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Whole child, whole teacher: leadership for flourishing primary schools

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Abstract

Whilst the notion of the whole child is well-established within early years and primary education, the related concept of the whole teacher is less well developed. However, it is important to progress understanding of the concept in light of high levels of teacher stress in performance-driven education systems.

This paper details an empirical study with five primary schools in England which explored how leaders sustained a focus on the whole child within the context of a performance-driven education system. Specifically, it focuses on data which emerged from the study, identifying the concept of the whole teacher and its important relationship with the whole child and whole curriculum.

The paper critiques current conceptions of the whole teacher and proposes a concept which has, at its centre, the recognition of who the teacher is as a person. Implications for leadership and teachers' education are considered.

Introduction

Concerns about some educational systems placing increasing emphasis on performance-driven approaches are widespread, having been documented in the UK, Australia, the USA and Canada amongst others (Polesel, Dulfer and Turnball 2012). Embedded in these concerns is the idea that insufficient attention is being paid to the 'whole child', with teachers' priorities tending towards test and examination results (Peterson, Lexmond, Hallgarten, and Kerr 2014). Whilst teachers attend to children's wider personal development, which are often mandated in curricula, nevertheless the focus on performance indicators can come at the expense of both children and teachers. This paper makes an original contribution to the field by progressing the under-developed notion of the whole teacher. We argue that within climates of increasing teacher stress in performance-driven education systems, it is essential to recognise and nurture the whole teacher in order for teachers to effectively nurture the whole child.

The whole child

Calls to educate the whole child are far from new, particularly within early childhood education (Chen and Chang 2006). For example, founding theorists such as Friedrich Froebel recognised the importance of physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual health, arguing that these are developed through play in young children. Holistic approaches have remained central to policy and practice in early years education in mainstream settings, as well as those with specialised approaches such as Waldorf Steiner and Montessori schools (Bruce 2015).

However, the notion of the whole child is not unproblematic, as McLaughlin (1996) noted two decades ago. Whilst authors writing on the theme may fundamentally agree that the whole child needs nurturing in education, uncertainty about its definition exists, with different conceptualisations of what constitutes the whole child evident in academic thinking and policy alike. For example, the US-based international organisation ASCD (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development) argues for the need to educate the whole child, making the case to move beyond a narrow curriculum and accountability system in order to fully prepare children for life in the 21st century. In framing their concept of the whole child, they focus on five key areas: health; physical and emotional safety; engagement in learning and the wider community; support for children through personalised learning and caring adults; and academic challenge (ASCD 2012). Naturally, different countries use other language aligned to their cultural contexts. In comparison, policy in England and Wales uses the terminology: spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children (SMSC), which is a legal requirement in government-funded schools. Policy also recommends that schools cover personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) (Department for Education 2014).

The whole teacher

In comparison with the concept of the whole child, that of the whole teacher is relatively under-developed. It is most often located in North American literature. Chen and Chang (2006) argue for a whole teacher approach to early years teachers' professional development in the USA. They propose that courses should promote all aspects of a teacher's development through a multi-dimensional approach, which they define as the teachers' attitudes, knowledge and skills, and classroom practices.

In a separate US study with 60 undergraduate trainee teachers, Shin (2012) explored the idea of cultivating a whole teacher approach to professionalism. Specifically, Shin argues that trainee teachers should gain deeper understandings of themselves in the context of teaching. This, they suggest, extends professional development's focus beyond specialised skills, knowledge and practice.

The Aspen Institute promotes the importance of building teachers' social and emotional competence and sharing of strategies for building these skills in their students. In a publication entitled *Supporting the Whole Teacher* (Colvin 2017), the benefits of programmes which promote teachers' understanding of the social and emotional dimensions of learning are explored.

These conceptualisations are limited to the contexts of professional development and the latter restricted to social and emotional dimensions of learning. In comparison, Miller (2007), writing with reference to the Canadian education system, considers the whole teacher more broadly in relation to the whole child. He argues that both need to be understood in relation to each other and to the whole curriculum and whole school. He states: 'To teach the whole child, we need whole teaching, whole schools, and whole teachers.' Similar themes arose in our initial analysis of the data explored here (Adams, Lumb, Paige and Tapp, 2017, 10), in which participants spoke of holistic themes that pertained not only to the children but also to the school and staff. Hence we draw on Miller's

holistic concepts, outlining them in this section and critically evaluating his notion of the whole teacher in the discussion, in the context of our findings.

