

SECOND EDITION

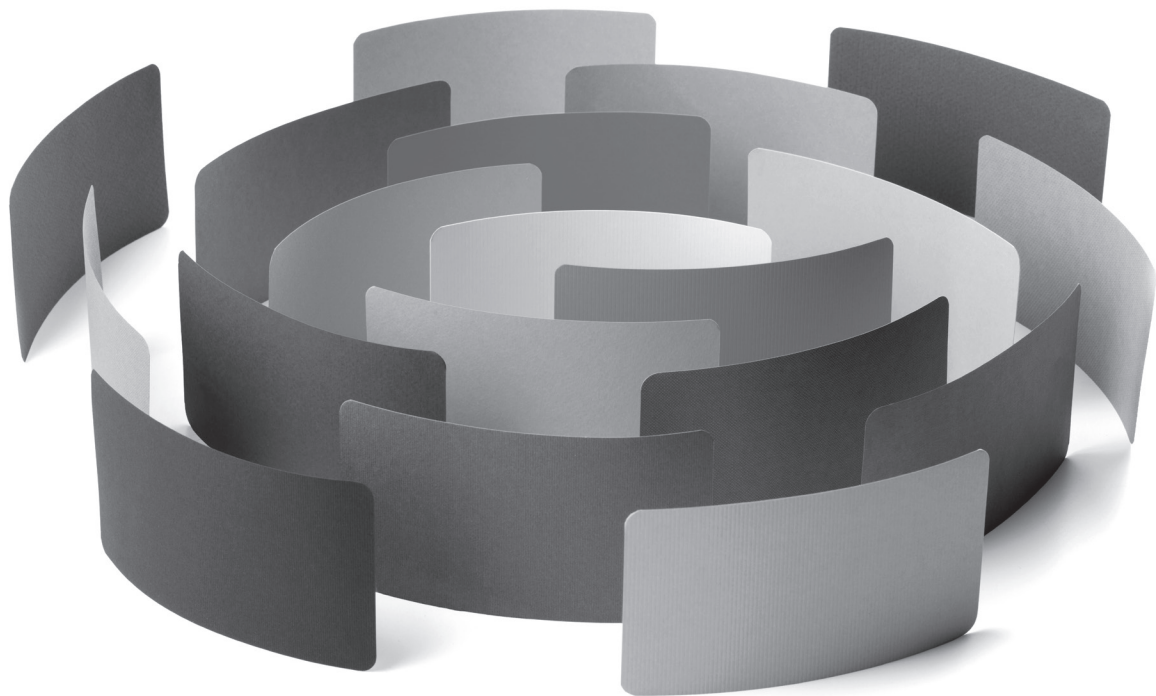
# UNDERSTANDING TEACHING & LEARNING IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

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SECOND EDITION

# UNDERSTANDING TEACHING & LEARNING IN PRIMARY EDUCATION



EDITED BY **MIKE CARROLL &  
MARGARET MCCULLOCH**

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# PRAISE FOR THE FIRST EDITION

'This book reveals the rich and dynamic world of primary pedagogy, offering existing and future teachers insight and guidance to support their practice. It successfully integrates evidence from large scale research with classroom vignettes and offers a fresh perspective on critical issues. It will help teachers develop as autonomous, creative and informed professionals, ensuring their successful contribution to primary education.'

Rachel Lofthouse, Professor of Teacher Education, Leeds Beckett University

'The authors are to be applauded for addressing important professional issues for beginning teachers. Setting the teacher education experience alongside a developing value base within wider national and global contexts, book chapters focus on contemporary issues of interest in Teacher Education and the writing is accessible but well-theorised and appropriately referenced.'

Dr Lesley Reid, Senior Lecturer and Director, PGDE (Primary) Programme, The University of Edinburgh

'This text is lucid, well organised, up-to-date and structured in such a way that it functions as effectively as a course textbook as it does as a key reading for trainee teachers.'

Dr Dominic Griffiths, Faculty of Education, Manchester Metropolitan University

'An essential addition to the reading around teaching and learning. This is ideal for student teachers to refer to and to support their engagement and understanding of teaching and learning.'

Catherine Carden, Faculty Director of Primary ITE, Canterbury Christ Church University

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# 1

## THE CONTEXT FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Mike Carroll and Margaret  
McCulloch

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### KEY IDEAS

This chapter explores:

- the relationship between teaching as a values-led profession and the creation of inclusive education;
- the significant political and economic drivers that are currently affecting primary education;
- professional responses to curriculum and organisational change;
- the structure and content of the book.





