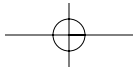
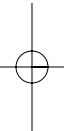
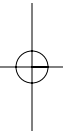


PART 1

THE IMPORTANCE OF ENQUIRY IN ENHANCING LEARNING



1

TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM TODAY

In this chapter you will explore:

- The terrain of professionalism
- Specialist knowledge
- Collective autonomy
- Civic duties and professional values
- The curriculum: what it is and who designs it
- Neo-liberalism and education
- The 21st-century school
- Modernism and education policy
- Modernism and school organisation
- Postmodernism and school organisation



INTRODUCTION

The zeitgeist of the 21st century is characterised by a focus upon education. In England, New Labour came to power in May 1997 with a mantra of 'Education, Education, Education'. Since then the focus has, if anything, become sharper. As you progress through your PGCE year you will become socialised into the professional context of education. This socialisation will take place in school, where, as soon as you enter the grounds, you are caught up in the rich fabric of everyday life, engaging with pupils, teachers, parents and a multiplicity of other professionals who support pupils' development in school. Your process of socialisation will also take place in the University, where you will engage with tutors who will open doors to national and international ideas around education, and who will provide channels for you to engage with the wisdom of past generations of educators whilst simultaneously introducing you to current education theories and practices. Your

socialisation will induct you into a new discourse of education, a multi-layered discourse that reflects the complexities of what it is to be a teacher in the politicised landscape of education in England today.

As a teacher you will engage on a daily basis with pedagogical issues and subject specific issues – all of which have a focus upon learning. This is explored in detail in Chapters 2 and 3. You will interact in an inter-professional context with other professionals, and this is explored in Chapter 10. This first chapter, however, introduces you to the ways in which, at many levels, government policy influences, to a greater or lesser extent, all of your actions and shapes your discourse. By understanding the policy arena within which education decisions are made at national level, you will become empowered to influence what happens at a localised level, in your school and your classroom. In this way, you will enrich and enhance your professionalism. So, what do we really mean by teacher professionalism?

THE TERRAIN OF PROFESSIONALISM

The terminology of professionalism began to develop during the 1950s and 1960s, when sociologists attempted to describe the quintessential characteristics of a profession (Whitty, 2003). It is possible to understand the concept of a 'profession' as fluid in nature, ever shifting along a 'hypothetical continuum' (Hoyle, 1995). As occupations achieve increasing characteristics of socially agreed features, they move along this continuum, gradually undergoing a process of **professionalisation**. Professionalisation relates to the ways in which an occupational group achieves status and standing in society – it is a measure of the 'societal strength and authority of an occupational group' (Englund, 1996, p. 76). Englund's focus here is on the strength of teaching as an occupational group, not a focus upon the qualities or characteristics of good teaching. Professionalisation can be understood as a political project (McCulloch et al., 2000) on the part of teachers to be recognised as professionals. An example of this is the political project the teacher unions have engaged in over the last two decades in enhancing professional status. Alternatively, professionalisation can be understood as a 'professional project' (Whitty, 2003), where teachers strive for status, but in professional terms rather than through political acts such as union action. An example of this is the creation of the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE). You are becoming a teacher at a time when it could be argued, 'after a century of striving, teaching has become a bona fide profession' (Whitty, 2003, p. 65) with a General Teaching Council to represent it.

**Reflection**

What is the General Teaching Council for England?
In what ways does the GTCE represent teachers?
What is the remit of the GTCE?
In what ways can the GTCE enhance your practice?

If professionalisation is the process the profession goes through to gain occupational capital, then **professionalism** can be understood as relating to 'exceptional standards of behaviour, dedication and a strong service ethic' (Helsby, 1995, p. 320). It could be said that professionalism as distinct from professionalisation, is inward looking in that it relates to the pedagogical skills teachers need to carry out their duties satisfactorily. Lawn (1996, p. 21) offers a no-nonsense definition of teacher professionalism, stating that 'professionalism is a highly specific, contextualised idea which is used in contemporary educational writing as a commonsense way of describing the work of the English teacher.

It has been suggested that professionalism carries with it a moral dimension (Carr, 2000), with a concern for standards, behaviour and dedication. Professionals have been described as the 'moral milieu' of society (Durkheim, 1957): if industry had the overriding goal to compete, then this 'moral milieu' was necessary to bring 'cohesion and stability' to society (1957, p. 29). This sense of occupying the moral high ground and in some way being motivated by altruism and commitment are well documented. The nature of professional motivation is not personal financial gain but 'client centredness' and in this sense is linked to morality and community interests.

