CHAPTER THREE

MY FIRST ACTION RESEARCH CYCLE - EXPLORING MY MANAGEMENT

OF TIME

The New Deputy

"What are you doing?" I asked George, one of the other deputy heads, one Wednesday afternoon at about five o'clock.
"Oh, this and that," he replied. He stopped doing this or that, and tried to put his mind to talking to me.

"I don't seem to have anything to do," I said, naïvely. I had only been there a few days. He looked at me as if he were about to launch into a diatribe about what he had to do, and then thought better of it.
"You will do soon" was all he said, soothingly, and turned back to his pieces of paper.

Gradually, I became the proud receiver of pieces of paper. At first they only trickled in. I felt very important, and looked for places to file them. That seemed to be a useful task - to update the previous Deputy's filing cabinet. I thought I would just leave last year's papers there and then add my own. But it wasn't that easy. I couldn't work out why papers relating to twenty years ago were still there. I made an early decision to throw them all out and start again.

I developed a good system. I had a space for everything, and for the first three weeks or so, every letter or document was put away.

The papers covered a much wider range of items than those I had received when I was a Senior Teacher elsewhere. I realised that the Head and three Deputies had copies of practically every document that was generated in the school, and that this was a good way of ensuring communications were effective. I certainly couldn't complain that I had been left out; neither could I complain that I didn't know something, because the chances were, that if I had read my paperwork, I would know.

Lessons, marking, administration, meetings, planning - all gathered pace, and eventually I was caught up in the race with everyone else. It was tremendously exciting and I felt very privileged to be at the heart of the management of the institution. I enjoyed talking about how we should go about achieving our aims and planning all of this with various groups of people in the school. I enjoyed doing the work - 'getting my hands dirty' - is the expression we used.

I remember my life as being on a series of interconnecting treadmills. The momentum had increased so much that I felt I was running along from one rung to the next, jumping from one wheel to

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another - just keeping going, not pausing to see the scenery.  I had
always liked running, and reckoned to be good, but eventually, I
became a little disenchanted.  I wanted to get off.  I wanted to
stop and see what was happening around me.
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Clarifying my aims

My reconnaissance revealed for me where I thought the school was in terms of its practices in 1989-90. I recognised that I was appointed to address these particular issues, and to work with the Head and other colleagues to effect changes which would result in improvements for the learning experiences of teachers and pupils. I decided to approach them through an action research methodology, because it would involve me in enquiring into my practice, as both 'innovator and implementor' (Lomax, 1990:13). So I selected my own starting point, and began at this point because I recognised a conflict in what I believed I should be doing, and what I judged that I was doing at the time.   My intention was to improve the process of education with which I was concerned and to involve other people as participants. I hoped that the new practices we engaged in would lead to institutional development.

During 1990-91 I set up some INSET sessions with the maths department (of which I was a member), in which we looked at our classroom practice, particularly in terms of management of resources; at pupil behaviour; and at how we could improve GCSE coursework. I felt that I was able to give some useful support to the maths department at that time, but was still left with the problem of how best to work with other colleagues, and gradually I was drawn to the action research model of managing change.

I think that educational management processes respond to self study through action research. I ask questions about my practice as a 'teacher manager' and I hope to 'come to know' my practice as a result of enquiring into it. I hope that my practice as a manager will improve my management of change, thereby enabling my colleagues to develop as well. I began my enquiry by seeking to improve two main aspects of my practice: to carve out for myself the space to reflect upon my actions through standing aside from them, and to improve the quality of support I was able to give to teachers.

I recognise now that I had a naïve view of reflecting-in-action; my idea of it was of the immediate thought processes which went into making 'on the spot' decisions. I thought that 'real' reflection probably amounted to more than I was doing, and it would certainly need to be linked to action - as in the 'double dialectic of thought and action; the individual and society' (Kemmis and Carr, 1985:150). The school culture was such that action without thought was unacceptable whilst thought without action was a luxury which was affordable only if it could be justified as a carefully considered strategy.

