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Chapter 13

Professional Learning of Primary Generalist Teachers in Ireland: Modelling Sport Education

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Professional development and teacher learning

This study is contextualised within (continuing) professional development and teacher learning. While we support the preference for the use of 'professional' / 'teacher learning' to the notion of 'professional development', which suggests teacher passivity (Armour & Yelling, 2004b), not all literature makes that distinction and use both terms interchangeably. There is however a consensus that professional / teacher learning is promoted through effective professional development opportunities. There is a growing recognition of the importance of providing teachers with professional development opportunities where learning is aligned, coherent, and sustained (Armour & Duncombe, 2004; Armour & Yelling, 2004a; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Finley, Marble, Copeland, & Ferguson, 2000). A number of reviews comprehensively report the types of effective physical education professional development and influencing factors of physical education teacher development (Armour, 2006; Armour & Yelling, 2004a & b; Bechtel & O'Sullivan, 2006; Li, 2010; Petrie, 2009; Wang & Ha 2008).

While professional development initiatives for practicing teachers are not new, less is known about what constitutes effective practice for primary / elementary physical education. Primary teachers in Armour and Duncombe's (2004) study suggest that professional development must be closely linked to practice, school-based with the teacher's own pupils, and realistic. Petrie's (2009) work evaluates the

impacts of a professional development programme on knowledges associated with teaching physical education, and the complexity of subject specific knowledge development for generalist teachers. Unlike imposed professional development opportunities, the two generalist primary teachers in the study reported in this chapter were proactive in seeking a professional development opportunity through inviting the second author, Deborah, to the school to deliver Sport Education (SE). Both teachers were willing to be involved in professional learning, being positively disposed to making conceptual changes to their teaching of physical education. Factors that facilitated professional learning, and also acted as criteria for the selection of modelling of SE in particular as a collaborative learning strategy, included the emphasis placed on sport in Irish primary schools, students eager to be involved in sport experiences, for one teacher their previous experience with the model and for the other teacher the novelty of transferring responsibility from the teacher to student, and Deborah's experience in teaching and researching SE.

Consensus has been reached that 'collaborative learning' (including organization partnership, small group models, informal networks) is an effective method of physical education teacher development (Armour, 2006; Armour & Yelling, 2007; McCaughtry, Hodges-Kulinna, Cothran, Martin & Faust, 2005; Wang & Ha, 2008). In response to Wang & Ha's (2008) recommendation that more studies are needed to examine how to efficiently put collaborative learning into practice, this research set out to examine whether a professional development initiative, using modelling of SE, would provide primary teachers with sufficient knowledge, skill, and confidence to plan and deliver a SE season. Teacher modelling as an effective teaching strategy has been discussed in the context of a teacher demonstrating a concept for a student (Haston, 2007). It was anticipated that modelling a SE season would reduce the limitations in professional development experienced by teachers of 'one-shot' design professional development programmes (Armour & Yelling, 2002; Ward & Doutis, 1999) that tend to be part of national continuing professional development physical education programmes (see Armour & Duncombe, 2004; Atencio, Jess & Dewar, 2009; Petrie, 2009).

Comment [YUN1]: In what way is modeling different than mentoring (Dodds, 2005; McCaughtry, Cothran, Kulinna, Martin and Faust, 2005; Patton, Pangnano, Griffin, Dodds, Sheehy, Qrnold, Henninger, Gallo and James, 2005),

Comment [YUN2]: This is all I can find on modelling apart from the other reference I have asked you to get through ILL.

The improvement in the quality of teachers' instruction (and learning) and students' learning are to some extent reliant upon improvements in the quality of teachers' professional learning (Armour & Yelling, 2007; Borko, 2004, Cohen and Hill, 1998). As Petrie (2009) succinctly points out, little is known about the extent to which a shift in teachers' physical education rhetoric translate into changes in the practice of physical education lessons and the associated (effective) teaching and learning of physical education in primary schools. Similar to Ko, Wallhead & Ward's (2006) analysis of identifying the components of a SE professional development workshop that teachers plan to use in their lessons, we asked teachers to analyze professional learning through modeling and its potential to enhance their students' learning. Unfortunately, being unable to commit time and resources to follow the two teachers as they rolled-out an outdoor adventure SE unit on completion of the athletics season resulted in no attempt to evaluate the direct impact of teacher learning on pupil learning.

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Comment [YUN4]: Not sure we want to be so explicit in this when we don't have data from the teachers delivery of the orienteering season and associated levels of student learning.

Teacher challenges in implementing SE

Penney, Clarke, Quill, and Kinchin (2005) highlight the challenges faced by teachers attempting to implement the student-led instructional approach encouraged by SE. Shifting pedagogies from teacher-centered to those that are focused on the student taking responsibility for their own learning experiences can be difficult for both the teacher as well as the student. In SE, the teacher becomes what Siedentop, Hastie, and van der Mars (2004) describe as an 'instructional engineer' who instructs, facilitates, and assesses learning and shares instructional and classroom management responsibilities with students. However, this does not mean that the teacher becomes a 'ball roller and arm folder'. As the teacher begins to share responsibility with learners the students learn to assume positive leadership roles, become active decision makers, negotiate positive social relationships within teams, and expand their skills beyond player performance.

