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ABSTRACT

This document presents findings from the fourth and final phase of a longitudinal study of teacher education. The report is based on data collected in 1991 and 1992 from interviews with 100 beginning teachers trained at the Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch Colleges of Education in New Zealand. The investigation focused on beginning teachers' experiences during their first year in the classroom; their perceptions of how they acquitted themselves as teachers, and their views on the effectiveness of teacher training. Following an introduction that deals with aims of the study, research objectives, and a summary of main findings based on data collected in 1991 and 1992, the report is organized into the following sections: methodology; graduates who did not get jobs; four-year students; beginning teachers; the first year of teaching; the value of the college program; the school and classroom experience; equity issues; the professional development of beginning teachers; and a discussion of issues that emerged. Approximately half the document consists of a series of beginning teacher profiles making extensive use of direct quotations. (LL)

WINDOWS ON TEACHER EDUCATION

Student progress
through Colleges of Education

Phase 4

The First Year in the Classroom

Margery Renwick
June Vize

New Zealand Council
for Educational Research
1993

New Zealand Council for Educational Research
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INTRODUCTION

This report presents findings from the fourth and final phase of a longitudinal study of teacher education and is based on three sets of data. First, 100 beginning teachers[1] who had trained at the Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch Colleges of Education and who gained teaching positions in 1992 (in the case of two-year trained students, 1991), were interviewed about their first year in the classroom. Second, those graduating students who did not gain teaching positions were surveyed by postal questionnaire. Third, those students from Christchurch and Wellington who were in our original cohort of students but undertook a four-year course of training[2] were surveyed about their final year in college.

As with our first three reports, we have had problems in knowing how best to write up material collected from beginning teachers, particularly as they trained in three

[1] We use the term 'beginning teacher' throughout this document because it is self explanatory. Prior to 1989 the term was officially applied to those teachers not yet certificated. With the introduction of compulsory teacher registration the term 'provisionally registered teacher' was used to denote a teacher embarking on their classroom career. However, with registration now being optional not all beginning teachers are provisionally registered.

[2] At the commencement of our study, students at Christchurch College of Education could enrol for a Bachelor of Education degree, and those at Wellington could enrol for a conjoint B.A./B.Sc. degree. At the satisfactory completion of four years' study students obtained both a Bachelor's degree and a Diploma in Teaching. A B.Ed. degree was introduced at Auckland in 1990 and all students in that year enrolled for a four-year course of training. In Wellington a B.Ed. was introduced in 1992 but not all students were required to enrol for a four-year course. A three-year Diploma of Teaching was still an alternative route to train for primary teaching.

different colleges. We were interested in links between the experiences beginning teachers had in their first year in the classroom with those they had had during their three years of training. However, our main focus was on the beginning teachers, rather than the institutions from which they had come. Many factors other than their college training influence the experience beginning teachers have in the classroom. Of particular importance is the school itself - its size and locality, as well as the level at which the beginning teacher is teaching, the length of time the beginning teacher has been in the classroom because not all were appointed to start at the beginning of the year, and the support they receive from other staff, particularly tutor teachers. Furthermore, although the beginning teachers trained in three institutions, they appear to reflect common views on a wide range of classroom practices. For these reasons, most of our data have been dealt with as a whole, although we have sometimes referred to the colleges, and have taken examples of beginning teachers' comments from the three institutions. It should also be noted that, as the highest proportion of beginning teachers trained in Auckland, their experiences in their first year, inasmuch as they do reflect their courses of training, most accurately reflect the views of those trained in Auckland. We are also aware that the college programmes referred to by beginning teachers in this report have since changed. Of particular importance is the move in all colleges towards a closer relationship with the university. A number of new courses have been introduced as part of the B.Ed. programmes. In Auckland, for example, there is a new course in professional practice, and another on assessment and evaluation linked with other curriculum areas.

This report is based on beginning teachers' accounts of their experiences during their first year as classroom teachers. We are concerned with beginning teachers' perceptions of how they have acquitted themselves as teachers. We have no measures of pupil progress or evidence of how others viewed them, particularly their colleagues and the parents of the children they taught. Nor did we observe the beginning teachers in the classroom, although we did sometimes conduct our interviews there, and when that happened we were almost invariably impressed with how 'alive' their classrooms appeared to be, in the best tradition of New Zealand primary school classrooms.

Our interviews of beginning teachers took place during the third term. Had we interviewed them earlier in the year, their perceptions would have been different. As one beginning teacher put it:

> I can see where I have changed from starting off to where I am now. I liken it to riding a bike. When you first start learning to ride all you are worried about is staying up and balancing. I'm just getting to the stage now where I can balance all right, and I'm starting to look at the road. Slowly my vision is starting to widen. (Christchurch)

The qualitative nature of our data makes it difficult to indicate precisely the proportion of beginning teachers experiencing particular problems or making critical comments. The majority of those interviewed had started teaching at the beginning of the year. The overwhelming impression we gained through our interviews was that by the third term most had come through the 'wobbly stage' and, with help and guidance from more experienced teachers, and constant practice, were generally riding along quite confidently.

Where possible we have indicated the proportion of beginning teachers who held particular views or had particular experiences, but this report is mainly a descriptive account of the first year in the classroom of one hundred beginning teachers, with some discussion of the issues raised. It documents the final phase of this research study but is not the final document. We intend to write one further report which will attempt to bring together the threads of the four reports which have been published during the study. The final report will also include some longitudinal analysis of the experience of the students who started their primary school training in February 1989, and entered the classroom in 1991 or 1992.

Profiles of Beginning Teachers and Quotations

When research data are analysed according to questions asked of respondents, it is easy to lose sight of the individuals who make up the study. We have included in this report a series of beginning teacher profiles in order to give a more rounded view of individual beginning teachers. For similar reasons we have made extensive use of direct quotations from beginning teachers. For the six profiles of beginning teachers, we selected from the three colleges in the study, although individual colleges are not identified. It was impossible adequately to cover the range of beginning teachers' experiences through the use of only six profiles. We have included male and female beginning teachers, five of whom took the three-year course of training and one the two-year course. The beginning teachers were teaching at various levels in a range of schools. These are the reactions of individuals and cannot be regarded as representative of the views and experiences of the whole group. The beginning teachers concerned were able to read and comment on the profiles based on their interviews and their responses to the questionnaire, and they are published with their consent.

Aims of the Study

The aims of the study are:

1. To record the progress of a sample of students through their training and out into the classroom.

2. To establish those factors which contribute to variations in students' progress through their course of training.

3. To isolate 'key events' in students' experiences which influence their later progress as students and teachers.

Research Objectives for Phase 4

The issues to be investigated are:

1. What are the perceptions of students of their first year of teaching (that is, graduate or two-year trainees in 1991 and three-year trainees in 1992)?

2. Now that they are in the classroom, how effective do beginning teachers regard their training to have been?

3. Were beginning teachers prepared for the particular age group they are teaching, and to handle all curriculum areas for this age group, including children with learning difficulties?

4. Do beginning teachers feel competent to assess children's work, and are they able to use these evaluations to improve their teaching programme?

5. In what ways do the beginning teachers consider they have developed as teachers since they have had responsibility for a class?

6. Where are beginning teachers getting their professional support, and what plans do they have for their own ongoing professional development?

7. What are the perceptions of their course of students who have completed the four-year training?

8. Do beginning teachers believe they have been prepared to handle the new curriculum initiatives, and how has this occurred?

Summary of Main Findings

These generalisations are based on data collected in 1991 and 1992 from interviews with 100 beginning teachers trained at the Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch Colleges of Education.

* Most beginning teachers felt they were ready for the responsibility of a class, are really enjoying their first year of teaching, and have become more confident as the year progressed. They frequently comment on how much they have learnt on the job.

* Most also find that it is a more complex and time-consuming job than they had expected, and that it tends to take over their lives.

* Beginning teachers varied in their reaction to their college training but most believed that the college courses, along with the associated teaching practice sections, had prepared them for most curriculum areas and for classroom planning and management.

* Most beginning teachers were happy with the practical help the college had given them in finding a job, in terms of preparation of CVs, and interview techniques. Many had used reports from associate teachers in their job applications, against college advice.

* Most beginning teachers are teaching in what they would describe as an effective school, usually because they consider that the school caters for children's needs.

* The majority of beginning teachers are teaching at their preferred age level, and feel that they have been well prepared in college for that level.

* Most beginning teachers favour an integrated approach to teaching, although not all have achieved as much integration of curriculum areas as they would wish.

* It is common for beginning teachers to find it difficult to deal with children with special learning needs but most have good support within the school.

* By the third term most beginning teachers feel they are able to assess children's work reasonably well, although for at least half this was not so at the beginning of the year.

* Most beginning teachers are using their assessments of children to evaluate their teaching programmes, either formally or informally.

* Of the three issues of equity which we discussed with them, teachers find the socioeconomic status of the children in the class of more importance than racism or sexism.

* Beginning teachers value their 0.2 release time, although not all of them have regularly had the full amount, nor has all the time been spent on their professional development.

* Most tutor teachers provide valuable professional and personal help to beginning teachers.

* Virtually all beginning teachers feel responsible for their own professional development, and the majority have attended several extra courses during their first year.

* Most beginning teachers feel they have exceeded their own expectations of themselves as beginning teachers.

* All bar one of the beginning teachers are provisionally registered with the Teacher Registration Board.

* At least a quarter of the three-year students in our cohort were still looking for full-time teaching jobs one year after graduation; the actual figure is almost certainly higher than this, but the difficulty of contacting students once they have left the colleges makes it impossible to obtain definite figures.

* Those without jobs felt they were as well qualified as those who had gained jobs. Most were committed to teaching and were employed in a teacher-related job.

METHODOLOGY

Tracking the Graduating Students

The cohort of students in our study was the first to graduate from colleges of education and not be placed in schools by the Department of Education. Graduating students applied for teaching vacancies as they were advertised. In some cases schools designated positions for beginning teachers, but in most cases graduating students had to compete with more experienced teachers. The original plan for our research project was to interview, as beginning teachers, all those students from within our total cohort who had been interviewed each year throughout their college course. We were able to do this for those who completed the two-year course of training in 1990 as all of the two-year students who were part of our interview sample obtained jobs for the start of the 1991 year, apart from two who decided not to apply for teaching jobs. Those in the classroom were interviewed in the third term of their first year (Auckland 5; Wellington 4; Christchurch 7).

For those students in our cohort who completed the three-year course of training at the end of 1991, full-time permanent teaching jobs were more difficult to find and many of the students who were part of our interview sample did not get jobs. In order to maintain a reasonable number of interviews, the advisory committee for the project decided that:

- *all* of the three-year students in our total cohort who obtained full-time teaching positions would be interviewed as beginning teachers, regardless of whether or not they had previously been in our interview sample, and

- an attempt would be made to follow up those graduates who did *not* have a full-time teaching position.

It proved difficult to keep in touch with our cohort of students once they left college. Graduating students were asked by the colleges to keep them informed if they obtained a teaching position, but students were not obliged to do so. The colleges passed on to us the names of students who obtained jobs where the colleges themselves had been kept informed. By August 1992, we knew that about 73 of the 289 graduating students had jobs. In order to be certain that we had the names of all of those with jobs, a letter was sent to the remaining students in our cohort. One hundred and sixty-six letters were sent (we did not have contact addresses for a number of students). Of these 166 graduates, 11 said they now had a teaching position and these were added to the list of those to be interviewed as beginning teachers; 124 did not have teaching positions; and 31 did not respond.

Data Collection

Graduates Who did *Not* Get Full-time Teaching Jobs

The 124 graduates who did not have a teaching position were sent a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to find out:

- how these teachers were currently employed
- what other employment they had had since leaving college
- how many teaching jobs they had applied for
- whether and how the college could have helped them secure a job
- whether they were prepared to move to other locations to secure a job
- whether they were prepared to teach at all levels of the primary school
- the reasons they thought they had not secured a job
- whether they intended to keep applying for teaching positions
- what they felt about their situation.

Table 1 indicates the number of returned questionnaires listed under the three colleges where the students had trained.

Table 1

College of Education Graduates Who Did Not Have Full-time Teaching Jobs

College	Number of questionnaires sent	Number of questionnaires returned
Auckland	79	54
Wellington	29	23
Christchurch	16	12
Total	124	89 (75%)

Beginning Teachers: The Interviews

One hundred beginning teachers were interviewed. The interview schedule was designed to collect information from beginning teachers about their overall impression of their first year in the classroom, and their perception of:

- their preparation for the classroom in retrospect
- the effectiveness of their school
- how well they were handling the primary school curriculum
- their competence to assess children
- their on-going professional development and where they get professional support
- the extent to which they have measured up to their own expectations
- their goals for their second year.

