A new shape for schooling?

David H Hargreaves
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Editor

Peter Chambers

THIS PUBLICATION

Audience

Teachers and leaders at all levels in education

Aim

To explain the concepts and give an overview of the application of deep learning, deep experience, deep support and deep leadership that can help reshape schooling for the 21st century

To invite schools to take part in this reshaping

Contents

1 Introduction

This is the first pamphlet in the second series emerging from the dialogue between schools and the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust on the topic of personalising learning. It provides a background and overview to the first four pamphlets of the new series under their generic titles:

Deep learning – 1 (written by Emma Sims)

Deep experience – 1 (David Hargreaves)

Deep support – 1 (Sue Williamson)

Deep leadership – 1 (David Hargreaves)

These four pamphlets, with the overview provided here, are published simultaneously. Ideally, they should be read as a whole and in sequence. Their main intended audience is school leaders, particularly those who have been working on the personalisation agenda. The pamphlets are a kind of bridge between the first and second series. In other words, they serve as a trailer to what will follow in each 'deep', but they also look for some of the common strands and concepts, most notably co-construction, that bind the initial pamphlets into a coherent whole.

This introductory pamphlet locates the series within the rapidly growing activity, and literature, about personalising learning. Our work in the Trust over the last two years has dealt with a challenging issue. Personalisation and its synonym customisation are well developed in the business world: the change from mass production to mass customisation transformed that world as firms engaged in
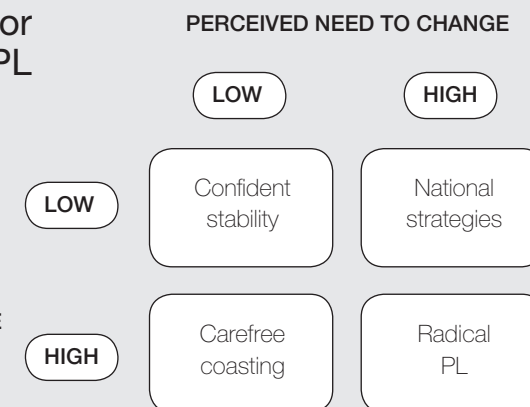
the innovation needed to meet the needs and aspirations of customers and clients more fully than was possible through mass production. In many ways contemporary schooling seems closer to mass production than to customisation. So the two years have been a learning journey to understand what personalisation might mean in education, what changes to schooling this might imply, and what schools are now doing to personalise learning. The journey was one of discovery to enact the transition from a 19th-century educational model or imaginary to one appropriate to the 21st century.

This learning continues, but some cautions are in order at this stage. Personalisation is one lens through which to examine learning. It highlights peculiar features of schooling; it asks particular questions; and it suggests distinctive ways forward. But there are many other lenses on learning. Not everything that could or should be said about learning is a form of personalisation and it is regrettable when the term is used to embrace every new idea or practice that affects learning. So in the pamphlets we continue to focus on the *personalisation* of learning and do not attempt a comprehensive account of learning.

Personalising learning implies a change from one approach to schooling to another that is very different – just as the movement from mass production to mass customisation involved a significant shift in business organisation and practice. The schools that exemplify the impact of personalising learning share some common features, especially in their attitude to change, innovation and transformation.

FIGURE 1

Conditions for embedded PL

		PERCEIVED NEED TO CHANGE	
		LOW	HIGH
PERCEIVED DEGREE OF FREEDOM TO CHANGE	LOW	Confident stability	National strategies
	HIGH	Carefree coasting	Radical PL

In figure 1, the horizontal axis is the extent of a school's perceived need to change in order to improve student achievement, and the vertical axis is the school's perception of its own room to manoeuvre in initiating change. The school in which personalisation of learning is most embedded tends to be high on both dimensions, and so sits in the lower right cell. In the lower left cell, the school knows it could change if there were such a need, but sees no need at the present time. If at some stage the school were to see a need to enhance the personalisation of learning, it could move quite quickly in that direction. In the upper right cell, the school lacks the capacity to take the initiative, but accepts the need to change and so readily accepts the national strategies and other externally determined sources for improvement. In the upper left cell, the school is confident about its own practice and performance and so will be reluctant to accept the national strategies or ways of personalising learning.

This pamphlet also locates the series within a wider framework of scholarly work. The pamphlets are not in themselves pieces of research or scholarship; nor do they attempt in any comprehensive way to acknowledge or cite relevant books and articles. Rather, the pamphlets are reflections upon, and conceptualisations of, our work with schools on the theme of personalising learning. As such, they report what happens in schools; they make connections between what might seem disparate activities or ideas; they pose questions about past and present professional practice; and they point to possible futures.

However, we do make occasional references to academic work where some acknowledgement is patently appropriate or relevant, but these are inevitably highly selective. We believe that any reader wishing to pursue the relevant research and scholarship will find these references a sufficient point of entry to much larger bodies of work.