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Professional development in Sport Education

In three extensive reviews of SE literature, a number of studies have focused on teachers' perceptions, responses to, and uses of SE in primary / elementary or secondary schools, and mechanisms that facilitate or inhibit pre-service teachers' delivery of SE during teaching practice placements (Hastie, in press; Kinchin, 2006; Wallhead & O'Sullivan, 2005). It is striking that very few of these studies deliberately set out to evaluate how best to provide professional learning for teachers to teach SE.

Ko, Wallhead & Ward (2006) identified the components of a SE professional development workshop that teachers (four secondary and one primary / elementary) planned to use in their lessons, the components of the SE curriculum that teachers actually used in their lessons and the teachers' rationales for their use or lack of use of these components. The four phases of the study included (a) a full-day SE workshop, (b) submission of a SE unit and corresponding lesson plans, (c) observation of SE lessons at the school site and (d) teacher interviews regarding their perceptions of the SE professional development learning and the SE unit they had delivered. In analyzing teachers' submitted SE unit plans, the authors reported that the highest level of alignment between the workshop and the enacted lessons existed for the season phases and the persisting team format element of the affiliation component of SE. Alignment also existed for student responsibility as teachers included the elements of incorporating student duty roles within lesson plans and provided task sheets for particular roles.

Sinelnikov (2009) provides a description and evaluation of an on-site SE professional development programme for two sixth-grade physical education teachers. The three step programme included (a) providing published information on SE, (b) a two-day SE workshop that included designing a SE unit and associated lessons, and (c) briefing and debriefing sessions with teachers during the delivery of the SE season. To complement the published material that had been provided, the teachers requested the opportunity to observe the researcher deliver a sample SE lesson. The teachers reported the need for constant validation of the accuracy of their SE implementation and continued support for relinquishing control of the gym to

Comment [YUN8]: Mention using 'instructor lecture and modelling' but do not define what they mean by 'modelling'.

enable students to pursue leadership responsibilities. They also valued the time they spent working cooperatively and learning from each other as support structures.

Context of elementary education in Ireland

In Ireland, primary teachers are responsible for teaching the six curriculum areas of language, mathematics, social environmental and scientific education, arts education, social personal and health education, and physical education. The Irish National Teachers Organisation policy is that primary class teachers deliver all curriculum areas and consequently there is limited scope for the employment of primary physical education specialists. Primary teachers are encouraged to pursue the revised primary school curriculum in PE (DES/NCCA, 1999a) and the corresponding teacher guidelines (DES/NCCA, 1999b). There is no compulsory level of physical education provision however the suggested minimum weekly time framework includes one hour per week for the subject. The quality and breadth of physical education provision varies and physical education is not provided in all primary schools. There is an increasing trend of National Governing Bodies providing coaches for particular sports within the school day and also providing resources and training to teachers (MacPhail, O'Sullivan & Halbert, 2008). Similar to international practice, primary teacher candidates in Ireland receive only limited training in physical education during their teacher training and thus often lack knowledge and confidence to teach this content.

The only other documented formal introduction of SE to Irish primary schools was when four schools within the Munster region of Ireland were invited to, with guidance from experts in the SE field, deliver a SE season on an agreed generic activity that would allow the four schools to meet at the end of the season to participate in a shared culminating event (Kinchin, G., MacPhail, A. & Ni Chroinin, D., 2009; Kinchin, G., MacPhail, A. & Ni Chroinin, D., in press). The school in which the study reported in this chapter took place had been involved in this opportunity and one of the teachers, Aine, had been involved at that time with another class of students.

Methodology

As the site of a previous SE research project and teachers being interested in continuing the school's involvement not only with SE but with university teacher educators, this study took place in a primary school in the Munster region of Ireland. A modelling approach was undertaken with the second author, Deborah, acting as lead instructor in the design and delivery of a SE athletics season to 48 4th class students (aged 8 and 9 years) across two physical education classes. Each class met weekly for physical education over eight weeks in 45-minute sessions held in a large sports hall. In week nine the two classes came together for a double period to complete the culminating event. These students had not previously experienced SE before undertaking the athletics season although one of the teachers, Aine, had the previous year. The primary teachers observed and assisted with instruction, and informally interacted on the planning of the season which followed a structured format (Figure 1). Following the athletics season, the primary teachers were to be responsible for delivering an orienteering season in which the content and SE framework would be extended.

