

Effective Professional Learning: An inquiry into the impact of 'collaborative' training interventions on the professional development of teachers in their second year of teaching

Kate Thirlwall

A Research & Development Project Submitted for the
MSc Learning & Teaching 2016

DEPOSIT AND CONSULTATION OF THESIS

One copy of your dissertation will be deposited in the Department of Education Library via the WebLearn site where it is intended to be available for consultation by all Library users. In order to facilitate this, the following form should be completed which will be inserted in the library copy your dissertation.

Note that some graphs/tables may be removed in order to comply with copyright restrictions.

Surname	Thirlwall
First Name	Kate
Faculty Board	Department of Education
Title of Dissertation	Effective Professional Learning: An inquiry into the impact of 'collaborative' training interventions on the professional development of teachers in their second year of teaching

Declaration by the candidate as author of the dissertation

1. I understand that I am the owner of this dissertation and that the copyright rests with me unless I specifically transfer it to another person.
2. I understand that the Department requires that I shall deposit a copy of my dissertation in the Department of Education Library via the WebLearn site where it shall be available for consultation, and that reproductions of it may be made for other Libraries so that it can be available to those who to consult it elsewhere. I understand that the Library, before allowing my dissertation to be consulted either in the original or in reproduced form, will require each person wishing to consult it to sign a declaration that he or she recognises that the copyright of this thesis belongs to me. I permit limited copying of my dissertation by individuals (no more than 5% or one chapter) for personal research use. No quotation from it and no information derived from it may be published without my prior written consent and I undertake to supply a current address to the Library so this consent can be sought.
3. I agree that my dissertation shall be available for consultation in accordance with paragraph 2 above.

Effective Professional Learning: An inquiry into the impact of 'collaborative' training interventions on the professional development of teachers in their second year of teaching.

Abstract

Retention of beginning teachers is an ongoing priority in education. In my Research and Development project, I investigated which learning resources beginning teachers most valued in their second year of teaching in order to learn more about how best to support and retain them.

Significant empirical evidence suggested that teacher collaboration could have a positive impact on practice and I therefore decided to introduce a new, collaborative element to an existing programme for teachers in their second year at my school. My research questions were:

1. What is the impact of using 'collaborative' training interventions on professional learning in the second year of teaching?
2. What do second year teachers' view as the most effective learning resources in their second year of teaching?

Five teachers peer-observed each other twice during the year; and offered feedback. Following observations, teachers took part in a semi-structured interview reflecting on their experiences of collaboration. Qualitative methods were chosen in order to collect rich and personalised data.

Findings confirmed that teachers responded positively to collaborative training interventions but not to peer-observations in and of themselves. Findings also supported empirical evidence of the highly

individualised nature of support needed for each individual practitioner. Further, a complex interaction of factors impacted significantly on what teachers perceived to be meaningful and useful training.

Implications for future training were found to need to take into account diagnostic, collaborative, reflective and affective elements in order to satisfy the needs of a diverse teacher cohort.

Contents

- 1. Introduction and rationale of the project*
- 2. Review of the literature*
- 3. Methodology and project design*
- 4. Professional development in the national & school contexts*
- 5. Findings and discussion*
- 6. Collaborative elements of the project*
- 7. Conclusions and implications of findings*
- 8. References list*
- 9. Appendices*

1: Introduction and rationale for the project

Media interest in the education sector and its provision is reliably constant; and the issue of teacher recruitment and retention has more recently been highlighted by the UK media as a persistent and pressing concern. Estelle Morris, writing for the Guardian in 2015 (2015), accused the government of 'sleepwalking into the UK's worst teacher recruitment crisis' (Morris 2015) and urged them to more rigorously assess the reasons behind recruitment problems in terms of the training structures in place and the market-driven model for teacher training allocations.

In January 2014 the head of Ofsted Sir Michael Wilshaw declared it a "national scandal" that around two-fifths of new teachers had left the profession within 5 years and that serious questions needed to be asked about the current teacher training system (2014). In addition, as part of his Ofsted monthly commentary in February 2016, Wilshaw cited two further worrying developments in teacher recruitment in retention, namely the rising proportion of newly-trained teachers choosing the independent over the state sector and the growing number of new recruits opting to work overseas in the expanding international school sector (2016).

Teaching unions have long echoed similar concerns at the exit rate of new teachers. The Association of Teachers and Lecturers' (ATL) executive report published in January 2015 reported that in their newly-qualified teacher survey, three quarters of trainee and newly qualified teachers had 'already considered leaving the teaching profession due to excessive workload' (Association of Teachers and Lecturers 2015). A survey in the same year by the National Union of Teachers (NUT) reported in 2015 (Richardson 2015) that 53% of all teachers polled were considering leaving teaching altogether within the next two years. It would seem from the media, Ofsted and the teaching unions that several big questions currently remain unanswered in the area of teacher retention: how are we to train our teachers

effectively in order to improve the sustainability of teaching as a profession and which elements in the early years in a teacher's career most need our attention if we are to help more and more teaching professionals to stay the distance after training; and to ensure that they see teaching as long-term learning commitment?

Within the research literature, what is known about teacher development following the newly-qualified teacher induction year is somewhat limited. Several educational researchers have highlighted the importance of further investigating teacher attitudes to professional learning and individual school contexts as potentiating or indeed inhibiting learning environments. However, it is noteworthy that there has been a greater emphasis in the research on investigating the induction year of newly-qualified teachers (NQTs) rather than on subsequent career development. Burn et al (2010), in their longitudinal study of 17 teachers in their second year of teaching, noted the 'enduring importance of individuals' dispositions towards their own learning' (Burn et al. 2010: 639) and the 'profound sense of isolation' (Burn et al. 2010: 639) experienced when teachers no longer have access to induction time; demonstrating the need for research to investigate teacher learning beyond the scope of induction.

In contrast, what is known about professional learning and how to make this as effective as possible, is burgeoning. Cordingley (2015), in her review of the contribution of research towards teachers' professional learning and development, demonstrated consistently the complexity of factors which enhance and inhibit professional learning as well as showing the powerful impact (from a wide variety of sources) on teaching practice when there was a sustained engagement with research in a variety of low-threat, non-hierarchical, collaborative ways. Timperley et al, (2007) in particular, emphasised the importance of working on a development focus for at least a year in order to see meaningful change. Finally, Fraser et al (2007) looked at three different continuing professional development (CPD)

initiatives in schools through three different lenses which conceptualised teacher development and concluded that there was strong evidence to suggest that teachers are more likely to establish meaningful changes to their practice if they are given 'opportunities that allow greater ownership and control of the process' (Fraser et al. 2007: 165) and that 'the nature, extent and role of informal incidental opportunities in teachers' professional learning are currently under-researched and therefore remain unclear' (Fraser et al. 2007: 166).

Moving forward then, what role does effective continuing professional development play in addressing these issues? Day and Gu (Day & Gu 2007) cited several factors as being prerequisites for effective teacher development (resulting in teacher retention) in their four year study of the early years of a teacher's career involving 300 teachers in primary and secondary schools. Influential factors were as follows: having an encouraging and supportive senior leadership team, having strong self-efficacy beliefs, experiencing 'positive professional identity' (Day & Gu 2007: 427), and having a willingness to participate in professional development and career advancement (2007). Day and Gu (2007) also described distinct phases of teacher development and made recommendations to senior leaders to create bespoke training opportunities matched to each of these stages. Finally, Day and Gu (2007) defined a teacher's development as dynamic and never static and this too must be borne in mind when designing training for their needs as opposed to a generic, one-size fits all development programme from initial teacher training up to the end of the first three years of teaching (the nascent period of teacher development and a crucial time to build teacher resilience, commitment and engagement).

Within my own setting, there have been several instances over the past few years of teachers leaving the profession, moving schools, or being highlighted as needing support with managing their workload or indeed their well-being during their second, third or fourth year of teaching. This trend would seem

to give anecdotal evidence in support of the research literature. In response to this trend, as part of our annual NQT evaluation survey in 2014-15, we asked prospective second year teachers what they perceived to be the biggest hurdles to professional learning following their own induction year. Their answers further endorsed educational research, as they described the barriers to development in the second year as follows: lack of time to collaborate effectively, lack of access to mentoring support, an overwhelming workload, the need for time and stress management strategies; and, to compound this, a strong desire to not want to admit to having a continuing need for one, or indeed all of these elements. Further, every teacher surveyed commented that they felt a need for their continuing professional development to be of a regular and reassuring nature; as had been their previous, statutory entitlement within the fortnightly mentoring support of the induction year.

As a teacher within this setting, the issue of effective professional learning was particularly important to me as the learning of new teachers informs a high proportion of my daily working responsibilities. I currently lead on initial teacher training in our school but also, crucially, am programme leader for a coaching programme designed for our teachers in their second year; which is called the Year 2 Professional Learning Programme (Y2 PLP). The research and development project would, I hope, generate rich insights into individual teacher attitudes to professional development and experiences of professional learning, in order for me to be able to adjust and improve existing training practice.

As a researcher, the opportunity to investigate the experiences of teachers on the Y2 PLP in significant depth would allow me to refine their training experiences according to their needs following the intervention. In addition, I hoped to be able to use my findings to create a revised model for future cohorts of teachers in their second year. Finally, the issue was also a priority for our school's senior leadership team (and others across the county), as they too were keen to lower the exit rate of teachers in the school within the first five years of their career.

More widely, with the national context of a teacher retention crisis in mind, it is clear that the retention of new teachers is an urgent priority for policy makers and school leaders. Furthermore, within my own school, the same priority remains and the opportunity to introduce an innovation to an existing training programme for teachers in their second year provided the perfect testing ground to better understand how to support and retain new entrants to the profession.

Finally, it was extremely important to me personally to be able to support every beginning teacher under my wing as effectively as possible. I wanted to see my colleagues thrive (rather than simply endure) in a sector which poses so many personal and professional challenges on a daily basis; and which can ultimately seem overwhelming in the absence of appropriate and timely support.

2. Review of the literature

My literature search was framed by two key questions. Firstly, what is known about effective CPD in the workplace and which factors inhibit and enhance this process? Secondly, what evidence is there that collaborative CPD helps teachers specifically?

Within my search, I consulted a range of sources, including theoretical literature on research into adult learning, empirical studies, government reports and reviews. In addition, I reviewed a selection of evidence-based professional literature on leadership and professional learning, as the professional learning ethos within my school had been shaped by influential texts in this area such as Daniel Goleman's *Emotional Intelligence* (1996) and Michael Fullan's *Leading in a Culture of Change* (2004). Each source was carefully evaluated for its relevance, validity and reviewed critically for limitations and potential bias.

What is known about effective CPD in the workplace and what factors inhibit or enhance this process?

Variability and complexity of adult learners as compared to children

In order to answer this question, it is crucial to begin by asking two further questions: what is known about the distinction between adult and child learning and what do we know about how adults learn in general in the workplace? Knowles et al (1998) describe a pedagogy for children where six elements must positively combine to create a successful learning experience (Knowles et al. 1998: 62-63):

1. The need to know
2. The learner's self-concept
3. The role of learner's experiences
4. Readiness to learn

5. Orientation to learning

6. Motivation

As the authors explain, what the child needs to know in this model is related to doing well at school, their self-concept is as a dependent, their experience is limited and therefore less relevant than the teacher's, learners learn what the teacher deems best, they see learning as knowledge transfer and the child's motivation can often be largely extrinsic either for good grades, teacher or parental praise. In the case of adults, the same six elements play out differently. As an adult learner, what is needed to be known can vary significantly depending on the learner's stage or disposition, their self-concept is less as a dependent and on relatively more equal footing than a child as they are now a qualified professional. Adults bring significant external experiences to the context in which they are learning, they are more self-directive in what they wish to learn, how they see learning will vary depending on their own range of learning experiences thus far (including professional training) and their motivation will vary according to a greater number of factors than a child given their greater life experience.

In addition, social constructivism tells us that an individual's perception of their progress is naturally biased; since it is constructed through their own experiences of the event and so this can hinder the learning process if they are less willing to accept and process alternative perspectives. Adams (2006) emphasises the need for teachers to see learning through their students eyes in these terms, and to accept that 'each learner will construct knowledge differently' (Adams 2006: 245). It is therefore crucial to accept the same conditions for training adults; that is to say to allow for and anticipate individual interpretations and outcomes from the same learning experience.

Within this context, an additional limitation cited by Eraut (2007) is the potential assumption by adults that the achievement of a generic qualification translates automatically into full competency within a

profession (Eraut 2007). Such an assumption precludes the capacity to effectively problem solve. In order to develop therefore, novice professionals must be willing to accept that in the workplace it is necessary to learn about and regularly review how you learn; irrespective of any qualifications attained and equally that a large amount of practice will be required in order to achieve teaching mastery; as championed in recently popularised professional literature such as *Bounce*, by Matthew Syed (2011) and as rooted in the concept of having a growth rather than fixed mind-set (Dweck 2012).

From this discussion, it is clear that two limiting factors specific to adults in their learning are: the variability and complexity they bring to their learning experiences compared to children and their possession of a qualification potentially impeding a willingness to improve. In this light, the first consideration for effective CPD for adults must be a need to take into account the high degree of variability in the additional layers of experience brought to the table by adults simply because of who they are and the fact that they have certain assumptions about their capabilities linked to their teaching qualification.

Additional limitations for adults when learning in the workplace

Eraut, (2007), in his five year study of individuals' learning in the workplace in the early stages of their careers (including teaching) found a number of other limitations to learning as adults. According to Eraut (2007), learning at work influenced by two main factors: the capacity to identify when one has learnt something and how a learner conceptualises the learning process itself. Research evidence synthesised by Coe et al (2014) supports this view and shows that teachers' professional learning behaviours and their beliefs about learning are two of six impactful factors on effective teaching.

Let us explore these two limitations to learning further. Firstly, adults who are novices in a profession are often not sufficiently aware of their location in the learning process and so they have difficulty in accurately assessing when they have learned something or not,

‘People recognise that they have learned things through experience, but do not necessarily remember how or when’. (Eraut 2007: 2)

This inability to identify learning can be hugely problematic; and it is frequently compounded by a lack of intellectual space afforded to novices in the workplace given the usually high number of new concepts, systems and routines which are being processed early on in a new role.

Cordingley, in her synthesis of several large-scale research reviews into the contribution of research to teacher development, (2015) supports this view in that evidence has shown that we must factor in ‘elapsed time as well as having enough of it’ (Cordingley 2015: 243) in order to see significant improvement in teacher learning. Indeed Timperley et al (2007), in their research review, found positive evidence that teachers need sufficient space to ‘process new learning’ (Timperley et al 2007: 29) in order to learn in any depth. In addition, self-efficacy theory confirms this view of teacher development, as learners ‘process and synthesis feedback information’ (Bandura 1977: 192) over time and over sequences of events rather than through compartmentalised, individual moments.

It is therefore clear that as it can be challenging in a new role to identify when learning has taken place, workplace learning needs sufficient space to develop and be revisited in order to provide opportunities for clarity and for concepts to crystallise and embed over time. Eraut’s (2007) second limitation was the way in which learners conceptualise the learning process itself and I will now move onto a discussion of

literature on this area in order to demonstrate what is known about types of learning before a specific focus on teacher CPD.

Effective learning processes: The Tortoise and the Hare

When we talk about learning, the literature shows us that it is important to bear in mind that learning takes many forms and therefore to conceptualise the term broadly. Claxton (1998) defines two types of learning using the analogy of the tortoise and the hare; acknowledging the limitations of using what he calls 'd-mode' or 'default-mode', a way of knowing things which involves deliberate and active thinking compared with a gradual integration of knowledge and understanding or 'slower ways of knowing' (Claxton 1998: 47). Claxton (2007) stresses the importance of making provision for learners to 'move fluently between focused, purposeful cognition and relaxed, receptive cognition' (Claxton 2007: 180) as complex problems often require a higher degree of rumination, intuition, distance or a combination of all three. Claxton uses the example of a Rubik cube being solved by a twelve year old girl who he was observing and who was playing with the cube, seemingly absent-mindedly. When asked what she was doing with the cube, Claxton reveals the girl said she was 'just messing about' (Claxton 1998: 29) and this unhurried tinkering is advocated as being extremely beneficial for learner development.

Claxton's model of learner development advocates that slow and d-modes need to be present in order for learners to be adaptable to a dynamic process. Claxton warns that 'fast intuition is vulnerable when responding to predicaments' (Claxton 1998: 55). Timperley et al (2007), confirm that teachers as professionals need intellectual space in order to negotiate and cement understanding and that they must develop effective professional inquiry skills in order to evaluate and improve student outcomes. Timperley et al's (2007) proposed model of effective professional learning for teachers is supported by

the social constructivist view of learning where assessment of students is viewed as ‘an active process of uncovering and acknowledging understanding’ (Adams 2006: 247). The assessment of teachers is recommended by Timperley et al (2007) to involve the same process of regular, cyclical action research into teacher development. Fraser et al (2007) echo Claxton’s (1998) opposition of deliberate versus deliberated learning in their distinction between teachers’ professional learning as ‘processes that...result in changes in the professional knowledges, skills, attitudes, beliefs or actions of teachers’ (Fraser et al. 2007: 157) and teachers’ professional development as ‘broader changes over time producing qualitative shifts in aspects of teachers’ professionalism’ (Fraser et al. 2007: 157). Eraut also supports this view in his definition of learning as a ‘deliberative process’ (Eraut 2007: 8).

In order for learning to be effective, therefore, it is important to think of it as an ongoing, evolving process of (re)discovery as well as trusting that a significant amount of background learning is happening even when this is not immediately obvious to an observer.

Learning as a dynamic process

Further, some adults may conceptualise their learning and development in a role as constituting linear progression over time; which can be limiting as it excludes the possibility of engaging with and accessing the widest range of learning opportunities; especially if one sees the learning process as neither dynamic, nor subject to change. Dreyfus et al’s early model (1986) of progression from the eighties reflects this linear way of thinking in their design of a learning trajectory from novice to expert. According to this model, as you pass through each stage in your career, you acquire an increasing level of clarity, understanding, long-term vision and intuition. Eraut (2007) criticises this model, however, for being overly simplistic given its ‘individualistic and conservative’ nature (Eraut 2007: 3) and Day and Gu (2007) agree that this model is not borne out in research evidence as they found that ‘the path towards

expertise is not straight' (Day & Gu 2007: 426). They show in their four year study of 300 teachers over seven local authorities that a teacher's development is constantly 'mediated' through three influences which they term the 'personal' the 'situated' and the 'professional'; in other words the interaction of their life outside teaching, their life within school and how their own values related to school policies and approaches and that the degree of influence of each element constantly shifts in 'intensity' (Day & Gu 2007: 424). Development is therefore highly unstable but it is this very instability which leads to the generation of new ideas. Fullan (2004) argues that stasis is death in the business world as this leads to stagnation and a lack of innovation. Schools are by their very nature dynamic and rarely stand still and as such in order to learn effectively in these environments one must accept the shifting sands in which learning must take place.

A final limitation to viewing learning as linear and incremental in Dreyfus et al's (1986) model is that their model does not take into account the potential for an individual to learn through collaboration (or indeed assess their willingness or capacity to do so) and how this impacts and interacts with their individual cognitive processes in a new work environment. Further, a lack of collaboration also means a lack of reciprocal criticism as well as a limitation of knowledge transfer.

Learning as lifelong

Effective CPD, according to research, must be regular and sustained for all teachers whilst in-service. Coolahan (2002) describes the deficit in the provision of CPD for teachers and the length of a teaching career. If a career is to span several decades, how can it be that the highest amount of training received by teachers comes in the first two years of their training in the form of a teaching qualification and an NQT induction year? If teachers are to remain proficient professionals, Coolahan notes that they should 'exemplify lifelong learning characteristics in their own behaviour and attitudes' (Coolahan 2002: 26). Whilst Coolahan's recommendation of a lifelong learning teacher is desirable; the reality according to

research is disappointingly different. The Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development's (OECD) report (1999) (a report reviewing eight countries, including England and Wales), demonstrates a profound imbalance between the amount of whole school training versus the provision of effective intervention training for underperforming teachers. Rather than underperforming teachers undergoing a 'systematic identification of needs' (OECD 1999: 4) at the start of the school year, many teachers are offered only undifferentiated, generic training which is shown to have little impact on performance.

Day and Gu (2007) propose a model of career development in teaching with effective CPD requirements matched to each career stage. In the early stages, the core training requirements also demonstrate a need for high flexibility and personalised learning as well as the need for emotional intelligence at each of these stages. If we rely on academic intelligence alone, Goleman (1996) warns that we will have 'virtually no preparation for the turmoil – or opportunity – life's vicissitudes bring' (Goleman 1996: 36).

Learning as available and observable

Finally, the success of learning in the workplace, according to Eraut (2007) is down to the availability of learning opportunities and the quality of the relationships fostered within the working context. Bandura (1977) also reports a need for learning from observation to be present for effective learning to take place and to achieve more positive self-efficacy beliefs; thus limiting a learner's tendency towards 'defensive behaviour' (Bandura 1977: 191).

Optimum models for workplace CPD for teachers

Fraser et al (2007) describe nine models of teacher CPD and provide useful distinctions between these, evidencing where the highest amount of knowledge transfer and subsequent knowledge integration can take place. CPD is graded according to Fraser et al (2007) on a scale of impact from purely transferred knowledge to a context in which knowledge is absorbed, reshaped, made sense of and successfully

integrated into meaningful and effective teaching. Fraser et al (2007) highlight the need for a widening of the definition of effective professional learning to include aspects of three different models of CPD; namely Bell and Gilbert's three aspects of professional learning (1996), Kennedy's continuum (2005) and Reid's quadrants for teacher learning (McKinney et al. 2005). In the first of these, Bell and Gilbert describe the relationship between the 'personal aspect', teacher 'self-efficacy' and 'teacher confidence' and how a number of studies have shown that these are interrelated. If a teacher feels that they have control or a sense of ownership over their development, this can improve their self-efficacy beliefs and in turn boost their confidence; all conspiring to ameliorate teacher performance.

In summary, it is clear that a number of elements need to be in place to support effective learning in the workplace. Firstly, one must acknowledge that adult learning dispositions will be highly variable and influenced by a greater number of factors than children. Secondly, as novices in the workplace will have difficulty in identifying when they have learned something, it is vital to create professional learning structures which allow sufficient processing time and intellectual space in order for a range of intelligences to flourish and for knowledge to be integrated effectively. Thirdly, anyone involved in training adults would be wise to discuss with each adult learner under their tutelage whether they conceptualise their learning as process or product in order to be able to constructively challenge more linear ways of thinking about development to help the learner to have patience whilst developing. Each learner will need to understand that their process of professional development is likely to be uneven, that they will experience implementation dips with new initiatives and that their learning trajectory is highly unlikely to be a smooth curve (Fullan 2004). Finally, an awareness of the limitations of merely 'transmissive' models of CPD (Fraser et al. 2007) and a provision of a wide range of learning opportunities is key to engaging adult learners.

What is known about the benefits of collaborative CPD for teachers?

Having explored the features of effective workplace learning, I will now review what is known about the impact of collaborative CPD for teachers in order to answer my second question within my literature review.

The Teachers' Standards (Department of Education 2013) themselves stipulate the statutory obligation of teachers to collaborate; notably in Standard 8 with the expectation of reciprocal seeking and responding to advice and feedback as appropriate as a minimum requirement. But how does this translate into reality and what forms of collaboration are seen to promote or preclude positive teacher development?

Fraser et al (2007), in their case study of three CPD initiatives in the UK (the National Literacy Strategy, Cognitive acceleration in Science Education and CPD related to formative assessment) conclude that 'approaches based on collaborative enquiry and support teachers in reconstructing their own knowledge are most likely to lead to transformative change' (Fraser et al. 2007: 167); whilst they also note the importance of teacher agency and control over their learning process as well as an inquiring learning disposition. One high profile strategy for teacher collaboration was Wiliam and Leahy's (2014) programme for teaching and learning communities (TLCs). Wiliam and Leahy's programme provided a CPD structure for an academic year based on regular, collaborative discussions on teaching practice in structured meetings with pre-determined agenda items designed for teachers to be able to critically evaluate and improve their practice as peers rather than in a traditional performance management structure wherein a line manager would usually be responsible for grading or assessing teacher performance. The efficacy of Wiliam and Leahy's TLC programme was recently researched in a doctoral thesis in which Barr (2014) created a TLC on the theme of Assessment for Learning (AFL) using Wiliam and Leahy's model (2014) in one UK secondary school involving 12 teachers in a staff of 121. Findings in this qualitative study were positive as the teachers interviewed commented that the TLCs provided a

space in which observation, discussion, experimentation and reflection could develop fruitfully; as seen in Figure 1 below cited in Barr's thesis (Barr 2014: 95):

Figure 1

The figure originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. The figure was sourced at Barr, C. (2014) ***How do teachers learn in a school-based teacher learning community?*** University of Sussex

As well as improved teaching understanding and implementation of AFL techniques, Barr found an additional benefit to collaboration in TLCs; that of sustained emotional support; also cited by Cordingley (2015) in her large-scale synthesis of the benefits of using research to improve teaching practice.

Cordingley also concludes, however, that collaborative discussions in and of themselves do not translate into sustained improvements in teaching and learning, finding that talking about existing practice without rooting this in research evidence does not improve student outcomes. Cordingley (2015) makes a convincing case for the role of research in professional learning for teachers with a wide range of examples of instances in which using educational research to inform practice improves learning and teaching outcomes. However, the benefits of collaboration are not restricted to using educational research. Collaboration can include a range of interactions between formal and informal, planned and incidental interactions resulting in productive learning. Fraser et al demonstrate this in their review of

Reid's quadrants of teacher learning (2007) where a number of learning opportunities are seen to be of value such as 'incidental conversations', 'staffroom chat' as well as intentional 'joint forward planning' (Fraser et al. 2007: 161).

Barriers to collaboration

In spite of this positive research evidence that collaboration enhances teacher learning, (and the statutory professional requirement for teachers to collaborate), a marked lack of collaboration has been found by some studies to be a prominent feature of the second year of teaching in UK schools. Indeed Burn et al (2010), in their study of seventeen teachers, cite professional isolation in the second year of teaching as one of the key barriers to learning following the NQT induction year and found evidence of 'rapid disillusionment' of teachers 'with high aspirations who were not offered opportunities to observe and plan collaboratively with others' (Burn et al. 2010: 654).

In addition to professional isolation, Kincaid (2014), in his study of one American High School implementing Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) designed to collaborate in improving practice, found that a second barrier to collaboration was teacher resistance to openly discuss practice in fear of criticism. Although this is a small-scale study and it cannot be generalised to a UK context, it nevertheless returns us to the issue of teacher self-efficacy beliefs, teacher confidence and the existence of positive relationships as being among the deciding factors on whether effective collaboration can be realised in the first place.

In conclusion, there is a significant evidence base to suggest that collaborative learning interventions have a positive impact on professional learning and also evidence to suggest the types of collaboration which are most fruitful are collaborating in using educational research to inform practice and discussion with colleagues in a structured and focused cycle of improvement and review. Equally, it must be borne

in mind that individual teacher confidence and trusting relationships must be nurtured in order for effective collaboration to take place.

Implication of the review of the literature and emerging research questions

From my review of the literature, it is evident that the way in which adults learn is a complex process and for adults to be successful lifelong learners they must achieve a certain level of self-awareness to understand their own strengths and limitations, be able to differentiate between types of learning, adapt to learning in a dynamic context as well as acknowledge and overcome a variety of barriers to effective learning created by themselves, those around them and the individual institutions in which they work.

With regards to nurturing effective learning environments for adults, what is known is that several factors need to be secure in order for deep learning to take place as learning can only become transformative when it has gone through a number of stages.

Existing research has helped to describe some of the optimal conditions for adult and indeed teacher learning and collaboration in a variety of forms has been shown to be extremely effective in improving teacher satisfaction as well as performance. In addition, empirical findings on the experiences of teachers in their second year of teaching suggest that there is a training deficit following the induction year.

What is not clear yet from the literature is what types of collaboration are most valued by teachers in their second year of teaching to develop; nor is there evidence of detailed knowledge of the learning resources which teachers in their second year feel are most effective for their progress. In my own research, I aim to shed further light on these two areas and therefore my emerging research questions are as follows:

1. What is the impact of using 'collaborative' training interventions on professional learning in the second year of teaching?
2. What do second year teachers' view as the most effective learning resources in their second year of teaching?

3. Methodology and project design

In order to answer my research questions, I decided to work with the new cohort of teachers in their second year enrolled on our Year 2 Professional Learning Program (Y2 PLP). I would create an innovation to the existing program by adding a collaborative, peer observation element in which teachers would observe and feedback to each other twice during the academic year. This would allow me to investigate teacher views on the impact of such a collaboration as well as seeking their opinions on effective learning resources on the program as a whole.