Handal (1990), in talking about teachers and reflective practice, pointed to the 'busyness' culture of schools, which he claimed meant that teachers operated at the level of 'planning and acting - constructing practice' rather than completing full 'self-reflective' spirals of action research. He said there was a need to study critically one's own practice and to treat 'what counts as 'knowledge' as 'problematic'' (Carr and Kemmis 1986:85). Handal's suggestion was that the teachers he worked with in Norway operated on a cycle of plan, act, plan again, rather than the full action research cycle of plan, act, observe outcomes, reflect, then plan again. For the first few months of my new role, I think I was working through incomplete self-reflective cycles, which could account for why I was unhappy with the quality of my reflection. Standing back a little, I might have recognised that I was immersed in 'the messy real world of practice'; that in the real world 'feedback is going on in many ways at once' and that making mistakes is part of a self reflective spiral (Griffiths 1990:43). Griffiths' conceptualisation of a three looped action research cycle is most useful here: the innermost loop is associated with Schön's idea of reflection in action, the middle loop with the Lewin model which incorporates planning and fact finding, and the outermost loop which includes long term reflection.

Schön's (1983:68) idea of 'reflecting-in-action' was that when a teacher experiences 'confusion or puzzlement' in her everyday activities, the professional response is to stop and think about what has happened, and to work out an immediate strategy to effect some sort of change in the dilemma which faced her. He said that

a professional person 'does not separate thinking from doing, ratiocinating his way to a decision which he must later convert to action. Because his experimenting is a kind of action, implementation is built into his enquiry.'

I knew I was linking thinking and doing, building up my intuitive knowledge as I went along. I was taking account of the expectations of the Headteacher and other colleagues, the ethos of the school, my previous experience in other situations and so on. Polanyi (1958) called this 'tacit knowledge' - the knowledge which is retained when the individual incident, situation or text has passed beyond recall. But although I was developing my tacit knowledge through 'thinking and doing', I was still worried that I was not making noticeable headway with the real concerns I had. This was a constant dilemma for me in the early stages of my research and it was only when I started writing stories about what happened at the school that I was able to sharpen the focus of my concerns. Olson (1990:100-101) noted that 'narrative structures provide a format into which experienced events can be cast in the attempt to make them comprehensible, memorable and shareable........' As I became more confident in story writing, I wrote stories which enabled me to re-live earlier experiences, and to impose some sort of order and connections between the remembered events. Through writing them, I was able to revive the feelings I felt at the time, and to bring to mind conversations which had triggered future actions. As Robinson and Hawpe (1986:112) said 'Stories are a means for interpreting or reinterpreting events by constructing a causal pattern which integrates that which is known about an event as well as that which is conjectural but relevant to an interpretation.'

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The Gerbil
"Good afternoon, everyone!" I said, thinking why do we have
afternoon lessons, and cursing my luck that the pupils can see from
the window what's going on down the road.

"Sit down, please, and let's get started," I said, hopefully but
firmly.
"Miss, I ain't got my book!"
"My card's not here.  I'm only half way through.  You can't have it
now.  Give it back, Darren."

A strange noise emanated from somewhere around Naomi.  I couldn't
quite work out what it was, but thought that, as she was unable to
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secure a place by the window where all the action was, she needed to
draw attention to herself somehow. It happened again.
"Naomi, get on with your work please,"
"I am, Miss," she said full of innocence. I knew she was up to
something.

It happened again.

"Naomi, what is that noise?" I asked, somewhat crossly.
"What noise, Miss?"
"The one I've just heard, of course," I said, thinking that I
mustn't get drawn into a discussion at this level!
"Oh," she said, "You mean my gerbil!"
"What are you talking about?" I asked.
"My gerbil," she said, "He's in my pencil case. He goes everywhere
with me. Ooops, there he goes again. Is that the noise, Miss?"
"Yes," I said, "And I don't want to hear it again!"
"No, Miss, I'll tell him to be quiet."
Naomi made a major occasion of talking to a totally non-existent
gerbil. I moved on to other things. The gerbil was heard several
times more during the lesson. I pursued a policy of keeping calm
and ignoring Naomi's attention seeking behaviour. I helped her with
her maths when she was ready. When I moved away, she stopped work.