Sport Education Athletics Season

Content of the athletics season included running and field events. The 400 meter run, 60 meter sprint, and a medley relay were taught and a standing start was taught for both distance and sprint events. Triple jump and shot put constituted the field events. Each student was expected to participate in one individual running event, one field event, and the relay event. The season schedule is displayed in Figure 2 and includes training (Weeks 2-6 training and trials), competition (Week 7-8 Relay Jamboree) and a culminating event (Relay Jamboree). As this was a cooperative season using a relay format all competitions were scored using a team average system regardless of number of competitors in an event. For each event, scores were kept on a score sheet and final team scores posted. In addition, each team had their own portfolio of class materials and role task cards. The intent was that while Deborah taught the initial season, the primary teachers would be designing an orienteering season using the SE framework (Figure 1). As teacher educators, we

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were interested in identifying which pieces of the SE season the primary teachers chose to keep, extend, or refine in an attempt to sustain the SE framework upon our departure from the school.

The intention of focusing on, developing and modeling the use of task cards in this study was to provide resources that help teachers integrate new curricula and instructional skills into their existing contexts without teachers becoming overly reliant on them (Ko, Wallhead & Ward, 2006; Petrie, 2009). It was anticipated that task cards would act as a resource for teacher and student learning. Characteristics of SE were added in a progressive fashion as the season unfolded and were applied within the athletics context. A detailed account of using the task cards to teach athletics with SE is provided elsewhere (Tannehill & Collier, 2008).

In line with SE, affiliation was created through the selection of teams. There were four teams of six students in each of the two physical education classes. These teams had their own designated team court in the sports hall for warm-up, practice, and team meetings. Initially, captains were selected by the teachers based on their judgment of students as leaders who were respected by their peers, and organized. Captains sat with Deborah and selected 'equal' teams based on their knowledge of their peers' abilities. To further build affiliation teams selected team names, colours, uniforms, mascots, and designed a team poster.

In conjunction with the two teachers it was determined that it would be most effective if the teachers could view several roles being taught to students and used by them throughout the season. The roles of captain, publicist, trainer, head throwing official, head jumping official, and head track official were introduced. Role responsibilities were defined (see Figure 3 as an example) and adapted, as needed, as the season progressed. While the captains were appointed as previously noted, the remaining students reviewed the responsibilities of the various roles and applied for the one in which they were most interested. Decisions were made by the captain in conjunction with Deborah and the primary class teacher. Task cards were developed to guide students in learning their role responsibilities. Students in charge of the various roles from each team met to discuss their responsibilities after which

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they shared their understanding with the rest of the class. Deborah provided guidance and feedback on how they were progressing.

Learning to be fair players is a critical aspect of SE and one that is facilitated in part by the classroom management system. A 'fairplay agreement' was developed by students following cooperative discussion and activities on the first day. Once developed, teams signed the fairplay agreement and, to maintain their commitment to it, assessed their individual and/or team achievement of goals set in the agreement on a weekly basis.

Festivity is a key aspect of sport at all levels and one that SE attempts to support and foster. To achieve this goal an awards and recognition programme was developed and implemented. Each day students were recognized for fairplay behaviour, strong role performance, and athletic achievement. This became a significant aspect of each class session along with consistent praise and encouragement being expected from all participants.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection occurred during and following the modelling period and involved journaling, teacher interviews, and student surveys.

Throughout delivery of the SE athletics season Deborah kept a journal on how she perceived the season progressed noting students' reactions to the tasks, task cards, and teaching methods as well as noting informal comments made or questions asked by the primary teachers. Analysis of the journaling involved reading and rereading journal entries, identifying any themes and patterns.

At the conclusion of the SE athletics season, and as teachers were designing a SE orienteering season, a semi-structured one-on-one interview was conducted with each teacher by the first author, Ann. The focus of the interview was to determine whether modelling was viewed as facilitating teachers' design and delivery of a SE season, what might have been missing from the modelling, and which aspects of SE teachers intended to pursue for the subsequent orienteering season. Interview data were analyzed through continuous reading and rereading of

the data sources identifying similarities and differences, themes, and patterns through inductive analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Following delivery of the athletics season students completed a survey to inform which aspects of the season were most effective, enjoyable, and worthwhile from their perspective. The first part of the survey included twelve statements to which the student could choose a 'smiley face', 'neutral face', or 'frowning face' to reflect their perception of the statement. These data were analyzed descriptively to report frequency. The second part of the survey provided open ended questions to which the pupils responded relative to their likes/dislikes, learning they felt occurred, areas of improvement, problems they encountered, and how instruction might be delivered differently. Survey qualitative data were uploaded to the Atlas programme as a means of organising the responses but not to analyse the data. Similar to the analysis of the journaling, themes and patterns across responses were noted. Qualitative comments reported in the chapter are presented as students wrote them and are denoted to particular students by a reference number.

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Reactions to SE and the modelling experience

Data collection allows us to comment on the extent to which the SE unit was perceived to be effective by the students, teachers and Deborah. While any success of SE in facilitating students' learning in SE cannot be attributed to the generalist teachers' learning in this instance, as Deborah was responsible for the organisation and delivery of the season, it does provide the two teachers with an insight into how their professional learning has potential to enhance their students' learning. What teachers perceive as worthwhile student learning experiences from the SE season, as well as instructional formats that they have been exposed to and are attracted to pursuing through the SE modeling experience, are likely to inform their level of intention to implement SE in the future. This also allows us to comment on the extent to which teachers would attribute their disposition towards teaching SE in the future to their confidence in delivering SE and / or the students' responses to the SE that they have witnessed. Consequently, we present the findings in two parts, (1)

Successful attributes of a SE unit: Shared perspectives, and (2) Putting learning into practice: Teachers' perspectives on future implementation of SE.

