PRACTITIONER ENQUIRY AND THE ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

BUILDING PROFESSIONAL CAPITAL – ENCOURAGING LEADERSHIP AND CREATIVITY

Annual Conference for Educational Psychologists in Scotland
(SDEP / ASPEP)
Edinburgh International Conference Centre
Friday 30th September 2016
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GROUP DISCUSSION

- What is your understanding of practitioner enquiry?
- In what way, if any, is your service involved in supporting practitioner enquiry?
SUPPORTING PRACTITIONER ENQUIRY

Charlaine Simpson
Senior Education Officer (National Improvement Framework)
Engraved on the head of the mace are the words "Wisdom, Justice, Compassion and Integrity" - these are a reference to the ideals that the people of Scotland aspire to for their Members of Parliament.
Policy Context

“There is a strong link between teacher’s professional skills and competences and the quality of children’s learning experiences. Ensuring the highest professional standards for all teachers in Scotland will help to ensure the highest standards and expectations for all children.”

National Improvement Framework: Teacher professionalism
Teacher professionalism is important because:

• Teacher play a crucial role in children’s learning to help them achieve positive outcomes, thrive and flourish in life

• The quality of teachers & school leadership are the most important in-school factors on children’s outcomes (NIF, 2016)

• Teacher professionalism is a key driver (NIF, 2016) to an excellent and equitable education system for all
Key Aspects of Teacher Professionalism and Teacher Identity

Professional Standards

Professional learning

Practitioner enquiry

Professional dialogue

Teacher Professionalism and Teacher Identity
‘Enquiry as stance’

Teacher professionalism: knowing why, knowing what, knowing how

- An *enquiring mindset & culture* is fundamental to a teachers professionalism in Scotland
- This requires:
  - An *‘enquiring stance’* (Cochran Smyth & Lyttle, 2009) this is a critical aspect of developing teacher agency (Priestley 2016)
  - *Teacher agency* is about empowerment, professional judgement, evaluating practices and impact and being agents of changes (Hattie, 2012, Sachs, 2016)
  - It enables teachers to ask critical questions of themselves and their practices and the wider educational agenda
Critical considerations

WHAT AND WHY OF PRACTITIONER ENQUIRY

PERSONAL CONSIDERATIONS
- SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE
- DISPOSITIONS
- CHALLENGES
- CONTENT, SUBJECT AND PEDAGOGICAL KNOWLEDGE INPUT

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS
- CULTURE AND ETHOS
- LEADERSHIP
- POLICY
- EXPERT OTHER/EXTERNAL PARTNERS
- STRUCTURES AND SUPPORT
Support

The Cycle of Professional Learning offers a navigation tool to support teachers to follow a PL process.
Practitioner Enquiry
Supports for Research

GTCS Online access to Education Journals via MyGTCS

To access these areas of the website you have to login to MyGTCS

Education Source - EBSCO

Education Source - EBSCO is a collection of over 1,700 journals, a selection of eBooks, and additional research resources in the field of education

Leadership and management Centre

The Leadership & Management Learning Centre provides content specifically aimed at the field of leadership and management and draws on resources from industry, as well as education

eBooks

A selection of relevant eBooks chosen by the GTCS are also available. A full list is available from our downloads section.
Practitioner Enquiry

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Aspirations:

- PE as a mechanism to support discovery and development of Visible Learning

- Building capacity of others to become critically reflective practitioners and bring about changes in pedagogy

- Develop the core function of research within EPS and share knowledge in this area
THE JOURNEY SO FAR

- Year 1: Midlothian-wide group of interested teachers supported by 2 Principal Teachers with strong interest in PE along with EPS. 6 workshops over the year to support professional learning.

- Year 2: Midlothian-wide group runs again. Two primary schools take up PE as a whole-school approach, again with a focus on Visible Learning.
AIMS FOR THIS YEAR

- Increasing awareness of PE across Midlothian
- Developing school-based PE model
- Linking together all the ‘forms’ of PE across Midlothian so that there is a joined up approach to how develop the practice
  - Visible Learning: VLAT, Impact Cycle projects
  - Inspiring Learning Spaces projects
- Building capacity amongst teachers e.g. Pedagoo learning conversations
USING PRACTITIONER ENQUIRY TO SUPPORT HEAD TEACHERS TO LEAD CHANGE

Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Service
Laura Hubbard
THE ABERDEENSHIRE CONTEXT

Visible Learning

Meeting with HTs Pr
Practitioner enquiry

Westfield

Dallas Park
Implementation group est

Mintlaw network
Introduction for all staff

Enthusiastic response
2 teachers of 34 staff
Read in VS Learner
Resourcing for la

Baseline evidence gathered, school matrix completed. Area for development identified

Cog skills and language for learning

Background reading given

Focus on Visible Learner

Dyslexia Network-Schools given intro to VL

Background reading

SIPs and P6s

Working to establish delivery group. Focus on Visible Learner

20 EPs and 24 Managers and class teachers booked for conference

Establish link with some QOs, supporting delivery

Introduction for all staff

Car session visual/visual

Car session visual/visual

Establish delivery group to take forward

Discussion

Cass building emotional trust

Delivery group established

School leaders set basin line statements
Long Term Aims and Vision

- Build a network of schools in Aberdeenshire that are using visible learning as a framework to use evidence-based approaches to raise attainment for all pupils.

- Use practitioner enquiry as a model to support HTs to lead on this in their schools.