**Reflection**

What do you believe are the qualities of a good teacher?
Carr (2000) argues that professionalism carries a moral dimension. Do you believe teaching is a moral undertaking?

The third term to consider here is **professionalism**. In relation to education, the term professionalism refers to the knowledge and skills needed to undertake the business of teaching. Traditionally, 'professionals' could be characterised as enjoying specialised knowledge that set them apart from other members of society (Perkins, 1989). The specialist knowledge of professionals

traditionally took many years of study in Higher Education to acquire, and would include specific skills based on that theoretical knowledge, which was certified by examination. The nature of teacher knowledge today (pedagogical, curricular and socio-educational) has shifted from being the sole preserve of the occupation to a matter for Government, and often public, debate.



Reflection

What pedagogical knowledge do you need to be a good teacher?
 What curricular knowledge do you need to be a good teacher?
 What socio-educational knowledge do you need to be a good teacher?
 Where does this knowledge come from?
 How can you update your knowledge?
 What skills do you need to be a good teacher?
 How do you know what skills you need?
 What do you know about your subject Association?

Teachers' professional work, then, embodies the dimensions of professionalism, professionalisation and professionalism, that comprise a body of systematic knowledge, professional values, study in Higher Education, a degree of autonomy, prestige and some control over the decoding of policy texts.

TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM

In the past, teachers' work was regarded as the domain of the professional, and certainly not an area that would be of interest to Government. During debate in the House of Commons on the Crowther Report of 1960, the Minister of Education, Sir David Eccles, commented that the findings of the report were 'an irresistible invitation for a sally into the secret garden of the curriculum' (Eccles, 1960). The Minister was swift to point out that 'parliament would never attempt to dictate the curriculum' but that 'I shall, therefore, try in future to make the Ministry's own voice heard rather more often, more positively and, no doubt, sometimes more controversially' (Eccles, 1960). It seems extraordinary to us today to think that there was a time when there was little interest, let alone intervention, in the business of education. Then teachers enjoyed curriculum design autonomy – what Lawton termed 'the Golden Age of teacher control (or non-control) of the curriculum' (Lawton, 1980, p. 22). In the past, constructs of teacher professionalism would have involved the following features:

- Specialist knowledge
- Collective autonomy
- Civic duties and professional values.

Specialist knowledge

Traditionally, the occupational group known as professionals could be characterised as enjoying specialised knowledge which set them apart from other members of their respective society. This knowledge is not always necessarily a natural scarcity and as such, the members of that profession may protect it by regulating the supply of expertise. This specialised knowledge would have taken many years to build. Today, the nature of teacher knowledge has shifted from being the sole preserve of the profession to a matter for both the profession and Government. Government intervention can be seen in all stages of education, from the Standards that determine whether or not a student teacher has reached a satisfactory level of competence to move into the NQT year, through a National Curriculum for pupils, sporadic Strategies and a stratified Professional Development offer from the TDA.

Collective autonomy

Professionals regulate entry into their profession. As gatekeepers of their profession they enjoy a degree of protected collective autonomy. This collective autonomy allows them to guard and define the body of knowledge needed within the profession. Professional councils register members of their profession, thereby protecting autonomy and determining their codes of practice. In this sense, the group manipulates the market and employs a 'strategy of closure' (Perkins, 1989, p. 378). Today, teachers enjoy a certain level of autonomy in relation to gatekeeping the profession.

The role of the Mentor in school is significant in terms of both supporting the PGCE student but also, in partnership with the Higher Education Institution (HEI), making judgements on the student against the Standards. You will have completed (or are in the process of completing) online tests, without which you cannot progress through your NQT year.

It is unlikely in contemporary society that any profession enjoys absolute autonomy and the way in which you progress through your training to qualified status is a good example. You will be supported in your learning by tutors in the HEI in partnership with Mentors and class teachers in school. You will be required to meet the Standards which have been determined by Government and pass your M-level work which is assessed by the HEI. This

complex relationship within which you are training is a good example of the subtleties of professional and practitioner autonomy today.