Participant description and ethical approval for the study

The participants in the study were six teachers currently working at the school in which I teach, who were enrolled on an existing professional learning course: the Y2 PLP. All six participants were female and were full-time teachers in the school across a variety of curriculum areas namely: two in Modern Foreign Languages (MFL), one in History, two in Mathematics and one in Biology. Three of the participants had changed career to move into teaching at a later stage, with two of these three having completed a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) qualification and one having qualified through the Graduate Teacher Program (GTP). The remaining three participants had qualified as teachers immediately after university and had all trained on the same university-led PGCE training course at the same higher education institution. With regards to the age profile of the group, the three career changer teachers were in their forties and fifties and the remaining three teachers were all in their early or mid-twenties. In order to conduct the study I obtained informed consent from the participants in two stages; underpinned by the principles of informed consent.

In the ethical approval secured for the study, it was agreed that my project qualified as working under the MLT Modus Operandi and therefore did not require signed, written consent from participants.

Thus, I firstly provided potential participants with an information sheet (see Appendix 1) which stated clearly the purpose of the study and detailed what involvement therein would mean. I then ensured participants had time to reflect on this information sheet with no pressure to make a decision straight away. Participants were informed on the same information sheet that they would be free to opt out of the study at any stage and that any data gathered during the study would be anonymised. One participant decided to opt out of the study just before the interview schedule was due to start. This participant cited workload demands as a reason for not being able to participate in the interview and was removed from the study. In addition to participant consent, I obtained the consent of the head teacher with a written request for consent for the study to take place as part of my ethical approval application (see Appendix 2).

Rationale for selection and de-selection of methodologies

My overarching aim was to gain insight into the learning experiences of six teachers in their second year (NQT+ 1) in a particular school with a particular intervention. My hope was that my findings would allow me to use this understanding to enhance the learning experience of future cohorts of second year teachers in the same school context (and potentially the locality); thus working to improve the experience and retention of beginning teachers. My research was therefore focused on exactly what Robson (2002) describes as ‘individual perceptions of processes within a social unit’ (Robson 2002: 271); in other words, within one teacher cohort within one school. More specifically, my research questions sought to produce a detailed description of both how impactful teachers had found an experience of observing their peers, *as well as* their own individual opinions on which resources best helped them to develop; therefore the data generated in the study would need to be descriptive rather than numerical. Further, this data would be likely to contain affective responses, anecdotes and highly context-specific information for me to analyse which could not be effectively interrogated using a quantitative

instrument. Given these considerations, it was most appropriate to use qualitative research methods. An interview of each participant, post-intervention, therefore seemed best matched to the investigation because of its potential to capture nuanced, individual experiences in great detail.

In addition, the intervention of peer observation was intended to provoke self-reflection and explicit comparison to the teaching practice of a participant's peers. This again would likely produce lengthier responses which were not numerically or statistically quantifiable and therefore a respondent interview remained the preferred data collection method.

Secondly, with regards to sample size, a study containing five participants is considered relatively small and therefore I decided that a quantitative approach was not fit for purpose as it couldn't serve to interpret my data meaningfully when working with such small numbers. It would in fact likely compromise the data to make unreliable claims across a narrow cohort if attempting to use quantitative instruments to determine the impact of my intervention. It would not be possible for me, as Cohen et al (2000) term it, to move from a sample to a population in this case. Further, as my intention was to produce a detailed account of teacher learning experiences, such a reduced sample was a practical necessity in order to keep the level of data generated to a manageable level.

Finally, when considering scope for data analysis, I needed to decide on the type of interview to conduct. It was clear I needed an instrument through which I could adapt, explain, omit and add questions as appropriate whilst participants evaluated their learning experiences (Robson 2002). I also wanted to be able to follow-up interesting responses and therefore a fully structured interview was quickly deemed unsuitable, as this would not allow sufficient scope into individual perspectives on learning if the structure gave no room for elaboration and my exploratory study required sufficient freedom 'in the amount of time and attention given to different topics' (Robson 2002: 278). However, I still needed to be able to identify trends across the sample so I retained a core set of predetermined

questions to facilitate some comparative analysis. This would provide significant scope to use the data inductively and yet remove an overly prescriptive framework for participants as with a structured interview.

In conclusion, as I needed sufficient scope to explore personal perspectives of participants but also retain enough prescribed questions to allow for in-depth analysis of themes and trends across a sample and sufficient exploration of individual stories, I chose to use semi-structured interviews as my main method of data collection. As with Elliott's (1978) description of an action-research case study, my research required participants to reflect on their 'situation, as active partners in the research' (Elliott 1978: 356) and the person interviewed needed 'flexibility of response' (Robson 2002: 270). A semi-structured interview would also allow me to change or adapt questions in order or format and add explanation as necessary (Robson 2002: 270).

Considerations for interview

In addition to considerations for the structure of the interviews, I also had to decide between video or audio recording and whether to interview the participants as a group or individually. I chose to audio record the interviews rather than to film them in order to minimise distractions and maximise ease for participants. With video recording the interview, there was the risk of participants becoming more self-conscious than when using a discreet audio device. Finally, I decided that the interviews would be individual, as this would ensure as far as possible that participants could comment freely on their experiences without the influence of their peers and any interference of the social and professional dynamics of the training group. The research methods literature supports this choice as conversely, with group interviews or focus groups, although these methods are equally flexible, 'group dynamics or power hierarchies affect who speaks and what they say' (Robson 2002: 284) and there is a risk that

personality clashes could arise as well as there being an imbalance of contributions if there are dominant personalities amongst participants (Robson 2002: 285).

Limitations of the methods of investigation

There were some disadvantages to my methodology (as in any study) and these can be broadly categorised into three areas: limitations of sample size, limitations of audio recordings and the time burden of conducting and transcribing interviews. I shall discuss each limitation in turn. Adopting a purely qualitative approach and using such a small sample size meant that it would not be possible to extrapolate convincing, generalizable trends from the data in a meaningful way; given that the experiences of the participants related so closely to an individual school context and a highly personalised perspective. Cohen et al define this as 'analytical' generalisation rather than 'statistical' (Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison 2000). However, a qualitative approach was required to capture rich, nuanced data on individual learning experiences or, put simply, 'in-depth information' (Wilkinson 2000: 47); which fitted precisely the purpose of discovering what resources each participant needed to develop effectively in their transition year to a full teaching timetable.

On the issue of audio recording, one could argue that in electing *not* to video record the interviews, a layer of data would be automatically lost as an audio recording could not capture the body language and facial expressions of each participant; both of which can be enormously illuminating. However, I decided it was preferable for participants to be audio recorded as this, although an artificial situation; would appear closer to a more natural conversation with a less invasive recording device and ensure they were more at ease and that we were both able to fully focus on the interview.

Finally, with regards to the practical implications of conducting interviews, there were limitations both for participant and researcher. One of the original six participants opted out of the study precisely

because it involved a thirty minute interview and this was deemed too much time to commit at a busy period in the school year. This therefore limited my sample size further and meant that I did not have the whole cohort of teachers on the Y2 PLP participating in my study as I had hoped. Lastly from my own perspective, the transcription of the interviews would be an extremely lengthy process. However, sufficient planning and preparation were able to easily counter this limitation and the richness of data would later compensate for this initial time outlay.

Data collection

The first phase of data collection was originally meant to take the form of a questionnaire on professional learning for all five study participants enrolled on the Y2 PLP within my school (see Appendix 3). However, due to time pressures following a postponed meeting with the participants, I had to adapt this mode of collection to change to a shorter activity which could fit into a ten minute slot at the start of the next calendared meeting. The five course participants were therefore asked instead to respond to a brainstorm activity within which they were asked to write words which they most immediately associated with a number of professional learning terms. One of the five study participants was absent from this meeting and was therefore unable to take part in this exercise.

The intervention

During terms three and four of the academic year, participants conducted two peer observations of colleagues on the Y2 PLP in order to make notes on the impact of a minor modification to their teaching chosen as a result of collaborative discussions, sharing of ideas from educational research and self-assessment of learning needs. For each observation, an optional observation guidance form (see Appendix 5) designed by the Assistant Programme Leader was offered to participants to aid note-taking. The observation form was not compulsory so as to allow participants the freedom to take their own

notes and so as not to restrict or bias their thinking in any way. Observations notes were collected as field notes after the observations and after participants had debriefed each other following the observations.

Post-intervention

At the end of the observation period, teachers within the 2016-17 cohort participated in a semi-structured interview asking them about the impact of the collaborative observations, other collaborative elements on the programme and what they used as resources and opportunities to support their learning as teachers in their NQT and NQT+1 year. Other questions included personal learning style, how they would adapt the existing programme for next year's teachers and potential limitations for the programme for them as learners (see Appendix 6 for the full list of interview questions). In order to maintain objectivity and neutrality in interview questions, prior to the semi-structured interviews, I asked my study supervisor to review the proposed interview questions to eliminate any leading or closed questions. Secondly, I trialled the questions with the Assistant Programme Leader in school to offer an additional perspective. Following these reviews by impartial colleagues, I made some adjustments to my questions and used the revised list in the final interviews (see Appendix 6).

The interviews were anonymously transcribed and full analysis of interview transcripts was completed. Each participant was anonymised by a letter from A-E within the interview transcripts. In instances during the interview where individual students, colleagues, institutions or localities were named by interviewees or interviewer, these were assigned pseudonyms or anonymised to preserve confidentiality as per the ethical approval secured for the project.

Ethical Considerations

There were several, important ethical issues connected to my research and I took careful steps to address each one.

Confidentiality and data storage

It was imperative that all data from the research participants be anonymised and that participants were guaranteed complete confidentiality in the handling of data. In order to ensure that any personal data was captured, transferred and stored securely, I ensured that any written documents produced e.g. interview transcripts were password protected and that they were stored on a memory stick in a locked filing cabinet. The audio recordings I collected were recorded on an mp3 player and were subsequently transferred onto a memory stick which was kept in a locked filing cabinet. Each audio recording was deleted from the mp3 player after transfer. I used a coding system to identify participants; assigning each teacher a letter from A to E for full anonymization.

Next, for the audio recordings of participants, full confidentiality was potentially not fully achievable due to voices being theoretically recognisable in such a small sample. In this case, I ensured that on the participant information sheet that it was explained that participants would have the right to review the materials before giving consent for them to be used but also that the material would only be reviewed by myself as researcher and would not be shown to anyone else without the explicit permission of the participant.

Bias towards teacher as researcher

With regards to the role of the researcher, as I am the current Y2 PLP Program Leader and have been involved in supporting the learning of the participants for over a year, there was the potential for bias in terms of participants wanting to please the researcher. With this in mind, I undertook two additional steps to preclude such influence as far as possible.

Firstly, prior to the observation intervention, I asked the Assistant Programme Leader to facilitate the pre-observation session so that the participants had professional distance from myself in the lead up to the intervention and to aim to avoid them wanting to please the researcher by performing 'well' in the intervention. It is worth noting here that the Y2 PLP fortnightly sessions are always divided between a mixture of facilitators precisely to remain true to the course principles of offering a variety of perspectives and a balanced experience for course participants.

During the interviews themselves, prior to recording each interview, I stated clearly to participants that they must reflect openly and honestly on their feedback on interventions and that they should not in any way feel obliged to answer in a certain way. When necessary, I reminded them of this during the interview. With regards to my own discipline as interviewer, I made every attempt to avoid appearing to 'share or welcome their views' (Robson 2002: 276) in the interview as well as using probes such as waiting time and repetition or summarising of what a participant said in order to encourage them to develop their thoughts further (Robson 2002).

Do no harm

Finally, with regards to ethical considerations, I had to be mindful of one other key principle of ethical research which was to do no harm. It was a distinct advantage of my research that I had established a trusting and open relationship with all participants. However, it was important to be mindful that as the participants felt comfortable describing their experiences in a confidential context to me, that they may reveal information which could be interpreted as making them vulnerable; or which they would not ordinarily reveal to other colleagues in the school (Simons 2009: 97). I was therefore of course conscious of the need to be aware of presenting all data (and especially data precisely of this sensitive nature) in a non-judgmental way when interpreting and analysing interviews, documents and field notes. In addition, it was important to acknowledge the risk of being overly interpretative, or even 'journalistic' as

Cohen et al describe (Cohen et al 2000: 292), in my analysis of all qualitative data, as well of course not using the data as an 'embodiment or fulfilment of the researcher's initial prejudices or suspicions' (Cohen et al 2000: 295). This concludes my methodology section and I shall now provide some additional context of professional development in the school selected for the study before presenting my findings.

4. Professional development in the national and school contexts

It is essential at this point to provide some additional historical background of CPD as well as describing the structures within my own school which support professional development in order to fully understand the context in which the five study participants are learning and growing as practitioners.

Current entitlements and requirements of CPD in UK schools

An important milestone in the history of continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers was the McCrone agreement in Scotland in 2001 when CPD as a professional entitlement became thirty five hours a year built into teachers' contracts (Education 2001). This agreement raised the profile of professional learning by legally endorsing the entitlement to develop and improve over one's teaching career.

In the United Kingdom today, this commitment to ongoing professional learning is most visibly embedded within the Teaching Standards where we see explicitly in standard 4 (d) all teachers being asked to: 'reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching' and in standard 8 (d) where they must 'take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues' (Department of Education, 2013) in order to maintain the minimum level of expected performance and to continue to progress within the performance management system and advance up the pay scale. In addition, from an Ofsted perspective, accountability for effective continuing professional development was raised further in September 2015 with a revision to the Common Inspection Framework (Department of Education, 2015) when Ofsted permitted themselves to request anonymised performance management objectives from staff. According to this revision, a school's inspection grading could be changed entirely,

irrespective of the teaching and learning judgments, if its performance objectives were not deemed challenging enough to effectively develop staff in their professional practice.

But what do we mean by continuing professional development? Can anyone really admit to being able to give a definitive definition? Within my own literature search, I believe the answer to be a resounding 'no'. Fraser et al (2007), citing Coffield (2000) points out that wider political and educational definitions of CPD or 'lifelong learning' (Coffield 2000: 3) are characterised by 'conceptual vagueness' (Coffield 2000: 3) in (Fraser et al. 2007: 155). I will now look at my own school, the subject of this study, in order to explain the opportunities for professional development provided therein.

Development and endorsement of a post-NQT teacher learning programme

In 2014, a number of concerns were reported by NQTs in discussions in a work/life balance session about their second year of teaching in my school. The most prevalent concerns were as follows: anxiety around missing the regular reflection on practice which had occurred in NQT mentor meetings, the need for help with stress and workload management (specifically marking overload) and a desire for ongoing support with behaviour for learning. In addition, following the more formal NQT evaluation in 2014, several other concerns or areas where training may be needed were highlighted by the NQTs:

1. An increased teaching load and the resultant decrease in planning and preparation time
2. Greater demands regarding feedback, monitoring and marking
3. Anxiety around higher stakes performance management and accountability
4. A sense of vulnerability as a result of becoming increasingly independent of mentor-support and decreasing opportunities to access support
5. Increasing tendencies to prove one's worth and a reduced willingness to appear incompetent or inefficient to mentors and/or Subject or Faculty Leaders

6. Teaching strategy deficits becoming more apparent as independence increased
7. An increased need to articulate problems and challenges outside of faculties
8. An increased need for specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) working strategies
9. An increased need for effective pedagogic strategies and structures to minimize stress and maintain well-being, and to avoid over-working in an effort to appear capable
10. A continued need for cohesive ongoing Continuing Professional Development (CPD) which builds upon the foundation of prior professional learning and focuses on a SMART range of improvements

Historically in the school, after NQT induction all teachers in their second year moved onto a full teaching timetable which translates to forty two periods out of a fifty period fortnight (unless the member of staff has an additional responsibility), in comparison to the thirty eight periods of the induction year. No mentoring or designated development opportunities were provided for this year group (until 2014) outside regular line management and whole staff training. In addition, formal opportunities to meet with peers in the same cohort no longer took place. Workshops on managing marking, behaviour for learning, work/life balance were all confined to the NQT induction year. In this context, several teachers in their second, third or fourth year of teaching had reported suffering from high stress and burnout and thus far, had been supported by a member of the senior leadership team linked to their subject department.

In 2014, I completed an action research project with a local education provider, involving research into affective barriers to learning in students. I found positive evidence to suggest that using a number of strategies based on the work of Claxton (2007), to have a more open dialogue about how students felt

about tasks before they did them, students' attitudes to learning improved, classroom climates became more positive and low-level disruption diminished. Having presented this work to our head teacher, it was decided that myself and my colleague would introduce a pilot scheme to share this knowledge with the next cohort of teachers in their second year in order for them to experiment with the same strategies in an exploratory way. In addition, teachers would have guidance and coaching on any area of practice they wished to refine after the NQT year, as well as general support with the transition to a full teaching timetable.

In order to facilitate the programme, the head teacher committed to giving each NQT+1 (teacher in their second year), one extra hour of additional non-contact time per fortnight. This hour was in lieu of fortnightly after school meetings with two course facilitators (myself and a colleague). The programme was called the 'Year 2 Professional Learning Programme' and was completed by six participants for the academic year 2015-2016. No formal research on the impact of the programme was completed but the six participants were asked to present their learning to the senior leadership team. Colleagues reported that the programme had helped them to reduce planning time, feel more supported and positive about their work and had made them more likely to use students' views within their planning. Their areas of focus for development were: independent learning, giving learning context, adapting learning intention language for vulnerable learners, differentiation and motivation for disaffected students. Following this trial year, the programme became a permanent fixture in the professional learning structure of the school and I decided to innovate it further for my research and development project in order to discover how we could improve the experience for the next cohort of beginning teachers.

I had only anecdotal evidence that our programme had been successful. I therefore wanted to formally test what impact a further innovation would have on the professional learning of colleagues and also to conduct a detailed case study to help me understand the individual learning profiles of each teacher.

Additional professional learning within the school

Outside its supportive learning strands for NQT and NQT+1 teachers, the school offers three other main opportunities for professional learning: lesson observation (within the performance management structure), internal leadership courses and whole school or faculty collaborative time.

The lesson observation culture has undergone several transformations over the past four years. For all fully qualified teachers there are three formal observations each year. The observer, focus and structure of observation feedback have, however, changed several times since 2012. In 2012, the observer would usually be a teacher's superior in experience and/or rank and therefore it was likely that the main observer would be the head of department or appropriate Key Stage for the year group to be observed. In the same year, the feedback would be measured against Ofsted criteria and the lesson would be graded. If the lesson was graded as less than 'Satisfactory', a re-observation was arranged within around four weeks and the same system was applied when the Ofsted criteria changed to remove the 'Satisfactory' grading; ergo if a lesson was graded as 'Requires Improvement', a re-observation was arranged along with additional feedback and support for the teacher in question to improve. Between 2012 and 2016 the school first acquired training school status, then became a teaching school. During the time the lesson observation culture has evolved to be more formative; with the current format being three observations per year, with the same observer, with no lesson grading and only formative, focused feedback.

With regards to career progression, the school offers several leadership courses which are all offered on a voluntary basis and structured flexibly; in other words there are some calendared meetings, some individual tasks and some collaborative discussions.

Finally, collaborative time is now the preferred and most prevalent form of teacher development as working within departments has been more positively received by colleagues than a more lecture-style delivery of generic training. Teachers in the school therefore have calendared collaborative time every fortnight and whole school staff meetings take place termly and are generally reserved for essential information giving. During the last ten years, the school has offered the following types of CPD:

- a) external courses followed by an impact statement where teachers are asked to declare how they will share the knowledge gained
- b) whole-school INSET where the head of teaching and learning presents an expected ethos of teaching and how to approach this,
- c) individual Teaching and Learning Communities (TLCs) where colleagues meet in cross-faculty groups to discuss common challenges and set targets
- d) carousel training sessions where colleagues opt in to attend a workshop on areas of development selected by the senior leadership team
- e) self-directed CPD through the performance management system with performance objectives linked to whole school priorities
- f) e-learning courses and video tutorials to complete in a teacher's own time
- g) collaborative time within faculties where faculty leaders are able to direct regular time to their own priorities and colleagues are required to work together on a specific focus

5. Findings and discussion

Having transcribed each of the five participant interviews, I had a large amount of data to analyse. In order to make the data analysis manageable, I created a grid with the interview questions on the vertical axis and Teachers A to E along the horizontal axis. I then reviewed the transcripts and completed a summary for each teacher with key words, themes and quotes from their responses to each question. Once this grid was completed, I then compared responses across all five teachers for each question in turn. The presentation and comparison of responses by question forms the first section of my findings. In addition, I have included the original brainstorm activity related to professional learning terms which was completed pre-intervention as well as field notes on the teachers' professional learning requests for the following academic year. Following analysis of interviews, brainstorm activities and field notes, I have included a discussion of common themes arising from the data as a whole and how these confirm or contradict existing educational research.

Throughout the data analysis I will refer to Teachers A to E with pseudonyms. These are summarised in the table below (Figure 2); along with the subject area and initial teacher training route of each participant.

Figure 2

Teacher Code	Pseudonym	Subject Area	Training Route
A	Nadia	Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)	Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
B	Jenny	History	Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
C	Kirsten	Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)	Graduate Teacher Program; School-

			Based (GTP)
D	Sofia	Biology	Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
E	Jade	Mathematics	Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)

1. The NQT Year

With regards to the NQT year, the sources of support cited by all interview participants as valuable were having an NQT mentor, having regular observations (whether from a mentor or from someone outside the department for a coaching observation) and receiving feedback from these. However, the definition of what was useful in terms of the mentoring and to what extent these elements were impactful varied highly according to each individual.

Nadia, who in fact mentioned her mentor the least in response to this question, had already worked in the school for two years prior to her NQT year and defined having a mentor as being helpful 'when you don't know any school rules'. In addition, Nadia used her previous experience working in the same school as a rationale for not seeing the mentor role as a crucial part of the NQT year; in other words she described that the most useful thing in the NQT year was full ownership of classes and how this had a positive impact on students' engagement and better routines. This revealed a more mechanistic view of the mentor as information giver rather than as an individual designated to nurture, refine and improve practice alongside a developing teacher. In these terms, for Nadia, once logistical information had been passed on, the mentor function had been fulfilled. By contrast, Jenny, Kirsten, Sofia and Jade described the usefulness of mentoring in more developmental terms. Jenny and Jade emphasised the usefulness of the regularity of observation in particular in order to be able to track oneself across the year where

the chance for a clear progress assessment or review was possible. Jenny described it as a 'sense-check' which allowed her to evaluate whether her ideas were working in practice when objectively analysed by her mentor. The theme of clarification was very strong for Kirsten, who specifically defined her mentors (she had two over two years as she completed the induction year part-time) as being the people who held her accountable to focus and prioritise 'as my weakness is seeing too many possibilities rather than thinking what I want to achieve'. Finally, Sofia appeared to have welcomed the mentoring experience the most out of all study participants as she mentioned seeking a wide variety of perspectives on her practice including coaching observations, organising observations of more experienced practitioners outside her faculty and gleaning tips from a number of sources. Sofia was quite emphatic on the value of a different perspective 'there's nothing quite like getting somebody else's view on what's going on in your classroom'.

A secondary source of support which was shared in the interviews with Jenny, Sofia and Jade, was the in-house support programme of NQT development sessions which were a series of regularly calendared meetings across the academic year in which common problems were aired and strategies discussed to overcome these such as behaviour for learning, making marking manageable and meaningful and work/life balance. Having the chance to reflect with other people and having intellectual space created by these NQT sessions was cited by Jenny, Sofia and Jade as a really positive element of the NQT year and a source of both learning and support for their development. Jenny referred to it as a place where tacit knowledge about teaching was revealed but also as a safe space where simple things could be shared without fear of shame or scrutiny 'it was always quite mundane stuff, simple stuff'.

2. The second year of teaching: post-NQT induction

Following on from the responses regarding the NQT induction year, responses to what learning resources were used in the second year of teaching were even more individualised. One thing to note

was that there is no formal mentoring structure in this year and this may go so far as to explain why the results varied; as each teacher had their own learning resource which they'd had to develop as distinct from the mentoring support of the previous year. Having said this, Sofia, whilst acknowledging that her mentor no longer had designated time devoted to her development, she had continued to work very closely with her mentor and as a department there was an existing, high level of collaboration already in place. As previously, Sofia cited the widest range of learning sources out of all participants; praising the level of collaboration in partner teaching of Biology as well as expressing a desire to watch a colleague in Physical Education (PE) teach Science to a year 7 class as Sofia expressed a fascination with how rapidly the PE staff (especially male PE staff) were able to develop effective rapport with students and in particular with disaffected boys.

Kirsten and Nadia, although in the same department, took quite different paths of self-development in the second year. Nadia defined two key learning points: a leadership course which she found interesting and inspiring and learning how to teach from a new textbook to deliver the new curriculum at Key Stage 3. It is worth noting here that Nadia's definition of learning was noticeably different from the other four participants in that she defined learning as acquiring new knowledge rather than re-working or refining existing ways of working. Kirsten, by contrast, commented that much of their development had come about from discussions with colleagues as well as stepping back to look at structures and routines from the previous year and attempting to improve these a second time around.

Jade found it difficult to think of what she had used to develop in her second year; and needed some prompting. After a gentle prompt of some thinking time, Jade cited an annual conference as one of the most useful development tools for her teaching. However, she had reservations about the facility with which she could implement the number of ideas from the conference as it took place in the summer and so it was more difficult to start new ideas at the end of the academic year, admitting that they tended to

'fizzle out'. In addition to the conference, Jade described a unique form of collaboration which none of the other participants had developed. Jade had co-planned several classes for the entire NQT and second year with Tania (a teacher in the same faculty who opted out of the study). Jade and Tania were in the same faculty and their head of department had deliberately timetabled several of their classes in parallel for the first two years in order to facilitate collaboration and peer support. Jade commented on how the co-planning and discussion of lessons on a weekly basis with Tania had resulted in a much lighter workload and she felt that they had taught better lessons as the lessons had been planned and re-worked through paired discussion. Nadia and Kirsten were also in the same department but, despite teaching similar classes, did not set up a paired planning system and worked independently of each other.

Finally, Jenny sought the least support and appeared to be the least collaborative in approach. Jenny expressed regret at no longer using her mentor as a source of support. She also mentioned in her answer that she had been speaking to a member of the senior leadership team about work/life balance on a few occasions across the year and it became apparent in later discussions of my own with Jenny that she found it challenging to ask for help from colleagues due to her perception that asking for help meant admitting that you were perhaps less competent than your peers. Jenny was a member of a very high performing department and she admitted that she felt that asking for help was creating a burden on colleagues and so she tended to refrain from this; even though the result of this decision was that she became more isolated and experienced difficulties with workload management and confidence with effective planning. Towards the end of her response, Jenny described anxiety around asking someone to observe her in the second year of teaching. She feared being judged that not everything was going to plan: 'there's an element of...I want to be careful about who I ask to come and do things...'

3. Preferred learning styles

The third question during the interviews related to preferred learning style: Do you tend to work with others or on your own when addressing your own development needs? Which is the two do you think is preferable? Why?

A summary of responses to this question are in Figure 3 below:

Figure 3

Respondent	Preferred approach to addressing a development need
Nadia	For issues with own students; alone. For shared departmental issues; in discussion with colleagues
Jenny	75% alone, 25% with others
Kirsten	I always need someone else
Sofia	I always with work things out with others
Jade	Predominantly with Tania; rather than other departmental colleagues

All five teachers cited some degree of collaboration with others to address their development needs but the degree of this collaboration was found to be dependent on a three factors:

1. Whether or not there was an existing culture of collaboration within a particular department
2. An individual's preparedness to ask for support; even within a collaborative culture (dependent on their own self-concept or affective response to being observed or assessed)
3. Whether or not time is designated to work on specific issues and how workload impacts on the capacity to step back and address needs on your own or with other people

There was some overlap in responses to this question related to question two as respondents had often already mentioned ways in which they collaborated for self-improvement. All five teachers described their departments as collaborative environments. How they engaged with these environments differed from person to person and this interacted both with their own perceived time and space to develop as well as their own self-concept and confidence as a proficient teacher.

With regards to pro-active collaboration, two teachers stood out as working most willingly with other people in order to develop: Sofia and Jade. Sofia again referred to their department as highly collaborative and was the only teacher to voluntarily invite members of the senior leadership team and heads of year on a regular basis into her classroom if she was struggling with a particular class. Furthermore, Sofia categorically stated that she would work with others one hundred percent of the time when addressing her development needs. Jade reiterated that her source of regular collaboration was Tania; with whom she planned a large proportion of her lessons. Jade stated that she did not regularly collaborate more widely than this as she was happy with the system she had established with Tania and she felt it was working well.