Taken together, these five pamphlets provide a useful background to the Trust's national conference in Birmingham from 29 November to 1 December 2006. It is also expected that they will help to shape the work of the D&R networks, which are now being grouped into the four deeps rather than remaining independent gateways.

Our aim over the next two years is to continue this work with schools to develop the thinking and new practice and thus to co-create the new shape for schooling. Later pamphlets in the series will be published at regular intervals to report progress.

2 From nine 'gateways' to four 'deeps'

The first series of pamphlets on personalising learning clarified the nine gateways that were devised with school leaders as a means of building on and extending what many schools were doing to create the pathways for the personalisation of student learning. The pamphlets recorded and elaborated on the national conferences at which presentations from schools and individual contributors explored the gateways. In the planning stage, it was obvious that nine gateways could not be covered in a single conference. It was equally impractical to cover one gateway per conference per term,
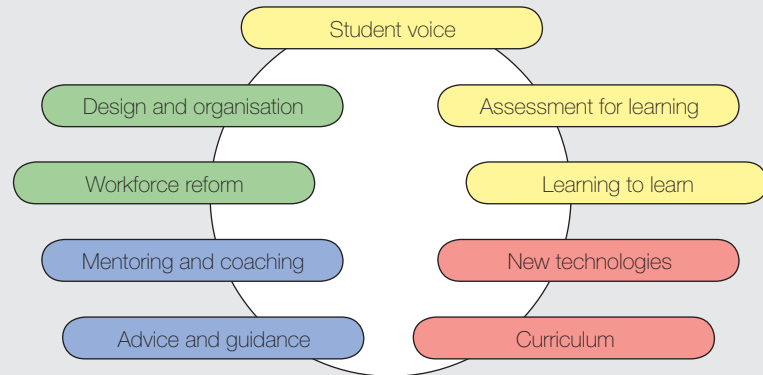
FIGURE 2

Sequencing the nine gateways to PL: the conferences
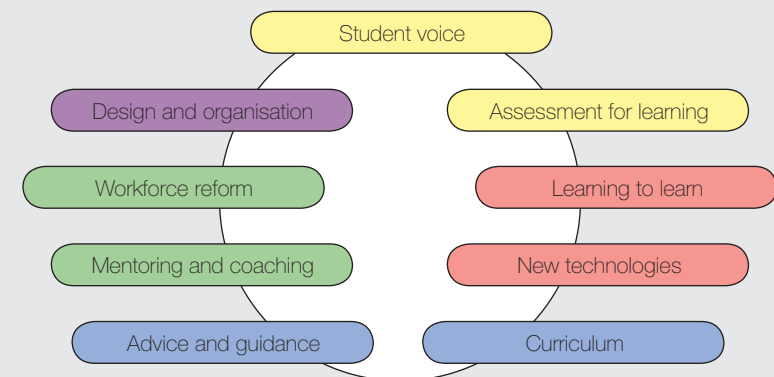
since that would take three years to complete. It was decided, therefore, to cover two gateways in each conference, thus taking five terms in all, with the last conference devoted to a single gateway – perhaps the most complex of them all – school design and organisation.

At the conclusion of the first series of pamphlets, and the conferences on which they were based, it became clear that there were greater links between some gateways than others, but these linkages did not reflect the pairings of gateways in the conferences series.
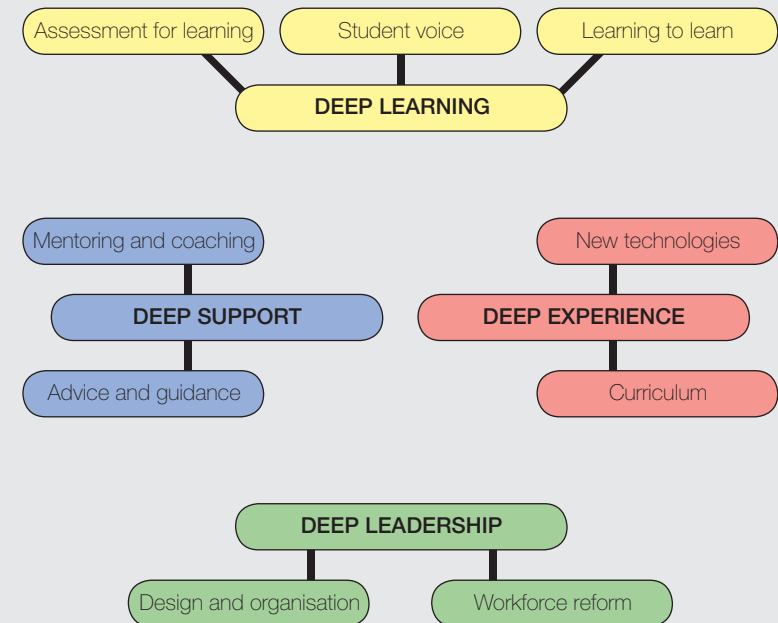
Sequencing the gateways to PL: the linkages

Student voice

Design and organisation

Assessment for learning

Workforce reform

Learning to learn

Mentoring and coaching

New technologies

Advice and guidance

Curriculum

These powerful linkages formed four clusters of gateways, and these have been named.