## INTRODUCTION

Primary education varies across the four countries of the United Kingdom – England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland (see Table 1.1) – in terms of, amongst other things, curriculum and assessment. Primary classrooms are generally organised in terms of age and stage, with children taught with others of the same age who progress through the primary as a year group. The exception to this is the mixed-age or ‘composite class’ which can be found where two or more year groups may be combined within the same class; this often arises in small schools but can be a feature of any school that has an uneven cohort intake for any given year. Other factors that can determine the formation of mixed-age classes are staff complement, class size limits and available accommodation.

**Table 1.1 Primary education in the United Kingdom**

Age at start	England and Wales: National Curriculum	England: Curricular stages	Wales: Curricular stages	Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland: Curricular stages	Scotland: Curriculum for Excellence	Scotland: Curricular phases
4–5	Reception	Foundation Stage	Foundation Stage	Primary 1	Foundation Stage	Primary 1	Early phase
5–6	Year 1	Key Stage 1		Primary 2		Primary 2	First phase
6–7	Year 2			Primary 3	Key Stage 1	Primary 3	
7–8	Year 3	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 2	Primary 4		Primary 4	Second phase
8–9	Year 4			Primary 5	Key Stage 2	Primary 5	
9–10	Year 5			Primary 6		Primary 6	
10–11	Year 6			Primary 7		Primary 7	

Primary school children across the UK are subject to constant evaluation, through formative assessment by their teachers and peers; matching pupils’ performance against curricular benchmarks through examination of class work, homework and, increasingly, through summative assessment, both internal and external, with the latter usually being at specific points in the child’s experience of schooling. In England the current assessment framework consists of a baseline assessment in Reception to assess their ability with respect to literacy reasoning and cognition on starting school; a phonics screening test at the end of Year 1 and a proposed times tables test at the end of Year 4 (starting in 2019) along with teacher assessments and Statutory Assessments or Standard Attainment Tests (SATs) at the end of:

- Key Stage 1 (Year 2) in English (reading and writing) and mathematics – these teacher marked assessments will run through till 2023; and

- Key Stage 2 (Year 6) in English (reading, and spelling, punctuation and grammar) and mathematics as well as teacher assessments in science.

In Wales, children in Years 2 to 9 classes take National Reading and Numeracy Tests; these tests, from 2018 onwards, will increasingly be administered as online tests. In Northern Ireland, children in Primary 4 to 7 classes are given a computer-based assessment in numeracy and literacy (InCAS). The Northern Irish government chose not to renew the contract for these non-compulsory assessments from 2017 onwards. In-school assessments are used to assign Levels of Progression (LoPs) at the end of Key Stage 1 (Primary 4) and at the end of Key Stage 2 (Primary 7) in the cross-curricular skills of communication, using mathematics and using ICT (information and communications technology). In Scotland, from 2017 onwards, standardised assessments will be administered to Scottish pupils in Primary 1, Primary 4 and Primary 7. These online assessments will focus on literacy and numeracy and there will be no set day or period of time when these national standardised assessments must be taken. Individual teachers and schools will decide the most appropriate time during the school year for children to take the standardised assessments.

New entrants to the teaching profession will no doubt be familiar with the basic outline given above and are choosing to come into the teaching profession for a variety of reasons such as 'the quest for personal fulfilment; the desire to work with young people and make a difference in their lives; and the opportunity to continue a meaningful engagement with the subject of their choice. There is a strong melding here of personal aspiration; spiritual endeavour; social mission; intellectual pursuit; the desire for connectedness; and a belief in the power of ideas and relationships manifested in education to alter the conditions of their own and others' lives for the better' (Manuel and Hughes, 2006: 20). Research suggests that, based on their own positive and negative experiences as pupils, pre-service teachers commonly aspire to be 'academic and pedagogically skilled and caring teacher(s)' (Lyngsnes, 2012: 6), focusing on the relationship between teacher and learner, and taking a strong view on the teacher's responsibility to make 'a positive and principled contribution to society' (Younger et al., 2004: 258). However, students are, understandably, generally unaware of the teacher's role within the larger systems of which the individual classroom is only a part; nor are student teachers always aware of the many external constraints which there may be on their initial expectations of how they will teach. These understandings develop over the period of teacher education and beyond.