A moderate degree of collaboration was found with Nadia and Kirsten. Nadia reiterated that she preferred to collaborate with her faculty on shared issues but preferred to work on her own with issues related to her own students rather than seeking an outside perspective. Nadia did not describe any specific struggles during the year and commented that the discussions in faculty were usually very useful; she did not express a particular need for further collaboration outside her own faculty as she felt that her department was a highly effective source of support and she was fairly happy to seek help when needed. Kirsten, in the same department, stated that she needed another person to make her step back from the minutiae of day to day teaching and someone to make her reflect; as without a sanctioned space for this, she would not do it on her own. She commented that she regularly asked her

colleagues for help when addressing problems and that this was usually the best way to arrive at a solution.

Jenny, on the other hand, raised an issue of lack of clarity and creativity in her practice this year and defined the second year as a 'scramble' in which she needed more space to step back and deconstruct or unjumble her thoughts. She specifically referred to her full timetable as having removed the intellectual space needed to think creatively and deeply about teaching:

'I noticed that the time, the full timetable just sucks, sucks, just takes away the little bit of space you've got for, creat...you know, the creative thinking, it's just, you're trying to get, you're on the treadmill of trying to get through your week.'

Jenny also described a need to reflect on her own first, before discussion with a colleague and so with the high teaching load of the second year, it became apparent that without this regular sanctioned space (previously provided by the fortnightly mentor meeting) a sort of survival teaching mode had kicked in. In Kirsten's response to this question, she too referred to needing someone to enforce a step back; again reflecting the pressure of the higher workload squeezing the potential for effective, reasoned reflection in order to develop rather than stagnate to stay the course of a full academic year.

4. What to work on in the second year

The fourth question related to which area of practice each respondent was trying to work on in the Y2 PLP course. There was again variation here as regards to more logistical, mechanistic or strategic aims and more development, slower processes of refinement in teaching expertise. A second variation was in the ease with which each respondent could define precisely what they were working on; which was again perhaps symptomatic of the lack of intellectual space described earlier; a theme I will return to in the final summary.

Nadia's areas to work on were very clear, and were very much in the former category of goals with visible completion outcomes. Nadia wanted to successfully complete the paperwork and exams for her year 11 class to a high standard as well as making good decisions around work/life balance with the result of an improved feeling of well-being at work. With regards to Year 11, the theme of learning equating to new knowledge was the same for Nadia as she referred to working on year 11 because it was the 'first year I taught year 11' and so new challenges seem to be consistently categorised as work which has not been previously attempted. With regards to managing workload, Nadia felt very happy with the decisions she had made with disciplined cut-off times for leaving work and commented that she had only worked a few weekends during this academic year. Nadia explicitly compared this to the previous year and commented that by working less weekends in this academic year she had clearly made progress in reducing this number from her training and induction years at the school.

Jenny, Kirsten and Sofia had longer-term, more developmental aims focused on specific areas of practice or specific themes in their teaching. Jenny was looking at raising levels of independence in all learners across all groups and had experimented with a variety of strategies in order to do this. Kirsten focused on one year group only, namely year 9 students, with whom she had struggled with behaviour and engagement throughout the academic year. Kirsten wanted to raise engagement of students within this year group who were not continuing with her subject at GCSE the following year through adapting her lesson objectives to be more immediately differentiated for different motivations to learn and use modern foreign languages outside of school. In addition, Kirsten was also attempting to make her lessons more predictable with clearer learning steps in order to boost the willingness to engage of some of her more disaffected students. Lastly in this group was Sofia, who focused on a number of classes, but also had a particular focus on Key Stage 4, with trying to co-construct the learning environment in lessons through regular consultation with students on how they were feeling about their learning and how to use student feedback to inform lesson planning and feedback.

Finally, Jade had the most difficulty defining what she was addressing in her second year. She said that she felt she had missed the opportunity to really pin down something to improve and that she had needed more time to decide on something. I will return to this in subsequent questions as it is connected in some senses to the structure of the Y2 PLP course. However, Jade did comment that she wanted to work on raising the quality of student responses to homework by collaborating on a new homework feedback sheet with Tania which contained a student response section. What was striking in Jade's response here was that the theme of integrating new ideas into teaching practice came up again as a barrier (just as with the ideas she had gained on her annual conference in answer to question two). Jade, despite working on this new strategy for student response, described the time problems associated with physically photocopying this extra sheet for lessons as a rationale for it not being able to be embedded into regular practice:

'I find that even harder cos it's like another thing to photocopy, another thing to photocopy in advance. You know, like to plan it in?'

This quote perfectly encapsulates a common thread which ran through the Y2 PLP course as well as the intervention itself. When introducing ideas which could help to refine the teaching practice of participants, a certain amount of time and space was required for these to be effective. However, in addition to this, a willingness to commit to prioritising the introduction of a single 'tweak' or alteration to practice was also required and this willingness was being undermined by a definition of taking extra time to be a negative and therefore fruitless task; if considered to then impact on a participant's capacity to perform all the other tasks on their ever-expanding to-do list.

5. Individual elements of the Year 2 Professional Learning Programme: which resources helped you, if at all, to change your practice?

For this question, participants were shown a list of five types of session ran on the Y2 PLP that year and were asked to comment as to the degree of their helpfulness to them on changing their practice. The list of sessions was as follows:

1. Discussions of teaching practice with colleagues
2. Observing colleagues in a rotation (twice – intervention)
3. Trying out ideas based on educational research
4. Talking to previous Year 2 teachers
5. SMART strategies for how to do your work

Discussions of teaching practice with colleagues

Discussions of teaching practice with colleagues were described by all respondents as useful (and this is also confirmed in responses to question seven of the interview ‘how effective were discussions with colleagues on the year 2 programme?’). Nadia acknowledged the usefulness of discussions with colleagues and it is important to note that this defined as useful in the context of discussions which generated *new* knowledge. As Nadia knew several of the study participants very well, this was given as a reason that discussions with these individuals were less useful as she saw these colleagues frequently; and therefore the discussions were not unique. Jenny cited the ‘comfort factor’ of discussions with colleagues as important and Kirsten and Sofia commented that discussions were always useful; irrespective of the learning context.

Observing colleagues twice (intervention)

With regards to the two peer observations which constituted the intervention for the Y2PLP, responses were highly variable dependent on individual learning dispositions to the observation task, individual

understandings of what constitutes usefulness, engagement from both parties with the process and the time given for observations. This question also overlapped with question six 'to what extent do you feel the peer observations helped you, if at all, to develop your practice on the year 2 programme' and I will therefore include responses to this question at the end of this sub-section.

All teachers agreed that observing colleagues had a degree of usefulness as a point of interest as to what was happening in other faculties and also if the observation meant watching students that they taught themselves and seeing how a colleague dealt with similar issues this was found to be insightful, reassuring and helpful. The theme of new knowledge recurred with Nadia as she did not find watching languages lessons useful as she commented that she had seen many of these before and therefore they were not new experiences. Nadia also mentioned that watching a different subject was not useful as, although she could appreciate seeing students she taught working well in a different context, she was not able to transfer this to her classroom and so did not see it as a valuable use of time. Conversely, Kirsten found the opposite when watching a Maths lesson, in which she commented on the positive impact of routines set up by Tania; routines which she later tried to transfer and embed in her own teaching as the experience allowed her to reflect that her lessons were often quite unpredictable and this impacted on calm starts and behaviour in general. Sofia, Jade and Kirsten commented that the observations could have had more structure and also that their second observation had been less successful as there had been limited feedback time.

The process of being observed was perceived as useful by Jenny but not by the other participants. Jenny particularly valued the observation as a tool to reveal her teaching 'blind spots' and was impressed with the insights and detail of feedback from Tania (who had observed her in the first rotation). However, the remaining participants felt that being observed was less useful as often they were not sure what they wanted the observer to focus on or on two occasions, the participants had wanted more time for

feedback or a feedback session had not taken place. It is worth noting here that within the structure of the Y2 PLP, an hour session had been collapsed during the observation term to facilitate two thirty minute feedback sessions for the intervention observations. Participants were responsible for organising their own feedback sessions and this question revealed that Jenny and Sofia had not arranged time for their feedback session.

In terms of an impact on teaching practice, results were contradictory and again linked to individual dispositions. Nadia commented that the observation intervention had 'no application to my practice whatsoever'; Jenny observed that it was more valuable to receive feedback than to give it; Kirsten felt that observing another colleague was much more beneficial than being observed as it allowed you to take ideas from them to integrate into your own teaching; Sofia experienced a high level of pride being observed with her intervention with a difficult student and so valued the experience of her first observation as it felt like an achievement had been observed by a colleagues; and finally Jade felt that there had been a real lack of time for effective discussions to take place and that she had felt a real lack of focus which rendered the experience less useful. Jade added that she felt it had been implied by the course facilitators that she was supposed to know what to change in her practice in the observation but that she had been unsure and so the observation focus had been vague.

Trying out ideas based on educational research

Following a session using excerpts from the work of Claxton (2007) where participants were asked to select a task type from a suggested list of interventions, all five participants answered that they had seen a positive impact with their students followed the introduction of a task or strategy based on educational research. All five participants selected a task or strategy based on consulting students about their learning and they varied in the time commitment and objective of the tasks they chose.

Jenny, Jade and Nadia all consulted students about their learning by giving students post-it notes to comment on a specific question or theme. Jenny asked students about independent learning and tried to promote opportunities for this wherever possible based on student responses. Jade consulted her Year 11 group about what they needed to revise most and then designed a revision timetable based on student responses and Nadia invited student responses on poor behaviour. Jenny and Jade consulted the students in a pro-active way at the start of a unit of work and lastly Nadia used the strategy reactively following a difficult Year 9 lesson.

Nadia asked her students about how they felt their behaviour was impacting on their learning environment and what would motivate them to improve their behaviour around the time of Year 9 options when a significant number of the class had chosen to drop a language the following year. Nadia commented that the students' responses had very accurately assessed what was wrong with their behaviour and that the exercise had helped to reset motivation for a short time. She did not repeat the activity and explained that she felt this approach had a short term effect because students were not able to think in very long term ways and so they quickly forgot to address their behaviour. She felt that despite the intervention you 'keep encountering the same issues'. Kirsten also worked with Year 9 motivation post-option choices as she wanted to give her students a sense of the relevance of a language even after deciding to discontinue the following year. Kirsten therefore adapted her learning objectives to include more cultural outcomes; and included giving students an explicit rationale for different reasons for doing the same work. Kirsten applied this technique for a term and commented that students had enjoyed the unit more than in previous years and that students 'really listened' in class as a result.

Sofia took the idea of student consultation further over a number of terms. She regularly consulted her students about how they were feeling about their learning and consistently used their responses to

inform her planning in an attempt to give students more agency; describing her relationship with her students as a 'partnership'. She commented that over time this ethos had helped to improve the learning environment and that she had been observed by her head of department (with whom she shared the teaching of the same class) and she had felt that the improved rapport between students and teacher in the group was 'very, very noticeable' and that there was a collaborative atmosphere of 'yeah we're doing this together.' Sofia also used a strategy of giving a difficult student an alternative responsibility in the classroom in one lesson which she said engaged the student far more and had the end result of the student completing all their work when they usually could be fairly confrontational and disengaged.

Talking to previous year 2 teachers

All five participants found talking to the previous cohort of year 2 teachers useful but for different reasons. Caroline, Kirsten and Jenny all appreciated the affective impact of talking to colleagues who had recently gone through the same learning experience. Jenny highlighted the power of having peers recognise, see and understand what she was experiencing and how this was 'very reassuring' and Sofia echoed this idea of being able to 'see where you are' in comparison to peers; with the session acting almost as an affective compass to locate and ground experience. Similarly, Kirsten commented that this session made her feel 'less alone' as well as being encouraged and motivated. Nadia and Kirsten commented on the social benefits to the session in that it gave Nadia the opportunity to discuss practice with colleagues who she had never met before and for Kirsten it meant that she could now 'talk to more of these people' and that they were now more approachable.

Kirsten, Jade and Sofia mentioned that the session had generated a lot of ideas and Kirsten enjoyed the intellectual space to be able to bounce ideas off colleagues; describing the session as 'just fruitful'. Jade felt that this session could have been scheduled earlier in the academic year in order to be able to

embed some of the ideas and Sofia added that it would have been useful for the teachers to do presentations of specific strategies as well as informal discussions.

SMART strategies for how you do your work

All participants had attended a session on work/life balance in their NQT induction year. The NQT session involved an open discussion about work/life balance and a sharing of some common strategies to manage workload more effectively. The year 2 session on SMART strategies took place at the start of the third school term, in January, and involved participants reading a number of tips relating to analysing the effectiveness of their current working patterns and selecting an area to work on for the term in order to improve efficiency.

Both Nadia and Jade commented that the session was reassuring but that it had little new content and therefore was not essential. Jade described the session as a 'good reminder but not something I really needed'.

In contrast, Jenny, Kirsten and Sofia all said that it was useful from the point of view of one particular strategy which was to use the first free period of the week to plan your work time rather than 'plunging into whatever I need to do most urgently' (Kirsten). Sofia remarked that she had stopped using this strategy part-way through the year and that the session reminded her to revisit it in order to plan effectively.

6. Frustrations with the year 2 programme

There were three main criticisms of the year 2 programme: the presentation style of some of the sessions, the timing of the calendared meetings and the impact of having to timetable one free period per fortnight in lieu of directed time to attend the fortnightly meetings.

Firstly, all participants commented that they would have preferred to have more discussion time in sessions rather than a more lecture-style presentation as they wanted to have more opportunities to discuss and refine ideas based on a shorter amount of input. Jade commented that 'probably the best session' was talking to previous year 2 teachers as this involved a full hour of talking and that she had wanted to have significantly more time for talking; as did Nadia who commented that balance of listening and discussing needed to be addressed.

Secondly, the timing of the meetings raised two concerns: time-keeping of sessions and the meetings' allocated time slot. With regards to time-keeping, Jenny mentioned that it was important to stick to promised time boundaries as one course facilitator had a tendency to overrun which caused frustration. This was echoed by Kirsten who mentioned that some sessions could have been 'speeded up'. In terms of the scheduling of the meetings, the fact that they fell after school and on a Tuesday was picked up as a potential limitation and challenge. Kirsten mentioned that a Tuesday meeting could mean three meetings in a row if there was a parents' evening the same week (Thursday) along with a department meeting (Wednesday) and this therefore left little space to plan after school. Kirsten also referred to her brain being 'dead by that point in the day', as well as having 'no window in my week' and Sofia remarked that perhaps having a meeting every fortnight was too much. All these observations have implications for the planning of the timing of the course next year.

Finally, regarding timetabling, each participant was given an extra one hour per fortnight free in lieu of attending a fortnightly meeting for the whole academic year. This was meant to create an extra hour for each teacher to work on their development. In reality, for Nadia and Jade, the deduction of one hour of teaching from their workload meant that they both had to teach split classes and that Jade had less A Level teaching than she had wanted. Nadia felt that the split class generated more workload for her and so negated the gained time from her extra hour as this was spent liaising with a colleague. She also felt

this added pressure as she had to get through content faster with her split group. Jade commented that her lack of A Level teaching and her split class had created a very negative attitude in her towards the Y2PLP from the start.

7. Advice to future participants in the Y2 PLP course

General advice for future Y2 PLP participants centred around two areas: target setting and attitudes to learning. Nadia and Jenny both cited the need to set a clear target for improvement at the start of the course so that you had a narrow focus and could measure your success at the end of the programme. Nadia suggested linking the focus to a performance management objective so that the course would support a specific target and you could use evidence from course sessions to demonstrate progress in one specific area. It is worth noting here that the course was set up initially as separate and distinct from the performance management process so as to be a formative rather than summative experience. However, Nadia stated explicitly that if she were advising someone who was more reticent to make changes to their practice on the course; that telling them they would achieve one of their performance management objectives by completing the course would be very motivating.

In response to the same question about persuading a more hesitant group member, Kirsten, Sofia and Jade emphasised the importance of being open-minded and to be reassured the course involved making only a small tweak to teaching practice in order to generate a big impact. Sofia, Jenny Kirsten also commented on the need to have a courageous approach to your learning on the course and Jenny specifically mentioned the need for the person helping you to improve to be a 'buddy' and someone you 'feel safe with'.

Kirsten mentioned that to encourage future participants to experiment with their practice you should remind them that the minor teaching alterations or 'tweaks' involved were not 'onerous' and did not

involve excessive planning. She added that she couldn't imagine that a teacher at this stage in their career could think they were perfect. This suggested again that the attitude to learning was of high importance as if a participant perceived something as a time burden they would be less likely to implement it but equally if they felt that the process of becoming a proficient teacher was complete after the NQT induction that this would also impact on their development trajectory.

Jade supported this view in her comments that a positive learning disposition was key to being successful on the course and she described her initially sceptical attitude as 'pointless'. She described how her main aim of the year had been to improve as a teacher but that her negative attitude to the course had adversely affected her progress. In answering the same question, Jenny, Kirsten and Sofia both described how important it would be to challenge resistance to engagement with the course. Jenny mentioned that a reticent course participant should be challenged as to why they were reticent and was clear in her view that they wouldn't be able to progress until the reticent attitude had been addressed. Further, Sofia's opinion was that it would be a 'perverse situation if you've got a teacher who thinks they're the finished article...we might as well go home right?' Sofia went on to say that 'teachers should be learning' and was consistent in her view that professional learning was a messy, continual process of refinement rather than a linear path of improvement.

8. Modifications to the programme for the next academic year

In the final part of the interview, participants were asked to reflect on elements of the Y2 PLP to introduce, retain, remove or reconfigure for the next cohort.

Participants suggested several improvements to the course. Firstly, all five participants noted that observing more experienced colleagues during the course would have been more helpful than a peer observation. Nadia, Jenny and Jade added that having a choice over who to observe would also have

been beneficial. It was clear from their responses that from these three participants all saw the potential for knowledge transfer to be much more likely when observing or being observed by a perceived 'expert' teacher rather than a peer at the same teaching stage. Jenny made a clear distinction here between the values of observing colleagues at different experience stages; defining peer observations as being 'reassuring' (having affective value) and observations by and of experienced colleagues as 'valuable' (having pedagogical impact).

Secondly, all five participants mentioned the need for more guidance at the start of the course around how to diagnose what to improve in your practice. Nadia mentioned that she would include a full session on how to set effective performance management targets and explicit training on the school's performance management software. Jenny, Kirsten and Jade all agreed that guidance was needed on what to improve as they didn't feel experienced or confident enough to self-diagnose areas for improvement. Kirsten mentioned the possibility of having a diagnostic observation in the first term to set a benchmark from which to work in order to have absolute clarity on a single area of focus; with the confidence that a target set from this would be achievable. Jade 'struggled to come up with my own stuff', Jenny wanted to have one project for the year and the time to 'really think things through' and Kirsten added that she required more guidance on what to tweak with an experienced colleague suggesting ideas: 'I think I'd have felt a little bit more this is worth doing if someone else had said it I think'.

Finally, Jenny was of the opinion that a useful addition to the programme would be a year 2 mentor; if money and time were not as restricted. This echoed the views expressed by several participants at the start of the interview with regards to missing the regular observation and guidance of the NQT year.

When asked about elements of the programme which they would keep for next year, there was a consensus that being given an extra hour per fortnight was hugely valuable; even if the effective

deployment of this time had varied for participants over the academic year. The most striking general comments here were in relation to the benefits of intellectual space provided by the programme and about the emotional relief brought by this time. More specifically, Kirsten, Jenny and Sofia expressed gratitude for the time as it gave a reassuring endorsement from the school leadership that they were not yet meant to be fully-fledged practitioners and that it was expected that further developments were needed. Kirsten summarises this view as follows: 'it's kind of sanctioned that you should be reflecting still'. Jade expressed regret that she had not used the time as effectively as she could and this indicated a potential requirement for more regular monitoring of attitudes to the course early on to ensure participants' barriers to learning were being addressed.

In terms of specific course elements all participants, agreed that discussions of teaching practice, ideas from educational research and meeting previous year 2 teachers should remain on the programme. Four out of five teachers felt that a SMART working strategies session should be retained. However, Jade felt that this session should be restricted to the NQT induction year only. It is interesting to note that this opinion was in conflict with Jade's earlier responses regarding her frustration with being unable to implement new strategies to her work effectively as she felt that SMART strategies were unnecessary and yet the issues which frustrated her were frequently around changes to her practice feeling difficult to integrate or a time burden. This potentially reveals the need for the SMART strategies session to involve more personalised and directed diagnosis of issues within participants' practice of which they are unaware as they do not have the intellectual space to effectively evaluate core issues within their teaching and as such dismiss sessions which may in fact hold the key to solving entrenched problems.

Responses surrounding elements to be removed from the programme showed a clear division between the participants. Kirsten, Nadia and Jade all regarded the peer observations as non-essential to their progress and were happy to see these dropped from the programme. Jade and Nadia viewed the

observations as non-applicable to their teaching contexts and Kirsten was concerned that they had little impact due to the lack of time for feedback and discussion. Sofia and Jenny both felt the observations had value and should be retained for the following year; with a clearer focus and a longer time frame.

Lastly, several sessions were asked to be retained but with some revisions. Sofia wanted the discussions with year 2 teachers to include presentations which were thematically grouped around relevant areas of teaching as well as being scheduled earlier in the calendar year in order for participants to effectuate ideas generated in this session (a view shared by Jade, Sofia, Kirsten and Jenny).

9. Additional document analysis and field notes

In addition to the semi-structured interviews, it is useful at this point to turn to the additional documents generated during the project as they provide an additional layer of interpretation to the main source of data collection.

Firstly, when looking at the brainstorm activity completed by the course participants, there is a clear link between the word association from each participant to professional learning terms and their experiences of the Y2 PLP and the intervention of peer observations. Nadia did not complete the brainstorm activity as she was absent from this session.

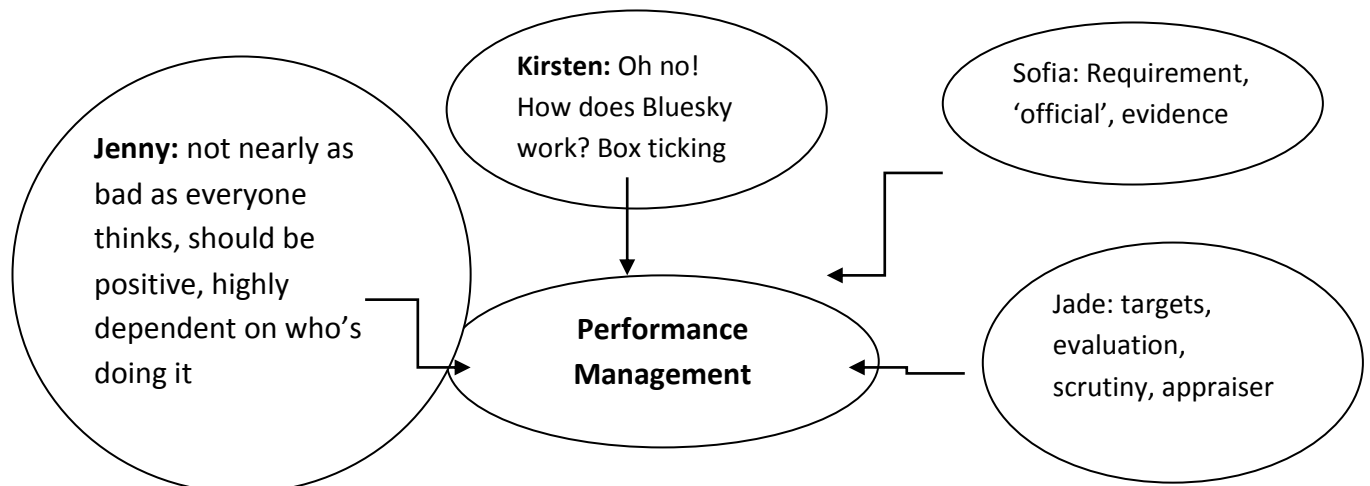
In Figure 4 below we can see the Wordle created which is a simple collection of every word associated with all the professional learning terms given to participants (see Appendix 4). This reveals the wide range of meanings and associations ascribed to words associated with training and confirms the 'conceptual vagueness' (Coffield 2000: 3) cited in the literature as there is a highly convoluted and fractured view of what it means to train and improve as a teacher.

Figure 4



The individual brainstorm activities for Jenny, Kirsten, Sofia and Jade can be found in Appendices 7 through to 10. Across this activity, there was a strong distinction between performance management word associations and other types of training such as coaching, mentoring, professional learning and professional development. Performance management had the most negative word associations with the following words attached to this term summarised in Figure 5:

Figure 5: Collated word associations from study participants for the term Performance Management



In reference to the term mentoring, all participants had positive word associations with the 'wisdom' and 'wiser' associations for Jenny and Kirsten, which supports their desire to continue observation from and of experienced colleagues following the induction year. Coaching also received positive associations across the cohort.

The term CPD was viewed by three participants (Jade, Jenny and Sofia) as being connected to external courses and Jenny commented that such course could be of 'varying use'. Kirsten demonstrated a collaboration of meaning between the terms CPD, professional development and professional learning, writing the question 'same thing?' on a line linking the three terms.

The term INSET was associated by the same three participants (Jade, Jenny and Sofia) with collaboration with colleagues, administrative tasks and information transfer. Kirsten, by contrast, saw this as a time for stepping back from colleagues; describing INSET as a 'buffer zone' and an 'overview'.

The term professional learning drew out some interesting links for participants. Kirsten added a single word 'culture' which was one of the school's development priorities and appears on the mission statement for the school. Kirsten did not elaborate on this association and conflated this term in meaning with CPD and Professional Development; perhaps demonstrating the danger of a proliferation of training terms diluting their meaning. Jenny and Sofia demonstrated further evidence of a blending of definitions as Jenny also linked professional learning and professional development as being the same but cited the need for 'a clear head to full engage' with learning under both terms. Sofia, by contrast wrote that she did not know the meaning of professional development, but cited, along with Jade, the role of professional learning to be directly linked to subject knowledge enhancement.

Professional learning requests for the following academic year

Finally, in the last session of the Y2 PLP, course participants were asked to write down what they felt their emerging training needs would be going into their third year of teaching. Their responses are summarised in the table below (Figure 6)

Figure 6: training needs for the next academic year

Respondent	Training needs and requests
Teacher A: Nadia	Possible coaching on mentoring trainee teachers as taking on a mentoring responsibility next year. Three observations from the head of faculty are always very useful.
Teacher B: Jenny	Further development work with sixth form teaching following the new A Level specification. Behaviour for learning coaching with a challenging Key Stage 4 group. Ideas to help needed.
Teacher C: Kirsten	Coaching observations from experienced colleagues
Teacher D: Sofia	Coaching observations from experienced colleagues at pinch point during the year Chances to collaborate with more teachers
Teacher E: Jade	Additional time to develop a template for homework at Key Stage Three and student responses to feedback

Discussion of findings

Having presented my findings in detail, we must now turn to a discussion of what the findings reveal in terms of my two research questions; namely: what is the impact of using ‘collaborative’ training interventions on professional learning in the second year of teaching and what do second year teachers’ view as the most effective learning resources in their second year of teaching?

Research question 1: the impact of collaborative training interventions

There was much in the data which supported existing literature on the impact of collaborative training interventions.

Firstly, all participants said that they valued the collaborative training intervention of the peer observations as a point of interest; supporting the view that teachers to some extent respond positively to collaborative training; as seen in Wiliam and Leahy's TLC model in theory (2014) and in practice (Barr 2014). However, participants were less sure about the value of their observation experience as something which had *direct* applicability to their practice or the potential to transform their teaching. There was only one instance of direct application of a single feature from one teacher's practice to another in the form of an idea for classroom routines transferred from Tania's teaching into Kirsten's.

This finding that the act of collaboration itself is not enough to have a strong impact on teaching and learning is supported by Cordingly (2015). However, a surprising finding with regards to collaboration in general was the fact that three of the study participants, Jenny, Kirsten and Sofia, contradicted the same literature in their responses. All three of these participants praised collaboration for collaboration's sake; citing it as 'just fruitful', 'always useful' and 'always interesting'.

In addition, the data supports the view that the collaborative activity needs to be adapted and personalised for the individual learner, as well as being closely aligned with the learning dispositions of individuals in order for all learners to find the collaboration of benefit; as seen in the models of the adult learner from Knowles et al (1998).

Secondly, limitations to the usefulness of the observations identified by participants supported the research findings of Cordingly (2015: 243), Claxton (1998) and Timperley et al (2007), in that teachers need enough time, as well as enough time to *pass* in order to embed new learning. Participants felt they

needed more time to establish a focus and more time to feedback on the observations in order for them to be effective. In addition, two participants could not find time to feedback and thereby missed the learning opportunity from the second observation; confirming that for participants in this school context, a lack of time impacted the efficacy of the training intervention. It is therefore clear that adequate provision of processing and implementation time as well as intellectual space; as supported by the literature; was viewed by all participants as being a prerequisite for effective professional learning.

Research question 2: effective learning resources in the second year of teaching

For my second research question, there was again a strong correlation with the research literature. Firstly, there was a definite degree of discrepancy and variability between the views and experiences of individual study participants as to what they viewed as effective learning resources. This is consistent with social constructivist theory that each learner will 'construct knowledge differently' (Adams 2006: 245).

