

An investigation of beginning teachers'
journeys through complex landscapes
of practice

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Abstract

This study seeks to gain a greater understanding of the process of transition and development that secondary physical education beginning teachers undergo during their pre-service year and their first year of teaching. Such an investigation is timely in the light of fundamental government reforms of current government policy that promotes a model of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) that is located in schools rather than higher education and that perceives teaching as a craft that is best learnt as an apprentice (Gove, 2010). This shift towards employment-based routes of ITE allocates universities a marginal position, which will impact on the kind of support they can provide. The research aim is to investigate beginning teachers' journeys through complex landscapes of practice.

This longitudinal study takes an interpretive approach to investigate the journey through complex landscapes of practice of thirteen physical education beginning teachers. The qualitative methodology utilises procedures associated with Charmaz's approach to grounded theory. Data were gathered over a two year period by way of 52 semi structured, individual interviews at four points in time, namely at the start of the pre-service programme (September 2008); after the completion of their first placement school (February 2009); at the end of their pre-service programme (June 2009); and at the end of their first year of teaching (May/June 2010). The data were analysed, coded, and categorised, and explanations of theory that emerged were grounded in the data.

The findings of this study have four broad sets of implications for the learning journeys of beginning teachers. Beginning teachers need time and space to be able to distance themselves from the practicalities of the school setting, which can be overwhelming in the immediacy of their demands. Both schools and universities need a shared language, so that sameness and continuity can reside in the fact that both sites are concerned with pedagogy and with the learning process of the beginning teachers. High quality, structured mentoring support is paramount in order to ameliorate the inconsistencies that occur during the learning journey. The University's role is key in the preparation of beginning teachers to help them

reconcile their personal and professional identities of who they believe they are and who they are aspiring to become.

This study highlights the need for policy makers, teacher educators and schools to develop a shared understanding of the complexity of factors that influence the professional learning of beginning teachers and highlights the importance of providing beginning teachers with a (neutral) third space where they can develop the critical capacity to negotiate the competing imperatives confronting them on their learning journey.

Thus this study makes a timely and important contribution to the ongoing debate around beginning teachers' professional development and particularly in the current policy context regarding preparation for teaching.

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Appendix 1 Coding process

Abbreviations

AfPE	Association for Physical Education
ALD	Actual Level of Development
ASCL	Association of School and College Leaders
CAQDAS	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CHAT	Cultural Historical Activity Theories
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
DES	Department of Education and Science
DfE	Department for Education
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
MTL	Masters in Teaching and Learning
MKO	More Knowledgeable Other
NCTL	National College of Teaching and Leadership
NC	National Curriculum
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PE	Physical Education
PEITE	Physical Education Initial Teacher Education
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
PLG	Peer Learning Group
QCA	Qualification Curriculum Authority

QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
TDA	Teacher Development Agency
TERN	Teacher Education Research Network
TTA	Teacher Training Agency
TGfU	Teaching Games for Understanding
SCITT	School Centred Initial Teacher Training
SE	Sport Education
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

1 Introduction and Context

This study is located within the context of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in England during a time of unprecedented change in pre-service programmes. Such an investigation is timely in light of the fundamental government reforms and re-professionalisation that the teaching profession has undergone in the past twenty years. These have been characterised by a highly centralised curriculum and government intervention programme for schools and ITE, which has been enforced through a relentless monitoring and inspection regime. The previous and current governments' preference for a technicist model of teaching is summarised in Michael Gove's (2010) belief that "...teaching is a craft and best learnt as an apprentice observing a master craftsman or woman", which is best achieved by shifting ITE out of Higher Education (HE) into schools. The beginning teachers' biographies and their initial perceptions of themselves as teachers are mediated by their experiences during their school and university-based pre-service programme. How these experiences shape their understandings of their role as teachers and the formation of these principles underpinning their practices in the classroom are a focus in this study. Doubts are evident in the spaces between entering the programme, meeting new peers and starting their placement (Grossman, Smagorinsky and Valencia, 1999).

Longitudinal study

This is a longitudinal study where four sets of interviews were conducted over two years. The study explores how a particular group of thirteen beginning teachers move through the various landscapes and boundary crossings to becoming fully qualified members of the teaching profession. The benefit of this approach is that developments or changes in the characteristics of the beginning teachers can be detected over a period of time. The key here is that longitudinal studies extend beyond a single moment in time, and because of data collection on a regular basis enhances accuracy (Kumar 2005). This was particularly useful in investigating the journey of beginning teachers into professional practice. However, longitudinal

studies require enormous amounts of time and often have only a small group of subjects, which makes it difficult to apply the results to a larger population. Another problem is that participants sometimes drop out of the study, shrinking the sample size and decreasing the amount of data collected (Cresswell 2009).

Context

The twenty first century has seen a clear return to a more school-based approach (Furlong, 2002). During the last two decades each new government has consistently challenged the monopoly of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Initial Teacher Training (ITT) (Knight, 2013). The revision of conventional training courses has gathered pace, which has included the launch of School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) (takes place outside the traditional context of higher education and is more usually led by schools or consortia of schools), Teach First and School Direct (Williams, 2002; Czerniawski, 2011). The School Direct model works with clusters of schools and a HEI to plan and deliver initial training which can be the catalyst that unlocks new ways of working on professional development more widely (DfE, 2013). However, there is an associated risk. In the government's rush to expand School Direct they are putting huge pressure on Teaching Schools to focus on this above all else. As a result, their wider work on Continuous Professional Development (CPD), leadership, research and school to school support is already being side-lined (Greany, 2013). According to Earley and Higham (2012), the education system in England is now both fragmented and, through the introduction of academies and free schools, increasingly autonomous.

There is an expectation that at the same time teacher education will become self-improving (Hargreaves, 2012) as academies and free schools are supporting each other's progress and development. Strong learning communities where schools and universities work together are needed so teachers can work openly and authoritatively in partnership (Hargreaves, 2012). However, the pressures being put on schools including teacher education, the reduced time to learn from colleagues and cut backs in professional development could destabilize the teaching profession.

The effect of all this is to return teaching to an amateur, de-professionalised, almost pre-modern craft, where existing skills and knowledge are passed on practically from expert to novice, but where practice can at best only be reproduced not improved (Hargreaves, 2012, p. 168).

These changes question the balance between educational practice and theory and shifting priorities in teacher training policy and practice over time (Gardner, 1998). According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2011) teachers are seen as the key resource in ensuring the global competitiveness of each nation state's education service. How teachers are selected, trained and developed as professionals are now essential concerns for everyone (Barber and Mourshed, 2007). This study focuses on the secondary physical education beginning teacher's journey across different landscapes of practice, and how their university and school-based experiences influenced this process, during their Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) year and their first year in teaching. As beginning teachers move through the transitions of their PGCE programme they challenge their existing views of self and their place in the world (Krause and Coates, 2008).

1.1 Policy context

The Government's justification for its school-led Initial Teacher Education (ITE) model relies on assumptions based on partial evidence (Wilkins and Ainley, 2013). Schools want more of a voice in teacher training as it is assumed that university-led ITE lacks sufficient focus on key aspects of teaching (DfE, 2011) and that the expertise of excellent teachers is sufficient to make them excellent teacher educators without any theoretical underpinning. This model is in stark contrast to other countries, notably Finland and Shanghai, China, where:

...teachers are provided with the research skills needed to enable them to improve their practice in a highly disciplined way. In Finland, teachers are encouraged to contribute to the knowledge base on effective teaching practices throughout their career, with candidates not only expected to become familiar with the knowledge base in education and human development, but also required to write a research-based thesis as the final requirement for the masters' degree (OECD, 2011, p. 236).

In contrast to many more educationally successful countries, the future contribution of universities in England, and the research-based knowledge they have access to, is likely to be significantly reduced in relation to ITE (Pollard, 2008).

The Government is widening the gap between research-informed practice and the 'craft' of teaching with these untested perceptions (Murray, 2010). They suggest that watching others and being rigorously observed yourself as you develop is the best route to acquiring mastery in the classroom (DfE, 2010a), which may be part of the process, but not the entire focus, as in the apprenticeship model (Lortie, 1975).

In the 2011 White Paper, *Training our next generation of outstanding teachers*, the Government recognised that, over the past twenty years, teacher education in England has already become overwhelmingly practice-oriented (DfE, 2011). However, in sharp contrast to teacher education in countries such as Finland and Shanghai-China, it argues that this move has not gone far enough in ITE in England.

Too little teacher training takes place on the job and too much professional development involves compliance with bureaucratic initiatives rather than working with other teachers to develop effective practice (DfE, 2011, p. 19).

The future contribution of universities in England, and the research-based knowledge they have access to, is likely to be reduced significantly in relation to ITT, in contrast to many more educationally successful countries as measured by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (Murray, 2010). After gaining Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), teachers tend to concentrate on their practice of teaching and largely ignore the academic (theoretical) influences (Hargreaves, 1994). Education is seen as the theoretical underpinning, which is separated from practice and training (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

Beginning teachers are quick to use the terminology of the differences between theory and practice (Eraut, 2007). The 'craft' (Gove, 2010) of practice is deemed of high importance and the theory is far less valued by some. Moreover, there is little research on the betwixt and between spaces of the PGCE course and the extent to which peer learning and group cohesion can play an important part in developing

and challenging experiences in initial professional practice whilst still in the relative safety of the university environment.

Learning communities

The beginning teachers' learning in schools is heavily situated (Edwards and Protheroe, 2004), since it is through participation that identity and practices develop. As such, it could be related to learning theory informed by Wenger's concept of a community of practice, through which individuals develop professional practices including values, norms, relationships and identities appropriate to that community. Wenger (1998, p. 4) suggested, that participation refers:

...not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the practices of social communities and constructing identities in relation to these communities.

Thus, participation is not just a physical action or event; it involves both action (taking part), as well as connection (Wenger, 1988). Wenger's research was focused on developing learning communities within organisations. Rogoff, Turkanis and Bartlett (2001) subsequently explored how this practice was used in schools.

On reading Lave and Wenger's work (1991; 1998; 2002), the variety of communities of practice beginning teachers are involved with on their journey to becoming a fully qualified teacher were considered. They are engaged in a process of collective learning and survival techniques. They share a passion for teaching and they learn how to do it better as they interact with their peers and their mentors (Kirk and Macdonald, 1998). Wenger (1998, p. 45) notes that:

This collective learning results in practices that reflect both the pursuit of our enterprises and the attendant social relations. These practices are thus the property of a kind of community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise. It makes sense, therefore to call these kinds of communities, *communities of practice*.

The beginning teachers become practitioners, developing a shared portfolio of experiences, stories, tools, decision-making and problem-solving, thus, in other

words; sharing practice. The beginning teachers' journey involves much more than the acquisition of subject knowledge, teaching skills and techniques.

However, in the context of this study it would be more appropriate to perceive this journey as located in “learning spaces in landscapes of practice”, in which social participation as a process of learning can be facilitated through the components of meaning making, practice, community and identity (Wilson and l’Anson, 2006) it is more useful As a pathway through this social landscape, learning is not merely the acquisition of knowledge that many beginning physical education teachers believe, it is something that transforms the person who inhabits the landscape with an identity, whose dynamic make up reflects the pathway through that landscape (Hobson and Malderez, 2002). The journey incorporates the past and the future into the experience of identity in the present (Palmer, 2008). The journey of becoming is as important as the arrival (Palmer, O’Kane and Owens, 2009), and the road they travel is never smooth. It has many diversions; repetitions; reversals and staging points, and can be disorientating and dampen enthusiasm (Pierce, 2007). A qualitative approach is employed in the study, which utilises procedures associated with grounded theory and is framed around beginning teachers’ journeys through complex landscapes. The intensification of national and international concern around teacher quality and retention has resulted in greater scrutiny of the preparation and development of new teachers (Ashby, *et al.*, 2008). There is a substantial body of literature on pre-service preparation of teachers (Cameron and Baker, 2004; Cochran-Smith and Zeichner, 2005; Kane, *et al.*, 2006) and the induction of new teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Johnson, *et al.*, 2004). Such literature documents the challenges beginning teachers face as they move from preparation to practice. According to Kane, *et al.* (2006) and Cochran-Smith, *et al.* (2010), the increase in public and political debate regarding the quality of beginning teachers is critical in that such discussions are informed by empirically-based understanding of what influences beginning teachers’ transitions into teaching.

The journey as a metaphor for learning

All beginning teachers making their journey towards becoming confident and competent teachers will bring a unique set of prior experiences and dispositions to

the situation (Witt, Goode and Ibbett, 2013). The notion of using a journey as a metaphor for learning can be likened to using opportunities for learning as stepping stones (Claxton, 1990). The use of the journey metaphor helps make meaningful connection in this study between how the understanding of ITE has changed the direction of the beginning teachers by using reflection to shape behaviour and, in turn, determine behaviour change (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Two metaphors of the journey and boundary crossings are closely interlinked, whereby the journey puts the beginning teachers into a situation where they must act in conjunction and connection with unfamiliar others, such as new schools and departments. They travel outside the boundaries of their known territory, where they may experience an anonymity that undermines their customary assumptions and attitudes. The relationship between the reflection and travel into unknown territories is of significance as it is at the heart of the beginning teachers' learning journey: learning on a physical level, a conscious level, but also learning who they are. Then there is the reflective, cognitive way in which they consciously reflect and 'make sense' of the landscape and their experiences. The focus of this study has emerged through the journey, not only of the beginning teachers and their perceptions of teaching and first year of teaching, but of my own journey through teaching and mentoring as a teacher educator and university link tutor.

In acknowledging the importance of prior conceptions, if the beginning teacher/learner does not know where they are, then they cannot place the stepping stones in the appropriate places (Crafter and Maunder, 2012). Further research on the journey metaphor led me to van Gennep's (1909) seminal work, *Les rites de passage*. Van Gennep, an anthropologist, described rites of passage as having the following three-part structure: separation; transition (liminal period) and incorporation. In this sense, beginning teachers also move through different phases and become incorporated into different contexts, one of which is socially embedded in the university and one in the school setting (Palmer, O'Kane and Owens, 2009).

Turner (1967, p. 95) expanded on van Gennep's theory of liminality, focusing on the liminal period where he uses the term *betwixt and between*. The transition of individuals from beginning teachers to teachers can result in an 'in-betweenness', a *betwixt* space, where they are not sure where they belong (Palmer, O'Kane and Owens, 2009). Turner (1967, p. 97) perceives liminality as a "...midpoint of

transition... between two positions” and as a temporary phase rather than a permanent state. However, the beginning teachers’ success in managing the betwixt and between spaces is reliant on the support they receive from their peers and the staff in both university and schools (Palmer, O’Kane and Owens, 2009).

Transitions encompass more than stepping stones and moving from one school to another, they are complex and multi-faceted and often involve changes to self-identity that are borne out of uncertainty in the social and cultural worlds of the individual (Crafter and Maunder, 2012). Beginning teacher transitions can be roughly grouped into two domains; namely, the cognitive and affective (Jones, *et al.*, 2008). The cognitive has a focus on pedagogic content knowledge (Ball, 2000), where consolidating and acquiring knowledge and expertise are perceived as a way of moving from the location of the learner to that of the teacher (Wilson, Shulman and Richert, 1987). Lortie’s (1975) research into the affective domain suggests that, when beginning teachers were pupils in school, they spent time in an apprenticeship of observation, where they absorbed a range of values, outlooks, practices and processes which helped to model their perceptions of teacherhood. This study will explore how beginning teachers manage the transition from beginning teacher to practising professional, and how, during this liminal state of betwixt and between, they cross structural, institutional, conceptual and professional boundaries and navigate through diverse learning landscapes (Crafter and Maunder, 2012).

According to Gorgorió, Planas and Vilella (2002, p. 24), transition is not a ‘moment of change’, but something that incorporates living the discontinuities between the different contexts. Transitions in the beginning teachers’ lives arise from their need to live, cope and participate in different contexts; to face different challenges and, subsequently, learn from new situations arising from the changes (Zeichner, 1987). Becoming a professional teacher includes the process of adapting to new social and cultural experiences (Guillaume and Rudney, 1993). However, these changes and transitions are not linear; as Zeichner and Liston (1987) explain, quite often, beginning teachers’ ideologies are resistant to change. In Fuller and Brown’s (1975) four stages of concern model, gaining rapport with the pupils and self-survival are concerns that they have to overcome before moving on to task and impact concerns. As beginning teachers navigate their journeys through different schools, they often

move back to self-survival as they learn to cope and participate in different contexts (Crafter and Maunder, 2012).

A continued reflection on the programme and the beginning teachers' transitions on their journeys directed my thoughts towards how individual novice teachers explored the different landscapes and experiences. Palmer (2008) explores an inner landscape, which includes the beginning teachers' intellectual, emotional and spiritual pathways, as well as their unique pedagogic approaches. The intention of this research is to gain a fuller understanding of beginning teachers, opinions, values and beliefs, in order to understand their journey of transition from pre-service preparation into the profession. In this endeavour, this study sets out to explore:

- What are the patterns of transition and the changing landscapes within which physical education beginning teachers are located?
- What are the key influences that affect the transition and development of beginning physical education teachers?
- How do these factors influence beginning physical education teachers' constructions of themselves as teachers?

In asking these questions, I sought to gain a greater understanding of the process involved in becoming a teacher, from the vantage point of a beginning teacher. I was interested in exploring the perspectives of pre-service teachers as they develop through the transitions into their first year of teaching. The study aimed to identify factors that influence or limit a beginning teacher's journey. I was particularly interested in examining the influence of the beginning teachers' own beliefs and biographies on their transition to becoming a teacher. The beginning teachers' personal experiences of learning through both the academic and practice landscapes can be thought of as their 'rites of passage' (van Gennep, 1909 cited in La Shure, 2005). According to Kalmbach-Phillips (2010, p. 635), these transitions are fluid and shifting "...like shadows across a landscape." Furthermore, Palmer, *et al.* (2009, p. 9), suggest that learners' experiences through these landscapes are diverse, as they dabble in, visit, encounter or avoid different contexts.

1.2 Biographical background

As beginning teachers embark on their path to becoming a professional teacher, they bring with them a wealth of personal experiences, as do the teacher educators on the university programme and the subject mentors in schools (Stevens, *et al.*, 2006). My own experiences as a leader and teacher educator (and the experience of the beginning teachers with whom I have worked) have played an important role in this learning journey. The beginning teachers will have experienced a variety of opportunities in their numerous physical education environments. For some of the beginning teachers this experience will have been the highlight of their week while at school, yet, for others it will have been a time to endure or even avoid (Tinning, 2002). I used my biographical influences from personal experiences of teaching and mentoring students in schools to help them to understand various situations. Murray (2010) recognises this influence as effective in teacher education. My own journey has involved letting go of some strongly held beliefs regarding physical education, as I realised that there is no perfect end product and that teaching, as acknowledged by Green (2008), is a continuous learning journey.

Philosophical assumptions

In any kind of work or study, researchers always bring a certain set of beliefs as well as philosophical assumptions to the process. Creswell (2012) explains these assumptions and locates them in interpretive frameworks so their significance can be understood in the research. In this study I am exploring beginning teachers' journeys through complex landscapes of practice, which has been influenced by my experiences as a pupil in a single-sex grammar school; my experiences of sport, both inside and outside of school, the interactions I have had with physical education teachers, coaches and team members, and my own success, both in physical education and sport. These socialising processes helped to shape my initial knowledge and beliefs about the purpose of physical education, how it was taught and what it consisted of. I am bringing my own world views on beginning teachers which will end up shaping the direction of the research. Ontologically, I have embraced the idea of multiple realities and report on these by exploring multiple

forms of evidence from different individuals' perspectives and experiences. Epistemologically, I have tried to get as close as possible to the beginning teachers' experiences by assembling subjective evidence based on individual views from the interviews conducted over the two years. In this biographical background I have reported my own values and biases as well as the value-laden nature of information gathered from the field. The emerging method used in the process of the research has been shaped by my experiences in collecting and analyzing the data

My philosophical assumptions are embedded within the interpretive framework of social constructivism. This framework encompasses the understanding of the world in which we live and work through the development of multiple meanings by exploring a complexity of viewpoints. In practice, broad, general, open-ended questions were used in the interviews with a focus on the 'processes' of interaction, in the respective historical and cultural settings of the beginning teachers. It was important to acknowledge how their backgrounds shaped their interpretation, of the world.

Beginning teachers in physical education want to pass on their passion, knowledge and understanding to young people (Evans and Williams, 1989; Mawer, 1995). This was one of my motivations for entering the teaching profession. This suggests some form of consensus in values, attitudes and beliefs about physical education and physical education teaching (Capel, 2000). However, some beginning teachers will want to teach, not because of their experience of physical education in school, but because of their own involvement in sport outside of the school environment (Stidder and Hayes, 2012). As Myerson (2005, p. 7) explains:

PE is one of life's great levellers, a uniquely ruthless aspect of school experience which shapes us all and leaves its traces in unexpected and lingering ways.

As educationalists, we would like to think that physical education leaves a legacy of passion for physical activity and the importance of lifelong participation; however, just like Marmite, physical education is either loved or hated by many, both old and young (Evans and Davies, 1993). I was teaching in schools throughout turbulent times of change and reform with the introduction of the National Curriculum (DfES, 1989): revisions and reforms of national strategies, including the examination of

physical education; the lack of emphasis on non-competitive sport; strike action regarding payment and extracurricular hours which led to the reduction of voluntary assistance by teachers; gender specific departments; and the introduction of Ofsted. However, it made me realise that, although I had been involved in a number of new initiatives, from my observations there had been little change in the teaching of the subject (Penney and Harris, 1998; Curtner-Smith, 1999).

Changes inevitably led to doubts in my values, beliefs and self-confidence as a teacher, which Penney and Chandler (2000) suggest can take time to overcome. Through my personal experiences and formal training, I developed a belief in the importance of teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil relationships that are in accordance with social constructivist theory (Kirk and Macdonald, 1998). These relationships, I discovered, need to be based on trust and have to be developed and fostered in order to enhance pupils' learning experiences by allowing them to play a more active role in their own development (Tolley, 2009). I also started to notice that the social environment was an integral component of my learning journey in nurturing knowledge development (Byrne, 2000). As a former secondary school physical education teacher and now teacher educator, I have had a long term interest in teacher preparation and beginning teachers. Over my thirty-five years in education, I have worked with beginning teachers in schools, taught pre-service beginning teachers and supervised them on placement. Additionally, I have led the design, development and implementation of teacher preparation programmes, both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. My work has led me to question why learning to teach is sometimes presented as being unproblematic, whereas my professional experience suggests that it is a far more complex and lengthy exercise than is sometimes portrayed in the media, policy reports and within literature.

Beginning to teach requires the pre-service teachers to take immediate responsibility for the range of tasks undertaken by experienced teachers (Tinning, 2006). I became increasingly interested in the transitions between initial teacher preparation and the induction phase of teacher education. This professional interest in initial teacher education became my research focus for this study. As a teacher educator and mentor, I began to realise that beginning teachers do not all progress at the same rate (Furlong and Maynard, 1995), but they are at different phases of development at

different times. Fuller's (1969) Phases of Concern model identifies three concerns through which beginning teachers learn to teach, self-concerns, task concerns and impact concerns, with the beginning teachers progressing from concerns about delivery to concerns for the pupils and the process of learning. These experiences triggered my initial reflections on the changing landscapes of a beginning teacher's journey and how they develop a sense of who they are when their pathways are often disorientating and sometimes intensely alienating (Pierce, 2007). My own experiences aligned with Fuller (1969), who acknowledges that each new environment results in refocusing on self-concerns rather than developing sequentially as a teacher (Capel, 2007). My curiosity into beginning teachers' transitions had been triggered and I realised that the beginning teachers not only had to balance passing the university programme and its inherent assessments, but also had to pass their teaching placements in order to gain Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) status (Murray, 2008).

Moving into HE as a teacher educator was, initially, a shock. In Fuller's (1969) 'Phases of Concern' model I was certainly refocusing on self-concerns. I seemed to have a narrow-minded assumption that, as a teacher in a school, I could transfer my knowledge about teaching in a HE context without any formal induction (Murray and Male, 2005). Perhaps the values and beliefs I had internalised as a consequence of my apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) had led me to believe naively, that teaching is teaching, regardless of the context (Casey and Fletcher, 2012). I wanted to challenge my own and others' beliefs and practices in teaching in order to make physical education more relevant to young people (Capel, 2007). I wanted to develop knowledgeable teachers (Rossi and Cassidy, 1999) and not settle for teachers who had a busy, happy and good approach to teaching (Placek, 1983).

Peer Learning Groups

In my role as a PGCE coordinator, I introduced the idea of peer learning groups, which Griffiths (2009) describes as small group teaching, where the interactive nature can challenge the beginning teachers' views and engage them in their own learning. The groups consisted of twelve PGCE physical education beginning teachers who could engage in discussion with each other and their personal tutor

about any good practice or issues they had experienced, without feeling compromised. The term 'peer learning', however, remains abstract. The sense in which I used it here was as a two-way, reciprocal learning activity. Peer learning should be mutually beneficial and involve the sharing of knowledge, ideas and experience between the participants. It can be described as a way of moving beyond independent to interdependent or mutual learning (Boud, 2001).

Beginning teachers learn a great deal by explaining their ideas to others and by participating in activities in which they can learn from their peers. They develop skills in organizing and planning learning activities, working collaboratively with others, giving and receiving feedback (Walsh et al 2015) and evaluating their own learning. Formalized peer learning can help beginning teachers learn effectively. At a time when university resources are stretched and demands upon staff are increasing, it offers beginning teachers the opportunity to learn from each other (Boud 2001). It gives them considerably more practice than traditional teaching and learning methods in taking responsibility for their own learning and, more generally, learning how to learn. It is not a substitute for teaching and activities designed and conducted by staff members, but an important addition to the repertoire of teaching and learning activities that can enhance the quality of education (ibid). Reciprocal peer learning emphasizes beginning teachers simultaneously learning and contributing to other's learning. Such communication is based on mutual experience and so they are better able to make equal contributions. It more closely approximates to Habermas' (1984) notion of an 'ideal speech act' in which issues of power and domination are less prominent than when one party has a designated 'teaching' role and thus takes on a particular kind of authority for the duration of the activity.

This study will explore some of the various kinds of "...self-work" (Stronach and Maclure, 1997, p. 135) that are undertaken by beginning teachers when making the move from being a 'learner of physical education' to becoming a 'teacher of physical education'. In the various transitions, beginning teachers' identity can be seen as a key feature in easing those tensions that lie between the two sites (Ball, 1994). It will explore how particular constructions of the 'self' are used to surmount and negotiate the hurdles and boundaries the beginning teachers encounter.

Policy context in physical education

Since the advent of the twenty-first century, physical education has been perceived as being increasingly accountable for resolving problematic issues in England (Green, 2008). The need for physical education to change its approaches to pedagogy and curriculum design has led some to suggest that unless radical change occurs, the subject may have a short future (Kirk 2010; Lawson 2009). Rising obesity levels, reduced participation in physical activity, increased crime and anti-social behaviour and sporting failure internationally (Penney and Jess, 2004) have all been linked to physical education. The idea that physical education can successfully address social problems such as obesity and inactivity within a curriculum that is focused on competitive sport and fitness is often recognised in literature as a dilemma (Kirk and Tinning, 1990; Laker, 2003; Evans, *et al.*, 2004) The widespread exclusions of students who do not fit the mould of the competitive sports person, or who do not possess the physique of a person deemed physically fit, suggest that a broader interpretation of physical education as a moral and social enterprise is long overdue (Kirk, 2010).

Debates surrounding the nature and purpose of physical education have been nothing if not persistent and contentious (Green, 2004), wherein physical education has been viewed as a cure for, amongst other things, the childhood obesity epidemic (Penney and Jess, 2004). Physical education has always been inextricably linked to the health of young people, and is considered to be the only subject to promote physical activity and encourage healthy and active lifestyles (DFEE/QCA, 1999). However, the conceptualisation of physical education has changed over time, reflecting different theoretical and practical perspectives with the nature and purpose becoming more diverse rather than consolidated (McNamee, 2002).

From an epistemological perspective, physical education in the UK has undergone significant professional changes, most noticeably is the emergence of a graduate profession with "...supposedly a greater breadth and depth of theoretical knowledge" (McNamee, 2002, p. 13). Policies are everywhere and always, it seems, likely to change (Evans and Penney, 2008). Physical education and school sport has been in the limelight of media attention over the last decade as a consequence of substantial

financial investment and political attention (Green, 2008). There have been a multitude of physical education and sport-related initiatives introduced by governments and sporting bodies, as well as the rapid expansion of sport-related programmes at university level, which point to the topicality of physical education and sport in school more generally (*ibid*). The effects of the changes in physical education are reflected in the limited degree to which teachers and teacher educators now feel able to influence the curriculum and teaching physical education in schools (Evans and Penney, 2008). Furthermore, some of the physical education profession believe that the growth of sport and sporting organisations has led to physical education losing its coherence (Kirk, 2010).

Beginning teachers often have very differing perceptions about what effective physical education teaching entails and what they need to know in order to achieve this (Capel, Leask and Turner, 2013). Strong pre-existing notions about teachers, classrooms and schools appear to influence how they perceive the role of the teacher, and, indeed, the role of schooling (Stronach, *et al.*, 2002). Many beginning teachers are also driven by a need for ideas and tasks that will make them feel confident, purposeful and authoritative in the classroom (Furlong and Maynard, 1995). This is a particularly understandable need in contexts where beginning teachers feel they constantly must perform and prove themselves to a range of audiences, including people who are judging whether or not they have met a required standard (Ball, 1994). The beginning teachers need to develop positive reference points during their PGCE year and teaching induction and remove negative self-inhibiting ones (Armour and Jones, 1998). The university part of a programme helps in developing these positive reference points and helps to sustain the beginning teachers' confidence in the continuous crossing of boundaries: from school placement to school placement; from practice setting to academic environments in H.E. and departmental subject boundaries in schools.

The university and the school landscapes challenge the beginning teachers' initial perceptions, norms and routines and they make the beginning teachers pause, rethink and reflect on their own thoughts, thus, in essence, making them question their own developing identities. Therefore, in other words, challenging their beliefs and expectations whereby the 'betwixt and between' spaces allow them to build or

redefine their teacher identities (Palmer, *et al.*, 2009). These “...turning points” begin to connect understanding and a “...new direction becomes clear where only wandering existed before” (Graham, 1989, p. 98).

1.3 The structure of the study

This thesis is made up of six chapters. This chapter, Chapter One has presented the biographical and policy/ practice context which prompted me to undertake this investigation.

Chapter Two (Literature Overview): This chapter examines the research that is directly relevant to the study. I reviewed and critiqued literature related to beginning teacher transitions and development, policy, professionalism, the influence of learning communities, physical education, and the role played by beliefs, biography and identity in learning to teach.

Chapter Three (The Research Process): This chapter outlines the methodology and methods used in this study. It presents and justifies the use of a qualitative, interpretivist design which draws on principles associated with grounded theory. The participants, data collection methods and data analysis strategies are described and the ethical considerations that guided this research are discussed. The chapter concludes with an explanation of the approaches used to enhance the trustworthiness of the study.

Chapter Four (Data Presentation): This chapter presents the data with the inclusion of relevant references. In this chapter, I examine the findings in relation to the key questions that shaped the study.

Chapter Five (Discussion of Findings): This chapter presents an analysis and discussion of the findings emerging from the data, such as the factors found to have influenced the transitions and the learning and development of this group of thirteen beginning physical education teachers. Findings are critiqued and discussed, aligned to relevant literature.

Chapter Six (Conclusion and Recommendations): This chapter of the study provides a summary of the study's key findings and discusses implications for policy and practice. Limitations to the study and matters arising from the research that could be developed through further investigation are also identified.

Chapter Seven (Reflection): The final chapter of the thesis is a reflection on the entire research journey and also my personal and professional learning journey and the subsequent impact of the study on professional practice.

2 Review of the Literature

The focus of this study is on the process of crossing boundaries in the changing landscapes of ITE. A critical review of the literature in ITE and physical education was undertaken to gain a greater understanding of the process of transition and development that beginning teachers undergo as they move from pre-service to qualified teacher. The aim of the literature review was to establish the knowledge base and to identify any gaps or areas that warranted further investigation.

The review was not intended to be a comprehensive study of all the literature on beginning teachers and physical education. Its purpose was to contextualise this study in relation to policy and practice that play a significant role in beginning teacher transition and development. This chapter focuses on the literature surrounding the transitions of beginning teachers into becoming a professional. For the purpose of this study, the term ‘beginning teacher’ applies to pre-service education and the induction phase of learning to teach. The literature is discussed under the following headings:

- 2.1 Crossing boundaries
- 2.2 The changing landscape of Initial Teacher Education in England
- 2.3 Policy and professionalism
- 2.4 Changing professional learning needs
- 2.5 Professional identity, emotions and learning to teach
- 2.6 Factors that influence beginning teachers’ transitions and development

Teacher education in England has been the subject of almost continuous change since 1984, with few of the effects of those changes ever systematically researched (Murray, 2010). ITE is always in transition, and, regardless of the policy or the arrangements for partnership, the success of the system is dependent on the teacher professionals who lead it (Furlong, *et al.*, 2000). Every new English government uses education as part of their political campaigns (Hargreaves, 1994);

over the last twenty-five years, politicians have always wanted schools, curriculum and teachers to change. “Few people want to do much about the economy, but everyone – politicians, the media and the public alike – wants to do something about education” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 5).

2.1 Crossing boundaries

The change from novice to expert in teaching involves crossing physical, cognitive and affective boundaries. Physical boundaries involve moving between different learning communities, whereas cognitive boundary crossings have taken their lead from Shulman (1987), with the focus on pedagogic content knowledge. Consolidating and acquiring knowledge and expertise are perceived as a way of moving from the location of learner to that of teacher (Jones, *et al.*, 2008). Affective boundary crossing spans both sociological and phenomenological perspectives. Lortie (1975) suggests that beginning teachers have spent time in an ‘apprenticeship of observation’, where they have absorbed a range of values, outlooks practices and processes. All learning involves boundaries and this study will explore the uneven territory between being a learner in physical education and being a teacher in physical education.

Beginning teachers are unique as they face an abrupt rather than gradual transition to full-time work and are given responsibility for the same range of professional tasks and roles as their more experienced colleagues. According to Grudnoff and Tuck (2005), the transition from pre-service to full-time teaching is found to be personally and professionally challenging. A number of studies have drawn attention to the ‘transition shock’ (Corcoran 1981; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2006) that beginning teachers experience in the shift from initial teacher education to being a teacher.

Wideen, Mayer-Smith and Moon (1998) argue that this shock is due to the lack of transfer from pre-service education to practice. The traditional models of initial teacher education, in which the university provides the theory, the school provides the context and the trainee provides the effort to bring them together (Britzman, 1986), do not provide the nurturing conditions to bridge the theory-practice gap and

so mitigate the effects of the beginning teacher transition shock. Brouwer and Korthagen (2005) corroborate research that suggests that programme interventions that are designed to integrate theory with practice can mitigate beginning teachers' 'transition shock'. It is not surprising that this 'transition shock' is still evident, as education *per se*, and teacher education in particular, seems prone to what Stronach and Morris (1994) call policy hysteria.

Transitions

One line of thought views teacher education as a weak intervention compared to the teachers' own life experiences and the socialisation process of the school (Lortie 1975; Richardson 1997; Feiman-Nemser 2001; Flores and Day 2006). Transitions have traditionally been characterised as forms of change (Crafter and Maunder, 2012). These may be inner changes (new beliefs or developmental growth) or the physical move from one place to another. At the beginning of a PGCE programme, beginning teachers are often at the point where survival to the end of the lesson is the primary concern (Capel, 2007).

Most beginning teachers believe that, as they move through ITE, they begin to focus on more than this. However, the sequence of progression is not necessarily as straightforward as might be predicted (Day and Hadfield, 1996). The way beginning teachers operate in the classroom is powerfully determined and directed by a number of factors beyond the amount of teaching experience they have had. In particular, the way they view themselves as teachers, how they understand the curriculum (particularly how physical education fits into the holistic curriculum) and the beliefs and values they hold in relation to the subject have all been found to be central (Cochran-Smith, 2005). Furthermore, these differing perceptions appear to have a direct impact on the ability of beginning teachers to effectively support children's learning in physical education (Capel, 2010).

Beginning teachers tend to think of the postgraduate year as a means to an end (Krause and Coates, 2008). They want to become NQTs and see their year in university as a transition to that end, which can change the direction and pace of their journey. Richardson and Placier (2001), in their substantive review of literature

on teacher change, have documented the beliefs about teaching that beginning teachers bring to their classrooms and note that many beliefs consist of unexamined assumptions that need to be made explicit and explored. They suggest that, if beginning teachers' entering beliefs are not addressed, problematic pre-conceptions may be retained throughout the pre-service phase, with negative impacts on their practice and experiences as first year teachers.

McNamara, *et al.* (2002, p. 864) positioned the beginning teacher's journey, not as a linear model, as in van Gennep's (1909) *Les rites de passage* or Head's (1992) *No Man's Land*, but as a dynamic and complex route that involves considerably more than accumulating skills and strategies. In both these fields of enquiry, the features of the transitions were a universal sequence where successful negotiation of one phase would lead into the next. These transitions were associated with biological life cycles, such as childbirth and coming of age (McNamara, *et al.*, 2002).

The beginning teacher's journey, however, is a complex liminal stage of passage in which they "...see themselves as neither one thing nor another, and yet both at the same time" (McNamara, *et al.*, 2002, p. 864). Previous studies of ITE programmes have often criticised the process for their failure to enable beginning teachers to bridge the perceived gap between theory and practice (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Good, *et al.*, 2006; Allen 2009). Sabar (2004, p. 147) uses the metaphor of beginning teachers as migrants to highlight the challenges they face in adjusting to the culture of their school. He describes the beginning teacher as being a stranger, unfamiliar with the accepted norms in the school or the hidden codes which exist among teachers and pupils, and says that they resemble migrants who leave a familiar culture (the university) and move into a strange one (the placement school) that is both repellent and attractive. He argues that the beginning teachers, as strangers, occupy a marginal space in their schools, since they lack confidence in their behaviour and their social status, and are thus dependent on the good will of the members of the community of learning to which they belong.

Transitions, argues Beach (1999), are consequential, in that they have an impact on the individual and the social context they inhabit. In this way, a consequential transition "...is the conscious reflective struggle to reconstruct knowledge, skills, and

identity in ways that are consequential to the individual becoming someone or something new” (*ibid.* p. 30). For beginning teachers in transition, this reconstruction cannot happen in isolation; there is a need for support from individuals and institutions. Beach (1999) has developed a typology for understanding two different forms of consequential transition: lateral transitions, where participation in one activity is replaced by participation in another, often involving developmental progress as the beginning teachers move from one placement school to another, and encompassing transitions, which occur within the boundaries of social activity that are themselves changing and are often where the trainee is adapting to existing or changing circumstances in order to continue participation.

Each of these transitions has the potential to engender some kind of change in the individual through the personal reflection and sense-making that takes place (Crafter and Maunder, 2012). The change may be in the form of knowledge construction, the adaptation of old skills or the incorporation of new ones, change in identities, and/or change in social position. Beach (1999) argues that transitions are not just about knowledge transfer, but about reconstructing what you do.

Such transitions are consequential, in that they involve a process of development and are associated with personal progress. Beliefs are deep rooted and are difficult to change, particularly in highly pressured situations (Day, *et al.*, 2006). A number of studies have investigated prior experience and beliefs in relation to Initial Teacher Education. Calderhead (1991) found that on entry to their programme, beginning teachers had clear images of good teaching related to their own classroom experiences as pupils, which appeared to be derived from teacher role models, which remained stable over time.