While a crucial component of teacher preparation is the time spent in schools, we believe strongly that school experience alone is not sufficient to allow you to develop a robust professional identity as a teacher which will enable you to cope with the pressures which you will face during a career in teaching in the twenty-first century. This book will support you as a student or novice primary teacher to recognise that learning and teaching are complex concepts about which many conflicting views are held. It should encourage you to gather and reflect on expert knowledge which will

allow you to justify your practice not simply on the basis of experience and instinct, but on the basis of evidence from theory and research and through having considered different perspectives on key aspects of practice. At a time when teachers are under constant pressure to increase pupil attainment and to respond to different local, national and international initiatives around curriculum and practice, it is vital that we are able to articulate our knowledge and understanding of the body of knowledge which we possess about learning and teaching processes from an 'expert' position, as opposed to those whose understandings may be based simply on their own experiences of having been at school. And crucially, we must be sure that our practice aligns with our professional values.

## LINKING VALUES AND PRACTICE

Teachers across the United Kingdom are required to meet the appropriate professional standards (DfE, 2013a; GTCNI, 2011; GTCS, 2012; GTCW, 2010); each refers to values understood by the different professional bodies to be fundamental to a teacher's professional identity. One key element of teaching standards is a commitment to social justice and inclusion and this should be seen as underpinning this book as a whole. There is a separate chapter on 'inclusive education' (see Chapter 8), which might suggest that we see this as a 'stand-alone' aspect of practice; however, this is not the case, as we operate under the assumption that we organise learning and teaching in our classrooms in ways which allow us to provide equitable opportunities for all young people to learn; that is, we understand that some will require additional support at some times for a range of different reasons but that, as far as possible, our pedagogy should allow us to include all learners without having to make significant separate provision for individuals (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011).

The concept of inclusive education is by no means a simple one. 'Inclusion', as well as being centred on issues of 'human rights, equity, social justice and the struggle for a non-discriminatory society' (Armstrong and Barton, 2007: 6), also has at its heart the right of individuals to be recognised and accepted for themselves. Inclusion is not something that can be 'done to' someone. It is not in our gift to 'include' anyone in our classrooms. Inclusion implies a state of 'being' where individuals can participate in and feel part of a larger group *as themselves*. While policies and overarching legislation may support and encourage the development of inclusive education, we often find conflicting policies in other areas which might lead to *exclusive* practices. We need then to be able to articulate clearly the reasons for our decisions around our classroom organisation and pedagogy and our response to policy directives. As we consider a few of the key issues currently impacting on primary education in the twenty-first century we will highlight questions which arise for us which underline our need to be secure in our knowledge and understanding of learning and teaching processes.

## SOME ISSUES IMPACTING ON PRIMARY EDUCATION

Alongside the human rights movement which has led to the development of inclusive education, and causing some tensions with issues arising from that, some of main political and economic drivers which have impacted on the education system since the late twentieth century are individualisation, globalisation, curricular change and raising attainment. It is not the aim of this chapter, or indeed this book, to discuss these in detail, but it is important that as student teachers you are aware of the challenges presented by these issues, briefly outlined below, as they will affect your life as a teacher by having an impact on the pedagogical strategies that you deploy in the classroom.

### INDIVIDUALISATION

Since the late 1970s, there has been a move in most of the wealthy countries of the world towards much greater individualisation: that is, the extent to which individuals take responsibility for their own lives and identities. This is largely as a result of successive governments which have taken a neoliberal stance. Simply put, neoliberal philosophy is based on a belief in the market economy, holding that improvement emerges from competition; individuals are seen as entrepreneurs who manage their own lives, free from government interference as far as possible. Grasso et al. (2017) found that those coming of age during from the 1970s – often referred to as ‘Thatcher’s Children’ – through to the 1990s – the so-called ‘Blair’s Babies’ – tend to be particularly conservative in their attitudes to redistribution and welfare. Economic individualisation results in societal atomisation with individuals being generally reluctant to contribute economically to wider society beyond themselves and their family and friends.