Miller (2007) identifies five key qualities that the whole teacher practises: patience, presence, caring, love (for the job) and humility. He argues that patience is essential in an impatient society, particularly in the context of some children's poor behaviour. Miller further contends that teachers need to be fully present in the classroom and draws on Nel Nodding's (1992) work on caring, as a means of demonstrating presence. He suggests that it is love for the job which carries teachers through challenging times. Finally he cites humility. Here, Miller suggests that it is beneficial for teachers to be mindful of how students feel when they learn, particularly when finding something difficult. He reminds teachers of the need to remain humble in light of the impact they may have had on children for the rest of their lives, even if they never become aware of the full extent of that influence.

Through cultivating these five qualities, Miller argues that wholeness of the teacher is attended to, which in turn is essential to nurture the whole child. He maintains that they can be achieved by practising mindfulness and meditation and also advocates teaching the practices to children to support them in becoming whole, in the context of a whole curriculum (Miller 2007).

The whole teacher in high-stress, high stakes performative environments

The current performative educational climate in England, in which schools and teachers are judged primarily on performance data, takes no account of the whole child or the whole teacher and creates challenges for teacher retention. The National Foundation for Educational Research's first annual report on England's teacher labour market showed that teachers have a higher rate of job-related stress most or all of the time compared to similar professions; 20% compared to 13% respectively (Worth and Van den Brande 2019). Newton's (2016) recent study found that workload and disillusionment were key 'push' factors influencing teachers to leave the profession at various stages of their career. In addition, Sims (2017) contends, through his analysis of the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), that there is a direct relationship between different aspects of working conditions in schools (such as good leadership) and job satisfaction which reduces the desire to move schools. His analysis appears to support the contention of Simon and Moore Johnson (2013) that working conditions in schools are a more important reason for high staff turnover than the challenges associated with teaching disadvantaged pupils. Sims concludes that the positive effects of good leadership are a key factor in teacher retention.

Teacher stress in performance-driven systems is also reported overseas. For example, Polesel, Dulfer and Turnball (2012) note that Australia, USA and Canada also report negative impacts. In a recent US study, Herman, Hickmon-Rosa and Heineken (2017) found that 93% of 121 elementary teachers were suffering from work-related stress; Gray, Wilcox and Nordstokke (2017) raise concerns about the high levels of stress leading to burnout in teachers in Canada as demonstrated in a range of literature.

The importance of moral and values-based leadership in holistic approaches

Given the concerns about teacher stress and retention, it is essential that teachers' well-being is nurtured. This situation, therefore, has implications for school leadership.

Whilst there is a vast body of literature on different types of leadership, those which are most pertinent to our argument are moral and values-based, as both are intrinsically connected to valuing the whole child and the whole teacher. The concept of moral leadership in schools has been explored by several authors (see Sergiovanni, 1992; Day et al., 2001; Fullan, 2002). Fullan (2002) presented the notion of moral purpose as a key driver for those entering the profession. Fullan (2002) found that motivations such as making positive contributions to children's lives and making a difference first attracted those in the study to the teaching profession, and subsequently drove them to remain in education and in some cases progress into leadership roles. In developing this concept of moral purpose, Fullan (2006) later writes that there is a need for 'system thinkers in action', that is, those leaders working at local level in their schools but also connecting with the wider system and contributing to educational policy.

An alternative, though related aspect of leadership which is pertinent to this field is values-based leadership (see Day, Harris and Hatfield 2001; Campbell, Gold and Lunt 2003), where some studies have shown that teachers often remain committed to their personal values in light of challenging times in the profession. In this case, the challenging times are reflected in the aforementioned international statistics on stress in the teaching profession, notably in systems which have developed a performative agenda. Ball discusses the effects of this performativity on the 'soul' of teachers who lose the sense of the authenticity of their work and professional identity. Teachers themselves become 'ontologically insecure: unsure whether we are doing enough, doing the right thing, doing as much as others, or as well as others, constantly looking to improve, to be better, to be excellent' (Ball 2003, 220). According to Ball (2003, 215), performativity requires teachers to respond to targets, indicators and evaluations by 'setting aside personal beliefs and commitments and liv[ing] an existence of calculation.' This can lead to highly individualised struggles on the part of teachers whose values 'are challenged or displaced by the terrors of performativity'. These struggles 'are often internalised and set the care of self against duty to others.' (Ball 2003, 216).