The 100 beginning teachers in the interview sample included all those graduating students from the three colleges in our cohort whom we knew to have jobs and was made up of 16 two-year trained and 84 three-year trained graduates. To be included in the interview sample, the beginning teachers had to be employed in full-time teaching

interview sample, the beginning teachers had to be employed in full-time teaching positions, although some positions were long-term relieving positions and not permanent jobs. (We later discovered in the course of our interviews that three teachers in our sample had less than full-time jobs.) The majority of those with teaching positions were employed in schools in the three main urban areas where they had trained, apart from a number of Auckland trainees who had jobs in Whangarei. Most interviews were conducted face-to-face. The few teachers who had jobs in less accessible areas were interviewed by telephone, as were one or two in urban areas for whom an interview at the specified time was inconvenient. A total of seven telephone interviews were completed. Table 2 gives numbers by college of those interviewed as beginning teachers.

Table 2

Number of Beginning Teachers Interviewed by College

College	1991 grads (N = 84)	1990 grads (N = 16)	Total (N = 100)
Auckland	49	5	54
Wellington	20	4	24
Christchurch	15	7	22

GRADUATES WHO DID NOT GET JOBS

Eighty-nine graduates who had not been appointed to full-time teaching positions returned a questionnaire. However, by the time they completed the questionnaire, only 69 did not have full-time permanent teaching jobs as 20 had now obtained teaching positions - some to start the following year in 1993. For the purpose of our analysis of data about unemployed graduates, we included the returns of those 20 who had recently won jobs with those who had not won teaching positions on the grounds that all of them had not had full-time teaching positions for at least two terms after completing training.

Three main factors caution against using the figure of 89 as an indication of unemployment rates for 1991 graduates:

1. What date should be used as a cut-off point? The employment of beginning teachers was very fluid; 20 graduate students secured jobs between returning our filter letter in August 1992 and completing the questionnaire, a month or so later.

2. Approximately 80 graduates were 'lost' because a current address was not known or they did not respond to the questionnaire.

3. The questionnaire was sent to three-year students, but 1991 graduates also included two- and four-year students, whose employment patterns may be different.

The fluidity of the employment situation also made it difficult to analyse and describe the occupations of those students who did not get teaching jobs. Many had moved from one

job to another or held more than one position at a time. The picture was further confused because we asked two questions about the employment patterns of graduates who had not won full-time teaching positions: what they were doing now; and what they had done during the year. As there was a good deal of overlap in the data we have concentrated on what graduates not employed as full-time teachers were doing at the time they completed the questionnaire.

Graduates' Current Employment

Although respondents did not have full-time teaching jobs, a high proportion of the 89 respondents were involved in teaching in some way. At the time they completed the questionnaire at least 52 (that is, 58%) were teaching in the school system, in early childhood, or doing a teacher-related job such as home tutoring. The ways those graduates who were teaching in the education system or were working in education-related occupations were involved is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Employment of Graduates in Teacher-related Jobs

Activity	Number of graduates (N = 52*)
Day relief	21
Full-time relieving	10
Part-time relieving	10
Long-term relieving	7
Early childhood centre employee	7
Teacher aide, full or part time	3
Teacher-related jobs, e.g., home tutor	5
Total	63

*A few graduates ticked more than one category

Graduates Not Employed in Teaching

Twenty-eight of the graduates who did not get classroom positions and were not employed in occupations related to teaching were employed in the following ways: clerical work (7); waitressing, cook or hotel receptionist (4); orchard, nursery, farmwork, labourer (3); sports and coaching occupations (3); shop assistant or manager (3); community work (2); and a range of other occupations such as homemaker, arts and crafts and cleaning (6). It should be noted that a few of those ex-students who were employed in non-teaching occupations were doing day relief teaching as well, and are also included in the numbers in Table 3.

Seven of the unemployed graduates were full-time university students (one of these was also doing some part-time relief teaching). These were all students who had trained in Auckland. In 1989, when they had enrolled for the three-year teaching diploma course, the four-year B.Ed. degree course was not an available option. However, they had

enrolled for courses of study at the university and in 1992 were full-time university students aiming to complete a degree. Eleven of the graduates who did not get a classroom position described themselves as unemployed, although even some of these had some occasional day relief teaching.

Applying for Teaching Positions

Over half of the graduates who had been unsuccessful in obtaining a full-time teaching position had applied for 20 or more teaching jobs. More than a quarter had applied for 50 or more teaching positions. The majority of these graduates (56%) felt that they had had sufficient guidance from the college in applying for jobs.

When asked to specify how the college could have helped them more, nine of the graduates, mostly from Auckland, felt that lecturers could not have done any more than they did. Some students (21) felt they would have benefited from more practical help in the preparation of CVs and interview techniques. Others (16) would have appreciated a more honest assessment of the job situation they faced, including suggestions for what other options were open to them, and how to cope with rejection. Very few felt that their course of training had let them down (seven). Three graduates suggested that the previous system whereby graduates were guaranteed jobs on leaving college should have been continued.

Mobility of College Graduates

Just over half of those who did not get jobs (51%) were not able or prepared to move to other locations. Where a reason was given, most were restricted to the area where they lived by family or other commitments, for example, spouse or partner's job, children's schooling, or house purchase. However, this is not significantly different from those graduates who had obtained full-time jobs, 55% of whom also said that they had been unwilling or unable to move to secure employment (*see also* p.33).

Level of School at Which Graduates Prepared To Teach

We wondered whether those graduates who did not get jobs were restricting their job search to particular age groups or areas of the school. About two-thirds of the graduates said they were prepared to teach at any level of the primary school. The majority of the remainder were prepared to teach *most* age groups but felt they lacked the experience, resources and skills to teach particular age groups. The most frequently mentioned was the new entrants - J2 level. A couple of graduates commented:

My training at college did not adequately provide me with the skills to teach NE - J2 mostly because of timetabling constraints. (Wellington)

I could offer more at middle and senior but would not rule out new entrant - J2 entirely. (Auckland)

Our data do not allow us to comment on whether the graduates' lack of confidence to teach juniors had any bearing on their lack of success in securing a job. Those graduates who have got jobs are employed across the whole primary school with just over a third teaching in the junior area (*see also* p.34).

Did Those Graduating Students Who Got Jobs Differ From Those Who Did Not?

We collected data on the gender, age, and ethnic background of graduating students who got full-time teaching positions and those who did not. We compared these characteristics for the two groups and found that there were no significant differences by gender or ethnicity in terms of their likelihood to get jobs. Age on entry to college, however, did seem to make a difference ($\chi^2=6.064$, $p<0.05$, $df=2$) as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

*Numbers of Students Who **Did** and **Did Not** Get Jobs by Age on Entry to College*

Age group	With a job (N=100)	Without a job (N=89)
Under 20 years	41 (48%)	44 (52%)
20-29	34 (69%)	15 (31%)
Over 30 years	24 (62%)	15 (38%)
Missing data*	1	15

* These are students who did not complete the original questionnaire on entry to college in which we asked demographic details including age. It is interesting to note, but not easily explained, that only one of the students who did get a job had *not* completed the questionnaire at the beginning of the study compared to 15 of those who had not obtained a full-time permanent position.

Those aged 20-29 had the greatest chance of being offered a job (70/30), followed by those over 30 (60/40). The least likely age group to be appointed to a full-time teaching position were the younger graduates who had been under 20 years of age on entry to college. Our data did not match the differences in employment chances of graduating students found in smaller studies undertaken in Auckland (Cameron and Grudnoff, 1990) or Wellington (Smith, 1992).

Graduates' Own Perceptions of Why They Were Unsuccessful in Obtaining a Job

The graduates themselves (53 out of the 64 who answered this question) were quite sure that the main reason they had not secured full-time permanent jobs was the limited number of jobs available. In addition, they felt at a disadvantage in having to compete with experienced teachers for these jobs. Thirty-one also felt that the fact that they were not known to the principals of the schools had been a factor in not getting a job. Relatively few of the unemployed graduate students felt that the graduates who had gained positions were better qualified than they were (four), or that their lack of specialist skills had contributed to their not being appointed to a position (nine).

At least half of the unemployed graduates responded with anger, frustration or concern at the teaching employment market. At least a third of the comments from graduates were directed towards the problems they felt existed with the policies of the current government in terms of training and providing jobs for newly trained teachers. Examples of their comments are:

> I am frustrated, disappointed and discouraged. The continual rejection has resulted in a loss of confidence. The only way to gain confidence is to get a job which exposes one to continual rejection - a difficult dilemma. (Auckland)

> It is difficult financially as my husband and I were both students last year and had to borrow money to attend our courses. Now it's not possible to pay parents back, thus rifts have been caused. It's pretty embarrassing and my self-esteem is very low and on the decline. (Auckland)

> Not printable ones!! I'm glad that I chose to do voluntary work - it gave me added confidence, more incentive to find a job so I could have my own class and an excellent reference. (Auckland)

> I think the recent Task Force scheme announced by the government really sucks. Schools are going to employ those who have been on the unemployment benefit for six months because of the subsidy provided, rather than those of us who have made an effort to get whatever work we can. (Wellington)

> I am disgusted that so many people are being trained as teachers when so few jobs are available. I am very bitter towards the Task Force Green, being ineligible because of my spouse's employment. It is totally unfair. Money would be better spent allowing older teachers who want to to retire. (Christchurch)

The responses of those graduates who did not obtain full-time teaching positions indicate that the majority are still committed to teaching as a career. Almost a year after leaving the colleges most have set out to maintain contact with schools and teaching through seeking day relief or short-term relieving positions. They have all applied for a significant number of teaching jobs and the majority intend to continue to do so. Those who do not have teaching or teaching-related jobs have not actively rejected teaching in favour of an alternative career; they have taken up other employment only because they could not find a teaching position. They feel strongly that their failure to obtain a teaching position is because of strong competition, often from experienced teachers, for few positions, and not because of any inadequacies in training or personal lack of teaching skills. Many of the graduates are angry and disillusioned by their situation but still intend to keep on applying for teaching jobs. This could reflect a number of factors.

- The success of the selection process in choosing applicants who are dedicated to teaching.

- The success of lecturers and associate teachers in capitalising on this initial enthusiasm and building a commitment to teaching.

- Graduates' determination not to waste their time and money spent training and to gain the reward of a job for their effort.

- Graduates' confidence in their ability to be good teachers, given the opportunity.

FOUR-YEAR STUDENTS

Introduction

A number of students from Christchurch and Wellington who had begun their training in 1989 followed a four-year course of training leading to either a B.Ed. or a conjoint B.A./B.Sc degree. (At the time of our study this was not the case with Auckland students; *see also* p.1). These students were asked to complete a questionnaire towards the end of their training, in the third term of 1992. The questionnaire was identical to the one completed by three-year trainees at the end of 1991, with the addition of a question on the fourth year of training. A total of 36 students, 23 from Christchurch and 13 from Wellington, returned the questionnaire, representing return rates of 87% and 50% respectively. As four-year students were in Christchurch and Wellington colleges only (N=36), we have compared their responses to those of the three-year students from Christchurch and Wellington colleges (N=93).

The data from the questionnaires completed by the three-year students at the end of 1991 formed a major part of our report of that year, *Windows On Teacher Education, Phase 3*. For the most part the responses of the four-year students were very much the same as those of the three-year students. In this report we have highlighted only those instances where the responses of one group are significantly different from the other. Areas where there were no significant differences included:

- courses students regret not having taken

- their opinions on whether optional courses should have been compulsory

- how often as students they had seen the various curriculum areas taught in schools
- how often as students they had observed or taught an integrated primary curriculum, and their confidence to run an integrated programme in their own classroom
- how confident they were at using computers to assist children's learning in the classroom
- the opportunity they had to learn Maori language whilst at college
- their confidence in justifying their classroom programme to parents
- their preparation to carry out various professional responsibilities
- how well prepared they felt they were to deal with the equity issues of sexism, racism and children from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds
- how confident they were at the end of the course about having their own class to teach
- the adequacy of their preparation for the classroom
- their feelings towards the workload asked of them each year they attended college, and towards the length of the college course
- the age group of children they would most like to teach
- their motivation to be a primary school teacher[3]
- their commitment to primary teaching as a career

[3] At the end of their training 80% of four-year students said they were either as motivated or more motivated to be primary teachers than when they began the course. This percentage is exactly the same as for three-year students. We regret an error in computer analysis which led us to report a percentage of only 60% for three-year students in our previous report (*see Windows on Teacher Education: Phase 3*, pp.5 and 149).

- what they hope to be doing in five years' time.

The questionnaire data have been analysed using SAS. Differences between the two years were tested for statistical significance using the chi-square test (χ^2). For all results $p < .05$, $df = 1$.

The Curriculum

Students were asked:

- which three curriculum areas they were *most* looking forward to teaching
- which three curriculum areas they were *least* looking forward to teaching

As with the three-year students, the four-year students were more likely to tick curriculum areas they were *most* looking forward to than those they were *least* looking forward to. However, a smaller proportion of four-year than three-year students ticked either category. Tables 5 and 6 compare the percentage of four- and three-year students who ticked the curriculum areas they were *most* and *least* looking forward to teaching.