Secondly, what was also consistent with the literature was that a respondent's definition of effective learning was found to be highly dependent on the learning disposition of each participant and more specifically, their willingness to engage. The learning disposition of participants was most marked in Jade's self-described negative attitude to learning and her conclusion that this had had a demonstrably adverse impact on her experience of the Y2 PLP. The level of effectiveness of a learning opportunity was therefore found to be highly dependent on a dynamic interaction between a teacher's own disposition or emotional response and the objective content or purpose of the learning opportunity itself. This corroborates the findings of Day and Gu (2007) in their description of learning as being 'mediated' (Day & Gu 2007: 424) by professional and personal factors and that the 'intensity' (Day & Gu 2007: 243) of these factors is constantly in flux.

Thirdly, the conception of each participant of the learning process itself was found to impact a learner's view of the effectiveness of a learning resource; consistent with the findings of Eraut (2007), Claxton (1998) and Fraser et al (2007). This is best exemplified by the contrast between Nadia and Jade's definition of learning as new knowledge and the product from a learning event as opposed to the definition shared by Jenny, Sofia and Kirsten that the learning process must by its very nature involve revision, refinement and re-education in a cyclical and ever-evolving process. Equally, Nadia's attitude was consistent with Eraut's (2007) finding that learners can have assumptions about their competency based on the fact that they have already qualified as a professional. This explains Nadia's mechanistic view of the mentor role as a provider of administrative information rather than a developmental tool.

As regards to the most effective learning resources, it was striking that participants put a high value on communication and idea sharing within their own departments as a live way of developing and the collaborative nature of their own departments as a learning resource was highly valued by all participants except Jenny; who experienced significant professional isolation; consistent with Burn et al's study (2010). Finally, additional learning resources cited as effective were systems of co-planning (Jade), coaching from experienced colleagues, emotional support from sessions designated to well-being and sharing teaching ideas with the previous Y2 PLP cohort.

Limitations of the findings

The limitations of the findings were as predicted. The small sample size make it difficult to generalise out to the wider population and individual definitions of impact (by their nature highly variable across individuals) make it a challenge to robustly measure the effectiveness of the intervention. However, what is clear is that there is still much to be learnt and developed around providing effective professional learning programs for teachers following their induction year.

6. Collaborative elements of the project

Before offering tentative conclusions from my study, I will outline the ways in which my study meets the collaborative criteria for the Research and Development Project. Given the context of the Y2 PLP, the project involved collaboration in a number of senses within the school community. Firstly, on an individual level, my collaboration with the Assistant Programme Leader in setting up the innovation of a peer observation cycle required co-planning and a number of discussions around the creation of an observation template for the observations themselves.

Secondly, on the programme level, as the innovation involved colleagues watching two of their peers, the intervention involved collaboration across the peer group as well as across faculties; with each participant observing at least one different subject area within the observation cycle. Further, during the formal data collection phase, after initial analysis of the interview data, I met with the Assistant Head Teacher who oversees Performance Management and Staff Well-Being in order to discuss preliminary findings. From our discussions, I decided on a second innovation to the project which was to review the original plan for Term 6. Based on my initial analysis of the interviews, I drafted a menu of options for the programme participants to select from in order to respond more precisely to their training needs.

Finally, significant collaboration on a wider level took place, with preliminary findings presented at two events hosted by Oxford University Department of Education. The first event was a meeting of the Oxfordshire City Learning Professional Learning and Development Group, a group comprised of local senior leaders and educational researchers aiming to enhance the professional learning experiences of teachers within Oxfordshire schools. The second event was a research networking event where local teacher researchers presented their preliminary findings on projects completed this academic year. At the time of writing, three local partnership schools had been in touch with me to request a meeting to

discuss the Y2 PLP. I intend to share my preliminary findings with these schools in the autumn term in order to generate a new dialogue about the needs of beginning teachers.

7. Conclusions and implications of findings

In answer to the first research question, collaborative training interventions have the potential to be impactful. However, different types of collaboration will be rated differently by different individuals and so it is therefore imperative that a need-analysis takes place at the start of the academic year in order for adequate provision to be made for a balance between the needs of the full teacher cohort and individual learning needs. Peer observation has been shown in this study to both reassure and to boost feelings of self-efficacy. However, it has not been shown to be a form of transformative CPD on its own.

Participants identified five features which could be improved about the application of the training intervention in order for them to perceive any significant increase in its usefulness:

1. The observation should be of a more experienced colleague in order for the observer to gain what they see as valuable insights into teaching practice (Nadia, Jenny, Kirsten)
2. When observing a more experienced colleague, ideally they should working on the same issue as the less experienced teacher (Jade)
3. The time elapsed between the observation and the feedback discussion should be as short as possible so as to allow for detailed feedback and adequate recall of events from both parties (Sofia, Kirsten)
4. Coaching and guidance on choosing an appropriate focus for a developmental observation should be made available on request (Jade, Kirsten)

5. The observation should have a defined focus and a formalised feedback structure (Sofia, Jade, Kirsten)

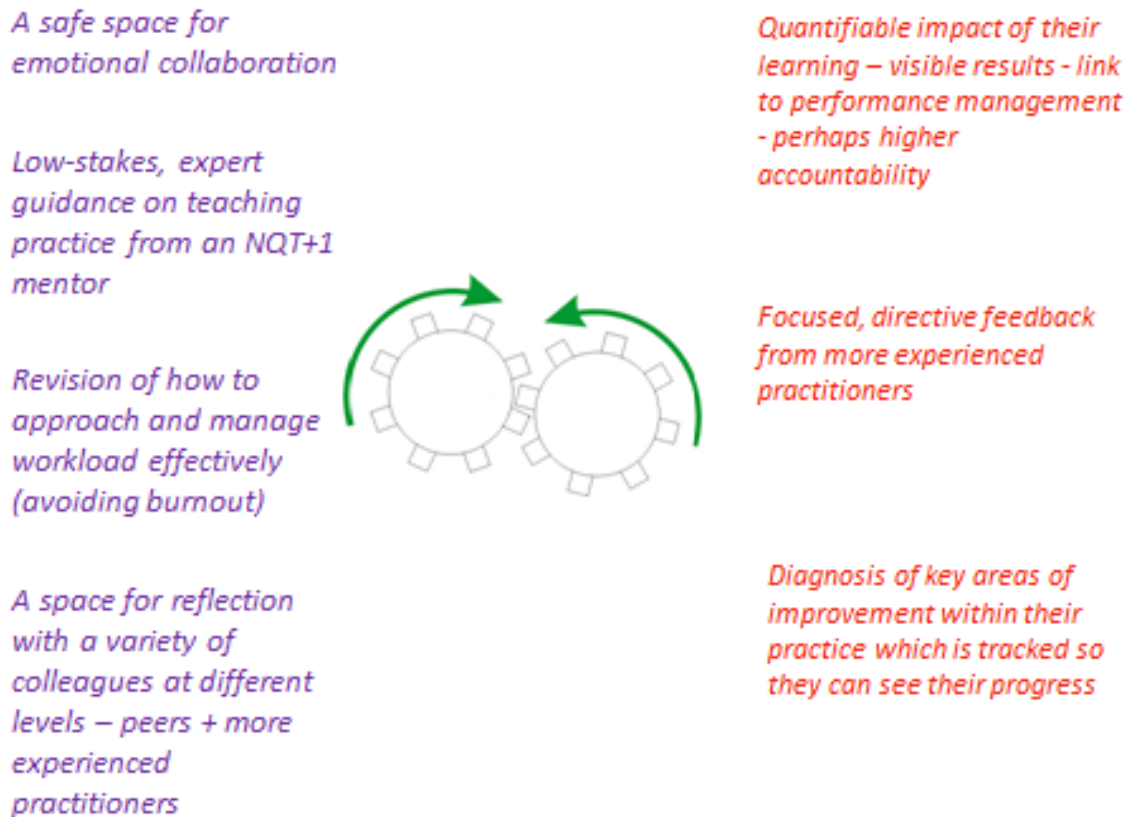
Features of effective CPD

Teachers in this study found effective CPD to combine four elements:

1. The diagnostic - an initial assessment of learning needs at the start of the year to identify priority learning needs
2. The collaborative - a variety of collaborative activities including discussions with colleagues, co-planning, sharing effective teaching strategies
3. The reflective – sufficient intellectual space to reflect on what is working well and how to improve at several regular intervals
4. The affective – opportunities to meet and network with teachers in your peer group in order to gain emotional support and reassurance around shared experiences of time and workload pressures

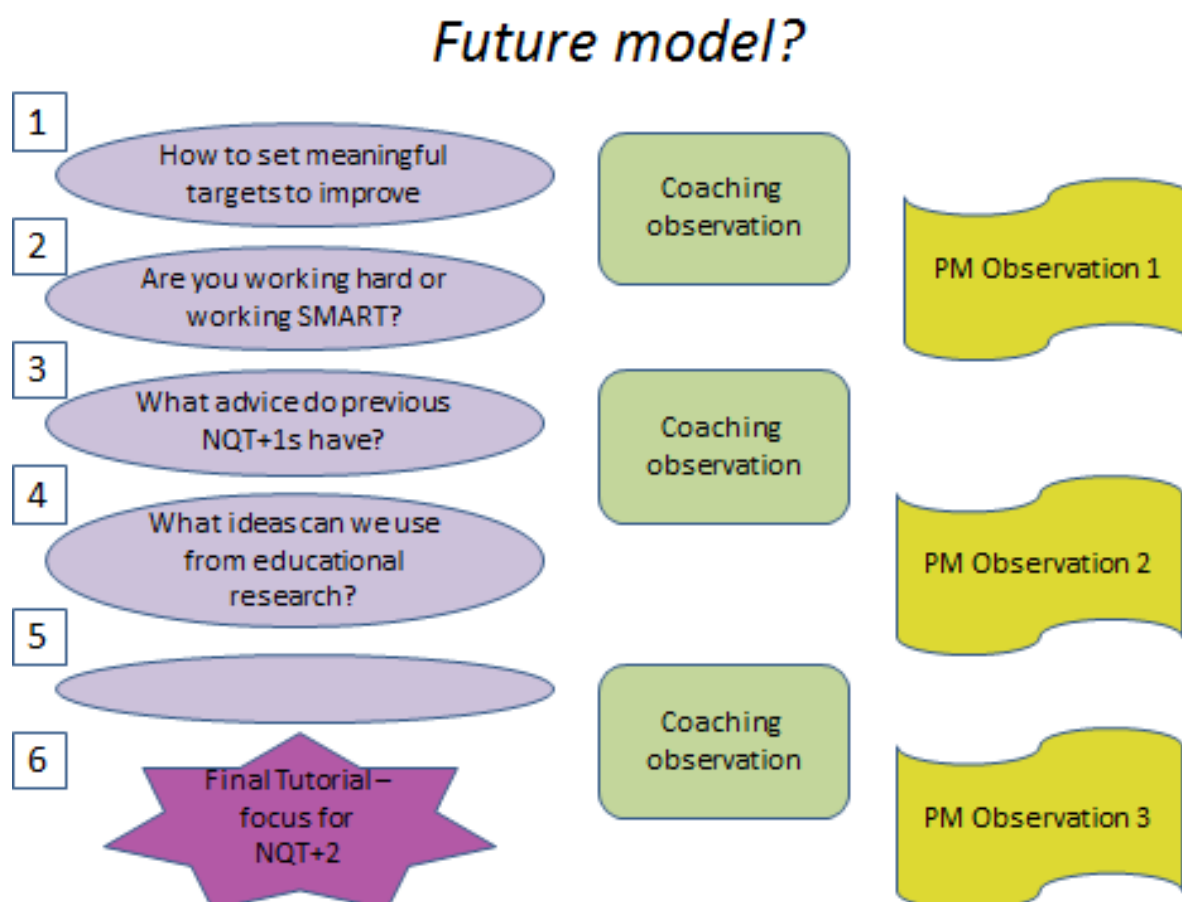
From my findings, I propose two new models of professional learning as shown in figures 7 and 8 which I feel best represent the data generated in this study. Figure 7 demonstrates the need for a supportive, affective strand to be in place (the purple strand on the left) to facilitate impactful collaboration activities to improve teaching practice (the red strand on the right). This model supports the conception of learning as a non-linear process (Fullan 2004) and one that should exist in a cycle of regular revision, re-appreciation and regeneration.

Figure 7



In Figure 8, the diagnostic, collaborative, reflective and affective strands are integrated into a revised model for the Y2 PLP for the coming academic year. The sessions highlighted in purple are based on experienced colleague input followed by supportive, collaborative discussions which seek to reassure teachers but also inspire them to work together to improve their practice. The middle section represents coaching observations from or of experienced practitioners on areas of improvement for the novice teachers. These coaching observations precede each of the three formative performance management observations, highlighted in yellow:

Figure 8



In conclusion, the professional learning of beginning teachers is still an area to which significant research time and expertise needs to be dedicated. What was striking in the interviews with all study participants was the strong desire in all of them to improve. However, the complex interaction of their personal stories, learning dispositions, capacity to learn and opportunities to learn still require much more careful thinking and re-structuring in order to provide the kind of personalised learning experience which, I feel, could be the key to sustaining a lifelong commitment to teaching.

8. References list

- Adams, P., 2006. Exploring social constructivism : theories and practicalities. *Education 3-13*, 34(March), pp.243–257.
- Association of Teachers and Lecturers, 2015. *ATL Executive Conference report 2015*, London.
- Bandura, A., 1977. Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), pp.191–215.
- Barr, C., 2014. *How do teachers learn in a school-based teacher learning community?* University of Sussex.
- Bell, B. & Gilbert, J., 1996. *Teacher development: a model from science education*, London: Falmer Press.
- Burn, K., Mutton, T. & Hagger, H., 2010. Strengthening and sustaining professional learning in the second year of teaching. *Oxford Review of Education*, 36(6), pp.639–659.
- Claxton, G., 2007. Expanding young people’s capacity to learn. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 55(2), pp.115–134.
- Claxton, G., 1998. *Hare Brain Tortoise Mind*, London: Fourth Estate.
- Coe, R. et al., 2014. *What makes great teaching? Review of the underpinning research*, Durham.
- Coffield, F., 2000. *Differing visions of a learning society*, Bristol, Policy Press.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K., 2000. The nature of enquiry. In *Research Methods in Education*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Coolahan, J., 2002. *Teacher education and the teaching career in an era of lifelong learning*, Paris.
- Cordingley, P., 2015. The contribution of research to teachers’ professional learning and development. *Oxford Review of Education*, 41(2), pp.232–252.
- Cordingley, P. & Cordingley, P., 2015. Oxford Review of Education The contribution of research to teachers’ professional learning and development The contribution of research to teachers’ professional learning and development. , 4985(October).
- Day, C. & Gu, Q., 2007. Sustaining commitment and effectiveness over a career variations in the conditions for teachers’ professional learning and development: Sustaining commitment and effectiveness over a career. *Oxford Review of Education*, 33(4), pp.423–443.
- Department of Education, 2015. School inspection handbook.
- Department of Education, 2013. *Teachers’ Standards*, Great Britain.
- Dreyfus, H.L., Dreyfus, S.E. & Athanasiou, T., 1986. *Mind over machine: The power of human intuition and expertise in the era of the computer*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Dweck, C., 2012. *Mindset*, London: Robinson.
- Education, D. of S. executive, 2001. A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century. *McCrone Report*.

Available at: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/158413/0042924.pdf>.

- Elliott, J., 1978. What is Action Research in Schools? *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 10(4), pp.355–357.
- Eraut, M., 2007. How Professionals Learn through Work. *Director*, 16(1), pp.1–29.
- Fraser, C. et al., 2007. Teachers' continuing professional development: contested concepts, understandings and models. *Journal of In-Service Education*, 33(2), pp.153–169.
- Fullan, M., 2004. *Leading in a culture of change personal action guide and workbook*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Goleman, D., 1996. *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*, London: Bloomsbury.
- Kennedy, A., 2005. Models of Continuing Professional Development. *Journal of In-Service Education*, 31(2), pp.235–250.
- Kincaid, E.R., 2014. *Barriers to implementation of effective professional learning communities*. University of Walden.
- Knowles, M.S., Holton, E. & Swanson, R., 1998. *The Adult Learner: The Definitive Classic in Adult Education and Human Resources Development* 5th ed., Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann.
- McKinney, S. et al., 2005. *Learners, learning and teaching network project 2 - progress report*, Perth.
- Morris, E., 2015. Sleepwalking into UK's worst teacher recruitment crisis. *The Guardian*. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/education/2015/oct/27/teacher-recruitment-crisis-estelle-morris>.
- OECD, 1999. *Staying Ahead: In-service training and teacher professional development*, Paris: OECD.
- Richardson, H., 2015. More than 50% of teachers in England "plan to quit in next two years." *BBC News*. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-34426598>.
- Robson, C., 2002. *Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner-researchers* 2nd ed., Oxford: Blackwell.
- Simons, H., 2009. *Case study research in practice*, London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Syed, M., 2011. *Bounce*, London: Fourth Estate.
- Timperley, H., Wilson, A., Barrar., & Fung, I., 2007. *Teacher professional learning and development: Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration (BES)*, Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Wiliam, D. & Leahy, S., 2014. Embedding formative assessment professional development pack. Available at: http://www.dylanwiliam.org/Dylan_Wiliams_website/Welcome.html.
- Wiliam, D. & Leahy, S., 2014. *Sustaining formative assessment with teacher learning communities*, London.
- Wilkinson, D., 2000. *The Researcher's Toolkit: The Complete Guide to Practitioner Research*, London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Wilshaw, M., 2016. HMCI's monthly commentary: February 2016. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmcis-monthly-commentary-february-2016>.

Wilshaw, M., 2014. Ofsted chief: two-fifths of teachers quitting within five years is “scandal.” *The Guardian*. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/jan/15/ofsted-chief-teachers-quitting-scandal>.

9. Appendices

Appendices

Appendix 1

Participant information sheet

Appendix 2

Head teacher consent letter

Appendix 3

Sample pre and post-intervention questions submitted with ethical approval (later revised)

Appendix 4

Training terms brainstorm sheet

Appendix 5

Observation guidance form

Appendix 6

Interview questions

Appendix 7

Brainstorm activity for Jenny

Appendix 8

Brainstorm activity for Kirsten

Appendix 9

Brainstorm activity for Sofia

Appendix 10

Brainstorm activity for Jade

Appendix 11

Interview transcript teacher A (Nadia)

Appendix 12

Interview transcript teacher B (Jenny)

Appendix 13

Interview transcript teacher C (Kirsten)

Appendix 14

Interview transcript teacher D (Sofia)

Appendix 15

Interview transcript teacher E (Jade)

Appendix 1: Participant information sheet

Participant Information Sheet

1. Study title

Effective Professional Learning: An inquiry into the impact of 'collaborative' training interventions on the professional development of teachers in their second year of teaching

2. Background and aims of the study

This study aims to evaluate the impact of collaborative training interventions on professional learning. The interventions would be designed specifically to encourage collaboration with colleagues to improve teaching practice(s) together rather than reflecting individually on teacher expertise. In addition, the interventions would be founded on the principles of a co-created learning environment; where opportunities for learning are created between the teachers themselves through peer-teaching, peer-observation and trying out teaching strategies which have evolved through collaborative discussion. The study hopes to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of using 'collaborative' training interventions on professional learning in the second year of teaching?
2. What do second year teachers' view as the most effective learning resources in their second year of teaching?

The study will be conducted by *** (name of researcher); a postgraduate student currently enrolled on the Masters in Learning and Teaching at the University of Oxford. *** (name of researcher) is supervised by *** (name of supervisor) at the Department of Education; University of Oxford

3. Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited to take part in this study as you are currently in your second year of teaching at *** (name of school) and are currently enrolled on the Year Two Professional Learning Program. Your status on this programme makes you suitable for this project as it aims to investigate optimum ways of helping you move forward with your teaching practice.

4. Do I have to take part?

You may ask questions about the study before deciding whether to participate. You should choose whether you participate and, if you agree, you may withdraw yourself and your data from the study without penalty at any time, and without giving a reason, by advising *** (name of researcher) as researcher of this decision.

5. What will happen in the study?

If you are happy to take part in the study, you will be asked to sign a consent form. During the study, you will be required to complete an initial questionnaire related to your experiences of professional learning, following by being asked to participate in a semi-structured interview about some of your experiences on the year 2 professional learning programme this year. The questionnaire should take

around 20 minutes to complete and your interview is likely to last an hour. The questionnaire would be completed during one of your training sessions at *** (name of school) and interviews would take place at *** (name of school) at a mutually convenient date and time arranged between yourself and *** (name of researcher) before the Easter holidays.

6. Are there any potential risks in taking part?

If, during the project, you need to reschedule your interview, this will be arranged by *** (name of researcher) or if you wish to abandon an interview at any time this will also be acceptable. The benefits of taking part in the study will be that you will be able to access the data from your questionnaire and interview in order to better understand yourself as a professional learner. In addition, you will have helped to deepen a broader understanding of the professional learning of teachers in the beginning years of their career.

7. What happens to the research data provided?

All information gathered in this study will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous. Data will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet. The only people who will have access to the data will be you as course participant, myself as researcher and my supervisor and members of the Department of the Education marking my assignment.

8. It may be the case that I will ask you for your permission to use direct quotes from your interview transcripts. If this is the case, you have the right to opt out of this process. Your permission for this would be sought in writing.

9. Will the research be published?

The research will be written up as my final Research and Development Project dissertation as part of the Masters in Learning and Teaching.

The University of Oxford is committed to the dissemination of its research for the benefit of society and the economy and, in support of this commitment, has established an online archive of research materials. This archive includes digital copies of student theses successfully submitted as part of a University of Oxford postgraduate degree programme. Holding the archive online gives easy access for researchers to the full text of freely available theses, thereby increasing the likely impact and use of that research.

If you agree to participate in this project, the research will be written up as a thesis. On successful submission of the thesis, it will be deposited both in print and online in the University archives, to facilitate its use in future research. The thesis will be published with open access.

10. Who has reviewed this project?

I can give full assurance that this project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee.

The research will be reviewed by my supervisor, *** (name of supervisor).

11. Who do I contact if I have a concern about the study or I wish to complain?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this project, please speak to the *** (name of supervisor) (supervisor for *** (name of researcher) (telephone number) who will do his best to answer your query. The researcher should acknowledge your concern within 10 working days and give you an indication of how he intends to deal with it. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the chair of the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Oxford (using the contact details below) who will seek to resolve the matter in a reasonably expeditious manner:

11.1.1. Chair, **Medical Sciences Inter-Divisional Research Ethics Committee**; Email:

ethics@medsci.ox.ac.uk; Address: Research Services, University of Oxford, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD

11.1.2. Chair, **Social Sciences & Humanities Inter-Divisional Research Ethics Committee**; Email:

ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk; Address: Research Services, University of Oxford, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD

11.1.3. [For applications reviewed by the **Oxford Tropical Research Ethics Committee (OxTREC)**, please insert the contact details for the local ethics committee which has reviewed your project]

Appendix 2: Head teacher consent letter

23rd November 2015

*** (name of head teacher)

The Cherwell School

Marston Ferry Road

Oxford

OX2 7EE

Dear *** (name of head teacher),

I am writing to enquire about conducting research in school this academic year. As you know, I am studying for the Master's in Learning and teaching at Oxford University, supervised by *** (name of supervisor). In my final research project, *Effective Professional Learning: An inquiry into the impact of 'collaborative' training interventions on the professional development of teachers in their second year of teaching*, I will explore the impact of introducing a collaborative element to the way in which beginning teachers develop and improve their existing practice.

The research will take place with our current cohort of second year teachers enrolled on the Year 2 Professional Development Programme. I am developing ways of encouraging collaborative observation and over a variety of tasks between January and April I aim to investigate the impact of collaborative learning on the teaching of these six colleagues. My research focus is on how collaborative learning impacts individual practice, and how teachers can develop this. Sinead Reilly (pseudonym) has agreed to collaborate with me on this as co-course facilitator.

By participating in the research, the school would be contributing to a project that will deepen the department's understanding of the professional learning of teachers in their second year of practice, and so contribute towards developing ways of improving the professional learning experience for colleagues (in particular beginning teachers) in the school in the future. It will also contribute to our understanding of the nature of professional learning more widely and develop awareness of optimum ways of engaging teachers in their own self-improvement.

I hope to conduct this research between January and April 2016. I would audio-record teachers engaged in the Year 2 Professional Learning Program in semi-structured interviews, observe and take notes during training sessions, and photocopy some of their students' written work or written feedback produced during their lessons. In addition, teachers would complete evaluative questionnaires about their attitudes to professional learning.

Oxford University has strict ethical procedures on conducting ethical research with teachers and young people, consistent with current British Educational Research Association guidelines. As practitioner research however, the University recognises that schools have the highest ethical standards in any event. Therefore only your consent is necessary, and not that of parents. Throughout the research, teachers and students will be able to refuse to participate in any research activities at any time.

All participants, including students, teacher and the school, would be made anonymous in all research reports. The data collected would be kept strictly confidential, available only to my supervisor and myself; and not used other than specified without further consent. All tapes would be destroyed at the end of the research period, and kept in locked conditions until then.

If you feel you would like to take part in the study, or need more information about what is involved, please contact me.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

*** (*my name as researcher*)

Effective Professional Learning: An inquiry into the impact of 'collaborative' training interventions on the professional development of teachers in their second year of teaching

*** (my name as researcher)

University of Oxford, Department of Education

The Cherwell School

Marston Ferry Road, Oxford, OX2 7EE

*** (name of head teacher)

- ☐ We do not wish to participate in this project.
- ☐ We would like to find out more about this project.
- ☐ We would like to take part in this project.

If you would like further information, please contact me, or my supervisor. If you require clarification of the ethical approval, process please contact Chair of Department of Education Research Ethics Committee, Dr Nigel Fancourt.

Supervisor email: ***

Chair of Department of Education Research Ethics Committee, Dr Nigel Fancourt email:
nigel.fancourt@education.ox.ac.uk

Please return this form to me.

Thank you for your help.

**Appendix 3: Sample pre and post-intervention questions submitted with ethical approval
(later revised)**

Sample Pre-Intervention Questions

1. What does the term 'professional learning' mean for you?
2. What does the term 'professional development' mean for you?
3. In what areas did you develop the most as a teacher in your NQT year?
4. In what areas did you develop the most as a teacher in your initial teacher training year?
5. What are you currently working on in your teaching practice in order to improve it?

Sample Post-Intervention Questions

1. What did you decide to 'tweak' in your practice and why?
2. How has the work in the Year 2 program felt different from other training you have done as a teacher?
3. What changes can you see in your practice this year? Why?
4. Talk me through your experience of peer observation. What did you notice?
5. What was it like having someone at the stage as you in teaching watching your lesson?
6. What have you noticed about discussions on this program?
7. What helps you most to improve your teaching?
8. How do you find the experience of being observed? Why?

Appendix 4: Training terms brainstorm sheet

CPD

INSET

Performance Management

Professional Learning

Coaching

Mentoring

Professional Development

Training

Appendix 5: Observation guidance form

Yr2 PLP – Peer Observation

Name of teacher observed.....

Observer.....

Date/Time..... Class.....

Subject.....