This paper examines primary school leaders' approaches to the 'whole child' in the context of a performance-driven education system, through a qualitative study with five primary schools in England. We present an overarching argument that in order for schools to flourish, as Miller (2007) suggests, embodying the principle of a 'whole school, whole teacher, whole child, whole curriculum' approach is essential. Our specific focus here is on the whole teacher; despite not asking directly about the concept, it emerged as a theme across all of the schools. Respecting the cultural differences in understandings of the whole teacher in our sample and those detailed in the North American literature, we explore how data from our study re-shapes the latter notions, before considering the implications for leadership in primary schools and teacher education.

Methodology

The project worked with five primary schools in the East Midlands of England which advocated a commitment to nurturing the whole child. Across the sample, these varied in type, size (between 80-240 pupils) and in rating by the national inspection body, Ofsted. The variations were intended to

enable a modest comparison of different socio-economic contexts and Ofsted ratings in order to explore similarities and differences in leadership styles for ensuring a philosophy of the whole child.

Table 1: School sample

School	School type	Socio-economic status	Ofsted rating	Comments
1	Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary	Mixed	Good (recently having come out of Requires Improvement)	A smaller than average size school with the proportion of children with disabilities or special educational needs being above the national average
2	Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary	Mixed	Good (recently having come out of Requires Improvement)	Some high mobility amongst the pupil population with significant fluctuation in numbers of children due to members of the Traveller communities joining and leaving
3	Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary Academy	Mixed	Good	Set is a former mining community with high rates of employment but many families on very low incomes
4	Community primary	Mixed with wide variation	Inadequate	During the research period the school converted to an Academy and became part of a Multiple Academy Trust with new Executive Head and Head of School
5	Academy Junior	Mixed	Outstanding	The Ofsted grade was given to the school prior to its conversion to an Academy five years earlier

Ethical norms were followed (BERA 2011); all adult participants (school leaders and parents) were given an information sheet and were able to discuss with a researcher any questions or concerns they had, prior to giving written consent. Following parental consent to approach their children, a sheet was adapted for the children and similarly, they were able to ask questions about possible participation before making a decision on participation. Options for withdrawal at any time were explained. Ethical issues around confidentiality between participants in the focus groups and the power relations within them arose. For example, there was the possibility that some leaders may have felt obliged to present the school's official narrative even if they were critical of it. Whilst each group demonstrated overall consensus, we acknowledge that unspoken dissent may have existed

which we could not capture. However, in order to minimise the potential effects of power relations, we advised participants in the preamble that we recognised that each had a different role and we were interested in all experiences and views. We assured them that we would not interpret different responses as a lack of consistency; rather as a different perspective reflecting their different roles.

Participants and Method

Qualitative methods were employed to explore the enablers and challenges for primary school leaders in nurturing the whole child in the context of a performance-driven environment. Research was conducted in schools in two phases. Phase 1 consisted of a focus group discussion with school leaders exploring how they understood 'holistic' education and how they sought to take a 'whole child' approach within the context of a performativity agenda. Analysis of transcripts identified themes which subsequently informed phase 2. Here, a second focus group enabled the researchers to explore topics raised in Phase 1 in more depth and across the 5 schools. These were: school priorities in relation to the 'whole child'; consistency of school ethos; staff well-being and the effects of external monitoring. In addition, the researchers undertook an observation of a Y6 child for a morning to triangulate staff perceptions and pupil experiences; interviews with the pupil and, where possible, their parent. This consisted of the researcher spending a morning in school observing the target child from arrival to lunchtime. A running record was made which recorded the pupil's experience of and interaction with the teacher, other adults, children, activity and environment.

Analysis

The focus group transcripts provide the main source of data for the research, with pupil observation and pupil and parent interviews providing data for triangulation. The four researchers each undertook thematic coding of the transcripts separately and then compared categories to give breadth to the analysis whilst ensuring that different interests and priorities did not lead to bias. Key topics were identified, and subsequent questions were framed for the second focus group to explore these areas further and to establish if they represented important issues for the schools. As with the first set of data, transcript analysis of the second focus groups was undertaken independently and then compared to arrive at five key themes, which are outlined in brief in our earlier report (Adams, Lumb, Paige and Tapp 2017).

The five themes were: Teachers' well-being and the 'whole teacher', revealing how leaders recognised that maintaining staff well-being was an essential part of the running of the school ; Relationships and their complexity, where participants detailed the myriad of relationships both within and outside the school and how all required careful negotiation to ensure a holistic approach to supporting the children; Whole child – whole curriculum, whereby staff emphasised the value of the arts and humanities, which were often side-lined due to an emphasis on English, maths and science for the tests and subsequent league tables; Making the most of time, where teachers lamented a lack of time to focus more on areas which the schools valued beyond the core subjects, such as trips, the creative subjects and time for reflection; and Leadership for a values-based ethos – in which teachers articulated how they led the school to ensure that all of the elements of education which they valued were addressed. In this paper we draw out, and focus on, the data relating to the whole teacher which emerged, making reference to the other themes where relevant.