Table 5

Student Attitudes Towards Various Curriculum Areas:
those they were most looking forward to at the end of their training:
a comparison of three-year and four-year students in Christchurch
and Wellington Colleges

Curriculum areas *most* looked forward to	Three-year students % of students (N=93)	Four-year students % of students (N=36)
Reading	69	36*
Physical education	51	39
Written language	44	19*
Art	39	36
Education outside the classroom	39	19*
Oral language	38	19*
Science	38	17*
Mathematics	34	33
Social studies	31	22
Music	30	28
Maori	25	22
Drama	24	17
Health	19	8
Computers in the classroom	15	8

*These subjects showed a statistical difference.

Table 6

Student Attitudes Towards Various Curriculum Areas: those they were least looking forward to at the end of their training: a comparison of three-year and four-year students in Christchurch and Wellington Colleges

Curriculum areas *least* looked forward to	Three-year students % of students (N=93)	Four-year students % of students (N=36)
Computers in the classroom	47	31
Maori	33	28
Music	29	36
Mathematics	24	3*
Drama	23	33
Health	18	14
Science	18	14
Social studies	15	11
Art	10	8
Education outside the classroom	4	8
Physical education	4	11
Reading	3	8
Written language	3	6
Oral language	2	0

*This subject showed a statistical difference.

Comments on Tables 5 and 6:

- Table 5 shows that the curriculum area ticked by *most* four-year students in 1992 as the one they were most looking forward to was physical education (39%), closely followed by reading (6%), art (36%), and mathematics (33%). By comparison, the curriculum areas ticked by *most* three-year students from Christchurch and Wellington in 1991 were reading, referred to by well over half of the students (69%), followed by physical education (51%), written language (44%), art and education outside the classroom (both at 39%) and so on.

- Reading ($\chi^2=11.538$), written language ($\chi^2=6.745$), education outside the classroom ($\chi^2=4.335$), science ($\chi^2=5.263$), and oral language ($\chi^2=3.911$) were

nominated by significantly smaller proportions of four-year students in 1992 as curriculum areas they were *most* looking forward to than had been the case with three-year students in 1991.

- In general a smaller proportion of four-year than three-year students ticked curriculum areas they were *least* looking forward to. Mathematics ($\chi^2=7.722$) is the only curriculum area for which a significantly smaller proportion of four-year students said they were *least* looking forward to teaching than had been the case for three-year students.

Comparisons with information collected from students on entry to college: Tables 7 and 8 indicate the curriculum areas which students *most* look forward to teaching on the one hand and *least* look forward to teaching on the other. They include data collected from students on entry to college and at the end of training. At the end of training, the percentage for both three-year and four-year students are given.

Table 7

Student Attitudes Towards Various Curriculum Areas: a comparison of those they were most looking forward to at the beginning and at the end of their training: 1991 and 1992 graduates from Christchurch and Wellington Colleges

Curriculum areas *most* looked forward to	On entry to college % (N=293)	At end of training % of students 3-year (N=93)	4-year (N=36)
Physical education	45	51	39
Reading	42	69	36
Social studies	36	31	22
Art	31	39	36
Written language	27	44	19
Drama	26	24	17
Maori	26	25	22
Music	24	30	28
Mathematics	22	34	33
Oral language	22	38	19
Science	20	38	17
Health	17	19	8
Computers in the classroom	14	15	8
Education outside the classroom	-	39	19

Table 8

Student Attitudes Towards Various Curriculum Areas: a comparison of those they were least looking forward to at the beginning and at the end of their training: 1991 and 1992 graduates from Christchurch and Wellington Colleges

Curriculum areas *least* looked forward to	On entry to college % (N=293)	At end of training % of students 3-year (N=93)	4-year (N=36)
Computers in the classroom	35	47	31
Mathematics	35	24	3
Science	26	18	14
Music	22	29	36
Drama	19	23	33
Maori	17	33	28
Art	13	10	8
Physical education	11	4	11
Health	10	18	14
Social studies	8	15	11
Written language	6	3	6
Oral language	5	2	0
Reading	4	3	8
Education outside the classroom	-	4	8

Comments on Tables 7 and 8

- The preferences shown in Tables 7 and 8 are group preferences. The overall figures may well mask individual changes in preferences. For example, even though individual students may have ticked physical education at the beginning of their course and not at the end, the proportions in each group ticking physical education remain approximately the same.

- The data included in these tables are relative data. For example, even those students who did not indicate that they were *most* looking forward to teaching a subject may in fact have been looking forward to doing so, but it was not one of their first three choices.

- When the preferences the three-year students gave at the end of the course are compared with their preferences on entry, the percentage of students saying they are looking forward to teaching each of the particular curriculum areas is higher for all subjects except social studies and drama. This is not the case for the four-year students. As Table 7 shows, the proportion of four-year students saying they are *most* looking forward to each of the curriculum areas has decreased at the end of their course, with the exception of mathematics, music and art.

- The pattern for the curriculum areas *least* looked forward to is less clear as shown in Table 8. When students' views at the start and at the end of the course are compared, the proportion of students *not* looking forward to teaching some subjects increased, while others decreased. The most marked change is in mathematics. On entering college more than a third of students (35%) said they were *least* looking forward to teaching the subject, but at the end of their training only 3% of the four-year students said this is the case.

While we can highlight differences in attitude towards the various curriculum areas between students who did a three-year course of training and those who completed four-years, we cannot from our data alone provide conclusive explanations. The slightly different rankings of curriculum areas that four-year students are *most* or *least* looking forward to teaching may be due to their having followed different courses with different lecturers from those who finished a year earlier, although this does not seem a completely convincing reason. After all, the three-year students also experienced a range of courses and lecturers throughout their time at college. We would need more detailed information about the actual courses, and lecturers involved in courses, taken by both groups of students to make valid comparisons. We did ask a further series of questions where, had the two groups of students differed in their experiences, these differences could have been linked to the differences in the attitudes of the two cohorts towards the various curriculum areas. However, with one exception, this did not appear to be the case. The questions asked were:

- how often as students they had seen the various curriculum areas taught in schools

- how often they themselves had actually taught the various curriculum areas

- their assessment of their own knowledge of the primary school curriculum areas

- the curriculum areas they have **not** seen taught in school

- their experience of an integrated curriculum.

The responses of the four-year students to any of these questions were not significantly different from those of the three-year students, with one exception. A higher proportion of four-year students than three-year students said that they were seldom given the opportunity to teach education outside the classroom whilst at college (61% of four-year students compared to 31% of three-year students (χ^2=9.725)). This may go some way to explaining why education outside the classroom was one of the curriculum areas ticked by a significantly smaller proportion of four-year students as an area *most* looked forward to, but does not explain why other curriculum areas were also ticked by significantly smaller proportions of four-year students.

Students' Preparation for Teaching in a Range of Organisational Settings or Types of Schools

We asked both groups of students how well prepared they were to teach in a range of organisational settings or types of schools. Students could say they were very well, adequately, or not very well prepared. The responses of the four-year students were very similar to those of the three-year students except that the four-year students were more likely to say that they were *not* well prepared to teach in the senior area of the primary school (22% compared to 9%, χ^2=4.431).

Assessing Children in the Classroom

The three-year and four-year students were also questioned about their ability to assess children's work in the classroom by indicating on a list of curriculum areas which three they felt *most* confident to assess and which three they felt *least* confident to assess. Tables 9 and 10 compare the responses of the two groups of students.

Table 9

Subjects Students Feel Most Confident To Assess

Subjects	Three-year students % of students (N = 93)	Four-year students % of students (N = 36)
Reading	83	67*
Mathematics	75	64
Written language	52	28*
Physical education	45	33
Science	28	22
Social studies	26	19
Oral language	25	19
Education outside the classroom	20	6*
Art	19	17
Music	18	14
Maori	16	17
Drama	14	8
Health	11	3
Computers	8	3

Table 10
Subjects Students Feel Least Confident To Assess

Subjects	Three-year students % of students (N = 93)	Four-year students % of students (N = 36)
Computers	40	36
Music	32	28
Drama	31	28
Maori	29	33
Art	22	33
Science	18	3*
Health	16	22
Social Studies	13	8
Oral language	11	8
Education outside the classroom	10	11
Physical education	9	25*
Reading	8	6
Mathematics	6	6
Written language	5	11

Comments on Tables 9 and 10:

- Table 9 shows that three curriculum areas were ticked by significantly fewer four-year than three-year students as being subjects they felt most confident to assess. These are education outside the classroom ($\chi^2=4.213$), reading ($\chi^2=3.973$), and written language ($\chi^2=5.958$). This is consistent with the smaller proportion of four-year students compared to three-year students, who were *most* looking forward to teaching these three curriculum areas at the end of their training.

- Physical education was the only curriculum area which was ticked by a significantly greater proportion of four-year students compared to three-year students, as a curriculum area they were least looking forward to assessing (25% compared to 9%, $\chi^2=6.099$).

- Science was the only curriculum area which was ticked by a significantly smaller proportion of four-year students compared to three-year students, as a curriculum

area they were least looking forward to assessing (18% compared to 3%, $\chi^2=5.194$).

The College Profiles

Four-year students were less likely to feel that their college profile was *not* an accurate reflection of their performance as a student than three-year students had been (8% compared to 27%, x2 = 5.254). On the other hand. they were less confident about its usefulness in helping them get a job (47% of four-year students were 'not sure' that their profile would help them get a job compared with 28% of three-year students, $\chi^2=4.335$).

Student Finances

Although interest in the financial situation of students did not form a large part of our study, the material we did collect suggests that the financial situation of students in our cohort worsened over the period of our study. Students have sought more assistance from banks through loans, and increasing numbers have had financial support from parents. The data from the four-year students show a continuation of these trends.

Four-year students were asked to indicate ways by which they had been able to manage their finances during their fourth year at college. Table 11 compares their responses with those of the three-year students.

Table 11

Student Finances

Source of financial support	Three-year students % of students (N = 93)	Four-year students % of students (N = 36)
Working part-time while at college	62	64
Working in holidays	60	69
Own savings	39	28
Support from parents	39	67
Bank loan	34	44
Borrowed money family/friends	21	28
Spouse/partner's income	13	6
Domestic purposes benefit	8	-

The table shows that in their last year of training 67% of four-year students had financial support from their parents, a significantly larger proportion than the 39% of three-year students ($\chi^2=7.524$).

Although approximately the same proportion of each group had jobs at the same time as studying, four-year students tended to finish their course with more debt than their three-year counterparts. Approximately half of the four-year students owed over $2,500, compared to half of the three-year students owing over $1,500 at the completion of their training.

THE BEGINNING TEACHERS

The Search for Jobs

Most students started applying for jobs in October of their graduating year, although a few had started as early as August or September. As would be expected, those graduates who obtained a job applied for fewer jobs than those who had *not* been successful. Thirty of the beginning teachers applied for five or fewer jobs; 50 applied for 10 or more jobs. (By comparison half of those *not* teaching applied for 20 or more jobs.)

The majority of beginning teachers (88%) are happy to be teaching in the locality they are in. More than half (55%) had not been prepared to seek teaching positions in other areas of New Zealand. This percentage was similar to those who did *not* have jobs and for the same reasons; family commitments such as their partner's job, children's schooling, a house and mortgage.

Contrary to the feelings expressed by those who did not have a job, a third of whom felt that not being known in the schools that were advertising jobs was a factor in their not having secured a position, those who did have jobs were not well known to the schools prior to winning a job. Only 17 teachers had had a section at the school where they were now teaching. However, it is also true that some of the beginning teachers were known for other reasons, for example, other family being on the staff, being an ex-pupil, or simply through living in the district. We have no evidence that any of these factors influenced their appointment. On the contrary one or two in their later interviews mentioned that they would have preferred not to teach in the same school as other family members, but limited teaching positions forced them into that situation.

The Schools and Localities

The majority of beginning teachers (76) are teaching in suburban schools. Few teach in small town, large town, or rural schools.

Over half the beginning teachers teach in what they consider to be lower middle-class (29%) or middle-class (26%) areas. A quarter of the teachers feel that their schools are in areas of mixed socioeconomic status. Relatively few teach in what they would class as affluent areas (11%). Fewer still teach in poorer, mainly working class areas (9%) or areas with high unemployment (7%). The socioeconomic status of families and the school district was referred to by a number of teachers during the interviews when they discussed equity issues (*see* p.126).

Beginning teachers were asked to describe the ethnic composition of the school. Most categorised their school as European/pakeha schools (44%), followed by mixed ethnic groups (36%); predominantly Maori/Pacific Island (16%); and mainly Pacific Island (4%).