There are advantages to the clustering of the gateways into the four 'deeps'. Each cluster **compresses** its constituent gateways so they form overlapping and interacting wholes. It encourages schools to see the links and potential synergies between the gateways and their leaders to design the work on the gateways in a way that ensures this happens, as will be discussed in *Deep leadership – 1*. This is critical if the gateways are not to become silos insulated from one another. Where schools are working simultaneously on several of the nine gateways, the avoidance of silos is especially important. But the synergies can also be of value to schools that are just starting on

Clustering the gateways to PL: the 'deeps'

Assessment for learning

Student voice

Learning to learn

DEEP LEARNING

Mentoring and coaching

New technologies

DEEP SUPPORT

DEEP EXPERIENCE

Advice and guidance

Curriculum

DEEP LEADERSHIP

Design and organisation

Workforce reform

the journey of personalisation, since our knowledge about preferred combinations of gateways is much greater than it was two years ago.

At the same time each cluster **enlarges** its constituent gateways so that new features (gateways, if you will) can be added. Only further work with schools in this next phase of personalising learning will reveal the extent to which, and the ways in which, each cluster needs to be enlarged. While it was always assumed that there would be complex interactions between all nine gateways, the potential combinations of gateways are staggeringly large. It is easier, and probably more practical, to conceptualise the linkages between the four deeps.

The first cluster, named **deep learning**, contains three gateways – student voice, assessment for learning and learning to learn – which overlap and share common features. Deep learning is at the heart of personalisation, for better learning is the purpose of personalisation

and its key outcome. Learning is complex and is influenced by many factors. Personalisation can transform the conditions of learning to give it greater depth.

We have adopted the following proposition to help in the next stage of exploration.

Deep learning is secured when, through personalisation, the conditions of student learning are transformed.

The curriculum and new technologies gateways are critical to personalisation because they offer potential ways in which the experience of school might become more engaging for students. Engagement is a precondition of learning, so a **deep experience** of school must ensure engagement. To make the experience of schooling engaging for all students may entail some restructuring, rather than merely tinkering with a curriculum to make it more 'relevant' or using the new technologies as decorative modifications to the routine of lessons. Schooling should not be dominated by a curriculum over which students have little ownership and which is delivered to them without the engaging challenges that so many young people crave in the rest of their lives out of school.

Deep experience is secured when schooling is restructured to ensure that all students are fully engaged in their learning.

If students are to engage in deeper learning, they will need new forms of enriched support. Such **deep support** will be more personalised than in the past and go beyond what is conventionally placed in the gateways of advice & guidance and mentoring & coaching. It concerns the broader wellbeing of the students, including their health, their general security and their freedom from poverty and disadvantage. In this regard, the more coherent and effective support system envisaged in *Every child matters*, by linking educational and children's services, is welcome. But personalisation in schooling should focus strongly on learning itself. This means rethinking pastoral systems, which have sometimes created a divide between the pastoral and academic aspects of schooling. The first comprehensive schools generated these twin pillars, with one deputy headteacher (curriculum) with associated heads of department or faculty, and another deputy (pastoral) with associated heads of year. In such a world it has been easy to lose sight of the fact that it is learning that needs personalised

support. Today the single school may not be enough to meet the whole range of students' learning needs. So several schools – as federations, collaboratives, clusters and networks – should now work together to pool their human and material resources to maximise the degree to which they can personalise learning.

Deep support demands that schools and teachers should collaborate with other institutions, agencies and people to secure deep learning for students.

Creating the conditions for deep learning, deep experience and deep support requires leadership of high quality. We are not introducing a new conception of leadership – to which there are already abundant approaches – but rather exploring the tasks of leadership that are necessary for the full realisation of personalisation in schools. It involves the workforce and school design and organisation gateways, but the focus is on the way in which leadership ensures that deep experience and deep support are understood and organised to ensure deep learning.

Deep leadership means redesigning education so that, through a culture of personalisation and co-construction with shared leadership, the school secures deep experience, deep support and deep learning for all its students.

This way of framing the leadership task of personalisation, combined with the current challenges afforded by Building Schools for the Future, offers an unprecedented opportunity for the reshaping of schooling to make it fit for purpose in the 21st century.

3 A virtuous circle of co-construction

From the school presentations at the conferences on the nine gateways, six core themes emerged that captured the qualities characteristic of the student for whom learning is being fully personalised. Such a student would:

• Be **engaged** with learning and the life of the school

• Take **responsibility** for his or her own learning and behaviour

• Show **independence** in, and have control over, learning

• Enjoy **confidence** in oneself as a learner

• Display **maturity** in all relationships, marked by mutual respect.

These five concepts appear constantly in the talk of teachers as they describe what they do in the name of personalisation. But the sixth term – co-construction – does not. This concept has to be added to the language to capture what school leaders often described as a core element in personalisation, namely the readiness to treat students as active partners in the design, implementation and evaluation of their education.