(1) Successful attributes of a SE unit: Shared perspectives

(i) Student learning through SE

Students recorded enjoying learning about athletics (shot put and triple jump were identified most frequently by students as being something new they had experienced and learned about) and reported increased knowledge and understanding of athletics following the SE season, expressing a desire to learn more about athletics in the future. Students reported feeling good about themselves as 'players' in athletics, as well as learning about team work ("I learned that working as a team is easier than working by yourself", S23), co-operation, and fair play ("I learned to help and let people join in at games", S8). Students also valued the use of task / information cards in helping them learn their roles and in learning the different events in the athletics season.

(ii) Team affiliation, roles and responsibilities

If SE is to be successful students must learn both their player and non-player roles and come to respect and value the contribution of each player, and their respective roles, toward their team's achievements (Tannehill & Collier, 2008). Team affiliation was an attractive feature of the SE season for students, "I liked it [being on a team] because I had extra people on my side and more help and support" (S12), "I liked the team of players because we worked well" (S18), and "I like being on a team because I got to know people better than before" (S44). One major aspect of SE that this season attempted to foster was that of working cooperatively to achieve team goals. Deborah made note of student progress in this area;

"One team was struggling but using FVC [full value contract] seemed to help. They held a team discussion and made plans on what they needed to do differently. Not a lot of finger pointing and blaming just what might be done to solve issues".

At the close of each day when students were involved in self assessment of team or individual effort, Deborah noted “they [students] were quiet and appeared to be considering events that occurred seriously”.

Both teachers and Deborah were surprised by the students’ response to taking on leadership within their teams, with every student applying for a role. The Festivity Coordinator role was a role that seemed to evolve by group consensus, as Deborah noted, “FC [Festivity Coordinator] was a role that many seemed to know who would be best (...) “She is very creative” or “He likes that stuff” were comments overheard during team discussions”. In other instances, Deborah reflected that students provided “detailed reasons for why they wanted a role and why they would be good at it”, which suggested their willingness to take responsibility for a portion of the athletics season. Nicola talked about the roles the students took on as being an effective element of the SE season from the students’ perspective;

“Definitely being their own trainer, that was brilliant, they all took it on board and they loved it and you could see everybody doing it. I loved it, it was excellent (...) they were a lot more positive towards each other, by the end of it. It took a while for some of them to get into it, but they were egging each other on, it was all good, it was all nice things and I felt like they improved their confidence, they gained confidence from it, and there were students patting each other on the back, it was all positive reinforcement”.

As students took on these roles their behaviour was noticed in Deborah’s journal comments;

“Excited group of captains as they picked teams. Came in with notepads and met in the corner before I even had things ready (...) [they] took task of choosing teams seriously (...) intense and talked through problems about those who may not get along”.

It was also noted by Deborah that the captains did not seem to focus on selecting their friends but rather developing even skilled teams and the focus of the trainers as they came into class daily, immediately picking up their trainer task cards, and moving to team courts for warm-ups with minimal prompting.

(iii) *Use of task cards*

Task cards were reported by students as being useful in explaining their role in the athletic season and in being able to do the skills and follow the rules of each athletic event. Using **task cards** was noted by Deborah in several instances as a positive aspect of season delivery, whether for management of the SE season or guiding student learning of athletics events;

“Pupils focused on task cards and technique throughout practice tasks (...) gave each other corrective points [practice tasks] (...) captains used task cards to lead practice of shot and/or running on team courts. They kept peers to the task with little conflict [role responsibility]”.

(iv) An appreciation for the attributes of the teacher

The majority of students noted an appreciation of the teaching attributes of Deborah and how it facilitated student learning. Students conveyed an appreciation for clear explanations that aided understanding (“I liked the way the teachers explained clearly and nicely it helped a lot”, S12; “I liked the way athletics was taught because it was easy to understand” (S21)), an opportunity for clarification (“I think it was good because we could ask questions and it was taught in an easy way” (S19); “I like the way you taught me because you explained it clearly and helped us through the way” (S43)) and teaching strategies that were conducive to gaining students’ attention (“I liked when Miss T [Deborah] got us to sit down to tell us what to do because she explained it good” (S17); “Nobody rushed you and they showed you very well how. Because nobody gave out to you” (S28), “You were kind to us because we listened” (S38)).