In looking at the size of school to which beginning teachers in our cohort are appointed, it seems at first that they are teaching in relatively large schools by New Zealand standards and not in 'typical' New Zealand schools. There are about 2273 primary schools, including contributing primary and intermediate schools in New Zealand. Of these, 1584 (70%) have fewer than 10 teachers whereas half of our beginning teachers teach in schools with between 10 and 20 teachers. The smallest school in which anyone from our sample taught has four teachers.[4] However, this is not surprising when one considers that there are more teaching positions in schools with 10-20 staff than there are in schools with fewer than 10 teachers, even though these schools account for 70% of schools. Throughout New Zealand there are a total of 8222 jobs in schools with 10-20 teachers compared to 6726 in smaller schools. In Auckland, where the majority of the beginning teachers in our interview sample were trained, the figures are even more marked. Fifty percent of schools employ between 10 and 20 teachers, but these larger schools provide almost three-quarters of the jobs in Auckland.

Most beginning teachers are teaching in either contributing (42) or full primary schools (36), with 13 in intermediate schools, two in Form 1 to Form 7 schools, and two in secondary schools. The proportion of beginning teachers in our sample teaching in intermediate schools (14%) is higher than the national figure of 7%. However, there is a higher proportion of intermediates in Auckland than elsewhere (11%). Ten, or 17%, of our Auckland sample of beginning teachers are teaching in intermediates, as well as one

[4] Beginning teachers are not appointed to sole charge positions.

from Christchurch and three from Wellington.

The majority of beginning teachers (80) are teaching in single cell classrooms. Eighty-five described schools organised on a syndicate basis. Three-quarters of the beginning teachers were responsible for between 24 and 31 pupils, with most of those being at the top of that range, between 28 and 31.

The age groups taught by beginning teachers are shown in Table 12.

Table 12

Age Groups of Children Taught by Beginning Teachers

Age group	N (N = 100)
5 - 7 years	33
8 - 10 years	30
11+ years	13
Mixed age groupings	15
Missing data	9

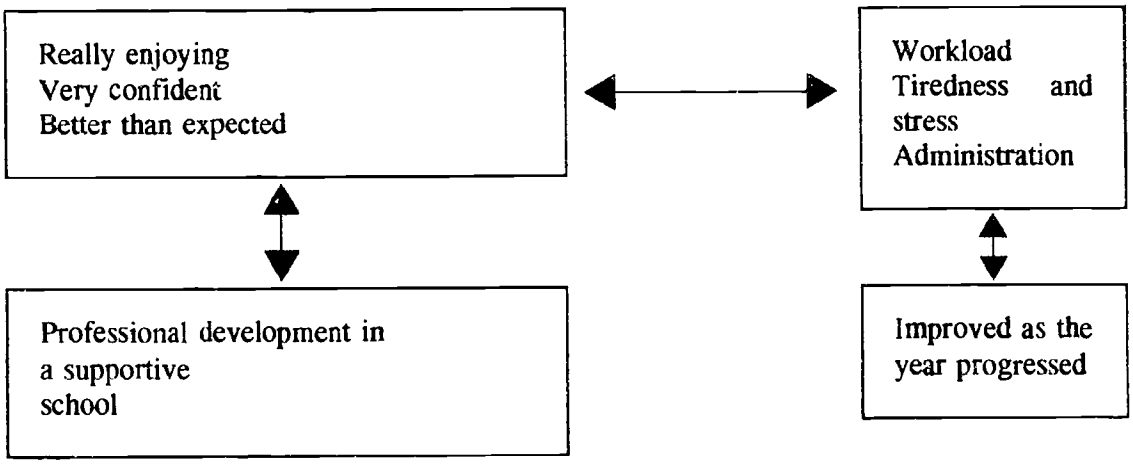
THE FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING

Beginning Teachers' Overall Impressions of Their First Year of Teaching

At the start of our beginning teachers' interviews we asked them to give an overall impression of how they were finding their first year of teaching. There were variations according to the college where the beginning teachers had trained, but the main issues raised were remarkably consistent across colleges.

The responses of the 100 beginning teachers as to how they felt, now that they were in the classroom, can be summarised as follows:

Beginning Teachers' Overall Impressions of Teaching



About three-quarters of the beginning teachers from each college said in their initial comment - often in the first sentence - how much they were enjoying the experience. It was 'going well', 'pretty fabulous really', 'heaps of fun', 'Really positive actually, really, really good', '... great, excellent: I love it'. A smaller number of these beginning teachers spoke of how confident they were and, despite the fact that others emphasised how stressful teaching was, they found they were coping better than they had expected.

Hard work and stress did, however, categorise the next important group of comments - sometimes made by the same beginning teachers. They were enjoying teaching, but it was 'full-on work'. They had thought they were prepared but the reality of the classroom was 'overwhelming'; it was the kind of job to which there was no end and they were often exhausted. For a small group of beginning teachers, usually in Auckland or Wellington, this was because of difficult children or problems within the school. More commonly it was the effort required to get a class up and running, and to maintain children's work programmes. Part of the pressure was from the amount of planning, organising, preparing and marking within the classroom - 'everything you do, you do for the first time'; part was from administrative paper work, which could be frustrating; and part was from the extracurricular activities commonly taken on by beginning teachers. A number of beginning teachers referred to the way their job had taken over their lives, although by the time they were interviewed many of them had taken some control over the amount of time they devoted to teaching. A common comment was that you could spend 24 hours a day on teaching and still do more but for your own well-being you had to set limits to allow time for family, friends, sport or other leisure time pursuits. However, it was also common for beginning teachers to say how much the situation had improved as the year progressed. At first they may have 'felt like fish drowning', but by the third term they were amazed at how much they had learnt and were now more confident and at ease. There were no examples of beginning teachers whose confidence had decreased.

A major contributing factor to their increased confidence was the support they had received from their tutor teacher, and other staff with whom they worked, perhaps as members of a syndicate or other teachers in an open-plan situation.

Other comments made by smaller numbers of beginning teachers about their overall reaction to their first year in the classroom were:

- How lucky they were with the class they had been appointed to teach - 'a neat bunch of kids!'

- The relief and excitement of actually being in a class after having applied for so many jobs.

- How much they had learnt because of the varied experiences they had had, perhaps initially as a relief teacher teaching at various levels, or because they were teaching in an area where they had not expected to teach.

- The irrelevance of some college courses, and lack of preparation for some specific tasks, particularly classroom administration.

- The difficulty of coping in a situation for which they were not specifically prepared, because of, for example, the age level of the class; the mixed ethnic composition of the class; the age range within a class, for example, whanau groupings; or the type of school, for example, an intermediate or secondary school.

Examples of beginning teachers' comments are:

> It keeps you busy. I don't have any free time. I have got a lot of extracurricular things which I didn't think I would be involved in so that takes up every lunch time and every night after school except one.... I was long-term relieving and so I got involved purposely so that they couldn't do without me the next year. And so I do as many things as possible, and I've since been told I've got another year next year. I really, really enjoy teaching. My third year at training college I thought it was just a waste of time, it nearly put me off coming out. But I think it's the best thing I did. I only aimed to come out for a couple of years and teach and then go on to something else maybe or go overseas, but I'm enjoying it so much I'll probably end up staying for a bit longer. I've got really supportive staff which really helps. My tutor teacher's amazing. All group syndicate members are just fantastic too. (Auckland)

> Really tough, especially at first. I think you have to give up a lot of your social life because of the amount of sleep you need to keep going so that you are still enthusiastic and energetic each Monday morning. Things like that I've found have been the biggest change from when you're at college where your hours are different. Now, being the third term, I feel a lot more confident and I'm more competent. I can see now that I definitely will make it in teaching. It's not something that's a struggle now, as I felt it was in the first two terms. The first term was just a shock to the system. The second term was a lot of hard work and realisation of what the job actually is. The third term is actually applying all those things that you've learnt in the first two and actually finding that it's not so bad after all. I'm starting to really enjoy it now. (Auckland)

Really positive actually. Really, really good. I've learnt heaps. I've been stimulated throughout the year. I've been exhausted, perhaps professionally as well as emotionally exhausted at the end of the day. I knew that it involved a lot of work but I didn't really expect to be working six days a week and up to ten hours or more a day - that's been the reality of it but that's the down side. Otherwise really good relationships with the kids and staff and I feel the reward of seeing kids' progress has been fantastic. It's been excellent. (Wellington)

The first term was the pits. I didn't know what I was doing... it was like walking around in the dark. Then halfway through the second term it started to fit into place and the children got used to me and I got used to them and this term's been wonderful ... I'll never forget the first day of having them all march into your class and sit on the mat and 30 little faces looking expectantly at you as though they were totally trusting, and thinking, 'My God, I don't know what I'm doing' ... and that fear that gripped in my throat as I look at them and thought, 'It must be better'. And it has got better and I know now that even though I was flailing about they were still learning.... (Wellington)

I feel really confident with my teaching this year. It's gone really well, probably better than I'd expected. I've coped surprisingly well. I've come across a number of things that I thought I'd never come across, even to children throwing up in the classroom and parents crying in the classroom with their children. I've had to deal with all those things and somehow you seem to manage to come through it. I'm really confident and am really enjoying it. (Christchurch)

Great. It's very busy compared to maybe other schools. I'm loving it. It's great to get in the classroom and actually do some practical work. I also enjoy the PE part, because that's my specialist part. I love it, no worries. (Christchurch)

Actually I'm finding it very good because I have marvellous support from my tutor teacher. All of my colleagues are very supportive, so the transition from college to school has been a lot easier than I thought because of the support. (Christchurch)

Things That Are Going Well

As one would expect there was overlap in the comments beginning teachers made about their overall impression of their first year in the classroom and the things they thought were going particularly well. About half a dozen teachers said they could not single out any particular things because they were equally pleased with all their classroom experiences - 'everything's fine'. Most comments fell into one or more of the following five categories:

1. Satisfaction with their classroom management and organisation and the overall running of the class programme including:

   - the atmosphere in the classroom
   - behaviour and discipline, usually because they felt they had started the year with clear guidelines and firm control, or their success in controlling the class had increased as the year progressed
   - establishing clear and effective classroom routines
   - increased confidence about ability to plan effectively
   - evaluating of children's work
   - coping with the age range or composition of the class
   - success in managing a difficult child or class.

   More than half of the beginning teachers made comments categorised in this way.

2. The children in the class including:

   - pleasure at working with children and the rapport between teacher and pupils
   - satisfaction in watching children's development and progress.

3. Excellent support within the school including:

   - excellent tutor teacher
   - 0.2 allocation (i.e., release time for the professional development of beginning teachers)
   - approachable principal
   - collegial attitude of other staff, particularly for those working with other teachers in a syndicate or in open plan situations
   - relationship with parents.

4. Increased confidence with increased knowledge and general professional and personal development.

5. Rather fewer than a quarter of the beginning teachers referred to satisfaction with the class programme in particular curriculum areas. Four subjects were mentioned

by beginning teachers across all colleges. The most frequently mentioned were reading and written language, followed by mathematics and physical education. All other curriculum areas were referred to, but usually by two or three beginning teachers only. One or two teachers also said how pleased they were with their use of a particular teaching method, for example, interactive teaching.

Examples of beginning teachers' comments are:

> My life for a start, everything, I don't know, the kids just seem to think I'm God, and things are really moving and everything is just going well. (Auckland)

> I'm most pleased with the fact that I've still got my class under control at this time of the year because it was a big thing - 'can I get my class under control?' That was one question I always had and they're all working really well together and I get on well with them. I'm pleased with the way that my general class programme is running. Things are running pretty smoothly and we have quite a bit of fun. Apparently I'm quite a firm teacher and I'm pleased at that. Not many people get away with anything in my room. I always thought that would be an area that I'd have problems, but I haven't. (Auckland)

> iscipline. That is the one thing that I found really hard from a South Auckland School. A lot of the discipline techniques they taught us at training college just went straight out the back door. They just did not work with children out here. They taught us to a certain extent but they forgot to teach us about the really hard problem, 'over the top' children - in South Auckland they have got a lot of them. So I had to go to teachers that are teaching here and get a iot of advice from them on how to start up discipline techniques. That was very hard, but I'm getting there. So I've finally got it under control now. (Auckland)

> I think it really pleases you when you see a child get something that you've been teaching and just smile about it and be happy the kid's happy and they know that you're happy with them. I really love that and I think, when you've spent your weekend tidying up your room, doing your art display, doing your planning and you come in the next week and the whole week just runs perfectly smooth because it's ready to go. The kids are just so much more motivated. There are no pauses or hesitations, so I love it. (Auckland)

> The thing I think I'm most pleased about is relationships in the classroom. The other teachers, relieving teachers, comment on the nice atmosphere in the class, the fact the children are really calm. They were quite a hyperactive bunch at the beginning of the year and they've got a lovely calm working atmosphere. And I'm working with each child in a way that I was hoping to be able to do... I've got some sort of bond with each one. The other thing I'm pleased about is the school music. I took that on as a sole responsibility and things are starting to take off now. I've got others to start using upbeat programmes and all the things that I

brought at the beginning of the year, they're being used. People are starting to get enthusiastic about music, about choir and so on since I've started. (Wellington)