Vygotsky (1976) believed that all cognitive development happens through social learning, and, thus, is inextricable from one’s social-cultural context. Further, it is argued that learning happens through our social interactions, and, therefore, is dependent on experience (*ibid.*). This study has used the work of Lave and Wenger (1991), who take the notion of apprenticeship as central to learning from a ‘situated learning’ perspective. The link between these authors is the suggestion that learning is not a case of the individual acting on the world, but of the individual acting in the

world as a member of a socio-cultural community (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 52). Learning will, therefore, involve becoming a different person, or at least a different kind of person. This learning is essentially 'cultural'; culture will determine the way in which beginning teachers 'see' and interpret their experiences and how they come to see themselves as teachers. Beginning teachers engaged in practice-based learning are engaged in courses which seek to integrate learning in academic and workplace contexts. They face the challenge of negotiating multiple boundaries in the course of their journey. They straddle a boundary between the academic and the workplace setting, but also, typically, are engaged in transitions across boundaries in the workplace; both between their current and future work roles and between different areas of practice (Fenton-O'Creevy, *et al.*, 2012). This perspective incorporates a number of linked theories which focus, not on individual cognitive processing, but on the whole person and on the relationship between that person and the context and culture in which they learn (Resnick, 1994). For Lave and Wenger (1991), learning is a process of participation in 'communities of practice'.

Boundary crossing in physical education

Over the last three decades physical education has followed a turbulent and uncertain future; it has faced political, professional and academic changes (Whitehead, 2010, p. 19). Armour and Jones (1998, p. 141) suggest "...physical education may be trying to do too much", and, therefore, "has failed to identify a specific focus within its huge potential." To some, the term physical education only exists in school; however, Evans and Davies (2006) suggest that physical education needs to be conceived of as a complex social process that occurs in a wide variety of settings and not just limited to schools. Physical education has reached a critical point with Kirk (2010) identifying three potential futures for physical education; more of the same, extinction, or radical reform. To avoid extinction, there has been a significant and growing voice calling for radical reform that centres on a number of empirically researched and theoretically informed pedagogical models-based practice (Metzler 2011; Haerens, Kirk, Cardon and de Boureaudhuij 2011). Models-based practice has been recognised as an alternative to the 'current and traditional one size fits all sport technique-based multi-activity form' (Kirk, 2013, p. 2) that

permeate many school physical education curricula. A comparison of curricula in England over the last thirty years suggests that the field has not moved on very much; indeed, the traditional curriculum has continued to alienate many students of physical education (Kirk, 2010). Models-based approaches provide opportunities for pupils to learn together subject matter in more depth, which address outcomes in multiple domains of psychomotor, affective and cognitive (Metzler and McCullick, 2008). Evidence suggests that attending to these diverse outcomes influences the likelihood that pupils will engage in a physically active lifestyle (Bailey, Armour, Kirk, Jess, Pickup and Sandford, 2009).

The Association for Physical Education (afPE) (2008) advocate that physical education should focus on young people learning to move and moving to learn. While these definitions take slightly different approaches, they both stress the value of physical education as part of education in the UK. One issue is motivation, as young people become frustrated by the lack of variety on the curriculum: "...the same thing every year" (Rikard and Banville, 2006. p. 396). The structure of the secondary school system in the 1960s and 1970s paid little attention to a holistic curriculum or the subjects contained within the school day. Physical Education was viewed very much as a marginal subject. Indeed, Peters (1966, 159) didn't help in popularising physical education when he concluded that 'games' was not a 'serious pursuit' like science, history and literacy appreciation which "...illuminate other areas of life – a wide ranging cognitive content." There is little to know about riding bicycles, swimming or golf, furthermore what there is to know throws very little light on much else!" (Peters, 1966, p.159). Many in the physical education profession, including those in Initial Teacher Education, expressed their doubts about the future of physical education in school (Westthorp, 1974; Dean, 1978), as it was seen as having limited value in the school experience. In the 1975 White Paper, *Sport and Recreation*, physical education received little coverage with the following quote showing its status in government thinking:

If PE teachers thought that they had a fundamental part to play in the education of every child, that they provide an essential basis of which active life for work and leisure could be built for everyone, then, clearly they have to think again! (Spectator, 1975, p. 93).

In the years since 1991, the fortunes of physical education have experienced significant financial and structural change and have been transformed (Houlihan and Green, 2006). From the late 1990s onwards, sport and physical activity for young people have emerged as central policy themes within the government's wider social inclusion agenda (Houlihan and Green, 2006, p. 78). Whilst young people as a whole are experiencing a broader diet of sporting activities in physical education than previous generations, the curriculum in many schools has not moved away from predominantly sport-based programmes (Capel and Whitehead 2010).

2.2 The changing landscape of Initial Teacher Education in England

The world has been experiencing an unprecedented economic crisis, so questions around how we are preparing the generations of the future are producing an immense moral panic (Hargreaves, 2000). It may be a false assumption, but it has, nevertheless, been assumed that one significant way of influencing the skills, knowledge and values of teachers is to change the form and content of their initial training (Furlong, 2002). As the government's determination to change the face of teacher training gathered pace, Michael Gove (2010), the then Secretary of State for Education, stated that "...colleges are not the place to train the next generation of teachers." He explained that "...beginning teachers will spend more time in classrooms and less in teacher training colleges in which left wing theories of education hold sway" and that Ofsted inspections will focus more sharply on teaching standards. Gove went on to say that training should focus on teaching "...being a craft." The best teachers are those who are academic, but also can master the craft of pedagogy. Indeed, Nick Gibbs (2012), the Minister of State at the Department for Education, said he would rather have "...a physics graduate from Oxbridge without a PGCE teaching in a school, than a physics graduate from one of the rubbish universities with a PGCE!"

Reforms to teacher training, however, are not a new phenomenon (Robinson, 2008). The dominance at different times of school-based/apprenticeship or a college/university-based model has changed many times (Campbell and Kane, 1998). School-based apprenticeship models dominated in the nineteenth century

and college/university models dominated in the twentieth century (Richards, Simco and Twistleton, 1998). Discussions around the form and content of ITE are, therefore, debates about the very nature of teacher professionalism itself (Zwozdiak-Myers, 2012). It is for this reason that the policy initiatives in Initial Teacher Education of the 1990s and 2000s are so significant (*ibid*). The mid 1990s saw the rapid development of 'standards' in teacher training. In 1997, just after the election of the first Labour Government for eighteen years, circular 10/97 was published, entitled *Teaching: High Status, High Standards* (DfEE, 1997). This consisted of numerous statements which became known as standards about the skills, knowledge and understanding required of teachers. The following year, the Labour Government published Circular 4/98 (DfEE, 1998b), which specified in detail the content of teacher education programmes. This was implemented by all of the university providers, which saw a significant relinquishment by the universities of their academic autonomy. There have been numerous revisions of ITE since circular 4/98.

Many of the changes introduced in the 1990s-2000s have been concerned with influencing the nature of professional knowledge, skills and values that beginning teachers are expected to have and are given the opportunity to develop (Maynard, 2000). Never before has there been so much detailed prescription of what beginning teachers should be taught, should know and should be able to demonstrate in terms of technical skills and competence (Robinson, 2006). Schools and teachers have been squeezed into the tunnel vision of test scores, achievement targets and league tables of accountability (Hargreaves, 2003). These pressures have led teachers, and those who work with them, to re-evaluate their professionalism and to make judgements about what type of professional learning they need to improve their teaching (Hargreaves, 2000). By the time New Labour lost power and the Coalition came in, it was obvious to see how neoliberal policies had affected the provision of teacher education. In a steady stream of government documents, new, increasingly tight controls were introduced. This resulted in many different routes into teaching, with an increasingly differentiated teaching workforce, both by route of entry and by nature of the responsibility (Childs and Menter, 2013). The Coalition (2010) set out ambitious plans to reform teacher training in England. In its strategy paper, *Training our next generation of outstanding teachers*, the DfE (2011) suggested that

beginning teachers find university courses ‘too theoretical’. However, the evidence in the strategy paper actually shows that most NQTs do not take this view. Two-thirds responding to the survey felt the balance between the theoretical and practical elements of their training had been about right.

The changes to policy and practice in ITT over the last few decades have resulted in a subtle, but continuous erosion of teachers’ autonomy (Zwozdiak-Myers, 2012). The renewed emphasis on accountability and league tables is the most obvious symptom of a general trend towards a greater top-down hierarchical direction within education. Ozga (1988, pp. ix-x) observed that “...the nature of teaching is being fundamentally altered by a number of different policy initiatives, the cumulative effect of which is to greatly increase central government control over the teaching force.”

The changing landscape of physical education initial teacher education

The ongoing challenge for schools and university is to close the gap and develop closer collaborations so beginning teachers can understand the wide-ranging complexities of physical education (Capel 2010). Physical Education Initial Teacher Education (PEITE) has transformed and developed over the last forty years (Rossi, *et al.*, 2015). It has a more scientific focus and the socio-cultural aspects have been removed, leading to an abundance of different sport-related programmes feeding into physical education ITE programmes. However, Armour (2010) argues that urgent changes are required to how teachers learn about teaching, suggesting that one way to start this process is to refocus teachers on themselves as career-long learners and then to consider the implications for the work of the wider physical education profession (McPhail, 2011). The PGCE year is necessarily a transformative process (Bryan, *et al.*, 2010); in physical education, beginning teachers can teach pupils to play hockey, to achieve a balance and flow in gymnastics and dance without affecting the participants as people in any significant way (Green, 2008).

Addressing beginning teachers concerns arguably lies predominantly within a university setting, notably the role that university tutors have (Bromfield, 2005; Shova

et.al 2010; Kyriacou and Stephens, 2010). Indeed, Bromfield (2005: 188) proposes that ITE programmes explicitly give more time and attention to realising and aiding beginning teachers, by emphasising the establishment and maintenance of an environment in which learning can occur. More specific to physical education are the beliefs of Shoval *et.al* (2010) who deem that HEIs should play an integral role in providing beginning teachers with ways in which to instil the values of physical education. the 'cultural environment' (Kwakman, 2003) of a university can provide beginning teachers with a supposed safe haven, in which concerns can be discussed (Hobson, 2009). Indeed, environments which can facilitate a sense of trust and unity (McIntyre, Hobson and Mitchell, 2009) enable beginning teachers to acknowledge concerns and issues (Goos and Bennison, 2007). Conversely, there is also a growing base of literature which indicates that school mentors play an "increasingly important" role in addressing beginning teacher concerns (Kyriacou *et al*, 2010: 29)- a view supported by Smith (2005: 218) who initialises that mentors must "seek out and support" beginning teachers. Therefore, the predominant issue is whether a university or school environment is best in the facilitation of student concerns (Bromfield, 2005).

The landscape of university physical education programmes is evidence-based, and focused on a holistic curriculum plan covering a broad and balanced design, incorporating innovative instructional models. However, the teaching of physical education in many schools is based on a sporting model (Capel, 2007) and this is likely to continue under the regime of the 2013 curriculum model. This model focuses on the acquisition and performance of skills in a multi-activity curriculum organised mostly around team games, taught with a limited range of teaching approaches, where most are formal, didactic and teacher-centred (Capel 2010). Physical Education Teacher Education needs to foster genuine ongoing professional learning (Loughran, 2006). Finishing a pre-service programme does not equate with the end of professional learning. Professional learning constitutes the learning that is undertaken on a daily basis and is embedded within the remit of fulfilling the role as a teacher, which is underpinned by research and practice-based evidence and supported by a professional learning community (Berry, Clemans and Kostogritz, 2007). Developing a professional development culture as part of a pre-service programme can encourage physical education beginning teachers to pursue lifelong

learning (Loughran, 2006). Beginning teachers need to have a clear understanding of what professional learning entails and how it benefits them in sustaining their learning as practising teachers (MacPhail, 2011). It is important that the physical education profession emphasises the transition and transformation of how pupils see and understand the world and themselves within that world (Capel, 2004). To be able to do that, beginning teachers, teacher educators and physical education teachers in schools need to understand how their own values and beliefs affect this observation (Palmer, *et al.*, 2009).

Although beginning teachers perceive that they have some level of competence after learning through a PGCE (Gower and Capel, 2004), limited subject knowledge is often indicated as to one of their main concerns when entering a teaching environment (Hardy, 1995; Laker and Jones, 1998; Malver, 1995). Furthermore, Shoal *et. al* (2009) deem that beginning teachers have little knowledge of practical pedagogy, which in turn affects their confidence to teach using a variety of teaching styles. Smith (2005) suggests beginning teacher's self-efficacy levels are salient beliefs which influence the way in which they perceive such levels of competence, therefore indicating that there is a direct correlation between self-efficacy levels and subject knowledge.

2.3 Policy and the concept of professionalism

During the past three decades, initiatives such as the introduction of the National Curriculum, league tables, academies and performance management (to mention only a few) have served to challenge traditional conceptions of autonomy within the teaching profession (Furlong, *et al.*, 2000).

The aspiration to change teacher professionalism by influencing the nature of the knowledge, skills and values to which new teachers are exposed is at least as significant (Ingersoll and Perda, 2006). The assumption behind policy within this area has been that changes in the form and content of initial teacher education will, in the long run, serve to construct a new generation of teachers with different forms of knowledge, different skills and different professional values (Hargreaves, 2000).

There may be broad agreement that school-based learning is a necessary part of the preparation for the practice of teaching; however, there is no agreement as to whether this is sufficient (Oancea and Orchard, 2012).

Being a professional, according to Helsby (1995), is focused on the quality of what teachers do and their conduct; in other words, how they are seen through other people's eyes. The term professionalisation is used to show improvement in the status and standing of teaching (Hargreaves, 2000). However, having improved status does not necessarily mean greater professionalism (Hargreaves and Goodson, 1996). The government priority is to maintain an adequate supply of professional, well-qualified applicants for ITE; and, second, the aspiration on the part of the state is to establish greater accountability for the content and quality of ITE (Hargreaves, 2003).

These policy concerns – teacher professionalism, maintaining supply and retention, and the raising of standards within a national framework for training – have all been influential on the policy initiatives that have been produced in recent years. It is concerns about the nature of teacher professionalism itself that have remained the most enduring focus. Eraut (1994) suggests accountability is exemplified when teachers, as professionals, demonstrate a moral commitment by reflecting on their pupils' well-being and progress, a professional obligation to review the nature and effectiveness of their practice and a professional obligation to continue to develop their practical knowledge. This resonates with Hoyle and John's (1995) overview of *Professional Knowledge and Professional Practice*, in which identifying knowledge, autonomy and responsibility are central concepts in defining the teacher as a professional. A key strand in the 'learning to teach' literature considers teacher professional development in terms of developmental stages. These stages can be considered in relation to Hargreaves's (2000) four historical phases in the changing nature of teachers' professionalism and professional learning. They consist of the pre-professional phase, the autonomous phase, the collegial phase and the post-professional phase.

The **pre-professional phase** was where teachers were taught in large groups, with little or no resources; it was the conveyor belt of mass education (Cuban, 1984).

Teaching was seen as managerially demanding, but technically simple (Hargreaves, 2000). The basic methods of teaching from this phase (lecturing, note taking and question and answer) are still seen in some areas today by teachers in their later careers who started their work in the pre-professional age (Weber and Mitchell, 1996). These teachers tended to teach the whole class as a kind of collective student (Bromme, 1987).

Survival strategies were a high priority and rote (transmission) learning, with the teacher being the font of all knowledge, was the pattern for this pre-professional phase (Hargreaves, 2000). The wisdom of the teacher was unquestioned and, once teachers had learnt to master the situation, it was deemed that they needed no more help (Pollard, 1982). Beginning teachers became apprentices and worked with a skilled and experienced teacher to learn their craft. According to Britzman (1991), practice made perfect and, even when teacher education programmes tried to change this scenario in colleges of education, beginning teachers often reverted back to the rote model of learning once they started teaching (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1998). In this view, good teachers are enthusiastic, "...know their stuff" and how to "...get it across" and can control their classrooms (Hargreaves, 2000, p.162).

The phase of the **autonomous professional** started in the 1960s, where the status of teachers in many countries improved significantly (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1998). However, teachers taught in isolation (in a box, paper at the window) with the overriding characteristic of teaching being individualism (Rosenholtz, 1989). This autonomy resulted in pedagogic stagnation, as most teachers taught broadly the same didactic way (Fullan, 1999). Teaching was now acknowledged as being difficult and how a teacher taught was no longer beyond question. Teacher training at this time was under the supervision of universities or in training colleges. However, the James Committee Report (1972), *Teacher Education and Training*, criticised the teaching of theory in training colleges at the expense of practical experience in schools, concluding that "...the essential is sometimes sacrificed to the desirable" (*James Report*, p. 67). Webster (1975, p. 145) noted that teachers were "often thought of as not having a role at all in teacher training, except to protect the student from the supervisor!"

The *disciplines* model of teacher education - which relied almost exclusively on academic knowledge and educational theory at the expense of practical training - started to be challenged (McIntyre, 1994). It was criticised by the Conservative government at the time, as well as the teaching profession, for "...failing to successfully link the practical and the theoretical aspects of courses and disregarding the professional needs of teachers" (Judge, *et al.*, 1994, p. 190).

Beginning teachers often found it difficult to understand educational theory because they had no practical experience in which to locate it (Furlong, 2002). The James Committee believed that only with experience could teachers properly gain any benefit (*James Report*, 1972). The Committee, therefore, recommended the provision of major programmes of in-service education for serving teachers, as well as the opportunity for teachers to 'top up' their teaching certificate to gain a degree (Fullan, 1999). However, the benefits of the in-service education seldom became integrated into classroom practice, as individuals found it difficult to influence their colleagues because of the isolation of their practice (Hargreaves, 2000). This phase of the autonomous professional did not help teachers to prepare to cope with the major changes ahead (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1998).

The phase of the **collegial professional phase** started in the mid-1980s, when individual teacher autonomy was becoming unsustainable as a way of responding to the increased complexities of schooling (*ibid*). More teachers faced the prospect of having to teach in ways they had not been taught themselves (Moore, 2004). In 1983, the DES White Paper, *Teaching Quality*, set out major changes in the pattern of teacher training, including partnership with schools, reflecting the Thatcher government's view that schools should play a bigger role in the training of teachers. This could be seen as a move back towards the 'apprenticeship' model of the earlier twentieth century (Robinson, 2004, pp. 52-53).

Teaching is an activity which is a complex, socially-situated process of intuition and implicit theorising, with a degree of uncertainty in how its knowledge base develops (Shulman, 1986). Moore (2004) cautioned how the importance of the university-based work must not be lost in this wave of 'apprenticeship style' training, as it

provides the space and opportunity for beginning teachers to reflect critically on their emerging practice, where they can examine their own observations and practices.

The implications for ITE, ongoing professional development and mentoring were gathering pace, with pressure to create collaborative cultures, which was a growing area due to the knowledge explosion, the increasing range of special educational needs children into mainstream education, and the accelerating pace of change (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1996). Teaching was being framed and informed by professional standards (competence model) of practice that defined what good teachers should know and be able to do and what qualities and dispositions they should possess to care for and connect with their students (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1998). In these transitions, many teachers fell into the cracks of the between and betwixt spaces (Turner, 1974) as they remained ignorant or indifferent to the possibilities of collaboration, and some held on tightly to their classroom autonomy (Grimmet and Crehan, 1992).

Collaboration was gaining importance in teaching (Campbell and Neill, 1994) with influences including: i) rapid changes in the substance of what teachers were expected to teach; ii) the expansion of knowledge and understanding about teaching styles and methods; iii) the increasing social work responsibilities of the task of teaching; iv) integration of special educational needs children into mainstream classes; v) growing multi-cultural diversity; and vi) the alienating structure of the curriculum for students in early adolescence (Hargreaves, 2000). These forms of collaboration shifted the patterns of professional learning, in-service education and pre-service teacher education (Little, 1993). The current **post-professional phase** reflects how the teaching profession is being “...pulled in different directions in different places at different times” (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 167). Information Communication Technology has created a proliferation of knowledge and information at the click of a switch. One of the consequences of this is that schools, like many other institutions, have become more economically efficient. However, the most expensive budget item for any school is teachers, their salaries and their working conditions, including professional development opportunities. Part of this post modernity is the shift of professional preparation from Higher Education into schools (Barton, *et al.*, 1994). According to Hargreaves (2000) the effect of this is de-

professionalising teaching and taking it back to where existing skills and knowledge are passed on practically from expert to novice, but where practice can at best be only reproduced, not improved.

Policy and professionalism in physical education

The intention of policy constructors and what ultimately is translated into practice can bring about unintended results as policy aims and intentions are open to the interpretation of teachers (Supovitz, 2008). There has been wide-ranging debate regarding the appropriateness, style and suitability of the previous, 'predominantly game-based' Physical Education National Curriculum, which has been widely criticised by authors such as Penney and Chandler (2000), Armstrong (2002) and Kirk (2002). Enabling curriculum innovation, is less about the rigid adherence to policy as inscribed in texts but more similar to a process of acting to bring policy intentions into being (MacLean, Mulholland, Gray and Horrell 2015). Teachers need to question the opportunities available, and reflect that "perhaps they have fallen into a trap of seeing a breadth of activities sufficient enough to interest young people for a lifetime of activity"; a criticism which the new curriculum is intended to overcome through broadening and making less prescriptive the content available (DfE, 2013). Curriculums are viewed as a 'work in progress' (Penney, 2006); a continuous process of planning, implementation and review of the pupil learning to meet education ideologies (McKernan, 2008).

In terms of the enactment of curriculum policy, Supovitz's (2008) analysis anticipated that there will be 'gaps' between what was intended by policy constructors and what ultimately is translated into practice. Physical Education has been criticised for falling between these gaps as it has been assessed as being socially constructed, gendered in nature, elitist, and based around physical education teacher's specialities and the 'likely' activities of sports participation post school years (Crawford, 1998; Hills, 2006; Evans and Penny, 2008). Physical Education throughout its development as an integral part of the school national curriculum has been too frequently defined by the activities it incorporates rather than the objectives and learning outcomes that are brought about from the activities chosen to instigate them (Capel and Piotrowski 2000). In recent years there has been an array of

literature that both advocates and criticises current practice within NCPE (Bailey, 2001; Jones and Cheetham, 2001; Kirk, 2004; Smith et al. 2007). Sport England (2008) highlight that the modern-day PE curricular is constrained with regards the diversity of the activities that are potentially available to secondary school pupils. Activities such as aerobics, martial arts, golf and multi-gym/weight training are only experienced by a providential few due to the traditional games based nature of many schools interpretation of the national curriculum. This would suggest that the current NCPE is principally devoid of the fundamentals of PE, or to actual aspects of learning, range of activities, fun and risk taking (Fletcher and Casey 2014). Likewise, Gard (2003) argues that unless a credible new vision for PE is formulated then failure on behalf of the collective PE domain would indeed be realised. It is suggested that the contemporary NCPE primarily focuses on how children and young people are to be both observed, monitored and assessed (Capel 2007), supporting the belief that the current NCPE provides more of the same, for the more able (Green *et al.* 2005; Kirk, 2005).

The key questions that this continuous process of development should ask are: 'what, where and how do they (*the pupils*) learn?' (MacDonald, 2003, p. 147). The extent to the what, where and how the pupils learn has changed dramatically over the last few decades (Green, 2008). The collective attention in the past three decades has been focused more on teachers' effects than curriculum effects. (Ward and Doutis, 1999, p. 393). Encouraging children's love of physical education at an early age is crucial if teachers are to motivate them to develop an active healthy lifestyle (Bailey, 2006). Kirk (2006) suggested that, for some, conventional forms of physical education closely match the values, dispositions and tastes they have already encountered and accommodated in their lives. These young people are the 'sporty', active and enthusiastic pupils. For others, school physical education is foreign and alienating (Penney and Evans, 2005). It has long been argued that physical education is important for the overall development of young people, and it is seen as an essential element in young people's learning experience (Daley, 2002). However, Kirk and Macdonald (1998, p. 381 cited in Capel, 2007, p. 494) argue that "...the form of learning represented in school PE may have little transfer value to related situations outside school." This is problematic if the aim of school physical education has not resulted in changing pupil behaviour outside of school.

In schools, teacher's agency is influenced by personal, social and structural dimensions which in combination influence the enactment of the curriculum. In fact Adams (2011, p. 66) states 'that it is the very opportunities for conversation and professional activity that form policy'. Social and material structures in the school setting offer both opportunities and constraints for physical education teachers. From this viewpoint teachers are considered as professionals mediating flexible policy frameworks (Supovitz, 2008) and not as technicians carrying out prescribed policy. Physical education teachers are required to exercise professional judgement as they engage in translating, moulding and enacting policy to uniquely fit within the constraints of the cultural, social and material structure of the school (MacLean, Mulholland, Gray and Horrell 2015)

2.4 Changing professional learning needs

Globalisation, new technologies and rapid communication that can instantaneously give learners new knowledge and dissolve borders are changing professional learning needs (Hargreaves, 2000). As part of this post-professional age, the New Labour government (2008) decided to make teaching a Masters profession. Larsen (2010) explains that professional development is a 'key policy lever' in education systems. Speaking at the Association of School and College Leaders' (ASCL) annual conference (2008) in Brighton, Ed Balls explained that "To compete with other countries we need a world class workforce with great teachers and a premium on great teaching that inspires their pupils every day." He wanted to 'transform' both the school workforce over the next decade and the children's workforce more widely, stating that:

Our aim is that every teacher over time should have the new Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL). It will raise the status of teachers and ensure that they get the recognition that they deserve (Balls, 2008).

The McKinsey Report (Barber and Mourshed, 2007), was credited with the idea of the MTL. It set out to get the right people into teaching, develop them into effective instructors and ensure the best instruction for every child (*ibid*). Professional development in the MTL was seen as continuous rather than continuing, with

learning being seen as lifelong and personalisation being a core focus (Frankham and Hiatt, 2011). The notion of a Masters profession was first discussed as part of the Bologna Agreement 1999 within the newly-created European Higher Education Arena; no HE course could call itself postgraduate if it did not include 'M' level work (Swift, 2008). There was much anecdotal evidence at the time that study at Masters level significantly changed how teachers viewed aspects of their teaching and learning in the classroom (Edwards, 2008).

However, Teacher Education was required to shift towards a curriculum where research theory was intertwined with the development of pedagogic skills (Murray, 2010). It occurred against the backdrop of teacher educators voicing concerns that the PGCE was already a professional and challenging programme without the addition of Masters level work (Furlong, 2008). Frankham and Hiatt (2011) suggest that much of the discourse of the MTL was not about a professional in the making, but a technician in the making. However, two years later, the coalition government not only closed the MTL for new students, but the free and subsidised MA in Education that many universities offered (including the PG Cert and PG Dip elements) have also ceased to exist given a 100% cut in their funding from government agencies. This was confirmed by Michael Gove in his published remit letter to the TDA, which contained the following paragraph:

In line with my priorities, I am not expecting you [the TDA] to take forward any new work in respect of Masters-level qualifications; whether through the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) or other Post-Graduate Professional Development (PPD) activity, and would ask you to take steps to conclude any ongoing activity in this area arising from existing commitments (Gove, 2010).

Throughout this period of reforms, a domineering concept has been reflective practice. In recent decades, reflective practice has increasingly become embedded within the discourse concerning teacher professional development (Pollard, 2008). In my own learning journey, I have questioned educational practices which have arisen through my own professional concerns and changing landscapes. I have encouraged the beginning teachers to seek out new ideas, evaluate and reflect on their impact and to try different ways of working to improve their own effectiveness (Zwozdiak-Myers, 2012). This approach to professional development underpins the concepts of

the teacher as a reflective practitioner, as an extended professional and as a researcher (Stenhouse, 1975).

Beginning teachers who are unreflective about their teaching tend to accept the everyday reality in their schools and "...concentrate their efforts on finding the most effective and efficient means to solve problems that have largely been defined for them by (some) collective code" (Zeichner and Liston, 1996, p. 9). Reflection is a way of being as a teacher; it is a disposition to enquiry that has at its roots the early work of Dewey (1959), specifically in relation to the reflective attitudes of open-mindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness, which he considers to be both a prerequisite and integral to reflective action. Developing as a professional enables beginning teachers to reflect and act upon their observation and analysis of their own teaching to improve pupil learning and their own teaching (Zwordiak-Myers, 2012).

Loughran (1996, p. 14) describes reflection as "...the deliberate and purposeful act of thinking which centres on ways of responding to problem situations in teaching and learning". Action has a strong appeal, as it provides a basis for an analysis of teaching that sees beyond a 'technicist', competency-based model (Calderhead and Gates, 1993) and suggests a strong basis upon which teaching might be viewed as a profession. Reflection, then, is a "...way of being as a teacher" (Zeichner and Liston, 1996, p. 9); in Dewey's (1959, p. 17) view, reflection "...enables us to direct our actions with foresight...it enables us to know what we are about when we act." Fullan and Hargreaves (1996, p. 156) make a crucial point in stating that "Teaching at its core is a moral profession." Reflection is linked to social learning and Schön's (1987) ideas about initial professional training and the emergence of a reflective practitioner. Schön (*ibid*) argues that effective initial professional training should be based on 'a practicum', where beginning teachers should be able to experience the fundamental aspects of a teacher's role without the attendant complexities and stresses of the 'real' job. They are then able to reflect on their experience and learn from it.

Creating a reflective continuum, Schön (*ibid*) develops the notions of 'reflection-in-action' and 'reflection-on-action'. Reflection-in-action helps beginning teachers to be adaptable in their teaching as situations change in their lessons; the phrase 'thinking on their feet' is often used by mentors as an example of reflection-in-action.

Reflection-on-action involves trying to articulate tacit and spontaneous intelligence through language (Furlong and Maynard, 1995) and Schön argues that moving teachers along the continuum from knowing-in-action to reflection-on-action is the way that they gain control of their developing artistry. Reflection-on-action enables the beginning teachers to look back at their teaching and learning that has occurred and be able to reconstruct and recapture the events, emotions and accomplishments (Shulman, 1987).

Changing professional learning needs in physical education

Over recent years, the domain of physical education has been subject to much change and, subsequently, persistent, and contentious, debates have developed. Many have centred on the nature and purpose of physical education in schools with various stakeholders, including the government, academics and teachers, contributing to an already saturated field of study (Kirk, 2003; 2005; Penney and Jess, 2004; Green, *et al.*, 2005; Rikard and Banville, 2006; Smith and Parr, 2007). There is a concern about the lack of learning and knowledge presented for lifelong learning within current NCPE. Movement skills, knowledge and understanding are fundamental to everyday lives and are essential to lifelong activity and health are only just being recognised as an integral and valued element of physical education. Green (2002) argues quite clearly that sport (or, rather, competitive, performance-oriented sport of the kind best illustrated by 'traditional PE' in the form of team games tends not to be the reason for on-going participation in active lifestyles. Despite over two decades of the NCPE, schools continue to practice in multi-activity, sport-based form that first appeared in government schools in the 1950s (Kirk 2012). Consequently, according to Kirk and Kinchin (2003) there is a large body of evidence which suggests that the multi activity approach to PE disadvantages girls (Flintoff and Scraton, 2001; Williams and Bedward, 2001), particular ethnic groups (Benn, 1996; Vescio *et al.*, 1999), and alienates motorically less gifted and disabled people while reproducing and celebrating hegemonic masculinity (Nilges, 1998; Wright, 1997). Therefore, it is considered that team games dominate the curriculum currently with detrimental effects for different groups and lifestyle activities, defined by Ross *et al* (1985:76), cited in Fairclough *et al* (2002:70) as "those that may readily

be carried over into adulthood because they generally need only one or two people” are marginalized and thus, hampers lifelong learning. Penny & Jess (2004) strongly criticised the content and focus of the existing school physical education curriculum, questioning its relevance and commenting that it seemed increasingly ‘removed from our needs and interests, as our life circumstances and interests have changed’. More significantly, they urged that curriculum planning should focus on transferable skills, knowledge and understanding, a distinct lack of which in the curriculum system was noted by Green, 2000; Armstrong, 2002; Laventure, 2003). This criticism was clearly acknowledged in the planning and development of the current curriculum, which focuses on a range of transferable skills offering both pupils and teachers greater degrees of choice; which had previously been restricted to six activities; which were arguably was not sufficient to both warrant pupils’ interest and provide them with the necessary skills (Laventure, 2003).

One such debate, which is a focus now, is the importance of the role that physical education can play in enhancing young people’s predispositions towards lifelong participation in sport and physical activity. So much so that physical education “...is recognized as providing the foundation of experiences that are the basis of health enhancing participation throughout life” (Laventure, 2003, p.41). Supporting this, physical education has been viewed to be a significant contributor in helping young people achieve not only the required volume of physical activity, (Fairclough and Stratton, 2005; Cale and Harris, 2006), but, more importantly, as a vehicle in promoting lifelong participation in sport and physical activity (Fairclough, *et al.*, 2002; Wallhead and Buckworth, 2004; Green, *et al.*, 2005; Smith and Parr, 2007). Some of the most prominent studies have argued that physical education teachers define the promotion of lifelong participation within sport and physical activity as their major role in school (Wallhead and Buckworth, 2004; Green, *et al.*, 2005; Smith and Parr, 2007).

However, the varying fortunes of school physical education seem to be out of step with the high public profile of sport, health-related exercise and active leisure, which together, construct and constitute physical culture (Kirk, 2010). Ives (2013) comments that the day-to-day classroom practice in physical education has not changed significantly since the 1960s, and, despite substantial investment, it

appears to have had little or no influence on policy of practice (Kirk, 2010). Although it has survived as a core subject on the secondary school curriculum, there have been concerns raised about the decreasing amount of time available on the timetable (Hardman and Marshall, 2009). Physical Education, throughout its development as an integral part of the school National Curriculum, has also been too frequently defined by the activities it incorporates rather than the objectives and learning outcomes that are brought about from the activities chosen to instigate them (Capel and Piotrowski, 2000).

2.5 Professional identity, emotions and learning to teach

In the early and middle parts of the twentieth century, the term identity were mostly the province of psychoanalysis to refer to the individualised self-image any person possesses (Freud and Strachey, 1961). In this way, identity was framed as mostly autonomous and frequently directed by its owner. However, social psychologists, including Erickson, (1968), Vygotsky, (1978) and Moshman (1990), have since framed identity as a more situated, dynamic process of individuals developing conceptions of themselves as rational beings over time. The late 1980s saw a growing research interest in the area of teachers' professional identity. A number of studies (Nias, 1996; Bullough, 1997; Connelly and Clandinin, 2000) identified the development of a professional identity as being a key factor in becoming and being an effective teacher. Teacher identity refers to how teachers define themselves in relation to their professional roles and particularly in relation to educational and teaching relationships. Britzman (1991) sees teacher identity as being a dialogue between individual identity and social experience and asserts that it is in this dialogue that the meanings of lived experience are named and negotiated.

From a social perspective, using Castells' (1997, p. 6) words, identity may be defined as "...a construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute or related set of cultural attributes that is/are given priority over other sources of meaning." Part of the trouble defining teacher identity stems from the many ways the word identity has been used over time. However, what does appear to be common in the literature is the notion of 'self' in relation to the development of teachers' professional identity.

Recent authors have argued that learning to be a teacher is as important as learning how to teach (Kelchtermans and Hamilton, 2004; Meijer, de Graaf and Meirink, 2011). The degree to which a teacher feels personally successful is also the degree to which s/he becomes a conscious agent in educational contexts, with strength to alter and improve (Brandt, 1996b; Russell, 1996 cited in Day, Kington, Stobbart and Sammons, 2006). An important component of the process of learning to become a teacher is the development of a professional identity (Friesan and Besley, 2013). Teachers play an active role in developing a professional identity. Florio-Ruane (2002, pp. 209-210) maintained that the:

....norms [of teaching] are not determinative. Teachers retain sufficient agency to act in new, creative ways ... teaching is both ordered and responsive to norms and standards and also improvisational and responsive to other participants.

Beginning teachers, embodying specific identities, understandings, and early enactments of teaching, engage with the systems of teacher education to create a professional identity. Teacher identity, as an analytical lens, permits a focus on the complex, situated, and fluid attributes that individuals bring with them to the study and practice of teaching. Recent studies suggest that the development of identity promotes a teacher's educational philosophy, decision making, well-being and effectiveness (Sammons, *et al.*, 2007). A heightened sense of efficacy is of help when teachers are faced with demands to implement new methods when these are taken as challenges rather than burdens (van den Berg, 2002).

Who you are as an individual has a huge impact and influence on what you will or will not learn in teacher education (Stronach, *et al.*, 2002). In developing as teachers, beginning teachers not only think about different things, but also think about the same things differently (Guillame and Rudney, 1993). Navigating the various landscapes and transitions in becoming a teacher results in interactions between the personal experiences of the beginning teachers and the social, cultural and institutional environments in which they work on a daily basis. Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) explain this as the idea of the 'self' intersecting with the context. For beginning teachers, developing a professional identity is a complex and ongoing process and one in which they are "...combining parts of their past, including their

own experiences in school with pieces of the present in their current placement context” (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1029).

In identity forming, personhood is sourced within activity systems, which are activities directed towards a shared construction of a problem or object, wherein cultural tools are used to transform that object into outcomes or goals (Engeström, 1987). The context of the participation of beginning teachers in the socio-cultural practices must, therefore, not be ignored in the development of beginning teachers (Wubbels and Brekelmans, 2005). This allows the beginning teachers to share their experiences of their landscapes of practice by internalising and modifying how they interact with the environment. This also shapes what they will be as a teacher, what and how they will teach, and how they will respond to the changing context of teaching (Bullough and Gitlin, 2001).

Teachers are entrusted with the task of educating in social contexts and, on the basis of this essential task; they construct and reconstruct their identities over time. To a large extent, identity has to do with meanings that individuals make about themselves and with the meanings that others make about them (Beijard, Verloop and Vermunt, 2000). Therefore, identity is a co-construction involving one teacher and other significant agents as well as the broader society to which they belong. The work of Wenger (1988), Lave (1991) and Wertsch (1991) on socio-cultural development perspectives and Engeström (1987) on cultural-historical activity theories (CHAT) have in common the foregrounding of Vygotsky’s (1978) work on the socio-cultural mediation of learners’ activity by psychological and physical tools.

Vygotsky (1976) argued that individual cognitive development cannot be understood without reference to the social and cultural context within which it is embedded. Socio-cultural theories focus on how identity develops across time through the interplay between the self and others in a social community of practice. The focus of Vygotsky’s (1986) work shifted from the focus on the learner to the learner-environment interface; for beginning teachers, the restrictions and possibilities within and between elements of this interface lead to tensions in the system, which may or may not be the catalyst for development and change (Engström, 1987; Newman and Holzman, 1993).

In shifting through the various landscapes of practice, through interactions within their teacher education programme, with their new teacher peers, within the schools where they work and within new professional networks (Daniels, 2008), beginning teachers encounter new experiences that they cannot adjust to; something Bruner (1996) calls a violation of expectancy. This may result in quick changes to their understanding and practice, or may result in them struggling to come to terms with the changes. Vygotsky (1986) recognised that a child's (and by extension, a trainee teacher's) common sense knowledge is a necessary, but insufficient starting point, because this everyday knowledge transforms abstract, theoretical knowledge, and vice versa, in the journey to higher consciousness and development. Vygotsky (1986) characterised this interplay between these forms of knowledge as the relationship between the Actual Level of Development (ALD) and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This is an important idea for supporting the development of trainee teachers because it is the process which leads not only to conceptual development, but also to practical competence (Edwards and Protheroe, 2003).