Where such conditions obtain, the student would thus have the readiness and ability to **co-construct** with others all aspects of education – teaching, learning, curriculum and assessment, indeed everything that makes up the experience of schooling.

These six themes potentially form a virtuous circle. If students are engaged, they will begin to take more responsibility for their learning. When they assume responsibility, they will achieve a degree of independence in learning. With independence comes self-confidence and so greater maturity in relationships. And it is with such self-confident, mature learners that teachers develop the trust in students out of which a commitment to co-construction with students as partners can grow.

FIGURE 5
The co-construction cycle
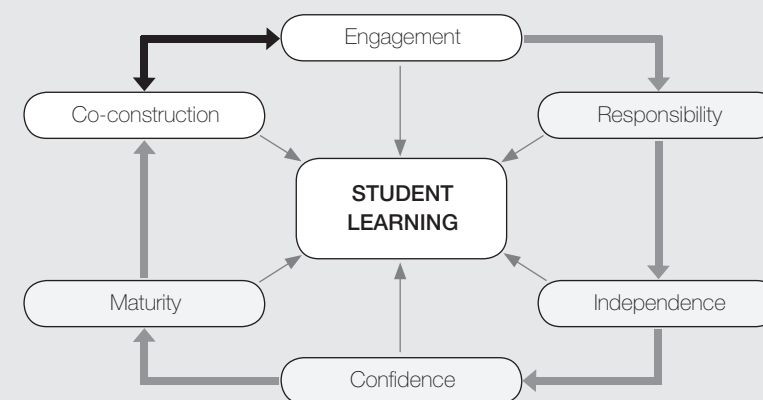
But how does one close the gap between co-construction and engagement? Co-construction will itself engage, but how can one ensure engagement to allow the cycle to run and so generate the conditions out of which co-construction between teacher and student can begin?

The answer, we believe, is that when teachers display a readiness to treat students as active partners in the construction of their education, students respond with the engagement that sets in train a powerful spiral. In other words, when teachers behave as *if* students are co-constructors, this automatically stimulates a degree of engagement. This is why student voice is so important. If teachers demonstrate that they want to give voice to students, and are willing to listen and act upon what they hear, then students understand they are being taken seriously and this promotes engagement.

Where personalisation is embedded in the school, such co-construction is pervasive. Consider, for example, these extracts from the recent inspection report on Cramlington Community High School, where the headteacher, Derek Wise, has long been a pioneer of personalising learning. Note the reference to the gateways and to the themes in the co-construction cycle (in italics):

'Students know their opinions matter and change happens as a result... Teaching and learning are consistently very good or outstanding because teaching has a sharp focus on how individuals think and learn... The high quality lesson planning always includes a range of strategies which prompt students to be more involved and to think deeply about their own learning. Students are aware of how their work is marked and receive very good feedback on how well they are doing. They understand their targets and talk confidently about their own progress. Students *respect* and appreciate that the whole learning process is shared openly with them which helps them understand the relevance of particular topics... This outstanding curriculum helps students to quickly become very *mature* and *confident* learners... Students are very effectively involved in their own learning and quickly take on more *responsibility* for their own performance. For example, the 'Learn2Learn' programme in year 9 develops positive attitudes to learning and students' *independence* skills... [The school] successfully focuses on transforming students' education by providing them with personalised learning programmes which better meet their needs and inspire them to learn... It has very strong links with partner schools and outside agencies... Pupils receive excellent care, guidance and support... The quality of teaching and learning in this school is exceptional because students have become equal *partners* in learning.' (Ofsted, 2006).

But the co-construction cycle is best illustrated in finer detail. Brooke Western CTC provides a vivid example of how this works. Here the teachers used an exercise in student voice to invite students to suggest criteria of how they judge an engaging or effective lesson. They came up with six criteria for such a lesson – **C**reativity, **E**nergy, **L**earning by doing, **T**hematic, **I**ndependent learning, **C**ross-curricular – yielding the acronym **CELTIC**. These are not the criteria used by inspectors during an Ofsted visit, and the teachers could have thanked the students for their observations but pointed out that the official criteria by which they are judged are different and they should have priority. Instead the teachers tried to make their lessons meet

the students' criteria. This validated the student voice consultation and demonstrated to the students that they were being treated as genuine partners. The effect was to engage students who then entered the co-construction cycle.

Discovering how else co-construction cycles are devised and sustained is an important task in the next stage of personalising learning, for we now believe that co-construction is at the heart of a culture of personalisation. The schools that have led the field on co-construction have adopted a distinctive line towards national education policy and their own local initiative. Relative to the history of education in England, the years since the Education Reform Act of 1988 have seen a massive expansion of the power of central government, and especially in prescribing much detail in pedagogy as well as curriculum and assessment. However, an important exception is financial management, for during this same period schools have gained considerable control over their own budgets.