In particular our language programme, everything's going really well. Children are really enjoying reading. And the standard of writing is vastly improved. We've got kids writing a page, who wouldn't even write a sentence at the beginning of the year, so we're very pleased with that. (Wellington)

Classroom management. I worked on that before I did anything else. Once I've got control then I can get on with the next thing. So I've done that first. It didn't take too long, but I came in half way through the year so I had to take over from another teacher, so that was quite hard accepting a new person - for the class, difficult for them and for me really. I've just concentrated on that and then maths because I was junior trained and this is a senior position; I hadn't done senior school so I hadn't done New Growth. Language and other things I could adapt pretty easily but I couldn't with the maths, I really had to learn that. (Wellington)

Maths. We stream for maths here. Maths was my weakest subject. I think I can remember in our first interview in '89 that that nearly made me leave teachers college. Well it's now become a strength and I actually teach remedial maths here. I've just had the maths advisers in and they thought I was doing an excellent job which was a real plus because sometimes when you teach the remedial kids you've got to hear that to know that you've actually made progress. But they couldn't understand how a beginning teacher was allowed to teach remedial maths. I was not aware of that but as maths became one of my majors at teachers college in the end it seemed the ideal opportunity to put it into practice. And we have a lot of fun in maths and I think that's what's given these children security to know it's OK to fail, but how can we fix it. And we do a lot of hands-on stuff. A lot of pushing tables down their throats but in fun ways and teacher reward systems and it's worked, so that's good. (Wellington)

I found the first term really hard going but I found that it's got easier and easier. I guess my confidence has increased as I've gone on and I've become more relaxed about what I'm doing, more relaxed with the kids, more sure about why I'm doing things in certain ways. I remember starting the year and really not thinking of what I was doing, spending a lot of the day just doing things and not really knowing why I was doing them in any particular way, you know. So I guess my ideas about it have just become clearer. (Christchurch)

At the moment I'm quite happy with it. The middle of this year I thought, 'My goodness, what on earth have I done?' And I couldn't blame it on my training, it was the fact that I had got a job in New Entrants/J1 and I would have preferred middle and upper school area. I found it rather difficult identifying all these needs these little ones have got, and they tend to be very dependent on you. But now I'm really enjoying and I feel that if you can teach at this level you can teach anywhere. Now I'm really pleased, I've had a lot of support from the staff, and I'm really pleased with the way it's gone. (Christchurch)

Things That Are Not Going So Well

About a quarter of the beginning teachers said there was nothing that was not going well, or nothing for which they could not get immediate help within the school, or that more experience would not solve. The comments of the remaining beginning teachers were often specific to a particular teacher or school, but they fell into four categories:

1. Planning and management, including time management, workload, administration and paperwork:

   - There is so much to fit into a school day. Work is never-ending - 'have to learn not to attempt to build Rome in a day'.

   - To really teach as you would like to, a lot of time has to be put into preparation, marking and record keeping out of school hours, including progress cards and report writing.

   - There is much more administration and paperwork related to both the classroom and the school as a whole than anticipated.

   - The time spent on extracurricular activities, even though satisfying.

   - Having to cope with changes in school organisation when you are still not settled in your class or school.

2. Concern with classroom programme in particular curriculum areas:

   The most frequently mentioned was mathematics, but mentioned by only about a dozen beginning teachers across the three colleges. This was for a variety of reasons and included minor criticisms of college courses; being unprepared for a particular class level; and lack of school resources. Most other subjects were mentioned but only by two or three beginning teachers in each case. One or two beginning teachers were unhappy with the amount of time they were able to give to non-core subjects.

3. Coping with individual differences including:
   - children from different ethnic backgrounds
   - gender differences
   - 'problem' children
   - children with disabilities.

4. Individual beginning teachers referred to pressure from parents; dislike of playground duty; evaluation; personality clashes with other staff; the 'ethos' of the school; not getting 0.2 allocation; being restricted by having to plan with other teachers; the need for a better relationship with parents; disappointment at not being able to be involved in special needs teaching because there were already teachers in the school covering this; and concern about a prospective visit from the Education Review Office.

Examples of the beginning teachers' comments are:

> No, there's nothing that I don't think is going so well, because when I've felt as if I needed support I just ask for it. I think you have to ask for it, otherwise you don't get it and if you offer to do too much then you're given too much to do. I've had a brilliant tutor teacher and I think that makes a difference. She's been really supportive and anything that I've needed I've just asked really. Everything's obviously not perfect because I'm just a beginning teacher but I'm finding that everything's developing well. (Auckland)

> Not really. I have had times in the year where I have got stuck on things and I've always gone to my tutor teacher for assistance and she's helped me out where she can.... teaching J2 J3 is the lowest level I've ever taught even through my years at college. I had a new entrants class but that was my very first section. I've found it really hard taking BSM[5] maths because I've never used it before. But I've gone on courses at the North Shore Teachers Centre to help me understand it a bit more but at the beginning of the year I was in a real fluster about BSM maths because it was so new to me, so that's probably one area that I wasn't too confident in. I'm feeling a bit more comfortable with it now. (Auckland)

> Admin to start with was really hard but now my tutor teacher gives me a whole block of preparation to start counting down to different things, so that's really good. Administration is really a piece of cake now. But I'm still finding it hard to get all my groups seen to in reading. We do a programme in reading where it's one hour, and you do buddy reading, shared book reading, and group work and I can only really see two groups a day. I'm not comfortable with that. I'm having

[5] Beginning school mathematics

problems finding out what the problem is with the child who's reading, and then writing it down, putting it into words and then into a group evaluation and then set them up for the next lot and how to teach that child at school. I'm learning still as I go along. It's really frustrating. And my maths, I've cut that down to one group a day. I can't seem to do two, I felt I wasn't doing justice. I just get frustrated with myself, not being able to teach the children ways to actually learn while I'm trying to teach them, do you know what I mean? It frustrates me. (Auckland)

I've just finished reports and I've realised that next year I'm going to have to do a lot more monitoring of the progress and results and maybe jot down things that happen rather than waiting till the report time and then having to think, 'Can they do that?' Next year I will begin a lot more monitoring - weekly. (Wellington)

I think, hopefully it's just a confidence thing. There's always worries, I find there's always something else, I think, 'Gosh I could do this a bit better'. I feel that I'm constantly critical about myself. But nothing that stands out definitely. I've got good staff relationships and everybody's really supportive. (Wellington)

I think time management is a big issue. I'm not happy with the amount of hours I put in. It's just very out of proportion. Some of the workload I question the relevance of possibly and that's a school thing. The school is a very hardworking school. (Wellington)

Classroom management - working in the different areas and adapting procedures for each area. I found it quite difficult at first changing from the different reading programmes, the senior reading to the junior and maths, new growth and BSM and things like that, simply because it was new but after a term I felt very fluent in both, so I don't think anything's been not so good. The workload was surprising, but I'd worked for several years before I went into teaching and I felt that I had really good organisational skills and that benefited me - I feel I'm very good at time management. If I hadn't had that experience, I think I would have found it quite a hard year. (Wellington)

Probably what I find most difficult is I've got a little mainstreamed boy and I find that difficult to try and keep him on task and give valuable teaching time to the other children. (Christchurch)

I don't think my maths programme is very good. Kids aren't really enjoying maths a great deal, or at least not as much as I'd like. What else. I guess things like my music and my PE has got really shunted to the end of the programme and I've done very little on either all year. Although music, we've actually got a school-wide interchange on music so in some ways it's not too much of a concern. The kids actually rotate around different class teachers and do things so they have actually all had music appreciation, and singing and rhythm work and those sort of things. But those two tend to get a bit lost really. (Christchurch)

I find time is never on your side. You always want a longer day but of course that's not possible. Probably the only time that I'd really like to put a lot more time into is theme time in the afternoon. We have it for three quarters of an hour and by the time you set up after afternoon play, there doesn't seem to be enough time to finish anything. We plan our themes as a syndicate which I don't feel gives me the scope to do a lot of things I want to do. (Christchurch)

I think the release programme we developed, my personal development as a first year, didn't go quite as well as I would hope but I didn't mention it. (Christchurch)

Well, I've had a constant battle this year with my reading programme. I've just never settled into the reading. I've had to completely alter my grouping and how I'm teaching it, about every six weeks and that's because I haven't found a programme that is working to my mind satisfactorily. (Christchurch)

THE VALUE OF THE COLLEGE PROGRAMME

Beginning Teachers' Retrospective View of Their Training

We asked the beginning teachers to think back to their time at college, now that they had been in the classroom for nearly a year. Had their views on the effectiveness of their training changed? In what ways did they now think they had been well prepared and in what ways had they not been well prepared? Some beginning teachers found these difficult questions to answer. College now seemed a long way away; they were so absorbed in their ever-present classroom experiences that it was hard to recall what they had thought about college while they were students, and the extent to which their views had changed. Nor was it always possible to say where they had learnt which teaching skill. The first year in the classroom had in itself been such a vital learning experience.

Beginning Teachers' Views on the Effectiveness of Their Training

Beginning teachers were divided as to whether or not their views of their training had changed now that they were in the classroom. A small number - ten in Auckland, six in Wellington, and three or four in Christchurch - acknowledged that they now thought the college course had been of more value than they had thought at the time - 'excellent in retrospect.' They now realised that what they had thought of as a waste of time - aspects of the programme as various as making resources, planning and management, report writing, and the value of child studies and knowledge of child development - were in fact valuable. In the words of two beginning teachers:

I think that in the past I've been a little bit over critical of some of the training I've received because it's not until I'm out here on the front line that I realise the amount of things that you have to learn and in a short period of time. I can see the other side of the coin now that I'm here. I think that the training college tried to do their best to prepare you in terms of courses and on reflection now I think that they can only do so much. I'm out here now and I've drawn on so much of it to help me through the day, to help me through the month, to help me through the year, that I can see that if you are going to set someone up for teacher training, you have to cover such a broad spectrum that you can't isolate things down so what they try and do is give you this whole view and then as you go out you can actually draw bits and pieces off. That's how I look at it now. (Wellington)

When I was at college I honestly thought that a lot of what we were doing was ... not a complete waste of time, but I thought that I wasn't actually learning a lot. But having been in the classroom now I think that if I'd gone straight from university into the classroom, there's a lot of skills that I have now that I didn't have then. So obviously you internalise something at college that you don't actually realise is happening until you get out there in the classroom. (Christchurch)

Another small group of students left college thinking they were well prepared, only to realise it 'was a different story in the classroom'. 'There is still heaps to learn', particularly about time-consuming administrative duties.

Yeah, (my views) have changed. I thought last year that I was quite prepared and thought I had everything - all my textbooks, all my notes, everything that I'd need and a lot of practical knowledge that I thought would be good. I did some relieving in the first term and I thought then this isn't what I thought it was going to be but I kept saying it's just because I'm relieving, it's not my own class. But now I can say that there are a lot of places that we haven't been covered for ... had to find my feet myself rather than look up some notes. (Christchurch)

When I was coming into my third year at college I felt I'm really prepared and I can go out there and into a classroom and I'll know exactly what I'm supposed to be doing. I was feeling quite confident. When I got into the classroom it was just a completely different story. I didn't know where to start. Even though they go through management and control techniques and all that sort of thing with you at college, talking about it is a lot easier than actually implementing those things in your classroom. So I found that really difficult at the beginning of the year. And knowing how to set up all of your programmes and getting them to run smoothly. Everyone kept saying, 'Well just focus on your maths programme and then focus on something else and something else'. But it's really hard when you've got all these things and you want to get them started and you know you've got limited time and everyone else seems to be under way and you're thinking, 'I still don't know what I'm doing'. So I actually felt unprepared. When I got into the classroom I wished I had more resources, things to call on, that sort of thing. (Auckland)

Others accepted that there was a limit to what the college could achieve. It was not until students had the full responsibility of their own class that they really knew what skills they needed and where the gaps were in that knowledge. For this reason time back at college *after* beginning teachers had been in the classroom for a while would be more useful than some of the preservice courses.

The most common complaint of those who said their views had changed (shared by those who said their views had been confirmed) was the lack of relevance for the classroom of some college courses - the gap between theory and practice, raised so frequently by students in the course of this study. As the comments beginning teachers made here are so similar to those they made when they referred to the ways they were *not* well prepared, they will be considered in more detail later in this section.

Those beginning teachers who said their views on the effectiveness of their training had not changed tended to do so for one of two reasons. Firstly, they had gone to college with a specific purpose in mind and they had achieved that purpose. It was over to the students to take out of the course what they needed. It was an effective preparation for teaching provided students had clear goals of their own. Secondly, a small minority said they had not thought the course effective while they were students and they still held to that view.