Practical examples of this in education can be seen in ongoing changes in legislation since the 1980s which have widened parental choice when selecting a state school. Parents may choose to send children to a different school from their own local one, or to a different type of school altogether such as a ‘free’ school. This puts schools in direct competition with each other to attract ‘clients’. Education has become a business – being no longer seen as a service the state provides for its citizens at collective expense. Reay (2017: 328) argues that ‘[e]ducation is in a parlous state because on the one hand a majority of our political establishment do not want state education, they want privatised education, preferably run for profit, but on the other hand it is in a dire state because there is a lack of political will among a majority of the English public to fund a state education service if it involves them personally paying more for the service’. The other parts of the UK have not seen market forces being given such dominance as in England.

Educational legislation from the 1980s onwards helped create the conditions for the (semi-)privatisation of the state sector of schooling: for example, the hugely increased emphasis on recording and publishing statistics about pupils' progress. It would appear that what is of 'value' is not learning itself but something which is measurable, particularly with respect to attainment. The increasing pressures which parents may feel to make the 'right' choices and to be responsible for their children getting the best possible education are significant, although there is debate about the extent to which real choice is available to those who are less able to make use of the system. For many young people the educational landscape is a bleak one in which 'societal inequalities are played out and reproduced rather than places where they can be overcome' (Gillies, 2008: 88). Gibbs (2016) asks, '[i]nstead of prioritising competition and achievement, should cooperation and understanding be at the heart of education?' The Scottish Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) is seen as a vehicle to overcome this, with the aspiration of creating a 'Scotland in which every child matters, where every child, regardless of his or her family background, has the best possible start in life' (SE, 2004: 6). However, the evidence suggests that despite education leading to social mobility for many, it nevertheless, at the same time, causes social inequalities to widen such that many poor working-class families find themselves 'stuck at the bottom of the social ladder' (Waks, 2006: 848).



### THINKING POINT

- What might be the impact of applying a market system, which operates on an understanding that there will be winners and losers, on the development of an inclusive education system?
- How can teachers respond effectively to parental concerns about the progress of all children in their class, using their knowledge of learning and teaching?

## GLOBALISATION

Due to the increasing speed of communications, both 'virtually' via the internet, and physically through significantly increased access to relatively cheap air travel, we live in a shrinking world, one in which there seems to be a 'compression of time and space across the planet' (Lauder et al., 2006: 31). 'Globalisation' is a blanket term which covers a range of factors which have impacted particularly on the wealthier countries of the world, including: the blurring of national and cultural boundaries; a decrease in trading restrictions; increasing mobility for workers in multinational companies, or

for those who are able to move to a higher-income country to look for more lucrative employment; job insecurities for those whose jobs are moved to lower-income countries; almost immediate transmission of news, knowledge and ideas through information technologies across the world. Increased migration is evident in the new diversities (ethnic origins, languages, faiths and attitudes) of the increasingly multi-cultural classroom.

In order to help countries to compete successfully in a rapidly changing global economy, in which the 'knowledge economy' plays an important part, governments are concerned that the education system should provide children and young people with necessary skills and knowledge. Tensions arise, reflected through the curriculum, around what these skills are, what kinds of knowledge are most useful, and how both should be addressed in schools. This has led some to comment that 'schooling, in all its phases, has become subordinated to the perceived requirements of the labour market' (Brehony, 2005: 31). Gillies (2008: 88) makes a similar point, describing 'the education system as a servant to the economy'. This suggests that at the heart of the curriculum the economic imperative is more important than learning.

### THINKING POINT

- What sorts of pressures might teachers face as a result of discussions around what sorts of skills, knowledge and learning are 'necessary' in the future?

### CURRICULAR CHANGE

The curriculum is a reflection of knowledge valued by society; consequently it is a site of contestation. Whose curriculum? From 1979 successive governments have sought to bring the curriculum under increased centralised control. In England, the 1988 Education 'Reform' Act, as well as imposing a National Curriculum on schools, took power away from local government and the schools giving control to the Secretary of State. The New Labour government 'did nothing to dismantle any of the destructive measure [*sic*] of the 1988 Education Reform Act and, lest we forget, introduced academies' (Berry, 2016: 258) as well as introducing the 'National Literacy Strategy' and 'National Numeracy Strategy' which resulted in teachers being told not only what to teach but how to teach it (Gillard, 2009: 157). In the UK, part of the educational policy debate over the past decade has centred