FIGURE 6
Vertical and horizontal relationships
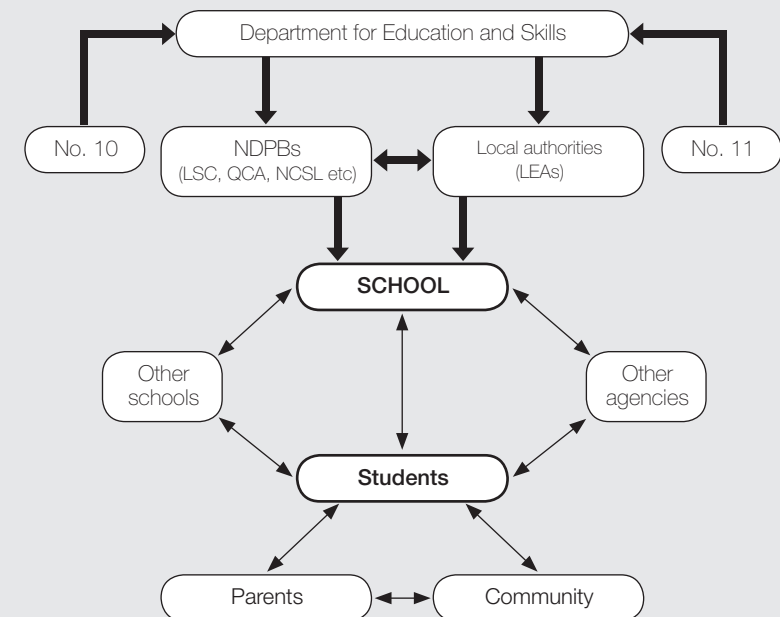
This, when combined with the growing confidence of many secondary headteachers in their leadership capacities and obligations, has meant that many important educational developments have been led from school level.

This tension between system and school is captured in figure 6. The upper half reflects the growing powers of central government, through the Department for Education and Skills, which:

• Ultimately controls the work of the NDPBs (non-departmental public bodies), such as the Learning and Skills Council, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, the National College for School Leadership, etc, as well as the National Strategies

• Has weakened the power of local (education) authorities, much of whose work is effectively directed by DfES

• Exerts direct power over schools by legislation and regulation, in addition to the indirect power exercised by the bodies named in the previous two bullets.

Ministers and their officials justify this increase in central power as a necessary step to achieve the government's aim of combining excellence and equity.

In March 2006 *The Economist* offered its view on this aspect of schooling the EU in these terms: 'Only a few small EU countries actually deliver an equitable education; and these are the ones that have junked the devices, such as stringent national curricula, or central direction from state or national bureaucracies, that are supposed to ensure equal education. The explanation, argues Andreas Schleicher, is that European education is stuck with an industrial mindset that has not adapted to the post-industrial world. Post-industrial organisations insist that innovation must come from anywhere; that hierarchies must be flat; and that everyone should be well educated... Finland… has the best schools in the world [and] it has achieved all this by changing its entire system, delegating responsibility to teachers and giving them lots of support. There is no streaming and no selection; no magnet schools; no national curriculum; and few national exams. It is all... about getting good teachers – and then giving them freedom.'

This potential is reflected in the lower half of figure 6. Here the individual school is strongly focused on meeting the needs of its principal clients, the students. But it does this in association with other agencies and other schools, often in new forms of association (federations, clusters and other varieties of strategic partnership), with parents and with the wider community, including employers. This is the arena where personalisation through co-construction has been most successfully pioneered. It is here, and in the same spirit of networked collaboration between schools, that the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust has worked with school leaders on personalising learning.

Some schools have found this tension between *vertical compliance* and *horizontal collaboration* a source of confusion and conflict. Though central government's rhetoric and some of its practice is moving in the right direction, it has not yet fully learned that a key part of its role is enabling the horizontal collaboration: its ambivalence is shown in its confused expectations of local authorities. Some schools, including those reported in these pamphlets, have successfully managed this tension to good effect, by accepting much of the national policy but capitalising fully on local initiatives and synergies. Hitherto, personalising learning has been a very loosely framed policy as far as the DfES is concerned; most local authorities have been little involved; there is no national strategy for it; it is not part of the accountability framework as exercised through Ofsted. This probably explains why it has worked so well. Will ministers and the DfES in their turn learn about transformation from what have been spontaneous developments in the lower part of figure 6? Will they liberate the innovative schools that are pioneering 21st century models of personalised education, and then support the lateral knowledge transfer that will transform our whole system? Or will they stick to a 19th-century industrial mindset and seek to micro-manage from the centre?

4 A culture of personalisation through co-construction

Personalising learning flourishes in schools where there is a culture of personalisation underpinned by a commitment to the co-construction of schooling.