Teaching strategy/innovation to be trialled

Colleague's reason for introducing this strategy/innovation

Evidence of strategy/innovation being used in lesson	Evidence of impact on students' learning, behaviour, engagement

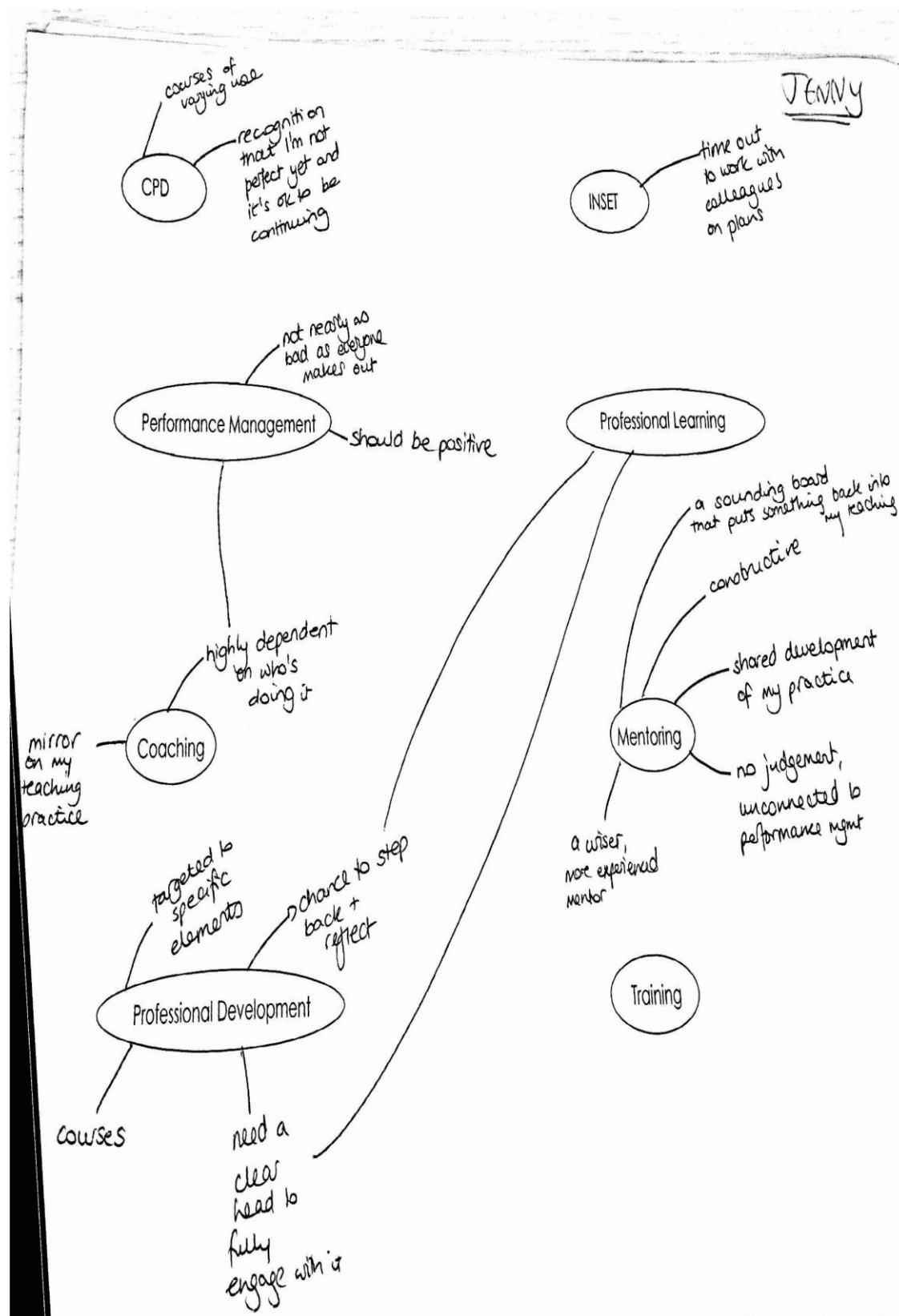
Evidence of strategy/innovation being used in lesson	Evidence of impact on students' learning, behaviour, engagement

Overall conclusion and notes for peer feedback

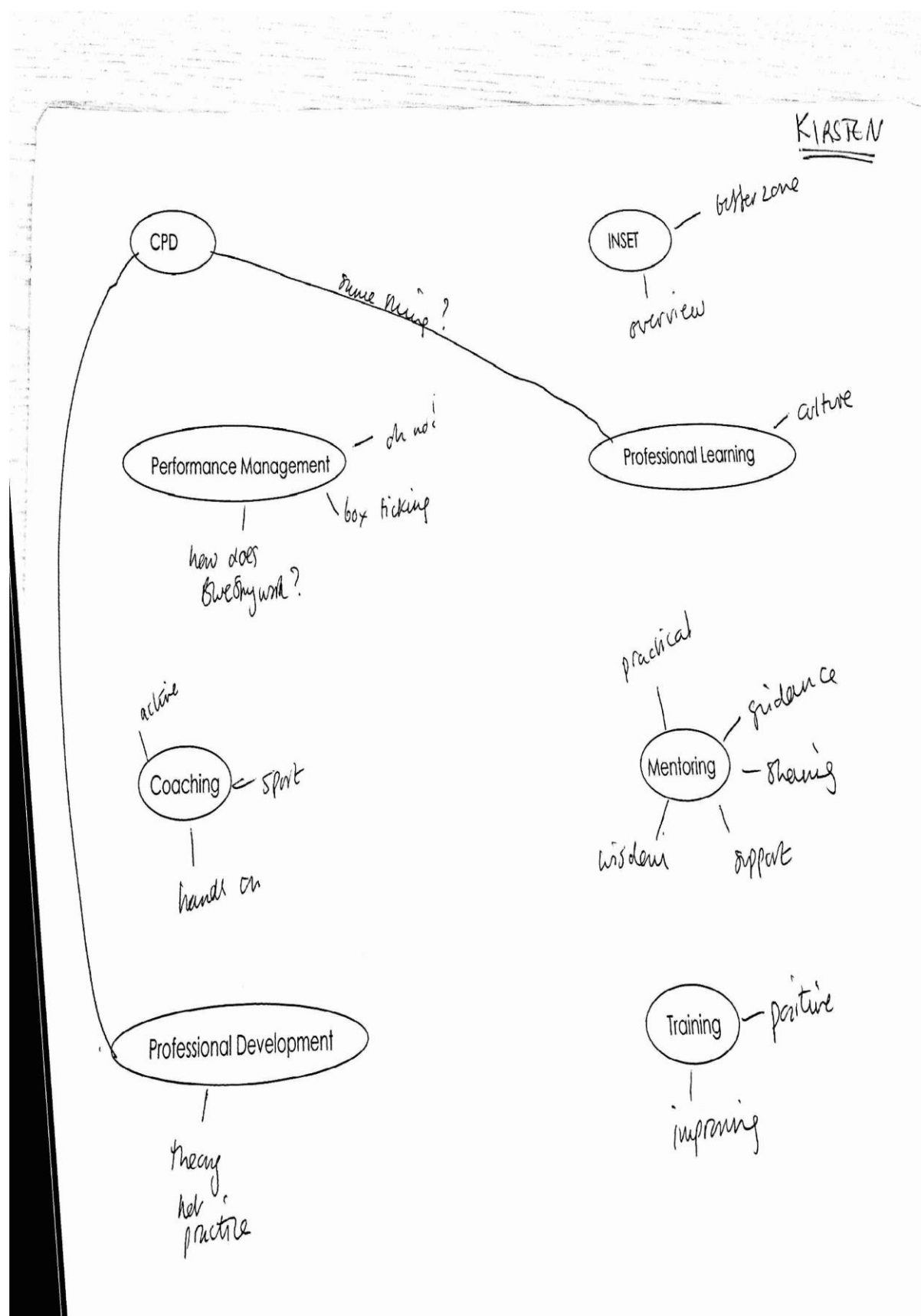
Appendix 6: Interview questions

1. Which factors most helped you to improve your teaching practice in your NQT year? Why?
2. What resources and/or opportunities do you currently use to develop as a teacher?
3. Do you tend to work with others or on your own when addressing your own development needs? Which of the two do you think is preferable? Why?
4. Which element of your practice are you trying to work on in the Year 2 programme?
5. How has the Year 2 programme helping you to change your practice? Show them a list of the course elements:
 - Discussion of teaching practice with colleagues
 - Observing colleagues in a rotation x 2,
 - Trying our ideas based on educational research
 - Talking to previous Year 2s
 - SMART strategies for how you do your work
6. To what extent do you feel the peer observations helped you, if at all, to develop your practice on the year 2 programme?
7. How effective were discussions with colleagues on the year 2 programme?
8. Has there been anything that has frustrated you about the Year 2 programme?
9. What advice would you give to somebody doing the programme next year to get the most out of it?
10. What advice would you give to someone who is keen to collaborate in making minor changes to their teaching practice?
11. What advice would you give to someone who is less keen to make minor changes to their teaching practice?
12. Which aspects of the year 2 programme do you feel are essential and which could be changed or removed?

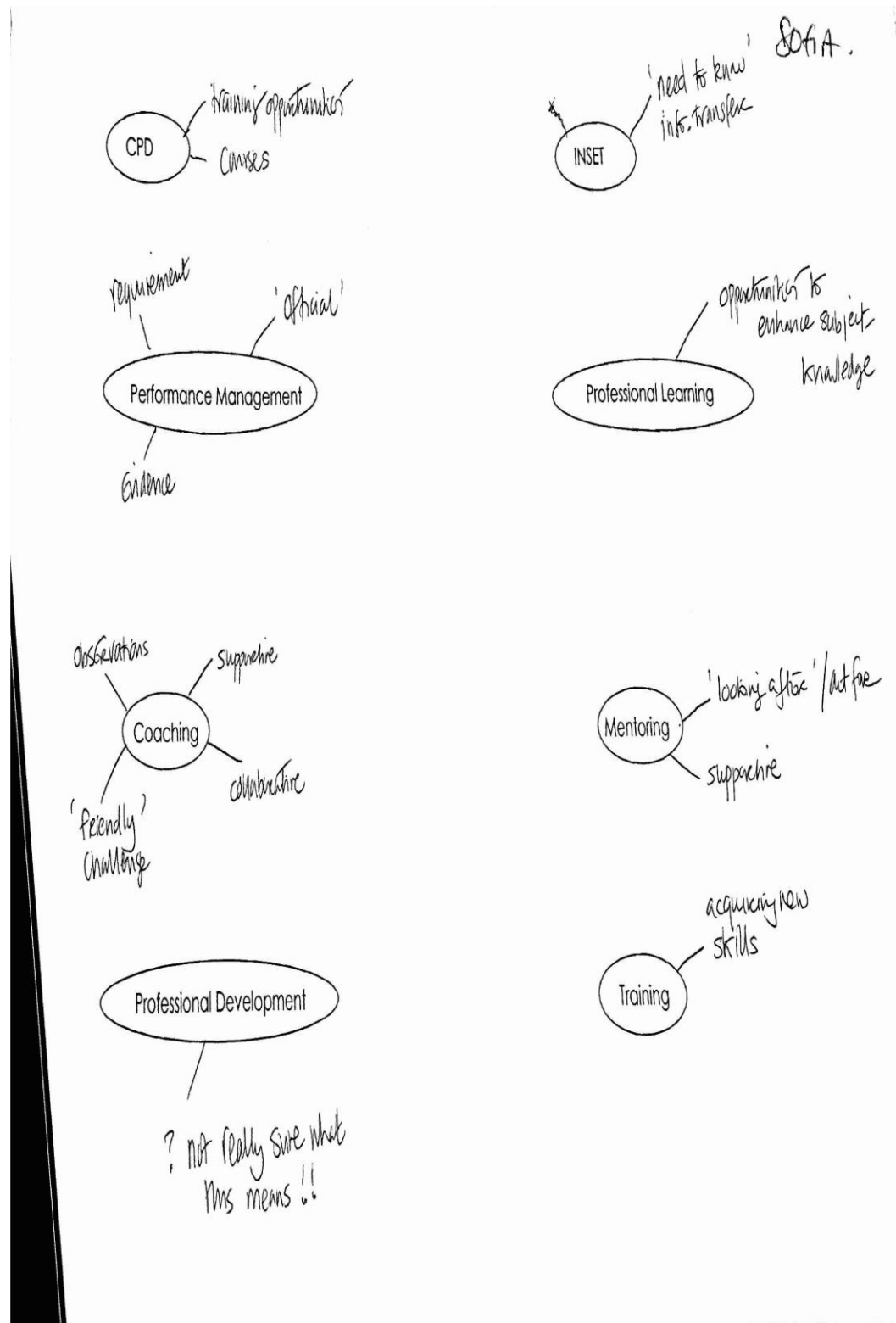
Appendix 7: Brainstorm activity for Jenny



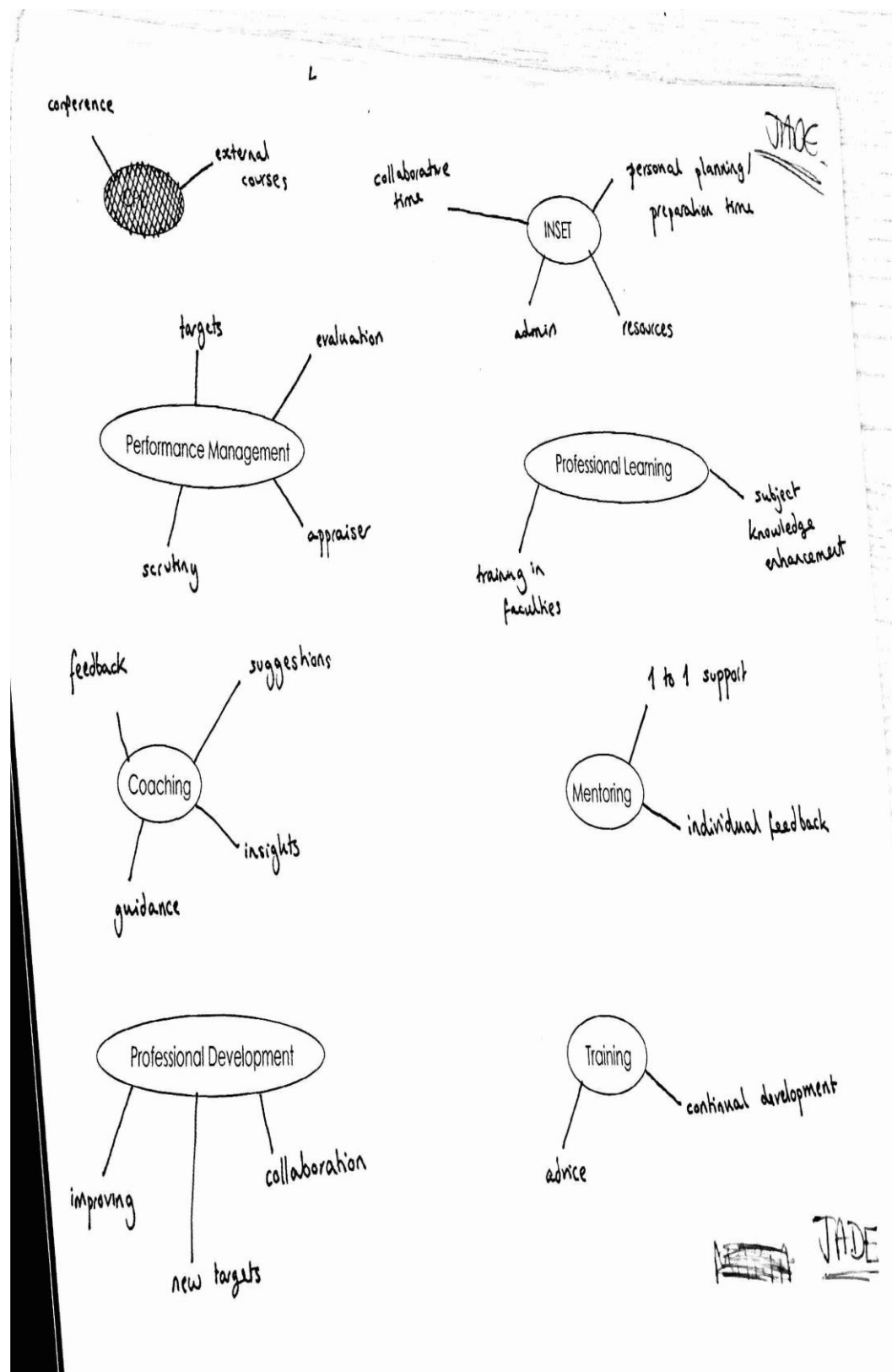
Appendix 8: Brainstorm activity for Kirsten



Appendix 9: Brainstorm activity for Sofia



Appendix 10: Brainstorm activity for Jade



Appendix 11: Interview transcript teacher A

Teacher A Transcript (Nadia)

Interviewer: Okay the first question is thinking back to last year...

Teacher A: Okay...

I = interviewer A = Teacher A

I: ...what factors do you think most helped you improve your teaching for your NQT year?

A: Um.....well I don't know if it's like a factor but...it's just the fact that I had my own classes straight from the beginning...from day one...um...it does make a difference when they come to school because you set up the tone in your lessons and I installed in my lessons a lot of routines that have been follow, that, you know, have followed up all the way through the year and I think that helped a lot my teaching because the kids felt settled in my lessons and it's, and in terms of, well, it kind of just improved behaviour, but also like, improved like, a sense of engagement in lessons and students being ready to learn so um, that was one thing. And...um, and also...er generally within my faculty I, um, well, I have, like, a lot of, obviously it's a big faculty and we've got a lot of different colleagues and I've been, you know, a lot, obviously like speaking all the time about my progress in general you know like hearing people talking about what they were encountering as issues and like how to...I guess what we do every day basically just um...being in the languages office and speaking together and kind of everyone shares it when they encounter a difficulty and we find solutions together and I think that helps generally not just like, er well I think that's not just I think as an NQT I think it's all the way through and I think, like all colleagues from the faculty would agree that we just work this way we kind of help each other and I think that's, yep,...probably what helped me the most...

I: How about things like, so your NQT mentor and the NQT sessions with other people? Were there bits of that that you found useful, if at all?

A: Um...well, I think I'm in a well, different position to, well, to many people because I, um, knew *** (school name) really well so...er and I knew my colleagues also so I think, um, in terms of, well, the discussions I had with *** (NQT mentor) er, would have been discussions that I was having also with other colleagues, er and I think it probably the mentoring thing is also much more helpful when you are just coming out of the blue and you don't know any of the school rules and any of how things work...um

I: Yeah...

A: ...so probably it was really good to have someone, like someone to talk to and also I really found helpful that someone would come and observe my lessons and tell me, you know, what happened in my lessons more often than you, than it happens when you're not an NQT anymore but um, but also yeah I was having discussion with *** (NQT mentor) that I was also having with any other colleagues in general so...

I: yep...so a slightly different context...

A: yes

I: The second question is what resources or...that could be people, 'resources' resources or anything, or opportunities do you use at the moment to develop as a teacher? So I suppose what things do you use to develop as a teacher currently?

A: Um...

I: ...as opposed to last year...

A: Okay...um...oh as opposed to last year...ha ha...well I've um started this course which is um...Exploring Leadership er Course...er...that no school is running so I'm doing this and it's I think it's quite, well I think it's a really good course because it's er really really flexible in terms we had like one meeting in February and we're gonna have two more I think towards Term 6 and... that's gonna be it but in the meantime they just ...um made us reflect on what we though um... being a leader was... um and then now we're kind of exploring and trying to have chats with different people who have different leadership roles in the school. And I think that's quite a nice way of doing it because most of the people that have signed up for that course are teaching full-time because we don't have any um, like, roles as leaders yet and um, it's a really good design of...of the course in terms of giving us, kind of some time and some things to think about it but not overloading us with, er, different sessions because we all have a full timetable um...so I'm doing this and that's really useful and well also *ici* this year we have changed all our textbooks for Key stage 3 in French and Spanish and so I've never really used a textbook to teach before because I didn't really like much the ones we already had. *** (name of textbook) a little bit but not consistently because the units don't really match with our curriculum and it's a bit harder to do and that's something that I've started doing this year basically teaching using a textbook and I found that the Spanish one that I'm using, *** (name of textbook) is really good and that's been really helpful to, yeah, to learn how to use a textbook and really work with this in my lessons so yeah, I really enjoyed that.

I: And this is kind of about your learning style, a little bit number 3, do you tend to generally work with others or on your own if you've got a development need, something that you want to work on um, or is there one of those that you kind of prefer? Do you prefer to work on your own or with other people? Or is it a mixture?

A: Um I guess it would depend on... it would depend on what the need is. If my development need is that I know I need to get to know my students better, that is something that I would deal with by myself. If I'm struggling with planning that's something I probably would discuss with my faculties, with my faculty colleagues like it happened this year that we found that on the other side using the other textbook *******(textbook name) and ******* (textbook name) has been quite difficult because it's...nothing is scaffolded but we still need to follow the curriculum and we need to teach everything that's in there so that they can access the assessments that we've planned for and as a team we have spent quite a lot of time, lunchtimes and just, you know, like, um, thinking, you know, one of us would just think of something and would share it with everyone else so that we could all, um, all solve our little issues with planning for this curriculum, making sure the lessons were accessible to students but also everything that was on these pages and that's sometimes too challenging for doing just on your own just like this...yep.

I: And so which element, what part of your practice are you trying to work on in the year 2 sessions? Or are there things that you tried to work on through the year?

A: Ah well, I think I've got like, I had several different things in the year that I kind of switched from and...um...er...the first thing is this year for the first year I taught year 11 and I had two classes and three at some point aswell (sigh and laugh) and so um.....that was something I...was going to focus anyway in my year as a teacher...and so...I don't know whether it's something I actually like focused on I actually, year 2 programme specifically but it was something I wanted to because it involves also a lot of paperwork and managing workload in terms of that plus doing all the speakings...er...so that's been something. Um...in my year 2 I've...also tried to yeah kind of work on the level of workload and make, er, er, I don't know, good decisions about what I should be taking home or not or all of this and I've I'm quite happy actually with myself this year with that cos' I've kind of managed to keep most of it in school and I stay quite late in school but then when I go home I don't do any work most of the time...I think I only worked three weekends during the year so far so I'm quite happy with that, so yep.

I: So year 11 and then kind of working SMARTLY?

A: Yeah and obviously as everyone in the faculty we've got, we had year 9 that have been quite a challenge so, you know, trying to re-think of the planning for these classes but yeah, always alongside with all the other classes um...yeah.

I: Okay um...so this is actually a little bit about the actual year 2 programme so we're looking at the things that are in it. So it's basically how has it helped you, if at all, to kind of change your practice...and there's a few things so we've got the elements that we included so SMART strategies to kind of manage your workload, the session that we had when you were talking to previous year 2s, um, trying out ideas based on research so those ideas about

little tweaks, (sorry, just doing this for my dissertation – cleaner entered the room) observing colleagues together so when you did that twice and went to see each other, um and then just general discussions of what's happening in your teaching with people who are kind of at the same stage as you um so...it might be that, so maybe if you go through them, each one and say if it was helpful or not helpful or a little bit...

A: Okay...er, discussions with colleagues, well that was, well it's always helpful to discuss with different colleagues on different things we struggle with...um...but specifically to doing it within the context of the programme, um, I don't, didn't find it that helpful because I'm really good friends with two of the people that are on the course at least and I live with one of them so we discuss things anyway at home a lot...um...so I, yeah for this, well that's already something I found that I had that kind of discussions but it's always helpful to discuss with colleagues so um so yeah...and then...that's something I do also a lot in the faculty also but I guess it depends on which kind of faculties you have in our faculty we've got this, well first we all get on really well with each other and we all want to collaborate but also we've got a nice space on south site where we have a big office and we sit there for lunch during breaktime and we share many things and I don't think people have the same opportunities in all faculties to do that so um yeah personally yeah I think it's useful but I didn't find it useful within the year 2 programme because that's something I've had.

I: ...because you've got that different context...

A: Observing colleagues was interesting in terms of what they're up to in other faculties so I found that interesting always to know what's happening in other lessons and other subjects. In terms of helping my practice I didn't find it useful at all because I observed one other languages colleague, *** I had observed many languages lessons before so...

I: Was there anything in her practice that made you think about your practice in a positive, negative or a kind of neutral way?

A: Oh, uh, I need to remind myself about the observation now. She...um...what was she doing? Oh yeah, she was having a discussion with the kids about the purpose of the content of what they were going to learn and that's something I would certainly have done differently, er because she was kind of having it but kind of already convinced what the, well obviously you're always convinced about what the answer is you want from the kids but she didn't elicit it from the kids, er, having those discussions, so she explained to them why it was going to be useful for them to learn about healthy stuff but I would have probably done it a bit differently and asked the kids okay so even if you're interested in languages, why, what do you think you could get out of this lesson and make it more like kind of their choice. But I guess also, it's also a year 9 class and they're quite a tricky one from what I've seen so it's also something that it's a risk that you take always having these discussions with them because it's going to last much longer if you take the time to do that with them and I

don't know...so that's a choice she made and I'm...I would have done slightly differently...what's the next one...trying out ideas based on educational research?

I: That was the session we had about kind of consulting students before and a list of ideas to try...

A: Oh yeah we had the list of things...I did a consultation with year 9 at the end of November I think when...yeah...I had a lesson when things were not happening the way I wanted so I had to stop the lesson and had like a rethink with the whole class of like, why are we learning languages, why are you here, what if you don't want to carry on learning languages and I can't remember exactly what the questions that I asked them were and I just wrote the questions on the board and I got them to just write answers in English on paper and in complete silence because they needed the silence at this time of the lesson but also because I think if you're having a discussion like with my hand up sometimes they it's sometimes just don't say what they think just saying what they think their peers wanted them to say...that was pretty different from the type of answers I believe I got. It was actually really interesting to read what they understood or not of the purpose of them being in the language lesson and languages in general the answers I got and so I read all of these and then we had a chat about it in lessons and in terms of long term achievement I don't think it um, it's something that they quickly forgot I think er...but I think at the end of that lesson they were really apologetic about what the...atmosphere they had in the lesson so year in terms of short term it helped but further in the year, they're teenagers and I found that yes I had this conversation it's not something that in the long term has so much effect I find.

I: Why do you think it doesn't have an effect them long term?

A: Because you keep encountering the same issues...well I encountered again the same issues that on paper these kids knew why they were in a language classroom they had raised the right questions some of them really well on paper and when we were discussing it they were like, yeah miss, we understand that it's also quite cool if you go to a country and people want to catch up. At the end of the day they are students and they are kids and when they're having a full day of lessons and they come to a language one and they don't want to carry on at GCSE I don't think they see that far, er...behind because they are kids and what they see further it's probably next year and some of them even not next year maybe tomorrow. So they...we talk to them about these things that how is it gonna help you and all of this but sometimes we just don't tailor them to the fact that they are kids and they, they just you know, next week is already far away for them and so it's quite hard to kind of reason even if you know all the reasons why you should be listening, um it's something that is not kind of immediately achievable and immediately like – oh yeah - I'm gonna need it at some point. And you hear it with a lot of adults actually too when you speak about well, when you say that you are languages teachers, um I don't know many

times (and probably you have the same heard) of people saying 'Oh I was rubbish at languages I wish I'd listened to it cos I would love to speak a foreign language'. Everyone says that and they don't say that about other subjects...they do say it about languages but it's you know, that's time as a kid I think you, you don't see that far.

I: It's hard for them to predict that isn't it?

A: Yeah - and also you're affected by your emotions and in the instant so you kind of live more in the instant and less in the...

I: Yeah...so these last ones...so it's talking...when we had a session when the year 2s came to kind of chat to you and then strategies you talked about a little bit that you kind of took away from that kind of making SMARTER decisions about workload and things - was there anything about those sessions that you took away?

A: Um...well I dunno the SMART strategies I found were um... it was lots of similar to all the things we had done when we were NQTs and also when I was doing my training at *** (school name) so yeah they're kind of useful and it's nice sometimes to think oh yeah 'why did I not do that? I know that', but I didn't find there was much new in there, um, from, yeah, um, what I'd seen before. Um...so...yeah and...talking to previous year 2s...yes it was interesting because well, some of them they are just really people that I just never have the opportunity to talk to. I was speaking to *** and *** and they're from completely different subjects and um...there were...um...oh I can't remember what they, I can't remember what they talked to us about I just remember I found it interesting! (laughs)

I: That's okay... so I think we probably, number 6 we probably covered number 6 so it was interesting to see other faculties but not necessarily in terms of changing things in your practice. Um...and I think we've talked about discussions a little bit haven't you, we aswell?

A: Yeah.

I: So number 8 has there been anything (and you can be completely honest here) that has frustrated you about the year 2 sessions?

A: Um, yeah, well, I think, er, well, first one thing was just purely like, bad luck for me but...oh actually, um, in terms of workload it was...well, I lost an hour with one class so it made me share a class and I find that that's it's actually more work to share a class than to teach the whole class through.

I: So you lost your hour for the fortnight that you're supposed to get back?

A: Yeah, yeah...and so as a result of...

I: So you lost your extra free?

A: No I didn't lose an extra free but in terms of um, (because we lost an hour on the timetable to do the year 2 programme) I just lost an hour a fortnight with one class so it meant that I was sharing a class and that just created more work than actually teaching that lesson so...um, so for me in terms of workload, it just, it just made my workload higher and so that was just... kind of really frustrating...

I: Was that the first time you've shared a class?

A: Um no I was sharing but the other way but at the other end last time so I was the one filling up for an hour, um...but...it's like...it's been okay but it just meant that basically I had to teach two year 7 classes. In one year 7 class I had a reduced amount of hours to teach them because the other teacher cannot really, well it's really difficult to kind of fill up one for the other so you do different stuff and they've been doing speaking and stuff with *** (teacher name) but I had to teach the same c and keep them at the same pace while I had one less hour with that class and it's been like kind of creating more work. And also in terms of you know getting them settled it's not always easy when you have that.

I: That's hard yeah.

A: Yeah but, you know, it was unlucky that it just took away that hour from my timetable.

And then sometimes, sometimes I felt like we didn't have much time to speak and we spent more time listening, er...to stuff that people were telling us and I think, um, actually it's kind of more useful to just speak, yeah, together but yeah I felt that we were just the balance of listening.

I: Was that in all sessions or in particular sessions do you think?