Findings

This section describes the findings of the study, prior to an analytical discussion. Each section is contextualised in the wider concept of leaders' establishment and embedding of their school's ethos and values, which were evident in all of the interviews. However, the findings are focused primarily on the underpinning notions of whole child and whole teacher, and their relationship to each other.

Supporting relationships that enable teachers to flourish

Throughout the conversations with leaders, relationships were a prominent theme. Participants stated the importance of developing strong teacher-child relationships, as well as building relationships with wider stakeholders. Parents also echoed these principles.

In their concern for the whole child, all schools in this study discussed the importance of knowing children as individuals, understanding their lives outside school and responding to their needs. Many cited Abraham Maslow directly or indirectly, with reference to meeting children's basic physiological, safety and social needs as a foundation for academic progress. They explained how their school addressed these concerns in practical ways.

Relationships were presented as central to being able to help children achieve, and schools were clear about how they sought to build relationships with pupils and their parents that would support the well-being of the whole child. Some schools also explained how positive relationships between pupils were encouraged through strategic whole school approaches. Relationships with the wider community were also discussed and schools outlined how these relationships were mutually beneficial.

The curriculum offered by schools was a key variable in relation to the whole child, with all schools seeking to find ways to avoid a narrow curriculum dominated by English and Maths that simply prepared children for the SATs: Standard Assessment Tests which take place at the end of Year 2 (aged 7) and end of Year 6 (aged 11). Schools sought to achieve this through careful timetabling and cross-curricular approaches to learning and argued that not only were these subjects intrinsically valuable, for their own sakes but also that time spent on the broader curriculum enabled pupils to develop transferable skills and dispositions. Art, music, sport, drama, visits, residential trips and a host of other opportunities were presented as enhancing motivation, building self-esteem and encouraging children to take risks and move beyond their comfort zone.

Extending pupils in this way gave them a chance to push boundaries and take risks in contexts outside of the high-stakes English and Maths curricula. Children explained to us how proud they were of their achievements during a school residential trip and in sporting events, and staff spoke enthusiastically of how quiet children had risen to the challenge in school productions.

Relationships in school were, unsurprisingly, central to the process of knowing and understanding the individual. Leaders explained how structures were in place to support the development of supportive relationships both between staff and in managerial contexts. They explained how they would ask each other for help or notice when others were struggling and take steps to stop them from overworking. All schools identified a strong sense of being part of a team and sharing responsibilities so that no-one need feel isolated. The relationships between staff were often cited as being a model for pupils of positive supportive relationships.

How such relationships were achieved varied. In School 5, staff referred to the 'school way' of doing things which new staff 'get from just immersing yourself in the school life because it comes across in

all sorts of ways … through living it really.' In contrast, School 1 adopted a more structured approach, providing new staff with a mentor who can explain and model the school's practices and expectations of staff. They also stressed the importance of staff attending daily briefing sessions which set the tone for the day, allowing discussion of pupil and staff needs and enabling them to experience the school's normal practices.

Teachers' personal lives

In relation to the concept of the whole teacher, some participants felt it was important for leaders to know their staff well, beyond their professional lives. For example, leaders at School 5 spoke of teachers whose abilities in drama and music had not been utilised. Significantly, in one case, no one in the school had been aware that one teacher could play the piano. A colleague explained how the teacher had led an assembly about fears during which she explained to the children that she knew how to play the piano but was too afraid to play it in public. However, she promised the children that if they behaved well during the assembly she would overcome her fear that day, and play for them at the end. She did. The colleague went on to commend her for her bravery and for acting as a role model:

> She was… letting them know it is alright to be scared of something, to be worried about something, to be nervous about something and to have a go at it even when it's hard. It is not going to get you shot down even if you do it badly, or make a mistake, so I think if the teachers can model all that then that's part of the job, that's part of teaching isn't it? It's teaching them different things. It's teaching them that mistakes are good.