Ways Beginning Teachers Were Well Prepared

Listening to the beginning teachers, particularly in Auckland, one sometimes wondered if they had all attended the same institution, their comments could be so conflicting. One of the explanations is possibly the fact that students, particularly in their third year, had a good deal of choice in their course selection and were reacting to rather different programmes. As one Auckland beginning teacher said, she 'chose brilliant courses in the third year' which turned out to be very appropriate for the level she was now teaching. Even if students took the same course, variation in the approaches of individual lecturers no doubt contributed to differing views of the value of courses. Beginning teachers also commented on the problem they had had as students of focusing their efforts when they did not know which school and class they were preparing themselves for. Some, for example, felt well prepared for the junior or middle school but were teaching Forms 1 and 2, or vice versa.

The beginning teachers' comments about the ways they had been well prepared tended to fall into four categories (not always discrete): the primary school curriculum; various aspects of classroom planning, management, and control; teaching practice; and comments peculiar to individual beginning teachers. There were differences by college in

the proportion of beginning teachers' comments which fell into each of these categories, but the issues raised were similar. For example, the highest proportion of beginning teachers' comments from Wellington and Christchurch fell into the category of specific curriculum areas, compared with Auckland, where a higher proportion of beginning teachers commented on preparation for various aspects of classroom planning and management. However, not too much weight should be given to these apparent differences, some of which may simply reflect difficulties in assigning qualitative data to categories. Furthermore, beginning teachers who had already referred to aspects of their training earlier in the interview may not have repeated themselves here.

1. The primary school curriculum, including strategies for learning and teaching:

- About a dozen beginning teachers from Auckland and two or three from Wellington and Christchurch referred to having received good grounding across all curriculum areas - 'an overview of the primary syllabuses'.

- Where individual subjects were referred to it was usually because of the practical nature of the courses.

- The subjects most frequently referred to across the three colleges were reading (26); physical education (18); mathematics (21); and language (13). Reading was most likely to be referred to by Christchurch beginning teachers, about half of whom did so. This compares with about a quarter of the Auckland beginning teachers and only three in Wellington. A quarter of the Auckland beginning teachers also referred to physical education and mathematics. Only one beginning teacher from Christchurch referred to physical education and language.

- Other subjects referred to by college were Auckland: music 7, science 5, social studies 4, art 2, and health 1; Wellington: science 3, social studies and Maori each by 2 beginning teachers; Christchurch: art 1, health 1.

- A small group of beginning teachers, from Auckland in particular, made general comments about having been taught 'strategies for learning and teaching' or 'latest teaching methods'. As well as being handled in specific curriculum areas, these topics were covered in more general education courses. An equal number of Auckland beginning teachers referred to the

value of the resources they had made at college which were also made in courses for specific curriculum areas. In the third year, assignments tended to be in the form of resource books rather than essays. These could be modified for different groups of children.

2. Various aspects of planning, classroom management, and control, including:
   - setting objectives
   - how to plan units, including looking for resources
   - daily planning and evaluating
   - planning in terms of personal organisation
   - thinking through objectives
   - management techniques
   - classroom organisation and environment
   - behaviour management.

Beginning teachers were not asked where in the college programme these topics had been covered, but several Auckland beginning teachers referred to third-year education courses and a few from Wellington mentioned courses within the Professional Studies department.

3. Teaching practice:

   - the direct usefulness for the classroom, of ideas gained through teaching practice, against the background of college lectures
   - the period of full control
   - the fact that as students they had had a wide range of experience of different schools and levels through teaching practice was considered to be particularly helpful
   - lessons planned for teaching practice could sometimes be used in first-year classrooms.

4. Other ways individual or small groups of beginning teachers thought they had been well prepared were by:

   - being made aware of the hard work involved in classroom teaching, although one beginning teacher commented that having been led to expect the worst, the job was in fact easier than anticipated

- being assisted to develop an educational philosophy

- studying educational theory; it was always there for beginning teachers to draw on

- using educational media (Christchurch)

- observing children (Christchurch)

- developing skills necessary to relate to staff and parents

- the tutorial system, particularly where students had enjoyed the support of a tutor for three years (Auckland)

- the college course being a catalyst for students' confidence and energy to get out into schools and work with children using the skills and ideas they had developed at college. 'Prepared to have a really good go!'

Examples of beginning teachers' comments were:

> I feel quite positive about my three years of training college. I think I learned a lot. By and large I was very well prepared. Interestingly, looking back now, I tend to think of personalities of lecturers rather than the content. So perhaps quite a bit of it was how the lecturers and tutors were able to communicate that it was a worthwhile thing to be doing and their kind of personal approaches - their personal stamp rather than actual specific methods. (Auckland)

> I think I've been well prepared in terms of understanding the processes that schools run on and the kind of processes involved in teaching, in terms of planning, in relation to the curriculum requirements, delivering. We were offered lots of different approaches to teaching through different people. And again it was more the people - now I can think of the way that things were modelled to us rather than the models themselves. But we were presented with a range of different approaches and I felt well prepared in terms of understanding how a school works and understanding the whole system of getting what is in the curriculum into the kids. (Auckland)

> Mainly self discipline, deadlines, what to expect at school, and subject content. The best way I've been prepared is the latest teaching methods and up-to-date knowledge of the curriculum - progressive teaching methods. I didn't realise when I was at college, but now I do, how important it is to keep that professional development going and to be up-to-date with what's happening. I learnt a lot at

college, and with the support of my first tutor teacher, who had been a college lecturer, it has been excellent. I've heard a lot of students say it was too theoretical but I think that you have to use 'your up here' and see why they're doing it. I was really critical of college for a while. I think I said to you after my second year I could be out there now with a classroom, but now I don't think so. (Auckland)

We were very well prepared regarding planning in the education department which took place in the last six-month block at college. I found that regarding planning curriculum areas, knowledge of syllabuses, that kind of thing, I followed to the letter what I was shown at college and it was really well received by the principal and I found that it worked extremely well for me and I haven't had cause to change any of those procedures. I found that reading and maths were very good and very valuable - what we learnt at college - and the only thing that we needed was follow-up in the classroom, so we could see teachers modelling what we were shown in college, the theory, and then to actually see it happening in front of our own eyes to consolidate it. That was good. (Auckland)

I found that my third year was brilliant when we could choose our own courses. It was hard at the time because we didn't know what level you were going to get to specialise in that area, but I actually chose all the right courses. I must have had ESP or something. I did J3/standard 2 - that was the mathematics programme. That was brilliant, you know I couldn't have done without it. It's a good help for my level because it's a big jump from BSM to the middle school programme. That was excellent that course. It's really helped me and also I did extra reading courses and they were brilliant as well. I've used lots of their ideas and we did lots of resources and units for reading and that was really helpful. So my 3rd year for me because of the course I chose was brilliant, I've used them a lot. Still using them. (Auckland)

I think that at teachers college you're not really taught the reality of setting up a programme and assessing levels and implementing that programme. You do a lot of one-off lessons, like a three- or four-sequence lesson which is like micro-teaching. I really don't think that running a whole programme is really gone into enough. All the stuff like management and control and all that sort of thing, I suppose that also depends on who you are. I think college deals with that quite well, but I just don't think they cover actually setting up a programme; like, I don't even remember doing spelling at college. (Auckland)

It seems I'm hammering Professional Studies but reading recovery work was absolutely amazing, now that I've had this length of time in the classroom. The language work, the language development, the whole language programme was really good. My maths, which is my strong point now, was very good in helping me in the areas I'm teaching.... My involvement with Kapa Haka was a personal thing at college through taha Maori. It was important for my own support and now that's paying off here with my involvement in music. (Wellington)

I think that what we were fed in terms of up-to-date curriculum knowledge was very good. I was very familiar with whole language; new growth, although the initiatives came out this year. The two major curriculum areas were addressed well. Yes, in terms of the theory and up-to-date curriculum knowledge that was well covered especially in Maori studies probably, language, maths, PE. I don't think the music department did such a good job. Social studies was good; science was good; so from that point of view I think that it was good preparation. Art could have been better. (Wellington)

Management I was quite pleased with actually. The course I did on human relations and self-esteem in the classroom made me think hard about the tone I wanted and I went in from the word go with those expectations and that's paid off because people have commented on how well my kids work together right from the beginning and they are a really nice group of kids to work with, so that was good. I was well prepared that way, I think. I haven't had any major problems behaviour wise. (Wellington)

Planning. It was a focus. People have said about training college, 'Oh, it's a waste of time', but it's what you put into it and what you take from it. I know that a lot of people that I went to college with treated it as though it was secondary school and it was a big deal to wag and they felt as though they were getting something over on someone by not doing an assignment as well as they could. Because I spent time out in the workforce before I went there, I was clearly focused that I was training to be a teacher and even the dead boring, waste-of-time courses that I did take - I learnt from them as well. You can learn from anything if you really put into it. (Wellington)

I think that the whole teaching experience is excellent. My most valuable experience was the sole-charge major responsibility. I taught for the full six weeks and found it hard, found it a struggle, found it exhausting but really rewarding and it prepared me for the realities of teaching. As well as that the section before, which I did in new entrants, was excellent and I had an associate who basically said to me, 'Right, what do you want from the section?' I ended up doing about three weeks' sole charge and that was the first time I really felt as if I'd done any major teaching. I think for me I would have liked it if I had actually been involved in more teaching right from the start. A lot of things just drift past you if you're just observing. (Wellington)

The three years' training I had was excellent. It prepared me and I got a lot out of it, because I was more mature and knew why I was there .... Especially when you are talking to teachers who have been here for quite a while and you've got more up-to-date outlook on teaching approaches and the way children learn. I don't at all feel as though I should have done anything different when I left. (Christchurch)

Well I found most of value probably the reading courses I had done. They were very specific. They had resources that are in use in schools. We went on practical lesson teaching. We watched people doing lessons. We didn't do a

written essay or anything like that. It was very practical, hands on. We did the planning for something that we were actually going to do and we carried it through. (Christchurch)

Maths and reading I feel were covered very well. It's probably one of the reasons why I actually felt reasonably organised planning and teaching it. (Christchurch)

Planning, I think they actually over prepare you to plan. I mean, I plan a unit of work but we were always told to plan for every single maths lesson ... but I suppose by making us over plan then we do plan something rather than the other way round. (Christchurch)

Ways Beginning Teachers Were *Not* Well Prepared

A few beginning teachers from all colleges had no comments to make because they thought they had been well prepared, or at least to the extent possible prior to having a class of their own, including one Maori beginning teacher from Auckland who described the whole training as 'Pakeha with a Maori overcoat'. Another Auckland beginning teacher commented, 'Everything was well prepared except for how to teach on the run'. The comments of the other beginning teachers were wide ranging. The four most significant groups of comments were:

1. Administration, assessment, and record keeping, including:

   - All the paperwork demanded of classroom teachers.
   - Assessment and evaluation: how to regularly assess and evaluate 30 children, rather than just small groups. The topic was handled in the third year but there should have been a greater focus on assessment earlier in the course.
   - How much time to put into evaluation - how much the teacher should do, and how much the children should do.
   - Running records, including analysis of what they mean.
   - How to translate pupil evaluations and running records into reports for parents, particularly negative comments.

- Roll books, progress cards, and yellow cards.

- How a school runs - what goes on behind the scenes.

2. Course not sufficiently practical. The comments made here were largely by Auckland and Wellington beginning teachers. At this point in the interview, Christchurch beginning teachers did not voice similar concerns.

   - Not a high enough proportion of time spent in schools.

   - Too theoretical: practical implications of educational theorists not dealt with, for example, Piaget.

   - Coping with a whole class is very different from handling small groups and individual children.

   - The knowledge of most practical use for the classroom is gained on teaching practice sections. Students should spend more time in schools.

   - The period of full control was helpful but too much was left until too late in the course, which meant that the tutor teacher now had to help with much that should have been covered at college.

   - Even when lecturers do present practical ideas, these may not be applicable to the class and school to which a beginning teacher is appointed.

   - Students tend to be prepared for ideal situations rather than the reality of the classroom. The assumption at college seems to be that all children want to learn all things; and teachers only have to do one thing at a time.

   - The value of learning on the job has been brought home to beginning teachers because of the amount they have learnt since they have had their own class, particularly through the support of tutor teachers and other staff.

   - The theories and teaching goals advocated at college may be fine, but beginning teachers may not be able to put them into practice because they are not supported by school practice.

- Being in a school, beginning teachers are able to focus directly on the needs of a particular class within the framework of school policy - much less abstract than at college.

- More teaching experience in schools with coverage of all class levels, preferably in each year of the course. (This could mean school-based rather than class-based teaching practice sections.)

- Clear links between college courses and teaching practice so that students have relevant practical experience in schools to demonstrate and practise topics covered in college courses at the time of each course, not six months later.

- All courses should assist students to translate theory into practice. The theory may be excellent, but what does it mean in terms of classroom practice?

- Courses should be more realistic in terms of what students can achieve in real life classroom situations, particularly in the first year when so much energy goes into setting up a classroom and keeping it running.

