were chosen as they were identified as being either high or in the case of England medium performing systems.

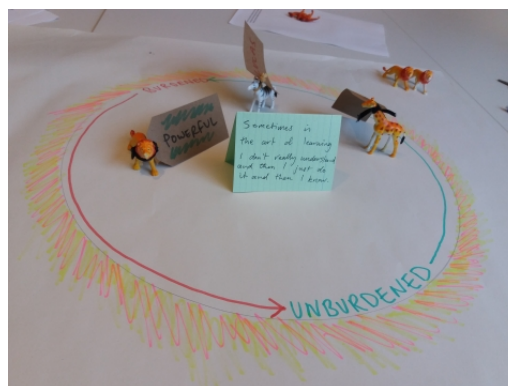
Throughout the review we have been able to identify a number of variables which strongly influence the effectiveness of the systems in relation to research evidence and system performance, issues such as: methods used, links to teacher career progression, pay and competency procedures, involvement of various actors/stakeholders, and level of centralisation. The aim of the review is to help inform future evaluation policies.

If you want to find out how CUREE can carry out a similar evaluation for you, please visit our [website](#) or get in touch via email at elizabeth.barnard@curee.co.uk

LIVE Project at CUREE

Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF)

CUREE has been working with the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for almost two years now on the pilot of the Teacher Development Fund, a new funding source for providing professional development and learning to primary teachers which helps them bring the arts into the curriculum effectively. This pilot is now drawing to a close, and CUREE have produced a report for the Foundation, available [here](#), distilling some of the fascinating things we have learned over this period. The application window for funding through the full programme is now open, with guidance on who should apply and how available on Paul Hamlyn Foundation's website [here](#). If you would like to know more about the report and what we have discovered so far, please give us a call or [email](#).



Bart Crisp



NPOEL Route Map

The National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership (NPQEL) is the qualification required for those who wish to lead more than one school. This, coupled with the increase in Multi-Academy Trusts shows a clear need for more support for leaders of multiple schools. The Association of Schools and College Learners (ASCL) has commissioned CUREE to produce a bespoke route map to support prospective and fully qualified executive headteachers.

This has brought some unique and welcome challenges to CUREE, as research surrounding executive leading is not readily available, which has left us really scrutinising the key concepts behind the idea of an executive headship. We looked at several job descriptions of executive heads and began to plot strategies that tied in with the kind of day to day activity that an executive headteacher would do. We devised strategies depending on whether the activity was something that an executive headteacher would do independently, delegate to other members of staff or a combination of

both, and once this was done we began to dive headfirst into existing research.

As the project stands, we are still intently studying the research to see if it's quality is robust enough to be included in the project.

Want to find out more or how CUREE can create a bespoke route map for you, visit our website or email bart.crisp@curee.co.uk

Matias Landini

Upcoming Events

Hungary

CUREE was recently asked to contribute to a collaborative discussion with colleagues from Hungary visiting England to learn more about how teacher development and learning is designed and implemented here. The delegation includes colleagues from the Hungarian government, a number of think tanks (including the Klebelsberg Center and the Centre for Digital Pedagogy and Methodology), universities and the school system (both primary and secondary). The topic of the discussion is “defining good teacher development”, a topic which is of course close to CUREE’s heart, along with working with colleagues from a variety of international education settings. If you would be interested in a discussion about the evidence base and how it can be useful for your organisation (governmental or not), please get in touch to [find out more](#)

Bart Crisp

New Faces at CUREE

We’re pleased to have welcomed a new member to the CUREE team in the form of Matias Landini, our new Research Coordinator.

Matias joins us from his previous role as a Head of Geography at a secondary school in Birmingham. Matias has already made strong contributions at CUREE working on projects such as the NPQL route map and a number of our SSIF projects.



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