on whether the curriculum should comprise of either discrete or integrated subjects for more effective learning to take place. The National Curriculum has often been criticised for being too prescriptive and content-laden (Hayes, 2010), with a heavy emphasis on raising standards in literacy and numeracy at the expense of some other subjects. This leads to the suggestion that only teaching discrete subjects tends to result in knowledge becoming fragmented. Rose's (2009) revised curriculum advocated movement towards more subject integration and creative approaches to the curriculum, only for this to be rejected by the 2010 Coalition Government. The Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, was firmly attached to separate subject teaching, leading to the introduction of the revised National Curriculum (DfE, 2013b), which 'introduced far more content into primary schools alongside autocratic and strictly monitored instructions for the teaching of reading based on synthetic phonics and an increased role for rote learning in mathematics' (Percival, 2017: 277). This neoconservative curriculum conceptualises knowledge as a fixed body of accumulated facts to be memorised and tested. Arguably it is unlikely that such a curricular framework will be able to 'meet the challenges of a complex present and an uncertain future' (Alexander, 2007: 4) as the inherent problem is that life is not fragmented into subject areas so a curriculum burdened with excessive content may not adequately prepare children to deal with real-life problems. In the search for a solution to real-life problems, we tend to call upon knowledge and skills from any and all sources that might be helpful, rather than seeking the parts of discrete subjects that can help us arrive at a solution; consequently, a curriculum organised around discrete subjects is 'an artifice of life, and in that sense, an obstacle to education that has unity and meaning' (Beane, 1991: 9).

Curriculum change is frequently seen as necessary to meet the challenges facing a country, and UK governments have taken this route in response to the impacts of globalisation. For example, the Scottish Government (SG) has reinforced this view, stating that a 'Curriculum for Excellence' (CfE) (SE, 2004) will support its aspiration to create a more successful Scotland, with opportunities for all, by tackling strategic objectives: to make Scotland smarter, safer and stronger, wealthier and fairer, greener and healthier (SG, 2008b: 3). The Curriculum for Excellence has moved away from a content-based approach, offering teachers some autonomy in their choice of content and teaching methodologies. At the same time, the new National Curriculum in England is taking a different approach to addressing the perceived needs of the education system. It confirms the statutory status of 'core' subjects by identifying specific content, closely related to age and stage, for these curricular areas, while suggesting that other non-statutory curricular areas, or 'foundation' subjects, will be less tightly prescribed to allow teachers 'greater professional freedom over how they organise and teach the curriculum' (DfE, 2011). The curricular choices that are made by policy makers are not value neutral.

## THINKING POINT

- What do you see as the teacher's role in curriculum development?
- What might be your professional responsibilities in this area?



## RAISING ATTAINMENT

'Educational attainment' is defined by the OECD (1998) 'as the highest grade completed within the most advanced level attended in the educational system of the country where the education was received.' This in itself is not problematic; however, the way in which we have come to understand 'standards' in schools has increasingly become conflated with standardised tests (e.g. in England, SATS) for children in primary schools. This can become problematic as this rather narrow measure of attainment is being used to focus schools' attention on educational disadvantage as a result of socio-economic disadvantage by the drive, as in Scotland, to close the attainment gap. However the question remains, is attainment about more than academic grades? We would argue that attainment is about making a holistic judgement with respect to a child's learning incorporating an assessment of the intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of each child, which then places us in a stronger position if asked to make comparisons with children from different economic, social and ethnic backgrounds. A more holistic understanding of attainment will provide deeper insights as to how best to develop strategies to address disadvantage and reduce educational inequalities.

According to Alexander (2007: 10), the attainment gap which occupies the minds of government is only one of a number of interconnected gaps: 'the gap between rich and poor; the gap of social class; the gap in parental aspirations; the gap in the quality of under-five care; the gap of gender; the gap of race; the gap of disability; and the gap of exclusion'. These gaps suggest that the 'United Kingdom' is in reality a deeply divided society and perversely education becomes a means to segregate and divide people. Murphy et al. (2016: 174) argue that '[i]ndividual schools can and do make a difference, but current policy rhetoric tends to place all responsibility for unequal outcomes, and define all solutions, at the level of the school, which burdens schools with unrealistic expectations while shielding from view the roots of educational inequality in wider society'. Clearly this would require society to re-think the aims and purposes through 'wide-ranging changes in education policy, but also in broader economic and social policy, if we are to achieve a fair educational system' (Reay, 2017: 328).