Vygotsky points to the role of a 'More Knowledgeable Other' (MKO), in the case of a beginning teacher, a mentor, in demonstrating ideas, values, strategies and so on that an individual internalises and learns from. At the core of Vygotsky's theory is the theoretical construct of the ZPD (or Near Development). Vygotsky (1986) claimed that a child (and by extension a trainee) has limits to what he/she is able to learn alone; however, these limits are extended under the guidance and support of an MKO (teacher educator or mentor). The ZPD represents the *potential* ability of a trainee, when given guidance and help from others; for learning to occur, the learner must work with a challenge that is within their ability when provided with assistance and gradually, as the assistance is reduced, learning and cognitive development occur. Scaffolding and modelling are at the core of the ZPD model (in contrast to, for example, a discovery-learning model). For beginning teachers, this scaffolding is important to help them in their transitions and build their pathways into teaching.

The confidence of beginning teachers is linked to their beliefs of these positive relationships with mentors and also peer support and the assurances of their university tutors are a focus for these reference points (Pratt and George, 2005). The

beginning teachers are often confident in one situation, for example, teaching games, but not in others, for example, class management (Capel, 2004). The more experience they can have of managing behaviour in a physical education environment, of using positive reference points via mentors, peers and university tutors, the more they will enhance their confidence in these situations (Siedentop and Tannehill, 2000). As the beginning teachers start their placements in school, they should be given safe and comfortable environments where there is less pressure and more freedom to experiment (Brooks, 2007). However, in reality, many schools expect the beginning teachers to be able to structure and control a class from the very start without a great deal of support and encouragement and this is where confidence starts to wane (Kyriacou, 2009). This is often due to circumstances beyond their control; for example, not knowing the pupils they are teaching and any learning difficulties in the classes they are teaching. The transitions of their training, whether they revisit university or meet with their mentor, can help to manage and improve their confidence, which is influenced by their beliefs (Crafter and Maunder, 2012). The beginning teachers need to know their comfort zone and start to extend it during their PGCE programme.

Day, *et al.* (2006) propose that a significant and ongoing part of being a teacher is the experiencing of strong emotions and suggest that there has been insufficient consideration of the strengths of their influence in previous studies on teacher identity. Stephenson (1995) suggests that beginning teachers' emotional conditions impact on the kind of experience they have in school and that these emotions depend significantly on the relationship developed with their subject mentor. In a study of trainee primary teachers, Hayes (2001) indicates that the establishing of a positive relationship with the class teacher is one of three key factors influencing both emotional well-being and progress on school placement. Successful beginning teachers, therefore, according to those who see strong personal ties as indicative of healthy school communities, need to establish close bonds with people around them, colleagues as well as pupils (Hargreaves, 2001). Becoming accepted – as a learner, a person, a teacher and as part of the profession (Maynard, 2000) – is thus a key challenge for beginning teachers. But, while positive relations can foster positive feelings about teaching and about oneself as a teacher (Kelchtermans and Ballet, 2002), the impact of problematic interactions can also lead to equally strong, yet

aversive, emotional consequences. Nias (1996) reports that the most disturbing emotions came from encounters with adults, with colleagues being a particular problem. Hargreaves (2001), reporting on teachers' professional relations, asserts that the presence of conflict was the most frequently cited source of negative emotion among teachers. Hayes (2003), moreover, revealed that beginning teachers who were unable to become integrated within the school's socio-cultural climate suffered decreased confidence, which had a negative effect upon their classroom performance.

Teacher resilience

The area of teacher resilience is emerging as an important factor in managing transitions, particularly in the process of how beginning teachers overcome challenges (Bobek, 2002). Resilience involves a complex interplay between the individual and the environment, resulting in "...successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances" (Masten, *et al.*, 1990, p. 242). Resilience can be seen as a combination of abilities and characteristics that interact dynamically to allow an individual to bounce back cope successfully and function above the norm, in spite of significant stress or adversity (Tusaie and Dyer, 2004, p. 3). Resilience implies not just recovering, but adapting and growing from situations the beginning teachers are able to reflect on (Campbell-Sills, Cohan and Stein, 2006). However, enabling positive adaptation from the student teachers rather than negative reaction takes skilled mentoring and an ability to recognise situations and reflect on the learning process.

The changes of environment for beginning teachers and the betwixt and between spaces means it is essential that beginning teachers are guided in specific attributes and have mentors who can help and support them (Evans, *et al.*, 2008). Teachers who possess the characteristics of resilient individuals are more likely to persevere in adverse situations, find it easier to adapt to change and will feel more comfortable in their role as a teacher (Bobek, 2002; Howard and Johnson, 2004). Attributes such as a strong sense of competence, efficacy and accomplishment, humour, agency and use of coping strategies have been identified as important to resilience (Sharplin,

O'Neill and Chapman, 2011). Campbell-Sills, Cohan and Stein (2006) suggest resilience is an individual's ability to thrive and fulfil their potential despite, or perhaps as a response to stressors. Many beginning teachers use the expression of coping with their placements, so part of the PGCE university-based programme at my institution is about supporting the trainee teachers' strengths and moving them towards functional coping, which is a key contributor to the achievement of resilience (Edward and Hercelinsky, 2007).

Other personal strengths in beginning teachers have been equated with resilience, such as a positive self-image, hardiness, optimism, a sense of humour, a belief system which provides existential meaning and hope (Tusaie and Dyer, 2004), a sense of self efficacy (the individual's belief in their ability to control events in their lives) and self-understanding (Hammond, 2004). These all form part of a wide range of active coping strategies and social skills enabling resilient beginning teachers to assess a situation, understand its various dimensions, do what they can to intervene in a helpful way, and, importantly, have the capacity to let go of things that they can do nothing about and move on (Kahn, 2005). The learning communities are also influential and relate to perceptions of social support – a sense of feeling 'connected', whether to family, peers or colleagues. It is suggested that a trainee with a negative view of the support offered may ignore or repel it and, therefore, receive less, suggesting that an individual "...is not a passive recipient of social support but the process of social support is reciprocal and dynamic." (Tusaie and Dyer, 2004, p. 4).

Further, in order to ensure positive growth in beginning teachers, Wilkes (2002) argues that they need to achieve a level of skill as critical thinkers; in other words, applying the same kind of critical analysis to themselves as they apply to their academic work. Becoming more aware and analytical about their emotional reactions to situations could help beginning teachers not only to regain equilibrium, but to recognise inappropriate or unhelpful reactions (Loughran, 2006). It may also affect the strategies they use, since an increase in self-awareness cannot only help an individual to make a more rational judgement of their capabilities, but, if they feel any criticism unjustified, seek constructive dialogue (Abraham, 2004). Flores and Day (2006) argue that teachers' individual and professional histories, their ITE and

school-related factors are strong mediating influences in determining the kinds and stability of professional identities that teachers develop in the early years of teaching and, thus, the kind of teachers they become. According to Day (2002), identity is not fixed or static, but an amalgam of personal biography, culture, social influence, and institutional values that may change according to role or circumstance. He also suggests that there is an interrelationship between teachers' professional and personal, cognitive, and emotional identities and that maintaining a positive sense of professional identity is important in maintaining motivation, self-esteem, efficacy and commitment to teaching.

Professional identity, emotions and learning to teach physical education

There is considerable evidence to support the view that physical education teachers have constructed their curricula in new and innovative ways yet it can equally be reflected that teachers are actively resisting new directions for curriculum development (Capel 2010). Regression to familiar and established patterns of provision has been portrayed more as an essential coping strategy than a proactive response to new requirements. Kirk (2010) made the point that positivist science had hijacked physical education and seeks to educate, or promote healthy bodies that demonstrate all the characteristics of efficient machines. It only addresses the psychomotor and ignores the fact that humans are thinking, feeling entities that must have social and cultural features as part of their existence. The psychomotor is only part of what is desirable others are the cognitive, social and affective domains. Kirk (2012) suggests young people need to develop a whole range of physical competencies and a 'physical literacy' of skills and knowledge to enable them to take advantage of a curriculum. Social and moral areas (affective areas) are important, Armour (2006), explains that physical education lessons are social situations, young people come with a social agenda. The underlying factor that unites all aspects of physical education is that there should be some element of educational value attached. Participants should have an enhanced educational experience by taking part; however the level of enhancement may vary. Meaningful physical activity is that which is relevant to the lives and interests of young people it might not be traditional

physical education as we know it, indeed what constitutes traditional physical education is questionable (Kirk 2010).

Whilst young people as a whole are experiencing a broader diet of sporting activities in physical education than previous generations, they continue, nevertheless, to be introduced to various activities according to their sex, social class and ethnicity (Roberts, 2001). Physical education should be based on individual achievement and improvement and not on comparisons of performance on ability made against others (Kay, 2006).

Physical education is expected to simultaneously bring about improvements in physical activity levels, in obesity levels, in rankings in international sporting arenas and in drug-related health and crime statistics! (Penney and Jess 2004, p. 270).

If physical education is going to maintain its status as a core subject, there needs to be a focus on physical learning, cognitive learning, social learning and affective learning (Bailey, *et al.*, 2006). These four outcomes will legitimately support the promotion of a physically active life (Kirk, 2010). A models-based approach caters for these multiple learning outcomes of physical education (Casey and Goodyear, 2015) and is one that was instigated by the university in this study as part of the pre-service programme. Instead of focusing on the activity or sport, the curriculum is organised around models, for example, sport education, cooperative learning and Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU). The Physical Education National Curriculum, as it has traditionally and currently been conceptualised and organised, is destined to have only a partial and short-lived impact on many people's lives (Penny and Jess, 2004). In order to overcome such criticisms, and the pupils' undoubted frustration and disappointment with the duplication of activities, but, more importantly, to serve a more significant purpose in the development of young people's lives, the learning needs of pupils in schools and beginning and practicing teachers need to be addressed.

2.6 The processes that influence beginning teachers' transitions and development

If it is the purpose of educators to make a positive difference to the lives of the students that they find in their care (Carr and Kemmis, 1986; van Manen, 1997), then this concern with 'moral purpose' can be strongly linked to the idea that "...reflective teaching implies an active concern with aims and consequences as well as means and technical competence" (Pollard, 2005, p. 15). Dewey (1959) outlines some of the skills and personal qualities of reflection. Certainly, keen observation, reasoning and analysis are seen as skills central to reflective practice.

Reflective practitioners

Developing teachers as reflective practitioners in bringing about changes to current practices is a key factor in determining whether change is needed (Hargreaves, 2003). Kagan (1992) argues that beginning teachers should first learn only basic skills and that the focus for reflection should be on their own biographies, because they need experience in order to reflect on their teaching performance. Kagan (1992, p. 147) asserts that beginning teachers need to have an inward focus in order to develop a clear image of themselves as teachers before they can grow, commenting that "...without a strong image of self as teacher, a novice may be doomed to flounder."

Kagan's view differs from Fuller and Brown's (1975), who argue that "...the novice's initial focus on self is a weakness or inadequacy that is best shortened or aborted" (Kagan, 1992, p. 161). He contends that only after beginning teachers resolve their self-image as a teacher can they move onto the next stage of development. Part of their development is the ability to take on board feedback. Beginning teachers receive a considerable amount of verbal, visual and written feedback that focuses on different aspects of their development as a teacher (Moore, 2004). From this emerging evidence base, they have to consider the effectiveness of their teaching in the interest of all the pupils' learning. Initially, this is a challenging exercise to engage in, as there might be many different areas to focus on (Zwozdiak-Myers, 2012).

Central here, of course, is the idea that trusts between teachers and between teachers and other practitioners must be embedded - without trust the sharing of ideas, concerns and challenges can be highly threatening (Pollard, 2005). The process is one of raising tacit understandings so that they can be examined, critiqued, developed and re-framed (Elliot, 1991).

It is the way in which better and more general solutions are developed that can be applied in new circumstances - the 'frame for action' develops and a more confident teacher emerges. To enable this to happen, beginning teachers need to develop their observations and accrue a range of experiences that can help them to deal with the unexpected (Pollard, 2005). Critics of Schön, as distinct from re-interpreters, highlight his lack of attention to the discursive or dialogic dimension of teacher learning (Day, 1999). Solomon (1987) in particular makes a powerful case for reflection as a social practice, in which the articulation of ideas to others is central to the development of a critical perspective, and, thus, to the development of appreciative systems. In short, we all need a mentor, and social constructivists would point to the crucial role of language and interaction in developing shared understandings (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991; Mercer, 2004). It was deemed that teachers learn best in their own professional learning communities, where strong collaborative cultures can be developed (Moore, 2004). However, 'forced' or 'imposed', collegiality can quickly switch teachers off and they can resent and resist it (Hargreaves and Goodson, 1996). The introduction of the National Curriculum is a good example of where collegiality was at first embraced, but then an overwhelming amount of directives fell upon teachers and their 'goodwill' was quickly withdrawn (Helsby, 1995).

There is a fine line between schools building their own professional learning communities and cutting off links to the academic world. A balance needs to be reached to "...avoid the de-professionalization of the knowledge base of teaching and dull the professions' cutting edge" (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 166). One of the most important factors supporting transitions for beginning teachers is school and university tutors. There is evidence that a 'sink or swim' approach does not provide optimal learning conditions for beginning teachers (Britzman, 1991), but the guidance, mentoring and feedback that beginning teachers receive from their

schools and university tutors play a critical role in their learning and development. Studies investigating the role of the university tutor suggest they play an important role as the translators of the values and beliefs of the teacher education programme (Rust and Bullmaster, 2000). However, Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) have highlighted the importance of there being an alignment between the placement school and the programme's vision of teaching, as well as the beginning teachers, university tutors and school mentor having a shared understanding about the purposes and activities of placements.

Mentoring

Teachers have moved a long way from the peripheral figures depicted by HMI (DES, 1991), their role confined to offering informal support and guidance. However, initiative and control of key elements – such as funding and the appointment of staff – have continued to be exercised centrally and not at the level of individual schools. Moreover, those in HE have maintained their position as 'the experts' and the guardians of the quality of contributions made by schools' (Furlong, *et al.*, 2000. p. 23). Bullough, Clark and Patterson, (2003) believe that there is a growing understanding of the shortcomings of the traditional patterns of teacher training in schools, and an awareness of how little is actually known and understood about teaching practice.

Mentoring appears to have the essential attributes of: a process; a supportive relationship; a helping process; a teaching-learning process; a reflective process; a career development process; a formalised process and a role constructed by or for a mentor (Roberts, 2000, p. 145).

In the context of education, however, the term 'mentoring' is frequently used to describe:

...a combination of coaching, counselling and assessment (which can be problematic and create tensions) where a classroom teacher in a school is delegated responsibility for assisting a pre-service or newly qualified teacher in their development in their profession (Fletcher, 2006, p.56).

Thus, when looking at the mentoring relationship within the HEI Partnership arrangements of ITE, it is not surprising that we see varying representations, some

of which are exclusive, of what mentoring actually is. Indeed, multiple interpretations of the mentor role, by researchers, teacher educators and mentors, have been described in the literature. As a consequence, and despite the plethora of models in the literature, the concept of mentoring remains elusive (Roberts, 2000). This is because beginning teachers receive different models, messages and support (McIntyre and Hagger, 1993) in different schools, which often adds to their confusion.

It is, however, also possible that mentors develop distinct strategies, perhaps through their independent professional development through systematic self-study (Stenhouse, 1975) when working with beginning teachers. The practice of the mentor as a teacher and mentor has to be considered in the context of mentors' interactions with the training provided by the HEI Partnership, their knowledge and understanding of the role, portrayed in the pedagogic practices they employ while mentoring within schools, as well as their personal perceptions of the role. Teachers and beginning teachers are responsible for the education, beliefs, values and well-being of their pupils (Furlong, *et al.*, 2000).

Professionalism in teachers and beginning teachers is developed from a combination of personal skills, job training and institutional policies. There are a number of different qualities highlighted in teacher professionalism that fall into three broad categories: competence, performance and conduct. Competence refers to the teacher's mastery of a subject area, as well as their understanding of the methods of teaching. Performance refers to practical classroom instruction techniques and the teacher's ability to communicate material related to the National Curriculum to their pupils. Finally, professional conduct includes behaviour, language and personal appearance, which reflects a teacher's overall attitude. Whilst the literature describes the dominant conceptual framework behind mentoring as being provided by adult learning theories (Hansford, *et al.*, 2003), in practice mentors appear to have very little, if any, training in adult learning theory. Rather, mentors, in their training and role as teachers, appear to have been strongly influenced by research developed in the context of children learning, with Smythe (1996) stating that:

Teachers and student teachers work in schools within a contextual framework, which has been formed by their own unique life experiences and understandings of pedagogical issues. (Smythe, 1996, p. 4)

Mentors should support beginning teachers coming to grips with teaching and studying simultaneously; they have two identities, that of teacher on the one hand and that of learner on the other, so the process should be a developmental relationship (McDowall-Long, 2004, p. 520).

An Ofsted survey in 2003 (Ofsted, 2003) found that there were few opportunities for beginning teachers to learn how to teach their specialist subjects and a lack of systematic mentoring and support in the workplace. Ofsted was highlighting two separate issues: firstly, the lack of subject-specific training for teaching a specialist subject and, secondly, the lack of effective mentors, observation and feedback on teaching in the workplace, which the inspectorate felt inhibited, beginning teachers' progress significantly. The government's programme of reforms (DfES, 2005, p. 7), however, led to a merging of mentoring with subject-specific pedagogy.

The DfES (2005) document states:

Mentoring of beginning teachers in the workplace: an essential aim of the training is that teachers should have the skills of teaching in their own specialist or curriculum area. The taught elements of teacher training courses are likely to be generic, because of the range of teachers taking part. Subject-specific skills must be acquired in the beginning teachers' workplace and from vocational or academic experience.

It is unclear whether the mentor's role in the training and induction of beginning teachers centres on subject knowledge or subject pedagogy. Government documents fluctuate between mentoring as a support for the beginning teachers' knowledge about teaching their subject and mentoring as a support for the beginning teachers' knowledge and skills in their subject. These are very different concepts and yet the policy seems to move between the two as if they were the same. The government has promoted mentoring (DfES, 2005, p. 4), not only as an effective method of advice and support for novice teachers, but as the cornerstone for the development of subject pedagogy in generic teacher training. Mentors are now the work-based learning link outside the academic classroom (Ofsted, 2003; DfES,

2005) and their role is to induct mentees into a community of practice and to encourage them to forge a new identity as a teacher (Eliahoo, 2009).

Collaborative mentoring departments should be a focus for schools rather than isolated mentors in departments (Smethen and Youens, 2006). This aids in the beginning teachers receiving a consistent message rather than a 'do as I do because it works for me' approach. As observed by Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1993), different forms of mentoring emerge in different contexts, with expectations, working conditions, selection and preparation of mentors all creating constraints and opportunities that shape how mentors perceive and carry out their role. As a consequence, there is no one model of mentoring that has superseded all others (Brooks and Sikes, 1997; Butcher, 2005), rather mentors are encouraged to select strategies that are appropriate to their circumstances. The OECD (2005, p. 176) agrees with the use of a range of strategies and suggest that, in considering a pedagogical method for use with adults, one of the most important considerations is its "...ability to be adapted to the participants. It must be compatible with the participants' level, their personality, their motivation, their aptitudes and their expectations." Whilst policies, procedures and documentation can be used to monitor progress and assessment purposes to support the provision of quality across the partnership, the importance of the people involved should never be underestimated (Trethowan, 1991).

Furlong and Maynard (1995) identified three models of mentoring: the start apprenticeship, the middle competency and the end reflective. Tomlinson (1995), however, supports the view that mentors are firstly reflective coaches, developing teaching and reflective skills, and, secondly, effective facilitators with a counselling role. The use of reflection by learners, as described by Schön (1987), and as identified in Furlong and Maynard's model and by Tomlinson, was acknowledged within the Teacher Training Agency guidelines for ITT (2003), which state:

Teachers need to have a capacity and commitment to analyse and reflect on their own practice and beginning teachers to develop an ability to make judgements about the effectiveness of their teaching, and to identify ways of bringing about improvement (TTA, 2003, p. 12).

A model of teacher training has now emerged which is centrally controlled through inspection, school-based and skills-oriented, and which places a high premium on subject knowledge (Ellis, 2007). The term subject knowledge is used widely, but generally loosely. In physical education, it relates to what the subject is about and puts the child at the centre of the learning (Kay, 2004). However, mentors in schools often use the term to mean content knowledge. Hence, there is a "...dichotomy in perceptions as to what constitutes subject knowledge and content knowledge in physical education" (*ibid*, p. 19). Making the knowledge which manifests itself in their day-to-day practice as teachers available to others can be facilitated through the process of personal reflection (Jones and Straker, 2006). In doing so, their existing craft knowledge of teaching can be articulated to the mentee by making explicit the pedagogical processes at work and by integrating theoretical aspects with the practicalities of classroom action (Tomlinson, 1995; Braund, 2001).

In addition to theoretical and practical aspects of knowledge, mentors need to be aware of another dimension, the kind of cultural knowledge that provides "...the lens through which teachers' practical knowledge is viewed and interpreted" (Maynard, 2000, p. 8). This is a particularly pertinent aspect of mentoring, as the extent to which beginning teachers establish positive relationships with their colleagues and conform to their expectations of them will, in part, influence how much knowledge is ultimately transferred to them (Jones and Straker, 2006). Dunne and Dunne (1993) intimate that positive relationships with mentors are fundamental to learning. Waring and Waring (2009, p. 345) comment that "...the language of professionalism becomes a mechanism for fostering occupational compliance that encourages employees to act 'professionally' through realigning identities and working practices." Therefore, 'being a professional' does not simply include familiarity with a specific body of knowledge, but also what sort of person one is, how one appears and conducts oneself, and how far all these behaviours are deemed by others to be appropriate professional conduct (Fournier, 1999).

The link between social learning, learning communities and Schön's (1987) ideas about initial professional training and the emergence of a reflective practitioner are also important in beginning teachers' learning. Goodfellow and Sumsion (2000) explored the interconnections between teachers' relationships with colleagues and

their professional progress and development, and proposed that learning to teach is underpinned by, and embedded in, relationships with others. McNally, *et al.* (1994) also commented that effective engagement with colleagues and classes taught is of paramount importance, with Hargreaves (1998) suggesting that the way teachers relate to their colleagues is significant in terms of the kind of teachers they become. The challenge for beginning teachers is to successfully negotiate the different learning communities betwixt mentors and university teacher educators within the formal partnership agreement during training (Murray, 2010). This involves straddling the boundaries between university and school contexts. They are journeying through different communities, to which they have to adapt and establish relationships in, but have no long-term membership of any. Bourdieu (1977) makes a useful analogy with reference to a journey between what is actually carried out on the ground and as seen on the map (an abstract space devoid of any landmarks or any privileged centre). The end result smoothes over the myriad decisions made with regard to changing conditions.

Community and practice are vital constructs in understanding the meaning of being a teacher and consequently professional identity (Johnson, 2009). While the act of belonging to a teacher community translates into direct interaction and the negotiation of forms of participation, classroom practice helps beginning teachers to get a real sense of the role of a teacher. These general domains evolve as a dynamic process resulting from the experience of becoming a teacher; a learning to teach journey where all of the constructs come together to frame the meaning and identity of teachers (Miller, 2008).

It is assumed that learners have to construct their own knowledge – individually and collectively. Each learner has a tool kit of concepts and skills with which he or she must construct knowledge to solve problems presented by the environment. The role of community – other learners and teachers – is to provide the setting, pose the challenges and offer the support that will encourage learning (Davis, Maher, Noddings, 1990, p. 3).

Rather than the beginning teachers being empty vessels into which information can be poured, they come with a wealth of knowledge already organised. Beginning teachers will incorporate new information into their existing ways of understanding

the world, creating new links to their existing ways of understanding the world, creating new links to their existing knowledge (Hausfather, 1996). For the beginning teachers to learn meaningfully, they must integrate new knowledge into their own conceptual structure.

The processes that influence beginning teachers' transitions and development in physical education

Physical education needs a balance that joins together the 'what' (the selection and elaboration of pupil learning outcomes via the curriculum model), the 'how' (the deliberate choices about instructional methods that are congruent with the curriculum model), and 'to what degree' creation of formative and summative assessment design components and tools that elicit the demonstration of learning (Lambert, 2015). In physical education, the constructivism method has emerged as a big influence on the practice of teaching in the last few decades (Kirk and Macdonald, 1998; Rink, 2001; Griffin, *et al.*, 2005; Rovegno and Dolly, 2006; Jones and Barber, 2014). A constructivist view of learning sees it as a process of adapting to and fitting into a constantly changing world. Cognition is seen, not as an individual process, but instead as a collective process spread across the individual's world (Light, 2008). Constructivist theory holds that prior knowledge is very important (Richardson, 1997).

The key features of constructivist teaching focus on problem solving, teaching strategies tailored to pupil interpretation, open-ended questions, analysis and evaluation with teachers and other pupils (Jones and Barber, 2014). It focuses on the learner and the personal meanings the teachers make based on their prior experience, knowledge and interests (Kirk and MacDonald, 2009). Much of this interest arises from recognition of the TGfU approach (and its variations) as being consistent with a social constructivist approach to learning. It has also been suggested that learning in TGfU can be understood through Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of situated learning (Kirk and Macdonald, 1998). The TGfU approach involves teaching a particular games principle, and its related skills, through conditioned games that present a problem or highlight a principle within that game

that the pupils need to find solutions to. In the TGfU approach the learner is being actively engaged in learning and drawing on existing knowledge to make sense of learning situations and construct understandings. Approaches to teaching and learning that are consistent with constructivism are not a new initiative. The student-centred movement approaches of the 1950s and 1960s had many elements of a constructivist approach. Elements of constructivism are also evident in physical education texts of the 1970s (Rovegno and Kirk, 1995). For example, the teaching styles at the student-centred end of the Mosston and Ashworth (2002) spectrum of teaching styles are consistent with a constructivist approach. When Bunker and Thorpe (1982) developed the TGfU model, it was not theorised from a constructivist perspective, but the approach to learning that underpins it provides a good example of a social constructivist approach to learning in physical education (Kirk and Macdonald, 1998).

Siedentop's (1994) Sport Education model is also consistent with the learning theory of constructivism. The three major goals that guide program development in Sport Education are for pupils to become competent, literate, and enthusiastic players (Siedentop, 1994). This means that teachers must design learning experiences that facilitate pupils learning in realistic settings. According to Siedentop (1994); A competent player has sufficient skills to participate satisfactorily, can execute strategies that are appropriate for the complexity of the game being played, and is a knowledgeable player. A literate player understands and values the rules, rituals, and traditions of sport, and is able to distinguish between good and bad sport practices in a variety of sport settings. An enthusiastic player is one who preserves, protects, and enhances the sport culture through participation, involvement, and appropriate behaviour. However, *behaviourism* formed the dominant view of learning for much of the twentieth century and, despite being largely displaced by constructivism over the past few decades in most teacher education programmes, the meaning of constructivism varies according to one's perspectives and position. It has a holistic view of learning and cognition that extends beyond the mind as a separate entity to include the body and all its senses (Light, 2006). In constructivism, knowledge includes the vague knowledge enacted in daily life that is captured in the suggestion that "...we know more than we know we know" (Davis, *et al.*, 2000, p. 6).

Bruner's (1996) scaffolding theory was based on the work of Vygotsky (1976) where the learner constructs new ideas or concepts based upon current or past knowledge.

Initially, the teacher provides focused questions, appropriate resources and progressive steps to aid the learner and gradually withdraws control and support as the learner increases mastery of the task (Jones and Barber, 2014). In physical education, constructivist approaches stress that learning is developmental, both in the sense that there are identifiable phases in learning physical skills and that the ways in which people learn change over time due to growth, maturation and experience (Kirk and Macdonald, 1998). Social constructivism centres on the belief that social interaction is paramount to effective and meaningful learning (Hausfather, 1996; Richardson, 1997; Byrne, 2000). In the late twentieth century, the constructivist view of learning started to change as the perspective of "...situated cognition and learning" emphasised the significant role of context, particularly social interaction (Kirk and Macdonald, 2009, p 125.).

Teaching does not make learning happen. Good teaching is the effective facilitation of learning (Claxton, Lucas and Webster, 2010). Within the school environment, it is important for beginning teachers to establish trusting relationships in order to allow the beliefs of social constructivism to be realised (Tolley, 2009). Similarly, it is important for pupils to believe that they are genuinely cared for in order for such trusting relationships to be established (Ennis and McCauley, 2002).

2.7 Summary

Beginning teachers cross many boundaries and navigate different landscapes of practice. These transitions will have an impact on their beliefs and development of subject knowledge and their approaches to teaching. Transitions can be a struggle, but they also have the potential to alter "...one's sense of self" (Beach, 1999, p. 114). In support of this proposition, research studying beginning teachers' adjustment to study has highlighted that the changes and challenges they negotiate during their transition lead to personal transformation, and a new sense of identity (Britton and Baxter, 1999; Warin and Dempster, 2007; Hussey and Smith, 2010; Maunder,

Gingham and Rogers, 2010). Hviid and Zittoun (2008) explain that transition is not a moment of change, but the experience of changing by living, coping and participating in different contexts, and facing different challenges.

They include the process of adaptability to new social and cultural experiences (Georgio, Plansar and Vilella, 2002). Studies in educational and developmental psychology have consistently featured changeability and stability (Crafter and Maunder, 2012). The perspectives of James (1890), Erikson (1975) and Piaget (1976) suggest that change is brought about or influenced by external or social situations, which have the power to shift our understanding of ourselves. Transitions can be best understood by taking into account the social and cultural locations of human thoughts and actions (Zittoun, 2006). Educational research reminds us that teaching is not merely a cognitive or technical procedure, but a complex, personal, social, often elusive, set of embedded processes and practices that concern the whole person (Hamachek, 1999; Oakes and Lipton, 2003; Britzman, 2003; Cochran-Smith, 2005; Olsen, 2008).

In recognition of the complexity and interconnectedness of factors in learning to teach, Widden, *et al.* (1998, p. 169) call for an ecological approach to seeking to understand how individuals, institutions, programmes and ideas are interrelated, observing that “...we can no longer regard courses, programmes, and other participants and structures of teacher education as unchallengeable and operating in isolation.” Their suggestion that more attention needs to be given to how other players affect the landscape and process of learning to teach is supported by Feiman-Nemser (2001), who argues for a coordinated approach in building a professional learning continuum that links ITE to new teacher induction to continuing professional development. Beginning to teach is a particularly challenging stage in a teacher’s professional career. Concern about teacher quality has become a common theme in the public, political and policy discourse on educational achievement. While beginning teachers come to the profession with plenty of dreams, aspirations and ideals, the requirements of a demanding profession cause varied levels of frustration and disenchantment.

Much of the research focus has been on investigating stakeholder perceptions regarding the effectiveness, or otherwise, of Initial Teacher Education programmes or school induction programmes, and little attention has been given to navigating the various landscapes of practice that influence beginning teacher learning and development. According to Darling-Hammond (1999, p. 18) “...teachers learn just as students do: by studying, doing, and reflecting; by collaborating with other teachers; by looking closely at students and their work; and by sharing what they see.” By attending to learning about teaching as well as learning about learning, teacher educators can guide beginning teachers in their work.

The exploration of the nature of changing landscapes, transitions and professional growth for the future suggests that beginning teachers’ expectations of growth are significantly informed by several contextual factors. Factors that have been identified as influencing transition and development of beginning teachers include learning communities, biography and beliefs, support and the culture of the school. In terms of the enactment of curriculum policy, Supovitz’s (2008) analysis anticipated that there will be ‘gaps’ between what was intended by policy constructors and what ultimately is translated into practice. Physical Education has been criticised for falling between this gap. This study aims to address this gap by undertaking a longitudinal, qualitative approach to probe more deeply into how physical education beginning teachers experience and interpret beginning to teach. Of particular interest is understanding how beliefs, influences, biography and school and university factors impact on the transition, development and professional identity construction of new physical education teachers over their pre-service year and their first year in teaching.

3 The Research Process

Research can be defined as the systematic study of a given topic in order to add further knowledge (Theodorson and Theodorson, 1969). It requires the researcher to understand the interrelated components of the research design, which refer to the purposes of the research, and the theory which surrounds it, as well as the development of suitable research questions and methods (Robson, 2002). These, according to Robson (*ibid*), provide the basis of a good research design. Consequently, this chapter reflects upon the development of the research design utilised within this study, while assessing the challenges, justifications and rationales which provide the foundation for the selected methodological approaches.

The intention of this research is to gain a fuller understanding of beginning teachers' opinions, values and beliefs in order to understand their journey of transition from pre-service preparation into the profession. This longitudinal study is framed around three key questions:

1. What are the patterns of transition and the changing landscapes within which physical education trainees are located?
2. What are the key influences that affect the transition and development of beginning physical education teachers?
3. How do these factors influence beginning physical education teachers' constructions of themselves as teachers?

In posing these questions I sought to understand the process of becoming a teacher from the vantage point of the lived reality of the beginning teacher. I wanted to explore the perspectives of beginning teachers as they developed and changed over their pre-service training and induction year and to gain a greater understanding of what aspects of their prior and current experiences enabled or limited their growth as teachers. This study aims to expand our knowledge and understanding of factors that influence and shape beginning teacher transition, learning and development. At a time when the School Direct model of teacher training is taking priority, it is critical to gain a clear understanding of what factors enable or limit new teachers' transition

to teaching and their development as teachers. This study, therefore, has relevance to those who work in ITE and to policy makers, as well as beginning teachers themselves.

The selection of an appropriate research framework for this study was, therefore, critical to enable understanding of the process of transition and development that beginning teachers undergo. This chapter sets out the theoretical framework and design of the research project and examines the question of trustworthiness, along with the equivalent quality criteria in qualitative research. Also discussed is the maintenance of ethical standards, including the selection of participants, and the strategies used for collecting, recording and analysing data. The relationship of the researcher to the research participants is also explored.

3.1 Methodology

Methodology is a way of thinking about and studying social reality (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Sarantakos (2005, p. 30) defines methodology as a “...research strategy that translates ontological and epistemological principles into guidelines that show how research is to be conducted.” The positivist research paradigm underpins quantitative methodology. The realist/objectivist ontology and empiricist epistemology contained in the positivist paradigm requires a research approach that is objective or detached, where the emphasis is on measuring variables and testing hypotheses that are linked to general causal explanations. The associated data collection techniques are focused on gathering hard data in the form of numbers to enable evidence to be presented in quantitative form (Neuman, 2003; Sarantakos, 2005). In contrast, qualitative methodology is underpinned by interpretivist epistemology and constructionalist ontology (Neuman, 2003). This assumes that meaning is embedded in the participants’ experiences and that this meaning is mediated through the researcher’s own perceptions (Merriam, 1998). Delamont (2002, p. 7) describes this as finding out “...how people you are researching understand their world’.” According to Holliday (2002, p. 5), researchers can only “...explore, illuminate and interpret these pieces of reality”, which implies a commitment to the idea of multiple realities.

Thus, the interpretivist paradigm is closely associated with the view of qualitative research. There are different advantages and disadvantages for both methodological approaches. Punch (2005) suggests that qualitative approaches are more flexible and, therefore, can be used in a wider range of purposes. Qualitative approaches “...are the best way of getting the insider’s perspective ...the meanings people attach to things and events” (Punch, 2005, p. 238).

There does not appear to be one definition of qualitative methodology. Merriam (1998, p. 10) describes it as an “...umbrella term comprising diverse methods employed in the social sciences.” These include the goals of eliciting understanding and meaning, the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, the use of fieldwork, an inductive orientation to analysis and findings that are richly descriptive. Qualitative research methodologies offer multiple tools for understanding and explaining these socio-cultural complexities (Hastie and Hay, 2012). The aim of qualitative research is to discover meaning and understanding, rather than to verify truth or predict outcomes. Central to the qualitative paradigm is the belief that people assign meaning to the knowledge that is being created, that their valued experiences are situated within a historical and social context, and that there can be multiple realities (Tesch, 1990; Benoliel, 1994). Researchers who locate themselves in the interpretive paradigm seek to understand the social world from the viewpoint of the research participants, in this study the beginning teachers’ perspective, by means of detailed description of their cognitive and symbolic actions, and through the richness of meaning associated with observable behaviour (Wildemuth, 1993).

In the end, the argument for which is the best methodology comes down to decisions about ‘fit for purpose’. According to Cresswell (2009), the selection of an appropriate research design requires several considerations: firstly, the research problem will often indicate a specific research approach, or approaches, to be used in the enquiry; secondly, the researcher’s own experiences, training and world view (Strauss and Corbin, 1998); and thirdly the audience to whom the research is reported. This study investigates beginning teachers’ opinions, values and beliefs in order to understand their journey of transition from pre-service preparation into the

profession. To collect detailed accounts of their perceptions, experiences and thoughts, the qualitative approach was deemed to be the most appropriate. Capel (2007) lends further support to this approach as she maintains that all knowledge is socially constructed, including a physical education teacher's knowledge of their subject. Physical education and sport are inherently social activities (Hastie and Hay, 2012).

As sites of social interaction, marked by relationships, institutional expectations, unique learning contexts and different engagement modes, teacher education in physical education and sport settings provide challenging and complex sites for investigation (Macdonald, *et al.*, 2002). The nature and purpose of the study indicate the qualitative approach as being the most appropriate methodology. Qualitative researchers study occurrences in their natural settings, "...attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p. 3).

3.2 Methodological considerations

Neuman (2003) contends that while reliability and validity are central issues in all research, these notions are conceptualised differently according to the methodology used in an investigation. According to Neuman (2003, p. 185):

Qualitative researchers are less concerned with trying to match an abstract concept to empirical data and are more concerned with giving a candid portrayal of social life that is true to the experiences of people being studied.

Merriam (1998) also argues that, for qualitative research to be seen as being trustworthy, researchers must take account of notions related to validity and reliability. She also asserts that ensuring validity and reliability in qualitative research involves conducting the investigation in an ethical manner. Trustworthiness is an internal validity measure; it ensures that the research process is rigorous and the results of the study are communicated fairly to others (Gasson, 2003). It also refers to the degree to which the research results and interpretations can be corroborated by others by checking and rechecking the data throughout the study (Morrow, 2005).

One of the most widely used set of criteria for trustworthiness is that developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985): truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality. Bryman (2001) provided a concise overview of the elements of trustworthiness, along with the equivalent criteria in quantitative research, which are: credibility, which parallels internal validity; transferability, which parallels external validity; dependability, which parallels reliability; and conformability, which parallels objectivity.

Credibility relates to the plausibility of the context while trustworthiness includes the pre-set interpretations the researcher brings to the study and imposes upon it (Hastie and Hay, 2012). According to Bryman (2001, p. 272), the "...feasibility or credibility of the account that the researcher arrives at is what is going to determine its acceptability to others." Merriam (1998, p. 204) identifies six basic strategies that can be used to enhance credibility or internal validity: "...triangulation; member checks; long-term observation; peer examination; participatory or collaborative modes of research; and clarifying researcher biases."

Triangulation can include the use of multiple sources of data, multiple informants or multiple methods to confirm the emerging findings (Merriam, 1998; Sarantakos, 2005). For this research project, the perceptions of thirteen beginning teachers provided multiple informants, and data were collected through four face-to-face interviews with each participant, with three over the pre-service year and one at the end of their induction year. The data for this study were gathered over the period of two years as, according to Silverman (2001), gathering data over time is a way of increasing the validity of findings.