- Students need to realise that when they have daily responsibility for a class the one-off, original, carefully planned lessons are not possible.

- More courses on classroom management and administration, including time management in the classroom and handling of registers.

- More emphasis on the skills of teaching rather than students' broad education, particularly for mature students.

- How to deal with 'difficult' children - not just reasons for why they may be difficult; and child abuse.

3. Classroom management and teaching skills, including:

- How to get started in the classroom: how to establish classroom groupings and work with, and cater for, all groups in all curriculum areas (more

learnt from tutor teacher and on section than at college).

- Time management: how to fit everything in.
- How to 'do everything in a classroom at once'. The college only prepared students to do one thing at a time.
- How to set up and maintain a total classroom programme, as compared with individual lessons.
- How to cope with a wide range of abilities.
- The progression of children.
- Long-term planning.
- Behavioural management, especially for very difficult children.

4. Inadequate preparation in particular curriculum areas, although the number of beginning teachers from each college referring to specific subjects was rarely more than five and usually one or two. Subjects referred to by college were: Auckland: Maori, mathematics, social studies, art, science, language, and reading; Wellington: mathematics, science, reading, language, music; Christchurch: Maori, science, social studies, reading, written language, health.

In Auckland, if beginning teachers had not majored in a subject they tended to be critical of the relatively short time (usually 50 hours) devoted to the subject, for example, mathematics and social studies, or of the view that they had not been prepared for all levels, for example, reading.

Individual or small groups of beginning teachers referred to:

- The need for the college to prepare students for the volume of classroom work. In Wellington it was suggested that this would be assisted by ensuring that students were fully occupied with demanding work while they were at college. Students need to be trained to work hard. From a student perspective, more courses and visits to schools could have been fitted into

the college day.

- The lack of knowledge of resources used in schools, for example, Burt spelling test and PRETOS.

- The amount of time spent making resources which cannot be used in the school because they do not fit the school programme.

- Children with special needs, including children for whom English is a second language.

- The fact that they were not prepared equally well for all age groups.

- The better preparation at university in terms of child psychology and child development.

- Dealing with parents, particularly demanding parents.

- Handwriting on the blackboard.

- The teacher's role as 'social worker': more knowledge of the extent of their responsibility for children in terms of broader social concerns, including hunger and lack of clothes.

- Staff conflict.

- Network of support persons available for teachers, for example, NZEI.

- Lecturers being out of touch with recent changes in schools.

- The 'politics' of education, including boards of trustees.

Examples of beginning teachers' comments are:

> For the unexpected things that happen in the classroom and having flexibility in changing things if it doesn't go well the first time. When you're at college, you just expect that everything is going to work out the way you plan it the first time

round, whereas there are experiences where I've tried things and they just have totally not worked and I've had to redo it. College doesn't really prepare you for those times, for unexpected situations. (Auckland)

There wasn't enough emphasis on thinking off the top of your head. There was too much emphasis on the thing being all set up and neat and tidy, the situation as you would hope it would always be. (Auckland)

Can't think of anything. Mustn't be that important. (Auckland)

I wasn't prepared for the amount of energy it takes up, well - I realised that it would be a lot but you are feeling so tired all the time and the hours that it takes to get things organised. You just don't realise how hard it is. In my class I've got kids that can't read or write at all and people that are well up, fourth form level work, and it's just so hard to get them all going in the same direction at the same time. (Auckland)

Writing on the blackboard. It sounds ridiculous, but it's not something a lot of people can just walk in and do, especially handwriting, in the lower school. They should provide blackboards all over the place for practising and get somebody in to teach us. There's people of my age - the handwriting system's changed so much since we were at school that you actually need to be taught to do it again. (Wellington)

I think I'm not too well prepared on the amount of work that you have to do. I mean, it's just bulk work. It's just constant work. I've never worked so hard in all my life, and if I'd known that teachers have done so much work in the past I may have thought twice about coming into this profession ... I mean I work every night. There is so much preparation. I know they try at Teachers College but you don't really know until you're in the thick of it, how much work teachers actually do. (Wellington)

Probably maths - especially at junior level. BSM was looked at college as being, 'Well you've got the book, it's got lesson plans in it, you just go through the book'. In reality that's not how it should happen, as I've learnt.... it's really quite a hard resource to manage and keep up. They didn't really put much stress on maths at all unless you wanted to take it as a minor or major. (Wellington)

Teachers College is fantastic with its social studies courses and multiculturalism and biculturalism. That's great. They let you know about the different cultures and their expectations and everything. But they don't in the least help you with managing discipline related to that because that's the problem that we're faced with here, with some of the teachers walking into this class. They don't take their shoes off. The kids see it as an invasion of rights to their culture. Teachers just see it as a ploy and there's a big mix-up and there's bad words and tempers flying. So I think that the college has got to broaden its views and do something about it. (Wellington)

... I wasn't prepared enough for classroom management skills. Now I come to the school with five children, I'm an older person, but even so there are situations in the classroom that happen and it goes from a smart Alec remark or to physical violence against another student. How to deal with that, how to cope with it? I reread ... my notes from Professional Studies and we spent an hour and a half with this vital information. Well, to me it wasn't important at the time to say, 'Hey, we need this,' because I'd been in schools that had good strategies, positive learning modes and practice, but I've come to this school where I've had children in my class pick another child up and throw them across the room. What do I do? I'm a beginning teacher, what strategies? I've had to formulate those strategies myself. (Wellington)

I think it would be good now if they picked up assertive discipline at training college. We've just had the training and started it here and most of the other schools are doing it - so it would be a bonus for third-year students to be coming out already with the training of assertive discipline so that the schools don't have to worry about training them in the system. (Wellington)

Just the sheer weight of the administrative type of things you actually have to do in your classroom programme that we were never really confronted with. And trying to get a balanced timetable. (Christchurch)

I think we weren't well prepared for extremely difficult children. Whether or not the college assume you will have a handpicked class, which is certainly not what happens in a smaller school. (Christchurch)

Dealing with parents. I found that although I knew we would have to deal with parents, I expected that, it was just when I have parents twice my age cry on my shoulder and things like that and I had no help or anything to do relating to them, that's a bit hard. (Christchurch)

Guidance for Students Applying for Jobs

We were interested in whether or not beginning teachers believed the college had given them sufficient guidance as students in applying for jobs, and whether or not they had found their college profiles helpful. We also wondered what use, if any, students had made of associate teachers' section reports. There were differences by college in the emphasis beginning teachers placed on their various comments but the issues raised were similar across colleges.

- A few beginning teachers did not think the question applied to them, either because they had completed their course at a different time of the year from other students; had been in the fortunate position of being offered jobs in schools where they have

been on section; or were mature students with earlier experience of applying for jobs.

- Most other beginning teachers, virtually all from Auckland, and all but five in Christchurch, were impressed with the help they had received from the college both in their search for jobs and in applying for them. They had been given ideas on how to set out CVs and what information to include; how to address job and person specifications; and what to do, and not to do, in interviews. In Auckland, beginning teachers from the previous year had been brought back into college to talk about the process of job hunting.

  The reservations of Wellington beginning teachers were usually attributed to differences between lecturers and the variation in the amount of assistance received, depending on which Professional Studies group students were in. Individual lecturers were particularly helpful but a co-ordinated, college programme for assisting students would have been appreciated, with more detailed information about preparing of CVs, filling out application forms, and how to present oneself at an interview in an increasingly competitive job market. The college is not sufficiently active in 'marketing' its own students.

  Several beginning teachers from Christchurch also commented that the help students received depended upon the tutor they had and that some tutors were better than others. But given that only five beginning teachers were critical of the help they had been given, it is likely that those tutors perceived to be less helpful, although talked about, were actually few in number. A few Christchurch beginning teachers were also critical of what they perceived to be conflicting advice given by tutors, particularly in terms of what should or should not be included in CVs.

- Those who felt their college had not given them sufficient help, thought they had not been given a sufficiently realistic picture of how difficult it was going to be to get a job, or too little information was given too late.

- Most beginning teachers had made use of their college profiles but not all were sure how helpful they were.

Those who thought the profiles were probably helpful did so because:

- The profile was accurate because the tutor who wrote it knew the student well.

- The profile enabled students to get another view of their strengths and weaknesses which they could use in job applications.

- Students were quite happy to use the profile as a basis for their CVs.

The minority of beginning teachers who had reservations about their profiles did so because:

- Tutors writing the profiles did not know the student well enough, perhaps because students had had several changes of tutor whilst at college.

- The profiles were too general and did not differentiate between students, and employers would find it difficult to distinguish one student from another. (A minority Wellington view was that profiles were more individualised than they used to be.)

- Profiles were all so positive principals would be suspicious and try to 'read between the lines'.

- The grading system was confusing, with some courses being the pass/fail system and others graded. (Christchurch)

- College profiles were probably not as helpful as referees' reports and principals' personal networks.

Several beginning teachers commented that it was not college policy for students applying for jobs to use associate teachers' reports or the report from their final sole-charge teaching practice; however, rather more than half used one or other or both. Whether or not they used associate reports, associates were often asked by students to write references or act as referees. A number of beginning teachers said the information included in associate teachers' reports was what schools wanted and that they, as students, had regarded them as particularly useful. A few beginning teachers claimed that principals were 'suspicious' if associates' reports were not included with job applications.

Examples of beginning teachers' comments:

> Yes, I used my sole-charge assessment. We had lots of controversy with teachers college as to what we should put in our CV and what should be left out. But I thought, I'm the person applying for the job and I have to show I'm the best person so I put my report in. (Wellington)

> Yes, I think the college was very good providing help applying for jobs. I was on section in Nelson when the first round of jobs came out and I had the information sent to the principal of the school I was at and I could apply from there. In Professional Studies you got quite a build up, how to apply, what you've got in your CV, what sort of information you send in. That was good. (Christchurch)

> No. That was a pain - I actually feel they hid an awful lot from us about the amount of jobs out there. They kept saying, 'No, there's plenty out there, you know, you'll be fine,' and all this sort of stuff. My tutor was excellent, she was very down to earth. She said, 'Listen, you've got to apply for as much as you can around New Zealand, because there just aren't the opportunities and the jobs out there that we had hoped for'. I feel that at the end of the year we need to get more on interviewing techniques, preparing yourself for interviews, CVs, what to write in your job, how to complete job descriptions, all those sort of things that you're sending out to employers. I didn't feel I was very well prepared at all, in that respect. (Christchurch)

Ten of the Christchurch beginning teachers thought their profiles had been helpful. In the main they thought the profiles represented an honest appraisal of what they had achieved at college and that their tutors had gone out of their way to produce something that both tutor and student were happy with. One student felt that the profile also had value as a confidence booster. Typical comments were:

> Yes. I had a good profile. To me it would have to be helpful. The only problem I have with the college set up is that they're not prepared to do verbal verifications ... Now having been an employer at different times - sometimes you get a reference that looked really great - but we also do verbal checks on them, ring up their previous employer and say, 'Did you really mean all of this that you've written?' The college has a policy not to do that. (Auckland)

> For me, I don't really know. They were all quite similar. It's hard when you are writing hundreds of different ones. My principal didn't even really look at mine. She took the face value and what I said at the interview more than what was written in my CV. That is the more important thing. (Auckland)

> Mine described me to a T. Mine was actually, very, very good. Others said that they didn't know who they were talking about. Some people said, 'This isn't me', or, 'They've either got a totally wrong impression of me'. But mine was perfect. (Auckland)

They were good because we wrote them ourselves and then the tutors just added their bit, and any lecturers that you wanted put down their bit and it all came out pretty even, what we wanted. (Auckland)

The profiles were really good. I got a shock when I read it because it's like you can see yourself in it but to have someone else, the way they put it and actually things you wouldn't say about yourself, it was really nice. Gave you confidence. The merit passes and all that kind of thing, that was good but most schools didn't even look at it. They were really more interested in my practical experience on section. (Auckland)

Well, there's some kind of policy. I think they could have written a little bit more but I think there's a policy where they can only do so much. But they were helpful. It would be unfair to say they weren't helpful. But I think that ... you know you put so much time in there and it's quite a personal place, and after that amount of time to be told at the end that they can't give you a personal reference is disappointing. (Wellington)

I thought it was quite bland. It provided an overall view of what you've done in three years but it wasn't specific enough to my liking. I would have preferred to take along my teaching practice reports. (Wellington)

I felt it was very flowery. I was disgusted. If I knew what I know now I would not have put an effort into some of my courses. Whether you got an outstanding report or cruised through and just did the basics, some people didn't even do the basics and they still got a satisfactory report because they couldn't afford to fail them. So no matter how hard you worked, their report virtually said the same thing. I think it was most unfair, so that's another thing, I cheated on the system. You weren't allowed to use your teaching practice reports. You were told you weren't allowed to use any of your actual personal reports. I have intended to use teaching practice reports if I get that far into an interview. (Wellington)

As far as applying for jobs? - I did. I liked the idea of the profile because I thought it was honest and the people who had worked hard had it written down that they had, and I thought that was good. (Christchurch)

It was nice, it was a nice thing to get it and if it's positive it's always nice. But I don't really think it was helpful. (Christchurch)

Use of Resources

College lecturers were interested to know whether or not beginning teachers had made much use of classroom resources they had made while at college. (This question was not asked in Christchurch.)