'Poverty and the growing divisions in society reduce children's educational opportunities' (Cox, 2015: 27). The recent survey by the Child Poverty Action Group



(CPAG, 2017) provides sobering reading as it estimates that 4 million children were living in poverty – representing 30% of children, or 9 in a classroom of 30. Children from poorer backgrounds:

- are lagging behind at all stages of education;
- are estimated to be, on average, nine months behind children from more wealthy backgrounds at the age of 3;
- receiving free school meals are estimated to be almost three terms behind their more affluent peers by the end of primary education.

These children are often concentrated in particular areas, especially inner-city housing estates and rural areas where there is not enough work to go around. These children are often hungry so they are dependent on the school to provide them with breakfast and lunch. They are often late when they arrive as there is no-one in the household keeping 'regular hours' such as getting up to go out to work. Their homework is often incomplete as they do not have access to basic resources like books, let alone a computer and access to the internet, or indeed a place they can use for study. They are reliant on the school fund to pay for them to participate in school activities as well as attend sports, excursions or extra-curricular activities as there is no surplus money in the household to fund such activities. As a consequence, 'schools serving the poorest children in the country have to do more with less. They must spend more of their budgets on: health and welfare support; subsidising equipment, materials and excursions; breakfast and homework clubs; and enrichment activities that less cash-strapped families would provide for themselves' (Thomson, 2015: 206). Charles Dickens would recognise the landscape of childhood being described here. As a primary teacher you should never forget that it is a privilege, an absolute privilege, to be charged with the educative care of ANY child. When faced with teaching children in difficult circumstances it is vital that you do not become a dealer in despair. The role of the primary teacher is to be a dealer in hope! There are many good and great teachers working alongside children in difficult circumstances who are making a difference in the children's lives each and every day; however, for this work to bring about significant change it must be supported by government and educational policies, taking into account the issue of child poverty. All too often it appears as if these policies are not fully coordinated; and worse still, they can impede each other.

Educational systems that focus on standardised testing as one way to drive improvement and reduce the deleterious impacts of living in poverty tend in reality to reinforce inequalities as the 'tests are determining what is taught' (Au, 2009: 87) as teachers start to focus on the tests, thus narrowing the curriculum, which in turn tends to lead to a didactic teaching style. Teachers and schools start along the road to narrowing the curriculum by deleting those aspects of the curriculum that do not feature in tests, with creative and aesthetics subjects being most hard hit. This is understandable in that teachers' reputations and indeed employment may depend on their classes

obtaining good test results (Wrigley, 2016: 331). Learners are not immune from this effect, for apart from an impoverished experience of the curriculum they are labelled according to their performance expressed in numerical terms; children deserve to be considered as much 'more than a score' (<https://morethanascor.co.uk/>). According to Reay (2016: 329), '[t]he enduring problem of education in the United Kingdom is that it has never had a ruling class committed to providing a good education for all its citizens. The ideological prejudices of the UK elite, as was the case 100 years ago, is that a good education is to be found in the private sector, has to be paid for, and needs to be highly selective and exclusive.' Herein lies the battleground into which you are entering, for the struggle is to secure a future of primary education that will enable you to be part of a profession that provides children with positive destinations in terms of education, work and life.

## CHANGING NOTIONS OF TEACHERS AS PROFESSIONALS

Over the past few decades, neoliberal approaches have led to education policy being based on notions of productivity and performance, with managerialist policies encouraging 'compliance and conformity' amongst teachers. It is suggested that very specific guidelines around practice have led to teachers' professional identities being challenged and eroded through loss of professional autonomy (Forde et al., 2006). Professional identity is also affected by external factors such as the expectations of society, public perceptions and how schooling is valued. Being seen by others and by oneself as having expert knowledge, both about specific subjects and about learning, is also an important element.

It could be argued that, currently, the public perception of schooling is that it is not as highly valued as it was in the past. Furthermore, everyone who has been to school feels he or she is an 'expert' in education and many consider that their views and opinions are of equal importance with those who have studied the discipline of education and have developed their practice as educators. Indeed, the views of parents as to how or where their child should be educated and the views of the politicians responsible for the overall system *are* of equal importance to those of the teachers working with the young people. The question is whether or not teachers can speak with real authority on matters of learning and teaching and have their voice heard.