I began to collect in the homework. I listened to the excuses. I
pointed out the importance of doing the homework. It will help you
to get better grades in the exam, I said.

Eventually we packed up in time for the bell. No-one left until all
was quiet, tidy and peaceful. Table by table, I let them go. I
heard the noise as they pushed their way down the corridor. I
turned to Jackie who wanted to talk to me about something she didn't
understand about a piece of coursework I had given her back. We
talked it through. She packed away.
"Thanks Miss, see you tomorrow!"
"Yes, good-bye," I said. I thought to myself, I see them every day
but Wednesday.
I went down the corridor to the maths staffroom carrying my pile of
carefully extracted homework to be marked, and equipment which I had
allowed the class to borrow - rulers, pencils, protractors,
calculators and so on. The maths staffroom was full of papers,
worksheets, coursework, piles of exercise books and people.
"What an awful afternoon!" cried Fran.
"Yes, mine wouldn't settle to anything," agreed Maria.
"Oh, mine were all right today" said Geraldine.
"That's because they couldn't see the gate from your room!"
exclaimed Maria.

Starting the Action Research

There were many things for which I did not find easy answers - they had not responded to my 'reflecting
and acting' and I grouped them as my main areas of concern under the following headings:-
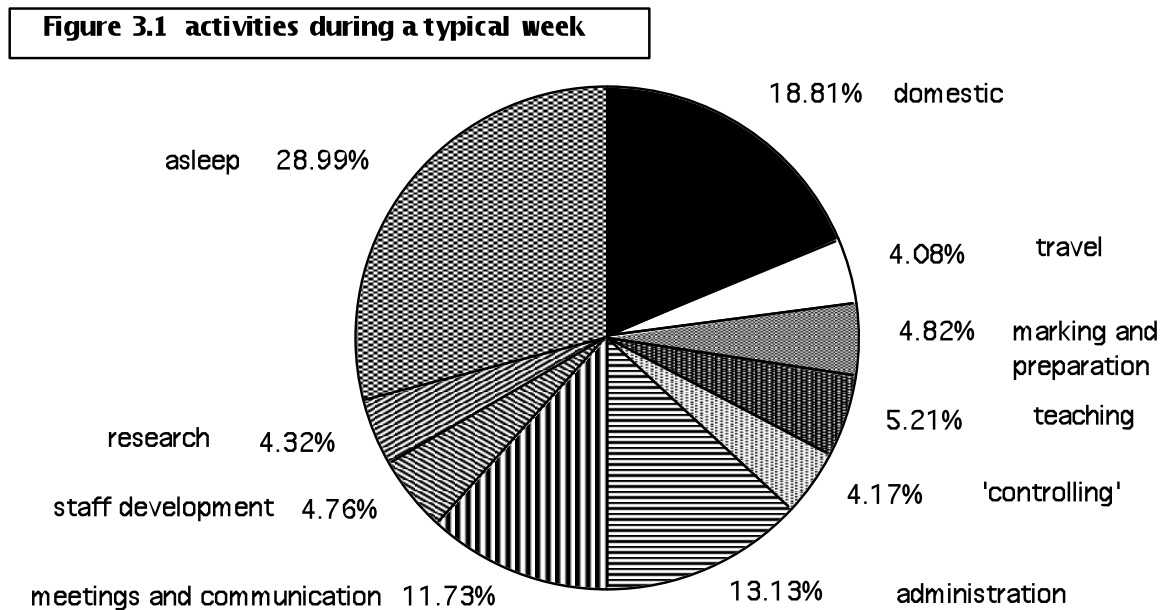
a)   I was concerned for the children, who, in general, did not achieve their potential,

b)   I was concerned for the teachers who were distressed because the children did not take learning seriously,

c)   I was concerned about the lack of structure in our inservice training programme and the use we made of the available time.

There were two main aspects to these concerns; one was about myself in my everyday role, and the other concerned how I was helping other people to develop.   With the constant flow of tasks to be done, I felt I did not have time in the day to reflect, other than briefly, upon what I was doing, and how I was doing it. I was not happy with this. In particular I thought that, as I had responsibility for staff development, and our policy talked of the need to reflect on our actions, I was not acting as a good role model.