Civic duties and professional values

Professionals have for many years been regarded as the 'moral milieu' of society. As far back as 1957, Durkheim argued that if industry had the overriding goal to compete, then the moral milieu was necessary to bring 'cohesion and stability' to society' (Durkheim, 1957, p. 29). This sense of professionals occupying the moral high ground and in some way being motivated by altruism and commitment is well documented. The nature of professional motivation in terms of education is seen as 'client-centredness' rather than financial gain. In this sense, professionalism becomes more closely linked to moral issues and community interests. The personal gain is not financial but rather in the acceptance of status bestowed upon that individual by society, who accepts 'honour and authority' as payment (Nixon, 1997).

From a professional context in 1960, where the Minister David Eccles talked about education as a 'secret garden', to a situation where the Secretary of State, Estelle Morris, comments 'We shall take forward this [education] transformation with vigour, working enthusiastically with those who share our cast-iron commitment to raising standards and who share our vision of creating a trusted, high quality teaching profession' (DfES, 2001, p. 28), there has clearly been a radical shift in the relationship of Government to education. Table 1.1 sets out the changing policy landscape of education since the 'secret garden' comment of 1960 in terms of dominant political ideology and approaches to curriculum intervention

TABLE 1.1

Dates	Political Party	Prime Minister	Dominant political ideology	Curriculum approach
1997–	Labour	Gordon Brown Tony Blair	Moral collectivism; communitarianism	interventionist
1979–1997	Conservative	John Major Margaret Thatcher	Neo-liberalism; free market ideology	interventionist
1976–79	Labour	James Callaghan	Diverse	Non-interventionist
1974–76	Labour	Harold Wilson		
1970–74	Conservative	Edward Heath		
1964–70	Labour	Harold Wilson		
1963–64	Conservative	Alec Douglas-Home		
1957–63	Conservative	Harold Macmillan		

As teachers, we live our professional lives through changing political landscapes. Each political party brings with it an ideology that will shape education. Table 1.1 shows that between 1957 and 1979 there was, generally speaking, non-intervention in terms of curriculum design from Government. However, after 1979, things changed. These changes have formed the landscape within which we practice today. As such, it is worth exploring this relationship between Government and education a little more.

THE CURRICULUM: WHAT IS IT AND WHO DESIGNS IT?

The 'great debate' was held at Ruskin College, Oxford, on 18 October, 1976, by the then Labour Prime Minister James Callaghan. Amongst the many things discussed (teacher accountability, vocational education), the idea that a curriculum might have a 'core' of basic knowledge was explored. You will see from looking at Table 1.1 that government intervention in education began really began in the late 1970s under a Conservative Government. In 1979, with a Conservative Government in power under Margaret Thatcher, the Secretary of State for Education, Mark Carlisle, published the consultative paper, 'A Framework for the School Curriculum', the first in a trilogy of curriculum documents. These documents represent the first steps taken by Government in terms of curriculum interest and control:

a good deal of support has been found for the idea of identifying a 'core' or essential part of the curriculum which should be followed by all pupils according to their ability. Should the core be defined as narrowly as possible? Should it be expressed in terms of traditional school subjects or in terms of educational objectives which may be attained through the medium of various subjects, appropriately taught? (DES, 1979)

You will realise that these questions were being asked 30 years ago. How would you respond today to Mark Carlisle's questions? What is your professional opinion?



Reflection

Should there be a narrowly defined 'core'?
If so, should the core be taught through subjects or through objectives?
In what ways will rich and deep learning be facilitated?

The journey towards a National Curriculum continued steadily from 1979. It seems incredible today to think that in 1983 the General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers expressed concern that the Conservative Government was intent on controlling the curriculum. In fact, the ideologically non-interventionist (Jenkins, 1995, p. 113) Secretary of State for Education, Sir Keith Joseph, was at that time wary of direct curriculum intervention. He announced his intention to define the objectives of the curriculum for ages 5–16 so that levels of attainment could be met, but resisted direct intervention. In 1984 the White Paper *Better Schools* was published. In this, Joseph determined the principles underpinning the curriculum and the purposes of learning at school.



Reflection

What, in your professional opinion, are the principles underpinning the curriculum today?
What are the purposes of learning at school?

By 1987 Sir Keith Joseph's successor, Kenneth Baker, was in post as Secretary of State for Education. Where Sir Joseph was a non-interventionist neo-liberal, Kenneth Baker was pro-intervention. Where Joseph 'tinkered at the fringes' (Jenkins, 1995, p. 113), Baker intervened in the curriculum as soon as he was appointed. Decades of educational laissez-faire were followed by increasing political intervention as the 'passive phase of Thatcher policy' (Jenkins, 1995, p. 115) drew to a close. During this new period, with increasingly energetic interest from the Department of Education and Secretaries of State, a number of highly influential think tanks were also formed.