(v) Maximising the effectiveness of SE

For the SE season to maximise its effectiveness for all students, dislikes reported by some students such as an over-emphasis on the technicality of athletic events, problems with team mates (“When a team members disagreed with each other”, S1; “The unfaire [unfair] teams”, S24), reinforcing fair play (“Nothing was wrong with the way athletics was taught, but some people didn’t go by the fair play agreement and that caused problems, S27) and the pacing of the lessons need to be addressed. The latter issue received mixed responses with some students wanting to spend more time on the events they had covered (“Have it a bit longer. Do new things

every maby two weeks”, S28) and others wanting to be introduced to other athletic events (There could be more events for a longer time, S22). The techniques promoted for the triple jump and shot putt were problematic for some students and it is imperative that an opportunity to achieve success in all events is accommodated. For students who recorded problems arising with team members, they accredited this to work rate, “When people in the team weren’t working hard” (S19), or confusion over roles, “The only problem was one person on the team was acting like they had my role” (S12).

(2) Putting learning into practice: Teachers’ perspectives on future implementation of SE

(i) Team affiliation and roles and responsibilities

When commenting on aspects of SE the teachers believed to be most effective and that they were likely to continue to pursue in the SE orienteering season they planned to deliver, Aine noted;

“team affiliations and roles and the responsibilities were very important (...) the roles and responsibilities and encouraging their team-mates and their classmates was beneficial and they did enjoy it and they saw the importance of it within a classroom situation. So, they did improve as time went on and the modelling was good and especially the team affiliations. I think they did learn something from it and they enjoyed it”.

Deborah noted throughout the SE season that teachers were impressed by student response to teamwork, “Teachers impressed by student response to activity and teamwork. Nicola indicated that this was much more cooperative than they typically are even though they do get along [as a class of students]”. Nicola felt the entire notion of SE was helpful and exciting for her students;

“The kids were more involved in it, the kids took more leadership in it, you know, they were the leaders, they were doing the training, they were doing the scoring, all that was brilliant, it was great (...)”.

Teachers’ appreciation of the students’ independence from the teacher was noted by Deborah, “Teachers surprised by the response from students to leadership (...)

Teachers pleased to see that students could lead much of the lesson themselves and it would be productive”.

(ii) Festivity and culminating event

Both teachers planned to maintain the festivity created in the SE athletics season. Nicola proposed that one way to do this is through the awards and recognition aspect;

“we’re going to have a notice board in the hallway, in the hall there, and it’ll be (...) every week there’ll be one person from the team up with their name, their (...) details about the team. That’ll change then every three weeks, so that over the nine weeks everybody gets a turn of being on the notice board.”

(iii) Managerial and instructional task cards

Use of task cards for various aspects of the season was discussed and Aine noted her reaction to the managerial task cards;

“They were good, they got them focussed. Because often times you tell kids “Okay lads, this is the warm-up, this is how it’s done. I want ye to run around first, I want ye to do jumping jacks second, blah, blah, blah, whatever.” So it kind of focussed them and they were able to kind of refer to it if they got stuck, so it was kind of a crutch for them”.

When it came to using instructional task cards, Aine noted their worth but that she would not develop them further;

“Again, you’ll always have some that do [read them] and some that don’t. I’d say it was fifty-fifty, some read it, some didn’t read it. Some wanted kind of feedback from their own classmates more than actually reading it. So you’ll always have one that’ll read and one that won’t read it, so I wouldn’t bring in any more task cards as such because by fourth [class], they should be better able to read, but some of them are reluctant and when they see reading involved in PE they say “Oh,” they turn off”.

Aine did note that using task cards are attractive to her as a teacher, “student response to them [was positive] and having a task card and having to complete that task card within a PE lesson. They wouldn’t have been used to that kind of structure before.” Nicola was less intrigued by their use;

“Every now and then they’d glance at them, but they never actually looked at it and if they were doing anything incorrectly, they didn’t look at it to figure out how to do it. Like, that was even when they were, let’s say, they were learning how to do the long jump – the task card was there in front of them, but nobody read it. You know, you’d see them doing it [a skill] and they’d be doing it all wrong, but they won’t bother looking at it [task card]. I think they should be more drawn to it, “Well here you go, now look at the task card and see what you’re supposed to be doing.” And even stuck up on the wall, as opposed to down on the floor, so that they were stuck up on the wall and they couldn’t move”.

While the teachers found the task cards problematic they planned to continue using them to see if they can be more effective, with Nicola stating, “I still think it’s a good idea to use it, yeah, just maybe in a different way or maybe put more focus onto it”.

(iv) Transferability (or not) of modelling

The notion of modelling was new to both teachers and this impacted the extent to which the teachers engaged with the intervention, not fully aware of how to make the best of such an opportunity. For example, Nicola admitted to at times ‘switching off’ and this could perhaps be attributed to Deborah modelling the classes with no active role for the teachers. Nicola had also intended to write notes at the end of each class to remember the intricacies of the lesson but this never materialised. In discussing how modelling may affect the teachers’ planning of the orienteering SE season, Nicola appreciated the SE framework;

“I liked the layout. We had ten weeks, a ten week structure, and you knew what you were supposed to do every week, so I could see myself definitely doing that next year, and saying “This week I’m going to talk about captains, next week I’m going to talk about trainers”, so I liked that. I liked the way she [Deborah] did the training at the beginning (...) she was very clear how to train and how to do their stretches, so that was good.”