My first action research cycle was an investigation into my management of time. I began in November 1991, with a plan for collecting data on how I spent my time. I then analysed the data and reflected upon it, and searched for the possibilities for change. I decided to take an average week and to record how I spent my time. The week I picked was from Saturday November 9th - Friday November 15th, 1991.

After looking at my data, I classified my time as follows:- (a) being asleep, (b) domestic (including personal eg washing, dressing, relaxing, watching television etc.), (c) travel, (d) marking and preparation, (e) teaching, (f) being 'on duty' - which I called 'controlling', (g)   administration, (h) meetings and communicating through talking, (i) staff development work, and (j) writing up this research.

Figure 3.1 shows how I spent my time during the week of November 9th - 15th, 1991.

Figure 3.1 activities during a typical week

18.81%   domestic

asleep   28.99%

4.08%   travel

4.82%   marking and
preparation

5.21%   teaching

research   4.32%

4.17%   'controlling'

staff development   4.76%

meetings and communication 11.73%

13.13%   administration

Out of 168 hours in a week, work related activities took up 52% of the week, with administration taking the biggest slice - 13%, followed by communications and meetings 12%, writing up the research 4%, staff development 5%, teaching 5%, preparation and marking 5%, controlling 4%, and travel 4%.   The rest of the week was spent asleep, 29%, or in domestic activities, 19%.

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Thursday, period 3

It was Thursday, period three.  The most dreaded time of the week.
Tutors  and  their  forms  face  each  other  expectantly,  -  teachers
expecting difficulties, and pupils expecting boredom.  As far as I
could establish, it was a diet of self assessment and relationships,
but no sex education because no-one had yet learnt how to teach it.

I roamed around the corridors, peering into the classrooms to see
what 'my team' had set up their year groups to do.  I met several
pupils on my travels.
"Where are you going?"
"Oh, Sir said I could go to the library to look at a book."
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"What about you, Lena, you're going to wrong way for the library?"
"Eh?  Me and Sam's going to the toilet.  Sir said we could go."

I entered a form room.  The teacher got up quickly from her chair at
the front of the class, and moved towards me.
"Hullo, I've just popped in to see what's going on," I said in as
relaxed a manner as I could.  I scanned the room as I was talking.
There didn't seem to be much going on.
The teacher said, hesitantly, that she was just about to develop the
theme, but I was welcome to go and see what they had done.  I talked
to two girls.
"What are you doing?" I asked.
"This, but it's boring," they said, waving at a sheet of sugar
paper.
The sugar paper displayed thirty minutes worth of their combined
thoughts on the topic 'what makes me feel good?'
"Oh, Miss, you shouldn't see that one," said Sacha, going suddenly
red in the face.  She sprung into animated action, obliterating a
phrase which I did my best not to read.  I wandered off to talk to
some others, then sensed that the teacher would not proceed whilst I
was still there.  So I made platitudinous comments to her and
departed.
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Reflecting on the time study

Each day I spent at least one hour and a quarter travelling to and from school. During that time I thought

about the events of the day and made plans for the next one. I kept a record of my reflections on tape,

recorded on my journey to form what I have called a 'talking' diary. I started using the 'talking' dairy from

December 1991. I recorded my thoughts, potential actions, actual actions and my reflections. I summarised

the weeks as they went by in a written diary from my reflections on the audio tapes (December 1991-July

1992). By June, I had developed sufficient confidence in the technology, and in the groups of colleagues I

was working with - and they with me - to be able to apply this method of recording to particular meetings,

for instance, the Head of Year meeting on sex education on May 7th 1992. Recorded meetings then began to

form part of my diary record. I have a collection of 16 ninety minute tapes from this early part of my

enquiry and have used them particularly to catalogue data on my work with Department A (Case Study 1), and, on analysis, to inform the stories I wrote. I have also made transcriptions of the tapes, when necessary.