It seems clear that in a situation where teachers are under constant scrutiny in relation to children's progress and achievement from parents, media and government, we need to be confident in our professional and practical knowledge and understanding of how learning and teaching processes work. We need to know why we are making particular decisions around classroom organisation and practice, and we must be able to articulate this authoritatively in discussion with others. We are regularly called upon

to justify our actions and these justifications must be based on more than experience and feelings. Rather, they must be grounded in a thorough knowledge and critical understanding of relevant theory and research.

## STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE BOOK

*Understanding Learning and Teaching in the Primary Classroom* is made up of 20 chapters, each of which address key issues with which you as student teachers should engage critically as you develop your own professional identity.

We recognise that all of you as student teachers will have your own unique experiences of learning and of being taught, which will naturally influence your practice as teachers. You will also have a set of key values and beliefs about learning and teaching, and about human relationships, which will underpin this practice. However, we firmly believe that it is vital that as students you should interrogate these experiences and identify the assumptions which underlie the beliefs you hold, consciously or unconsciously, about how learning ‘works’ – your epistemology – and, therefore, about how teaching ‘works’. As you read this book, you will be asked to respond to ‘Thinking points’ which often suggest that you reflect on whether what you have read has challenged what you *think or believe*.

Chapter 2, by Julie McAdam and Jennifer Farrar, examines the complex and contested nature of childhood. The authors argue that the notion of diverse childhood is the norm and that our beliefs and attitudes to diversity are shaped by our own experiences. They argue that multiliteracies provide a practical way to promote inclusivity in the increasingly diverse cultural nature of primary classrooms in the United Kingdom.

Chapter 3, by Mary Wingrave, examines the expansion of pre-5 education as well as outlining the principles and philosophy underpinning Early Childhood Education and Care. The key issues of play and assessment are discussed; the roles of adults and children in constructing the learning environment are considered. Readers are invited to consider implications for effective practice in the early years of primary school and beyond.

Chapter 4, by Mike Carroll, presents three broad models that teachers may find useful in understanding learning and teaching and discusses the theories relating to these models. The implications for practice arising from taking these different views of how learning and teaching ‘work’ are considered.

Chapter 5, by Maureen Farrell and A. Graeme Pate, investigates some of the theoretical and practical issues related to effective planning for learning. Readers are encouraged to think critically about the planning process, and practical examples of developing learning intentions and success criteria are offered.

Chapter 6, by Margaret McCulloch, addresses social and emotional contexts for learning. Some theories of social and emotional wellbeing are discussed and important

issues relating to the development of positive relationships in the classroom are identified. The chapter also provides some insights as to the importance of building classroom relationships within a positive learning environment.

Chapter 7, by George Head, explores some of the different issues around the concept of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and highlights the danger of taking a deficit view. He suggests a move towards ‘complementary pedagogies’ which are based on building relationships of mutual trust and respect amongst learners and teachers.

Chapter 8, by Margaret McCulloch and Margaret Sutherland, outlines the historical development and current contexts for inclusive education. The authors argue that there are tensions evident in an examination of the concepts of inclusion and additional support for learning. Some insights are provided with respect to the principles and practice of an inclusive pedagogy.

In Chapter 9, by Mike Carroll, the theoretical background to collaborative learning is examined along with some of the key features of planning effective group working in the classroom. A range of useful classroom strategies are described and explained.

Chapter 10, by Mike Carroll and Fiona McGregor, provides an overview of the shifting policy landscape with respect to integrated learning. The authors argue that planning for integrated learning should be a collaborative endeavour as it requires teachers to connect ideas conceptually across subjects, based on a sound understanding of subject-specific knowledge.

Chapter 11, by Margaret Sutherland and Niamh Stack, considers the multifaceted and contested nature of ‘ability’ and the ways in which our expectations of children may be limited by our own experiences. The authors make a strong argument for providing challenge for all students, including highly able pupils.

Chapter 12, by Louise Hayward and Ernie Spencer, examines some important issues in the area of assessment for learning. The authors argue that assessment for learning is integral to all effective learning and, when implemented thoughtfully, can contribute to the development of independent learning.

Chapter 13, by Alan Britton, Liz Moorse and Mary Young, examines educational policy and practice linked to education for global citizenship and sustainable development. The authors suggest that there are different curriculum models used to organise teaching and outline some pedagogical approaches and good practice for such teaching.