Transferability needs to include a thorough description of the context, as well as the assumptions that are central to the research. In other words, the reader should be able to transfer the findings of the study to their own context and address the core issues of how far they can make a claim for a general application of the study's theory. Geertz (1973) uses the phrase 'thick description' to enhance transferability by using a thorough detailed description of source data and the emerging analysis. This involves using rich descriptions, not only of the trainees' experiences but also the contexts in which the experiences occur. The thickness of the description relates to

the multiple layers of culture and context in which the experiences are embedded (Gasson, 2004). This study is exploring the different settings (those of the university programme, peer learning group, different schools and departments) as part of becoming a teacher, and my knowledge of these settings as a teacher educator will help in providing another perspective to that of the trainees. Grounded theory method has been used successfully in a number of studies (Kagan, 1992; Carlson and King, 1999; Wood and Bennett, 2000; Flores and Day, 2006; Clandinin, 2013) therefore, the method of analysis utilised in this study is comparable and transferable to other projects.

Merriam (1998) argues that the term reliability, in the sense of replication of results, does not fit qualitative research. This is because the focus in the qualitative approach is on understanding and interpreting social phenomena from the participants' perspective rather than testing hypotheses that are linked to general causal explanations that is the concern of quantitative research. The emphasis should be the *dependability* or *consistency* of the results obtained from the data (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The issue, therefore, is not whether the findings will be replicated, but whether the results are consistent with the data collected (Merriam, 1998). As part of this study, I was required to submit a research proposal and an ethics proposal that included participant information forms and consent forms. I was also appointed a supervisor to oversee the research.

Conformability refers to how, in qualitative research, it is important for the investigator to ensure that the direction of the findings is not influenced by dubious evidence or personal bias (Yin, 1998). According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), bias is different from subjectivity, which is related in this study to my educational background, training and competence as a researcher. By acknowledging researcher biases, by explaining the context, the work gains a degree of scientific hardness (Jones and Alony, 2011).

As a qualitative researcher in this study, I have acknowledged that the very nature of the data I have gathered and the analytic processes in which I have engaged are grounded in subjectivity (Scriven, 1972b). Glaser and Strauss (1967) recommend that researchers should enter the field without preconceived or *a priori* ideas of the

subject area; however, Charmaz (2003) comments that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to totally divorce oneself from the accumulations of knowledge and experience which temper understanding, observation and interpretation. By disclosing my background and involvement in the study, I have made the reader aware of these potential biases and I have endeavoured to account for them. Giddens (1984), suggests the participant of the research is influenced by the research and the researcher (double hermeneutic).

Given time, the subjects will eventually learn from the researcher and modify their behaviour. Landsberger (1958) found that people have a tendency to do things to please the researcher and this can result in artificial results (Hawthorne effect). In this study, it was imperative during the initial stages for me, to discuss with the trainees that the interviews were about their experiences and feelings and not about stating what I wanted to hear or what they had heard other trainees say.

Trustworthiness plays a critical part in the assessment of qualitative research (Merriam, 1998; Lincoln and Guba, 2000; Bryman, 2001). As part of this study it was important to establish a good rapport with the beginning teachers (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Rapport is described as being on the same wavelength as the person you are interviewing (Gasson, 2004). However, in this study, it was crucial that a level of trust and understanding was created because of my different roles of researcher, teacher and mentor.

Because of my background, there was not an issue with being on the same wavelength; however, it was important that the trainees were reassured that the interview data would remain confidential and anonymous and be stored in a secure place on an external hard drive and would not affect any assessments on the programme. If beginning teachers are comfortable and trusting, they will relate richer stories and elaborate much more freely on their explanations (Morrow, 2005). According to Bryman (2001), conformability is concerned with ensuring that the researcher has acted in good faith. This requires the researcher to ensure that personal values and biases are addressed. For this study, my supervisor, through questioning and challenging various aspects of my work, provided me with the

opportunity to step back from my study and reflect on my personal biases and values in terms of how I was conducting the research process.

3.3 The research approach

Ontological questions in social science research are related to the nature of reality. There are two broad and contrasting positions: objectivism, that holds that there is an independent reality, and constructionism, that assumes that reality is the product of social processes (Neuman, 2003). An objectivist position holds that there is an external reality that both exists and is discoverable; that is, "...social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors" (Bryman, 2001, p. 1717).

Neuman (2003) refers to this as a 'what you see is what you get' type of stance. In contrast, is the constructionist position that holds that people's interactions and beliefs create reality, a view that allows for multiple realities. Within constructionism, social constructionism emphasises the importance culture has on the way people view the world (Crotty, 1998). According to Crotty, constructionism is different from constructivism in that the latter focuses on the unique experience of the individual or, as he put it, "...the meaning-making activity of the individual mind" (*ibid*, p. 58). Where constructivism implies that each person's way of making sense of the world is valid and, therefore, meaning is relative, constructionism focuses more on the collective generation and transmission of meaning. It is argued that:

It would appear useful, then, to reserve the term constructivism for epistemological considerations focusing exclusively on the meaning-making activity of the individual mind and to use constructionism where the focus includes the collective generation and transmission of meaning (*ibid*, p.58).

Criticism against the information-processing constructivist approach to cognition and learning became stronger with the pioneering work of Vygotsky (1986), as well as with anthropological and ethnographic research by scholars like Lave (1991) and Rogoff (2003). The essence of this criticism was that the information-processing

constructivism saw cognition and learning as processes occurring within the mind in isolation from the surrounding and interaction with it (Kirk and Macdonald, 1998). Knowledge is considered as self-sufficient and independent of the contexts in which it finds itself. In the new view, cognition and learning are understood as interactions between the individual and a situation; knowledge is considered as situated and is a product of the activity, context and culture in which it is formed and utilised. This gave way to a new euphemism for learning as ‘participation’ and ‘social negotiation’.

The personal experiences of the beginning teachers prior to the start of their pre-service course, as well as during, are factors inherent in shaping their values and beliefs, including epistemological beliefs about teaching and learning (Powell, 1996; Goodman, 1998). Their model of professional learning is also situated in the workplace (Lave and Wenger, 1991), which takes place through social interaction with members of a community of practice and is mediated through the actions of its members, cultural artefacts, rules and the division of labour (Engerström, 1987; 1999). We are all influenced by our history and cultural context, which, in turn, shapes our view of the world, the forces of creation and the meaning of truth which are often taken for granted, particularly in education with unconscious assumptions.

Constructivism is a research paradigm that denies the existence of an objective reality asserting instead that realities are social constructions of the mind and that there exist as many such constructions as there are individuals. (Guba and Lincoln, 1989, p. 43).

Knowledge is being created in interactive ways, therefore, constructivism emphasises the subjective interrelationship between the researcher and the participants and the construction of meaning (Hayes and Oppenheim, 1997). This study is set within a social constructivist theoretical position (Berger and Luekmann, 1967). According to Neuman (2003), social constructivists hold assumptions that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work.

They explain experiences in terms of their relation to the external world, and examine how meanings are placed in everyday experience as a social construct determined by human action, interaction and thought (Crotty, 1998). In this context, researchers are part of the research endeavour rather than objective observers and

their values must be acknowledged by themselves and by their readers as an inevitable part of the outcome (Guba and Lincoln, 1989; Stratton, 1997). The goal of this study is to rely as much as possible on the beginning teachers' views as they navigate the various landscapes. My intent is to make sense of (or interpret) the beginning teachers' individual accounts of their journey, so, rather than starting with a theory, a pattern of meaning or theory will be inductively developed (Crotty, 1998).

Therefore, the aim of this study is to gain a greater understanding of beginning teacher's transitions and how it is influenced by the structural, social and cultural factors inherent in the practice setting and university environment. My philosophic viewpoint is in tune with the interpretive approach, which encompasses a subjectivist epistemology (interaction between the researcher and participants co-create understandings), a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities) and a naturalist methodology (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).

Research design for a specific study does not just happen; it is a journey (Moore, 2006) with several changes of direction. This is true of this study, and self-critical reflection on this journey was necessary to understand the study's origin, its direction and its destination, as well as the personal and professional experiences gained through the journey. This was important as it helped to chart the research process, aiding in the clarification and contextualisation of the emerging themes. To understand the changing landscapes of a beginning teachers' journey, there is a need to use specific tools to understand the beliefs, values, feelings and changes that underlie behaviours and their consequences (Robson, 2002). Qualitative research allows for these understandings, because it is particularly focused towards the complex, messy, and at times unpredictable, contributions to outcomes of social interactions (Hastie and Hay, 2012). Human behaviour is not governed by general universal laws that are characterised by underlying regularities (Cohen, Mannion and Morrison, 2007). The next section outlines a qualitative research design that was deemed most appropriate for the enquiry.

3.4 A grounded theory approach

Within a constructivist approach, I needed a method that would provide an ontological and epistemological fit with my position. I was led to explore the concept of grounded theory, as promoted by Charmaz (2006). Martin (2006) explained that using grounded theory in education helps to explain real world complexities, meaning the research must be grounded in real world situations. Accordingly, I have engaged with the literature from the beginning of the study, interweaving the literature throughout the process of evolved grounded theory as another voice contributing to my theoretical reconstruction. In this way, the literature was able to provide examples of similar phenomena that would "...stimulate my thinking about properties or dimensions that I would then use to examine the data in front of me" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 45). My personal experiences as learner, teacher and teacher educator will have affected how I interpreted the literature, as I will have included my own preconceptions into the analysis (Guba and Lincoln, 1989).

In designing this study, there were many methodological and ethical issues that had to be considered prior to arriving at an appropriate approach. This involved extensive examination of potential research approaches, at a personal level and in conjunction with my supervisor. Grounded theory is a methodological approach developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), by which theory is constructed by gathering and analysing data in real life situations. Thus, theory evolves and develops during the phases between data collection and analysis. Expanding Glaser and Strauss's (1967) original work, several different perspectives on grounded theory approaches now exist which can be separated into three distinct groups: the Glaserian approach, the Straussian approach and Charmaz's constructivist approach (Hernandez, 2009).

There are many common features to the different approaches, but there are also subtle differences. Glaser (2002) defined grounded theory as a method of discovery and treated categories as emergent from data. Researchers using this approach often maintain a distance from the data and limit the extent to which their own experiences and knowledge are integrated within the theory (Heath and Cowley, 2004). Strauss, while agreeing that theories should be traceable to the data, also states that researchers' interaction with the data leads to the construction of a grounded theory, rather than a theory emerging from the data. Charmaz's approach, which is adopted by this study, is situated within a constructivist perspective where

the researcher constructs a theory through their interaction with the data and where the theory is grounded in the participants' experiences.

Charmaz (2011b) proposes that there are three factors necessary for the integration of a grounded theory:

- i) an identified core category
- ii) theoretical saturation of major categories
- iii) an accumulated bank of analytical memos

Creating a theory entirely separate from the researcher is, according to Charmaz (2009) impossible. Glaser (2002) objects to the constructivist tradition; likening it to much descriptive capture, which seeks accurate descriptions of the data rather than abstracting information and which fails to remove researcher bias. A specific feature of grounded theory is that it enables analysis of data derived from the study of practice settings to drive the research itself, as opposed to testing hypothesis drawn from the research literature. It generates theory from practice, which can, in turn, be used to further inform practice (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). It is inquiry shaped by the aim, to discover social psychological processes.

This study will take Charmaz's (2006) social constructivist approach in an endeavour to investigate how beginning teachers navigate the betwixt and between spaces in their journey to becoming a professional practitioner. Charmaz (2009), in her constructivist approach, places a priority on the phenomenon of study and sees both data and analysis as created from shared experiences and relationships with participants and other sources of data.

Accordingly, this study will construct grounded theory through the researcher's past and present interactions with beginning teachers and research practices. Constructivist theory starts with the experience, in this case PGCE trainees' experiences before, during and after their PGCE programme. As highlighted by Charmaz (2006), their interpretation of the studied phenomena is itself a construction, which recognises the multiple social realities and creation of knowledge

by the research participants and aims towards interpreting how this affects their values, beliefs and understanding of teaching.

Charmaz (2006) sees grounded theory as evolving, taking comparisons from data and reaching up to construct abstractions and then down to tie these abstractions to data. It means learning about the specific and the general and seeing what is new, then exploring their links to larger issues or creating larger unrecognised issues in their entirety. While Charmaz (2005, p. 517) endorses grounded theory coding procedures as a way of providing "...analytic scaffolding", she is critical of grounded theory studies that have not taken account of the context in which the research question exists. She argues for credibility and originality; resonance (is it connected to the worlds of lived experience?); usefulness (can it be used by people in their everyday worlds?); and does it contribute to a better society? As I analysed the trainees' responses, I found it a complex iterative process, involving constant adjustments as I attempted to achieve the best possible fit between the emerging themes and overarching categories. Discovering the emergent themes involved rereading the transcripts and questioning the data in order to establish their relevance. According to Charmaz (2006), this 'abductive reasoning' process helps in forming hypotheses and to confirm or disconfirm the interviewees' explanations until a plausible conclusion is arrived at. She takes an epistemological stance, which she sees as an iterative spiral of purposive data gathering and analysis, which lies at the heart of the grounded theory method. This drives a process through which the researcher constructs and develops theoretical concepts from the data. This movement back and forth between the data and the conceptual elements being developed is continued until a theory has been constructed. It is grounded in the belief that concepts are constructed, not discovered. Constructivists begin with specific questions on a particular substantive area. In contrast, the classic grounded theory (Glaser, 2002) starts with a desire to know more about a substantive area, but has no preconceived questions prior to the study.

There will always be the tensions of juggling predictable outcomes with the emergent outcomes of continuing to learn, understanding that there is more than one way of doing something flexibly and approaching how the problem can be solved. The aim and focus of this research match the qualitative methodology that is aligned with the

interpretive paradigm. I have constructed my teacher educator knowledge through exploring the landscapes and experiences of 'betwixt and between' (Turner, 1982) spaces from my own experiences in teaching and through the interactions of the students through semi-structured interviews. This involves an acknowledgement that the trainees also bring with them a variety of "...emotional baggage" onto a PGCE programme (Jones, *et al.*, 2008, p. 112), which would also form an implicit part of the journey.

3.5 The sample

This study required a purposeful selection of participants that would best help the researcher understand the research question (Creswell, 2009). The sampling selection used in this study fits with Merriam's (1998, p. 8) description of what is usual in qualitative research, namely, that it was "...non-random, purposeful and small." My choice of sampling strategy was based on factors to do with time and availability (Merriam, 1998). The study used a purposive convenience sample of physical education beginning teachers (n=13) on a PGCE programme in a post-92 university in North West England, studying in the academic year of 2008- 2009.

The decision to use purposive convenience sampling and not extend the research into other institutions was taken primarily due to time constraints, which, according to Bell (2014), have great influence on data collection. Purposive convenience sampling involves a specific predefined group (in this case a cohort of n=65 PGCE physical education beginning teachers). Although this approach might limit the broad representation of results, according to Bryman (2001) it provides a springboard for further research to take place. The use of convenience sampling was not seen as detrimental, as it would still allow for a longitudinal subjective understanding to be sought through the investigation (Smith, 2008).

Originally, twenty beginning teachers volunteered to be part of the study, which involved four face-to-face interviews; three during their PGCE year and a follow-up interview after the first year of teaching. The rest of the cohort (n=43) were still feeling very uneasy about their journey through the programme and did not think they would have time to participate. Of the original twenty, seven decided not to go

ahead before the initial interview stage. However, they agreed to take part in a pilot study for the first set of interviews. The age range of the students was 21 – 28 years, with seven male and six female participants (see Table 1). The types of schools they attended as pupils were a mixture of mixed comprehensive (n=6) and single sex grammar schools (n=7). The physical education experiences they were bringing to the PGCE varied, as did the type of undergraduate degrees they had followed.

Table 1: Participant Profile

	Gender	Age	Type of school	Undergraduate degree
Student 1 Hayley	Female	28	Mixed comprehensive	Events management/4year QTS
Student 2 Zoe	Female	23	Mixed comprehensive	Sport psychology
Student 3 Adrian	Male	24	Boys grammar school	Sport science
Student 4 Mark	Male	23	Boys grammar school	Sport studies
Student 5 Danny	Male	24	Mixed comprehensive	Sport coaching
Student 6 Amy	Female	21	Mixed comprehensive	Sport performance coaching
Student 7 Elizabeth	Female	22	Girls grammar school	Sport and leisure management
Student 8 Ian	Male	21	Mixed comprehensive	Physical education
Student 9 John	Male	21	Boys grammar school	Sport development with physical education
Student 10 Chris	Male	23	Mixed comprehensive	Leisure and sport studies
Student 11 Cath	Female	21	Girls grammar school	Sport development with physical education
Student 12 Matt	Male	22	Boys grammar school	Sport and exercise science
Student 13 Sally	Female	23	Mixed comprehensive	Physical education and youth sport

3.6 Ethical considerations

While all research involves ethical issues, Punch (2005) asserts that they are likely to be more acute in social research because it requires collecting from people, about

people. Ethical issues are heightened in qualitative investigations because the level of intrusion into people's lives is often greater than in quantitative research (Punch, 2005). Consideration was given to ethical issues in adherence to the revised BERA Guidelines 2011 from the outset of this qualitative study.

As a safeguard to ensure that ethical issues have been considered, educational researchers are required to submit their research proposals to the appropriate ethics committee for approval. Ethical approval was sought and granted by the University Ethics Committee. Bryman (2001) proposes that the ethical principles in social research that need to be considered revolve around four overlapping areas, which are: harm to participants; informed consent; invasion of privacy; and deception. The following details how these four aspects have been considered in this study.

3.6.1 Protecting participants

This can entail a number of aspects, including physical harm, stress, loss of self-esteem and coercion. In this study, there was no risk of physical harm and no coercion of any of the participants to be involved in the research or to disclose information. The rights of any individual in a research study are that confidentiality of information and anonymity are assured and that participation is voluntary and based on informed consent (Couchman and Dawson, 1995).

As the researcher, I understood fully the ethical and moral issues arising from the dual role of the researcher as university tutor and researcher. This balance of power and status differential had to be explored fully in my initial introduction to the participants. In this study, the interviewer is also a tutor, assessor and mentor on the programme, which had to be addressed before the interviews commenced. Dual role research (practitioner and researcher) raises two overarching issues; the position of power and the release of results compromising the privacy or professional status of the trainees.

I proceeded carefully with this integrated role, in a justifiable and sound manner and without threatening the validity of the research endeavour. Participants agreed voluntarily to participate (i.e. without physical or psychological coercion) and

agreement was based on full and open information (i.e. purpose of the study, duration, methods and possible risks). The timing of the interviews took account of the patterns of the PGCE year, so there was no added pressure when the trainees were out on school placement (see table 2 p.81) . The September interviews were timed before they went out on placement, the February interviews took place at the break between their two placements and the third interview at the end of their pre-service year. The final interview was towards the end of their first year in teaching, which is known to be a very stressful and challenging period in teachers' professional lives (Murray 2010). Also of critical importance, therefore, in minimising harm to participants, were ethical considerations related to informed consent and confidentiality.

The principle of informed consent means that potential research participants are given as much information as necessary to make informed decisions about whether or not they wish to participate in the research (Cohen, Mannion and Morrison, 2007). This means I had the responsibility to ensure that consent was based on the trainees being truthfully informed about the risks and benefits of taking part in the research. Informed consent and participation selection for the whole study occurred at the beginning of the pre-service year. I addressed the trainees in a professional studies session in the first week of their programme.

I informed them verbally about my research, including possible risks and benefits to participation. It was important from the start of this process that the trainees were willing to open up and, therefore, I had to reassure them that all information would be confidential and that only the researcher would listen to any recordings made. The consent form clearly indicated that all information would remain anonymous and that the trainees could withdraw at any time. Possible benefits were the opportunity for participants to reflect on their experiences as developing teachers, and support and guidance through gaining greater understanding of factors that help or hinder beginning teachers' transitions into becoming physical education teachers.

Possible risks related to concerns about confidentiality and anonymity, and strategies for preserving these were outlined. Informed consent of each interviewee was gained (Sarantakos, 2005), by each participant being given a participant

information sheet explaining their right to confidentiality, and to withdraw at any stage during the research, in line with the University Ethics Committee guidelines.

Bryman (2004) suggests that the issue of privacy is closely linked to the notion of informed consent, particularly in relation to the issues of anonymity and confidentiality. According to Christians (2000), ethics requires the researcher to take care to maintain the confidentiality of all data so that the identities, information of each participant and research locations remain confidential. Several measures were employed to ensure that confidentiality and anonymity were maintained.

All transcriptions were kept in a secure password-protected hard drive with restricted access. Participants were assured of anonymity by ascribing a number to each trainee in the reporting of the data. Cohen, Mannion and Morrison (2007) talk about privacy in relation to respecting the rights of participants to only divulge information with which they feel comfortable. It was also discussed that the content of the interviews was not part of their regular professional practice as part of the programme and they were being conducted solely for the purpose of a research project. At no time during the research process was pressure put on the trainees to reveal information.

Deception is linked to the ethical principle of informed consent and voluntary participation. Neuman (2003) contends that the right of a person not to participate becomes a critical issue whenever the researcher uses deception, disguises the research, or uses covert research methods. In carrying out this study, no deception was intended or knowingly carried out. I was also aware of the suggestion by Sarantakos (2005) that a potential, ethical weakness of qualitative research relates to the requirements that researchers enter the personal world of their participants. In this study, all care was taken to ensure that my behaviour as a researcher was ethical, unbiased and sensitive to the participants and their contexts (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

Five of the interview transcriptions were developed into vignettes, which revealed interesting insights into the process of beginning teachers developing their personal practical philosophy of teaching and the factors influencing their deliberations. They were constructed from primary data, giving me confidence in their trustworthiness

and representativeness (Barter and Renold, 1999). They are meaningful, contextual and reflect 'reality' (Spalding and Phillips 2007). Vignettes demonstrate the ability to capture how the beginning teachers, meanings, beliefs and actions are all situationally positioned (Hazel, 1995). The vignettes provided examples of behaviours, which facilitated the discussion around the opinions expressed by the beginning teachers (Hughes, 1998).

By using stories about situations, they made reference to important points in the study of perceptions, beliefs and attitudes. They are a useful way of "...making concrete the events and experiences of practice, facilitating the identification of individuals' situated understanding and practical theory" (Phillips, Schostak and Tyler, 2000, p. 130). The vignettes highlight the particular themes of feeling safe, moving outside the comfort zone, developing a teacher identity, critical reflection and creating a synergy between learning goals and social goals

3.7 Data collection

As discussed previously, the focus of the research was on gaining a greater understanding of the journey of thirteen physical education beginning teachers across complex landscapes of practice. My aim was to understand and interpret the beginning teachers' experiences in terms of the transitions and influences and to present findings that were '...thick' (Ponterotto, 2006, p. 538) in description. Thick description is a way of achieving a type of external validity by detailing the beginning teachers' patterns of cultural and social relationships as they cross the boundaries on their journey.

Semi-structured interviews were used in this study to elicit personal reflections on the trainees' experiences of becoming a professional teacher. By emphasising this strategy it would allow a social, interpersonal encounter between researcher and research participants (Kvale, 1996). In this sense, interviews are regarded as a place where knowledge is generated between the participants through conversations with a specific purpose, which are often question-based (Dyer, 1995). Face to face interviews have the advantage of noting changes in body language and facial

expressions which can be related the interviewees reaction to the question (Josselson 2013).

However, the interview is a constructed, rather than naturally occurring situation, and this makes it different from everyday conversations. Interviews enable the participants, whether they are interviewers or interviewees, to discuss their interpretation of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view (Cohen, Mannion and Morrison, 2007). As Laing (1967) highlights, using the interview method in this study was not simply about collecting data about the trainees' experiences, it was part of life itself and its human embeddedness is completely intertwined. Fieldwork requires the researcher to observe and talk directly with the people being studied (Neuman, 2003). This research was designed to gain a greater understanding of the thirteen beginning teachers' journeys across landscapes of practice. I elected to interview the participants to provide, as Kvale (1996, p. 1) puts it, "...an understanding of their world and their life." In qualitative research, an interview is seen as a conversation with a purpose: that of obtaining specific kinds of information (Merriam, 1998).

The interview method is a social encounter, not just a means of collecting data (Cohen, Mannion and Morrison, 2007). Creswell (2009) explains that data are inevitably lost, for a transcription represents the translation from one set of rule systems (oral and interpersonal) to another rule system (written language). Kvale (1996, p. 166) suggested the "...prefix trans indicates a change of state or form; transcription is selective transformation."

I felt as the researcher (and experienced teacher and teacher educator), I possessed the relevant subject knowledge of physical education, teaching and communication skills to establish an appropriate atmosphere and rapport, which would allow the trainees to talk freely about their experiences (Kvale, 1996). The interviews were conducted out of regular contact time of the programme, in a room which was not the researcher's office, in order to allow the trainees to feel at ease in a professional setting. All the interviews were recorded, using a Sony IC recorder (ICD-PX820). The average length of the interviews was approximately thirty minutes. Although the beginning teachers' did not know the individual questions in advance, they were

given a general overview of the intentions of the study. There are a variety of different approaches to interviewing that can be utilised, including fully structured, semi-structured, unstructured, informant, group and focus group interview (Robson, 2002).

Fully structured interviews were rejected as they do not allow for variation or expansion on questions and are too rigid in format to elicit in-depth responses which may offer new insights. While unstructured interviews could offer the latter and are beneficial in providing an informal setting, which could allow the interviewee to take the lead, these were not appropriate as a certain element of structure was required in order to maintain focus whilst still allowing for new lines of enquiry to be explored as they arose; hence, the semi-structured approach was adopted.

This strategy has two advantages; it allows not only a broad overview, but also provides an opportunity to delve deeper into particular issues not previously considered to be highlighted (Wilson, 2009). The spoken word, however, has a residue of ambiguity, no matter how carefully we word the questions and report or code the answers (Gratton and Jones, 2010). Asking questions and getting answers is a much harder task than it may at first seem (Fontana and Frey, 1998).

Data were collected in four stages (Table 2). The timing of the interviews took account of the patterns of the PGCE year, as the researcher and tutor on the programme I was aware of the demands of school and university work and I did not want the interviews to be seen as an extra burden on the beginning teachers. Stage one was at the start of the beginning teachers' pre-service year, before any experience of their placement schools. It was important at this stage to find out the beginning teachers' initial thoughts and feelings about becoming a teacher, and what, and who, had motivated their desire to teach. The second stage was after they had completed their first placement, which consisted of nine weeks of three days a week (September 2008 – December 2008) and five full-time weeks (January 2009 – February 2009) in the same school.

Table 2: Data collection schedule by interview

Phase	Dates interviews conducted between
1	Thursday September 11 th , 2008 – Tuesday September 23 rd , 2008
2	Monday February 9 th , 2009 – Tuesday February 23 rd , 2009
3	Monday June 15 th , 2009 – Tuesday June 23 rd , 2009
4	Tuesday May 17 th , 2010 – Wednesday June 30 th , 2010

This stage allowed the trainees to reflect on their learning journeys so far and the transitions they had made. After three weeks back in university, the beginning teachers embarked on a second placement, full-time, for twelve weeks (March 2009 – June 2009). Stage three data were collected after the completion of this second placement, which was at the end of their PGCE year. This allowed the beginning teachers time to reflect on the peaks and troughs of their year and their expectations for the future. Stage four of the data collection was towards the end of their first year of teaching. Only having one interview during the NQT year could have limited the richness of the data collected however, it allowed the novice teachers to link the experiences of their PGCE year with their reflections of the induction year as an NQT. Due to travel costs and time constraints, six of the stage four interviews were conducted over the telephone. These interviews were ten to fifteen minutes shorter than the face-to-face interviews, which Creswell (2009) explains as being because participants tend to be more evasive and quicker to respond than face-to-face interviews. The interviews were transcribed word for word and were sent to the beginning teachers to check that they were a true and accurate record of the conversation.

3.8 Data analysis

Data analysis is the search for patterns within the data (Neuman, 2003) that, once identified, will be interpreted by the researcher. In order to make sense of the data, I read and reread the transcriptions in order to develop codes and categories of codes (Merriam, 1998). Managing the data was a key concern. In this study the primary sources for data analysis were the transcriptions of the fifty-two individual interviews.

As Taylor and Bogdan (1998) emphasise, qualitative data analysis is not an easy process, because it “...is not a mechanical or technical process; it is a process of inductive reasoning, thinking and theorising.” In analysing the data from this study,

great attention was paid to understanding the participants' experiences as a means of addressing their perceptions of a beginning teachers' learning journey, and to also focus upon their interpretation of their version of events. In addition, it was vital as a researcher to not incorporate my own personal interpretation of the beginning teachers' experiences.

Therefore, throughout the analysis process, every attempt was made to keep as close as possible to the spoken word of the beginning teachers, from transcription through to theme development. This was done through careful use of language, ensuring that, where possible, the beginning teachers' own words were used. In addition, all interviews were recorded to aid with the transcription and analysis process, and these were referred to in order to ensure all analysis was kept within context. Kvale (1996, p. 165) suggests:

Transcripts are not copies or representations of some original reality; they are interpretative constructions that are useful tools for given purposes. Transcripts are decontextualized conversations; they are abstractions, as topographical maps are abstractions from the original landscape from which they are derived.

The transcript can become a screen between the researcher and the original live interview situation. This meant that the transcripts had to be read and re-read many times in order to stay as close to the meaning as possible.

NVivo analysis

NVivo 10 is a computer-based organisational tool designed to aid the managing and organising of qualitative data analysis research. It is a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software tool (CAQDAS) and was utilised to assist in the analysis of the interview transcripts. However, I took note of Taylor and Bogdan (1998), who cautioned that, while computer-aided data analysis can be a great help in coding the data, the insight and intuition of the researcher is invaluable when interpreting the data. Although software programs can be used to facilitate data storage, coding, retrieval, comparing and linking, only humans can perform the challenging task of analysis (Fielding, 1998; Creswell, 2009).

With the development of CAQDAS has come debate about the appropriateness of using computers to analyse qualitative data (Seidel and Kelle, 1995; Weitzman, 2000). The key issue is whether CAQDAS changes the way analysis is conducted and to what extent it enhances or detracts from the quality of qualitative research (Bringer, Johnston and Brackenbridge, 2004). Welsh (2002) warns researchers to take care that their research does not get driven by the attributes of the software, creating codes that add little or no value to the analysis of the data. Kelle (1997) also sounds a note of caution. Terms used quite frequently in the ongoing debate, like 'computer- aided qualitative data analysis' or 'software program for theory building', carry implicit connotations of computer programs as tools for the analysis of textual data, which could be compared to software packages that perform statistical analyses. However, NVivo is a way of coding that refers to a word or short phrase from the actual language found in the data, according to Strauss and Corbin (1998, p. 33) they are "...the terms used by participants themselves." Qualitative research usually involves analysing passages of unstructured text, then searching and collecting ideas expressed about certain themes or specific words used. This difficulty is caused, in large part, by the richness of qualitative data (Fielding, 1998). While the boundary between data retrieval and data analysis has blurred somewhat as subsequent generations of CAQDAS software have become ever more sophisticated, it is helpful to recognise the important distinction between organising and analysing data at the outset.

Critical explanation of grounded theory method

Coding is the core process in grounded theory methodology. It is through coding that the conceptual abstraction of data and its reintegration as theory takes place. Coding is the umbrella term for characteristics, actions, experiences, phrases and explanations in the initial analysis of the data (see appendix 1). Constant comparison of incident with incident in the data leads to the initial generation of codes. According to Neuman (2003, p. 442), "...coding is two simultaneous activities: mechanical data reduction and analytic organisation of data into themes. The researcher imposes order on the data." According to Dey (1993), classification and connection are at the heart of coding. Kerlinger (1970) defined it as the translation of question responses and respondent information to specific categories for the purpose of analysis. Open

coding was used as a starting point to provide analytic leads for further investigation and to "...see the direction in which to take the study" (Glaser and Holton, 2007 p. 56). Future incidents are then compared to existing codes, codes are compared with codes, groups of codes representing a higher level concept form a category; categories are subsequently compared with categories (Charmaz 2006). Ultimately it is this iterative analytical method of constantly comparing and collecting or generating data that results in high level conceptually abstract categories that are rich with meaning, possessive of properties and providing an explanation of variance in the changes of direction. Using codes and categories are essential methods that differentiate grounded theory from other predominantly interpretive research designs (Birks and Mills 2011). Decision making when constantly comparing data relies on a combination of inductive and abductive thought. Inductive thought is defined as 'a type of reasoning that begins with study of a range of individual cases and extrapolates patterns from them to form a conceptual category' (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007, p. 603), whereas abduction is defined as 'a type of reasoning that begins by examining data and after scrutiny of these data, entertains all possible explanations of the observed data, and more plausible interpretation of the observed data (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007, p. 206). According to Reichertz (2007), it is the use of inductive and abductive thought that accounts for the conceptual leaps of analysis that occur to move a grounded theory away from being a qualitative descriptive account and towards being an abstract conceptual framework. Theoretical integration involves processes that are intellectually and emotionally demanding (Strauss 1987). Theoretical integration is not just a collection of categories that are assembled into a theory Birks and Mills (2007) propose there are three factors necessary for the integration of a grounded theory; an identified core category; theoretical saturation of major categories and an accumulated bank of analytical memos. Once categories are saturated they are theoretical abstract yet substantively grounded (Charmaz, 2006), thereby functioning as the link between the data and the final theory. In figure 3.1 the memos (blue arrows) indicate how they helped to lubricate each of the cogs as they rotated around each other. Memos are not just produced as a mechanism for recording analytical insights; they are functional tools that serve as a reference throughout the process. Advanced coding is at the heart of theoretical integration figure 3.1 summarises the coding phases which highlights that the grounded theory process is not linear. Charmaz (2006) highlights the need to be

tolerant of ambiguity during coding and stay focused and precise in the grounded theory method.

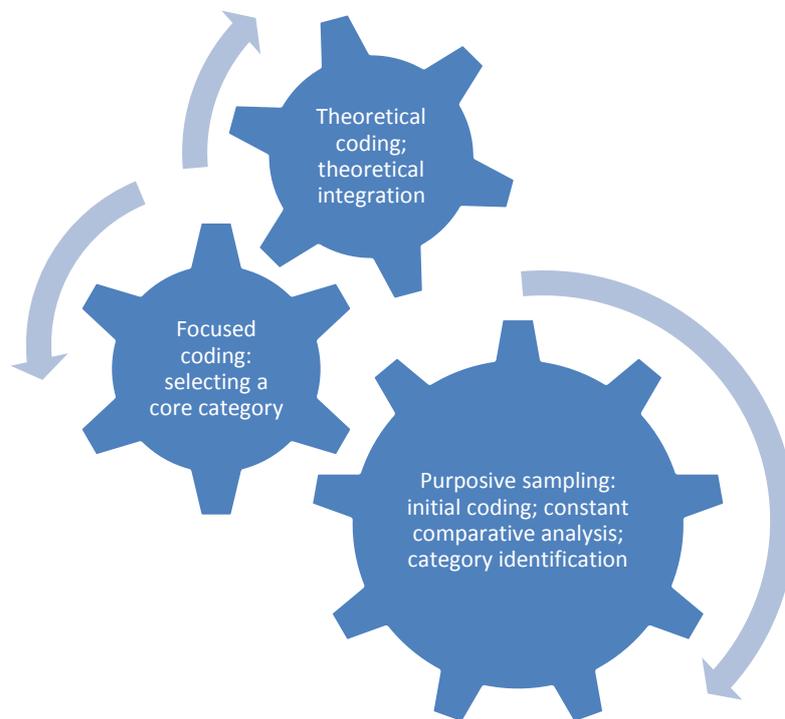


Figure 3.1: Advanced coding and theoretical integration (Birks and Mills, 2011, p.114).

Initial coding

I decided, as Clarke (2005, p. 84) suggests, on a period of “...digesting and reflecting” on the data before starting the initial coding. This allowed me more time to think through the process and plan my time. The coding process for constructivist grounded theory uses three types of coding: open, focused and theoretical (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007a). This is compared to classical grounded theory with open, substantive and theoretical, and Straussian with its open, axial and selective coding (Howell, 2013). While the terminology may be similar, the definitions of what is termed ‘theoretical’ coding are different. Open coding uses a process of constant comparison (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), which is a simultaneous and congruent process of coding and analysis (Birks, Chapman and Francis, 2008). Initial or open coding, allowed insight into the beginning teachers’ lives and what could be learned about them. How did they respond to different contexts? What contributed to their different responses? Coding distils data, sorts them and gives an indication for

making comparisons with other segments of data. As I commenced ‘open coding’ the transcripts, I felt lost and uncertain about the process, particularly over the amount of time and mental stress each transcript took. There was an anxiety as to whether my interpretations were at all plausible. Several initial codes stood out which are detailed in Table 3. Raising the process of coding and analysis from the descriptive to the conceptual level and trusting my own intuitive sense of the conceptualisation process to allow a core category to emerge was a challenging process. Then being comfortable to delimit data collection and coding to just the core concept and those concepts that relate to the core was a further challenge. I was worried about missing something in the data that was left behind, however, I was reminded of Holton (2007, p.266) who acknowledges that ‘it is important to remember that grounded theory is about concepts that emerge from the data, not the data per se. Moving into theoretical coding I realised how important the process of using memos in the coding and analysis stages would be.

Table 3: Initial coding from data collection

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Influences of PE as a pupil, PE teachers, coaches, external sports teams, motivation, enthusiasm, doubt, fear, passion, drive	Influence of peer group, university, personal tutor, mentor, context of school, anxious, nervous, behaviour management, content knowledge, pedagogic content knowledge vulnerable, reflection of teaching	Influence of peer group, mentor, university, department, relationship with mentor, school department, experience of mentor, critical reflection on learning	Influence of social and cultural aspects of the practice setting, Influence of school context, acceptance, relief, critical reflection

It was also hard to decide at what level to chunk the data, either as words, phrases or sentences. I challenged myself to stop coding and capture, in the moment, the conceptual ideas about the codes I was finding. During the first reading, although I used NVivo, I also resorted to using coloured pens to highlight emerging concepts and record the open codes. In subsequent readings, I reviewed the initial codes and identified patterns; emerging themes were highlighted and, once common themes were identified, data were categorised according to the themes created. These were

then explored during subsequent data collecting. Note taking or memoing (or, in this study, hundreds of post it notes) were used to define ideas that best fit and interpret the data as tentative and analytic categories. The following offers a sample of memos written in conjunction with more than twenty indicators of the category personal and contextual factors:

Memo 7 personal and community really start to learn when they link past experience and make a real connection to other learners and teachers. Individual motivation for learning is stimulated and reinforced in community

Memo 11 peer learning groups and bonding, re-reading field notes noted many references to PLGs and feeling secure. Appears this is a common link that brings the beginning teachers together like 'glue' that bonds them together and keeps them safe.

Memo 16 contextual factors sometimes eroded their enthusiasm as day-to-day routine dulled their challenge to be creative in solving a problem, too easy to fall into line.

Following this, focused coding was employed. During this process, the codes developed during open coding were then tested against further data (Holt, Knight and Tamminen, 2012). It is at this stage, where relationships are being formed between categories, when codes become more directed and selective and the study "...begins to fulfil its theoretical promise" (La Rossa, 2005).

I began to think more conceptually, leading towards theoretical integration by which categories identified in focused coding are integrated; for example, the social and cultural aspects of the practice setting, including the beginning teachers' relationship with peers and the university setting. The aim was to build theory through the construction of categories directly from the data, which sets grounded theory apart from strategies used in other types of research (Charmaz, 2011). I was constantly interacting with the data, asking questions of it and making comparisons.