The Education Reform Act of 1988 represents Government at the heart of educational systems and curriculum policy, although not yet at the stage of intervention or influence on pedagogical practice. The Education Reform Act is a complex cocktail of tension between centralisation and decentralisation: on the one hand, and put somewhat simplistically, finance was decentralised with power devolved to schools in terms of budgetary decision making, where the state was 'rolled back' and individual schools were remodelled as small businesses. In juxtaposition, a centralised curriculum system was conceived with a vigorous inspection system regulating practice.

In 1992 the Conservative Government published *Curriculum Organisation and Classroom Practice in Primary School* (1992), otherwise known as the report of the DfEE, 'Three Wise Men'. Alexander (himself one of those 'wise men') highlights the fact that the report, an investigation into pedagogical practices

at Key Stage 2, ultimately favoured autonomous professional judgement, and words which echo the Crowther Report of 1960. John Major's Conservative Government took over the baton from Margaret Thatcher at the start of the 1990s, and continued in Government until New Labour was elected in 1997 bringing with them the concept of 'Third Way' politics. The period between 1990 and 1997 saw the introduction of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), the Parent's Charter, and the 'back to basics' campaign.

The last 30 years can be characterised, then, in terms of a move to 'marketise' education, to apply the principles of the economy to education. Schools today operate along business organisational principles in terms of budgetary considerations, and Head Teachers and Governing Bodies, with Local Authority support, are accountable to parents and Government. The period up to 1997 has been characterised as a time of neo-liberalism, where schools evolved within a free market economy.

Neo-liberalism and education

It has been argued that since 1979, neo-liberal principles have characterised public life, and that 'a new political order of neo-liberal public accountability was constituted, based upon principles of rights designed to enhance individual choice' (Ranson, 2007, p. 203). In essence, neo-liberalism applies market logic to education, where education is positioned as a key driver of future economic growth. The 'Foreward' in policy documents began to be increasingly introduced by Secretaries of State with a focus upon the value to society of a strong education in economic terms. David Blunkett, in the Green paper, *Teachers Meeting the Challenge of Change* in 1998 stated, 'We recognise the very real challenge facing manufacturing industry in this country and the way in which we need to support and work with them for skilling and reskilling for what Tony Blair has described as the best economic policy we have – education (DfEE, 1998). The 1988 Education Reform Act devolved financial power to schools (Head Teachers and Governing Bodies) and in doing so, reconstructed schools along a business model of enterprise. In addition to a focus on the market, neo-liberalism also brings with it the concept of accountability. As schools developed along business lines, so business practices began to emerge in the education system: targets (performance related, pupil attainment, standards) became pivotal to practice. Performance accountability was realised through the publication of Ofsted reports and league tables. The Parent's Charter introduced by John Major's Conservative Government in the 1990s matured into a key policy platform for the Labour Government of 2005, when Prime Minister Tony Blair stated 'We believe parents should have greater power to drive the new

system: it should be easier for them to replace the leadership or set up new schools where they are dissatisfied with existing schools' (Blair, 2005). In this way, teachers have become publicly accountable to pupils and parents and this has brought about a 'changing relationship between users and providers' (Ball, 2008, p. 77).



Reflection

To whom, as a teacher, are you accountable?
 What do you believe should be the relationship between parents and the education system?
 What performance and accountability measures have you seen in practice in schools?
 What do you feel about the publication of league tables in newspapers?

NEW LABOUR

If the Conservatism of the period leading up to 1997 can be characterised as neo-liberal, with a focus on the market economy, then it is possible to characterise New Labour as seeking a 'Third Way' – and this, arguably, has at its heart, moral collectivism and economic responsibility. A plethora of education policies followed Labour's election in May 1997; long gone were the days of Sir David Eccles' 'secret garden'. The first Secretary of State of the new Government, David Blunkett, wanted to be seen to be effective early on. By July of 1997 a White Paper 'Excellence in Schools' detailed the new agenda, having six underpinning principles:

- Education will be at the heart of government.
- Policies will be designed to benefit the many not just the few.
- The focus will be on standards not structures.
- Intervention will be in inverse proportion to success.
- There will be zero tolerance of under performance.
- Government will work in partnership with all those committed to raising standards (DfEE, 1997).