Chapter 14, by Leonardo Franchi and Leon Robinson, consider spiritual development as well as exploring how teachers can promote this amongst young people. Issues of human flourishing are discussed, and some of the challenges arising from linking ‘spirituality’ and ‘religion’ are highlighted, with examples of good practice being offered.

Chapter 15, by Moyra Boland, Margaret Jago and Jan Macdonald, explores the concepts of creativity and creative teaching. The rationale behind the current emphasis on creativity in education is discussed and they give suggestions as to how teachers may encourage creativity in their classrooms.

Chapter 16, by Stephen Boyle, David McKinstry and Kenneth McLaughlin, looks at ways in which information and communications technology can be used not simply as a means of collecting information but as a vital pedagogical strategy to enhance all areas of teaching, and to support a holistic approach to pupil learning, encouraging integrated learning and motivating young people to learn.

Chapter 17, by George MacBride and Margaret McCulloch, considers some of the issues around transition experiences, both into and out of primary schools. The authors argue that planning around transition should take account of learning as much as of pastoral issues, and that the learner has a vital role to play in effective sharing of information.

Chapter 18, by Mike Carroll, examines a range of issues arising from working with other adults in the classroom, with a focus on the role of school support assistants, and the teacher's responsibility to supervise and encourage them. Suggestions are made for developing positive working relationships and for ensuring that additional personnel in the class have a positive impact on pupil learning.

Chapter 19, by Beth Dickson and Irene McQueen, examines the contribution of practitioner enquiry to professional learning and development as part of becoming an extended professional. The authors consider the progressive nature of practitioner enquiry and identify ways in which both pupil learning and attainment can be positively impacted by the teacher's engagement with professional enquiry in the classroom.

In the concluding chapter, Christine Forde and Margery McMahon explore the meaning of 'teacher leadership for learning', particularly in relation to what this means for the primary teacher becoming a 'leader of learning'. The authors address the dimensions of the teacher as a leader having influence over learning in their own classroom as well as exerting influence over the practice of their colleagues through developing a pedagogic vision as a result of engaging in their own professional learning, 'teacher leadership by learning'. Fundamental to their analysis is the notion of the school as a professional learning community. In common with other chapters in this book, the educational arena is seen as a contested place. The changing expectations of primary teachers within today's policy environment require teachers to develop a notion of professional practice that requires them to become leaders *for* learning, leaders *of* learning and leaders *by* learning. This is the challenge of professional practice.

## SUMMARY

Increasingly, the policy discourse is one that seeks to focus on 'practice' and 'practical knowledge' whilst devaluing the teacher's sense of professionalism. The primary teacher for the twenty-first century should be wary of attempts to position them solely as technicians with a responsibility to bring about measurable improvement in a narrowly defined range of performance indicators. This is not to say that pupil

achievement, pupil behaviour and the quality of teaching are not important, they are! However, it is important that primary teachers make informed professional judgements in order to develop a pedagogy that places matters of social justice and care at the heart of the educational endeavour. We hope that you will find this book helpful on your professional journey.

### REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

- What forms of inequality have you observed or experienced both as a learner and as a teacher?
- How might you demonstrate a commitment to social justice and inclusion?

### FURTHER READING

Brady, L. (2011) 'Teacher values and relationship: Factors in values education', *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 36(2), 56–66. <http://ro.ecu.edu.au/ajte/vol36/iss2/5> (accessed 9 August 2013).

Laurie Brady provides a thought-provoking exploration of teacher values. Although set within the context of Australia and particularly orientated towards teaching values in schools, the values discussed are nevertheless applicable to all areas of the curriculum and to all primary teachers in the UK and elsewhere.

Patrick, F. and McPhee, A. (2011) 'Professional identity', in M. McMahon, C. Forde and M. Martin (eds), *Contemporary Issues in Learning and Teaching*. London: Sage. pp. 130–41.

This chapter highlights a range of factors that exert an influence over the construction of a teacher's professional identity. The authors argue that an understanding of how your professional identity is shaped will provide insights with respect to teaching practice.

### WEB RESOURCES

Further information on curriculum and assessment can be found at:

England: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education)

Wales: [www.learning.gov.wales/?cr=4&ts=1&lang=en](http://www.learning.gov.wales/?cr=4&ts=1&lang=en)

Northern Ireland: [www.education-ni.gov.uk/](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/)

Scotland: [www.education.gov.scot/](http://www.education.gov.scot/)