The process started by being open and flexible to a wide range of predominantly descriptive categories, and progressed to the refining, and ultimately saturation of, existing, and increasingly analytic, categories (See figure 3.1). However, I found that saturation was a goal rather than reality, as modifications or changes in perspective is always possible.

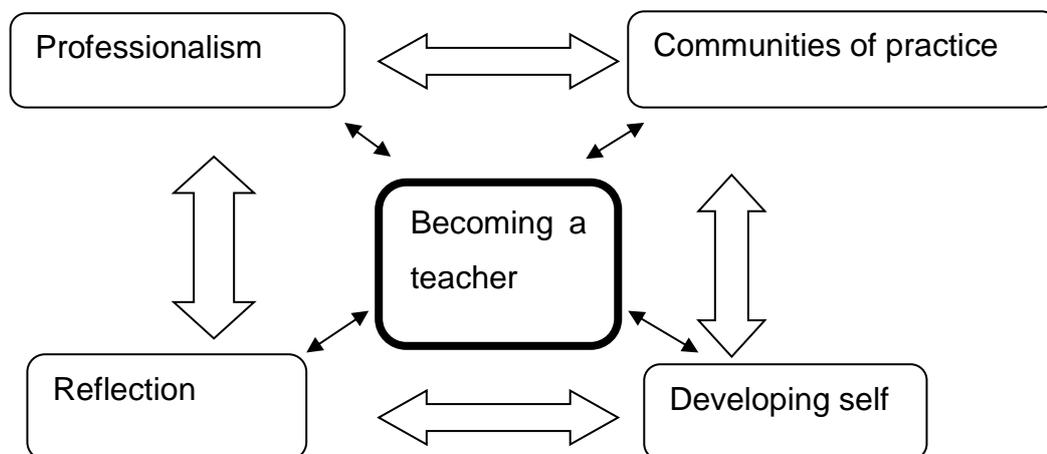


Figure 3.2: Category identification

Focused coding identified core categories, making connections between and within categories (see appendix 1). Three core categories emerged: the influence of personal and contextual factors, the significance of formal and informal relationships and developing classroom practice. Each of these core categories is central as they relate to many other categories and their properties and account for a large portion of the variation in a pattern of behaviour. They became stable patterns, which were increasingly related to other variables.

The research process as a whole was reflexive. All processes involved in the data collection were evaluated and reflected upon throughout the study. Reflecting on the data directly after each interview allowed for initial ideas about themes and key points to be drawn out. In this sense, grounded theories are substantive theories as opposed to formal theories, because they are related to everyday situations and are, therefore, seen to be of more practical use (Neuman, 2003; Cresswell, 2009). Strauss and Corbin (1998, p. 12) note that grounded theories are more likely to resemble reality and, therefore, offer “...insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action.”

3.9 Limitations of the research

There are a number of limitations to this study that need to be acknowledged. Firstly, there is the specific nature of the socio-cultural contexts of the school. The participants in the study were only a small sample from one university. Whilst there may be similarities in the constraints and experiences of the beginning teachers in this and other contexts, it is inevitable that each individual beginning teacher and each individual context will display their own unique features.

The study only presents the perspectives of beginning teachers; it would have been preferable to include mentors in giving a more rounded view of the changing landscapes. However, the internal and external pressures on schools and individual teachers is immense, as the shifting changes in policy, structure and culture restricts them in sharing freely and divulging insider information with an outsider.

A major influence on this study was my multiple roles as researcher, course tutor and link tutor. I outlined the features of this role in terms of insider knowledge in Chapter Four. However, participants, whether consciously or unconsciously, may have felt the need to impress on me either knowledge extracted from various lectures or to say what they felt they should say or what they thought I wanted them so say.

I endeavoured to minimise these limitations by establishing trusting relationships within which honest views could be expressed and shared, by discussing the aims and objectives with the beginning teachers as part of this process. Although I took steps to actively enhance my reflexivity, my multiple roles raised the distinct possibility of me drawing conclusions that matched my expectations and my investment in my own professional identity.

3.10 Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodology and methods used in this study. A qualitative, interpretive strategy was employed; the process of selecting the sample and the ethical considerations that guide the research are identified and outlined. Data were gathered over two years by way of interview. The interviews were recorded and transcribed to provide text for analysis through coding and categorisation. Explanations and theory that emerged are grounded in the data. Issues relating to criteria for soundness of this research are addressed by using multiple sources of information gathered over time. A second layer of data is presented in the form of five vignettes, which illustrate the need for a supportive space. They focus on the issues, challenges and dilemmas the beginning teachers encountered in negotiating the various boundary crossings. The aim of this longitudinal study was to gain a greater understanding of the transition of beginning teachers into becoming a professional from the standpoint of thirteen physical education novice teachers. A reflexive approach was used during the research process to assist in demonstrating the value and trustworthiness of the study. It is with this in mind that the findings are now presented and discussed under their thematic titles in the following respective chapters; the initiation phase (separation) and the transitional phase of wanting to become a teacher; and the assimilation and moving forward phase of becoming a teacher.

4 Presentation and Analysis of the Findings

The purpose of Chapter Four is to explain the findings of the data analysis in this study. It outlines the data-gathering process that utilised a series of semi-structured interviews with thirteen beginning teachers. In addition, five vignettes provide supplementary information in support of the emerging themes, all of which indicate the need for a third space, such as that provided by the university-based Peer Learning Group (PLG). These vignettes facilitated the capturing of critical events that functioned as catalysts in the beginning teachers' professional learning journey and how they negotiated the various boundaries they had to cross.

- Feeling safe in a learning community that can provide professional and emotional support (Chris and Zoe).
- Finding your own style and developing a teacher identity (Cath and Ian).
- Creating synergy between the learning goals and social goals of physical education (Mark).
- Moving outside a comfort zone into uncharted territory within an expansive learning environment (Adrian).
- Using reflection to provide a process for developing, discerning and learning (Hayley).

The data are drawn from four points in time over a two year period, namely at the start of the beginning teachers' pre-service programme (September 2008); after the completion of their first placement school (February 2009); at the end of their pre-service programme (June 2009); and at the end of their first year of teaching (May/June 2010). The analysis required the identification of examples from the data that highlighted the factors that influenced the beginning teachers development and learning and how their experiences affected the way they constructed themselves as teachers.

The key themes under which the data were collected are: the influence of personal and contextual factors; the significance of formal/informal relationships; developing classroom practice (See Table 4).

Table 4: Key themes

	The influence of personal and contextual factors (school and university)	The significance of formal and informal relationships	Developing classroom practice
Phase 1 initiation starting out	4.1.1 Own biographies, support structures, early influences	4.1.2 Developing reflection of learning, changing contexts Vignette 1	4.1.3 Developing content knowledge, reflection of themselves as teachers,
Phase 2 transition finding their feet	4.2.1 Their university experience, PLGs school-based mentors. Vignette 2	4.2.2 Influence of mentors, peers, role models.	4.2.3 Engagement in professional dialogues creating support networks. Vignette 3
Phase 3 assimilation moving on and letting go	4.3.1 Support mechanisms, becoming autonomous, emotional wellbeing.	4.3.2 Developing pedagogic content knowledge, using a wider range of teaching approaches. Vignette 4	4.3.3 Developing critical reflection, developing their own style flexibility Vignette 5

The research was structured around three pre-determined phases of a) the initiation phase (September – December), b) the transition phase (December– May), and c) the assimilation phase (June – June) (see Figure 4.1).

The central focus of the beginning teachers was the desire to be a physical education teacher (see Figure 4.1). The data highlights that learning to be a teacher emerges through various states of practice and social arrangements, through routines, sub-routines, processes and experiences. The journey from novice to expert involves crossing many boundaries. Beginning teachers move through different territories where the terrain is unfamiliar and face the challenge of negotiating and combining components from different contexts to achieve “...hybrid situations” (Engeström, *et al.*, 1995, p. 319).

According to van Gennep's (1909) seminal work, *Les Rites de Passage* (discussed earlier in the study), the traveller moves through three phases. The initiate (that is, the person undergoing the ritual) is first stripped of the social status that he or she possessed before the ritual, inducted into the liminal period of transition, and, finally, is given his or her new status and re-assimilated into society. These three steps align with the three phases of the study, from novice to qualified teacher. The initiation phase (starting out) represents the detachment of the beginning teachers from their previous social statuses (students and pupils in school). During the transition phase (finding their feet), the beginning teachers pass through a stage Turner (1982, p. 24) refers to as "...social limbo", when they are suspended between different learning communities. They perceive that they do not belong to the university or their placement schools. The third phase (of assimilation, letting go and moving forward) is where the beginning teachers become qualified (QTS) and they enter their first post and new school community.

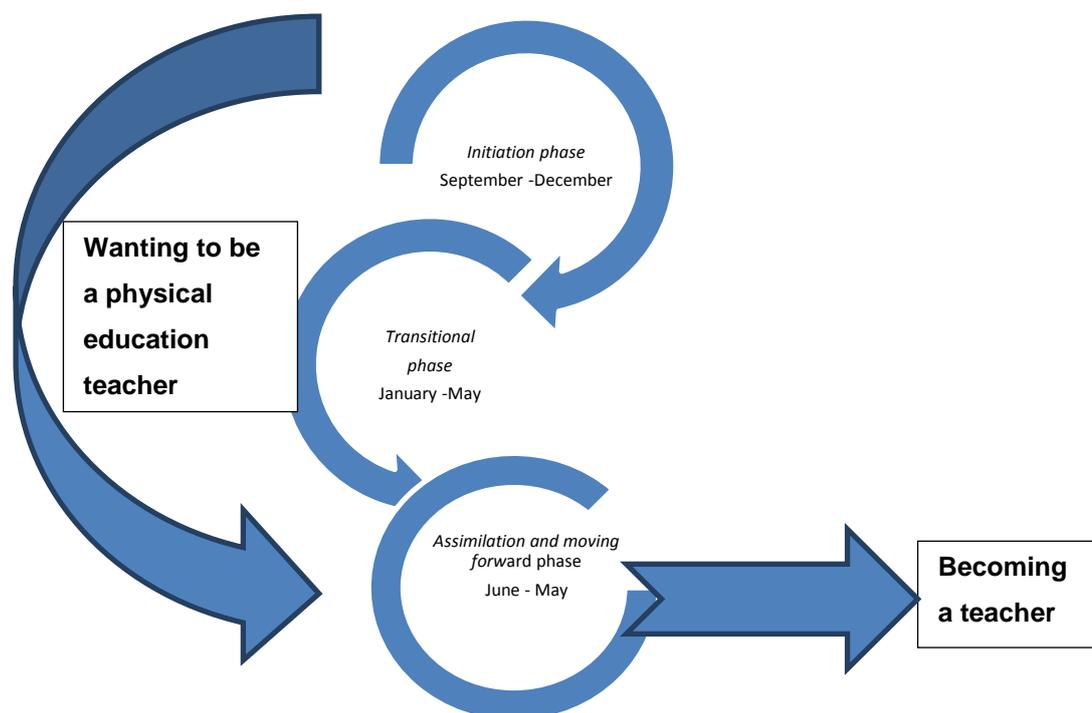


Figure 4.1: The three phases through which the beginning teachers pass

The journey to becoming a teacher is not straightforward, as the crossings have to be navigated with care (see vignettes 2 and 3). The individual differences and experiences of each beginning teacher means there is not a one size fits all

mentality, as each novice will have encountered critical incidents differently, depending on the beginning teacher's influences and emotions.

Although it appears to be a linear process, with the phases marking the start and end of each part, the negotiating of each border crossing happened for each trainee beginning teacher at a different time, depending on their previous experiences, their self-confidence and their ability to learn from mistakes and take on board feedback.

4.1 Initiation phase (starting out)

To move through this phase, the beginning teachers have to embark on their university programme and also complete a twelve-week placement in a secondary school. The beginning teachers were finding their way socially, culturally and professionally in different environments. Their prior and new experiences in these contexts facilitated how they viewed themselves (their identities) and mediated how they constructed their relationships. Learning and personal development are inextricably intertwined in this process.

4.1.1 The influence of personal and contextual factors

The early influences of experiences that shaped the beginning teachers' beliefs about physical education were their own schooling. For some, this was not always a positive memory:

I didn't obviously have previous experience only seeing my teachers. It wasn't like the philosophy that I wish to adopt (Sally).

As pupils, many of the beginning teachers used the apprenticeship of observation model (Lortie, 1975) to shape their beliefs about best pedagogical practice:

The only way you know of teaching is that style that you've learnt or you've replicated from other people (Ian).

A recurring theme during the initiation phase was that physical education was only concerned with teaching sport and games. According to the majority of beginning teachers, physical education was:

Lots of drills into games (Matt); very games-based (Elizabeth); just games all delivered the same way (Hayley).

The above is in agreement with Lawson (1983), who identified a number of socialising factors which shape physical education teachers' knowledge and beliefs about the purpose of physical education, including childhood and adolescent experiences. Ten of the thirteen beginning teachers talked about activities in their own schooling and not their learning, for example:

I always enjoyed PE, but I don't remember much about really what I learnt.(John).

It depends what you mean by learning. It helped me to, like, regurgitate it time and time again; in terms of learning, possibly not (Elizabeth).

Although this study was designed to focus on Initial Teacher Education, it was clear that the knowledge and beliefs of the beginning teachers were influenced by events and life experiences encountered prior to embarking on their programmes. Prior experiences influenced the development of perspectives and beliefs, not only about education and schools, but also about how the beginning teachers felt teachers should enact their roles.

Danny expressed that his motivation to teach came from his own positive schooling experiences as a pupil:

I'll have to thank my PE teachers, because if they hadn't done a good job, then I wouldn't want to be a PE teacher; so I thank them for that (Danny).

Despite the fact that all (n=13) beginning teachers had enjoyed their own physical education at school, nine of them also explained that they had been taught by poor teachers who didn't care what they did in lessons and, consequently, they experienced low quality programmes consisting of free play or 'unsupervised' games:

(They) just give you a ball, go off and play (Matt).

You know, the old perception, you go out in the cold, wet field and you're made to do it, with all the teachers all wrapped up in their gear and they're like, 'right, go off, run around' and they sit there, sometimes with their cup of coffee in a lesson, and just, you know, didn't really engage the rest of the pupils in the class at all (Zoe).

Only three of the beginning teachers thought that elements of their own school curriculum had been high quality because they had been taught various activities by ‘caring’ teachers whose lessons were “....structured, interesting and fun”.

Some of the beginning teachers noted that this kind of teaching had attracted them into the profession:

The teachers were a massive influence on me (Danny).

They knew what they were talking about (Adrian).

I learnt a lot from them (Cath).

It is apparent that the perceptions, behaviours and practices about content, teaching and teaching philosophies were influenced by their own school experiences. The qualities the majority of beginning teachers associated with inspirational teaching were:

Enthusiasm; (Cath) encouragement; (Danny) strong interpersonal skills ;(Zoe) generating confidence; (Mark) energy and drive (Elizabeth).

Some of these qualities they were able to identify in themselves and, therefore, identified with being a teacher. However, many of them listed negative qualities of their physical education teachers, which included descriptors such as:

Demotivated; (Chris) waiting to retire; (Matt) set in their ways (Sally).

In these cases, the beginning teachers’ motivation had come from realising that, perhaps, they could do a better job and that their love of physical education and sport was their true motivation for wanting to teach the subject:

I always wanted to teach physical education, but not utilise the methods that my teacher did (Elizabeth).

What their teachers did as a result of their daily practice (behaviour, discourse or subject knowledge) seemed to have an impact on the aspirations of all the participants, either positively or negatively.

4.1.2 The significance of formal and informal relationships

During the first three weeks of the pre-service programme, the beginning teachers were immersed into an induction which introduced them to the year ahead. During this induction, the beginning teachers were placed in PLG which were organised and managed by the university, to help and support their journey through the programme:

The PLGs helped you build your confidence (Amy).

It was good to get everyone's view on types of behaviour that you've dealt with in a safe environment (Elizabeth).

Every Tuesday morning in PLG was hugely beneficial to my teaching (Chris).

It was the PLG spaces (see vignette 1) in which Chris and Zoe could share and discuss their fears and anxieties with their peers and personal tutor about initial beliefs and assumptions about teaching in the year ahead. During the initiation phase, the PLGs became an important support community where they could swap resources, learn about different perspectives and provide emotional help during this early stage and subsequent phases of their course.

The guidance and information given in professional studies lectures did not always correspond, and often conflicted, with what was being said in schools (see vignette 2). The beginning teachers found it very difficult to adjust or accept this incongruence in their learning experiences:

My mentor indicated that university was not important (Mark).

The importance of shared language and concepts is a vital ingredient in supporting the beginning teachers' progress. The idea that beginning teachers are taught about the results of research carried out by researchers (who are not seen as teachers) helps to account for the widespread sense of irrelevance of courses in schools of education in university (Korthagan, *et al.*, 2006).

Lectures, where didactic forms of delivery were used, were not seen as a worthwhile part of the university programme. This was particularly the case in professional

studies lectures that considered general practice, which was not specific to physical education. The beginning teachers 'switched off' as the issues raised were not related to their subject:

Lecturers lose me; after ten minutes, I'm just totally gone (Mark).

The lack of variety and didactic delivery (Sally).

However, nine of the thirteen felt confident that, overall, the university had prepared them for their first placement. For example, Hayley acknowledged that:

University has done a great job of preparing us; practically wise, I've learnt a lot so far.

Of the remaining four, their anxieties about becoming a good teacher were reflected in their own reservations of starting their first placement:

Very nervous; (Ian) anxious; (John) worried; (Hayley) panic stricken (Zoe).

Behaviour management was the single most important factor the beginning teachers were worried about before embarking on their first placement. They felt that, without control, the lesson would fall apart:

Because, obviously, they're not going to respond to you, unless you strike them with fear as opposed to enjoyment in the lessons (Adrian).

The use of PLGs helped to alleviate their worries and fears by enabling role play and a safe space for discussion regarding behaviour management. There was no evidence to support Britzman's (1986) view that, during the initiation phase, beginning teachers regard themselves as natural teachers or having been born to teach. Regardless of their individual preferences or perceptions, there was a common theme during this phase, namely that of survival.

The beginning teachers wanted a space for professional and emotional support; somewhere they could feel safe in expressing their concerns and issues.

In vignette 1, Chris and Zoe discuss the importance of university-based PLGs in providing this support.

Vignette 1 Chris and Zoe: Feeling safe in a learning community that can provide professional and emotional support

Chris and Zoe are both 23; they both attended mixed comprehensive schools. Chris followed a leisure and sport studies undergraduate degree while Zoe followed a sport psychology undergraduate degree. Chris and Zoe both enjoyed the university part of their programme, but Chris particularly enjoyed the university-based peer learning group (PLG), which he referred to as '*a safety valve*'. These learning communities were set up to help the trainees develop the capacity for a continuous resilient sense of self across each transition, where they were having to manage multi-memberships of different learning communities, including university, school, peer and departmental groups.

Chris and Zoe were able to negotiate the boundaries between school placements, relationships with their mentors and their university programme, as well as having a safe sounding board to ask each other questions and resolve problems. Chris explained:

"It was important to have a safe place to express our feelings of frustration, panic, hitting a brick wall!"

Zoe and Chris emphasised how the PLGs helped them to settle into their placements. It allowed them to talk through difficulties and work out strategies with one another. Zoe commented

"Obviously you're nervous and anxious, but in my tutor group, you sat down each week, you talked about your school, it was good to get everyone's point of view."

Chris and Zoe felt very strongly about having the space at university, where this informal learning can take place. The personal communication with lecturers and working with peers helped in bridging the gap between school and university and helped make an effective learning environment. The PLG was more important than formal lectures. It gave Chris and Zoe an opportunity to talk to their peers and their personal tutor about issues that had arisen on their first placements. They used the PLG sessions to discuss their fears and discover different approaches to dealing with various situations. Chris had concerns on his

first placement, so he was able to seek advice and support:

“In terms of the PGCE and the university set up, the structure was spot on. I found that to be outstanding. My personal tutor was Mary and she spent lots of her time when I had concerns about my first placement. You know, chatting about things and trying to help me work out the best course of action, what to do.”

Zoe enjoyed the group cohesion that the PLG afforded:

“Just thinking back to your PLG that you came through with on the PGCE, that sort of group cohesion, being able to try new ideas on one another in the safety of university.”

Chris enjoyed returning to the university to ‘return to normality’ and act like a student again.

Zoe reflected on her PGCE year:

“I loved going to university; I have had one of the best years of my life on this course, mainly because of the friends that I’ve made and all of that, I’ve just done something I loved for a year.”

They were also driven by a need for ideas and tasks that would make them feel confident, purposeful and authoritative in the classroom. The PLG allowed for the sharing of resources and approaches. Developing into a professional practitioner is a complex process of acceptance, tensions and resistance and this transitional stage between the university and school learning communities generated tensions and conflict. Chris was reassured by this supportive space:

“It was hugely beneficial, it helped release the tensions, and it was reassuring to know others were going through the same thing, it really helped.”

In managing the academic and professional challenges of their learning journey, they both felt it was important to be able to form social relationships which could provide personal and emotional support. Chris made it clear how the social side of the programme helped him:

“We made time to see others on weekends and on evenings, and, you know, talk about various things was going on in the school, but also, you know, do things socially together. And I think that was essential really. It was a massive, massive help and it’s probably the most difficult and most intense year of my life, I’d say, the probably the most enjoyable.”

Empathy and a shared understanding of the challenges involved in becoming a teacher were particularly appreciated by Zoe:

“I think the university programme was important, because it’s a difficult demanding process, a PGCE year. You need the social aspects, the support group of people that are going through a similar sort of thing. You need the advice from those people who understand what you are going through. They actually know how difficult it is when you stand in front of the class for the first time with people you’ve never met.”

The safe and supportive space of the PLGs allowed Chris and Zoe to share and discuss their concerns and frustrations over workload and work-life balance with peers and tutors and, thus, enable them to critically reflect upon their problems, uncertainties and self-doubt. To answer the questions about who they were and where they were going, Zoe felt *“...it was really important to have that and be part of that.”*

Chris and Zoe both realised that the informal PLG sessions went beyond subject knowledge and pedagogy, but affected, influenced and changed their values, beliefs and identities around teaching by providing support, nurture and networking. Zoe was particularly influenced at the start of her pre-service year:

“The support I’ve got at university was extremely beneficial in that early stage, because you almost tried to find your feet by walking in the dark, and you don’t know if you’re doing right or wrong, and so, with somebody like your PLG tutor being there to tell us and guide us and be able to bounce ideas off each other in the group, yeah, it’s extremely beneficial.”

As a result of their experiences, Chris and Zoe both realised that learning to teach is more than just standing up and delivering a lesson. It is characterised by continuous interaction, communication and social participation within the school community, the university and broader contexts of professional connection.

4.1.3 Developing classroom practice

All of the beginning teachers (n=13) referred to the fact that knowledge for teaching was absolutely imperative, particularly content knowledge and pedagogic content knowledge. For the majority of the beginning teachers (11 of the 13), their desire to become a teacher was driven by their interest in physical education and their motivation to choose a career located within this field. However, this response carries with it a complexity of constructions of the subject and teaching. For these eleven beginning teachers, it was the perceived intrinsic value of the subject itself, and the opportunity to continue working within the subject area, which drew them to teaching:

I loved physical education (Amy).

I really enjoyed physical education (Hayley).

For the remaining two beginning teachers, however, an additional dimension to the love of the subject was the desire to share their own enthusiasm and pleasure in the area with others, to communicate ways of seeing the world through different lenses.

I wanted to pass my enthusiasm and passion on to others (Zoe).

The beginning teachers often had very differing perceptions about what was entailed in effective physical education teaching and what they needed to know in order to achieve this. They recalled their own stories of how lessons were introduced:

We've got Dance today, get changed, stand there and off we go, rather than 'This is what we're going to try and bring out of this lesson, this learning objective' (Hayley).

Right we're going to be doing Hockey', that was a learning objective, to learn that we're going to be doing things related to Hockey (Cath).

And also how they were taught in a didactic sage on the stage approach:

It was like, right, '...this is how you hold a stick, everyone put your left hand here, your right hand here'; you know ball and a stick, copy this up and down, up and down (Cath).

An attitude from the mentor of 'sink or swim', because that is how they were taught, left Amy losing self-confidence and belief at the start of the initiation phase:

They just left me to it, I was given very little feedback and guidance at the start (Amy).

Halford (1998) has even judged the support offered to novice teachers to be so inadequate as to call teaching the profession that eats its young.

Most beginning teachers appeared to be intensely concerned at the outset of their ITE programme with the image of self-as-teacher (Fuller, 1969), with their attention gradually shifting towards concerns about situation and task, and the impact of teaching on pupils, only after their most urgent self-related concerns were resolved (Conway and Clark, 2003).

Reflection of themselves as teachers

Reflection at the start of their journey was limited to worries about classroom management and their organisational skills. They were far more concerned with having the right equipment ready and pacing their lessons, rather than reflecting on their own learning and the learning of the pupils. The beginning teachers' reflections at the start of their journey were superficial, seeking quick fix solutions to generating immediate, but often ineffective, solutions to problems.

The data showed that the beginning teachers' first reflections were about their environment, the context in which they were situated. There was inner conflict if these environments were different to what the beginning teachers had encountered as pupils at school. John had attended a formal grammar school and his first placement was in an inner city comprehensive. During his first few weeks on placement he recalled that he felt like a "...fish out of water", a sentiment that is difficult to resonate with Schön's (1987) argument that effective initial professional training should be based on the practice of teaching.

Five of the beginning teachers were very worried about taking a class on their own:

Well, when I started, I'd say I was quite shy or maybe not so shy in front of the class. But I was very nervous about what I was doing and whether I was doing it right. My mentor was very supportive in helping me through those anxious weeks (Zoe).

Mark shows that, whilst positive relations can foster positive feelings about teaching and about oneself as a teacher, leaving them to find out for themselves left them feeling lost:

I just felt at the start of the placement, they were kind of, I almost felt, they were a little bit too relaxed with me. And sometimes I didn't really know what was expected of me, that kind of thing (Mark).

At the start of their journey, the beginning teachers prioritised content knowledge, and therefore knowledge of the activities being taught, above a process-based curriculum in which the child is placed at the centre of the learning process. The beginning teachers, and often their mentors, were focused on a static skills-orientated approach with a didactic method of delivery. Five of the beginning teachers were told to spend most of their Year 7 games lessons teaching various skills rather than teach through a game, which was at odds to the university programme of a constructivist approach.

In vignette 2, Adrian's traditional background in teaching games (skills and drills) hindered his progress. During his first placement, a series of structured static skills were his preferred method. This did not enable him to develop into what Rossi and

Cassidy (1999) called a knowledgeable teacher, who places pupils' learning at the heart of their teaching. However, with more confidence and the support of his mentor on his second placement, Adrian delivered a successful unit of work, incorporating TGfU, which encourages pupils to solve tactical problems by providing a concrete link between skills and tactics.

Summary

At this initial phase, the beginning teachers own biographies, their university experience and their evolving classroom practice played key roles in influencing their development. However, as time progressed, these preconceptions were subjected to and mediated by their university experience; that is, the formal programme and engagement with the PLGs, which were a regular weekly, timetabled part of their course intended to provoke debate, reflection and critical dialogue. Reflection was focused on how they were delivering lessons, and organisation and behaviour management.

4.2 Transition (keeping going)

During the transition phase (January – May), the beginning teachers started to feel more confident, operate more responsively within the subject and engage learners. It encompassed the beginning teachers finishing their first placement school and starting a full time twelve-week placement in their second placement school, with a three-week university break to assist in their planning.

4.2.1 Influence of personal and contextual factors

During the transition phase the beginning teachers faced the challenge of negotiating multiple boundaries in the course of their studies. They straddled a boundary between the academic and workplace environment, but also, typically, they were engaged in transitions across boundaries in the workplace, between subject experts and pastoral carers in the role of a form tutor. Their understanding and perceptions of teaching and learning started to change. The influence of school mentors increasingly became a focal point. At the beginning of their course, the beginning

teachers brought with them their implicit institutional biographies – “...the cumulative experience of school lives - which, in turn, inform their knowledge of ...curriculum” (Britzman, 1986, p. 443).

Most of the beginning teachers felt vulnerable when they were on placement. They felt exposed, as they were frequently being observed and not only being given feedback on their teaching performance, but also on themselves as a person:

I sometimes felt the feedback I got was more to do with me as a person rather than the lesson structure or content. I didn't really get on with my mentor, so I don't think that helped (Ian).

It was difficult for the beginning teachers to feel part of the culture of the school when they could not relate to the type of teaching approaches they were observing, as they felt they had to replicate these styles rather than develop their own approaches, and this had a negative impact on their confidence:

My first placement school was at an all-girls school, they were very, very strict in what I could and couldn't do. I had to follow a very formal structure in my lessons. It was really hard (Sally).

Sally was reflecting on negative experiences and dealing with them. This example reflects an individual's ability to thrive and fulfil their potential despite, or perhaps as a response to, stressors. Many of the beginning teachers used the expression of '*coping*' with their placements, so part of the university-based programme was about supporting the beginning teachers' strengths and moving them towards functional coping, which is a key contributor to the achievement of resilience (Edward and Hercelinsky, 2007):

Being able to discuss our experiences in PLGs really helped in knowing it wasn't just happening to you (Elizabeth).

Peer support was also acknowledged by the beginning teachers as having an important role in developing resilience, by encouraging one another and keeping each other going through the peaks and troughs of their experiences by providing each other with emotional support. Resilience is part of this learning process. To the

beginning teachers', resilience implied not just recovering, but adapting and growing from situations they were able to reflect on (Campbell-Sills, Cohan and Stein, 2006):

I taught my first week of lessons and I came home and I, I honestly I cried and I was like 'that's not going to work' and I completely re-jigged everything (Zoe).

Reflection on learning

Reflection on who they were was more apparent during the transition phase, when the beginning teachers were more active in their teaching than the previous phase. They began to recognise that their placements were not just experiences to demonstrate or apply things learned previously, but that they were also important for their learning. With more experience and confidence in their teaching, during this phase the beginning teachers started to use critical reflection to develop their technologies of teaching, as opposed to the initiation phase, where their reflections were about teacherhood.

They started to understand that certain practices and approaches bring about learning and that others do not. Schön (1987, p. 46) called this "...theory in use", where the beginning teachers moved beyond their anxiety of teaching to building up and drawing upon a collection of actions and ideas. As the beginning teachers became more confident, they started to develop their 'theory in use' through their lesson planning, reflections on what worked and what did not work so well, and their problem-solving while teaching. The 'theory in use' developed their teaching by helping them to reflect on their experiences of teaching, which helped them to become more adaptable and better able to solve problems as they arose in lessons:

To reflect on each lesson and evaluate each lesson has enabled me to improve my overall style and improve as the year has progressed. Obviously my weekly reflections and the weekly meetings that I've had and the areas of my subject mentors have told me to improve have enabled me to improve substantially through and in each lesson (Amy).

The beginning teachers felt that being flexible and adaptable would enable them to be open to new ways of approaching issues and problems. However, as vignette 2

highlights, Cath and Ian's personal experiences of developing their own style was not straightforward.

Vignette 2 Finding your own style and developing a teacher identity

Cath is 21; she attended an all-girls grammar school and had completed a sport development programme prior to starting her pre-service course. She was keen to succeed and take on board new ideas. Ian was also 21; he had attended a mixed comprehensive school and had completed a physical education undergraduate degree. Cath's first placement was in an inner city comprehensive school, where the mentor was set in her ways and did not allow her to introduce any new ideas. Cath felt very restricted in what she could do, as she had to structure and deliver the lessons as her mentor would do, as her mentor believed this was how she would 'pick up' subject and pedagogic content knowledge.

"I felt I had to teach in the style my mentor wanted me to and not necessarily how I would teach, so I would get good feedback."

As a beginning teacher, Cath felt conflicting levels of professional recognition due to the fact that being a trainee and a teacher at the same time became a source of tension. She wanted to know

"When could she be herself in the classroom?"

Cath realised that, in order to please her mentor, she had to teach like her. This was just about performing the professional role of the teacher rather than being herself.

Cath felt she constantly needed to perform and prove herself to a range of different staff – including her mentor who was judging whether or not she had met a required standard.

"I felt you had to always put on an act."

Putting on an act influenced how Cath learnt things and took on board feedback. It was not Cath's experiences of working with the children that caused her doubt about going into teaching, but the relationship with her mentor.

The presence of conflict between Cath and her mentor or other members of the department created a negative emotion. Critiques of lessons became a focus of this tension as Cath could not differentiate between constructive feedback and criticism.

"I felt I could never do anything right."

Ian's first placement was in a similar type of school, and yet his experience was entirely

different. He acknowledged how much he learnt from his mentor, that he would

“Take into his future teaching career.”

In Ian’s case, the school mentor played an increasingly important role in addressing his concerns during his first school placement. He felt positive about his placement because he could talk with his mentor, was able to engage in professional dialogues, and felt part of the teaching community:

“It’s been a really wide range of strategies and techniques I’ve had to try out and throw out the window and try new things and put in new tasks, I had to ask my mentor all the time like ‘why’s this not working today?’ You know, yesterday he was fine when I was doing this, so it’s been up and down heaps.”

Ian felt confident in approaching his mentor and asking for his advice. Cath and Ian also acknowledged the support of ideas and knowledge bases from the university, while practical subject knowledge came about through school discourses. They also acknowledged that, although their mentors helped them to acquire pedagogic content knowledge, they often did so from a practical view of what worked for them in their school context.

In both schools, the physical education department had their own room, so they did not speak or socialise with other teaching staff during the day. As members of the department, Cath and Ian felt they had to model their practice, and this sometimes created tensions. Cath not only felt she was putting on an act, but also was

“Left feeling isolated.”

They both felt the staffroom was a central place where all teachers were physically located, regardless of their specialist subject areas, and somewhere where they could not only socialise but also discuss their concerns with other staff. However, they were concerned about creating a good impression with the department and so remained in their separated space.

Despite this feeling of isolation, Ian was confident at the end of his first placement and, therefore, felt positive about entering into his second school. However, this environment was entirely different; he was part of a large department in a specialist sports college.

“Every single teacher whose class that you’re teaching, you know what they like for their class and it isn’t like they don’t all sing from the same hymn sheet at the end of the day, because they’re all individuals, so with one class teacher, I know that organising pupils in certain groups is how he would do it with his class, so I would know that he liked it done that way, so I would do it that way. Whereas if I go into another class, I know that teacher’s not bothered about the way you organise them, but they’re bothered about something else, you’re getting the same thing coming up

on your crit sheet two weeks in a row, you know that that's something that bothers them about that class, so you just do it that way it's just cos you kind of do it to please them so they write nice things on your crit sheet."

He wanted to pass the course with a good mark and, therefore, knew he had to work hard, but also please his mentors. He became a chameleon in delivering his lessons in different ways to please each member of staff in this large department. All the staff had been trained as mentors; however, one in particular was concerned about it hindering the progress of his classes. In other words, he was wary of introducing different teaching approaches in case pupils did not learn. Ian felt he had developed a dual identity because he had to act in a way that pleased his mentors, which was not always his own representation of the world. Ian began to feel negative about his school placement and the observations of his mentor's lessons:

"If something's not quite working, they'll change it. But because they've been teaching at that school for like six to seven years, they know the kids, they know what works, and they know what doesn't work. So they kind of deliver the same lessons throughout the activities, even with Athletics 7 to 9. They pretty much deliver the same lesson, but just try to change it up a little bit."

Cath's self-confidence at the end of her first placement needed a boost; she felt she had tried to please her mentor, but had not succeeded. Her second placement school provided a positive, friendly and supportive school environment where Cath thrived.

"My influence has been stemmed from where I've just been on placement and from what I have seen on placement."

The school provided a nurturing environment, which helped Cath grow and develop her own identity, and this was reflected in the relationship between her and the school:

"In the placement I've just had, because I honestly believe that you don't know what to do until you are faced with it, and that's what's made me grow a lot through the past couple months there."

In both second placement schools, Ian and Cath had access to the staffroom where they were able to participate in discussions with other pre-service teachers, mentors and feel part of the social aspects of the school. Cath commented:

“Being able to talk with staff and other students really helped me to feel part of the school. It was good to be included in staffroom gossip!!

Being accepted into the school community did not reflect on the type of school or the experience of their subject mentor, but on the attitude displayed by Cath and Ian during their first couple of weeks in the school and how adaptable and resilient they were to feedback and changing environments:

“If you just went home and didn’t think about it, then I don’t know you’re not going to improve either.” (Ian)

One of the biggest challenges for Cath in each school was the need to maintain a continuous sense of self in the face of threats to her identity and to manage the emotions this evoked:

“I honestly believe that it’s the person that you are and the teacher you are, it’s how you deal with that situation.”

The school placement as a community of practice impacted significantly on her sense of identity. The stories reported by Cath and Ian reveal the influences and experiences of different school environments and mentors and how they made a significant impact on their own confidence, values and beliefs. Cath developed her professional identity as part of a process of participation in the university community and through interaction with members of school communities. They both felt positively about their placements when they could talk with a mentor, were able to engage in professional dialogues and felt part of the teaching community, professionally as well as socially.

The beginning teachers at this stage of their journey saw themselves on the periphery of two communities (the university and the school), needing to please both and succeed with both, and almost creating dual identities, one as a trainee and one as a school practitioner. In the context of their placements, it implied the beginning teachers had conflicting levels of professional recognition due to the fact that they were still under teaching supervision:

One of the members of staff that observed me was like, 'I've never seen that, that was really good, I'll try that.' But, you know, there was the odd member of staff who wasn't really open to many ideas and basically, you know, I got some bad lesson critiques because I tried new things and they didn't...I wouldn't say they didn't work, but he sort of slated me for trying those new things (Matt).

There is a perception from the beginning teachers that, through their progression of the programme, they will be on a steady trajectory to becoming a fully qualified teacher, whereas, in reality, they might take three steps forward and two steps back:

In the placement I've just had, because I honestly believe that you don't know what to do until you are faced with it, and that's what's made me grow a lot through the past couple months there (Zoe).

This was tied into how they were accepted into the school community and their relationship with their mentor. All of the beginning teachers referred to reflection as being very helpful to them as teachers:

Reflection provides a focus, why I should do it, like, for yourself, or discussions with my mentor that you know that you can improve. And you've taught a lesson and you thought that was good, but there's areas lacking. So it encourages you to look into that theory surrounding maybe the areas that you haven't done so well in, and look to how you can improve them (Sally).

4.2.2 Significance of formal and informal relationships

The influence of the mentor was a big impact, both positively and negatively, on the beginning teachers' developing confidence and identity during this transition phase:

The school and the mentor had a massive impact on the way I teach (John).

Some of the beginning teachers were allowed to bring innovation and creativity into their teaching with the support of their mentors, whilst others were asked to teach as their mentors did:

The mentor was very safe, so I could not change how I taught (Hayley).

The mentor gave me the freedom to do whatever I wanted (Mark).

The beginning teachers became very aware of the experience of their mentors and how they had or had not retained their enjoyment for teaching and learning:

In the teachers that I've observed in this placement, I feel that teachers seem to get a bit lazy. I think that once you get to be a teacher and you're doing it and it's your job, some of them just seem to not bother and not give that enthusiasm and not want to be there after school. And I don't think that should ever go; no matter how long you've taught (John).

A contrast to a lack of enjoying their role was the over enthusiastic member of staff who wanted to show off his skills in each lesson:

One of the teachers, he was quite young, a lot younger than the rest of the department, he used to take part in lessons, so he was actually playing football as though he was playing Sunday League, a lot of the pupils didn't like that because he would be going hard into the tackles and stuff! (Mark).