A: Er...no I don't know...I think it was in general that we were just spending more time just kind of listening to things a bit too much, less than actually doing stuff and I dunno planning bits of lesson or planning...like actually doing stuff that we were gonna use later.

I: Yes. And what advice would you give to somebody next year to get the most out of it?

A: Um...hmmm...set themselves a target straight away from the beginning and...um, make it in relation to one of your, um, Bluesky targets...and just stick with it for the whole year so that at least that's one Bluesky target (or maybe two) that you have less work to do for later when you want to do your evidence and that's kind of doing two things at the same time so you know what you're focussing on straight away.

I: Yep. And then this one is um...these two are kind of very similar – it's basically what advice would you give somebody who's in that programme who's really keen work with other people and make changes to their practice or it might be helpful to do the next question instead...what advice...if you had somebody...so if you were running the course next year

and you had somebody who wasn't really, who was a bit more reticent and was less keen to change their teaching what advice would you give them?

A: Um...okay...er...yeah so that's gonna be linked to what I've said earlier like... really think of...in terms of straight away in the beginning of the year let's think of Bluesky targets and we're gonna help you make sure that you achieve that one or these two and that's what we're doing and so that person who is less keen is probably gonna think okay well that's probably gonna be useful think because I'll have at least the Bluesky thing covered and that it could be an extra help for me to do this Bluesky thing because actually that's something we don't do anywhere in NQT um...so yeah um... it's something that's kind of new and something that you don't know how to do the notes thing and which evidence do you upload and all of this and also, and also it's quite difficult to kind of set your targets at the beginning of the year so maybe at the beginning of the year I would actually help the NQTs to um, spend some time defining their Bluesky targets and work more along the line of that kind of things and then all the way through the year they can work on specifically their targets in this dedicated time.

I: It's interesting because we set up the programme specifically so that it wasn't part of the performance management process at all so that people didn't feel any pressure that when they were being observed, um...that they, er...were having to meet targets so you could kind of just explore for a year, um, with no, kind of, summative pressure I guess...but it's really interesting in terms of that because this last question, cos we're nearly done.....that sounds like...do you, is it, do you think then maybe as part of it you could have one part which might be actually just setting up this is what Bluesky is and this is defining what this means and this is how you do it cos that's useful for the NQT bit...how do you set something that's useful? And then, nailing down your targets quite quickly cos that's just...

A: Yeah...

I:...that's the last question are there parts that you think are essential or any things that could be changed or removed? So maybe we put in a session about Bluesky and to guide people maybe...

A: Yeah, yeah definitely a session about Bluesky and um...and yeah that's....that would sound good...

I: Was there anything in here that you'd take out or remove apart from switching the balance to of listening and doing to a healthier balance?

A: Yeah...um...(long pause), hmmm, in terms of...well, observing colleagues, er, in terms of doing that...um...(pause) I...well, I don't know, maybe, um...the observation, instead of being NQT, it could, like, you could choose to observe anyone you want in the school, um...because people could choose whether they want to stay in their faculties and observe

like, someone who's got another class of the same level and that you're struggling with and that you wanna see 'okay how do you do it?'...and 'can I come into your lesson?' and also that's kind of less, well, in a really informal way. And...I guess it would be difficult because some other teachers would find it a bit pressure to be like, observed on the top of their management but in terms of learning er... it's something you don't have, well, time to do ever, observing people, and I think maybe, yeah, observing someone in your faculty or maybe if you wanted to, observing someone, a specific person because you know they're really good at that in the school but rather than just observing other NQTs because sometimes it just didn't really match, er...the situation we had to face so when I observed Olivia for example it was interesting to see it, er...but I couldn't take anything away for my lesson because there were five kids and four adults in the classroom and that just never ever happens in languages so it's not applicable what they were doing.

And she was brilliant at teaching them because they are difficult kids as they were all engaged and all wonderful...it was actually really good to see that because I know some of these kids and I know how difficult they can be but it's got no application whatsoever in terms of what I'm doing because I never have four adults and five kids in my classroom. Um...and when I get these difficult kids (they might be four aswell) but they're in the context of having thirty kids in the class and all abilities to teach so...you know it was really interesting but I don't think it was useful at all in terms of helping me and...and, and I think a lot of people felt this way. While if kind of, if we could choose anyone to observe we'd probably could take more out of this whether they are in the faculty or completely outside of the faculty because they're really good at behaviour management or because they teach that kid that you also have and that you struggle with and that you want to see how they're dealing with him yeah...I think that I would change.

I: Cool, brilliant. Thank you. Twenty eight minutes.

Appendix 12: Interview transcript teacher B (Jenny)

Teacher B Transcript (Jenny)

Interviewer: *** (teacher name). Hello.

Teacher B: Hello.

I = Interviewer B = Teacher B

I: So...first question is...er...well, thank you for agreeing to be interviewed first of all. The first question is actually about last year, about your NQT year. And it is...which factors do you think most helped you to improve your teaching in that year and why?

B: Um...(long pause) I think regular observations, the termly observation, was a real sense-check on...on how I was doing and how my ideas worked in practice or didn't and...um, because I'm my own...I'm a...own worst critic and I'm...probably not a very good reflector. I reflect a lot but...I think from what, the feedback I, got, I get from John (NQT mentor's name)...could often be very different from what my perceptions of things were so having that sense-check was both valuable in what it told me about, er...a technique I'd tried or a way of looking at a certain subject ...um... so I suppose....pedagogically it was a good, it was a sort of a..., someone else's reflection the stuff but also the stuff he doesn't...no... the stuff I wasn't aware of that he'd observed and I'd sort of think I hadn't even been aware of that so that was um...and the confidence, actually, the confidence factor of that was...was huge.

Um...I think comparing last year to this year just having the little bit more time to reflect on things, um...which I didn't realise, I didn't realise until I'd done this year...having that...was important and having other, and actually the NQT sessions, the chance to reflect with other people in all sorts of different ways, um...

I: Are there any ways...so from those NQT sessions...are there any particular, um, things that stand out in terms of when you're working with other people, things that are most useful?

B: Er...I can't think of off the sort of top of my head of exactly what we were doing. Um...I don't know it's really mundane...it was always quite mundane stuff, simple stuff...you sort of think 'oh that's quite a good idea or I hadn't thought of that myself' or...er...I can't think of a specific example, um...

I: And if you think sorry, oh so for this year...what do you think when we're kind of looking at this year what resources or, um, sort of opportunities do you use at the moment to develop as a teacher? So do you still, do you still use John (NQT mentor name) a little bit or are there other kind of things that you use?

B: Hmmm...no. I've probably...I should have used other people a bit more...

I: Yes...

B: and it was something that when I've been talking with Heidi (member of Senior Leadership Team) about sort of well-being stuff, I probably should have organised someone to come and look at certain things... but it's a combination of just the busyness of everything and probably...there's an element of...I want to be careful about who I ask to come and do things...

I: Yep, yeah yeah...

B: ...cos you know...having someone else observe is always, always comes with its trepidatious side and it's been a combination of just...time and it just sort of slipping off the agenda but actually that, that is one thing I should have done. Um...er...I noticed that the time, the full timetable just sucks, sucks, just takes away the little bit of space you've got for, creat...you know, the creative thinking it's just, you're just trying to get, you're on the treadmill of trying to get through your week.

I: Do you think that's generally true that you tend to...? Do you tend to work with other people or do you tend to work on on your own when you're trying to look at your development or your needs or which do you prefer out of those two?

B: I think I probably prefer working on my own if I've got the, if I've got the opportunity to sit, if I've got the time to put into it...um...yeah...I do value other people's reflections on what I'm doing but I do, I would quite like to sort of, you know develop my own things...probably cos I've got so many thoughts about it but they all whizz around in my brain and it's sort of having the time to sort of deconstruct them and think, you know, right, okay...I could do something with that and work up a plan to...tweak something or try something different but that gets, I've just, I've found this year been such a...scramble, you know, of not having the space to do that but um...

I: Where do you think you spend most of your, I suppose, where you think most of your thinking's going this year in that, kind of, scramble of stuff, where do you think you spend the most time?

B: Um...this year it's probably been, I suppose it's probably been a combination of...acq... acquiring new knowledge for new stuff we're teaching or stuff that's new to me. Um...writing, you know, new schemes of work for our A level. Um...but in part it has been year 10 stuff trying to put what I feel like is more coherence around what we're teaching, what we teach, in the light of what, cos' this is my second year running through it and sort of trying to think right...I really didn't like that way we did that, I wanna tighten that bit up so it's...so I feel like they're gonna come to the end of the year 10 with a much firmer structure than my year 11s probably came out with so...um...I mean I don't feel like anything much Key Stage 3 has, has changed, improved,

I: Yeah

B: ...and sometimes I...with because Key Stage 3 it's more like I sort of look back on stuff and I think bloody hell that was quite creative or that was quite a good lesson but that just again serves to sort of highlight...cos' last year felt like a busy enough year...I mean don't get me wrong...but I was still managing to pull together some...original...stuff and I look back and think 'oh'...but, um...none of that's happening this year.

I: Cool...um...and then if we think about the year 2 programme so... the time you've had with...er...on that course, um which, sort of, which part of your practice are you trying to, are you kind of working on in that this year... or are there kind of things that you tried to work on if it's more than one...or what were you trying to tweak, I guess, is my question?

B: I suppose it was trying to tweak the thing of getting, actually, mmm, at pretty much all levels, all year groups, trying to get them to be more independent learners. Um...yeah...erm.

I: And in terms of achieving that, I've just...I've kind of made a little list here of some of the stuff that we did, so we had some of the things that we've talked about, um...discussing your practice with other people, so we did quite a lot of that...um...observing colleagues that we did, that we ended up doing twice, um, trying out some of those ideas based on research...

B: Yep, yep.

I:...so based on those activities, er talking to previous year 2s when they came and talked to us...

B: Yep.

I: ...um...and then we had that session in January about kind of how you are doing your work and sort of SMART planning...

B: Yeah...yep...

I: Out of those were there any, Jenny, that for you, you found, um...useful, er, or to what extent did you find any of those useful, if at all?

B: That one...(points to SMART strategies session on the list) which, the bit I picked up on was planning what you're planning...

I: Yep...

B: Which actually is, that has stuck with me...um...that I found very reassuring...

I: Oh, talking to previous people...

B: ...yeah and that's something I'd like...I'd like to go and see some of them in Term 6. Um...that, some of that was around the, that sort of was trying to I used some of that in trying to create that independence or more independence and sort of getting them to reflect back on what they've learnt, how they've learnt it, how they feel they've developed as learners so yep that was... (now points to observations) that's always interesting...um...

I: That's kind of this question actually, so if we look at that for a second. To what extent do you feel those, the peer observations helped you, if at all, and feel free to say it didn't help me at all, to develop your practice? Who did you go and watch?

B: Um...I watched Nadia first time round. Um...which if anything...I mean the sort of bit I remember taking away from that was that Year 8s still want little bits of reward and um...you know, I tend to think year 8s have sort of grown out of that and some of them possibly have but there are some that haven't. Erm, I saw, I saw Sofia just a couple of weeks ago. Um...I suppose if anything it's a thing of um...you look at things and think I know what they're trying to do and sometimes, this sounds awful, but it's not quite going right and I'm thinking what is it that's not quite gelling here?

I: Yep.

B: Um...because I sort of thing well what, what do I do? Particularly with a class that I know...which was re..., was helpful in all sorts of ways and thinking right, how am I, how do I set up my instruction portion when I'm in front of this lot? Um...

I: Was that the case with Sofia's class? Was it the same class?

B: Yep, yup, yup. Um...but there again I mean the value I suppose was feeding back. It was, it was useful. I probably got a lot, I got quite a lot back from Tania observing mine.

I: Yep.

B: Actually so...

I: So how was, in her feedback what did you get back from that when she came to see you?

B: Um...it was all around the extent to which they, (the kids), engaged and seemed to be thinking about how they've progressed as learners through year 10 ...

I: Yep...

B: ...and the fact that they were actually sort of, really thinking about that.

I: Yep...

B: Um...

I: And was it similar to when, I suppose when you were talking about John earlier (NQT mentor), when he observed you, did she notice things that you didn't notice or reflect on things that you didn't...

B: Yeah, yeah. I can't remember what now but I remember reading through her list of, of um...of observations and thinking oh okay that's, um...trying to think there was something cos with that lot, with my year 10s and it was a it was period 4 where they're always a bit barking um...and I think...there was something that gave me a sense that I had more control than I ever feel like I have with them so... yep maybe my internal, er swing-o-meter is high and like buzzing in the red zone cos I don't feel like I have got control completely but that's that was, there was something in what she said actually the atmosphere was good and positive which made me sort of think oh okay right interesting so yeah there was, there were, she had quite a list I was quite impressed with, cos sometimes I feel like I'm not nearly as good value at giving feedback as I've had from others but um...um...yeah....just tryin' to think now....(long pause) yeah I can't think of...

I: So that's the observations and the last one was discussions with colleagues on the year 2 programme. How effective did you find those talking, just talking to each other in the sessions?

B: It, it is...without always knowing exactly why it feels, it, it might not be something that you actually come out and think 'I'm gonna try this' or 'I'm gonna do this' but it's just...it just feels...it's a comfort factor and it's, you know, it's people that you've known actually now for, well you've been through NQT, you know, together and it feels very safe and you know you're all in a similar, in a similar sort of place in terms of development and just even if it's just a 'I've had a crappy day with...and, you know, you can sort of, you know, other people sort of know where you're coming from...um...so...yeah...that one's not an easy, it's not an easy, it's more an emotional thing often than a practical thing but um...and like yeah...and that sort of fed in with the lot, the one, the year above us them come in and saying 'yeah - recognise that' 'yeah that sounds like how I felt this time last year' and this, that and the other so...yeah it's...yeah it's...comfort and, comfort and support.

I: Hokey dokey. Has there been anything that's frustrated you about the year 2 sessions and you can be completely honest...

B: Um...

I: Or if there have been any sessions that have frustrated you or just in general?

B: I suppose it's, if I'm being completely honest there's an element of...um...presentation style...um...not, not with you, you're nice and brief and to the point and get us done...you know, get through it and actually you know, but, Sinead can be a lot more sort of...and quite repetitious and it actually makes me think 'am I this repetitious?' and I, I know at times, at

times I've just sort of thought um when I'm giving instructions I'll sort of... 'oh I didn't quite do that right' so I'll rephrase it in another way for the kids and then I'll rephrase it again and just to make sure and then um... I'm sure it's they must be thinking 'oh god can we just bloody get on with it?' and you know there's an element of, you sort of, 'got it the first time round'

I: Yeah...

B: Just it cos it is a little bit of the time factor as well cos you're always thinking well it's quarter past four now and I've got to get back to *** (name of school site) and then, I've got, then I've got to start planning and it's not that she's not got value but... we got it the first time and it is... it is... I think with you always being very clear that we know your time is precious...

I: Mmm...

B: That... you kind of set, you set that expectation up so then we arrive and it's... but it's... it's... kind of like... ooooooh, ooooooh...

I: I see what you mean... cool. Um... okay so we've got four, four more to go and if we've got time I might ask you a couple of extra ones but um, if you were thinking about next year's people who are coming on the programme, what advice would you give to somebody doing the year 2 programme next year to get the most out of it?

B: Um... I think it would be probably to in the sessions... to really really try to nail down exactly what you're gonna do, what your task is, what you're gonna do... there and then because at times I've sort of not quite been... I've not quite done that but... and then it ends up diluting, then you're sort of thinking 'oh shit they're, they're coming to observe' and you've got to sort of backtrack and sort of... so it would be to really sort of make sure you sort of nail something down and even if that means sort of saying 'hang on a minute I don't quite know what you're asking us to do' at that point, um... yeah I think it's, it's that.

I: Yeah, okay um... and what would you, um, so this is sort of I suppose talking about, um, type I suppose, cos you'll have a range of people who'll come, um, to the sessions and a range of experiences and a range of training experiences whether they've done PGCE or School Direct or that kind of stuff. What advice would you give to somebody who's really keen to sort of, to make those minor changes to their teaching who was on that programme? What advice would you give them do you think? That's quite a hard question... the er... and if it helps the second question is what advice would you give to somebody who was kind of less keen to make those changes?

B: Um... I think I'd say be brave... might work, that might be work actually for both those, both those sets. Um I think I'd probably say... sort of... go and observe people, observe

teachers that you, you think you admire. And I say 'think you admire' it's one of those things, you know, until you actually see someone teach... you don't really, you don't really know what they're like um...but you know...get as many sort of, different experiences as you can and I think, (and I've not followed this advice myself...obviously) but, um...er...I think it would probably would be to find a buddy that is completely safe to sort of come in and watch, watch you teach.

I: Yep.

B: Either that or sort of, I suppose the camera, get the, the little camera but I think that's even, the thought of that is even more excruciating than having someone,

I: Yeah...

B:...a mate watch me do it...

I: Yep...

B: Um...and again that's a, you know a Term 6 thing when everything starts calming...

I: ...calming down...

B: I sort of think, um ,yeah, I'd sort of like to do that, um...

I: And if you had, if I just ask the other question again, if they, if you had somebody, what advice would you give to somebody who was maybe quite reticent to make changes in their practice?

B: Um...what advice would I give them?

I: Mmm. I suppose if you were doing it again and there was somebody who was quite reticent in the group what advice would you give them? I suppose knowing what you know now about this year.

B: I think I'd probably suggest they reflect on why they are so reticent.

I: Yeah.

B: What is it that's, what's, what's uncomfortable about it? Because...you can't possibly think that one year in...

I: Yep.

B: ...that you're good, you're as good as you could be yet so what is it that's, yeah, what's causing you to hang back from it?

I: Mmm.

B: ...um...I think until you've unpicked that one really um...you know you can say well 'be brave, just go with it, you might, you might get something out of it' but...

I: Yep.

B: ...the reticence is still gonna be there...

I: Yeah.

B: Um...yeah...how can you possibly sort of not think you've got stuff that could, could be helped could be improved at this point? But...yeah...

I: Brill...and the last question is um, which aspects, erm, of the year 2 programme do you think are, so if you were redesigning it next year, or kind of, honing it down, do you think are essential um, and are there any that you think you / we could change or could just be removed or anything you think we should do more of?

B: Um...nothing jumps, nothing springs to mind I must admit um...(long pause) ...cos I don't think when I sort of go through what we've done and things like observations it's fitting those in.

I: Yep.

B: Um...(long pause) I suppose if anything I'd probably say...I dunno I'm just sort of thinking back to...I probably wish I'd sat down a little bit more with you or Sinead and really sort of thought through...

I: Mmm...

B: ...something that I wanted to do...um...and sort of got an idea but I du...how do you, how do you make that happen? Well I've gotta, you know, that's down to me to make that happen really...erm...

I: Well it sounds like that could be kind of more, I suppose more a tutorial basis at the beginning ...

B: Yeah...

I: ...kind of like what's your project for this year? Kind of thing?

B: Yeah, yeah, yes. Yes. To sort of have a little bit of sort one on one...right...

I: Earlier?

B: Yes. Yeah. That, that might have helped, might have been useful for me.

I: Yeah.

B: Um...time-consuming for you.

I: Yeah.

B: But...

I: But possible I think within the structure of it if we've only got kind of six people. It's probably possible. Um...and one last question...is how, how do you think you learn best? I suppose it's linked to that and...um...yeah, how do you think you learn best?

B: Um...give me some example of things you...

I: Um...so I guess we might kind of go back to those situations...working, working with other people, um, maybe working with...like you, like you were saying, teachers that you admire or working with people who are on, who are in the same year as you, or I suppose the year above, those kind of year 2s, working on your own, erm...working I suppose with a more experienced teacher kind of guiding you...um...or I suppose what do you, yeah...

B: I suppose...um...I'd maybe say 75% on my own with 25% of guidance pre...you know...sort of prodding 'what were you thinking there?' - that sort of reflection with probably someone quite a bit more experienced than me...

I: Yep.

B: ...who um...who I feel safe and comfortable with, um... I think it's yeah, I think it's the experience, someone who's really experienced. I say really experienced I mean John's been teaching what, six years? Are you the same year group as, you know, you're the same group as Daniel?

I: Daniel. Same. So yeah. Nine...no it's eight...I'm eight...

B: Yeah, it's getting into that sort of...I find that more, real and deeply insightful than...collea...it's, it's re-assuring, colleagues of a similar level and...like I say I've always got good stuff but I, for the confidence of really sort of feeling like someone's really, sort of nailing what getting right to the nub of the issue...

I: Yeah.

B: I think it needs someone more experienced...

I: Yep.

B: Um...um...yeah.

I: So is it potentially a model for that programme that you have a, a, I suppose, outside of your NQT mentor you have potentially a year 2 mentor?

B: Mmm...

I: ...for that year? If, if, kind of, if money was no object?

B: Yep.

I: ...and you kind of designed it? Would that be?

B: Yeah.

I: Useful?

B: Yeah.

I: Cool, thank you very much. Brilliant.

Appendix 13: Interview transcript teacher C

Teacher C Transcript (Kirsten)

Interviewer: Okay...so the first question is actually about last year, your NQT year...

Teacher C: Right...

I = interviewer C = Teacher C

I: ...which factors (actually I'll give you a copy of this then you can have a look) most helped you to improve your practice in your NQT year and why do you think that was?

C: Um...well I had a mentor, I had two mentors actually, I changed. But I think the time I spent with mentors was always very, very positive and helpful.

I: Yep.

C: And it helped me focus because I think one of my weaknesses was that I tended to see too many possibilities rather than thinking what I actually wanted to achieve...

I: Yep.

C:...sort of lesson by lesson...

I: Yep.

C:...and my mentors really helped me clarify my thoughts and look at the end goal of assessment and that sort of thing so...I think the mentoring sessions were a key point last year.

I: Yep. Okay. Um and what resources, so...similar question really but this is about at the moment...what resources or learning opportunities do you think you currently use to develop as a teacher?

C: Um...well I talk to my colleagues...

I: Mmm hmm.

C: ...and we've had those collaboration times which have been useful, um...I've used shared resources, I've looked more at the overall structures this time round, you know, schemes of work have been really key...

I: Yep.

C: ...and I've developed what I've done from those...

I: Yep.

C: ...and I have based what I've done this year on what I've done previously but I think I've improved it...simplified it...okay?

I: Cool. And third question is kind of about how you work so do you, when you're addressing your sort of development needs do you tend to work with other people or on your own? Um...and which of the two do you think is preferable and why?

C: My personal development needs as a teacher? I'm not very good at doing it on my own, I tend to reflect on...sort of the individual steps in things, in the lessons. I'm not very good at sitting back and thinking 'what should I do next?' I need someone else to make me do it probably, like with our Bluesky training, that kind of thing. I just need the time and someone else as well...to talk it through, really.

I: Perfect so um...question 4, which element, this is specifically about the Year 2 programme this year...

C: Yes...

I: Which element or elements it might be, of your practice are you trying to work on or have you tried to work on in the year 2 programme this year?

C: Um...

I: And it might be a number of things or it might be one thing...

C: Yes. I've been focusing on my Key Stage 3 my year 9s specifically, cos I've got four year 9 classes and um I was thinking that, about the behaviour problems I had throughout...with year 9, as I think quite a lot of people do, and trying to think how I could teach them with, you know, to avoid those or at least minimise them and so the key thing, because the classes are very mixed ability was thinking about, um, clarity of lesson aim and really explaining the task step by step, scaffolding things so they know at every stage what they're expected to be doing. Um...I've also tried to incorporate (though I've slightly slipped a bit recently, and I need to bring it back in actually)...I've tried to incorporate the idea that I accept that some of them don't like languages and don't want to continue with them but yet, not only are they obliged to do languages but also I think they can get something out of persevering with something that they're finding hard and get, you know, learning skills and character...building and all kinds of culture and everything else out of continuing and persevering and making the best of something...

I: Yep.

C: So that's something that actually I want to revisit because...we've sort of finished a cycle of, of work with both groups actually, the French and German sides and they're gonna look

ahead towards doing a test eventually so I want to try and keep as many of them as I can...driving forward not disrupting and...so that's been my aim this year.

I: So cla...clarity of...?

C: Clarity of instruction, um...

I: Step by step learning...

C: Why are we doing it? How is it gonna benefit me as a person who doesn't really care about languages?

I: Yep.

C: As well as the one who does want to learn, you know, the grammar or whatever...

I: Yeah.

C: So...that sounds a bit vague, doesn't it? Is that clear enough?

I: I think that's, that's really useful so...that's, that's what you've been working on. Are there any, are there any other things, um...that you've tweaked in your practice as a result of the programme do you think?

C: Um...well I'm still tweaking, um...I'm still trying to have more lessons which are pupil...where they're working together in groups to, to teach themselves from...but um...ju...just...I don't feel that happens all the time and I don't actually think it can happen all the ...

I: Yeah.

C: ...because there's too much inputting that has to go on...

I: Yes...

C: ...so it's just getting the right balance and...there are some lessons where I know I've got the balance right and, you know, they know exactly what to do but they can do it for themselves...

I: Yep.

C:and then there are others where I finish off and I think hmm, that was okay but it was still too much...me imparting stuff so...I'm still working on that balance really.

I: Yep. Hokey doke. And question 5 this is, I wrote, I thought this might be helpful to write out um, those kind of five points there and just um, I suppose...generally the types of sessions that we've run

C: Yep.

I: ...in the year 2 programme and we, it might be helpful to just sort of look at them in turn...um...so it's a general question: how helpful have the year 2 sessions, kind of being with that group of people who are at the same stage as you, um...helped you change your practice? So there's just a reminder really of things we've done so we've had discussions of teaching practice with colleagues, um...observing other colleagues which we did twice, um...trying out some ideas based on educational research, um...so those things about student voice and...

C: Yep...

I:...sort of control in the classroom...

C: Yep yep I did do those yep...

I: ...and all of that, um...the last...the very most recent one we had talking to previous year 2s and then them kinda coming to work with you a little bit and...er...after Christmas that's when we did SMART strategies for workload and looking at...um...that together...um...so...maybe have a think about them either in turn or if any of them particularly strike you.

C: Um...well in general I think it's really helpful to discuss teaching practice with colleagues from other departments...

I: Yep.

C: And...to feel you're not alone...

I: Mmm...

C: And also to see slightly different angles because of the different subjects on similar problems...

I: Yep.

C: And I think that's just something that's a really great thing to do anyway...

I: Yeah.

C: ...um reg...the, the observations were really interesting cos I observed Science and Maths.

I: Yeah.

C: And...um...

I: So did you observe Jade or Tania?

C: Er...Jade

I: Yeah.

C: ...and also some of the students were overlaps with mine so...

I: Yep.

C:...very interesting to see the different way they behave. I mean it was a very different setting, I mean, separate desks and a very small group and that sort of thing...

I: Yeah.

C: ...but to see the, the sort of calm and the quiet and th...the, I think what I took away from it was the routines they liked...

I: Yeah.

C: ...so I've tried to make my lessons a bit more predictable for the students cos I think I tend to make them a little bit 'ooh what are we doing today? We've no idea this time', you know, so I've tried to give them a bit more, sort of calm, or at least prepare them for what we're gonna do if we're doing something a little bit, sort of less calm...

I: Yep.

C: So that was useful...

I: Yeah.

C: Um...previous year 2s well...again it's, it's it's discussing, discussing teaching and teaching issues with other people and people who've gone on a stage is always...

I: Yeah...

C: ...just fruitful and you, it's very hard to pin down precisely why it is...

I: Yep...

C: ...but...it's very encouraging and motivating as well because you can start to go 'oh I'm the only person in the world who can't do that or...who finds this difficult or does this...is this gonna work if I try it?' and you can just bounce ideas...so I think it's a good thing to do.

I: Mmm hmm...

C: ...Um sorry I've missed one out but it's not deliberate but I...

I: That's fine.

C: I might back to it...the SMART strategies yes - I used those and I still do. Um...I'm much better now at making my list...ahead...instead of plunging straight into whatever I need to do most urgently.

I: Yeah.

C: Sometimes it's a mental list now...to be fair, but I do do it and I do think ahead.

I: So when you're in your frees, you like make a list...

C: Yep I think I want to achieve this and this this time. And I don't always get it done in the time but I try to....yeah. Um...educational research...that, that was what led me to do the year 9 thing where I explained different um, different outcomes...different reasons for different groups of students doing the same work.

I: Yeah.

C: And how it could be of benefit to them.

I: Yeah.

C: So that, that did give me an idea for something I've tried to do.

I: Yeah. And how did that work in practice in the classroom?

C: Actually it worked really well.

I: Yeah?

C: Um...the first time I did it was with Year 9s doing the *** project (name of department project on German literature)...and so I could say 'look, you know the guys carrying on I mean obviously you're going to learn a new...the imperfect tense...and you're gonna develop your translation skills and develop longer texts and all that stuff. You guys...these are culturally, they're such rich stories...um...you're gonna learn how to just keep trying to understand something that's difficult for you, you know...longer passages of text that'll crop up in all your other subjects, that sort of thing.