To many teachers the idea of co-construction is by no means new, in part because it is already within their practice and in part because they are familiar with, and often adopt, constructivist approaches to learning. On this view students (like all human beings) are constantly in search of meaning and use their prior knowledge and experience to make sense of what is presented to them as new or unfamiliar, as is the case with much of the school's formal curriculum. The learner is neither an empty vessel into which teachers can pour the curriculum, nor the *tabula rasa* implicit in the now rather discredited behaviourist approaches to learning and teaching. Knowledge is not directly transferred to students through teaching, which is an intervention into a continuous process of the student's knowledge-building activities.

Many of the major names encountered by teachers during their training adopt constructivist perspectives. Jerome Bruner, in *The culture of education*, 1996, wrote: 'Reality construction is the product of meaning-making shaped by traditions and by a culture's toolkit of ways of thought. In this sense, education must be conceived as aiding young humans in learning to use the tools of meaning making and reality construction, to better adapt to the world in which they find themselves, and to help in the process of changing it as required. In this sense, it can even be conceived as helping people become better architects and better builders.'

The social dimension of constructivism has assumed growing importance. Few teachers will have read Lev Vygotsky or used the key concept of the *zone of proximal development* in their professional practice, but it is Vygotsky who haunts much influential writing. The idea of 'scaffolding' children's learning as developed by David Wood and Jerome Bruner, for example, is often applied to practice.

In this second series of pamphlets we are using the concept of co-construction in a fuller, perhaps even more radical, way than constructivist theories of learning, in two regards. First, our emphasis is less on the teacher having to take account of the learner as a knowledge constructor and more on the need for the teacher to treat the learner as an active partner in the jointly constructed activity of learning-and-teaching. Secondly, we argue that personalisation involves various forms of co-construction over *every* aspect of schooling, not just learning itself. Such forms of co-construction include:

• Co-construction between teachers and students
  – the most important

• Co-construction between students

• Co-construction between students and adults
  other than teachers

• Co-construction between teachers and adults
  other than teachers

• Co-construction between teachers.

And these apply in deep learning, deep experience, deep support and deep leadership.

(i) Deep learning

In the first, and probably the most important form of co-construction – between teachers and students – what we say about deep learning is compatible with constructivist approaches. But it goes beyond them. Take student voice. In some constructivist approaches student voice has a relatively low profile: the teacher needs to know little more than the prior knowledge and experience that the student

brings to the learning task and so adjusts the teaching accordingly. Other approaches emphasise the scaffolding talk between teacher and learner that is involved, but again the focus may be on the teacher's talk not that of the learner. In deep learning, students articulate their needs, problems and preferences in an invited conversation with the teacher; this arises only under conditions of trust between the parties.

The key worker in a school is the student. The only important product is his or her learning. All else is a matter of means… **Theodore Sizer,** *Horace's Compromise*, 1984

When assessment for learning is added to student voice in deep learning, learners play an active role in shaping how the teacher teaches as much as how they themselves learn. Pedagogy as well as learning is co-constructed. Co-construction is then extended further to assessment. This does not, of course, mean that somehow teachers abdicate responsibility for assessment. Rather, students begin to internalise the teacher's notion of a quality performance, or standard, and the criteria for assessing the extent to which that standard is reached in any particular performance. In so doing students may well play a role in influencing the nature of those criteria or how they are applied. Assessment for learning ensures that assessment influences, not just records, learning: at its best it also makes assessment an arena for co-construction.

In deep learning, co-construction focuses heavily on the talk that takes place between teacher and learner – their learning conversations. *Deep learning – 1* draws heavily on the work of Robin Alexander and his ideas on dialogic teaching, which itself builds on a rich tradition of research into classroom talk. Of the three gateways included in deep learning, it is student voice that is at its heart, since without student voice, there is a severe limit on the extent to which co-construction will flourish. Indeed, there are versions of both assessment for learning and learning to learn that underplay student voice, and in this respect they make less impact on deep learning than they could or should.

(ii) Deep experience

Personalisation demands a new, and more rigorous, emphasis on projects as the unit of learning rather than the ubiquitous short lesson. *Deep experience – 1* argues that if school is to offer learning experiences that are highly engaging to more students, then the students must play a role in co-constructing the curriculum.

We should expect students to learn more while being taught less. Their personal engagement with their own learning is crucial. **Theodore Sizer,** *Horace's Compromise*, 1984

This does not deny that schools should offer a pre-existing body of knowledge – subjects, disciplines – inherited from the past. It means that the way knowledge is acquired by students need not be a passive reception of material transmitted by the teacher, but can be an active response to problems and tasks that have been co-constructed between teacher and learner. Of course teachers will already possess much of the knowledge that the student will acquire through the project. But they will not have all of it, for the more open the project, the less there will be a simple answer to the underlying question or problem and the more there will be a possibility of relevant knowledge unfamiliar to the teachers being gathered by the students. Again, if students have access to adults other than teachers as part of the project's procedures, and the project's outcomes are presented to and evaluated by such adults, the whole learning experience becomes even more a product of co-construction.