However, Nicola reported that the transferability of the SE framework was somewhat limited when designing the orienteering season;

“We were changing our orienteering from week to week, let’s say we were spending three weeks on photo orienteering, three weeks on using the compass and three weeks on (...) something else (...) symbols or something, so I think it was hard to tie it in with the way she [Deborah] did it”.

Aine and Nicola admitted that while modelling of the season, use of task cards (for management of SE season and instruction), and developing student roles had been useful, they were not confident in their ability to transfer this to another area within the physical education curriculum, as hinted in the previous quote. This was particularly true for Nicola who stated;

“at some level, yeah, [modelling had been helpful] but I’m not too sure how it’s going to work with our one [orienteering], because it’s so different. I can see myself doing this next year, doing the athletics one next year, and I’d have no problem with it”.

Nicola’s limited experience and knowledge of physical activity opportunities in physical education did result in a lack of confidence and subsequently clouded her perception on the extent to which she could benefit from the modelling intervention;

“I’m not too sure how it’s going to work with our one, because it’s so different. I can see myself doing this next year, doing the athletics one next year, and I’d have no problem with it, but having to change it to suit the orienteering, I think, would be [difficult]”.

(v) *Finding space to invest in professional learning*

Whether Aine and Nicola are prepared, and able, to continue using SE is also dependent on the students in their classes and time constraints around which they must plan. Aine relayed her concern that she would not have, or was not prepared to make available, the same amount of time that Deborah had invested in planning for the SE unit;

“ (...) she [Deborah] was very organised and she had all her sheets and she was...like, she knew where she was going, she knew what her aims were. She was very organised from the point of view of paperwork and that kind of thing. I don’t know if we’d get as much time to do what she did. (...) I liked her awards, the little stickers, I thought they were nice and they were very

creative. Do you know, if we'd have time to cut them in the nice shapes and put all those stickers on them (...) I would have had to make out the task cards and laminate the task cards and...so a lot of it is to do with time as well. I don't think, as I said earlier, we would have had the time to do out the task cards that Deborah did out".

Nicola indicated that continuing to have debriefing sessions each week to link what had just happened with their own orienteering season might have clarified for them how to progress in their planning. However, she admitted that the initial plan to meet with Deborah on a weekly basis after each week's athletic class to parallel plan the orienteering season based on what Deborah had modelled that particular week did not occur because the teachers were unable to find the time in their day to give to such a weekly activity;

"We had them [debriefing] at the beginning, but I didn't think there was a need to continue, once we could see what they [students] were doing with it. I suppose what we could have done was maybe talked about it in relation to our one [orienteering season], what we were going to do if we wanted to parallel plan it, which was the idea at the start but it just didn't work, because we didn't take it on. It's our own fault, you know. I suppose it was just the time constraints, there was just so much to do".

The demands placed on primary teachers to emphasize other subject areas and get students ready for exams, rarely allows time to consider alternative delivery methods for physical education and the related planning and preparation, as Nicola shared;

"With a different class I might need to work harder on them and you mightn't let them have so much time. Like, we're supposed to have, let's say, the hour of PE during the week, so I felt like it takes, it does take up a lot of time. You know, you're under a lot of pressure (...) I worked around it, but that's one of my worries, like, let's say, we have tests now coming up and you, kind of, want to make sure they get on well enough, that they've learned enough in English and maths, let's say. Now I know how important PE is and I know we should have it more often, but the curriculum doesn't allow for it (...) I don't want other subjects to suffer".

In spite of these issues, Nicola noted that maintaining a connection with Ann or Deborah to seek assistance would help her feel confident to continue with SE;

“Yeah, maybe a check-in, yeah, definitely, because you’d forget things. You know, maybe a check-in, say “How did you do that again?” (...) definitely a kind of a reference or somebody that...maybe I could email Deborah or whatever.”

Points for consideration

It was evident that the lack of appropriate and adequate content knowledge and subsequent confidence in delivering physical education (Armour & Duncombe, 2004; Petrie, 2009; Rovegno and Bandhauer, 1997), appeared to be the weak link in the teachers’ dispositions to develop SE across other activity areas. Regardless, they felt that the modelling provided them with a useful example to replicate SE. We believe that modelling can be extended to the primary setting and professional learning of primary teachers in physical education by drawing on the work of O’Sullivan and Deglau (2007). In a longitudinal professional development project they provide a set of principles for the design of professional development programmes that include, allowing teachers to form their own interpretations of educational issues as a result of their participation, providing teachers the opportunity to take ownership of programme initiatives, situating professional development in teaching practice, focusing on design and delivery of physical education content, developing means of sustaining teacher interaction and dialogue, conducting professional development in the actual teaching and learning context of schools, and working to meet teachers’ needs while striving toward larger programme goals. Through modelling of curricular initiatives and physical activity content in the school setting, working collaboratively with teachers to design and deliver their own units of instruction, and being available for continued support, collaboration, and dialogue primary teachers can develop their skill and expertise in teaching physical education for learning to children.