I: Yep.

C: And they really listened...um...they have enjoyed the topic I would say. It's been a good one I'm mean I'm not sure if that's because of the explanation but...I felt it kind of set the tone...so it worked...I think.

I: Great. Okay. Um...so...the...this is more specifically question 6 about peer observations. We've talked a little bit about it already so if there's nothing, kind of additional to add that's fine. Um...so this is just about the observation element of the programme. To what extent

do you feel the peer observations, so with Jade and with Sofia, if at all, um, helped you to develop your practice?

C: Well it was on the routines like I said really...um...and it was interesting. I didn't feel being observed was terribly helpful because...I didn't really get any feedback. And I think that was the thing, we didn't really have time to...at any time discuss them, the observations, with each other. So that's what I'd say really.

I: Yep. And the next one was how effective...again if at all, were discussions with colleagues on the year 2 programme...and there's a little bit of overlap here. I think we might have covered that one.

C: I think, I think I've probably said all I can and to be honest I don't, I don't kind of remember anything that came out of it but I know...I feel for a start I could go and talk more...I mean I knew them already but I would not hesitate to go and talk to them now if I had something I wanted to ask them.

I: Yeah.

C: So it kind, of, you know...breaks ice.

I: Yep. Um...has there been anything, and you can be completely honest here, that has frustrated you about the year 2 programme? And that can be absolutely any element of it at all.

C: Um...well I have sometimes groaned about having to go.

I: Mmm.

C: Partly because it was on a Tuesday and it just happens in my week to be a really bad time for me to have a meeting. Well Tuesday's busy, Wednesday's busy, Thursday's busy and we often have meetings Wednesdays and quite often Thursdays so it felt like my middle of my week I had no window where I could just get on with stuff.

I: Yeah.

C: So...I have to admit I did groan a bit. Um...I know, I know there's no real answer to that probably.

I: I guess the...the trade off for that it your extra free isn't it, that you get as a result?

C: I know.

I: As well...so...

C: Fair enough.

I: But timing-wise?

C: It wasn't the best time cos Tuesday I probably, you know, I'd be at work all day and then I'd have to go to a meeting and then I had still got to prepare for Wednesday and by that sort of four thirty time my brain was...a bit dead.

I: Yeah.

C: And I sometimes felt things could have been speeded up a little bit.

I: Yep, yep.

C: I think there was perhaps a little bit too much wordiness at times.

I: Yeah, yeah. Were there any particular sessions that you remember? I know it's difficult to think back isn't it?

C: (sigh)

I: Or any particular sort of...

C: I'm afraid...I just remember an anecdote that went on a very long time which I just thought wasn't necessary. We didn't need it.

I: Yep.

C: We could have just been given you know, this principle because we didn't apply it to our own lives. I can't really go, remember in more detail.

I: Yeah. Cool. Um...so question 9 is what would advice be to somebody doing the programme next year for them to get the most out of it? So if you kind of did it again.

C: Well, this is probably gonna tie in with some questions that are coming.

I: Mmm...

C: But...

I: We can mix those if you like?

C: You see what I found was hard was that one of the very first things we were asked to do was to tweak our practice and...in a way I think it would have been...for me...I would have liked someone to suggest tweaks to my personal practice....that would have been a good thing. Cos I sort of felt we had to choose out tweak and I don't, I don't know that I remember what tweak I chose specifically, I think it was modelling of some kind. But it wasn't necessarily my best tweak and I wouldn't, I sort of felt, half way along well...it might

have been better if I'd, if I'd actually really worked on something I need to work on rather than just picked something.

I: Yeah. So...would it, would it have been useful, I wonder if...well...would it have been useful if it was an observation in the first term or, er, a kind of very short observation of something in your practice and then, kind of deciding together what you wanted to work on and then track...that...?

C: Mmm (positive), yep, because I think most...

I: ...rather than having to discover it for yourself?

C: Exactly, yeah, I mean, I know we come out of our NQT and we've, we, we know what we still need to work on. So it would have been quite good, at the st...towards the beginning of this year, for twenty minutes to have someone in there to look specifically at that, that thing you were a little bit bothered about.

I: Yeah.

C: And get them to suggest something that would be a good way for you to help, to help you overcome that.

I: Yep.

C: Cos you don't always know yourself what's the best thing to do.

I: And use that as a basis?

C: Exactly, like because when I was training I remember for example, uh...can I say names?

I: Mmm hmm, yep.

C: Yep, Helen saying um, 'you talk, you use so many words', and that's, that's just - just that made me really think, try and slow down how I talk to kids and restrict my vocabulary, that sort of thing.

I: Yep...yep....

C: So if someone had just said 'Look, do you realise how many three syllable words you use?' or something...

I: Yeah.

C: And I could have thought, you know...that sort of thing would be really quite helpful.

I: So kind of like an establishing observation?

C: Yes...

I: In the first term...and then...?

C: ...to sort of set you on...

I:...and refine your focus?

C: Yep...and of course it would still develop anyway but I think I'd have felt a little bit more 'this is worth doing'...

I: Yeah...

C: ...if someone else had said it I think.

I: It's interesting because we, kind of, the way that it was set up was very much, um....about separating it from, um...the performance management system.

C: Yah, I get, I do understand that.

I: So it's not...summative...

C: Yes.

I: So you get to kind of explore something. But equally, you know, there are kind of tensions between those two things and actually, um, different things also...are gonna motivate different people I think so...

C: Yes.

I: ...which is why it's really interesting. And actually, maybe to do that way round...um...would it be useful to do an observation in Term 6 along those lines to then set you up for year 3?

C: Yes I don't...I think it would actually. Yup.

I: Um...so...10 and 11 are kind of about, this is again sort of you thinking of, um...as if you were running the course next year so if you were kind of facilitating it, what advice would you give to someone who's keen to make changes, minor changes to their practice and what advice would you give to somebody who maybe is less keen or who was a bit reticent to make changes to their teaching? So...it might be easier to do the second one first.

C: (sigh) That's really hard...(laughs)

I: Well I suppose if you were paired with somebody like in the session who was not particularly...

C: So you feel you're doing it okay and you don't want to...? Well...I can't imagine anybody feels that everything is going perfectly...there must be something.

I: Yep.

C: And it may be something really tiny that could make a...just improve the quality like it might make your marking easier if you get them to leave their books open for you...just that, alone...it doesn't have to be anything that's gonna spend, take time. I think that's the thing to emphasise. It doesn't need to add to planning or...it's just take out some daily irritation and see what impact that has and then maybe that will encourage you to do another one.

I: Yep.

C: I suppose that's what I'd say.

I: And the last one is...um...again, similar line, in terms of, I think we've talked about this already perhaps...um...but which aspects of the year 2 programme – so if you're being really brutal – do you feel are essential? Which ones could be maybe changed or which ones could we ditch, could be removed?

C: Well I don't know that we needed to do two peer observations really. Given that we didn't do any kind of talking about it afterwards...I mean if we'd talked...also I think when we did them none of us were very very clear what our tweak was so it was quite hard to make them focussed.

I: Yep.

C: Um...so just do the observations really for a purpose and then have time to discuss them. Um...if the meetings could be shorter that would be helpful.

I: Yep.

C: Always finish at four. Maximum.

I: Yeah...It's a tricky one that as you get, cos you get this hour so...

C: I know.

I: So technically for the whole year we should be using an hour...

C: Yes I suppose that's right.

I: So you're already time there, that's tricky, cos that's their financial investment.

C: Yes I do understand that...okay...

I: It probably doesn't feel like it though cos you think, that free probably gets lost...but that's...so you're the only year group who's got that extra period on your timetable...but that's, you know, that's a tricky one...

C: Um...essential aspects well I think the SMART strategies and I think the discussion of the pressures, you know, and acknowledgement that we haven't made it all the way there yet, we're still on a curve...is really good.

I: Yeah.

C: Um...I think the talking to the previous Year 2s is also really good...

I: Yep.

C: Um...and it was it...I tell you what frustrated me slightly...

I: Yeah.

C: ...was that I got this idea that from the very beginning we were told that there was all this research that had been going on and we weren't really going to be told about it but we were sort of part of it...kind of and we'd see the benefits eventually and I don't now feel...that I know what it was. I don't feel I've really...

I: Was that something Sinead said?

C: Yes. And I just find that slightly, well, come on, 'why don't you tell us?' or least, well, have a, tell us...now...or at some point. What was that thing that we...were gonna find out and we sort of...

I: I think potentially, I'm not, I'm not...totally sure...

C: I think it was when you weren't there because she ran some of the first ones.

I: I think potentially, it might be...she might be referring to the fact that at the moment there's a lot of research going on in terms of just the first five years of people's career...and how...um...linked to what you were saying actually about, kind of, um, explaining the rationale of things, of tasks to students...getting students to self-regulate...that's the kind of body of research which is growing in terms of, kind of, showing really, um...what was I gonna say?... really, strong kind of positive impact with students and it's also I think...there's quite a lot of research going on about teacher retention um...and, um...that's why, initially...um...the programme was kind of set up in terms of having this sort of bridge between NQT and full timetable.

C: Yes.

I: ...because there were, I think, in previous, sort of, cohorts, um...I think there's been...a lot of sort of drop-off in terms of development where people just sort of stagnate and they're just maybe surviving rather than developing um...and also...I think there's quite a lot of people who've been leaving within the first five years.

C: Yes that's right. I know that.

I: I think potentially maybe that's what she meant - maybe that's that? Maybe a project she's doing? It's not linked to me. I don't think so.

C: Maybe not. But...I do think, I think um...the, the time, the time to reflect is actually what w...

I: Mmm.

C: ...is really, really beneficial.

I: Mmm.

C: And to feel that that's kind of sanctioned and you should be reflecting still because we all could it and it could be a negative thing sometimes. And to have something in place where you can sort of let off steam a bit and turn what might be negative into at least realising everybody's got it or a better... how to deal with it...is, is incredibly valuable.

I: Yeah. And I think, probably with the time thing actually, if we go back to that. I could, I take your point, you know, that it kind of, it feels long after school. I suppose one solution might be...I wonder whether...would it be useful to have, um...the time structured more flexibly so for example that you had maybe one after school meeting during the term and then the other meeting we kind of chose a time to meet up to observe you when it was balanced.

C: Yep.

I: So if you had a long term, for example, say next term in Term 6, if you had, um, we're gonna do an observation and we'll decide at a mutually convenient time and then we all have, kind of a debrief session at the end...

C: Yes.

I: And...maybe we could look at the school calendar a little bit um...cos I think one of the restrictions was, um...cos I'm not here on Mondays that's why we put it on Tuesdays but potentially, if I'm here on Mondays, cos you're not NQTs anymore we could just run that on Mondays and actually that would give you a gap...between those meetings. Um...

C: Yep, that's true...

I: Would that be helpful if we kind of did it...I suppose if you varied the pattern of it a little bit more?

C: I think it would...yes I think it would...

I: If you've got a longer amount of time to do something so then that last session is more...

C: yep is more...

I: ...is more meaningful.

C: Exactly, yup.

I: Perfect, okay, brilliant thank you.....I'll press stop.

Appendix 14: Interview transcript teacher D

Teacher D Transcript

Interviewer: Sofia...

Teacher D: Okay...

Interviewer: I Teacher D: D

I: So first question is...er, thinking back to last year...

D: Yep

I: Which factors most helped you to improve your teaching practice in your NQT year do you think and why?

D: Okay um, I think for me...lesson observations and feedback from lesson observations. The coaching observations that you did, which were not sort of formal they weren't part of NQT assessment but you know, here's good tips and here are things that you can do.

I: Yep.

D: I think that helped enormously...um, just because, you know, you can't, you can't beat it getting somebody else's view of what's going on in your classroom, cos you know, you, have an idea, I have a sense of what's going on but actually....yeah...validation of whether it's actually, you could be doing it slightly differently but yeah for me that's enormously beneficial.

I: Yeah.

D: Watching other experienced teachers was also really beneficial, going and seeing how Sinead does things or going and seeing, you know, how Marsha and Naomi were doing various things so that really, I mean for me that's really, really great. I think also the sessions that we had...um...really for, apart from the sort of delivery of, you know, you need to know this in terms of setting cover or ye...just information in terms of induction because you're new staff...I think also just as a space to reflect or to think, you know, okay so what is it I've been doing and you know, wh...why...what could I do differently so...yeah, I think tho...those would be my top three.

I: Mmm hmm...

D: I did find, and I still do, last year, okay, and I didn't directly I suppose because I didn't have um, you know in the sort of...ugh...(sigh)...what's the acronym? The extended time, development time...

I: Oh yeah.

D: ...that we have. Um...there was...

I: TLCs

D: ...Yep...there was a focus...so Roisha (head of department) already had people who were working on specific things...which I guess must have been related to their, their targets...

I: Mmm hmm

D: Um, and I liked...and that was really, I found those sessions really helpful because that wasn't just within Biology or in the context of being an NQT and ye..., you and all it was sort of listening and hearing people like Beth and Portia saying this is what we've been trialling with homework or assessment and stuff and so, and that was really good...just in terms of getting tips cos I think, you sort of think, well, especially I think that year you're so, you're so overwhelmed with the sheer volume, certainly in Science, the sheer volume of content that you have to get through...

I: Right.

D: That it's a bit like 'okay I've just got to deliver this and you know you think about, okay...resources...um, as in...physical resources what's available to help me deliver this...

I: Yep.

D: ...without really stopping and thinking about well really is it the most effective way of doing it? So I think getting other people's views and you know just that whole thing of being, of standing back a bit so that you're not constantly... 'er er er I'm teaching *** (name of Biology module)...what, you know, d'you know?' ...so the sort of stopping and thinking actually...and I think that has helped because I certainly feel much more, well this is sort of moving onto this year now...but I certainly feel much more relaxed in 'Don't worry about the content'

I: Mmm.

D: And so I'm thinking more about, okay, it's not, it's not just 'here's information transfer and I've got to get this content into your heads'. It's actually, 'what can I do to break it up? make it more interesting? So we've worked really hard this week on something quite dull, let's throw in a practical, you know, that sort of, just be, just be much more confident? I suppose in, yeah, you will get the content done, it's...it's okay.

I: Yeah

D: (laughs) Does that seem okay?

I: Yeah.

D: Okay.

I: Absolutely, so second question is what, so this, kind of, a little bit linked to what you just said...what resources, um and/or opportunities do you currently use to develop as a teacher? So I suppose that's at the moment, where do you, what resources do you draw on, I suppose now that you don't have an NQT mentor? What's changed?

D: Um, I still, I mean I very, I suppose we're quite a small, tight department and I mean...it's a big faculty but...

I: Biology?

D: Biology...and so I talk to Kalinda and Marsha, we...you know, share, sort of, you know...we're about to teach this, what's the best way of doing it? So I st...still have an awful lot of...we don't do as, we don't do formal co-planning together, Marsha and I, as we did...

I: Yep.

D: ...but that's just because, you know, she's got other demands on her time, you know, and we don't need to in the same way as we need to then.

I: Yep.

D: Um...but, um...yeah so...I haven't and I was looking at it and I would still like to...and I just suppose, it just doesn't happen, um...I still would like to do more observing other people.

I: Yep.

D: Um...and I, and I feel like actually, you know, I remember you saying that, oh, last year that it's a gift having that time to be able to do it and it won't come back and I...but I really don't. So I'm hoping with some of the gained time I can start to do a little bit of that, obviously I can't see people teaching year 12s and year 11s or whatever but...cos I certainly know that I...I think, you know, children do respond very differently to different adults, they just do. Um...and it's not, sort of, I'm sort of old enough and ugly enough and fixed, I don't, it's not a personal thing but they do they have a different way and...so I'm quite intrigued cos I share year 7 classes with Martin Timpson and I think the PE boys have got very different relationships with those kids and I think the reason, primarily that they have different relationships with those kids is because first and foremost the kids see them as people who see them outside the classroom.

I: Mmm...

D: And they actually see the kids in a different way because they do see them outside the classroom primarily, whereas I primarily see the kids *in* the classroom. Um, so...so I think, you know, I, I, that I'd like to use more of those opportunities, um...I mean the other thing is, you know, I don't, I haven't really been involved in any specific sort of CPD training as such apart from, I'm tryin' to think, things on our own time as in doing...

I: ...sort of internal stuff?

D: Yep, um...but yeah, I, I suppose ma...mainly it's communication, you know, collaboration within the department.

I: Yep.

D: Um...that, that sort of thing.

I: Grand. Um...this one is a kind of general one about your learning really. So, do you tend to work other people or on your own when you're looking at something; one of your development needs? And which of those two do you find preferable? Being on your own or working with other people?

D: So in terms of development needs...what are we thinking? In terms of actual practice?

I: I think just in terms of your teaching practice. So if you were working on BFL or trying to figure out a problem within a class that you've got or figure out...

D: Oh *always* with other people. Because also in Science, um especially with...(and I suppose it goes hand in hand) but...with...you know because we've got partner teachers...so three teachers all teaching the same difficult group or the same really great group. Yeah. So always, you know, Sandra and I talk with Roisha, you know, we've got one particularly group that's very challenging and we always talk about how are we doing it together and that idea of...and then I did, um, and I do from time to time...and that's also really good...is to get SLT to come in or to get the Year Leader to come in...

I: Yeah.

D: You know...this is not working for me...so the year 7 group that I'm finding very difficult right now...they're on, they're on tutor report, the whole class.

I: Okay.

D: So yep. Venetia Greenwood comes in, Fred comes in, that sort of thing. So yeah, I'd much rather do it with other people. Yep. For sure. Yeah, just, I think, because, you know, I still feel relatively new at this game. (laughs)

I: Yeah.

D: You know and I just think there is nothing like the experience of others and...

I: Yeah.

D: No...for sure. Definitely with other people.

I: Okay so question four. So this is kind of moving onto this year really now proper...with year 2.

D: Yep.

I: Um, which element of your practice are you trying to work on in the year 2 programme or which elements it might be...I think that's really referring to what were you trying to tweak in your practice? Or what did you start out with?

D: So I think for me it was very much that idea of um...(sighs)...that co-creating a sort of learning environment and having kids who we...were motivated, um, and, you know, and invested in the sense of actually, you know: we're doing this together...so for me, and that's not something that I really did very much in my first year at all...

I: Mmm hmm.

D: ...it really has been the asking *them* more...about how *they* are feeling...um...and just being a bit more comfortable in doing that, because, you know, and not sort of thinking well...and, and not doing it in terms of oh, sort of pop psychology 'how are you feeling today? Happy or sad of whatever'...but doing it in terms of, you know: 'So, how are you feeling about your learning today? You know, wha...what mood have you come in?' And then asking them at the end of the lesson, well, how are they feeling about it, and just getting that sense of, I'm thinking 1. Them thinking oh you care. You care about how I'm feeling.

I: Yep.

D: Um...which I think is great because, you know, I'm sure that sometimes it's not obvious to them that we care, you know, it's not.

I: Yeah.

D: It's like, you know, you would have thought actually, of course you must realise I care otherwise I wouldn't be doing this, um, you know, can think of better things to do...(laughs) ...d'you know what I mean?

I: Yeah. I know exactly what you mean.

D: And also that think of well you know, when kids say to you 'Oh, Miss that teacher really doesn't like me.' And I always say to them 'Do you think teachers really don't like kids?' And

they go 'Yeah, there are some teachers who really don't.' And I say to them 'Why do you think they go into teaching?'

I: Mmm.

D: And they look and they go 'Dunno, maybe they couldn't get another job.' And then I say 'Oh but I've had quite a few other jobs.' (laughs)

I: Yeah.

D: And, you know, um, and just that sense of actually giving...I think maybe there's that whole thing of thinking...yeah...just thinking a little bit more deeply about them as sort of emotional creatures, not just as sponges to soak up knowledge but actually coming with all of their baggage of, you know 'so it's all kicked off in the playground today and I'm worried about' – d'y...d'y know? With all of their sort of whole baggage of 'I'm a teenager' and life is really a bit gruesome for teenagers isn't it?

I: Yeah, yeah. And what, what do you think's been the, has...how has that felt different in your classroom when you've done that, compared to last year?

D: Well it's felt...last year with the...and...it still is for me a cause of not, concern but it's still...and je...concern's the wrong word but it still doesn't feel quite right to me. So that, that year 11 group, they're year 11 now and they're very low ability but there are a bunch of kids in there who...if they have come in in a mood to not work then literally, nothing gets done.

I: Mmm.

D: I mean like li...you know, whatever you do and so I asked them and I started this at the end of last year you know so...what is it you'd like to do, wha...what you know what strategies, what ways would help you to, um, engage more or...obviously in their terms, in terms of what would you like to see more of, what would you like to do more of...

I: Yeah.

D: How would you best like to learn and all of that. Um, and they did respond for a bit but really not sustained and y'know and now at this stage there is still, it, it is almost like a resentment from them that '*you* are expecting me to work' '*you* are *doing* this teaching to me'.

I: Mmm.

D: Um...

I: Yeah.

D: And I think by doing that a little bit more rigorously, a little bit more from the beginning with my other equivalent bottom year 10 class this year, I certainly feel that we have a better working relationship...

I: Mmm.

D: Because I don't think they just think 'you're doing this to us'. I think they think 'Oh, you know, we've got some part to play here'

I: Yeah.

D: And I certainly know that, and that was nice for me because Roisha who's my formal observer...

I: Right.

D: She, and I share the difficult group with her. Um, well she only inherited this year. But um, she came in to watch my bottom year 10s cos I was doing that thing of thinking a little bit and she said that she felt that it was very, very noticeable and well, that there was a good, a good rapport with them, a good sort of 'yeah, we're doing this together'. So, so yeah so I think that's...

I: That's interesting.

D: That's felt sort of like oh, that's different. So yeah, I think, I'm feeling happier. I still feel like I don't do it enough and I also just sort of think oh, why, and I did, so I did then do it with my *** (name of higher ability set). I just also thought 'you do this with the lower ability kids but you're not actually doing it with the higher ability kids cos they're already a bit, you know, they're motivated to learn...

I: Mmm.

D: But in fact, you know, there's no reason why I can't get some feedback from them to motivate them more or you know, to, to see what would help them, um, but...so yeah, so I think that, it's very much that, it's very much that sort of more, taking a more holistic approach to, to the child and just thinking actually, um, I...cos I think even last year, I mean I don't think I, I think I've always got on well with the kids. It's still that sense of you feeling you're doing something to them rather than them feeling like, well, we're doing this together.

I: Yeah.

D: So...yeah, so that feels better in some ways. I dunno, this time next year they might still be, they might have all just fallen by the wayside and me thinking 'oh no what's the point?' but I hope not. Um...so...

I: It's interesting though to, to kind of, to start it with one group and then kind of, really re-start in year 10.

D: Yeah. Just to see y'know, cos I'm hoping that we will have a sort of, yeah, that there will just be shared sense of you know, it's a partnership, and it's, you know, it's your teaching and if they have that sense of 'we can tell you a little bit about what it is we like about your teaching and what we don't'. And I can then tell them, you know, it's, it's a, it's just, it's more about your learning. I can, you know, I can teach till the cows come home but you have to, to be, you have to be receptive to, to do some learning, sort of thing, um, so...anyway...

I: I wonder if we could get to a point where we say 'this is some feedback on the decisions you make when you learn' as well, kind of doing it the other way round.

D: Yeah.

I: Um, so, that's really useful. Thank you. So this one is, um, I've written down some of the elements that were in the year 2 programme, just general kind of types of learning we've done.

D: Yep.

I: Um, we've talked about some of those a little bit but I just thought it would be useful to have a look. So how has the year 2 programme in general helped you, if at all, to change your practice? So we've had discussions with colleagues between the six of us, observing each other, trying out those tweaks kind of based on research...

D: Research yeah...

I: ...student voice and affective responses, er...talking to previous year 2s, which was more of a kind of, I suppose, visit from the year 2s and chatting things through at the end of a term and then this one, SMART strategies for working...I think we did that just after Christmas to kind of say 'okay...'

D: No, no I liked that, that sort of yeah. Um, spend the first free of your week, um, having a, yeah no, no I do like...yeah so...they've all been helpful I think, um...

I: Yeah.

D: The...observing colleagues has been re...has been helpful, it's not been as helpful as, in some ways as I think I thought it might be...being observed as well...I just think because also, you know it was that trying to observe people in a particular context because they'd made a tweak or something, I just, I don't think when I went to observe Tania she had just been formally observed and so she'd tried to, she said would you focus on a few things?

I: Mmm.

D: It was helpful but I think...I dunno how helpful it was for her...cos I just sort of felt like oh, I can sort of say yes or no, you know...just sort of...it didn't feel like, maybe, she'd got that much out of it. Um, and I know...Jenny came and observed me, Kirsten observed me. That was helpful. But I haven't had any feedback from Jenny yet. I suppose it's just that sense of, you know, making time to make sure you do that. And by the time...she'll have forgotten, I mean hopefully she'll have written some stuff down. Going to see other people and going to see the same kids being taught by other people...yep, always helpful...the ideas, um, yep, that's, I don't think I would have...I wouldn't have thought of some of those things by myself in terms of, you know, um, asking them more directly about how they were feeling about specific things, um...

Previous year 2s...yeah that was good. I was in a little group with Peter Florick (previous year 2 teacher), that was helpful. I'm trying to think...um (long pause)...yeah that was, that was helpful. I'm not sure...I mean I've probably written some, some notes somewhere but um...cos we had, we broke out into little groups didn't we?

I: Yeah.

D: Um...yeah, um, I don't know. Helpful because always sort of good to hear, you know, where people were. I know...maybe nicer to have had specific strategies...

I: Would it have been useful to have presentations?

D: Yeah, yeah. About what, what they had trialled or what was working and stuff like that. The SMART strategies one I did find useful and then I realised the other day...oh, I forgot. I've stopped doing that. I've stopped using my first free for that, what have I been doing with my first free? But yeah, no that's always, is good, I mean...you know it, I don't, yeah so that has helped, that did feel really useful.

I: I think there's a little bit of overlap with these questions so if you think there's not anything else to add to here, cos we've kind of talked about observations. So it's: to what extent do you feel the peer observations helped you, if at all, to develop your practice on the year 2 programme?

D: Yeah no I mean I did feel, I mean I haven't had feedback from Jenny but I feel, Kirsten came and watched that same group that Roisha did but at a much, much earlier stage.

I: Right.

D: And that was really good to get her feedback on that because I think she also teaches...I dunno if she teaches them but it's a year 10 class with um Serena and a bunch of...

I: Serena Dixon?

D: Mmm. Who...is fine really. (laughs)

I: What did Kirsten notice? Do you remember?

D: I'm trying to think what feedback she gave me...so it was me and it was one of the first times that I had done that thing of asking them how they were feeling about their learning. What she noticed was that I, cos I gave Serena, Serena did...it was a reaction time thing and they were doing a thing on the computer and all the boys really loved it but...

I: Yeah.

D: But Serena was not so keen to do it. So I said 'you be our recorder' so, so I think she no...she picked up on, you know, it was very good to give her a job that she could do, and do really happily and be really, cos she writes nice and neatly and stuff like that, and be really competent at, and be very invested in the whole thing, and of course by, because it was quite good fun at the end...

I: Yeah.

D: By the end of it she actually had a go as well, which she probably wouldn't have done...

I: If you hadn't given the...

D: Yeah, if I'd said 'oh actually you've got to have...take part too...well yes I mean I think she sort of thought it was...it feels like a very long time ago. I think I've probably got a...somewhere...cos she did scribble notes and I should probably have got somewhere what she said but um...(whispers) – I can't remember!

I: Don't worry it's not a problem. It's a very specific question. But I think we've covered it anyway really in terms of, especially...

D: And and, I do need to, to hook up with Jenny just to get some feedback from her.

I: Um...and...we've maybe touched on this a little bit. How effective were discussions, if at all, with those particular colleagues on the year 2 programme, cos you've got somebody from History, two people from Maths, you from Science and two linguists.

D: Yeah I think that is always helpful cos it's really good to see how, so, I mean, so, I suppose, Sci.. it's good to see how the Maths people are doing things always. Well it's good to see how everyone's doing things but there's actually, you know, wi...wi...with Science I suppose we have certain, cos in terms of marking, um, I mean that's a big, especially with Key Stages, it's a big thing constantly taking books to have a look at because they take notes and you assume that they're taking reasonable notes and they, most of their homework is past paper questions practice, most of which we peer mark in the class cos it's the best way of doing it actually. Um, either they self-assess it and they can annotate it as they go along.

Alright, if it's really obvious that's, you know, and I want them to, but they hate, they hate marking each other's work. Because the other day I got them to mark a whole paper and they were like 'Ugh' cos, you know, and then I said 'can you put the name?', cos I had a person, I said 'will you put the name of the marker?' and they were like 'No! I don't want them to know that' – and it was fine. But, er, we do so many rigorous, sort of, formal tests along the way, so it's always very good to have any ideas about people doing quick or sticking things in sheets, you know, getting them to, you know, so that you can look at books and assess then quickly. Cos I still don't look at my Key Stage 3 books as much as I should I just, I just don't have the time.