During the Autumn Term 1991, my perceptions of what I did during the day were that much of the time I was 'on duty'. I spent time in the recreation area and cafeteria talking to and listening to both children and colleagues, answering questions, picking up litter, encouraging children to pick up litter, inspecting toilets, telling children not to run, argue, mess around, eat in the wrong place, push each other and so on. However although I felt that this controlling role took a major part of my time, it actually took the smallest percentage of school based activity time in the week. It was a much higher profile role than I had previously been used to and I began to study the head's role more closely than hitherto, finding that she spent, possibly, more time than I did on what I considered to be trivial activities. So how important were they? On reflecting on the time I spent on duty, I recognised more clearly its contribution in establishing the school ethos, in terms of building a community which was pleasant to work in for teachers and pupils and also, in these days of competition for pupil numbers, was one of the qualities on which schools were judged by their local communities. This insight was later shared with Heads of Year who I hoped would share my concern for establishing ownership of the environment by pupils and teachers.

Just over 22 hours of my time were spent on administration. This always included an hour from 7.45am to 8.45am organising the cover for absent colleagues, but the other activities I classed as being 'administration' were fairly diverse, from phoning for supply teachers and completing staffing returns, to discussing and planning INSET days. In some respects my administration time was subject to the iceberg syndrome referred to in 'If it moves' (SHA 1990), which indicated that 'the work of the day can be thrown out by a sick child, a distressed teacher, an angry parent, bad weather'. Whilst bad weather did not often affect the smooth running of the school and sick children were dealt with by Matron, there were many other features in a day which could overturn my carefully planned list of activities. By the close of most days, a new list had formed itself in my mind, and yesterday's problems took their place at the bottom of the priorities.

Although I collected data for meetings/communication separately from staff development, in retrospect I would class much of the work I did in meetings in terms of staff development. The small percentage of my week dedicated just to staff development (5%) was specific to watching probationers teach and discussing their lessons with them, or to INSET sessions which were part of our school initiative programme. If I put together the time spent on this and the time devoted to meetings and communication, I found that the largest chunk of my time in school was spent on these activities. I realised that I needed to clarify my view of what staff development actually meant to me. The way I had categorised my data and my experience of staff development which had been in terms of action research and the reflective practitioner were incongruent. This incongruence is reflected in two quite different definitions of staff development:

'Applied to classrooms, action research is an approach to improving education through change, by encouraging teachers to be aware of their own practice, to be critical of that practice, and to be prepared to change it. It is participatory, in that it involves the teacher in his own enquiry, and collaborative in that it involves other people as part of a shared enquiry.' (McNiff, 1988:4).

And

'.....the activity of staff training, that is a conscious institutional approach intended to improve the capability for staff to fill specified roles, particularly in relation to teaching' (Matheson 1988:4).

It could be argued from Matheson's definition that staff development was a training given **to** teachers to enable them to do their jobs more effectively; that someone else - possibly the senior management team, should decide what was needed and how to fulfil this need. This implies a rather different stance on staff development from that in the McNiff quotation where teachers were expected to look at their own practice, and with support from other colleagues, identify areas of need, and seek to put into operation strategies for improvement. The emphasis is on collegiality, working together, sharing experiences and learning from them, whereas in the other example, teachers were told, encouraged, sent on courses in order to make the

developments others have identified. In the teacher-as-researcher model, the teacher is in control of his or her learning; in the management-led model this is clearly not the case.

At Roseacre School, pupils were taught to exercise control over their own learning; it was recognised that pupils learn at different rates, that they need to plan and organise their learning, that they should be listened to and given appropriate support to enable them to move on to the next stage of learning. It would seem inappropriate for teachers to be expected to learn any less favourably than the pupils in their care, and the teacher-as-researcher model of staff development seemed, therefore, to fit in better with the school ethos. From my own experience of learning about the effectiveness of the process of staff development, I recognise action research as being a powerful way of improving schools.   But I was aware that not all of my colleagues shared this view of staff development, feeling instead, that attendance at a course would provide them with much of what they needed to know.

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INSET - or something!