Improving the quality of teachers’ career-long professional learning is pivotal to raising the standards of physical education (Armour, 2006; Armour & Yelling,

2004b) and school-based, collaborative and informal learning, in which teachers engage voluntarily, are continually supported as the tenets of effective professional learning (Armour & Yelling, 2004b; Deglau & O'Sullivan, 2006). Teachers need to be supported continuously to overcome the inhibitors of professional learning concerning their practical teaching problems (Li, 2010) and this is where the authors, in the absence of other professional learning opportunities related to SE for the two teachers, failed. Supporting Armour & Yelling (2007), we are conscious that the informal network the two teachers in this study form(ed), could benefit from appropriate input, including ourselves in the role as teacher educators.

Supporting the notion that students' learning outcome is an important measure index for the effectiveness of a professional development programme (Deglau and O'Sullivan, 2006), while there is evidence from the students of the effectiveness of their SE venture, more could have been done to examine how much of this was attributed to the novelty of the SE discourse and how much to Deborah's delivery. If professional development is to be validated as an effective instructional strategy there is a need to link effective physical education teacher development with student achievement and growth (Wang & Ha, 2008).

In suggesting an alternative to the traditional model of CPD (i.e., off-site, with minimal follow-up or support to enable teachers to integrate new learning with practice), Armour & Yelling (2004b) refer to Garet et al.'s (2001) 'reform' type activities;

"reform' types of CPD typically take place within the school day, involve collective participation of teachers from the same school or group of schools, and are integrated into practice in the form of study groups, mentoring and coaching' (p. 86).

The modeling approach to professional learning in this instance did reduce a number of concerns that (physical education) teachers have raised previously, including time and location (Armour & Yelling, 2004b). Modeling the SE unit with the teacher's own class of students did not take teachers' time from the school day or their own time and allowed professional learning to take place in the context in which teachers were being asked to reproduce the practice. However, the investment of time the teacher

educators involved in the study gave to working with the primary teachers was in addition to their contractual teaching and research remit, resulting in it not being feasible for both to continue involvement with the teachers as they embarked on the orienteering season. We believe that teacher educators should be involved in providing professional learning opportunities for teachers in schools, that this should be acknowledged as a legitimate professional responsibility and hence be reflected in the remit of those working in teacher education.

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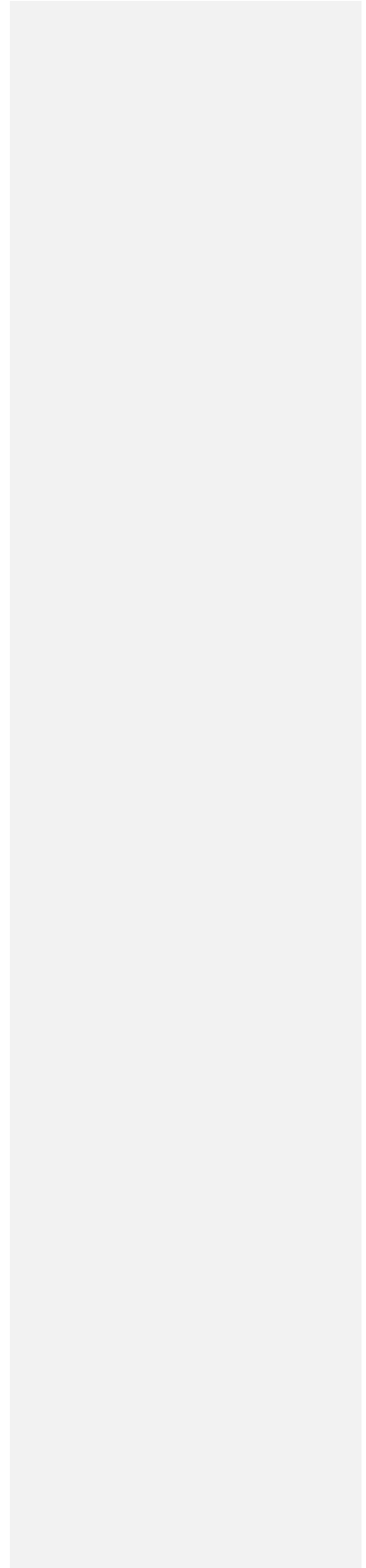
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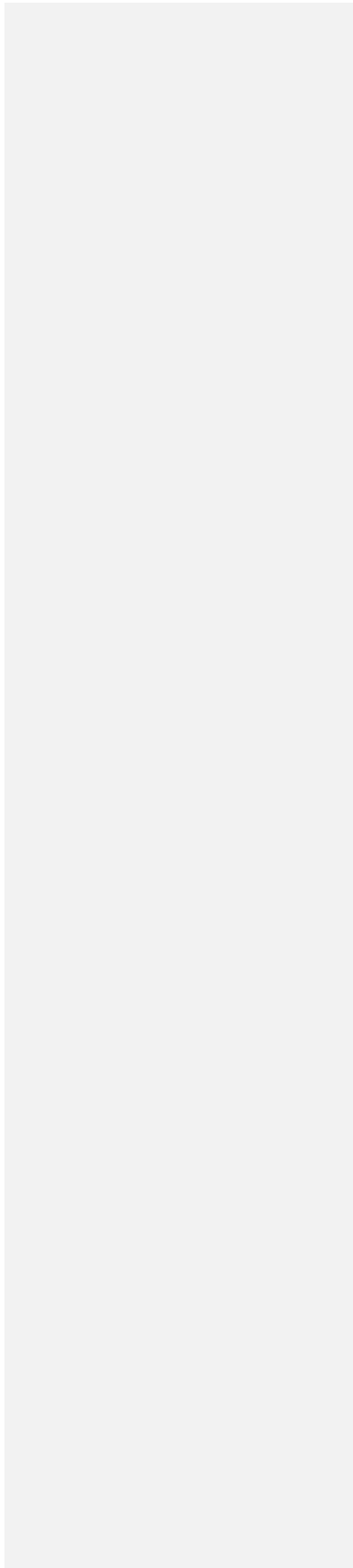
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Scoil Ide Sport Education Season Framework