This theme of being true to oneself, and modelling that to children, also emerged in another school where leaders were reflecting on their personal lives in relation to their profession:

> Rita: You know we've all had lives of our own […]
>
> Emily: And I think that's something that we're quite good at doing at this school, I think we do share…
>
> Rita: We do share a lot.
>
> Emily: We're not here as 'I am a teacher, I am a learning mentor', we are ourselves pretty much with the children, and you know obviously you don't give them everything but…
>
> Rita: We have a life as well.
>
> Emily: We show them real people because they need it a lot.
>
> Rita: We try to teach them to show empathy with other people, they don't always do that, they're not all good at that are they, but we do try to show, we promote that.

Rita's reference to having a life outside of work was echoed in another school, where teachers discussed the importance of leaders both recognising that staff have personal lives which can impact on work, and the need to be flexible around any issues arising. As Iain said,

> We're not just teachers, we've got family and other things outside of this school that impact massively on us as human beings. And we need to be understanding of that so whilst there

> are staff who will always go the extra mile, you need to respect why maybe sometimes they can't because of something else that's happening at the time.

It was clear from the study that teachers in our schools regularly went the 'extra mile' as they sought to provide the very best opportunities for the pupils in their care. They often spoke about doing what they did 'for the children', with one leader from School 1 commenting that people become teachers because '… you want children to do well and not necessarily just in the academic sense, you want them to grow as whole children. I don't think anyone goes into teacher training thinking oh well I really want to make sure that every child leaves the school with a knowledge of what a semicolon, colon and bracket is.'

Whole teachers, ownership of the curriculum and risk taking

When teachers spoke about matters other than a narrow curriculum and testing, there was a sense of enthusiasm and excitement. This was particularly evident when they could take ownership of the curriculum. When undertaking the pupil observations, it was apparent that all of the observed teachers endeavoured to present even potentially uninspiring lessons in an engaging way. One example from School 5 was a spelling test in which the teacher had used the words from a mock SATs test in humorous sentences to give them meaning but also to make the pupils laugh. Eleven-year-old Sam said, '…we had Miss Williams for spelling… even though I don't like spelling I do like Miss Williams… she makes me laugh, she makes everyone laugh.'

For the staff, their enthusiasm for aspects of the broader curriculum was apparent, illustrating where their passion for teaching lay. Examples included visits, performances, sporting achievements, swimming, creating memories for children, and Godly Play in the Church Schools. In School 4, there was a palpable sense of pride when children 'raised their game' for school productions in front of the audience and when shy children who had been given a solo spot rose to the challenge on the night.

The teachers reflected on the kind of curriculum they would design if there were no restrictions. In School 4, there was a strong emphasis on practical learning that was fun, 'rather than proving something on a piece of paper all the time… there are different ways that we could be learning rather than teaching to an end result of sitting the SATs test. That's how I feel about it,' explained Harriet.

However, the pressure on the teachers of Year 6 children to focus on the tests led to unwelcome curriculum restrictions. In school 5, they had been

> …talking about doing an open science afternoon where we invite parents and some visitors in and the children do some science investigations with them. And we sort of said well we better not do it with year 6… [because it's] a bit too close to SATs and we can't let them give up time that afternoon. We've moved their residential as well [for the same reason].

In a similar vein, a group of children in School 4 had been outside looking at some beans which were flowering. The children were excited and engaged in learning about the plants, but the teacher had been anxious that, whilst this was a valuable learning experience, she knew that 'it was 25 minutes of something that [she] wasn't ticking off to say it's written down [for the inspectors to prove] that they know it.'

The desire for a broad curriculum which used teachers' interests and talents was shared across the sample. The leaders felt that space for experimentation and risk taking was essential. Clearly, formal risk assessments are undertaken for a range of activities, but those are not our concern here. Rather, we note how informal risk assessments of the potential damage to test results and subsequent school reputation affect how schools approach teaching and learning. Creative approaches to teaching were, in the words of one leader, 'stifled'. Janine in School 1 referred to protecting the children from potential stress where possible and felt that if the performance measures did not exist, it would eliminate the

> underlying stress and [they] would… be much more experimental in certain things and challenge [themselves] in different areas to explore more art type activities… just be a bit more creative. But we are channelled and we can't, we are blinkered in a way towards those things.

Another leader indicated that they were fearful of making mistakes. That is not to say that there were no innovative approaches, even with the older children; indeed there were. In School 1, for example, the team was convinced that even older children learned very effectively through play. Similar views were held in School 2, where the following happened to a group of 11 and 12 year olds (Years 5 and 6):

> And they went off into the boat outside and they had their shoes off and they were play acting being in the boat and … this enabled the lower ability child to actually put himself in that position. They were pretending they were swimming, got out of the boat and were swimming in the water and then they clambered back in. And they came in to the classroom and he sat and wrote about it. [The play] enabled him to be able to do that.