"Could I have a word?"
"Yes, of course, come in and sit down, Malcolm."
"I hope you don't mind me coming in just now, but I never get any
other time!" he said.
"Well, you're free now aren't you?  I often see you around the place
during this lesson."
"Yes, if I didn't have it I'd be lost.  But it's my TVEI time really
- supposed to be doing INSET or something.  But that's a laugh for a
start!"
"How do you mean?  I thought you had to account for what you do
during the year - it must cost a small fortune to free you up for
one lesson a week all through the year."
"Yes, but nobody minds.  And anyway, no-one's told me what to do in
my INSET time.  So I use it profitably, but doing other things.  But
that's not what I came to talk to you about."
"No, but I'm concerned - you know staff development is my
responsibility?"
"Oh, yes, but this was set up before you came.  Anyway, it's about
Alan and Oliver.  They had a fight in Mrs Ramster's lesson.   What
do you think I should do about it?"
"What do you think you should do about it ?"
"Oh, well, I usually get told what to do."
"Well I'm asking you to think it out now, then get on and do
something about it," I replied, a little tetchily.
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    "Peter, I want to talk to you about our INSET plans," I said to my
    other deputy head colleague.
    "Oh, right," he said, "But you don't mean now, do you? Next week -
    perhaps after the meeting on Monday - that should be over by six, we
    could talk about it then."
    Monday came. People wanted to talk to me after the meeting. It was
    seven o'clock before I could tell Peter the tale about Malcolm. He
    said,
    "Oh, yes, yes, that just buys them time. Yes, we put it down as
    supporting the school development plan. Which it does. If he didn't
    have that time, he wouldn't get into classes to support teachers
    delivering the school development plan. So that's how that works."
    "But I thought there was a programme drawn up for them to follow?"
    "Oh, yes, but no-one's done anything about that really."
    "Well," I asked, "Who is supposed to?"
    "You, I suppose, now that you have responsibility for staff
    development. But I don't think you should worry about that now.
    We've got plenty to do without trying to do something about that at
    the moment."

<u>Rethinking my Role as Deputy Head</u>

My analysis of how I spent my time did not allow me to address those aspects of my role as a deputy that

particularly interested me. Rather, as a new deputy, the time study was made within the categories

determined by my own prior expectations of what deputies did. Yet I was beginning to see ways in which I

could make a real impact on the concerns that I have identified on page 99.   I was beginning to imagine

solutions that I could act upon. These solutions did not fit into the categories that I had devised to explain

how I spent my time. I looked towards action research to help me clarify my thoughts. The planning,

acting, reflecting and evaluating stages of an action research cycle suggested to me a different way of

viewing my activities as a deputy head. Planning and acting suggested the leadership and management

dimensions of my work. The intention to develop the staff into a reflective, learning community suggested

that any view of leadership and management needed to be informed by the role of collaboration and

therefore needed to recognise a collegial element. Evaluation is self-explanatory and obviously linked to an

important monitoring function in relation to both colleagues and students.

Hoyle (1981:36) drew a distinction between administering and leading an organisation. He described the leadership function as involving the creation and establishment of new organisational goals, whereas the administrative, or management, function ensured that routine tasks set up to achieve organisational goals were carried out smoothly. My management function was quite clear; I was responsible for the day-to-day running of the school. Much of this I organised on my own, or on the 'phone, having taken note of discussions with the Headteacher, Heads of Year, and individual members of staff; much of it concerned the school diary, and making a careful note of appointments, absences, visits, examinations and so on.

Leadership and management are different. West Burnham's model (see Chapter 1:19) demonstrated that leadership is about managing change, whilst management is about doing routine tasks effectively so that the organisation runs smoothly. Leadership is about having a vision, based on a clear value position, of where the school is going, and it is about how to take the teachers along. I began to see that for change in school to be effective, I needed to involve teachers more in the thinking and planning. They needed to feel that power was shared among members of the organisation (Bush 1995:52-72), and that working collaboratively in teams, supported collegial management processes which empower teachers and increase their efficiency (Chapter 1:20-21).