A characteristic of New Labour is the desire to develop within society a 'moral collectivism' which is 'essentially the same reservoir of virtues and traditions' that influenced Attlee (Hargreaves, 1996, p. viii). There has also emerged a desire for social cohesion:

Classic themes from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries - the role of trust in a market economy; the prerequisites of civil society; the meaning of citizenship; the relationship between duties and rights; the need for and scope of a public domain; the threats to and demands of community - have all been discovered. (Marquand and Seldon, 1996, p. 10).



Reflection

In what ways is social cohesion promoted in your school?
How is the concept of 'community' encouraged in your school?

A desire for moral collectivism was at the heart of the introduction of citizenship education into the curriculum in September 2002 – a curriculum based upon humanistic ideology, where moral priorities are understood in terms of human need.

If moral collectivism is one defining feature of New Labour, a second is the way in which there has been continuity between the former Conservative policies and New Labour. Indeed, this was reflected by Prime Minister Tony Blair in the statement 'Some things the Conservatives got right. We will not change them' (Labour Party Manifesto, 1997, p. 3). It has been argued that Prime Minister Blair endorsed virtually all of the Thatcher reforms. This idea of a direct line of continuity between the Conservatives and New Labour suggests that there has been a 'paradigm convergence' (Ball, 1999).

A third feature of New Labour policy that is directly relevant to you is the way in which the concept of 'new professionalism' has emerged. Estelle Morris, Secretary of State in 2001 stated 'we need to be clear about what does constitute professionalism for the modern world. And what will provide the basis for a fruitful and new era of trust between government and the teaching profession' (DfES, 2001, p. 20). This concept had been further developed in *Higher Standards, Better Schools for All* (DfES, 2005a).

A New Professionalism:

8.7 A thorough reform of all teachers' professional standards will set out what can be expected of teachers at every stage of their career. This will include the need for teachers to have good up-to-date knowledge of their subject specialism as part of a clear commitment to effective professional development. We will introduce into this framework more stretch at all levels.

8.8 We will make performance management more effective. The greatest rewards and promotion throughout a teacher's career will go to those who

make the biggest impact on pupils' progress and who show commitment to the development of themselves and their colleagues. The best training will be delivered in schools by our best teachers and we will ensure classroom observation and feedback are improved.

8.9 For our best and most experienced classroom teachers, access to the Excellent Teacher grade will be dependent on having been assessed as meeting demanding Excellent Teachers standards, showing that they have developed themselves professionally, including demonstrating excellence and up to date knowledge in their specialist area, and provided regular coaching and mentoring of other teachers.

8.15 We will ensure that the school workforce is able to play the wide range of roles set out in this White Paper, through:

- a group of leading teachers in every school to coordinate catch up and stretch activities, within and beyond the normal school day. This is essential for one-to-one and small group tuition;
- more support staff trained to a high level in literacy and numeracy; and more staff trained in vocational areas, like catering, to come into our schools and colleges to deliver the 14-19 diplomas;
- health and welfare staff ready for the new roles they will play in full-service and other extended schools;
- trained sports coaches, music tutors and modern foreign language assistants to enrich the primary curriculum;
- professionals with the credibility, recent practical experience and workplace knowledge to provide high-quality vocational education. Some of these will be school employees; some will be brought in from employers, work-based learning providers or colleges;
- trained specialists able to deal with disruptive behaviour, truancy and pastoral issues; and
- trained bursars and other administrative staff, freeing teachers to teach and ensuring the best use of resources to improve outcomes for children. (DfES, 2005a 8.7, 8.8, 8.9, 8.15)

This White Paper was published in 2005. Since then what have you experienced in your school in terms of:

- Support staff – in what ways do they support the pupil and teacher?
- Diplomas – how are they operating? Who is teaching them?
- Health and welfare staff – when do they come into school? In what ways do they work in school?
- Coaches, music tutors and language assistants – have you worked with them in your primary school?
- Pastoral managers – in what ways have you seen them working?
- Administrative staff – in what ways do they work? With whom do they work?

THE 21ST-CENTURY SCHOOL SYSTEM

In his 'Statement to the House', Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, Ed Balls, announced on 30 June 2009 his intentions for 21st century schools. It is interesting to identify key policy drivers that have been tracked further back in this chapter. There is a clearly articulated commitment to keeping parents at the heart of the education system:

Mr Speaker, our new Parents Guarantee will ensure:

- regular online information about their child's progress, behaviour and attendance;
- access to their child's personal tutor;
- that parents' views will be listened to and reported on the School Report Card so parents know what other parents think when choosing a school.