This situation put Mark in a dilemma, he needed to discuss a colleague's practice, but in a space away from the school situation where he could critically analyse and reflect on his observations. Neither of these provides powerful role model examples for new entrants to the profession. Mentors are vital in supporting the development of beginning teachers. They do not just offer subject support and assessment of the beginning teachers' competence; they also provide guidance in the complexities of becoming a teacher, so positive relationships with mentors are fundamental to beginning teachers' learning. In vignette 4, Adrian was allowed to stay in his comfort zone as he replicated the approach of his mentor, so he was encouraged to carry on in a similar way. This changed in his second placement with the support of his mentor, when he was asked to plan and teach a TGfU unit of work. In vignette 2, Cath and Ian's teaching was influenced by their mentors' expectations and not necessarily their own philosophies, because they were both aware they had to successfully complete the programme.

4.2.3 Developing classroom practice

During the transition phase, the beginning teachers discovered that, in physical education, classroom management refers to more than discipline or control

(McCormack, 1997). Classroom control was seen as a requirement for successful teaching by mentors and beginning teachers, regardless of changes to pedagogy, curriculum and school organisation.

The beginning teachers discovered that, particularly in physical education, poor organisation had a negative impact on how and what pupils learned and encouraged poor pupil behaviour. Gallahue (1985) observed that physical education teachers with effective discipline practices tended to be efficient planners, good communicators and thorough assessors of behaviour, and that they had consistent expectations of pupils. During this transition phase, the beginning teachers started to recognise inconsistencies in the use of the terms content knowledge and pedagogic content knowledge used by their mentors, who often indicated the one term to mean the other. This "...dichotomy in perceptions as to what constitutes pedagogic knowledge and content knowledge in physical education" is highlighted by Kay (2004, p. 19).

During transition, the beginning teachers' perceptions of how children learn best, their role as teachers and the purpose of physical education had started to change:

My teaching approach has completely changed. You went from a structured side of teaching, a traditional side of thinking, warm-up, game skill in that way to then completely realising that you have to change your lesson for every individual. That was something that I haven't really understood until I started on this course (Matt).

During this phase, the beginning teachers became more aware of children as learners:

The main belief, you've got to make sure that every single child in your lesson's learning and your lesson has got to adapt to them rather than you expecting them to change (Ian).

Amy explains below how her enthusiasm for teaching and understanding the pupils' needs helped her to select appropriate teaching and learning strategies:

I did a lesson on protective equipment in BTEC and, you know, they've never seen a Hockey Goalie kit in their life or anything, and we went in and most of

the time, in theory, you know, I would have originally thought, right, put a PowerPoint up, they read it, they write it down, they do that. It doesn't work there, so I had them in groups and they had to dress each other in this kit and name them with sticky labels and then do a presentation of why they wore it, and they loved it and it, but it was up to me to make the effort and go and get all that stuff, bring it in. And in some schools they might have been a bit funny, but they were fine and, cos that's how those children learn, but that necessarily wouldn't work in other schools.

Amy was aware that this was an unfocused group of pupils and she wanted to try and re-energise their enthusiasm. She recognised that different contexts require different approaches; she had taken a great deal of time planning and putting together the lesson plan, and was delighted that this had worked and motivated the group.

During the transition stage, some of the 'confident' beginning teachers who enjoyed physical education began to realise that excelling in school as a pupil and teaching were two very different concepts. In vignette 3, Mark highlights his experiences of developing his classroom practice.

Vignette 3 Mark: creating a synergy between the learning goals and social goals of physical education

Mark is 23, he attended an all-boys grammar school in the north west of England. After completing his sports studies undergraduate degree (where there was a small element of practical teaching), he spent a year in a local school as a curriculum support assistant in the physical education department. He had a positive view of the profession as a result of his own experiences and he made it clear he wanted to become a positive presence in the classroom.

"I excelled in physical education, so I wanted to continue doing something I was good at."

He had a good grasp of the content as he had completed a number of level one coaching awards. At the start of his pre-service year, Mark was confident about his teaching when he first went into his placement school.

"I felt I had a good understanding of the subject going into my first placement."

However, when he started solo teaching, he soon realised that knowing the activity and being able to progress learning was far harder than anticipated:

“I taught my first full week of lessons and I came home and I, I honestly I cried and I was like ‘that’s not gonna work’ and I completely re-jigged everything.”

In failing to identify the broader frameworks to which learning objectives relate, it could be argued that Mark, at this stage, was not genuinely participating in the discourse of the subject nor structuring learning experiences so as to help pupils to participate. He was more concerned about keeping control of the class:

“In terms of behaviour management first, you worry that the kids might prove you to be a weak teacher.”

Mark’s biggest fear was the pedagogical content knowledge, as it was exploring what he knew about teaching, not just what he knew about physical education.

As Mark gained in confidence towards the end of his first placement, he started to focus on the children and their learning rather than managing the learning environment:

“The children that I’ve just been with really, really learnt visually and practically and everything I did when I was in theory lessons was taught in a practical way. They can’t sit there, and it’s no good me standing there and waffling on, which they did a lot more when I was at school.”

As the year progressed, Mark started to see a more holistic approach to teaching and learning with a realisation that the attainment of content and pedagogical knowledge is essential to be able to teach. One thing that had changed was his perceptions of his placement experiences compared to the reality of becoming a teacher.

“I definitely feel that I’m still progressing, I mean I don’t for one minute think I’m the finished article by a long shot. So, my experiences have obviously helped me progress to this point, but I still think there’s quite a bit to go yet.”

During the early phases, Mark believed content knowledge was a priority. The change to his first teaching post meant he had to again adapt to a new community of practice. He had concerns around ‘fitting in’, of being able to adapt to a new school culture, but also a developing self-confidence.

“When you’re in a new place of employment and you know you are teaching PE, the worst nightmare is that, as a teacher, I think that the kids are going to take over, you won’t be able to sort of behaviour manage or keep your class safe and organised. And you’re going to lose, not necessarily control, but you know as the teacher, you’re the one that should be setting the boundaries.”

Towards the end of his first year in teaching, Mark was enjoying teaching and felt a sense of achievement of making it through ‘a long hard year’. His reflections of his pre-service programme highlighted that it had been invaluable in preparing him for the teaching profession. What it had not prepared him for was the size and scope of a teacher’s day-to-day job. He enjoyed the fact that he was now seen as a ‘real’ teacher and having responsibility for his own classes, which gave him more freedom to experiment and to develop confidence as a teacher. He commented on how tired he was during the first term. During their pre-service programme he had been given time for planning, but this was now having to be incorporated into his busy daily schedules, which contributed to his tiredness.

“I’ve learnt that it’s completely to do with the learner, and completely what suits that individual and the only way that you’ll find that out is by building a relationship with them.”

Mark cared about the interaction between him and the pupils. He realised that trying to create a synergy between the learning goals and social goals of physical education would help the pupil’s progress. He needed his mentor to bounce ideas off and discussions with other staff to help him gain in confidence. He knew that to become a caring, challenging teacher, feedback from his colleagues would enhance his growing confidence.

Some of the school mentors’ beliefs about learning in physical education were based upon traditional approaches to teaching and learning. This was obvious in the

teaching of pre-determined fundamental motor skills seen as being a pre-requisite for teaching games. This was evident in Chris's response regarding comments from his subject mentor:

You need to make sure they can perform the skill first before going into a game.

Where there were honest exchanges of ideas, the beginning teachers were able to acquire knowledge and experience:

PE that isn't just about planning your lesson and being like 'right, well we're doing this skill today' and they've got to get through that skill, I've learnt that it's not really about that (Amy).

Some of the beginning teachers valued the expertise of their school-based mentors more than that of university tutors. Equally, the university could provide the kind of supportive environment where the beginning teachers could share their physical education classroom experience, and be encouraged to develop and challenge their own practice in order to begin the process of developing their initial professional practice while still in a safe environment. It was the place to test beliefs and assumptions and learn what might work in certain situations:

You've got a team of people around you, so you can discuss what's going wrong, so you can discuss alternative ideas, and having your personal tutor to guide and support you as well it made you feel better (John).

Although half of the beginning teachers strongly believed that the majority of their knowledge about teaching was acquired on placement, they did acknowledge that they would not have acquired the language to articulate their practice without the input of the university formal programme of seminars, lectures and PLGs, which included various instruction models:

University provided a good sort of basis of knowledge and teaching approaches (Cath).

The beginning teachers became aware of the internal conflicts and micro politics within each department and also discovered that each school had its own ethos and

culture, and this added to their anxiety. In schools where there were conflicts in departments between staff, it was difficult for the beginning teachers to adapt to tacitly applied norms of teacher behaviour:

I still think that, as a trainee going into school, you're under the guise of the mentor and the way the school runs. So as much as I would like to go in and maybe do some sort of Teaching Games for Understanding and or some sort of Sport Ed, sometimes the school just don't want it (John).

Instead of a progressive, planned introduction to teaching and learning, five of the beginning teachers identified how there was a lack of congruence in the feedback they received:

Maybe it was all about age. The more established staff were set in their ways of doing things, and the younger, more vibrant ones had a different approach. You could really see the effect on the pupils, but also on the feedback we were given about our lessons (Elizabeth).

Relationships with staff were sometimes hard to establish, as the mentors were protective of their own pupils and their own performance.

For example, seven of the beginning teachers were initially not allowed to teach GCSE or 'A' level because the staff had:

Worries about them being able to cope (Hayley).

The beginning teachers were not aware of the implications of groups falling behind if they did not deliver the syllabus.

Work-life balance became a problem for some, as they wanted to be seen as part of the department and be involved in extra-curricular activities:

When I'm home, I just want to sit down and relax and spend time with my children and stuff. It was important to have this downtime (Danny).

Four of the beginning teachers were expected to attend all extra-curricular clubs. They found it difficult to make time for these activities due to a heavy university

workload, but that was seen by their mentors as of secondary importance to their role in the school; for example, Mark commented:

My mentor indicated that university was not important!

Part of the partnership agreement between the university and the school was to make sure that the mentor and the university created a stable emotional environment to allow the beginning teachers to thrive:

Yeah, but I think you grow as well, you know, being on this course, as well, you start to grow up, and you start to realise your responsibility and that, you know, you're going to be a teacher and you're there as a role model and things you expected of yourself, as well as what you want from the children. So I think the whole thing is a big learning curve (Mark).

This was a strong influence on developing classroom practice. The beginning teachers were pulled in many different directions; however, their ability to learn from each one was important and their learning and growth through it was important and did much to help them succeed.

Many of the beginning teachers were driven by a need for ideas – tasks that would make them feel confident, purposeful and authoritative in the classroom. This was particularly an understandable need in the context where the beginning teachers felt they constantly needed to 'perform' and prove themselves to a range of audiences – including people who were judging whether or not they had met a required standard:

I've learnt that it's completely to do with the learner, and completely what suits that individual and the only way that you'll find that out is by building a relationship with them (Hayley).

The beginning teachers' emotional environment was shaped by the behaviour of the mentor, the behaviour of the learners and the physical experience of the learners:

I think I'd been knocked by a previous observation of when I had tried teaching through a game, I thought it went all right, but it hadn't gone as well as what other people thought, and then you get knocked, so you go back to I will just get into a comfort zone and I'll go back to what I know (Adrian).

Sometimes the beginning teachers only ever felt as though they were on the periphery of the school community and seen only as a student by staff and pupils and not as a novice professional accepted into the school setting. This had a very adverse effect on some beginning teachers:

I learned about me and my confidence on my first placement, then, when you leave and go to another school, you go back five steps (Amy).

The beginning teachers discussed how they felt they had been on a steep learning curve and their concerns about doing what was the right thing, at the right time.

Summary

This transitional phase of the beginning teachers' journey exposed the nuances of their teacher selves as facilitator, professional imparter of knowledge, learner, teacher and colleague. Their narratives reflect the influences that underpinned their decisions to choose physical education teaching as their profession. The connection between the experiences of being taught in the past and the wish to become a teacher were not straightforward. What their teachers did as a result of their daily practice and behaviour, for example, seemed to have an impact on the aspirations of all the beginning teachers, either positively or negatively. Consideration, therefore, must be made as to how both the university and school environment can support the development of beginning teachers' knowledge bases.

Indeed, the apparent juxtaposition of learning in a practical and theoretical domain brings about a certain level of dissonance in beginning teachers' acquisition of knowledge. With the apparent polarity in environments as to how subject knowledge is best attained, further consideration needs to be given to how schools and universities can best work in conjunction to bring about acquisition of knowledge. Although the acquisition of practical knowledge is important to develop the beginning teachers' confidence, it is also vital that broader knowledge bases are formed, which can be facilitated in a university setting.

4.3 Assimilation (letting go and moving forward)

The assimilation phase of letting go and moving forward meant the beginning teachers leaving a safe, familiar environment to enter an unknown school community. There was still some uncertainty regarding their own subject knowledge, a fear for the future and nervousness about their style of delivery and the type of teacher they wanted to become.

It was evident that the degree to which the beginning teachers were able to incorporate knowledge for teaching acquired during their initial phases was largely contingent on the placements into which they had been placed, the support they received from their mentors, the influence of the pupils on the beginning teachers and the level at which they were teaching. Belonging to a teacher community was important, with the central focus on relationships and developing a sense of belonging. Nine of the beginning teachers had successfully gained full-time permanent employment, three had a temporary one-year post and one was employed as a supply teacher.

4.3.1 Influence of personal and contextual factors

This phase was a time of anxiety for the beginning teachers as they applied for suitable jobs, allowing them to move forward into their new role of professional teachers. It was also a time to become more autonomous in their thinking as they completed their induction year. At this stage, 90% of the beginning teachers felt confident that their programme had prepared them to be an effective teacher. Eight of them had changed their views of teaching, discovering that being a teacher was harder than they had thought and gaining awareness of the responsibilities involved in being a teacher:

All schools are different, so finding your feet and feeling part of the community takes a lot of time and effort (Ian).

Support mechanisms became a focus for the beginning teachers during this phase. Seven of the beginning teachers were moving out of the north west of England, but were still keen to keep in touch with peers and personal tutors. A group Facebook page was created so the beginning teachers could continue to share their experiences of their new roles. They were aware of the need to find other support

mechanisms in their new environments, replacing the support formed while at university; however, they still wanted to find out how they were all progressing.

During the early phases of their course, many of the beginning teachers believed content knowledge was a priority, as their mentors had placed significant emphasis on this development. Their peers in the university-based PLG had been an excellent support, and part of their anxiety about letting go and moving forward was being able to continue to develop this aspect of their role. Taking up their first appointment meant they had to become a member of a new community of practice, they had concerns around '*fitting in*', of being able to '*adapt to a new school culture*', but also of developing self-confidence.

4.3.2 The significance of formal and informal relationships

The beginning teachers felt positively about placements where they could talk with a mentor, were able to engage in professional dialogues and felt part of the teaching community. The influence of mentors was significant in enabling the beginning teachers to both stay in their comfort zone where they felt 'safe' and progress and introduce creative approaches to learning. In vignette 4, Adrian highlights his unease at being introduced to 'new' approaches to teaching and learning in university and his subsequent challenges in his various school communities.

Vignette 4 Adrian: Moving outside a comfort zone into uncharted territory within an expansive learning environment

Adrian is 24; he had a traditional schooling in an all-boys grammar school where physical education had been very games-based, with team games being a particular focus. His undergraduate degree was sports science, where there was a bias towards games as part of the curriculum. Adrian enjoyed his physical education lessons at school; however, he was aware that it was not inclusive:

"It was a football school; if you were not good at football you were sort of put off to the side and left."

Adrian had strong pre-existing notions about his teachers, and how they had influenced his perceptions of the role of teacher and the role of schooling. It is apparent that his former teachers provided models to either imitate or surpass.

“Obviously, that’s such a big part of where I am today, but, a big part as in I’ve learnt from it rather than that’s what I want to be.”

What his former teachers did as a result of their daily practice, behaviour and discourse of subject knowledge, for example, seemed to have had an impact on his aspirations, both positively and negatively:

“PE was very old fashioned, but that was good, it worked well for me.”

Adrian had experienced a model of teaching that was focused on the acquisition and performance of a multi-activity curriculum organised around team games, taught with a limited range of teaching approaches where most were formal, didactic and teacher centred:

“Lots of drills into games; very games-based; just games all delivered the same way.”

In contrast, the university physical education games programme, as part of the PGCE, focused on social constructivist approaches to teaching in the form of Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) and Sport Education. Adrian’s initial thoughts on this approach were that this was something that would work in an ideal teaching world, like university, but not in a school situation:

“Sometimes we were introduced to things that felt disconnected from the school situation because I did not see it being used in my school.”

Adrian’s traditional grammar school education had informed his views of ‘how things should be taught’ and as the TGfU model was new to him and he was unsure and outside his

comfort zone, he decided to leave it in university. He did not like the idea that he should be actively creating new knowledge based on his prior knowledge and experiences:

“I just liked the activities; I felt it was important for skills to be learnt before I introduced a game.”

Adrian’s first placement school had a traditional approach to physical education. It reinforced his beliefs about teaching games as it was taught in a skills-based approach, with games being planned at the end of the lesson, if there was time. Adrian’s mentor’s beliefs about teaching physical education, and games in particular, were based upon the prerequisite of predetermined motor skills being taught and perfected first before introducing a game. He was told by his mentor:

“Make sure they can perform the skill first before going into a game.”

This resonated with his beliefs at the time and, therefore, he felt happy to teach as his mentor wanted him to.

Adrian’s second placement school was in a sports college. He had an experienced mentor who wanted to provide a productive learning space for him. He asked Adrian if he would like to try any different ideas in his teaching. Although still not convinced about it, he was encouraged by his peers to ‘give it a go’. Knowing he had the support of his mentor, Adrian explained about the TGfU approach and, although his mentor had heard of it, he did not employ it in his school. However, he was keen to see how it could be utilised in his school and encouraged Adrian to plan for its use. Adrian was tasked with writing and teaching a series of six rugby lessons for a Year 8 games group using TGfU.

Adrian really enjoyed using the approach and he received positive feedback from his mentor, who had also used it as a learning experience himself. He asked him to write further units of work before he left the school, for him to use. At the end of his PGCE year, Adrian concluded:

“Although I was sceptical at the start about TGfU, as it put me outside my comfort

zone, I realise that it not only helped the children enjoy their games lessons more, but it also helped me to differentiate and facilitate my teaching rather than showing and telling all the time.”

Adrian realised that the TGfU model helped him incorporate pedagogic content knowledge and aspects of subject matter most applicable to the ability of the various groups he was teaching.

Towards the end of his first year in teaching, Adrian explained that he had introduced the model into his school with great success at key stage 3 and he had been asked to lead a departmental staff development day in the summer for the rest of the staff team.

Without the university input and a mentor who was prepared to let Adrian introduce the new model to his school, Adrian explained that:

“the university part of the programme allowed me to think, share, develop and challenge my own values and beliefs in a safe environment. Although I developed my practical hands-on experience in school, I know I would not have acquired the same technical vocabulary or underpinning theoretical knowledge of different teaching approaches without the university input.”

Moving outside his comfort zone and into uncharted territory was uncomfortable for Adrian, at first. His idea of good teaching had changed. He conceded that his original beliefs, based on his personal experience as a pupil, had been transformed:

“I enjoyed PE at school and my belief was that traditional teaching approaches would be alright for everyone!”

Adrian needed to be placed with mentors who were prepared to try out new ways of thinking, who were already reformers in their classrooms and were prepared to develop collaborative learning environments. He also needed the support and encouragement of his peers and the university guidance to assist with his professional learning.

The induction year is another phase of the beginning teachers' development which contributes to their socialisation process. However, they still have to pass the regulatory requirements of the teaching standards and understand the cultural expectations placed on them. Starting their first year in teaching was described by all of the beginning teachers as *'being tough and stressful'*. Their first year in teaching was critical in terms of self-efficacy and developing content (Hoy and Spero, 2005). Many of them regressed to worrying about behaviour management:

The worst nightmare is that, as a teacher, I think that the kids are going to take over, you won't be able to sort of behaviour manage or keep your class safe and organised (Chris).

You're going to lose, not necessarily control, but, you know, as the teacher, you're the one that should be setting the boundaries (Matt).

They felt under pressure to show that they were good teachers. Three of the eleven beginning teachers expressed a feeling of being lost, as there was confusion between what they wanted from their jobs and what they were experiencing:

At first, you worry that the kids might, you know, prove you to be a weak teacher in terms of behaviour management. I thought I would be more confident in my new job (Danny).

The beginning teachers' emotional conditions impacted on the kind of experiences they had in school. These emotions depended significantly on the relationship developed with their mentor:

My subject mentor was absolutely fantastic" (Cath) to the extreme of "some of the teachers just don't seem to bother (Zoe).

Hayes (2001) indicates that the establishing of a positive relationship with the class teacher is one of three key factors influencing beginning teachers emotional wellbeing and progress on school placement.

4.3.3 Developing classroom practice

The beginning teachers spoke more knowledgably about teaching and learning concepts, including differentiation and assessment for learning during their lessons.

Zoe explained her journey:

At the start, I just was led by my planning and my, my lesson, my actual piece of paper. I was panicking that if I'm not going to plan then the lesson is going to fall apart, so that's changed a lot (Zoe).

Changes were not always obvious to the novice teachers, many commented on the fact that they were too busy to notice that they were actually learning new things as they progressed through the year, but certainly, towards the end of their first year of teaching, they had begun to feel more confident in themselves and their abilities. Ian felt confident in "...becoming a professional" and Zoe appreciated "...having more freedom and responsibility". However, Hayley explained that "...it was also overwhelming, as it was a lot of hard work."

They also had a sense of satisfaction; they saw themselves as being more relaxed, comfortable and self-confident as teachers:

As you get to know the kids more and they know what you're like and what your approach is and who you are as a person and as a teacher (Matt).

As new members of a department, six of the beginning teachers thought that their philosophy of teaching had developed during their pre-service year. It gave them a clear focus of "...*what they wanted*" (Hayley) and "...*what they believed in*" (Zoe), especially when they had been faced with difficult situations, such as not having a mentor to guide and support them during the first few months in their new schools:

Everyone was so busy it seems I was just forgotten and left to get on with it (Elizabeth).

Their values and beliefs had influenced their views on teachers and teaching, but their views on learning and how children learn had developed during the year. They all held positive views of themselves as developing teachers and judged themselves as having the right qualities and attributes to enable their pupils to respond positively to them as teachers:

I'm a lot more relaxed when I'm teaching. As things have progressed, I've developed myself, my actual personality; it comes out when I'm teaching (Cath).

This development of their teacherhood had progressed during their pre-service year and during their first year in teaching. Four of the beginning teachers were still taking multiple unexpected twists and turns in relation to their classroom practice and how to integrate theory into practice; for example Cath commented:

It's good to know, but it's not much use for actual teaching.

All of the beginning teachers stated that, by the end of their first term in their new post, they were physically and emotionally drained:

We just never seem to stop; we have lunchtime practices and matches at weekends (Mark).

They had also decided on a strategy on how they were going to approach their first few weeks of teaching:

I was quite formal at first, I like to get to know the children and bring in a bit of humour, but only, obviously, once they've learnt that though, because I've at first I did try and be a bit too nice to them and that's even at the school I was at, which is a ridiculously nice school anyway, but I mean that can go the other way, cos the children were quite spoilt and then they'd take advantage of you (Ian).

Towards the end of their first year of teaching, all thirteen of the beginning teachers had become more confident and less stressed about teaching, particularly Chris, who had secured a full-time permanent job for the following year. However, nine of the beginning teachers felt the transition between becoming a teacher in the first few months of their new jobs could have been managed better, as they were not allocated an official mentor and were expected to "...just get on with it" (Zoe).

She wanted to discuss some of her lessons and find out possible solutions to problems, but she felt had nowhere to go, as her department were all so busy. At university, Zoe could return to the PLG to discuss solutions. She was in need of a

space where issues could be discussed at this stage in her professional development.

Developing critical reflection

During their journey, the beginning teachers had moved through reflection on themselves as teachers during the initiation phase to reflecting on pupils' learning during their transition phase, to critical reflection of their professional practice in their assimilation phase. In vignette 5, Hayley explains how reflection helped her to select appropriate teaching approaches and ask questions on her journey about her values and beliefs as a teacher.

Vignette 5 Hayley: Using reflection to provide a process for discerning, developing and learning.

Hayley was slightly older than her peers at 28; she had followed a different pathway, she had completed an events management undergraduate degree before pursuing a physical education programme. She was reflective at the very start of her pre-service year.

"I have thought long and hard about changing tack and becoming a teacher. I do not think I was ready at 21 to make that decision. I became a ski instructor and travelled around Europe for a few years before deciding on my career pathway."

Hayley had attended a mixed comprehensive school where she thoroughly enjoyed her physical education lessons, although she was not sure how much she learnt. More often than not:

"they just let us play, just give you a ball go off and play."

However, Hayley 'loved' physical education and excelled in it and eventually decided she wanted to continue doing something she felt she was good at. She wanted to share her own enthusiasm and pleasure in the area with others, to communicate ways of seeing the world through different lenses:

“I wanted to pass my enthusiasm and passion on to others.”

At the start of the programme, Hayley used reflection-in-action to consider changes to planned lessons and different teaching situations.

“The first mistake I made was of just talking too much and I just talked at them and talked at them and that’s been a major target for me and you’ll see it in all my reflections, stop talking right stop talking, move this on faster.”

Hayley was nervous about how she would cope. These reflections helped Hayley at the start of her pre-service year to develop her own ideas about teaching by replicating practices she had observed in schools or she had experienced herself. Hayley developed the skill of reflection-in-action by amassing a range of experiences that informed her practice of reflection-in-action during her pre-service year.

“My teaching approach has completely changed through reflection.”

As she travelled through the different learning communities (university school, PE department, peer learning group), she started to use reflection to help her select more effective teaching styles specific to learning activity. Discussions on reflection were held at a basic level in induction lectures and the PLGs provided the time and the space for Hayley to develop this further.

“Being able to reflect on our practice and discuss solutions to problems was a highlight of my time in university.”

However, as she progressed through the pre-service year, Hayley found it difficult to find the space to develop her reflection-on-action and resorted to talking to peers about pupil learning and the effectiveness of teaching approaches.

“I’m always striving to improve and reflect. Obviously, if there’s something that doesn’t go well, I’m the type of person who’ll go home and think, talk to my peers and ask why isn’t it going well? So, obviously, if I do that lesson again, maybe after I have adopted a different approach.”

As Hayley indicated, becoming a teacher is a complex process and one that involves entering the teaching community and experiencing several different learning activities in several different contexts. Although Hayley developed a good relationship with both her mentors, much of the reflective practice was around making improvements in her lessons and thinking on her feet rather than thinking about what the pupils learnt:

“Obviously, my weekly reflections and the weekly meetings that I’ve had with my subject mentor have helped me to improve and have enabled me to improve substantially through and in each lesson.”

She was still uncertain of how she was developing as a teacher. She wanted to analyse and evaluate particular experiences after the event to improve the quality of her learning and teaching.

Her reflections helped her to progress. Although she was still adapting to the school culture, she started to feel part of a department and more secure about her job role:

“I think reflection has been absolutely fantastic. Especially to reflect on each lesson and evaluate each lesson has enabled me to improve my overall style and improve as the year has progressed.”

Hayley discovered that reflection provides a process for discerning, developing and learning about her teaching. Towards the end of her first year in teaching, Hayley started to pay more attention to her thoughts, feelings and wants related to what she was observing and experiencing in her teaching:

“There have been a number of lessons that I’ve had recently where there’s a lot more than it goes on because, now, I’m not worried about my teaching approaches, and my teaching has evolved a little bit as my understanding of what the pupils’ learning needs are, and different aspects of assessing the needs of the pupils within the lesson has evolved as well; so it’s obviously aiding pupil learning.”

Reflection invites a fundamental shift in perspective, as Hayley indicated, from asking questions about ‘what do you want of me?’ to ‘how can I integrate myself more fully and

authentically in practice?'. However, having the time and space to critically reflect on improving the quality and effectiveness of her practice was an ongoing issue:

“Sometimes there are just not enough hours in the day, there needs to be more time and space to be able to focus your attention on reflective practice.”

At the end of their pre-service year, and particularly at the end of their induction year, the beginning teachers were able to evaluate their own approaches:

I feel I have, I have developed, you know, a range of strategies to accommodate everyone, you know, but it is something that I'll continue to develop during future years (John).

They realised that stepping back and thinking about what was happening was important in thinking about change and doing things differently. Twelve of the thirteen believed that reflection assisted their professional learning. They were looking forward to completing their induction year, but, felt they still had a long way to go. They were looking forward to making improvements and developing their teaching approaches. Hayley summed up the thoughts of many of the beginning teachers:

I definitely feel that I'm still progressing, I don't for one minute think I'm the finished article by a long shot. So, my experiences have obviously helped me progress to this point, but I still think there's quite a bit to go the yet.

At the end of their university programme the beginning teachers had started to shift in how they viewed teaching. During their pre-service year they had started to ask why they were teaching specific content as opposed to how they were going to teach it. They now felt more confident and better prepared to tackle this issue. Their developing capacity for critical reflection had enabled them to evaluate the conventions and routines they had encountered during their school placements to inform their own practice:

I suppose one thing my mentors have taught me is to sort of step back a little bit sometimes and not jump in and keep stop starting keep stop starting if, if

they're doing it and it's going well, and there's nothing, nothing that you need to say or, and it's working well, then don't jump in and stop it, just let them, let them get on with it, let them keep doing it and then you can maybe stop, stop them as a whole, and say, just quickly make a point, but try to keep the talking down to a minimum, keep them active for as long as possible, otherwise it just makes your job harder, because if you're keep stopping and starting them they get frustrated (Cath).

As NQTs their confidence increased and critical reflection had a much greater influence on their teaching. However, they also acknowledged that confidence in critical reflection was dependent on the support and guidance from mentors. In vignette 4, Hayley reflects on her journey from trainee to professional practitioner and explained how having the space to develop reflective practice was essential in beginning to teach.

Critical reflection was also identified as assisting the beginning teachers' transition and adjustment to teaching. It assumes an inquiry approach to learning and teaching, which positions teaching in Lampert's (1998) terms as 'thinking practice' and one which requires the integration of knowing with action:

Reflection provides a focus for yourself or a discussion with my mentor, so you know that you can improve. And you've taught a lesson and you thought that was good, but there's areas lacking. So it encourages you to look into that theory surrounding maybe the areas that you haven't done so well in, and look to how you can improve them. It's quite important in developing practice and something that I think probably everyone should do, purely to get the best out of kids and ensure the highest standard of teaching and learning (Matt).

Five of the beginning teachers commented that their best learning had been on placement. The others commented that reflecting back on their year they needed the 'safe haven' of their PLGs and their personal tutor for help and guidance, which had really helped their confidence and decision making:

I'm always striving to improve and reflect. Obviously, if there's something doesn't go well, I'm the type of person who'll go home and think 'why isn't it going well?' So, obviously, if I do that lesson again, I would adopt a different approach. The PLGs really helped us in that respect (Chris).

The NQTs reflected that their first year of teaching had reinforced and extended their beliefs about children and how they learned. Each of the thirteen beginning teachers talked about the importance of really getting to know the children in terms of their interests, talents, learning strengths and needs. In vignette 2, Adrian explained how TGfU (introduced in university) helped him to facilitate learning in his games lessons. Cath recognised that, if you teach skills in isolation without the understanding of where and how they fit into a game, you are not going to develop learning:

If you are going to teach skills that way, you are going to get the same outcome, because you're not giving pupils like the holistic approach, they know how to perform a chest pass, and they know how to perform a chest pass between a partner, but then can they translate that to a game if they never play a game? So it's down to the approach, but then, if the teacher's not willing to change with the approach, then the results will always be the same (Elizabeth).

As NQTs, they were improving their understanding of how they, as teachers, needed to know how each of the pupils in their lessons learned best in order to "...develop their strengths" (Chris) for the "...huge range of abilities" (Zoe) in their lessons. Differentiation became more of a focus in their planning:

I feel I have, I have developed, you know, a range of strategies to accommodate everyone, you know, but it is something that I'll continue to develop in (Adrian).

The NQTs began to realise as part of this move into their first posts, how much time was spent establishing routines and behaviours at the beginning of the year and that you had to find time to "...teach that kind of thing" (John). As beginning teachers, they felt they had just taken these things for granted:

You get to know the kids more and they know what you're like and what your approach is and who you are as a person and as a teacher; you have definitely got that more freedom to sort of teach in a way, that gives them a bit more responsibility and a bit more freedom (Amy).

However, they found the expectations of their new schools difficult to navigate in their first few weeks, as they had not been involved in the planning of timetables and schemes of work:

You cannot be prepared for everything (Elizabeth).

It is all part of the learning curve (Sally).

Six of the NQTs had settled in well to their new schools. They had created their own support networks to enable them to cope with the many dilemmas they encountered in their first year of teaching, which Peters and Le Cornu (2007, p. 213) see as having a "...resilience factor." Certainly these beginning teachers saw resilience as an important strength in teaching. The connection these NQTs (n=6) had with their placement schools was key as they were all in schools that developed and encouraged their self-confidence and belief. They felt part of a professional learning community that provided a positive and enabling context which allowed for their professional growth:

I definitely feel that I'm still progressing, yeah, and you know, I mean, I don't for one minute think I'm the finished article by a long shot. So, my experiences have obviously helped me progress to this point, but I still think there's quite a bit to go yet (Matt).

Although three of the six NQTs had joined traditional physical education departments, they had been allowed to develop schemes of work incorporating sport education, which gave them a sense of ownership and belonging.

Five of the NQTs were still developing their support networks and had little support from senior staff in the schools they were working in. They had received good support in their placement schools, but were struggling to integrate into the schools where they had taken up their first appointments and their professional growth was not developing as quickly as they thought. The NQTs realised that because of traditional teaching approaches, the pupils were sometimes tired and bored of teacher-centred learning and wanted more learner-centred approaches. This led to frustration on their behalf and reluctance to engage in identifying with the department.

Towards the end of their first year in teaching their reflections on their own practice showed the changes they had made:

I kind of try and do a little bit of guided discovery. I think that's, that's probably the best way for pupils to learn. And, obviously, with all the things that we have developed over the last year in terms of my teaching, I've seen that kind of a broader picture of the best way to teach (Danny).

To do their job well, the NQTs had to be flexible and adaptable in a constantly changing policy environment. Their reflections also highlighted areas where they lacked experience and their reactions to their approaches:

I know I haven't taught A level on either practice, but I know a lot of the guys have just been thrown in and kind of like, we don't really know what to do. I'm going to make a PowerPoint and do it. And then that's when you fall into trap of teaching the same way as everybody teaches it because that's the way that you are taught (Ian).

Personal experiences as a pupil were used as a fall-back strategy in unfamiliar situations; however, Ian recognised that is probably not the best option.

During the assimilation phase, the NQTs participating in this study were able to take a more holistic approach to teaching and comment on the interaction between *what* is being taught (the content), and *why* and *how* it is being taught (the rationale and process). It has long been recognised that there is a body of specialised knowledge that teachers need to have developed in order to teach physical education effectively. However, the findings from this study suggest that the values and beliefs of each individual, through which such knowledge is accessed, channelled and shaped, are as important as the concepts and skills themselves.

NQTs not only need to understand the concepts and skills they are trying to develop, but also how they relate to broader interconnected social, cultural and political contexts that are not limited by the boundaries of the curriculum or content knowledge. This understanding is inextricably bound up with teacher identity. If their main principles for action are bound up with notions of task management and keeping children busy, these connections that link pupils to learning, and classroom learning to knowledge that relate to the world beyond, the connections will not be made.

Teachers need to see their primary role in the classroom as a catalyst for learning - the link between pupil, curriculum and subject, task and learning, classroom and the world beyond it. The need for a third space via PLGs or similar support groups was identified as a place where professional learning can be facilitated. At the beginning of their journey, the beginning teachers moved from a reliance on teachers and mentors in guiding and shaping their thoughts through developmental stages to self-reliance and self-authorship, where they became able to challenge and lead their own and others' practice.

For example, Adrian, who relied heavily on lesson plans, using one single approach in a lesson and mentor feedback at the beginning of his journey, moved to commenting in his first year of teaching on the importance of understanding the classes and the individuals within them and being flexible enough to use different approaches to teaching, as and when necessary. The NQTs became much calmer in their thoughts as they were not constantly being observed. They had settled into the routines and rhythms of the school:

You realise that some days it just does not go to plan and you begin to accept that that's ok (Cath).

Summary

After nine months of teaching in their first posts, the NQTs had a different view of teaching from the start of their journey. Initially, they had found the job tough, but, as the year progressed, they felt *far less stressed*, more *relaxed* and had started to feel like a *real teacher*, but, this had been a gradual process. They still felt it was *hard work*, but had got used to *what was expected of them* and six of them commented that they had *started to enjoy it more* and felt more confident about *what they could and could not do*. They admitted however, that, whilst their beliefs had not changed fundamentally, there had been shifts in emphasis and in terms of how closely they matched their practice.

The beginning teachers all held a positive view of themselves as teachers and believed they had made a difference in terms of their pupils' attitudes to learning.

During each phase of their professional learning journey, all valued a safe space to share ideas and discuss problems and solutions. This was initially provided by the university through PLGs, but during their NQT year, social networking and meetings with other NQTs and staff from various departments had helped in their pastoral and professional support.

5 Discussion

5.1 Building a robust base for professional practice

Chapter Four presented the findings and analysis of the data. This was explained in terms of the influence of personal and contextual factors, the significance of formal and informal relationships and developing classroom practice. This chapter discusses the findings and their significance in relation to the current developments in teacher education.

The findings suggest that the beginning teachers need time and space to be able to distance themselves from the practicalities of the school setting, which can be overwhelming in the immediacy of their demands. The concept of a third space would bring to the fore teachers as workers and learners, in order to achieve broader, long-term goals for achieving high quality learning for both pupils and beginning teachers. A third space could include settings for workplace learning in universities, cross-professional territories and spaces created by new technologies, particularly virtual spaces, which allow for the exchange, development, debate and simulation of practice (McNamara, *et al.*, 2014). The challenge is to create possibilities for participation and collaboration across academic and practitioner communities which provide sympathetic and supportive environments for beginning teachers.

It is argued in this study that, for beginning teachers to do their job well, they have to be flexible and adaptable in a constantly changing policy environment. In order to achieve this, a safe supportive space is needed to be able to bridge the perceived gap between academic and practitioner communities. According to Crafter and Maunder (2012), transitions have traditionally been characterised as forms of change. These changes explore the balance between educational practice and theory and shifting priorities in teacher-training policy and practice over time (Gardner, 1998). The transition from novice to practising teacher incorporated changing landscapes with highly complex and unique journeys, which provided the beginning teachers with different and contrasting experiences during their pre-

service and in-service year. The beginning teachers' initially held beliefs and perceptions of the type of teacher they aspired to become were highlighted as the baggage they had brought with them (Pajares, 1992).

Some of the beginning teachers' initial beliefs and perceptions underwent modification in response to the respective teaching environments in which they were located, others were substantially revised. Schools are influenced by political, economic, social and cultural capital (Lupton, 2005) which constrain and enable their work and the ways they can exercise their activities. Crossing the boundaries into different learning communities, the beginning teachers faced numerous pedagogical differences as well as socio-cultural changes between the academic and practitioner communities (Alsup, 2006).