I thought more about my leadership of groups in relation to developing reflective, learning communities, as it occurred to me that, as I often set the agendas, any enquiry was initiated by me rather than by my colleagues. I recognised this as a living contradiction (see Chapter 2:60-61) in that I wanted teachers to take a more active role in developing their learning, yet I was controlling that development through the way in which I led the groups. An early attempt I made to shift from my agendas to that of the teachers was in my work with the induction group - which met for a year at intervals of approximately three weeks, and consisted of eight teachers who were new to the school in September 1991. In discussions held with relevant colleagues, including probationers, before the programme for the new group was drawn up, we established

that the leadership of the group should be shared by different members of staff who had an interest in the programme. There was plenty of opportunity for discussion, role play, information gathering and so on, and the agendas belonged to staff concerned who were giving new teachers insights which they considered to be of value.

At the end of the Autumn Term the group evaluated the programme so far, and prioritised their own agenda for the Spring and Summer Terms. I worked with the other 'leaders' of the group to produce a series of sessions on classroom practice which might be applicable for all participants. However, it was not until the Summer Term that I felt sufficiently confident to introduce action research as a methodology for enabling the participants to take control of their own learning - and I was surprised by the results.

I was surprised by three outcomes of this new venture. Firstly, I had not anticipated that my role would change, and I was surprised that my new role appeared now to be less that of a deputy head facilitating an induction course and had become instead more like that of a professional tutor to the group. I was unsure of my skills in this role, and gradually developed them over the next few years.

Secondly, I was surprised at how readily the group entered into the spirit of action research. I had been worried that they would have other priorities or that they would be too tired at the end of a busy year to engage in research into their own practice. Topics they looked at included:- giving instructions, varying approaches to children, asking questions, taking care with their speech, reinforcing 'good' activities in the classroom, and so on.

Thirdly, I was surprised that all of them expressed a wish to be involved in further sessions the following year.

It was interesting to note in their evaluation responses that the participants commended the practical nature of the sessions and the opportunity to talk to others as being of prime importance. Comments such as the following were fairly typical:-

'The course has helped me to focus on an area of my own practice that I should like to develop - notably my objectives, and how effectively I am delivering the course to students. I am aware that I discuss more openly classroom practice with colleagues, including those from other curriculum areas. I have found the sessions very practical and have particularly benefited from the information and advice offered in discussion sessions.'

<u>I'm not having that in my classroom!</u>

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I talked to George, the other deputy head, about my worries.
"I can't get these kids to take their work seriously, and it's the
same in all the classrooms in the maths department.  It's not just
me, I'm sure.  How do you find the pupils?  Do they do what you
want?  What do you do with them to make them work?"
"Well, you've got to be hard on them, not let them give you an
answer.  Perhaps you give them too much leeway - get in quick with
the rejoinder.  Be fierce.  Then once you've got them to understand
you're the boss, you can be a bit gentler if you like - but not
much!  They're hard, you've got to be tough with them.  Just thank
your lucky stars you don't teach all through the day. Think of
having to put up with all that, all day long."

That wasn't much help, I thought, still trying to puzzle it out for
myself.  But perhaps I did understand what George meant - I was too
easily taken off guard by a quick answer - I maybe gave the pupils
too much space for a smart retort, instead of making it clear I
don't expect one.

I talked to Barry.  I had to be careful here.  He needed to feel
confidence in me, his new line manager.  I was probably expected to
have all the answers to all the problems.  Perhaps I even thought
that I had most of the answers before I came here!
I discussed discipline in the school in general.  He told me all
about how good the children were in his classroom.  I tried to get
him to explore how he performed this feat.  He told me
"I just say to them, I'm not having that in my classroom.  And they
stop doing it.  They know where the line is drawn.  These teachers
who have difficulties, they just don't let the kids know their
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expectations. The school expectations are clear enough. The Head
makes it clear what she expects. I wouldn't dream of having some of
the things going on in my room that I see happening in some of the
classrooms."
"But I suspect that's what other people think. They will be saying
'I won't have that going on in my room'. But it still does. So how
do they get it not to? What are you, as a head of year, doing about
helping staff to address this issue?"
"Oh, I go into the lesson and talk to the kids and they improve for
a bit. Or we put them on report. But the classroom teachers have
got to solve it for themselves, ultimately!"
"But supposing they can't?" I persisted.
"Well, perhaps they shouldn't be in the job!"