Personalised learning is at the heart of the pupil offer:

- every secondary pupil has a personal tutor;
- all pupils get 5 hours of PE and sport every week and access to cultural activities too;
- gifted and talented pupils get written confirmation of the extra challenge and support they will receive;
- all pupils with additional needs get extra help, with 4,000 extra dyslexia teachers;
- all pupils in Years 3 to 6 falling behind in English or maths get one-to-one tuition to help them get back on track;
- we will now extend the offer of one-to-one or small group tuition to all pupils at the start of secondary school who were behind at the end of primary school. (Balls, 2009)

Secretary of State Balls also makes a commitment to ensuring the standard of teaching is monitored:

Mr Speaker, because a world-class schools system needs a world-class workforce, we are making teaching a Masters-level profession.

And we will now introduce a new 'licence to teach' similar to that used by other high-status professionals like doctors and lawyers.

Teachers will need to keep their practice up to date to renew their licence - and they will be given a new entitlement for continued professional development. (Balls, 2009)

Secretary of State Balls concludes his statement by framing his commitment in terms of the two overriding New Labour ideological principles – economic and moral drivers:

Mr Speaker, with this White Paper we match continued investment with reform and higher expectations so that:

- we meet the economic imperative by ensuring every young person gets the qualifications they need;
- and we meet our moral imperative by ensuring that every child can succeed, whatever barriers they face.

And I commend this statement to the House. (Balls, 2009)

POSTMODERN SCHOOLS FOR POSTMODERN TIMES?

It is possible to understand the period within which you are currently training as the Postmodern era – that the education policies articulated by Secretary of State Ed Balls are in essence a Postmodern position. In order to understand this, it is useful to begin with a consideration of Modernism, and its implication for schools.

MODERNISM

Based upon the premise that scientific progress will improve the human condition, Modernism has its roots in Enlightenment ideals. Technical advances are at the heart of Modernism and are viewed as the means through which progress will be made. Mass production and profit are key drivers in this social condition and it follows that factory models of working – that is, specific tasks allocated to individuals or teams are seen as the most profitable way of working. Factory workers on a production line will attend to whichever element of the product they have been allocated – no one worker attends to, say, the production of a car from start to finish – specialist workers focus on different elements of production in an attempt to increase profitability, efficiency and expertise.

In this system, hierarchy is essential to maintain order, and promotion and seniority are systematised – control from the centre is seen as the means to ordering this entire system and intervention and even regulation from the centre are commonplace.

MODERNISM AND EDUCATION POLICY

If we look at education policy initiatives in recent times, it is possible to read these through a Modernist lens. The 1988 Reform Act is a study in centralising,

on a vast scale, the curriculum entitlement for young people in England and Wales. Decision-making in terms of curriculum content was taken away from individual teachers, departments and schools, and moved to a centrally determined offer. In terms of regulation and intervention, an inspection system was developed in the form of Ofsted. More recently, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies were developed around a centrally determined construct of subject matter, accompanied by a suggested pedagogy.

In this sense, the process of determining subject specific material appropriate to pupils in a given classroom was taken from the teacher and determined by a remote body. In this way it can be argued that production – line processes were applied to classrooms – the subject matter was remotely determined, the pedagogy was remotely determined, the Strategies were sent into schools where teachers ‘delivered’ their part. Interestingly, the National Strategies have now been phased out by Secretary of State, Ed Balls (June, 2009) exactly 10 years after their introduction.

MODERNISM AND SCHOOL ORGANISATION

It has been argued that secondary schools are the ultimate expression of modernism (Hargreaves, 1995). The scale of secondary schools changed in the light of comprehensivisation – a Labour initiative of the 1970s when Secretary of State Shirley Williams sought to restructure secondary education. This proved a contentious initiative and one that was never resolved. It resulted in a patchwork of school structures. However, the comprehensive schools that were established were often vast in size, with a specific hierarchy in terms of Senior Management (or the Senior Leadership Team) and a structure of subject-based departments. Hargreaves argues that such balkanised structures of complexity failed to ‘engage the emotions and motivations of many of their students and considerable numbers of their staff’ (1995, p. 158).