- Design to include tools and materials to guide implementation
 - Keep the pieces you like from the first season and adapt those you feel need revision.
 - Be prepared to talk about why you made the choices you did.
1. Context for season
 - Sport, time, days in season
 2. Teams
 - Number/size of teams, team selection process, building affiliation
 3. Roles
 - Determine/define roles, role selection procedure, strategies for teaching roles
 4. Class Management
 - Fairplay agreement, routines, rules
 5. Festivity
 - Awards, recognition, rituals & traditions
 6. Season Design
 - Sport Education; season aspects, competitive schedule, culminating event
 - Content; skills & techniques
 7. Record Keeping
 - Scoring, statistics, maintaining records

Figure 1: Scoil Ide Sport Education Season Framework



Sport Education Roles-Athletics Season



Roles

Participant

Captain

Trainer

Festivity Coordinator

Head Throwing Official

Head Jumping Official

Head Track Official

Participant

Everyone is a participant

Everyone shares in team responsibilities

Captain

Select teams

Lead team practice sessions

Lead team in choosing events

Ensure team follows Fair Play agreement

Trainer

Get team to team space for warm-up

Lead team warm-up

Monitor safety in practice & competition

Obtain ice if there is an injury

Festivity Coordinator

Lead season festivity (cheer, poster, whatever else you design)

Post team scores on team poster
 Present fairplay & performance awards at end of season

Head Throwing, Jumping, and Track (Distance & Sprint) Judge

Monitor event set up for competition
 Review with teams the “need to know” rules for each event
 Measure distances and/or time events
 Record scores for participant performance
 Submit scores to the Festivity Coordinator for posting & awards

Figure 2: Team Roles & Responsibilities

Sport Education Athletics Season Schedule

Day/Date	Sport Education	Content
Week 1	Name tags to start Introduction to Sport Ed Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork • Team experiences • Competition/cooperation • Praise & encouragement Design Fairplay	Cooperation & Getting Acquainted Group juggling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use names, encouragement, praise In the woods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mosquito, salmon, & bears
In classroom	Captains pick teams	
Week 2	Captains announce teams Captains share responsibilities of captain role Teams sign captains contract	T teach warm-up T teach shot putt technique & rules Do all of this on court as part of demonstration

	Assign team courts	Teams go to home court to practice
In classroom	Apply for Festivity and/or Trainer	
Week 3	Announce Festivity Coordinator --name, colour, mascot task chosen Announce Trainer --trainers count as T lead warm-ups	T teach running technique drills Shot practice on team court
Week 4	Trainer led warm-up on team courts Festivity Coordinator organize team photos	Team warm-ups Review running technique T teach standing sprint start and rules Practice starts with running technique
Week 5	Festivity Coordinator get ideas for team poster with picture	Team warm-ups Review sprint start, & running technique Split class for triple jump (hop, step, jump) and distance running. Students go to both for ½ class T teach triple jump T teach rules of triple jump T teach distance running technique
Week 6	Students practice in teams taking responsibility for learning	Team warm-ups Half of class at each event for 20-minutes Practice Shot Putt and/or Triple Jump
In classroom	Captain led event sign ups Announce event competitor Apply for sprint, distance, shot, or triple jump judge	
Week 7	Announce Officials Shot and Sprint Officials practice with time trials	Team warm-ups Performance practice Go to participation event or officiating event

		Shot and/or Sprints
Week 8	Triple Jump and Distance Officials practice with time/distance trials	Team warm-ups Performance practice Go to participation event or officiating event Triple Jump and/or Distance running
Week 9	Relay Festival Duty Roles Awards Ceremony with combined classes	Team warm-ups Relay Festival Sprint, Shot, Distance, & Triple Jump

Figure 3: Sport Education Athletics Season Schedule