However particularly in schools with lower Ofsted ratings, where the pressure to conform to inspection requirements was much higher, the notion of risk taking was often overshadowed by fear.

Discussion

Having outlined key themes arising from the findings, we now consider how those findings impact on the concept of the whole teacher in light of a critique of the North American approaches and the UK context. We then discuss the implications for school leadership and teacher education (initial training and continuing professional development).

The whole teacher

All of the leaders were committed to educating the whole child within the confines of a curriculum which was relatively restricted, focusing heavily on the SATs and their results. As noted above, none of our participants used the term 'whole teacher', and no questions were asked about it. Rather, it was a theme which emerged from our discussions about the whole child, across all schools. The staff were conscious of the need to recognise that they and their colleagues were more than 'just teachers'; as Emily and Rita conveyed, they, like the children, were whole people whose wider lives beyond the school gates impacted on their lives inside the school. Like the children, they had skills, strengths and vulnerabilities (such as fear of playing the piano in public). It was important for them to engender a mutual respect and understanding of this aspect amongst all staff.

The notion of the whole teacher as emerging in this study differed from the aforementioned North American literature. Colvin's (2017) report for The Aspen Institute starts with pupils' social and emotional needs for learning as their basis. It argues that if teachers, through both initial and ongoing training, learn 'to develop their own social and emotional competencies' (2017, 1) they can implement these in the classroom. In turn, their relationships with pupils and peers are strengthened, and their own well-being is enhanced. Their attention only on social and emotional needs for learning is more restricted than the ideas expressed in our study. Furthermore, it also focuses on developing teachers' skills, as indeed Miller's (2007) work also does.

Miller's (2007) proposal of five key qualities that the whole teacher practices (patience, presence, caring, love and humility) parallels the Aspen Institute's notions of developing teachers' social and emotional skills in order that they can act as more effective 'whole' professionals. Whilst we do not challenge such areas of development *per se,* we argue that their conceptualisation of the whole teacher as the development of further skills of a personal nature is problematic. At first, some of these skills might not seem contentious. For example, some such as social and emotional skills and presence usually appear in different forms across initial and continuing professional development. However, the focus on social and emotional skills would normally be on those of the children, and a culture change would be needed to reframe the nature of such training onto the self. Whilst there is a long tradition of reflective practice in education dating back to Dewey's work in the early 1900s (see Pollard 2018), teachers who already consider themselves to be patient, caring and humble might also be offended if they are asked to develop those areas further, particularly given the subjective nature of such judgements around them. Our conceptualisation of 'the whole teacher' is not based on further requirements that the teacher should evidence or aspire to, but rather a recognition that a wide range of teachers' own needs must be recognised if they are to achieve their full potential in the classroom.

Teachers in our study who spoke of personal skills and qualities did not make reference to them in the way that Miller (2007) and Colvin (2017) did in broad terms; rather in our research, these related to individual, specific skills such as those in music or drama. The 'whole teacher' in our study instead frames the individual as a whole person, recognising social and emotional skills but also moving beyond them, encompassing how personal life impacts on their well-being and on their work lives; and that not all existing skills may be known, recognised or utilised in school. In addition, children's understanding that their teacher is more than 'their teacher' also emerged. They realised that their teacher is also a person with a life beyond the classroom, just as a child is more than a pupil. Part of that recognition also involves acknowledgement and acceptance of the fact that teachers also have weaknesses and fears and, in the appropriate circumstances, openness about these can be useful.

These differences in conceptions of the whole teacher might in part be due to the different contexts of the education systems in Canada, the USA and England. Differences in language used is also a consideration. For example, whilst Miller (2007) uses the term 'love', he is doing so in relation to love for the job, which in the UK is more likely to be termed 'vocation'. Again, we do not propose that a leader assesses a colleague's level of vocation – that would be a personal and private matter for each teacher. However, notwithstanding these issues, the concerns about teacher stress and emphasis on performance are shared by both systems and all authors.

Leadership for the whole teacher: ethos and change

None of the above – whole child, whole teacher, whole curriculum or indeed Miller's concept of the whole school – can be achieved in isolation; indeed, to imply that they could be, is counter-intuitive to an holistic approach. The foundation of such an achievement lies in creating a strong ethos that places the concepts at its core. An ethos in which teachers feel able to use their passions to inspire pupils and to use them to explore more creative approaches that could enhance learning across the school would provide such an infrastructure. In a high stakes education system, where any slippage in test scores can have negative consequences, such an approach might be perceived as risky, as indeed teachers in our sample indicated in terms of creating a broad curriculum. It is thus a challenge for leaders to create an ethos that enables teachers to experiment and take risks, but also to embody the whole teacher. To bring in changes, such as a focus on the whole teacher as conceived of in this study, needs to be managed and led with care.