POSTMODERNISM

In recent times, Western society has seen a decline in industrial activity. The global oil crisis in 1974 provided a backdrop against which further industrial unrest was to develop. The miners’ strike of the 1980s and the subsequent battle between the Thatcher Government and the mining industry is one example of the painful process of industrial decline. As large industries faded away, the Modernist model of factory-floor production systems increasingly lost their relevance. In place of large-scale production, services emerged on a smaller, more personalised scale. Advances in technology resulted in a situation

where workers could be relatively autonomous, linked through mobile technology and instantly contactable.

Rapid results and instant, personalised communication characterise Postmodernism. The result of these changes is to put the individual at the heart of the system – the production line has largely disappeared, and control is decentralised. Hand-in-hand with this change comes uncertainty – where Modernism created standards and structures that provided benchmarks, Postmodernism rejects these standards resulting in a more personalised but ultimately more uncertain condition.

Postmodernism and school organisation

The 1944 Education Act provided the blueprint for education in the post-war era. Based upon Judaeo-Christian principles, this influenced subsequent developments in education. As Britain has recognised and embraced its multicultural heritage, uncertainties have emerged in terms of faith-based perspectives. This uncertainty and multiple faith perspective is characteristic of Postmodernism.



Reflection

In what ways do the schools you have experience of reflect multi-faith, multi-cultural perspectives?
How do schools articulate their values and principles?

The structure of comprehensive schools has undergone continuous change since their development in the 1970s. In recent times, large schools have established structures to facilitate a more personal approach to learning and teaching. You may find that in the schools in which you work there are:

- mini schools within schools
- faculties that focus on curriculum
- houses that have a pastoral focus
- vertical groupings that are developed around houses
- curriculum departments
- schools of learning
- Key Stage groupings.

**Reflection**

What have you experienced in terms of structures within schools that aim to personalise learning and teaching for pupils and teachers?

Whereas Modernism provided structures and stability in terms of working practices, the Postmodern state breaks down such structures, allowing for a more flexible approach to the workplace. This can be seen in particular in the way in which, following the National Agreement *Raising Standards and Tackling Workloads* (DfES, 2003), Higher Level Teaching Assistants began to assume greater responsibility in the classroom when teachers were allocated planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time. This raised complex issues around the professional identity of the teacher, the place of the para-professional in the classroom and the right of pupils to access a curriculum provided by qualified teachers. This is explored in depth in Chapter 8.

In 1988 the Education Reform Act provided a National Curriculum that offered a mass curriculum experience for all pupils. This expression of Modernism has since had a layer of Postmodern complexity laid upon it in the form of personalised learning. The consultation document *2020 Vision* (2007) offered a detailed personalised vision for pupils. This is a good example of the way in which Modernist and Postmodernist approaches overlap in education – schools may be operating according to Modernist organisational principles whilst simultaneously attempting to implement personalised learning. As you can see, deep complexity lies at the heart of education.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have introduced you to the terrain of teacher professionalism, to issues of status as an occupational group, moral duty and knowledge and skills. From a consideration of teacher professionalism we have then contextualised the professional within the policy landscape, considering issues of curriculum design and control. We have introduced you to the neo-liberal policies of the Conservative government, and the moral collectivism of New Labour. Finally we have explored the way in which education can be viewed through a Modernist and Postmodernist lens.



Recommended further reading

Ball, S.J. (2008) *The Education Debate*. Bristol: The Policy Press.

This book tackles policy issues in detail – it will introduce you to key concepts in education and provide critique of current education policy.

Lingard, B. and Ozga, J. (eds) (2007) *The RoutledgeFalmer Reader in Education Policy and Politics*. London: Routledge.

If education policy analysis appeals to you, then this challenging and wide-ranging Reader introduces you to the complexities of policy within education.

Olssen, M., Codd, J. and O'Neil (2004) *Education Policy: Globalisation, Citizenship and Democracy*. London: Sage.

We recommend this book if you find education policy fascinating and want to really deepen your understanding of policy – how it has evolved and how we can understand policy in a global context.

Scott, D. (2000) *Reading Educational Research and Policy*. London: Routledge.

This book takes you through the relationship between research and policy-making. It is accessible and well structured.

Trowler, P. (2003) *Education Policy*. New York: Routledge.

This book provides the reader with a comprehensive account of recent education policy. Trowler provides commentaries on the policies which enable the reader to classify policy text and to begin to understand how policy is made.