One of the major influences in the development of beginning teachers was becoming a member of the school community. Sabar (2004) uses the metaphor of beginning teachers as 'migrants' to highlight the challenges beginning teachers face in adjusting to the culture of their school. He describes the beginning teacher as being a stranger, unfamiliar with the accepted norms in the school or the hidden codes which exist among teachers and pupils, and says that they resemble migrants who leave a familiar culture (the university) and move into a strange one (the placement school) that is both repellent and attractive. He argues that the beginning teachers, as strangers, occupy a marginal space in their schools, since they lack the confidence in their behaviour and their social status and are, thus, dependent on the good will of the members of the community of learning to which they belong.

Exposure to professional practices in school and theoretical perspectives in university provided the beginning teachers with a diverse repertoire of sources to draw on in the selection and justification of their portrayal of their role as teachers and their construction of themselves. According to Beach (1999, p.30), transitions are consequential in that they have an impact on the individual and the social context they inhabit. In this way, a consequential transition "...is the conscious reflective struggle to reconstruct knowledge, skills, and identity in ways that are consequential to the individual becoming someone or something new". For the beginning teachers in this study, transition and reconstruction did not happen in isolation, they needed

support from their peers, PLGs, university tutors, mentors and institutions. In this struggle to becoming someone or something new (Beach, 1999), the beginning teachers needed confidence to express their feelings, support to guide them on their journey and a space where this informal learning could take place.

The idea of third space has developed from hybridity theory (Bhabha 1994); it recognises that individuals draw on multiple discourses to make sense of the world. It rejects the binaries of practitioner and academic knowledge and theory and practice (Zeichner 2010). Bhabha (1994) used the concept of third space as a metaphor for the space in which cultures met. It is a space in which colonial authority is challenged and hybrid identities are created. For example, the beginning teachers' developing pedagogy is linked to previous learning experience, experiential and professional knowledge, as well as participation in a teacher community. Third space can involve the integration of what are often seen as competing discourses in new ways. The dominant model of practice in teacher education is that theory is learnt at university and applied in practice in schools, in other words the beginning teachers go into schools to 'practice' what they have learnt in university (Zeichner 2010). The third space can join practitioner research with academic research without hierarchical boundaries. The study shows there are expansive and restrictive (Fuller and Unwin, 2004) workplace learning environments. The need for a third space becomes apparent in the novice teachers' accounts, which are concerned with straddling the academic and practitioner communities and developing a sense of belonging.

In expansive learning environments, the beginning teachers have encountered a shared vision for workplace learning aligned to organisational goals whilst also allowing them to develop individual skills and capacities. In restrictive learning environments, the beginning teachers experienced limiting forms of workplace learning, where creativity and the required knowledge and skills were restricted to organisational needs, with learning occurring on the job, allowing little time for reflection. In both environments, there was still a need for a space to be able to share and discuss ideas.

The beginning teachers were required to make rapid transitions to fully functioning teachers acquiring any new knowledge on the job. It was clear, in the final phase (letting go and moving forward), that the beginning teachers became aware that they needed a space where they could reconcile their personal and professional identities of who they were and what they wanted to become. The formation of a third space can create a virtual, as well as a physical, community of practice where teacher education involves an equal and more dialectical relationship between academic and practitioner knowledge in support of beginning teacher learning and the generation of new knowledge (Zeichner, 2010). However, schools should not be seen as the only setting for workplace learning. Cross-professional territories and spaces created by new technologies, particularly virtual spaces, will allow for the exchange, development debate and simulation of practice.

If universities are to provide a third space, a shared language with schools is crucial. Socio-cultural differences between schools and universities can cause discontinuity, as the beginning teachers find role and perspective changes between sites challenging (Akkerman and Bakker, 2012). At the same time, sameness and continuity reside in the fact that both schools and university are concerned with pedagogy and with the learning process of the beginning teacher. This is especially important in view of the current climate of the diminishing role of universities in Initial Teacher Education. The role of the university in providing this space and support is an important element of developing a shared language. In order to give beginning teachers the best opportunities to develop realistic expectations and appropriate knowledge, skills and understandings, the development of a third space is critical.

Professional learning needs are changing as globalisation, new technologies and rapid communication can instantaneously give learners new knowledge and dissolve borders (Hargreaves, 2000). Strong learning communities and the creation of a third space are required so that schools and universities can work openly and authoritatively in partnership. The recent Carter Review of ITE (2015) highlights that partnership between schools and universities is the key to combining a successful approach to ITE, as neither can do it alone. Schools are not designed with teacher learning as a focus (Hodgson, 2014).

Learning in the workplace suggests there is a designated space where opportunities for growth and professional learning exist. Teacher work is no longer confined to the classroom, but takes place in diverse physical, professional, and sometimes virtual, spaces. This study explores how the beginning teachers navigate a multitude of social practices within these spaces. In summary, this first part of the discussion has related the findings of the study with regard to the three questions that motivated it.

- What are the patterns of transition and the changing landscapes within which physical education beginning teachers are located? (a and c)
- What are the key influences that affect the transition and development of beginning physical education teachers? (a and b)
- How do these factors influence beginning physical education teachers' construction of themselves as teachers? (b and c)

The key discussion points emerging from the key themes, which were: i) the influence of personal and contextual factors; ii) the significance of formal and informal relationships; iii) developing classroom practice, are:

- a)** Straddling the academic and practitioner communities
- b)** Developing a sense of belonging
- c)** The need for a third space

5.2 Straddling the academic and practitioner communities

Learning at and through work is, inevitably, influenced by the structural and socio-cultural factors inherent in the workplace and in the broader professional, socioeconomic and cultural contexts in which it occurs (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2004). The beginning teachers were involved in different learning communities, each one with its own routines, rituals, stories and histories. Eckhart and McConnell-Ginet (1992, p. 464) describe it as "...ways of doing, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short practices that emerge from mutual endeavour." How the beginning teachers engage with each learning community will enhance their overall

success of their ITE. Some will fully engage and gain valuable experiences; others will stay on the periphery, and, therefore, hinder their learning opportunities, asking if they can be themselves in each situation. In vignette 2, Cath and Ian discussed the influence of their mentors and the pressure to pass the programme. During their pre-service year, beginning teachers straddle the academic and practitioner communities needing to please both and succeed with both. This disconnect between university and schools has been a focus of the coalition government.

The current neoliberal model of teacher education puts emphasis on skills and expertise firmly based in schools (Hordern, 2014). There has been a drive to locate teacher professional learning in schools, led by a raft of outstanding Teaching Schools (Gove, 2010), with the School Direct model as the central vehicle for the delivery of the government's plans. The aim of Teaching Schools is to include school-based teacher-training together with a development continuum across the entire span of a teacher's career. The concept of boundary crossing are explicit parts of Engerström's (1987) cultural historical activity theory on expansive learning and Wenger's (1998) situated learning theory on learning communities. They both stress how boundaries carry potential for learning. Workplace learning emerges as highly complex and multi-layered, taking place within formal or informal, structured or unstructured programmes, resulting in good, bad and indifferent outcomes (McNamara, Murray and Jones, 2014).

There has been less discussion around the fact that, if a teaching school loses its Ofsted outstanding status where does that leave the schools in their alliance? The risk is, however, in creating a mixture of approaches to teacher education, with variations in both quality and capacity in different parts of the country (Morrison, 2013). Although the School Direct programme in particular has been seen as a potential threat to the role of HE in teacher education, there is an opportunity for universities to work more closely with schools. However, the creation of a College of Teaching (2015) would give a more consistent and sustainable approach to teacher-training the Carter Review (2015) has stressed the importance of a university's role in teacher education.

The capacity of partnerships to draw on the distinctive expertise of all contributors to secure the most effective initial and ongoing professional development for teachers is crucial. What is clearly needed is a third space, either physical, virtual, or both, where expertise that exists in schools and HE can be brought into teacher education and co-exist on a more equal plane, and where Habermas's (1984) ideal speech situations can be realised. The value of this idea is in the development of a space where autonomous discourse can occur with equal opportunities for all participants to communicate in an accurate open manner, in both reflective and discursive conversations (Habermas, 1996).

If universities and schools are serious about improving the quality and support of beginning teachers, as well as retaining them in the profession, they need to acknowledge that it is the responsibility of all those involved in the preparation and development of teachers to work together to ensure that they are provided with the conditions and resources that would enable them to grow and flourish (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2004). The emerging model of School Direct relies on forms of partnerships with HEI. There have been suggestions that few schools have the resources or infrastructures to manage their own teacher education programmes (Hordern, 2014). The roll-out of the academy programme introduces a different way of school organisation by potentially introducing templates of professionalism to teaching that have an organisational, or even a corporate, aspect (Evetts, 2011). This could lead to further fragmentation of national-level models of teaching professionalism, which could be based more explicitly on the values and identity of the employing organisation, particularly in the academy chains.

5.2.1 Developing a shared language between universities and schools

Both schools and universities need a shared language, so that sameness and continuity reside in the fact that both sites are concerned with pedagogy and with the learning process of the beginning teachers (Korthagan, *et al.*, 2004). Developing and using a shared language is essential to creating a common understanding of how the different learning communities work. This shared language must be a two-way evolutionary process, with a commitment of effort, time and resources from both the

university and schools (Freeman, 1991). It will allow the beginning teachers to question how something learned in one task or context can be applied in another task or context. In the development of third space, creating a shared language can build and sustain professional learning communities and educational initiatives. In order for beginning teachers, mentors, universities and schools to engage in conversation designed to bring sustained changes, there must be a culture of learning and sharing that allows all members to discuss important issues. Third space can provide a place for conversations and sharing of resources that are relevant to the specific contexts of the beginning teachers. The changes the government have made have brought inconsistency and a lack of continuity in teacher education (Hordern, 2014). In order to address this, university and school partnerships need to ensure that they develop a shared language; a framework for understanding to communicate how the beginning teachers develop and the forms of support and types of understanding that are needed. Darling-Hammond and Lieberman (2012) refer to the lack of connection and shared language between universities and schools as the Achilles heel of teacher education. A space where academic knowledge and the knowledge of the expert teachers are treated with equal respect would enhance the development of a shared language.

The need for a shared language became more apparent as the beginning teachers began to develop a command of how the subject is structured and how an expert in the subject thinks and uses it through communication and interaction with their mentors. According to Clayden, *et al.* (1994), this specialised use of language and understanding, the discourse of the subject, described as a set of shared understandings held by experts, is crucial to teaching and learning within the subject to enable the beginning teacher to develop content knowledge. Initially, this discourse was developed through the university setting via lectures, PLGs and critical reflections. This development continued in the learning communities in the context of lesson observations and mentor feedback.

Clearly in this study there were challenges in developing this shared language, as there was an apparent discrepancy between the university and schools (see vignette 4). One mentor told Danny to ignore what they did in university, as the staff did not know what they were talking about, which placed him in an awkward situation. The

contribution of the university aspects of the course provided opportunities for knowledge acquisition and developing resilience, criticality and reflexivity in relation to their learning journey. Although some of the beginning teachers felt the university was restricted to preparation for placements, all of them acknowledged the importance of peer learning groups as a supportive structure through the programme.

5.2.2 The university programme as an important aspect in development

Given the increasing marginalisation of higher education in ITE, it was reassuring to hear that the beginning teachers considered the university programme as an important aspect in their development as teachers. For example, in vignette 1, Chris and Zoe both highlighted the support and guidance they received through the university-based programme, PLGs, university tutors and the importance of a safe and supportive space. This helped them to make sense of the contradictions and conflicts they encountered within and across schools.

They referred to conversations and critical discussions with peers, which provided them with useful strategies and ideas to utilise on their school placements. The hallmark of every profession is the underpinning of its practice with theoretical knowledge. In vignette 4, Adrian explained how the integration of a pedagogic approach to teaching games, which was introduced at university, changed his beliefs about facilitating learning. He acknowledged that apart from assisting him in the acquisition of knowledge, the university played an integral role in helping him in developing his beliefs and values of physical education further.

The university had focused on social constructivist methods of teaching, moving away from the teacher as the sage on the stage towards the guide on the side, where the teacher is seen as a facilitator in the learning process, and decision-making and problem-solving are a focus. It was evident at the start of his journey, that Adrian's preconceptions acted as a culturally-based filter (Korthagen, *et al.*, 2001) to the way that he made sense of his initial teacher training and teaching experience. The university experience influenced Adrian's practice in school in terms of his approaches to teaching and learning. For example he discovered his role as

facilitator enabled the pupils to be more involved in their learning; to be more focused and on task and to enjoy their physical education.

This disagrees with the work of Capel and Katene (2000), who identified a perceived gap between what the trainee sees as the university part of the programme on the one hand, which they identify as the theoretical and social side to their learning, and school on the other, which they recognise as practical hands-on doing, and not necessarily active or creative learning. During their first year in teaching (Induction year), nine of the beginning teachers were still referring back to their university resources for ideas, which challenges the contention that ideas developed during pre-service education are washed out by the real world of school (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 1981). Adrian felt 'up-to-date' and confirmed that what he did in university does happen out there. This corresponds with Ball (2000), who comments on the importance of preparing teachers who have useable content knowledge in order to bridge the gap between knowledge and practice.

5.2.3 Conceptual shifts in operationalising curriculum and instruction in physical education

In order to teach physical education effectively, the beginning teachers were very aware they had to have a good knowledge and understanding of its underlying structures and organising principles. According to Shulman (1987), the *content knowledge* of the teacher should go well beyond what is to be taught. At the beginning of their journey, many of the beginning teachers' concerns were not focused on the application of this content knowledge, but merely on 'ticking off' the objectives listed in their lesson plans.

The beginning teachers were delivering their lessons without fully understanding the pedagogical principles of teaching and learning. In this respect, the term 'subject knowledge' is highly problematic. It is used widely, but lacks clear definition. In vignette 3, Mark demonstrated a good understanding of physical education; he is a keen sportsman and represented various school teams. He was also a football coach, so he was confident in his games subject knowledge.

However, on his first placement, he struggled to progress learning; this not only frustrated him, but also knocked his confidence. Kay (2004) explains that subject knowledge in physical education relates to what the subject is about and has the child at the centre of the learning. However, some of the mentors used the term to mean content knowledge, thereby identifying a “...dichotomy in perceptions as to what constitutes subject knowledge and content knowledge” (Kay, 2004, p. 19). Cochran, De Ruiter and King (1993, p. 263) described pedagogical content knowledge as that which “...differentiates expert teachers in a subject area from subject area experts.”

The beginning teachers appeared to have a grasp of the content, but not of how the content connected within the subject and the ways of knowing that are intrinsic to the subject of physical education. Consequently, the knowledge of physical education that some of the beginning teachers were operating with (and seeking to develop in children) was a narrow, restricted version at the start of their journey (the Initiation Phase). Chi, Glaser and Rees (1982) explored that it is not primarily the amount of knowledge that the expert possesses that is important, but how it is organised in the memory. As vignette 3 indicated, pedagogical content knowledge is a problem for beginning teachers, as this is exploring what they know about teaching, not just what they know about what they teach (Capel and Katene, 2000). The DfE (2010a) suggests that secure subject knowledge enables beginning teachers to teach their subject confidently. The Teachers’ Standards (DfE, 2012) indicate that good subject knowledge will enable a critical understanding of developments in the subject and address pupil misunderstandings. By implication, this suggests that less secure subject knowledge may result in less confidence and less accuracy in teaching (Capel and Katene, 2000).

The data showed that the beginning teachers were still being exposed to a traditional games-based curriculum in some of the schools. If newer pedagogical models, such as Sport Education, Tactical Games and Cooperative Learning, are to be embedded in physical education, a conceptual shift is required in the way they think about and operationalise curriculum and instruction. Fullan (1999) has stated that educational change is always messy, chaotic in nature, non-linear, labour intensive and

complicated work. There are no short-term fixes and no one model is a solution for the complicated myriad problems that plague physical education in our schools. Different approaches can be integrated as important components of a teacher education programme (Oslin, Collier and Mitchell, 2001; Dyson and Wright, 2003).

The challenge for beginning teachers is to move beyond superficial engagement with these instructional models and for educators to tease out the theoretical constructs, contradictions and articulations among and between these models to better inform practice (Rink, 2001). The creation of a third space to allow these discourses in different approaches to develop would mean engaging practitioners and researchers from different communities in challenging current thinking. The beginning teachers acknowledged that ideas and knowledge bases were formed in university, whilst practical subject knowledge came about through school discourses. They also acknowledged that, although their mentors helped them to acquire pedagogic content knowledge, they often did so from a practical view of what works for them (Evans, Hawksley, and Holland. 2008) This is further recognised by Putnam and Borko (1997), who note that it is in a practical base where beginning teachers best demonstrate and acquire their pedagogical knowledge. In physical education, the learning space is broadly unchanged; the spaces are 'traditional' (even in new build schools), reflecting a curriculum of the past, not the future. The directive of two hours of curriculum physical education each week also dictates the time. Therefore, both time and space contribute to limiting and controlling factors on teachers' work and pupils' learning. Teacher education has always existed in an uneasy alliance between the classroom and the lecture theatre.

5.2.4 Developing the capabilities and attitudes necessary to master the complexities of professional working

The role of inquiry in the development of new knowledge for practice through the situated problems that the beginning teachers encounter is important, and a space where this can happen is imperative. The university can assist in developing the capabilities and attitudes necessary to master the complexities of professional working (Eraut. 2000). The importance of types of knowledge learning is important in the beginning teacher's journey. As such, teacher educators in schools and

universities, as part of the partnership agreement, have an opportunity to consider how this interaction between formal and non-formal knowledge shapes learning within the programme and helps to develop initial professional development in the schools in the future.

Professional knowledge, according to Eraut (2000), has two parallel definitions. Eraut's (2004) longstanding interest in how people learn to do their jobs led him to focus on knowledge. Codified knowledge is subject to quality control and incorporated into university programmes. It includes ideas about skilled behaviour, but not skills or 'knowing how'. Personal knowledge is the cognitive resource the beginning teachers take into schools that enables them to think and perform. This incorporates codified knowledge in its personalised form, together with procedural knowledge and experiential knowledge. This personal knowledge may be either explicit or tacit, where ideas might be understood or implied without being stated openly. The learning context will affect how codified knowledge is acquired, so changing landscapes of practice will require further learning. The context of the changing landscapes influences the beginning teachers on entering the teaching profession and affects their perceptions and values about teaching (Laker, 2000; Green, 2003). Further, the personal knowledge of the beginning teachers' own experiences while at school and their influences of their perceptions of teaching physical education are incorporated in this tacit knowledge (Green, 2000a; Rich, 2001).

Knowledge of contexts is often acquired through a process of socialisation, through observation and increasing participation rather than formal enquiry. Socialisation aspects include the beginning teachers' experiences of sport, both in and out of school (Curtner-Smith, 1999). The beginning teachers in this study explained that their enthusiasm for physical education came from belonging to sport teams external to the school environment, as well as their interactions with physical education teachers (Mawer, 1996). This prior socialisation on the biographies of the beginning teachers had "...a distinct and traceable influence on an individual's future decisions, practices and ideologies as a teacher" (Schempp and Graber, 1992, p. 333).

However, in spite of holding such positive responses, ten of the thirteen beginning teachers experienced ‘stress’ and culture shock (Corcoran, 1981; Lang, 2001; Grundoff and Tuck, 2005) when moving from the teacher education setting (university-based programme) to the everyday realities of school life. The university was able to provide emotional support in the form of PLGs and a safe space to discuss issues. Due to the diversity of their first degrees, it is hard during a one year course to support all the beginning teachers equally well in gaining a wide breadth of pedagogic content knowledge which spans the requirements of all aspects of the National Curriculum for Physical Education (NCPE) (Hobson, *et al.*, 2006).

With the School Direct model (which is school-led and participating schools recruit and select their own beginning teachers) gathering pace, areas need to be identified where practitioner and academic knowledge and theory and practice can be developed, so the perceived dichotomy of workplace/non-workplace can be embedded in a more explicit way (McNamara, Murray and Jones, 2014).

As noted earlier, creating a third space, which recognises that individuals need to draw on multiple discourses to make sense of the world, would enhance the academic/practitioner divide. Gutierrez (2008, p. 152) argued that a third space is “...a transformative space where the potential for an expanded form of learning and development of new knowledge are heightened.” The partnership model, of which the beginning teachers were a part, went some way towards addressing this. However, as can be seen from the beginning teachers’ comments, the theory/practice divide was still apparent.

5.3 Developing a sense of belonging

The beginning teachers developed a sense of belonging, both to the university and school learning communities (McNally, *et al.*, 1994). A sympathetic and supportive environment was especially important as they negotiated various landscapes of practice. In university, the peer learning groups created spaces and interconnections where the beginning teachers enriched their learning experience by engaging with their peers and their personal tutor. It helped the beginning teachers to develop the capacity for a continuous resilient sense of self across each situation. In vignette 1,

Chris and Zoe explained the importance of having the PLG as a safe and supportive space to ask questions and resolve problems.

The academic culture of a university is charged with moving beginning teachers from their largely personal, incoming understandings of teaching to a more balanced, professional view of their roles as educators; the practical culture of the school is charged with moving the beginning teachers into confident practising teachers. The advantage of the PLG is that beginning teachers are learning and sharing with each other, are in similar positions, have faced the same challenges in similar contexts and use the same language (Boud, 2001).

The beginning teachers needed to gain a greater knowledge of school cultures, become familiar with school and departmental policies and understand the learning needs of the children they were teaching, as well as being confident in their delivery. In the findings of this study, the beginning teachers reported high levels of stress when moving from the first to second placement school, as they experienced different cultures and pedagogic approaches. They encountered an ever-changing, shifting process of identity building, which could change from day to day, depending upon the experiences and social interactions of each individual (Egan-Robertson, 1994). The uncertainties experienced by the beginning teachers regarding meeting their mentor and the department team were not a straightforward process for Mark, Elizabeth and Chris. Their mentors also held roles of responsibility outside the classroom, such as heads of year, which, particularly during their first few weeks in school, did not leave them sufficient time to meet with the beginning teachers. This created anxiety, which, without the intervention of the university tutor and the PLG, might also have had a negative impact upon their confidence and self-esteem. The PLG space afforded a sense of trust and unity, which enabled the beginning teachers to acknowledge concerns and issues. This two-way reciprocal learning space was a necessary and important aspect of the beginning teachers journey. It gave them a sense of belonging and supported them in crossing the different landscapes of practice.

The 'cultural environment' (Kwakman, 2003) of the university provided the beginning teachers with a *safe haven*, in which concerns were discussed. Ellis (2010) argues

that school-based teacher-training impoverishes the experience of beginning teachers, as they have to fit in with policies (both internal and external) and established practices and procedures. This view is also reflected by Edwards (1997, p. 190), who supports the view that beginning teachers must learn to engage in the school environment without "...disrupting the precarious equilibrium of existing classroom practices." Therefore, the debate goes on as to whether ITE experiences in schools provide vicarious, developmental situations (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006), or whether they are (as indicated by Ellis, 2010) expansive and restrictive learning environments.

Developing a sense of belonging was identified by the beginning teachers as helping to promote good social and professional relationships with colleagues in assisting their growth as teachers. Eight of the beginning teachers were invited to a staff social in their first few weeks of being on placement, which helped in developing good social relationships. Four of the male beginning teachers were asked to play on the staff football team. However, the remaining five beginning teachers felt impeded in forging and maintaining their relationships with the department, as they were left to their own devices most of the time with communication channels an issue, leaving them feeling isolated. Believing that other teachers were approachable and willing to help and support them made their school seem a friendlier place to work and helped them feel part of the team. As Kardos, *et al.* (2001, p. 257) note:

It is the professional culture that will provide formal and informal information about how to teach and how to be successful in a school.

Eraut (2004) made connections in early career learning between developing confidence and informal support. The importance of feedback, support and valuing work were important learning factors. The beginning teachers commented that many of the things they learnt were through informal processes (Olson and Craig, 2001). However, Lave and Wenger (1991, p. 29) explained that the most significant attribute to learning is belonging to a community of practice. Learning, they argue, is the process of becoming a full member of the community of practice, which they term "...legitimate peripheral participation" (*ibid*, p.31).

Part of the partnership agreement between university and schools is for each school to share the philosophy of the outcome of the course. However, each school has its own traditions and cultures within which learning communities are embedded and each view beginning teachers in different ways. As a result of the diverse contextual elements, the beginning teachers related very differently to the schools in which they were placed. Emotional resilience was paramount in maintaining the beginning teachers' self-confidence and beliefs. In schools where resilience was fostered, the mentor devised targets for development, which also recognised success. In schools where resilience was not fostered, realistic roles and responsibilities were not recognised, which led to the beginning teachers feeling frustrated and unsupported.

The most productive condition for informal workplace learning identified by the beginning teachers in this study was one where there was a culture in the school that encouraged and valued collaborative learning. Wenger (1998) explains that community must include mutual engagement, a joint enterprise and a shared repertoire around what they are there to do. The notion of partnership working in schools has to have this community of practice for it to succeed. Current government policy is supporting beginning teachers to replicate existing 'best practice' rather than develop them as learners (Murray 2010). There is a balancing act between what can reasonably be expected by the beginning teachers in relation to levels of support from their mentors and them becoming reflective practitioners who are able to stand on their own two feet (Robinson, Bingle and Howard, 2013). In this respect, the school community was very important for the beginning teachers' learning. It was where the beginning teachers started to make the essential connections between learner, curriculum, subject and context.

The findings from the study clearly demonstrate the importance of context in learning and the importance of a shared domain of interest and commitment to learning from each other in a community of practice. The beginning teachers can provide a rich context for situating content by providing beginning teachers with an opportunity to experience an innovative learning environment (Barab, Barnett and Squire, 2002). By adopting a community of practice perspective on teacher development, it shifts attention away from the traditional analysis of the cognitive attributes and instructional practices of individual teachers and instead, moves towards the

collaborative interactions that occur among teachers as they attempt to develop and improve their practice (Stein, *et al.*, 1999). If this group approach is successful, it will shift the learning from individual teachers' minds and become situated in the social interaction among the members of the community (Grossman 1992; Putnam and Borko 1997). For this to be successful, schools and universities are going to have to find a middle ground, a third space, where there is an equal sharing of ideas and resources, as in Habermas's (1984) ideal speech situation, which allows all to contribute on an equal basis. The importance of school-based learning does not mean that there is no place for learning away from school.

Successful learning communities led to the development of a shared set of understandings and resources that helped the beginning teachers, particularly in their first year of teaching, to take on the challenges they experienced in implementing change. However, there is not just one community of practice, there are a number of overlapping, intersecting learning communities, each of which provides often competing points of reference for the beginning teachers. In respect of identity formation, the learning communities will strengthen and affirm values and beliefs on the one hand and generate conflicts and dilemmas on the other. This is why beginning teachers need assistance in navigating this complex territory.

5.3.1 School-related factors in the construction of professional behaviour and identities

The culture gaps that beginning teachers have to negotiate between different learning communities have to be navigated carefully. The concept of 'teacher identity' is crucial to successfully managing this transition (Flores and Day, 2006). While the findings in this study identified the influence of biographical factors on the identity formation of thirteen beginning teachers, they also identified the role that school-related factors played in the construction of their professional behaviour and identities.

According to Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004), much of the research on teacher professional identity emphasises the 'personal' and underestimates the part that

context plays in this. All of the beginning teachers understood the academic and professional requirements placed on them from the university and school. Cath and Ian (vignette 2) commented that they felt they were acting on behalf of others and their priorities, saying and behaving in ways the mentors wanted them to, rather than being themselves (Brown and McNamara, 2011). This dichotomy relates to the collision of 'economy and ecology' of practice (Stronach, *et al.*, 2002), where it is more about performing for an audience on the one hand and autonomous professional practice on the other.

Constructing a professional identity is a complex ongoing process. The journey to becoming a professional teacher not only includes their past biographies, but the influence of their pre-service courses and the different learning communities they have been exposed to are all part of the jigsaw that helps to form the image of the type of teacher they want to become (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). According to Hobson (2002), human activities like learning are grounded in social participation and collaboration, not in isolation. Socialising with colleagues helped to calm the beginning teachers' stress and uncertainty and helped them to build relationships with staff across the school, which increased their access to support and advice and their sense of belonging. It is important to recognise that identity matters (Bullough, 1997) and is of vital concern to beginning teachers because it is the basis for meaning-making and decision-making (Collier, 2006).

The more that beginning teachers know about themselves, the more their personal decisions are going to pave the way for better teaching (Hamachek, 1999). The role of teacher identity and its relationship to how teaching and learning is understood is a central factor in learning to teach. Teacher identity has attracted increasing interest in the last decade (Richards, 2006; Day, *et al.*, 2006; Clarke, 2008). The subject has generally been approached from the perspective of what constitutes both the visible and invisible domains of the work and lives of teachers. The visible side is what the beginning teachers feel comfortable with, which includes what teachers do, for example, interaction with the pupils, assessment and lesson planning. It involves more personal phenomena, such as cognition, beliefs and emotions. This relates to what Stronach, *et al.* (2002) call an economy of performance (an indicator of an inspection culture) and various ecologies of practice (personal classroom

experiences, approaches to teaching). The tensions between the two areas generate contradictions, dilemmas and compromises of professional work and beliefs. Wubbels (1992) and Korthagen, *et al.* (2001) have shown that trainee teacher preconceptions about teaching and pupil learning can impact on their experience of ITT and their early professional development. This stance resonates with Wideen, Mayer-Smith and Moon (1998, p. 141), who believe that:

The story of how beginning teachers experience programmes of teacher education begins with who they are and what beliefs they bring to pre-service teacher education.

The multi-layered nature of teacher identity is aptly captured by Korthagen (2004) in an adaptation of Bateson's model (Dilts, 1990). It depicts the beginning teacher as a layered onion where the assumption is the inner layers (belief, identity and mission) can influence the outer ones (environment, behaviour and competencies) and vice versa. The beginning teachers all stated that teaching was something they had always wanted to do, as it allowed them to make a difference to and impact positively on children's lives. This supports the view of Woods, *et al.* (1997, p. 152) who contend that "...teaching is a matter of values" and, in relation to Korthagen's model, this desire is situated in the inner layers of the onion. People teach because they believe in something. They have an image of a good society to which they want to make a contribution, an altruistic motivation. The beginning teachers wanted to provide opportunities for young people to be the best they could be at sport. In Korthagen's (2004) adapted model, the inner onion layers of belief, identity and mission have synergy with the beginning teachers' journeys. It was clear at the start of the programme that their beliefs were shaped by the beginning teachers' own education, role models and routines (Feiman-Nemser and Parker, 1983).

During the transition and assimilation phase, there was a shift apparent from their beliefs about education towards a belief about self, where they started to ask the question, "What kind of teacher do I want to be?" How the beginning teachers think about themselves and how they undergo the personal transformations to become teachers is a core focus of their journey.

5.3.2 Fostering positive collegial relationships as a catalyst for learning

The importance of teachers learning continuously in order to develop their knowledge and skills, as well as adapting and developing their roles through classroom enquiry, should be recognised and supported. Beginning teachers bring varying backgrounds, motivations and experiences that challenge their identity, emotional needs and resilience. Placek and Griffin (2001) acknowledge three types of learning in beginning teachers. As active learners, the beginning teachers are not passive recipients of knowledge, but are involved in tasks that stimulate decision-making, critical thinking and problem-solving. As social learners, they construct knowledge through social interaction with their peers, facilitated by their mentors. As creative learners, the beginning teachers are guided to discover information themselves and to create their own understanding of the subject matter by drawing on prior knowledge and experiences to construct knowledge.

Schools have to be recognised and designed with teacher learning in mind, as well as pupil learning. Although teaching schools are starting to address this notion (McNamara, *et al.*, 2014), for many schools it is not a priority. This study demonstrates that schools which encouraged and facilitated the development of positive collegial relationships and networks enabled the beginning teachers to gain access to information, advice and support from a range of staff and these helped them to fit in and become part of the team.

Recognition and support need a space where critical discussion about professional practice and policy can take place freely outside the constraints of implied agreed institutional or externally prescribed standards of effective teacher behaviour. Beginning teachers need a professional base where ‘playing the game’ and ‘putting on a good show’ does not determine the agenda of professional practice. If beginning teachers have concerns, they should be seen as opportunities to bring about improvement through collaborative action. The beginning teachers’ journeys are influenced not just by “...the collection of skills and information but by a process of formation – a formation of a certain personality or, on the contrary, avoiding the formation of a certain personality” (Wenger, 1998, p. 215). These influences develop perspectives and beliefs not only about education and schools, but also about how

the beginning teachers should execute their roles (Lortie, 1975; Schempp, *et al.*,1998).

The beginning teachers also realised that effective teaching involves much more than a good task idea (Askew, *et al.*, 1997; Medwell, *et al.*,1998). What the participants commented on as effective teaching in their reflections was the way in which they responsively started to scaffold learning; i.e. support them in drawing on concepts and skills that are relevant to the learning that underpins the task. In doing this, they drew on a range of types of teacher knowledge (Shulman, 1987), such as an understanding of the subject, of children and of the classroom. This appears to be an essentially dynamic process, involving what Tochon and Munby (1993) identify as a 'synchronic time epistemology', in which knowledge is combined and connected by teachers who seize the moment to connect the child with the subject. Wood (1988) describes this type of teaching as making contingent interventions. This link in connecting the importance of physical education to the learner is an important element in the teaching cycle. Hayley used the phrase 'changing direction', the use of 'fast feet' and balance in a variety of different contexts within games and gymnastics. She explained that, by transferring similar skills and techniques between different activities, it assisted the pupils in making connections and helped to scaffold their learning.

The usefulness of reflection in terms of assisting the beginning teachers professional learning was a consistent message during the first year of teaching. This finding is corroborated by the relevant literature (Schön, 1987; Freese, 1999; Korthagen and Vasalos, 2005; Zeichner, 2010) which represents the view that reflection is a necessary condition for learning and professional development. The beginning teachers reflected on how their confidence and knowledge construction mediated how they came to know. How they viewed themselves (their identities) mediated how they constructed their relationships. Learning and development were inextricably intertwined in this process. Goleman (1996) sees self-awareness as the first of his five emotional and social competencies. He defines it as knowing what we are feeling in the moment and using those preferences to guide our decision-making. The findings show that, in the final phase of becoming a teacher, having to deal with academic and practice-related discourses as teachers, the beginning teachers

needed to reflect on their feelings in relation to their teaching, their values and attitudes as a teacher, and their own behaviours of how others saw them.

5.3.3 Developing emotional resilience

In addition to developing their critical reflection, knowledge and skills, all of the beginning teachers were advancing their personal dispositions and qualities, and, in doing so, they were changing as individuals. They were developing a greater preparedness to go on, to engage with life, and to throw themselves into and engage with different situations. In growing these qualities, they were cultivating their own personas and ways of imparting their own stamp on the activities into which they threw themselves.

Towards the end of their first year of teaching, the beginning teachers were clearer about the aims and purposes of physical education and were able to plan their content and teaching approaches to enable them to work towards achieving those aims. In contrast to their pre-service programme, they now paid as much attention to why they were teaching specific content as to how they were teaching it. During their pre-service year, the beginning teachers had regarded critical reflection as useful, but during their first year in teaching, it had enabled them to step back from what they were doing and think about what they could do differently.

Bullough, *et al.* (2003), in their study of primary school beginning teachers, comment that even when the first year of teaching is judged successful, it is a trying time and one that tests the beginning teachers' competence, commitment to teaching and conceptions of self. They argue that moving from a novice to an expert teacher involves working on and through one's emotions in context. Van den Berg (2002) suggests that the research base on the emotional aspects of teaching is somewhat limited. This finding is not surprising, given these beginning teachers' strong beliefs about teaching, about wanting to make a positive difference to children and their lives, and the amount of time and energy that they invested into their teaching and relation-building with colleagues and children.

The beginning teachers found it important to build, not only emotional intelligence, but emotional resilience. Resilience and coping are related concepts, but coping refers to the cognitive and behavioural strategies used for managing the demands of stressful situations, whereas resilience refers to the adaptive outcomes which occur (Campbell-Sills, Cohan and Stein, 2006). Supporting beginning teachers' strengths and moving them towards functional coping is said to be a key contributor to the achievement of resilience (Edward and Hercelinskyj, 2007). The beginning teachers' resilience was called upon when they were acquiring and utilising new academic knowledge and practice skills, which sometimes took them out of their comfort zone (see vignette 4). They also had to adapt to different contexts and increased responsibilities that required them to think on their feet. The experience of the beginning teachers had its own dynamic, with its own set of rules, relationships, emotional responses, judgements and ever changing circumstances (Britzman, 1991; Bloomfield, 2000; Groundwater-Smith, Ewing and Le Cornu, 2006).

Emotional resilience is a multi-dimensional concept, including age, social class, culture, history, gender and support networks in the immediate social environment. In recent years, there has been a renewed focus on teacher resilience because of the high proportion of teachers who leave the profession in the first five years (Le Cornu, 2008). Bobek (2002) and Howard and Johnson (2004) have also stated that resilience is not only important for beginning teachers and recently qualified teachers, but for all teachers, as it can enhance teaching effectiveness, heighten career satisfaction and better prepare teachers to adjust to education's ever-changing conditions.

According to Hammond (2004) resilience helps in developing self-image, optimism, sense of humour and beliefs. These all formed part of a wide range of active coping strategies and social skills, enabling the beginning teachers to assess a situation, understand its various dimensions, do what they could to intervene in a helpful way, and importantly, have the capacity to let go of things that they could do nothing about and move on. In addition to developing their knowledge and skills, all of the beginning teachers were also advancing their personal dispositions and qualities, and in doing so, they were changing as individuals. Resilience helped to rebuild confidence and develop toughness, a combination of abilities and characteristics that

interact dynamically to allow an individual to bounce back, cope successfully and function above the norm, in spite of significant stress or adversity (Tusaie and Dyer, 2004).

While positive relations and developing a sense of belonging can foster positive feelings about teaching and about oneself, the impact of problematic interactions can also lead to equally strong, yet aversive, emotional consequences (Kelchtermans and Ballet, 2002). Negotiating the boundaries between school placements, relationships with mentors, the university programme and PLGs is difficult, as they have multi-membership of different communities, engaged simultaneously in university, school, peer and departmental groups (Zeichner, 2010). Each community has different rules and different outcomes. All share the expectation that the beginning teachers are successful. However, how they react and engage with each community will be different if they cannot be themselves. The PLG and university tutor proved to be critical in supporting the beginning teachers' journeys. The beginning teachers were able to use the space of tutor group meetings as a safe haven where they could discuss conflicts and dilemmas outside the pressured environment of the school.

5.4 The need for a third space in redesigning and connecting school and university learning communities

As noted earlier the need for a third space, where critical discussion can take place, resources can be shared and help and support is embedded in the culture, is according to this study a necessity for successful initial teacher education. At the micro level, in school, this can be delivered by mentors; at the meso level, within an alliance, this can be provided by a collaboration of teacher educators and school mentors; and at a macro level this can involve policy makers and national associations.

The beginning teachers acknowledged that the success of knowledge acquisition in a school is dependent on reliable, experienced teachers who can install their craft knowledge. However, not all experienced teachers are critically reflective

practitioners. Without this key element, a school-based placement “...merely perpetuates current practice” (Keay, 2006, p. 371). However, through developing a critical reflective capacity, perpetuation of current practice can be challenged. While teaching competence can be recognised in accordance with QTS, evidencing knowledge development is more problematic and unresolved, and is certainly not definitive.