Changes in government policy are, of course, a key initiator of change in practice. In 2018, Amanda Spielman, Ofsted's Chief Inspector for Schools for England, acknowledged research which evidenced many schools narrowing the curriculum to focus on SATs results. She stated that Ofsted had previously focussed too much on test scores and not enough on the curriculum itself (Spielman 2018). Damien Hinds (2019), Secretary of State for Education, echoed Spielman's sentiments in a speech at the Church of England's National Conference. He noted that education is about more than academic achievement and emphasised the importance of building character and resilience in children, based on virtues. Specifically, he cites sport, creativity, performing, volunteering and membership and preparation for the world of work. However, whilst both Hinds (2019) and Spielman (2018) explicitly emphasise the new Ofsted focus on personal development, there is some ambiguity as to the extent of the actual change in emphasis. The new draft inspection framework (Ofsted 2019) which, at the time of writing, is out to consultation with the sector, does not make explicit reference to holistic approaches. Whilst it includes a section on the inspection and assessment of pupils' personal development, Ofsted and the National Curriculum have always made reference to personal development, including children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC). However, concerns about the qualities of inspectors' judgements on SMSC have been called into question (see Adams, Monahan and Wills 2015). It may take time to fully understand the practicalities in the shift in emphasis. At present, they are less evident than, for example, New Zealand's curriculum which identifies five key competencies: thinking; using language; symbols, and texts; managing self; relating to others, and participating and contributing. The competencies are framed as ways to live, learn, work, and contribute as active members of their communities. More complex than skills, the competencies draw also on knowledge, attitudes, and values in ways that lead to action. They are not separate or stand-alone. They are the key to learning in every area and the curriculum the whole child at its centre (Ministry of Education 2017).

In writing on the leadership of change, Kotter (1995, 11) asserts that 'change sticks when it becomes 'the way we do things around here,' when it seeps into the bloodstream' of the organisation as new behaviours become rooted in 'social norms and shared values' which can then be sustained. Kotter (1995, 67) goes on to claim that time must be taken to ensure that the next generation of management 'really does personify the new approach.' As the leaders in our study indicate, they regularly modelled behaviour in deliberate attempts to create a sustained and positive ethos.

The process of learning 'the school way', including a focus on the whole teacher, can be understood by reference to the work of Lave and Wenger (1991, 92-93) who see learning as being situated in the social practices of the community, including not only the formal public knowledge associated with the practices, but tacit knowledge inherent in those practices and the values and beliefs of the community. They define a 'community of practice' as a 'set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice' (Lave and Wenger 1991, 98), and they place importance on learning to talk as a participant in the community of practice, using the discourse practices of the community. Embedded in community discourse practices are the beliefs and values of the community, for example in the way that teachers talked about pupils and parents in a holistic manner. As Lumb (2014, 53–54) indicates, a school leader or leadership team establishes and controls the pedagogical language being used which in turn raises expectations that the ethos and values will be lived out, although, as noted above, there is the potential for varied views amongst any leadership team.

In the context of communities of practice for developing holistic ethos, recognition and valuing of the whole teacher can be made explicit and, more importantly, lived out as exemplified in our study where leaders adopted practices and created structures that recognised teachers' personal lives and sought to protect teacher-well-being. Examples of proactive and reactive leadership practice emerging included courses on mindfulness, a Head Teacher modelling taking time for family, and ensuring that staff all attend collective worship because it is an opportunity for them to take time out and reflect too. Practice is at the centre of this, modelled by leaders.

All schools believed that in addition to more structured induction, new staff members, would learn about the 'school way' through being immersed in a team which practised in certain ways. Using Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of legitimate peripheral participants, these new colleagues would be inducted into the school's community of practice. They would learn about the school's ethos in relation to the whole teacher through both formal induction and modelling of associated behaviours. One school spoke of teachers' relationships between each other serving as a model for children in how to relate to each other; where this involves the 'whole person', then children might also be deemed peripheral participants in this community, learning to value their teachers and peers for their 'wholeness'.