In terms of learning theory, then, we see natural links between our approach and that of social scientists who focus on the learner as an apprentice, notably the work of Jean Lave & Etienne Wenger, and related work on cognitive apprenticeship in early childhood by Barbara Rogoff.

There are limits to the extent to which the curriculum can be co-constructed – pedagogy and assessment are relatively more open to this. But the new technologies, the second gateway included in deep experience, suffer from no such limits. Indeed, it is abundantly

clear that most young people are ahead of adults in their familiarity and ease with these technologies. Though not always acknowledged, this is a permanent state of affairs: we adult professionals will never catch up with the young who inhabit the digital world so comfortably. Yet in developing the new technologies in schools we have assumed that the IT industry and teachers will lead the way on how they should be applied to learning. ICT is the very arena where co-construction is richest in potential, but as yet we have lacked the vision to nourish it. A school culture of co-construction might change this.

(iii) Deep support

The only function of the teacher is to assist the student to learn. Theodore Sizer, *Horace's Compromise*, 1984

All our work on personalising learning points to the critical importance of mentoring and coaching to personalisation. The learning conversations described in *Deep learning – 1* take place not only between staff and students but also:

• Between students, and perhaps especially in academic peer tutoring and in mentoring between students of different ages in vertical pastoral system

• Between students and many different adults other than teachers who serve as the mentors and coaches.

Support for students through such learning conversations potentially provides a huge supplement to teacher–learner talk and so plays a pivotal role in personalising learning. One example is provided by schools that have replaced the traditional parents' evenings, at which teachers talk to (or even at) parents – or those who are willing to attend – but it remains unknown whether parents then talk to (or at) their offspring back home, about what and to what effect. Meetings at which teacher, parent and student talk together in a triad tend to be better attended and lead to a higher quality conversation about learning that all three parties co-construct. The introduction of a new range of adults other than teachers as mentors and coaches substantially changes the degree to which, and the ways in which,

learning can become more personalised. *Deep support – 1* explores how the co-construction of support depends on parents and carers in the home and community and on the variety of people and agencies involved in the *Every child matters* agenda.

All this generates a need for teachers and students, and also parents and other adults serving as mentors and coaches, to have ready access to high quality and up-to-date data on students' learning and achievement, with guidance on what to do next. This will demand a revolution for school IT systems that are about *storage*, management information systems, to ones that are about *retrieval*, student learning systems, so that on a 24/7 basis any of the relevant parties – students, staff, parents – can see where a student is at and what needs to be done next.

(iv) Deep leadership

Deep leadership deals with the ways in which leadership is conceptualised and implemented to ensure full personalisation. It draws heavily on notions of leadership that is shared or distributed among the various parties to personalisation. The notion of students as leaders is central to this. A school culture underpinned by co-construction promotes co-leadership. Distributed leadership is not delegated leadership: it is co-constructed leadership.

Students learn much from the way a school is run. Theodore Sizer, *Horace's Compromise*, 1984

Deep leadership is crucially about creating and sustaining co-construction in the school. Another way of expressing this is to say that deep leadership is about ensuring that the school is a community of learners working in partnership, both internally as well as externally with other organisations and people who share the commitment to learning. Deep leadership is more closely linked to concepts such as Etienne Wenger's 'communities of practice' than to some of the mainstream – and vast – literature on leadership.

Mentoring and coaching are the life-blood of learning and should characterise relationships between teachers, just as they do between adults and students and between learners.

Deep leadership requires school leaders with the commitment and confidence to be organisational re-designers. It is this theme that *Deep leadership – 1* addresses.

In summary, from the point of view of school leaders, it is best to invert the order in which the four deeps have been here presented. It is deep leadership that creates the culture of personalisation grounded in co-construction. In such a culture the leaders can undertake the redesign of schooling to establish and embed both the deep experience that engages students in learning and the deep support that underpins it. And the outcome is deep learning through personalisation.

FIGURE 7

Implementing the deeps
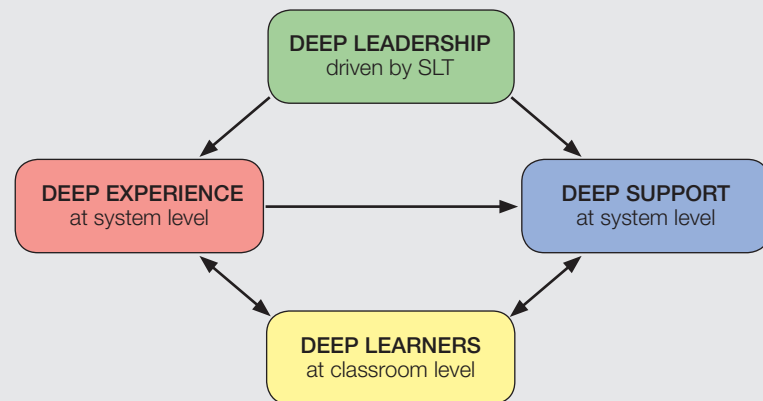
5 Person specifications of learner and educator

This all adds up, we believe, to a new shape for schooling. With luck, the school will look different, because the buildings will take new forms that are based on, and flow from, conceptions of deep learning, deep experience and deep support. More importantly, it will feel different to all who enter because the encounter between learner and learning space will have been transformed in fundamental ways. In the end, however, education is more about people than places, and we concluded the first phase of personalising learning with a conception of the learner and a conception of the educator that differs from our implicit images at the start of the professional journey.