I: I think that's a perennial problem for everybody.

D: Yeah no, so talking to colleagues that's all been, that's all been good, yeah.

I: So question 8, has there been anything – you can be totally honest here – that's frustrated you about the year 2 programme? So that's any of the sessions or any of the elements of it or things that you thought 'oh, I wish we'd done it a different way' or, um, anything at all?

D: Um...(sighs). Not really...I suppose it's just, you know, we're all, we've got that extra hour so we're all strapped for time aren't we? And so it feels like...I mean, you know, I inherently and have always, I always like the space to be able to think because...if, if it wasn't there that time you wouldn't make it otherwise, that time to stop and think. So that's been...good, I mean, you know, I, I think there was one session I think which felt very much a bit of a monologue from Sinead just in terms of, just the delivery and I, I find her very charismatic and very easy to so I don't mind but I did just sort of think 'ooh, um, this doesn't feel quite as interactive as maybe it should be' or whatever so...that was, that's a minor criticism but that's how it felt at the time.

I: Yes.

D: Well, but otherwise not really, I mean you know, yeah. Frustration in the sense that 'oh, have we got an hour to do that today?' But then when you're there you're thinking 'well actually it's an hour and it's an hour worth, you know, it's worthwhile and I'm happy to have this space to think about it and otherwise you, I wouldn't, so...yeah. It's all good. And it's also sort of good just I suppose...I'm thinking about this, just to have that sense of 'I'm not quite right', you know. That I can have that, it sounds awful but, just to have that little security blanket of NQT+1.

I: Yeah.

D: You know, that you, you know 'Okay I'm still new at this. It's alright, I don't have to have sorted it all out and be perfect and all of that'. So that's quite nice as well (laughs).

I: Cool. Now these two are a little bit, erm...what was I going to say? No, do number 9 first. If you were advising somebody next year so I guess that will be Sara, Kevin, all that kind of lot. Um, what advice would you give to somebody doing the programme next year for them to get the most out of it?

D: (long pause)

I: So I suppose if you did it again...

D: Oh I don't know...um...I suppose...is...that...sense of...regardless of, you know, what you've got to plan for the next day or where you are, you know, or how you're feeling, is, is to go, not just open-minded but to go with a view to being completely receptive to it all because otherwise what's the point of being there? It's to actually park everything else.

I: Mmm.

D: In terms of, you know, okay this is an hour dedicated to thinking about this rather than 'oh actually I'm sort of here but really my mind's somewhere else' So I think yeah, um, to, to be really sort of genuinely receptive to it um, so I think, yeah I think that would probably be the sort of single bit of advice, um...

I: Yep.

D: And you know and then also that thing of well...tiny tweaks feel so much less daunting than making some huge change, because apart from anything else, well I suppose they're all very young but you know, again being, you know, a woman of advanced years, I ca...you can't change who you are in that easy way I can't, couldn't suddenly go in and be very...I dunno...I'm just trying to think, you know I couldn't suddenly have a completely different persona you know, cos it's not like 'oh I'm trying to...', you know, I suppose it's because you're sort of established in the sort of person you are and the way that you talk and um, that, like I can't, I do get told off occasionally, I can't necessarily easily dumb down my vocabulary, you know, just, you can't cos that's who you are and that's how you've spoken for years and years and years so I do get the kids sometimes saying 'Miss you do use very complicated language' and I get that quite a lot 'make it a bit simpler' so yeah, so I think...

I: So going and being receptive?

D: Yeah. Pretty much.

I: So these are very connected. So we're nearly done. Last couple here. So um, there's some interesting gents outside (students making noise walking past the classroom). Pause for (school name) students. Um, what advice would you give to, sorry, these two are really, if you, if you were in one of those sessions again, so say you're kind of starting it next year and you had kind of two people. One who is, um very keen to kind of make changes to their

practice and maybe somebody who was in your group who was sitting back, who was less keen, what advice would you maybe give to each of those people? And the first one might be quite similar to the second one.

D: Yeah. So I suppose the thing is related again to that is...Have a go...like, what's, ye...ye know, it's only minor and it's something little and discreet and I think to start with, I wasn't really sure as to what it meant to make a little tweak but if you stop and think about it and you think well actually if I build in this time for reflection, so, you know, yeah no, not just sort of an end of topic test review but every now and then take the temperature of the class or something, you know. It can't, it's not onerous, it's not like your sat there and have huge amounts of information and what do I do with this...it's just gives you a very immediate sort of response. I think that's what I think is very nice is that whole sense of just being aware that actually every now and then it ma...it's, you know, it's almost like checking the health of your class isn't it? It's just, and, so...I would just say 'do it because what's there to lose?' I mean...and there might be something to gain and if it didn't work for you and in fact if you did this thing and the kids all, you know, wrote a load of drivel or they, you know, you asked them to, uh, put down a couple of, whatever...targets or to...let you know how they were feeling about their learning or what, you know, what they liked about lessons or whatever, you know, if you'd, if you don't, you might as well because what's there to lost? Sort of thing. And um there's quite a lot to gain. So, I just think 'oh, you know, do it'. And also...we're teachers, so...really, um, you can't have teachers who don't learn. Really? (laughs) That would – that strikes me as a slightly perverse situation if you've got a teacher who thinks they're the finished article, you know, then we might as well all go home. Hmm? Right?

I: I'm not allowed to agree or disagree.

D: Teachers should be learning. Teachers should be learning and you can't learn unless you are willing to, you know, try different things or, and just to see what works and some things might feel completely wrong and like 'that's not me' I can't, I can't do that, that doesn't feel right to me and some things might not...and some things might feel like actually that's a really easy, simple way of, of me making a connection with the kids which will improve, you know, my teaching practice so I just think, go for it. Yeah.

I: Okay. Last question. So this is if you were, I guess if you were planning this next year for your next year 2s sort of coming up...are there any bits of it that you think they're definitely essential, we should keep those, any bits that you would change or any bits that you would scrap? That you've done this year. Or indeed, any bits that you would want to put in? Or anything you'd like put in for Term 6?

D: Oh! So...I think discussions...teaching practice...that's all good.

I: Mmm.

D: Um, observing colleagues no I think that is, is really helpful. I just think maybe that, I dunno, I suppose it's the things of oh, in terms of how it worked out you know if somebody observed you and then you didn't observe them till quite a lot later and by the time you actually got round to having...so I feel like that could have just been tighter in terms of. And I know actually (researcher's name) cos I was thinking about it, I know you offered, you, you were like, you know, send, give me the dates and stuff like that but it, just things got postponed and so it didn't happen this time so it's not gonna happen for another two weeks because that's the only lesson I've got when I can see you and...

I: I wonder if it needs long that or if...well, structuring differently.

D: Yeah.

I: So it's enough time for it to be more meaningful.

D: I thought it was really useful, I just feel like it's sort of, if somebody observes you, you're thinking about your lesson a lot, they're thinking about it and then if you don't meet for two weeks it's sort of kind of gone, slightly gone. Um, yeah, no, ideas based on educational research I like, you know...I originally come from a fairly academic background...that, that was useful. Previous year 2s, again, possibly just tighter? As in specifics, you know, so 'these are the things that really helped me or, that would have been, um...and the SMART strategies I liked that session cos it was just about the time when I was thinking like 'Ugh!'...

I: So timing-wise?

D: So that came at the right time. Yeah, no I think, um, what else? I mean I think it has all been useful for me, I don't know about what could be changed or removed really, um.

I: Was there anything that you'd like to do for Term 6 because that's fairly fluid at the moment really based on what people would like to do.

D: Um...(long pause)...nothing...I don't know...nothing that immediately springs to mind. I'm not sure what, not sure what the, not sure what, what else could we do. Um, really I suppose as I'm just not feeling particularly clever right now but what, what? (laughs) What sort of things could we do...

I: I suppose potential ideas would be...thinking about timing, maybe having a list of options of things you could do and then ticking what would be most useful for you that term so...

D: Yeah.

I: Like you were saying, observing somebody within your faculty who you share a class with?

D: Yeah.

I: Or observing a particular colleague who's particularly good at a particular area...

D: Yeah.

I: And then kind of using that...or having somebody to come and observe you...

D: Yeah

I: On something maybe entirely different that you think actually I really want to work on this next year with this kind of group and have you got any advice or sort of strategies? Or maybe someone from Year 2 coming to watch you doing something, um...but you don't have to think of anything now.

D: No...I can't really think of anything.

I: That's fine.

D: That all sounds like, that all sounds like, yeah. That would all be good.(laughs)

I: Maybe a smorgasbord of options?

D: (laughs) Okay.

I: Okay. End of interview.

Appendix 15: Interview transcript teacher E

Teacher E Transcript (Jade)

Interviewer: (states Teacher E's name). Okay so first question,

Teacher E: Okay...

I = interviewer E = Teacher E

E : Um it was probably, er, having a mentor and being observed by the mentor and having those sessions where you actually review, like, what's going on. So having like a timetabled session to be like, okay 'What's changed ? what do you want to improve on ?' ...because that was kind of a, it was just carrying on from the PGCE but less frequent, which I thought was good. Yeah, that worked really well. But I had a really good relationship with my mentor so I found it really useful.

I : And at the moment, what resources or opportunities do you, sort of, currently use to develop as a teacher in school?

E : Um, you mean like any courses or something that I go on? Or... ?

I : So it could be anything yeah, so it could be school courses or people or resources...

E : Okay so, um I work a lot with Tania, who is another teacher, and we actually plan lessons for each other.

I : Yep.

E : Cos we have similar classes so we actually decide 'okay you're doing this class for the whole term and I'll do that class and then we meet after school quickly and discuss it.

I : Yep.

E : Um, and...sometimes I'll ask other teachers as well but to to be honest mostly it's just us two, um, cos everyone else kind of does their own thing a bit. Um, and..I mean I guess I use different like websites and things that I've, yeah, I've go...I've found the ones that I like basically so I don't spend a lot of time searching for them I just use the ones that I know.

I : Yep.

E : Um, and... we're going on a conference in um, in June, in July I think, like a Maths conference in (name of local area). We did it last year as well, it's really good.

I : It that the whole faculty ?

E : Yeah. It's like really rare. It's like an (name of local area) (name of subject specialism) conference. It's really cool. And I found that really useful last year.

I : What do they cover ? Do they cover a particular Key Stage or... ?

E : They did different things. You know like kind of a general session. Last year they started off with trying to talk about the new GCSE and looking at the different kind of questions. And then you can choose these kind of workshops. You can choose, you get the list before. So I think I did one, I did a really good one last year on A Level stuff which, I actually then did use. The problem about it is that it's at the wrong time really because, I mean I know it's not because it's at the time right time because everyone's free...

I : Yep.

E : But then, you've got all these ideas but you can't try them out because you haven't got any time. And then you start the new year and you're completely swamped and you don't really...unless, unless you remember them like really clearly and so I did a few things specifically and then it was, kind of fizzled out. It would be good to go again definitely I think.

I : Hokey doke, um and this question I supp..., yeah, have a think about this one. Do you tend to work with others or on your own when you're addressing something that you need to develop ; a development need. Or is there one of those two that you find preferable : working with others or working by yourself ? (referring to sheet of shared questions) Or does it depend ?

E : Um, so, so we plan individually but then we're very good if, if one of us has done the lesson and it hasn't gone so well then we'll, or even just, if one of us has done the lesson the other...I'll usually ask her : 'Oh how was that lesson?' and she'll just give me a really quick thing. I'll just change a really small thing and then I'll do that. So that's really useful. But, otherwise I think I tend to do it more by myself. I think 'okay, what, what did I not like about that lesson?' I just, yeah, I always think about it like that and I try and change that for next time if I can.

I : Yep.

E : Yeah, I don't tend to then ask someone else...I guess.

I : Yeah. And is there a particular reason you chose to co-plan stuff this year ?

E : Er, we did it last year as well. Er we..., we were friends already and we were starting at the same time. And we knew that, um...well it was a lot of work at the beginning.

I : Yeah.

E : Of NQT...and then we realised that our classes were all parallel but I think that's, they did that and they just did it because it was easier, like it probably, the shame is that probably next year, if we don't have parallel, it doesn't work if like our classes aren't parallel because if you have different sets you can't plan, which is a real shame. Um, but this year we've had the same year (number), the same year (number), the same year (number), the same year (number) class. As in, in parallel.

I : What's been the impact of that then, do you think ?

E : Ah well, my workload, yeah, my workload's been much lighter. And I think I've taught, we, we say that we teach much better lessons because they are more thought through. Cos you have to explain them to another teacher first. That 's before. You can't, you can't basically just turn up and then make it up, you have to actually have a plan, even if it's like really basic. But, and often when one person, when you're explaining it then the other person will say 'like I don't quite understand that' and then you kind of fix that already. So it's great, yeah. I think, yeah. I think the others are now used to us just like having these conversations where we talk about all our lessons.

Um... at some point Tania wasn't sure whether it was saving time anymore cos she was like 'oh we always have to talk about it' and I guess when you get really quick at planning, then having to talk as well adds time but I think it's not, but then we started, like giving each other like a whole week's worth of lessons in one go instead of one at a time. We'd be like 'okay, here's three year (number) lessons' like quick quick quick and then we don't need to talk for a while so...I think we've got better at that because we realised that sometimes it took too long.

I : Yep, and...so second questions, no, fourth question sorry. So this year, which element, or it might be elements of your practice have you tried to work on in the year 2 programme ?

E : Yeah I found that a bit difficult. I think I, I feel a bit like, um, I missed kind of the opportunity. I feel like, there, in hind...,like there were loads of small things but I wasn't really able to choose one to particularly focus on ? Because, so this came to me mostly in that session we had with, when the other people came back...

I : Uh huh...

E : Yeah ? And then we had these conversations with them and it was like **so** interesting and I had all these, like, and I was like 'oh I wish I'd done all these things'. Does that make sense ? I kind of feel like...

I : Why do you think you missed it ? Or was there something that happened ?

E : I think, I didn't have enough time to really decide on it. Like...we started off and we talked about, you know like in those first few sessions we talked about like, you know the

kind of questions, the things that kids, that we say that you wanna try and avoid. And that was really useful. And then we like, quite soon had to go into like watch each other. And that was, I didn't find that very useful because I didn't really...I hadn't changed anything yet so they weren't watching anything specific and I didn't really know what to...I dunno, I think we all felt a bit like we needed more time to actually try, decide on something and try something out before we had to then use up our time to watch someone and then...I dunno it just kind of, so yeah, and also, Tania and me work together a lot already, okay ? So that would have been fine, we could have done more but we didn't get enough time in the sessions to like, talk to each other.

Cos we actually, no, one session actually we did, we tried this, but it's not, I haven't got very far with it. We tried like a new type of feedback sheet where they, a bit like we already had but they have like a response section and they have to do...so we've started that but it's like, we haven't taken it any further though cos we haven't had a chance. So I feel like it's a bit of a shame because we could have done, I think, more with it...I think she's been a bit better at like, trying to use it and I find that even harder cos it's like another thing to photocopy , another thing to photocopy in advance. You know , like to plan it in ? So I haven't, I think she's used it more than I have. But it would be, yeah, it would be good for us two to like, actually, to have some time to think about it like whether it was worth it and whether we could make more of it.

I : Yep.

E : Yeah and then I wrote down some other things that...so basically I had loads, it was great cos I got all these ideas but they kind of came like at the wrong time or too late cos then I also had them from the, er...yeah...they were talking about like live modelling that they did like Sorcha and Fred and people and that sounded really cool.

I : Yep.

E : And I tried it like once, you know, but like when there's not, when it's just like one of many ideas you don't kind of do it consistently like it would've been kind of good if like loads of us, I dunno, if we'd all done the same thing and just like forced ourselves all to try it but I think we were all a bit. I don't, I don't really know. And then um...I mean it's not true I have done some of these things but, I haven't, you know I haven't like consistently done anything. Do you know what I mean ? Like, so then it was like student voice and um, I asked them. Yeah, I asked them, the year 11s, to go through their mocks and write a list themselves of what topics they want, they need revision on...

I : Yeah.

E : And then I put them in groups and they had to in the group pull that together, give me like five groups and then I pulled those together and I put them on a powerpoint and then

we worked through those topics for the exam. So that was really good but then I don't do that kind of stuff all the time.

I : Yeah.

E : So, yep. I kind of feel like, I kind of started, like, too many different things and then haven't like, got that far with any of them.

I : Yeah.

E : Just need some more, I dunno, some more time or more, more ideas I guess as well.

I : Yep.

E : And that was really useful, to speak to the other teachers.

I : Yeah. Well that's kind of, that's really linked to this next question. So that's, that's kind of included.

E : Yep.

I : So I put a little list of, I suppose, the elements of the course we put in. And so it's : how has the year 2 programme helped you to change your practice, if at all ? And maybe let's just have a look at these kind of elements. So I'll just remind you of them so we've had just kind of general discussions with each other within the sessions about your practice, observing each other which we did twice (and we'll maybe talk about the timing of that as well cos that sounds like a good thing to discuss), trying out some ideas based on research so those ideas about student voice and asking the kids how they feel about tasks, like we've just mentioned, talking to previous year 2s, and then that one session that was with me straight after Christmas where we were talking about how you do your work rather than how much work you've got to do. So yeah, it's just kind of having a look at those. Were there any of those which were particularly helpful or not helpful ?

E : Um...so I feel like the first one (discussions with colleagues), I would have liked to have done more...I feel like we, there were quite a few sessions where we didn't speak that much. Um...and you guys spoke more. And I think it would have been better if we all just kind of as a group, just had spoken a lot. Cos I think, yep, that didn't really work for me. Um...if I was just listening and then, no, we're not collaborating cos I don't know what anyone else is doing right ? So...and then I didn't find the observations very useful cos I found that, well...I mean, what...wait, did I do two ? I can't remember the other one I did. I must have done two. I remember doing Kirsten's, and I saw what she did so that's, that was quite useful actually. I think the observations of **me** were not useful. Because I was completely, like, you know, it was hard to find a time and I didn't know what I was doing with them so I quickly decided on something and it wasn't like I'd been like, working on it

for a while and was trying it out it was not like that at all so then I felt like it was a bit of a waste of her time to watch me. And why can I not remember the other lesson that I watched ? Who would that be ? No, I can't. I must have watched someone else but I...oh no Nadia's. That, that wasn't useful, I dunno, um, probably for the same reason that it wasn't like a clear focus of...

I : You watching her or her watching you ?

E : I watched her. There wasn't like a clear focus of...you know partly to do with the timing cos it was yeah, everyone was really busy and it was really hard to be like, yeah, in your free go and, oh I dunno.

I : Yeah.

E : Um...but, oh, yeah maybe I'm saying that I probably needed it to be like, I probably needed more structure but not like in terms of you guys saying 'you have to do all do this' but if we'd had more time to as a group, kind of just...cos I'm sure there's things, I mean, it's difficult when you're not in the same subjects but if we'd like, if it'd been me, even if it had been me and I'd like really decided 'I'm gonna try this out' then I think I would have done it. But I think that because I often kind of came away being like 'well I'm not really sure what I'm trying to do' and then some watched me and I was like, 'I'm not really sure what you're watching, what you're trying to watch ?' Um...

So...and the, yeah what ? Oh, talking to other years was really good, um, maybe we could have done that earlier actually, because, not too early obviously because you don't wanna take their ideas but it was really useful to hear what they did and when I did try some things it was really great but then I always like, forgot again and you know, and the workload...

Um...that was good but I kind of had that already, that was probably just me (referring to SMART strategies session)...I had that when I was on PGCE with you...already so the stuff about like not having your emails open or like cutting out the extra work so I, it was, it was a good reminder but it wasn't like something that I really needed.

I : Yeah.

E : I don't think at that point. Does that make sense ?

I : Mmm hmm. And so I think we've probably covered this one. To what extend do you feel peer observations helped you, if at all, to develop your practice on the year 2 programme? I wonder if that's connected to, like you said, to timing and to who you're doing it with.

E : Yeah, yeah. No I think you need, I think you need to chat more, you need to know the other people in your group a bit better about what they're doing. Cos what would happen, we'd have a session and then you'd be like okay guys watch each other so it would be like

really quickly you're like 'when can I do ?' and then done. And then you just go and see and you're like what am I actually watching ? Um...whereas if we'd had the sessions before where we had more of an idea...'oh I know Jenny's working on this' – right ? Or 'I know she's doing that' it would have made more sense I think. I think a lot of us didn't really know, maybe that's not true that's just my opinion, not really knowing what we were trying to achieve then...(laughs) when you're watching someone else you don't know, um, what's going on there either. So...

I : And why do you think you weren't clear on what you were trying to do or what you were trying to change?

E : Cos I think that like we didn't have enough time to like speak to the other people about it or, or maybe you guys like challenging us a bit more about what we, what it was...like I think it was always a bit like implied that we, I dunno, implied that we knew what we wanted to tweak even though I didn't really know...

Cos I had two, I think, you know, I always, I had too many different things I wanted to do so I needed someone to be like 'just take that one' and so imagine if someone else in the group also was doing one of them they could have been like 'let's both focus on this one' and watch it, I dunno...

I : So maybe have a session where we have lots of time for people to discuss ideas, um, and then a little bit of guidance and probably a bit more...

E : Yeah just kind of go round, you ask everyone so you explain to everyone. I think we kind of did that but I think I just didn't have enough time to...yeah to really...yeah...

I : Or maybe if you'd got lots of ideas some sort of prioritising ?

E : Yeah like here, I've got a lot of things. I mean I've tried all these things but there's like a lot, isn't it ? So...I think I've been a bit too unfocused.

I : Um, and then I think we've probably discussed this one already...er...how effective were discussions with colleagues on the year 2 programme ? So if you feel you've answered that already up here that's fine.

E : (nods)

I : Or, that might be more useful, has there been anything that has frustrated you about the year 2 programme ?

E : Yeah I think just what I said with, I think sometimes we were all too passive in the sessions. Um...I think we...like I honestly don't know what the others are trying to improve or tweak anything. I have no clue.

Cos I feel like, we talked about it at the beginning, like the problems we were all having and then we never talked about it again.

I : Mmm hmm...

E : And then there were quite a few sessions where you were talking or Sinead was talking and sometimes I did write something down but I think...seeing as you know, seeing as we're all in the same situation it would have been really useful to be like 'oh was your, how has this changed, how's it going with what you're trying to change ?' or some kind of updates on it ?

I : Mmm hmm...

E : Um...

I : Did you talk about that in this session ? (pointing to session with previous year 2s) as this session was all talking ?

E : Yeah that was really good. That was probably the best session, you know ? I got a lot out of that. I got all these ideas out of it and I kind of bounced them off them and I thought it was really useful. Um...and maybe...dunno...maybe more of...you could, I mean you could get them in like sort of not at the end. Yeah, it was nice that it was like really informal you know ? Better than getting like 'here's Hugh Drakemoor' and we then listen to him talk about AFL. Cos that's not the same. It was really good to have it informally like that.

I mean that's obviously taking their time again. But if that could, I think, imagine you did the same beginning and then you got them like, not right at the beginning but like nearer the beginning so you...cos then that would be ideal. We could bounce our ideas off them at the beginning and say 'oh we're interested in this' and they'd be like, you know, that would have given me a lot of guidance and I would have found it easier to do. Does that make sense ?

I : Yep, yep. What advice would you give to somebody who's doing the programme next year to get the most out of it ?

E : Um...I think...okay so personally I think that I um, so, okay I've said all these things that I didn't think were that good but I think also that I've not been great at it either. I think I didn't come in with a good attitude to it, to be honest like, I was kind of immature but I honestly think that I kind of came in being like 'oh why do I have to do this ?' which is totally stupid because...

I : Where do you think that comes from ?

E : Just because um...it does kind of affect your timetable, like having to take the hour off and it's after school and then like it means that you can't, like some classes, you know, cos

you have so many lessons per class, it means that you can't teach a certain thing you have to...so I couldn't...so my A Level class I had like switch to be the four period and not the five period, so stuff like that –

...I think when you see your timetable, you're probably quite aware of that, that that's the kind of a change.

I : Yeah.

E : Um and then cos it's after school I think that's a bit of a like, you know at the beginning you're really, you've got five period days all the time and you come to the meeting after school and you don't really want to do it. So I think that's a bit of a problem but I don't, but I think that's, that's like, that's completely pointless like, to have that attitude cos then it's just going to be a waste of time if I'm not trying to, er, make it into anything good so I think, um, I kind of changed my mind a lot about when I...partly when I had a, yeah, when I had that session with the year 2s and when I realised, when I did try out some things then...my whole thing this year's been about being, I wanna become a better teacher and not just um...I dunno, I haven't applied for anything, like any higher positions or anything cos I constantly feel like I'm not, I'm nowhere near as good a teacher as I wanna be.

I : Yeah.

E : Um...and this is exactly the thing that will help me isn't it ? But I think there's just been like some limitations at the beginning.

I : Mmm hmm.

E : Partly me and then partly the course. A bit of both.

I : Yeah and I think that's something we can kind of touch on probably next term aswell but I think that's been a...in terms of timetabling there's been, I think there's been some tricky things that we need to think around.

E : Yeah so I think with me it wasn't that bad but I think some people like had to share a class because of it or something like that which is not...

I : ...which is tricky I think because the original idea was that in the first decisions about it I was very definite in saying, if we have it after school, because practically we can't have it during the school day. That wouldn't work because you could have up to kind of ten people. So you get that time off in your timetable. But that seems to have had like a counter effect for some people. If you then have a split class and you have to liaise with...

E : Then it's more work...

I : ...it's generating work rather than taking it away...I think that's a really important point aswell. Um, now these are just kind of imagining you were running the course, um, next year. If you were facilitating it, what advice would you give to somebody who's really keen to collaborate and make changes to their practice and what advice would you give to somebody who maybe is less keen to make changes ? So if you've got somebody who's quite enthusiastic and somebody who's less positive in the group?

E : Well I think the first session was really good to get people together and talk about the things that you're finding difficult and then you realise 'oh no look it's everyone' and I think that gives you, even if you're, if you're initially not inclined to make changes I think that makes you realise that, you know, you're not the only person who's experiencing this, so maybe there's something you can come up with. Um...and then I think it's, um, yeah, having as many discussions as possible about, yep. I think you have to basically, you need to narrow it down a bit – which is my problem I think. But if you narrow it down a bit. Then have a lot of discussions with the people and then if you talk to these kind of Year 2 people and say 'oh what do you think of my ideas ?'.

And then to be honest, I don't feel, okay, that I'd be at all like in their position to do that, but you could ask, you can use them again, they'll be year 3s, um, and then they might, you know...

Oh, and another thing would be like observing specific teachers, you know, who are really good at that, as opposed to each other. Like if we all can't do it there's not as much value. It would have been great to observe Sorcha or Peter, or someone like that. But I wouldn't have known that. Like, that they'd be good people to observe. And now it's probably not, well I could still try and observe them now. Now I've got more time I guess but...

I : Yeah.

E : But I mean the timing, the timing is a problem in the whole thing isn't it ? As you said, the timing of the timetable and then after school and then trying to observe someone. That's all really difficult. But I guess that's just the way it is.

I : But I think there are things that could be made more flexible. Um, yeah. Which we can, which we can think about as well.

E : Yeah.

I : And very last one which, we've kind of answered this one a little bit already. Which bits do you think would be essential to keep and which could be changed or removed next year ?

E : I think observing colleagues was not essential.

I : Would you observe other teachers ?

E : Yeah. And I think it should be more focused like, this is your, like...okay 'you guys are all interested in doing this, you should watch this guy cos he's really good at it.' And then we discuss it. Much more useful than, I dunno. I just didn't, I got nothing from those observations. Which is a bit of a shame. But I think it's partly because it was like limited time to do it and didn't really know what I was watching them do.

I : Yep.

E : They were in different subjects so it just kind of distracts you if you don't know why you're there, you're just like 'well'. It's a mixed ability French class...

I : Yeah.

E : That doesn't apply to like, my Maths class at all. Um, yeah, I think that and um...the, I don't about that I mean, you could put that in like an NQT thing aswell, the SMART strategies.

I don't think it's really out of place or anything. And basically more discussion.

I : Yeah. And this... ?

E : Yeah, loads of that (Year 2 colleagues). Yeah but I mean even if it was you guys right ? I just sort of sometimes felt like, um, like we all didn't really know and it would have been good to have more like 'yeah, that sounds good' or maybe 'you could do this'. Yeah, yeah. Basically I think I'm struggling, I struggled to come up with all my own stuff, on my own.

I : Yep.

E : ...because of all the other stuff that I was doing and not having enough time to talk to other people.

I : Yeah.

E : And it was a bit of a shame cos we had that designated hour so it was a shame that I didn't make...(long pause)

End of interview