Whilst we have highlighted moral and values-based leadership as useful models for holistic approaches, these are not exclusive suggestions. Bhatti, Maitlo, Shaikh, Hashmi and Shaikh (2012) highlight the benefits of democratic over autocratic leadership in schools in Pakistan. Teachers working in democratic style schools, whereby all team members contribute to the decision making process, reported higher levels of job satisfaction and retention. Such a model may therefore be directly relevant to cultivating the concept of the whole teacher, and may (as well as other models) be an option for some schools.

Furthermore, in addition to the focus in this paper on the whole teacher as conceived in the UK and Canada, schools in non-western systems can also offer insights into leadership styles in this area. Law (2012) explores the dichotomies between Chinese and Anglo-American approaches to leadership based on questionnaires and interviews with school leaders in China. Law (2012) notes that whilst the literature tends towards separating the two styles, his study suggests that leaders in China often integrate elements of practice and values from both Chinese and Anglo-American models. This, he proposes, is due to an increasingly globalised understanding of leadership involving a complex interaction of ongoing cultural constructs at both national and international levels. Of course, all potential leadership models are primarily shaped by, and respond to, their respective

national policies, and will therefore differ within and across cultures. This is exemplified in the aforementioned approaches to early years' holistic education, by the existence of Waldorf Steiner and Montessori schools (Bruce 2015). Whilst these are both European in origin, they are distinctive from each other, despite being connected by their philosophical commitment to the whole child.

Implications for Initial Teacher Training and continuing professional development

We concur with the underlying argument of Chen and Chang (2006), Miller (2007) Shin (2016) and Colvin (2017) that training for teachers should address the notion of the whole teacher, however it may be conceptualised in any education system. Of course, all practice in schools is underlined by Initial Teacher Training which sets the foundations for an individual's career in the classroom. It has the power to establish strong skills, critical reflective practice and enable trainees to develop personal philosophies of education. It would, therefore, have the potential to explore such notions of holistic approaches to education in general, as well as the whole teacher in particular. Whilst holistic approaches are integral to early childhood education (Woods, Taylor and Bond 2013), this is arguably less well established in primary programmes but would be potentially beneficial, especially in systems facing challenges in teacher retention (see Wilshaw 2014 and Newton 2016 on teacher retention in England).

Providers of Initial Teacher Training in England are, like schools, also bound by pressures to comply with policy and evidence external standards. Pressures on time are also significant. This difficulty was reported by universities in a study exploring preparation to teach the whole child, through the promotion of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Furthermore, the lack of expertise in SMSC amongst trainers was also a concern, potentially hindering the awareness of this key holistic element of the curriculum (Adams, Monahan and Wills 2015). In addition, school-based Initial Teacher Training is dependent on the values and ethos of the schools in which the student is based; if those leaders do not value holistic approaches, the very notion may never enter their consciousness. Yet, as Miller (2007) suggests, to nurture the whole child requires a whole teacher: A study in British Columbia by Oberle and Schonert-Reich (2016) demonstrated that in classrooms where teachers reported burnout, students had raised cortisol levels, thereby indicating that teacher stress impacted negatively upon pupils. Teachers' well-being needs to be attended to in order for them to meet the children's needs as effectively as they can.

Limitations and areas for future research

A key limitation of this study lies in its small-scale nature. As such, findings cannot be generalised and further study would be needed with a larger sample. Our participants all valued whole child approaches but it would be useful to also explore the concept of the whole teacher with schools that do not consciously adopt this strategy. However, the strength of a small study was that we were able, in most cases, to develop good levels and depth of communication with the leaders.

Given that the concept of the whole teacher emerged from the data, rather than being a research question, our description of it here is intended to be a preliminary one: further research focussing explicitly on the notion would be needed, with larger samples, to elicit more information and further refine our understanding of the concept.

Conclusion

Whilst we agree with Miller (2007) that the whole child, whole teaching, whole schools and whole teacher are inextricably linked, we differ from him in relation to our conception of the whole teacher. Whilst performative education systems place continuous pressure on schools to strive for ever increasing excellence (linked primarily to test outcomes and inspection ratings), we argue that any (perceived) pressure on staff to also develop existing and/or new personal qualities will only create more tensions. In addition, those tensions may be heightened where an individual who may well be patient and caring for example, finds that the pressures in the workplace such as increasing bureaucracy reduce their ability to practise those personal qualities.

However, where leaders are able to articulate and model a concept of the whole teacher through moral and/or values-based leadership, there is potential for this to become an embedded part of school ethos. In so doing, the concept of the whole teacher may support a school – and all its stakeholders – to flourish amidst the performative pressures of many education systems.

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