Although mentors may not necessarily articulate clear beliefs about beginning teachers’ knowledge development, their practice invariably rests upon basic, unquestioned beliefs about learning. They have an important influence as role models and in nurturing, encouraging and providing emotional support as the beginning teachers develop their routines and strategies (Odell and Ferraro, 1992). Creating a safe space where feedback can be given is an important aspect of developing a third space. Feedback that was constructive and positively-framed helped the beginning teachers to view their mentors as being approachable and available for support, which made them feel more comfortable about seeking and receiving feedback and advice.

Ways need to be found to help the beginning teachers to get on the inside of teachable moments that cannot be fully captured in plans or evaluations, or even through uninvolved observation. It is very difficult to understand why and how a range of different types of knowledge are accessed, synchronised and utilised unless one is involved in the context surrounding it. A key recommendation as part of a community of practice is team teaching. It should be encouraged as part of the programme where the beginning teacher is actively involved in working alongside an experienced teacher who is providing a model of effective practice. Team teaching is more demanding on mentors than simply observing the beginning teachers.

Beginning to teach is recognised globally as a particular and complex stage of teacher learning (OECD, 2005). It involves structured or semi-structured processes (such as partnerships and collaborative networks) or informal contexts (such as workplace interactions) that facilitate learning and stimulate beginning teachers to alter or reinforce teaching and educational practices. The space where informal learning takes place is as important as the formal lectures. In the new School Direct

era, university partnerships, teacher co-learning and workplace learning need to be strengthened and prioritised to support professional learning.

The incorporation of both school and university components, in a partnership, contextualises a prevalent pedagogical approach in ITE (Fuller, 2003), which indeed helps to develop beginning teachers into 'knowledgeable teachers' (Rossi and Cassidy, 1999). Critical evaluations of such partnerships, and indeed ITT in England, however, imply a sense of conformism, which as McIntyre (2009) points out, only prepares beginning teachers to accept the 'status quo' of teaching. Indeed, for this 'status quo' to be broken, schools and universities alike must better communicate, so that the transition of learning in context becomes synonymous and transitory (Blake and Lansdell, 2000; Philpott, 2006; McIntyre, 2009). The development of a third space, which can work productively with schools and universities to integrate practitioner and academic knowledge in new ways to enhance the beginning teachers' ability to learn in and from practice, needs to be further developed.

The discourses of university-based teaching (the ideal) and school-based practice (the real world) can enter into a productive dialogue (Zeichner, 2010). The study identified the importance of school contextual factors and showed that the beginning teachers were well aware that learning on placement did not happen without the right kind of support. The mentors who know the school context better than university tutors are better placed to help the beginning teachers to make the necessary connections. However, traditional methods of supervision (e.g. observation and feedback), even when conducted by a school-based mentor, may not be sufficiently adequate to ensure this happens effectively. School-based mentors also need to see the importance of making these connections explicit to the beginning teachers.

This means ensuring that they themselves develop a critical capacity for analysis and reflection of professional practice, and the cultural, social and political contexts within which it is enacted, to make connections between learner, subject and curriculum. It is very difficult to understand why and how a range of different types of knowledge are accessed, synchronised and utilised unless one is involved in the context surrounding this process. Teacher learning occurs in many different aspects of practice, including classrooms, school communities and corridor conversations.

One way of promoting professional dialogue and critical reflection on practice is team teaching. This is encouraged as part of the programme, where the trainee is actively involved in working alongside an experienced teacher. A third space, provided by the school community, could help to cross boundaries by building bridges between the discourses of university and school (Moje, *et al.*, 2004). This third space could be located in training schools, with HE involved in the mentoring and strategic development. However, the recent government announcement to form a College of Teaching (run by teachers for teachers) could marginalise the involvement of HE further.

The importance of school-based learning does not mean that there is no place for learning away from school. The findings suggest that the beginning teachers need time and space to be able to distance themselves from the practicalities of the school setting, which can be overwhelming in the immediacy of their demands. When role and teacher self-aligned, the beginning teachers experienced a connection between personal goals and programme expectations, but also limited opportunities for professional growth. Misalignment, however, created dissonance, and students drew on personal experiences or other resources to address the divide between personal goals and programme expectations. Therefore, dissonance, conflict and dilemmas are not necessarily detrimental to learning, but can act as catalysts for critical reflection.

5.5 Summary

The straddling of academic and practitioner communities has highlighted formal and non-formal learning and the importance of both. Implicit learning gives rise to tacit knowledge, which allows beginning teachers to react to situations and think on their feet. They are often not aware at the time that learning is taking place. The beginning teachers' biographies and the contexts of their journey had influenced and affected their perceptions of learning. Peers, PLGs, tutors and mentors and their relationships with them were important features of each landscape of practice.

The creation of a third space involves a shift in the epistemology of teacher education, from a situation where academic knowledge is seen as the authoritative

source of knowledge about teaching to one where different aspects of expertise that exist in schools and communities are brought into teacher education and co-exist on a more equal plane with academic knowledge (Zeichner, 2010). Place and space have a significant impact on teacher learning. It gives an opportunity to integrate practitioner and academic knowledge in new ways by enhancing beginning teachers' ability to learn in and from practice.

While biography, beliefs, emotions and context influenced the way that the beginning teachers perceived and conceived of themselves as teachers, it was the interplay between beliefs, emotions and contexts that was critical in their professional development and learning. Day, *et al.*, (2006) argue that teacher self is constantly changing. This position is supported by this study, which showed that the teachers' views of themselves changed in relation to context-specific circumstances, and that these views were framed according to whether their emotional reactions were positive or negative.

This confirms the important role that the partnership between HE and school-related factors played in the development of these thirteen beginning teachers. It also reinforces the need for induction policies and practices to take account of the role that school culture plays in the transition, development and professional learning of beginning teachers.

6 Conclusion and Recommendations

This study represents an important addition to the ongoing debate around beginning teachers' professional and pastoral development, particularly within the current policy context regarding the preparation for teaching and where this should be located. The findings of this study identified a number of aspects and the interrelationship between these issues that affected the beginning teachers' professional growth over time, as well as influencing their views of teaching and themselves as teachers. The study highlighted the need for teachers' workplace learning that includes opportunities for developing a critical reflective stance in relation to their professional practice whilst providing high quality professional and pastoral support. Despite the data being collected in 2008 - 2010 the issues that have been raised in the study are even more relevant now with the changes to teacher education and the outcomes of the Carter Review (2015).

This research confirms that beginning teacher development (and, indeed, learning in general) is a journey. Current government requirements entail Teaching Schools as taking the lead in the practical competencies of teaching; however, if they are to lead in the formulation of a third space, they will need an evidence-base to underpin their work. The notion of a third space is a powerful way of conceptualising the diverse and fragmented epistemological landscape of workplace learning in teacher education. Teaching schools can only be categorised if they have an outstanding status given to them by Ofsted; they are in a precarious position if they do not uphold this status. It is clear from this study that a 'third space', which could be part of the new College of Teaching, needs to be identified for the provision of a sustainable and skilled teaching workforce.

The intention of this research was to gain a fuller understanding of beginning teachers' opinions, values and beliefs in order to understand their journey of transition from pre-service preparation into the profession. The study set out to explore:

- What are the patterns of transition and the changing landscapes within which physical education trainees are located?

- What are the key influences that affect the transition and development of beginning physical education teachers?
- How do these factors influence beginning physical education teachers' construction of themselves as teachers?

The study has identified four key aspects that are inherent in the concept of 'third space', an umbrella term that encompasses the original research questions to be considered for beginning teachers' effective professional learning. Third space is conceived as a place for critical professional discourse and the sharing of multiple perspectives:

- a) Developing a third space for critical professional discourse and the sharing of multiple perspectives.
- b) Developing a shared language for all those involved in ITE, facilitating the link between theory and practice.
- c) Providing adequate guidance and support for high quality professional, pastoral and developmental mentoring.
- d) University's central role in the preparation of beginning teachers.

6.1 Developing a third space for critical professional discourse and the sharing of multiple perspectives;

The findings suggest that the beginning teachers need time and space to be able to distance themselves from the practicalities of the school setting, which can be overwhelming in the immediacy of their demands. The concept of a third space would bring to the fore teachers as workers and learners in order to achieve broader, long-term goals for achieving high quality learning for both students and beginning teachers. This space could include settings for workplace learning in universities, cross-professional territories and spaces created by new technologies, particularly virtual spaces, which allow for the exchange, development, debate and simulation of practice (McNamara, *et al.*, 2014).

For a third space to be developed, it is important that multiple perspectives can be expressed in a democratic environment. According to Habermas's (1984) ideal speech situation, individuals are able to freely share their views with one another, are allowed to question any statement, introduce new ideas into the discourse, express their attitudes, desires and needs, and cannot be prevented by internal or external coercion from exercising their rights. By allowing every teacher the same opportunity to participate in the discourse, the ideal speech situation (Habermas, 1984) would hopefully eradicate the prejudices which limit the beginning teachers from sharing their views and beliefs. A virtual space in ITE could provide all partners and beginning teachers with a quasi-neutral space that can be inhabited by all, without any limitations on time or space and ensuring anonymity if requested.

Many in education seem to struggle with the tension between the personal and professional, especially when the most deeply personal dimensions of themselves do not align with the professional practices they enact. Third space thinking draws on hybridity theory (Zeichner, 2010) which recognises the complexity of people, spaces and places. Bhaba (1994, p. 270) articulates this as "...in-betweeness", which would expand opportunities for teacher learning and create new synergies through the interplay of knowledge from different sources (Zeichner, 2010). This could take advantage of multiple sources of expertise that can support high quality teaching by enhancing pre-service teachers' ability to learn in, and from, practice. This approach would show that the traditional distanced and disconnected model of university-based pre-service education is on its way out. However, staff involved in the process would need to be recognised in both settings to allow the time and the space for the model to be created and sustained.

6.2 Developing a shared language for all those involved in ITE, facilitating the link between theory and practice

The development of a third space would enable a shared language for all those involved in facilitating Initial Teacher Education. The Carter Review (2015) of ITE praised the role of theory and evidence-based teaching within existing programmes. However, the report recommends not only a simplified route into teaching, but also a

shared language that includes a mentoring framework which is structured and resourced to provide a focus on how teachers learn.

This study highlighted the importance of high quality mentoring and the inconsistencies that occur, which could potentially cause harm (Hobson, *et al.*, 2009). It appears that recent government policy has ignored this key principle of effective mentoring. According to McNamara, Murray and Jones (2014), two of the three key characteristics of high-performing school systems internationally relate directly to the quality of teacher pre-service education. It is unclear in the School Direct model how much thinking has been directed towards the intellectual, philosophical and pedagogic mechanisms of partnership that have emerged between universities and schools in the last decade (Maguire, 2014).

The professional culture of the school was a key influence on the ease and speed with which the beginning teachers adjusted to their new roles and developed as teachers. Schools that encouraged and facilitated the development of positive collegial relationships and networks enabled the beginning teachers to gain access to information, advice and support from a range of staff. Conversely, professional cultures that did not encourage constructive collegial interactions impeded development and learning, as the beginning teachers found it more difficult to figure out their schools' established customs and practices. There was little acknowledgement that they were also learners, so any new information and skills had to be acquired rapidly.

6.3 Adequate guidance and support for high quality professional, pastoral and developmental mentoring

The development of a third space would encompass support for beginning teachers, in-service support and mentor development as part of its function. Teacher education has been characterised by a continual set of conflicts between different sets of stakeholders who control and manage the provision (Maguire, 2014). Many of these struggles have centred on the academic profiles of teachers, as well as on the

content of teacher education programmes and their relationship to school experience.

One of the unintended consequences of all the changes is that they can contribute towards a loss of professional identity and a reduction in the power of teachers and teacher educators to influence professional development, policy and practice. Teacher education should be viewed as a continuum, covering pre-service preparation, induction and CPD in a process of lifelong learning. In addition to finding a shared language for the discourse of teacher education, there is also a need to ensure continuity in the learning process. For this to happen, teachers also need to be viewed as learners and for spaces to be provided within and beyond the school setting for cross-professional practices and established and emerging technologies (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2004). The learning continuum should provide a teacher learning pathway, which includes progression opportunities with an expectation of learner achievement. Beginning teachers are novices who need to acquire the skills required for technical implementation of curricular programmes in the classroom (Long, *et al.*, 2012).

Training that is provided through school-based and employment-based routes, such as School Direct, Teach First or SCITT, focuses on the development of trainees' practical skills and competences, which are necessary and vital in the early years of teaching, but this needs to be delivered in a collaboratively-designed setting. Data stemming from the study recognised that university, beginning teachers and experienced teachers can all be active contributors to decision-making about policies and practices affecting the entire school. This could be supported by a democratic structure, such as a virtual third space, whereby schools and universities can learn from each other. Socialising with colleagues helped to ease the beginning teachers' stress and uncertainty and to build relationships with staff across the school and feel part of the community of practice.

6.4 The universities' central role in the preparation of beginning teachers

There is concern from university-based teacher educators (Knight, 2013, p. 1) that immersion in practice could lead to “...mediocre everyday pedagogy” and the pedagogy of “...showing and telling”, in which the underlying principle of education and teaching would not be addressed. This perhaps underlines the universities’ central role in the preparation of beginning teachers to enter and engage in the community of practice with questions and critical dispositions, with a view to being the autonomous professionals of the future. This will involve the acquisition of theoretical knowledge, which can serve as reference points in the development and critical analysis of subject pedagogy and classroom practice in general.

When the beginning teacher’s role was identified by the school, they experienced a connection between personal goals and programme expectations, but also limited opportunities for professional growth. Misalignment, between personal and professional ideals, however, created dissonance, and students drew on personal experiences or other resources to address the divide between personal goals and programme expectations. Most of the beginning teachers wanted to ignite the curiosity and passion in the pupils they taught, to awaken human potential rather than try to standardise academic achievement at the expense of developing other dimensions of the whole person.

Towards the end of their first year in teaching, the beginning teachers confirmed that teaching was the right career choice for them. However, this continuation is not a linear chronological development, i.e. pre-service-induction-in-service, but one that crosses many boundaries and is influenced by context and content. Learning communities in the context of education assume that learners are on a trajectory from novice to full membership of the community of practice. However, shifting the focus from a community of practice to landscapes of practice and boundary encounters, it becomes important to consider individual trajectories in learning communities other than inbound from periphery to centre (Wenger, 1998). While the beginning teachers’ believed that teaching had become less stressful as they became more experienced, they all recognised that teaching was, and always would be, a challenging profession. The learning communities they worked in and the children they taught made the job worthwhile. The study highlighted the need for

workplace learning and critical reflection that provides professional and pastoral support in a “third space.”

Some of the beginning teachers embarked on the PGCE with strong teacher role identities based on their own teachers, and they used this as a base to interpret the subsequent teaching and learning process. Most of the pre-service teachers, when reflecting on their own teachers in physical education, observed positive traits that they would like to model; for example, a strong sense of personal identity which infused their work, using words like *enthusiastic, motivated, teaching is their life, really there when they teach, good relationships*. They also commented on negative aspects of their teachers, with some describing them as *distracted* and *unenthusiastic*. They focused on how the teachers detached themselves from their subject and, in the process, from their teaching and their students.

While biography, beliefs, emotions and context influenced the way the beginning teachers perceived and conceived of themselves as teachers, it was the interplay between these factors that played the critical role in their professional development and learning. The interrelationship between personal and contextual factors suggests that the beginning teachers’ professional identities were not stable or fixed and that teacher behaviour changed in relation to context-specific circumstances.

Further, the beginning teachers were cognisant that, in order to pass the course, they had to please their mentors, which often resulted in them emulating them rather than developing a style of their own. However, pragmatic compliance results in conflict and dilemma; beginning teachers need a space where professional knowledge is grounded in different kinds of evidence, together with principles which have been refined from collective understandings and experiences, so they can rationally defend their professional judgments (Alexander, 2004).

A key role here is for collaborative partnerships between universities and schools that will adequately prepare beginning teachers for the transition process, thus avoiding the culture shock that some of the beginning teachers experienced. At the start of their PGCE year, most of the beginning teachers in the study underestimated the impact of the journey from learning to teach to professional practice.

The transition process and the ability to cope and adapt may be dependent on individual personality; however, the ones who were allocated a mentor were more able to balance the transition and the culture shock. The success of this relationship between novice and mentor is dependent on the personalities, drive, commitment and enthusiasm of both the mentor and the beginning teacher in directing the journey into teaching. The mentor plays a key role in this process of professional learning.

6.5 Recommendations

In order to fully outline the recommendations that the study makes for future practice and research, four areas will be discussed:

- a) developing a third space for workplace learning;
- b) professional learning that is underpinned by research, practice-based evidence and supported by a professional learning community;
- c) mentors as having a key role in supporting beginning teachers;
- d) developing a college of teaching.

a) Developing a third space for workplace learning

A fundamental premise of learning communities is that practising teachers, beginning teachers, and teacher educators come together with the goal of developing relationships in which all members discuss and construct the ideas of what it means to not only teach, but also how to transform current practice. A key issue emerging from the study was the beginning teachers' social interactions with colleagues and how important these were in their professional lives.

Teacher education, as part of this third space, needs to explore the teaching self. By confronting and reflecting upon their experiences and beliefs, beginning teachers, as part of the community of practice, can develop their own personal and professional identities. Learning communities should be there to support one another and

respond to new opportunities by looking for new partnerships that will benefit the school and help them achieve their goals, informed by vision and values. With the support of universities, schools can widen their vision of professional development, from not just keeping up-to-date or refreshing knowledge, but to providing the use of new technologies, including virtual spaces, which would allow for the simulation of practice and virtual discussion rooms.

A successful ITE school and university partnership needs to be embedded within the concept of a community of practice. Beginning teachers need collaborative learning communities where they can have the freedom to experiment with alternative approaches and strategies with the support of their peers.

b) Professional learning that is underpinned by research, practice-based evidence and supported by a professional learning community

The tensions between the elements of theory and practice should be overcome in a democratic structure where both schools and universities can learn from each other. This relates to Korthagen and Vasolov's (2005) vision of freeing teacher education from a unidirectional focus on applying theory to practice and developing, instead, a process that builds on practice and is geared to a great extent of developing links to theory retrospectively.

Beginning teachers need a platform where sharing knowledge can spur debate and conversations about ways of teaching. This would utilise the views of teachers in schools more, and help the trainees to become theorists in their own right. Teacher education could be strengthened if the respective roles of university and schools were articulated through a clearer collaborative approach so that a more transparent partnership is created. Schools should have a significant, and no less important, role to play in the education of teachers. Beginning teachers' learning and development could be enhanced through a collaborative culture of sharing ideas and experimentation. However, schools should also provide a context and a space for critical analysis and reflection and opportunities for access to guidance and support from trained mentors who, as accomplished teachers, should have extensive classroom experience and a critical perspective of their role.

c) Mentors as having a key role in supporting beginning teachers

It is not enough for beginning teachers in school to expect learning to happen without the right kind of support. Mentors need to be able to scaffold beginning teachers' pedagogical knowledge practices. They know the school context better than university tutors, and are better placed to support beginning teachers in that environment. However, traditional methods of supervision (e.g. observation and feedback), even when conducted by a school-based mentor, may not be adequate to ensure this happens effectively. School and university partnerships need to provide rigorous training for mentors that focuses on how teachers learn and the skills of effective mentoring. This poses a great difficulty when teachers in school are already so stretched in terms of time and effort and when they have other competing priorities. Mentors need to be given more time to work collaboratively and plan for these identified sessions to happen. The use of a third space, where beginning teachers and mentors can come together and collaboratively discuss concerns and progressions, is a priority. If team teaching is carried out effectively, it can lead to the mentor and the beginning teacher joining together in aspects of professional development.

d) Developing a College of Teaching

An innovative College of Teaching could develop a framework of core content for ITE. It could cross organisational boundaries by recognising the value of the contribution of teacher educators, educational researchers, representative bodies and teaching professionals, and establish agreements that advance a knowledge-based professionalism. It could present a platform where teacher educators can provide ongoing professional learning and further qualifications alongside supporting beginning teachers.

The College of Teaching needs to include subject and pedagogic knowledge development for both pre and in-service teachers, ensuring that both have access to high quality subject expertise. According to Maandag, *et al.* (2007), countries with the most successful school systems, such as Finland and Singapore, favour research-led teacher-training, bringing together knowledge from different sources in

a coherent and integrated way. In schools, it is important to listen and address young people's needs and interests and to recognise their particular places in the world (Gannon, 2010). It is crucial in physical education that attention needs to be afforded to engaging and re-engaging young people to motivate them in lifelong physical activity. Research-led ITE and CPD would then move beyond a focus on delivery of knowledge, content and skills to a series of encounters in interpersonal, emotional and embodied space, which form part of a learning community.

Studying their own practice is not an end in itself, but a driving force for reframing how beginning teachers think about practice in order to develop new, innovative and productive practices. By sharing the understandings that have developed from enquiring about their own practice and comparing them to the principles of others; this may lead the beginning teachers to a better collective understanding of meaningful ways to advance their teaching of physical education. The move towards a College of Teaching would offer a provision where teacher educators, schools, mentors and subject associations could provide an informed authoritative voice for teaching by helping to establish, stabilise and sustain its national identity values, purpose and responsibility for setting standards.

If schools are going to grow their own teachers, how can the profession ensure that what they have learnt is transferable in multiple perspectives? It is important to remember that that ITE is initial; the beginning teachers need development programmes that will equip them well to start out as effective teachers. There are too many innovations that have ended as innovation without change (Sparkes, 1991). It is time to challenge schools and universities to move beyond activity-based instruction to provide collaborative learning spaces to sustain an effective and expert teaching workforce. As Gu and Day (2013) indicate, limited models of beginning teachers' professional development fail to take into account the importance of high quality teacher learning in building and sustaining teacher resilience and motivation.

The government needs to recognise that teachers must not be positioned solely as tools for school improvement (Czerniawski, 2011). Time and space are needed to engage in, reflect on, and analyse a range of opportunities in the workplace which have rich learning as a by-product (Eraut, *et al.*, 2006). This will give teachers more

ownership for their own learning and allow pre-service teachers a structured environment which supports a hands-on model of learning. It should also allow them the time and space to trial and reflect on a range of innovative learning approaches.

Learning alongside more expert practitioners in a school setting is anything other than a fundamental part of being a teacher. However, as this study has shown, it is not just about where teacher education is done, it is also about what is being done and how it is being done and who has the power to innovate?

Suggestions for further research

Using a qualitative approach, this longitudinal study investigated the boundary crossing of beginning teachers through complex landscapes of practice which involved many different participants. Data from these different sources could be gathered to gain more insight into this process. The perception of NQTs could then be compared and contrasted with the views of mentors, senior leadership teams in schools and teacher educators in university. This wider scope could contribute to a deeper exploration of the use of third space in teacher learning which might help to overcome some of the tensions arising from the changes in teacher education to a predominately schools-based approach.

The current neoliberal model of teacher education puts emphasis on skills and expertise firmly based in schools (Hordern, 2014). There has been a drive to locate teacher professional learning in schools, led by a raft of outstanding Teaching Schools (Gove, 2010), with the School Direct model as the central vehicle for the delivery of the government's plans. The aim of Teaching Schools is to include school-based teacher-training together with a development continuum across the entire span of a teacher's career. With the School Direct model gathering pace, areas need to be identified where practitioner and academic knowledge and theory and practice can be developed, so the perceived dichotomy of workplace/non-workplace can be embedded in a more explicit way.

The multi-layered nature of teacher identity is aptly captured by Korthagen (2004) in an adaptation of Bateson's model (Dilts, 1990). It depicts the beginning teacher as a

layered onion where the assumption is the inner layers (belief, identity and mission) can influence the outer ones (environment, behaviour and competencies) and vice versa. While there has been plenty of research identifying typologies of teachers' knowledge and beliefs, little research has explored the correspondence between the flow of these layers and the effects on teaching practice. This investigation could contribute to a deeper exploration of core reflection in teacher learning adding to current research on positive psychology.

7 Learning Journey

This study was initially conceived as one journey investigating the process of transition that beginning teachers undergo during their pre-service and induction year. However, it soon became apparent that there was a second journey running in parallel with the first, and that journey was my own personal journey of learning, reflection and acquisition of research skills and emerging sophistication of knowledge regarding conducting my study on beginning teachers. When I first started to scope out my plan, it was like discovering a map of an exciting destination; it all seemed so easy and possible.

I did not see the challenges and complications ahead in joining up the pieces. Embarking on writing this study was, to me, like running a marathon, something I never pictured myself doing. My initial enthusiasm was sparked by a colleague who encouraged me by saying, “*You can do anything you want, just try it*”. It challenged my equilibrium, I was happy and safe in my environment, I realised that changing your place in the world requires courage, and I have discovered that the greatest source of strength is inside me.

In a journey there are three elements – the destination, the route, and the actual means or process of travelling. It is the experience gained from travelling that constitutes the real changes to yourself. As my understanding of my own experiences became more sophisticated, I was able to draw on these learning experiences to interpret and explain the experiences of the beginning teachers on their learning journey. As I passed through the imaginary gateway at the start of my professional doctorate, much of my own ability to understand my own practices in teaching and learning was illustrated in the metaphors and images that I created for myself.

These images of my own teaching in school and university assisted me in understanding my ideas and articulating my personal theories, as each new community of practice (for example, as a teacher educator) helped me formulate my own ideas and forge my own pathway into who I am as a teacher. I encountered

many detours on the way that slowed, but never stopped the journey. Kvale (1996, p. 4) suggested that the interviewer is a:

Traveller on a journey that leads to a tale to be told upon returning home...the interviewer wanders along with the local inhabitants, asks questions that lead the subjects to tell their own stories of their lived world, and converse.

My journey has been a personal transformation, during which I changed my attitudes towards myself, my research, professional and personal life. The journey stretched my intellectual capacities and taught me a significant amount about thesis writing. Initially, the focus of the study was on the part the university played in supporting the pre-service teachers through their PGCE year and into the first year of teaching. What emerged were the beginning teachers' perceptions of different environments and landscapes and how they travelled across them and reacted with them. This was not unexpected, as my own experiences and journeys crossed many boundaries.

I encountered many different cultures and individuals and the meanings of my stories were interpreted through the experiences of my journey (Kvale, 1996). The reflections have led to new ways of self-understanding and uncovered some taken for granted values and customs, for example, I naively believed that all schools would encourage new staff to bring in new and innovative ideas and support them in curriculum delivery.

This research originated from an initial personal interest in the journey of beginning teachers and their professional development. I wanted to investigate how beginning teachers manage the challenges they encounter and how they view and interpret new information and experiences through their existing network of concepts, experience and beliefs (Richardson, 1997). I have spent a considerable amount of my life involved with education and sport, specifically teaching physical education both in schools and HE and in coaching and officiating in various sports. Over the years, I have had the opportunity and privilege to observe beginning teachers develop and many of my early trainees who completed pre-service training courses have now progressed to senior positions in the profession, so I have much personal

evidence that beginning teachers do develop professionally. However, I have less understanding of the process involved in this development. So, it was a primary motive of my research to increase my awareness and knowledge of the boundary crossings and journeys of beginning teacher developments.

My own progression in teaching physical education in schools and Higher Education has had many twists and turns, which have contributed towards my professional development throughout my career (Keay, 2013). This journey is intertwined in the dialogue of this study, as my own experiences have shaped my outlook on teaching and learning in physical education. My experiences have led me to continually strive to improve myself as a teacher, mentor and leader to enhance the progress and confidence of beginning teachers.

My initial interest in the beginning teacher's journey was first sparked when I became a mentor, as a teacher in a school where the beginning teachers seemed to be on a steep learning curve and needed to be guided and helped in various aspects of their development. Their stories of how they had been integrated (or not) into different schools and departments made me realise that understanding where they were on their learning journey and how they managed the different transitions during their PGCE year and their induction year had an impact on the type of teacher they were to become. This interest developed further when I moved to higher education as a teacher educator and a university mentor to beginning teachers. My initial literature searches were narrow in focus as I was concerned with the area of physical education.

My curiosity grew after examining education literature more extensively, providing me with a broader overview of the journey of the trainees. As a result, the current study was embarked upon with the aim of examining trainees' values and beliefs as they navigated their way through the various landscapes of practice to becoming a teacher.

There is no one-way street between the researcher and the object of study; rather the two affect each other mutually and continually in the course of the research process (Alverson and Skoldberg, 2000, p. 39).

The journey has certainly not been linear and progress has been gradual and iterative. It has been like putting together a jigsaw puzzle, but, at the same time, like juggling balls and having to focus on both at the same time. A significant rite of passage for me was the acquisition of sufficient confidence in arguments and language to contribute to and feel part of a wider academic community. As the beginning teachers have crossed institutional, professional and cultural boundaries and thresholds, I have also made learning leaps, moving from a predominantly practice-related field to a conceptual level of understanding.

I have experienced conceptual paradigm shifts regarding my research and myself. Moving into HE ITE, I became more aware of how changes in policy affected practice, particularly the changes to teacher education, which shifted my view on the focus of this study. When I first entered HE, I experienced a state of liminality where I no longer belonged to the school community, but had not become a member of the university community. I became stuck, as I wanted to make changes quickly and my old understandings were hard to move to take on a new appreciation of concepts (Land, *et al.*, 2005). I wanted to change the learning environment of the beginning teachers to enhance their preparations of becoming a teacher.

Trying to make ITE curriculum change was a slow process, which reflected my progress in my own research. This led to frustration and a loss of confidence in my understanding of teacher education and my own writing abilities. It was at these points where a deeper conceptual understanding happened. I use the terminology of 'peaks and troughs' with the beginning teachers to describe these boundary crossings as part of their learning journey. An example of this is during their first placements; the beginning teachers' initial euphoria starts to wear off as the practicalities of lesson planning, meetings, after school activities and university work begin to take their toll. Their coping mechanisms falter and self-doubt starts to creep in.

This is where peer support and personal tutors can assist. This rhythm of highs and lows is cyclic, but, nonetheless, a stage that needs to be recognised and supported.

I have always believed that, when observing good teaching, there is always something extra that the naked eye cannot see; it is earned respect, invisible discipline, something inside that makes you who you are. None of this can be observed, but it needs to be talked through, reflected upon and developed practically. For the purpose of this reflective journey, my construction of meaning is central, as is reflection. Schön (1983) claims that reflection-in-action is essential as mediation between theory and practice, which has been an essential element of my study.

He stressed the value of reflection in the development of knowing-in-action into knowledge-in-action. Eraut (1994) also argues that deliberate processes are central to professional work, involving intuitive as well as analytical thinking and discussion. I felt strongly that beginning teachers cannot be thrown into classes where the pupils are used as guinea pigs, for the placement schools also have a duty of care, not only to the beginning teachers, but also to their own students in ensuring that they receive high quality teaching. I realised that, if pre-service teachers only get time to reflect on their classroom experience, they may have no time to think about themselves.

If the only type of reflection they engage with is technician, that tries to explain problems within the classroom, then they cannot step back and reflect on the political, social and economic factors that influence their professional lives. Learning at and through work is inevitably influenced by the structural and socio-cultural factors inherent in the workplace, and in the broader professional, socioeconomic and cultural context in which it occurs (Murray, McNamara and Jones, 2014). These spaces need to explore how personal dispositions and senses of agency affect how beginning teachers interact with the workplace, participate in different learning communities and take advantage of professional development opportunities.

I have always believed that, to be able to develop myself and the students and trainees I have taught, I need to know my learners and my subject, but, more importantly, I need to know myself. I realised that, without this important part of the equation, the other parts will not happen successfully.

Hagger and McIntyre (2006, p. 42) highlight the interrelationship that exists between learners' biography and the learning process:

When beginning teachers embark on training, they are no more empty vessels than are children as they enter classrooms. It is now widely accepted that the personal knowledge and beliefs they bring with them are both complex and influential.

I began to explore my own inner landscape as my confidence in the external environment started to grow. I realised that professional boundaries should not be restrictive or focused on one area, but should form part of an infrastructure to facilitate learning. Palmer (2008) identified three pathways, all of which play their part in individuals' learning and development:

Reduce teaching to intellect and it becomes a cold abstraction; reduce it to emotions and it becomes narcissistic; reduce it to the spiritual and it loses its anchor to the world (Palmer, 2008, p. 1).

I now believe that good teachers join self, subject and students in the fabric of life, because they teach from an integral and undivided self. They somehow manage to connect all three areas with a seamless transition. There is no one size fits all approach here. They should be allowed the freedom and space to develop their own identity, by learning through participation in a range of settings, including other organisations and practice settings, and allow time for learning and reflection away from the workplace.

During my time in teaching in schools and higher education, many innovations have been variously welcomed, improved, deflected, co-opted, modified and sabotaged and schools have developed rules and cultures to control the way people behave when in them. The culture of schooling (a process of moulding and fashioning minds and behaviour according to the interests and beliefs of the school) has persisted, partly because it enables teachers to discharge their duties in a predictable fashion, cope with the everyday tasks that others expect of them and provide much predictability to all who encounter schools. Part of this predictability is linked to time management. It is an age-old saying in teaching that a lack of time prevents any

professional development and change. I have discovered during the writing up of this study that the effective and efficient use of time is a precious commodity.

During times when I had lost focus and self-confidence, I would tidy my papers, switch the computer on, read what I did last time, print off a few articles and then have to stop, as I had run out of time. Now I set myself a target of what I want to achieve before I start; keeping that focus has made me more disciplined. I can now use short periods of time to do smaller jobs, like organising references, and prioritise longer periods of time for in-depth study and reflection. An outcome of this has been my approach to structuring the beginning teachers' professional learning and development. I helped them design a holistic overview of their journey, identifying times for reflection and discussion.

Part of my journey has included learning about learning (meta-learning). It has helped me connect my thinking about my own learning to actions and behaviours that have engaged me in learning more strategically. According to Watkins, *et al.* (2002, p. 391), "... learning is the process of creating knowledge by making sense of experience; meta learning is the process of making sense of your experience of learning." Although, traditionally, higher education is the space where learning, research and practice about learning and learning about learning seem most logically to come together, the creation of a third space, where this meta-cognition can work with experienced school-based mentors, is a way to increase the learning of teachers in schools.

This can be through a virtual space where, for example, online webinars, blogs and resource banks can support learning communities. My own third space has been provided by my Professional Doctorate research, which has enabled me to look at problems from a number of different perspectives, to analyse, gather evidence, synthesise and be a flexible and creative thinker (Aulich, 1990).

I have become more aware of myself in the learning process and of the learning process. In Eraut's (1994) view, professionals adapt and develop knowledge

according to the circumstances in which they find themselves, since it is effective action that confers status.

One of the areas in which I have had to increase my thinking is the ability to transfer or adapt my learning to new contexts and tasks. It has helped me to become more aware of my strengths and weaknesses as a learner, recognising the limits of my knowledge and then working out how to extend that knowledge. At the start of my journey, I asked myself these questions: “What do I already know about teaching and beginning teachers?” “How has my thinking changed (not changed) over time?” “What has worked well in my journey?” “What has not worked so well?” “How have I acknowledged the difficulties?”

This study is certainly the most grounded scholarly task I have ever undertaken. At the start of the journey, my focus was narrow, reflecting my area of expertise, which was teaching physical education. My initial literature search did not help me in finding a way forward. At my first meeting with my supervisor, teacher education, and, in particular, workplace learning, was discussed, which moved my thinking to a different level. On her advice, I became a member of the Teacher Education Research Network (TERN) (Murray, *et al.*, 2009), a collaborative network of all seven North West universities involved in teacher education.

This developed into an active research community, which enhanced and impacted on my knowledge and understanding of teacher education. I became a member of a group exploring teachers’ beliefs and attitudes about creativity in education during times of policy emergence and professional challenge. The project, which received research funding, investigated the developing perceptions of trainees and newly qualified teachers, leading to a deeper understanding of how beginning teachers determine what constitutes a ‘relevant’ and ‘flexible’ curriculum for the young people they teach in relation to creativity in the curriculum. In addition, the study demonstrated how trainee and recently qualified teachers responded to the need to create flexible approaches to teaching and learning through their implementation of creativity within the curriculum.

Participation in the network was a catalyst for inspiring me to progress my own thesis. It could be argued that TERN provided a third space for teacher educators, where we could share concerns, engage in critical dialogue about policy and practice, step outside our comfort zones, develop resilience and cross boundaries. My knowledge base and confidence were further increased as I had two abstracts (one representing my initial findings of this study) accepted at the 2012 British Education Research Association annual conference.

After being inspired to progress my thesis, my next challenge was to decide on which research strategy I would use. In the conclusion, I used the metaphor of onion layers to explore identity changes. These onion layers can also be used to explain my research approaches, philosophical stances and the strategy and data collection methods I employed. These discussions and decisions led me on a steep learning curve, of understanding how it would all work. I had to take into consideration the beginning teachers' experiences of their journey, my own personal experiences and the audience of the study.

The philosophical view of social construction resonated with me, as I wanted to explore the beginning teachers' understanding of the world in which they live and work. It fitted in with a qualitative strategy of enquiry using interviews as my research method. Some of the studies I had read had used grounded theory. When I first read about grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), I was confused, as the two authors developed very different ideas in future publications. They were keen to demonstrate that their method was inductive as opposed to the conventional deductive approaches they were challenging. I then discovered constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; 2008; 2009), which assumes that neither data nor theory are discovered, but are constructed by the researcher as a result of their interactions with the topic and its participants.

This method was a much better 'fit' with my proposed study, as I wanted to listen and value the beginning teachers' stories and analyse and interpret their experiences. Charmaz's (2006, p. 141) argument that there are multiple realities in the world and

“...generalisation is partial, conditional and situated in time and space” resonated with me, as I wanted to highlight the importance of the beginning teacher’s narrative,

In order to theme the rich data, I decided to use a CAQDAS package (NVivo10). I am not a natural computer fanatic, so understanding the nuances of nodes and trees was completely alien to me when I first started. It initially helped me to organise the data; however, it did not do the analysis for me, it merely acted as a holding centre for the data, which disappointed me.

After the initial coding, I struggled to differentiate between the nodes and, on many occasions, reverted back to printed sheets and highlighter pen. I do believe CAQDAS packages enhance grounded theory analysis because you are always working close to your original data; however, frequency is the key here, as long lapses in returning to the data meant repeating and re-reading the categories and codes. I did make use of memos as part of this process, where I wrote down thoughts, ideas and further questions as they occurred to me, which certainly helped when it came to writing up the study.

The process has resulted in an immensely rewarding experience, despite the high levels of frustration, anxiety and even anger as the journey evolved. These emotions were tied into my own management role at university and snatched periods of time trying to fit everything in. However, I can claim there are sufficient reasons to believe that both my research and professional skills have developed considerably. This will inevitably translate into new possibilities as a scholar and teacher educator.

The study highlights the need to develop a shared understanding among policy-makers, teacher educators and schools regarding the multiplicity and complexity of factors that influence the transition from pre-service to professional teacher. I now feel better prepared to make more grounded decisions regarding expanding on my area of research – beginning teacher transitions – as well as transferring these skills to other fields of higher education, including student transitions and professional development.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 coding process

Initial coding – constant comparison – relationship between codes – focused coding – theoretical integration

Initial coding

Influences of PE as a pupil, PE teachers, coaches, external sports teams, motivation, enthusiasm, doubt, fear, passion, drive

Influence of peer group, university, personal tutor, mentor, context of school, anxious, nervous, behaviour management, content knowledge, pedagogic content knowledge vulnerable, reflection of teaching

Influence of peer group, mentor, university, department, relationship with mentor, school department, experience of mentor, critical reflection on learning

Influence of social and cultural aspects of the practice setting, Influence of school context, acceptance, relief, critical reflection

memo

memo

memo

memos

memo

Theoretical integration – linking of categories