As our thinking moved from the nine gateways to the four clusters, we realised that each 'deep' generates a description of the learner who would be the ideal outcome of personalisation, that is, in a school where personalising learning is embedded.

Deep learning is about how personalisation, through the gateways of student voice, assessment for learning and learning to learn, helps to develop *an articulate, autonomous but collaborative learner with high meta-cognitive control and the generic skills of learning.*

Deep experience provides the framework, including the curriculum, the new technologies and an approach to pedagogy, by means of which deep learning is *gained through engaging educational experiences with enriched opportunities and challenges.*

Deep support ensures the general well-being of the learner and to that end draws on various forms of advice and guidance as well as a culture of mentoring and coaching to ensure that the learner is *supported by various people, materials and ICT linked to general well-being but crucially focused on learning.*

Deep leadership refers to the leadership that is essential to the creation of deep learning through the associated deep experience and deep support, and this means that the school will be a place where *the culture and structures support continuous co-construction through shared leadership.*

In summary, the first phase of work on personalising learning has yielded a kind of person specification of the learner who flourishes when personalisation is well developed, collated through the four deeps as follows.

The learner when personalisation is well developed

An articulate, autonomous but collaborative learner, with high meta-cognitive control and the generic skills of learning, gained through engaging educational experiences with enriched opportunities and challenges, and supported by various people, materials and ICT linked to general well-being but crucially focused on learning, in schools whose culture and structures sustain the continuous co-construction of education through shared leadership.

Associated with this we tentatively formulate a related conception of the educator – a far wider concept than the qualified teacher or teaching assistant – as follows.

The educator when personalisation is well developed

A person who is passionate about learning, for self and for students, a skilled mentor and coach, committed to the co-construction of all aspects of schooling; who views students as partners in the creation of, and access to, data about their learning and achievement to assist in their progression; who is an expert in a relevant domain but who knows that forging the conditions of successful learning is not simply a matter of telling; who strives to engage students to generate the motivation that underpins true learning; who recognises that student needs are complex and variable and so personalisation entails drawing on a wide range of human and material resources to support learning; and who constantly relishes the changing responsibilities of a leader in education and of the need to redesign our educational institutions.

Taken together, these person specifications constitute a transformation of education and a transition from the 19th century model of schooling to one that is fit for purpose in the 21st century, with its need for a different kind of person, educated in a different kind of schooling, for a different kind of society.

Full personalisation demands, we believe, a new shape for schooling. This is not a blueprint, nor a single new model. The reshaping will take many different forms in different places to respond to the differing demands of people and contexts. We seek to reflect this diversified innovation in this second series of pamphlets.

6 An invitation

So a new shape for schooling is emerging from the grass roots. It is in part about a new design and organisation for schooling; in part about different kinds of buildings and learning spaces; in part about different conceptions of learning and teaching and so of learners and teachers.

We intend to work in the second phase of the work on personalising learning much as we did in the first, namely by staying very close to schools and their leaders. We take from the schools with which we work, reporting on them, showcasing what they do, and conceptualising the common features that innovative schools and teachers share. We seek to give something back by floating ideas, asking questions, and devising concepts and frameworks.

But there is a shortage of knowledge. Nobody has a comprehensive intelligence of what schools are doing as part of personalisation, and in this regard the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust is no different from any other body or agency. Some of what we report on we found as part of our work; some comes to light from those who participate in conferences; some derives from third parties who tell us that a school they know is doing something interesting. But far too few people tell us directly about what they are doing to personalise learning.

That we have come across so much work by chance convinces us there is much innovative work, in many more schools, than is known to us. So if the new series of pamphlets, and any events

and conferences associated with them, is to be in a position to showcase and make more widely known some of the innovative developments taking place as part of personalisation and the new shape for schooling, we need the leaders of those schools to contact us directly and tell us about what they are doing.

Is this an invitation you want to accept?

Contact: PLTeam@ssatrust.org.uk

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This pamphlet is the first in the second series of SSAT publications on Personalising Learning:

A new shape for schooling?

Deep learning – 1

Deep experience – 1

Deep support – 1

Deep leadership – 1

Deep experience – 2

This series develops the themes identified in the first series of SSAT pamphlets on personalising learning:

Personalising learning: next steps in working laterally

Personalising learning – 2: Student voice and assessment for learning

Personalising learning – 3: Learning to learn & the new technologies

Personalising learning – 4: Curriculum and advice & guidance

Personalising learning – 5: Mentoring & coaching and workforce development

Personalising learning – 6: The final gateway: school design and organisation

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