- Asked HTs to:
  - Identify where their school is with a certain aspect of visible learning.
  - What is the evidence for this?
  - Use this evidence to plan a way forward.
  - Identify how they will evaluate impact.
THREE SESSIONS

- First session - practitioner enquiry and introduction to visible learning
- Second session - Revisited practitioner enquiry and introduced ‘deliverology’
- Third session - focus on how to use data and gather evidence of impact

- Opportunities to share what they had been doing

- Collaborative planning in themed groups using
  - Where are we now?
  - Where are we going?
  - How will we know when we get there?
Next Steps

- Three more practitioner enquiry sessions this year
- Evaluation after every session
- VSE and beyond!
New Principal
Educational
Psychologist

Staff changes

New Legislation

Learning Academy

New Education Senior Management Team

Challenge Authority

VSE

CONTEXT
WHERE DO WE START...

Work with Learning Academy
- Link with academy
- RAFA framework
- Support re data literacy
- Joint working re delivery and support
- Promote leadership

Work to Embed Initiatives
- Cluster model groups
- Early adopters in each come together into network
- Professional Enquiry Approach

Work within EPS
- PE replacing research group
- Up-skill staff
- Support and challenge each other in use of PE

National
- Link in regarding shared understanding of PE
- Joint work with other EPS
- Follow up from these activities
• Communication lines with academy
  • Defining a role
  • Shared understanding of Practitioner enquiry
  • What is Data
• Lots of change within the Authority- “buy in”
• Up-skilling EPS
• What the model looks like in practice
• Time- especially with probationers
• Network beneficial
• First sessions of training
• Support in measurement to ensure impact

Reflections and Next Steps
THE DREAM

 All clusters empowering schools to use PE to effectively implement initiatives
 PE being more widely used as a tool to support and challenge stakeholders
 All EPs measuring impact through PE
 Link into National Network and continue to see it develop....
 Working together nationally
A SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIP MODEL

Chris Atherton
24 SIPs
2-4 Class Teachers
Link Quality Improvement Officer
Link Education Officer (Across all SIPs)
Link Educational Psychologist

Targeting achievement of a small key group of learners (e.g. SIMD 1-3, LAC, Lowest 20%, EASL).
RATIONAL

EQUALITY

EQUITY
THE ROLE OF THE EPS

Encourage Creativity and Innovation
Contribute to Professional Discussion
Action Research Methodology
Evaluation
Signpost and Access Relevant Research
Almost all (90%+) agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements:

- Following training, I felt supported and confident in contributing to SIPs.
- The improvement methodology guidance was helpful.
- I received appropriate opportunity to participate in SIPs.
- I worked collaboratively with teachers from other schools to plan, implement and evaluate intervention.
- I felt confident to share my thoughts and opinions throughout the process.
Almost all (90%+) agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements:

- The data gathered about the children’s strengths and needs informed intervention.
- I engaged with research to inform my understanding of pupil’s needs and subsequent interventions.
- The Educational Psychologist positively contributed to the work of the SIPs.
- I believe that SIPs can improve the attainment of vulnerable learners.
The SIPP has had a positive impact on my day to day practice.

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<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent of All</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>54.17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.333%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Answered</td>
<td>0</td>
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Feedback regarding what went well.

My SIP group were a fantastic group of educators to work with. Everyone contributed fully and shared their ideas. Once the input began, the children's learning was engaging and had a positive impact on their attainment.

Partnership working and sharing ideas was very positive. Working in collaboration with the Educational Psychologist was extremely effective.

I thoroughly enjoyed working with colleagues from other schools in the authority. I benefitted from the discussions and ideas that they had. I liked also reflecting on my own practise and focusing on the group of learners in my class.

Collaboration of all involved, no feeling of failure or judgement when the original area of focus did not produce the expected outcomes. Everyone agreed to use it as learning and move on.

It was great to work in collaboration with other professionals within the authority. I enjoyed the opportunity to dip into current research and collected valuable data that gave me a further insight into the pupils that I had in my class.

It was great to work in collaboration with other professionals within the authority. I enjoyed the opportunity to dip into current research and collected valuable data that gave me a further insight into the pupils that I had in my class.
The methodology was not given until after we had started our partnership and therefore was not beneficial at the start. Also the paperwork should state that practitioners should create a research question to focus on. If teachers have been on any university courses recently they would know this but if not then this guidance would be useful. The psychologist was not allocated to our school until after the intervention had been completed. He / she did meet with us and offer support but it was too late.

Initially, we found it difficult to lead the direction of the project and clarify what would work in each centre. Accessing appropriate research was an area where we were uncertain and required further support from Ed Psych and discussion as a team. My own target group also had poor attendance due to absence and holidays etc.

Meeting frequently with group. Delivering intervention in a busy third term. Educational Psychologist playing a central, key role in the intervention.

Feedback regarding challenges.

Understanding the process at the beginning was a challenge. It took a while to decide what our underlying methodology was and this impacted on being able to begin the delivery of our learning experiences.
Looking Forward...

- Refresher training for teachers and head teachers in September.
- Each individual school identifies a group of learners.
- With support from EPS, gather more data on learners to better identify SIPs.
- Allocate partnerships with similar research question.
- University support through masters modules.
What would enable Educational Psychology Services to:

- Share best practice
- Prevent / reduce duplication
- Facilitate peer support across the profession
- Make best use of the PE Network
- Develop links with GTCS
Developing key features of PE for our profession
Defining our unique contribution to PE
Highlighting EP contributions through the GTCS website / magazine
Professional learning - starting with the annual conference
Possible ‘EP meet’ in the new year
Explore EPS involvement in professional recognition programme - may not get there but may help standardise our input nationally.
Explore connections with EPAEP.

Next Meeting: Friday 9th December, 11am - 1pm, Perth & Kinross.