The beginning teachers varied in the amount of resources they made or collected whilst at college. Some spent a lot of time and effort to gather as many resources as possible, covering a wide range of ages and abilities. Others were more selective, either because they collected or produced resources for a preferred age range, or they were conscious of the fact that they could be appointed to a job teaching any age range and therefore felt that it was inefficient to collect resources when they might not be of use. Expense was one reason given by students who had not made many resources while at college.

A few teachers claimed to have used all of their resources; conversely a few claimed to have used none. The majority of beginning teachers, however, had used the resources they had collected at college depending upon the relevance of the resources to:

- the age of the children they are teaching
- the curriculum
- the way units are planned in the school
- the availability of alternative resources within the school.

In Auckland, the resources that beginning teachers mentioned as being most useful were poem cards, and maths games, followed by science, physical education, music, reading, language, art, health, computers and social studies.

In Wellington, if students had made use of the resources they had made in college, these were most likely to be resources for mathematics, Maori language or poetry cards, followed by physical education, science and reading.

Examples of beginning teachers' comments are:

> I have, I did the musical instrument course and we made our own instruments and I've got them all in the classroom. I use them all the time. It's especially good for us, because we haven't got a lot of resources, being a small school, so that was a good help. And also Unit plans that I did and what not. I also made a lot of things at college that I don't think I'll ever use. But then it's hard as well, because of the levels that you're catering for. (Auckland)

> Yes I've used a lot of my PE resources and units that I made. Also science, not so much maths. Maths I've sort of got into once I've been teaching. I did two maths papers at college but I didn't really take in what resources I could use when I was at college. I've used a lot of art ideas too. (Auckland)

> You just don't have time sometimes to make up resources so I wish I'd made a lot more over the three years than leaving it till now. I've used all of them. All the

poem cards that I made. I had a lot of music resources. Some of them I haven't but most of them I've used. If I haven't used them it's because the topic hasn't been covered this year, like my science ones. We've collected a lot on the beach, and off the shore and we haven't done that yet but we are going to be doing it in two weeks so we will be using them then. Some levels have been inappropriate but that's mainly in maths. (Auckland)

Yes, I have. I didn't make any resources when I was at college. I couldn't afford to. The first year I was beside myself with depression because you go into every class and the lecturer would say, 'This is a great book, get this book', or 'This resource is great to have', and you think, 'Oh my God! I can't afford all these and I want them because I want to be the best teacher I can be' and all that sort of stuff. Then a friend of mine who's been teaching for about 20 years, said, 'Look don't get this stuff because you don't know what and where you're going to be teaching' ... I've found that my general resources have been useful, but the more specialist ones that I made say for juniors or whatever, haven't really been. (Wellington)

I have. They've probably been more help than I realise. I have made use of some of the written notes and things like that, but because in some areas you get such a lot, like Professional Studies there's so many different alleyways and you've got so many notes. I don't have time to read through them all to find out what would be useful for me, so I think one thing which I would've liked to have organised better, would be some sort of filing system to organise my notes through those three years, so when I came into here my first term wasn't spent reflecting back on training college and notes and trying to plan my own things - I'd have liked an idea as to how to file things. (Wellington)

Depends what curriculum area - maths yes, language yes, not really the Maori studies things. I haven't used some of the units I wrote. I think anything that I did before my third year I would take with a grain of salt. I haven't referred to my notes once since I've left, except language - PS300 - that is a course that I've used and my language studies but other than that, no. (Wellington)

Yes, heaps more PE and language things than anything else, mainly because our school is not well equipped. Well, it's not badly equipped but we haven't got the money and the resources to spend so basically the teachers have their own or buy their own. So I've used mine heaps. (Wellington)

Yes, definitely. I found it hard at college to make resources because the resources I did make were standard 3 and 4 and now I'm down in the junior area, so they're sitting at home at the moment doing nothing, and yet I would have loved to have more resources down at the junior area. Now that I'm out teaching I spend two hours some days after school making a resource for something. You wish all that spare time you had at training college you had done that sort of thing, but it's very hard to know what area to make them for. (Wellington)

> Yes, I have. My maths resources have been wonderful. I probably overdid it a little bit at college. You get very excited and it's quite hard when you're not in a classroom to be selective, but overall I've used the things that I've made. My Maori studies resources have been really useful. I've used those in the classroom now and the children just love them. My science, I've used cards and activity cards and plans ... sometimes we've had a plan that I've been able to go back to and take part of from what we did as assignments.... Poetry cards I've got sitting around in the classroom at the moment. We had to do six. Cards which I laminated, they're out again. (Wellington)

Beginning Teachers' Readiness for Responsibility of Own Class

We asked the beginning teachers if, at the beginning of the year, they thought they had been ready for the responsibility of their own class. With a few exceptions, most thought they had been. A few beginning teachers admitted to some initial self-doubt but on reflection felt that they had coped well in making the transition from college to classroom. Where they were specific in their comments, their doubts related to aspects of planning, administration, and classroom organisation, none of which turned out to be insurmountable problems. Some beginning teachers expressed the view that whilst their first experience of their own class was like 'being thrown in at the deep end', there was little alternative to getting started in the classroom; all of them felt they had quickly become proficient 'swimmers'. Those who felt confident from the beginning felt the preparation from college, combined with their personal preparation for their particular job, had made them confident of a good start. A smaller number said they had felt 'more than ready', and could have started teaching earlier in that year. They mentioned losing their enthusiasm for college, becoming bored during the third year, and generally feeling that they would rather have been in a classroom than at college.

The few who felt they had not been ready for the responsibility of their own class were unsure only because they had had very little time between actually getting a job and starting in the classroom, or they were teaching an age level for which they felt unprepared. A few felt that they had run out of ideas after only two weeks, and remembered being daunted by the thought of having to keep going for the whole year. Examples of the range of students comments are:

> In myself I was but you still have the doubts. You know you're thinking 'Oh I hope I'm doing it all right', and I did have that worry. I was very careful in my first couple of weeks, but now I'm much more confident. (Auckland)

> Yes, I couldn't have gone on much longer at college. I was mentally prepared over the holiday time to get into it; I think I was ready then. After your last

section you always really want to get into it. (Auckland)

I was real nervous, when I first got my classes and wondered, 'Could I really do it?' That's just a matter of getting confidence I've learned to introduce one thing at a time and just keep on bowling what you've got, so you're not doing everything at once. (Auckland)

I think so, because I worked my guts out in the third year. I got stuck into preparing myself with the resources, games, practical books that showed you how to do things. No, I got stuck in, I think that I was prepared. (Auckland)

I think I was, yes. Depends on what you call ready I suppose. I was nervous, extremely nervous and worried about what would go wrong and everything else. But I think on reflection now looking back to the beginning of the year, I think I coped pretty well, so obviously I was ready for it. (Auckland)

Yes, I'd had enough. I had to get out there and put it into practice. (Wellington)

Yes, I was ready. I'd had enough of college. I wanted to get out there and put these theories into practice. I think I would have been a lot better off if I'd had more time getting my hands dirty, as it were, at the chalk face. I was ready, but confused. (Wellington)

Yes, yes I was. I was ready for the responsibility. I don't think I was as equipped as I could have been but there's only a certain amount they can do, until you get the chance to try this - no this doesn't work - and slowly your own philosophy evolves and your own method and teaching style. I think they could have gone further but I don't think that they can go the whole hog, so I think I was ready for the responsibility - yes. (Wellington)

When I look at it now probably not, but you've just got to get in there and do the best you can I suppose. I had a lot of trouble at the start of the year just trying to get control of these kids and figuring out how programmes went, and planning and assessing and all those types of things, running records.... I had done a few at college but really not done enough. (Wellington)

Looking back now I thought I was but perhaps I wasn't. I feel my ideas and various skills have matured over this year even just doing what I have been doing. Especially as a relieving teacher because your behavioural management has to be fairly sharp to relieve. I think that has tightened up a bit. (Christchurch)

Oh yes, I was really pleased to get on and learn in a practical situation and find out for myself and learn from other teachers, instead of just talking about it. (Christchurch)

Yes, I had the enthusiasm and get up and go to make it work, but I certainly didn't know all there is to know. I've learnt a lot this year. (Christchurch)

I probably would have floundered a bit if my tutor teacher hadn't been so supportive and ready to help me. After the holidays and everything you tend to think, oh whoops I've forgotten everything, but then it comes back very quickly. (Christchurch)

No, no I still don't think I am. No, not at all. It's a daunting prospect! (Christchurch)

I didn't. I sort of wondered about myself. I still consider myself quite young and not having children myself I felt, 'Oh gosh, these parents are going to let me have 23 kids to look after from 9 - 3.' I wondered what they were thinking more than myself. But after the first week you lost that feeling and thought, 'Oh yes, this is OK, I can do this'. (Christchurch)

PROFILE OF BEGINNING TEACHER 1

Jill took the two-year graduate course of training. She felt she had sufficient guidance from her tutor at college about applying for jobs, and the college profile, which was honest and straightforward, was helpful. After applying for 14 jobs, Jill is now teaching in the junior school, 24 new entrants to J1, in a semi-rural school with nine staff. Jill was not prepared to move to other districts to look for a teaching position. The school is 20 minutes' drive from her home which she initially thought was too far to travel each day but soon accepted the distance. Jill enjoys teaching - perhaps even more than she thought she would. She is really happy to be in the school where she is teaching and does not have 'any major problems' - in fact she cannot think of anything that is not going well. She is particularly pleased with her classroom management and her relationship with other staff. Jill regards the school where she is teaching as an effective school. It is in a small community where the school is an important focal point. Communication amongst staff and between staff and parents is good. The school reflects the views of parents and there is a lot of community involvement.

Jill sometimes thinks back to her training and the gaps she believes there were in the programme. She does not think students were given enough experience in certain things that are very important to the school, for example, evaluation, keeping report and progress cards, report writing, and parent interviews. As she said, 'in your first year, you're thrown straight into that. You've got to know how to be able to write progress reports, how to communicate with parents, and how to tell them something they may not want to hear'. There was a lot of 'theorising' at college about educational matters, including educational psychology, but not enough practical help with, for example, how to deal with disruptive children, or what to do from day one in a class music or reading programme - factual, step-by-step progressions. In Jill's case, there were one or two aspects of the college training which did not fit in with school policy. For example, students were taught process writing as the preferred approach for written language but this is not favoured at her school and she had to 'scrap everything and go back to square one'. She thinks the college should be more aware of the various approaches currently used by schools and prepare students for more than one method. Despite these reservations about her training, Jill thought she was ready for the responsibility of a class. This was partly because of what she had learnt at college, but the fact that she was a mature student with a family of her own was also important.

Jill hoped to teach in the junior school but she does not think she was specifically prepared for new entrants. She realises that it would have been difficult for lecturers to

prepare all students for all levels, but new entrants are a rather special group of children. 'It's quite a different ball game from J1 or J2.' The move for children from playcentre or kindergarten to school requires a big adjustment, and teachers have to be aware of the recent early childhood experiences of this age-group. Jill still feels she is 'learning her way' with new entrants. She feels that it is a pity that students cannot elect to concentrate on a particular area of the school when they are at college. She took middle-school courses because of the tight job market as well as the basics for junior classes in maths, reading, and classroom management.

Jill is confident in most areas of the curriculum and feels her classroom programmes are running really well. She would have liked more guidance from the college about young children's oral language skills and how these can be improved. She has not done much music or drama in the classroom. This is partly because she is not musical herself, but she also feels that the music course at college assumed that students had a basic musical knowledge, and those who did not floundered. She does not feel she left college with anything very useful in music apart from knowing the names of the music advisers whom she could contact if she wished to. At the junior level it is reasonably easy to do a little singing and dancing so she does not feel threatened; if she was teaching older children she thinks she would need to know more about teaching children how to read music. Jill is particularly pleased with the way her reading, art, physical education and Maori language are going. She is also quite excited by her social studies, science and health programmes, although she thought the preparation for science teaching at the college was poor. She plans topics for these subjects co-operatively with the three other junior class teachers. A new topic is planned every four weeks. Jill is also well prepared to handle computers in the classroom.

There are one or two children in the class with learning difficulties. One has hearing problems which have led to delayed speech and this affects his reading and written language skills. Jill did take a course at college designed for children with learning difficulties so she feels she can cope, although it is difficult with a full class of children to find the time to work individually with one child. The school is fortunate to have extra assistance to help with such children, and Jill is grateful for the extra help.

Jill feels she is able to assess children's work reasonably well. The school has just completed a series of parent interviews with which she had no problems. She feels there is a big emphasis now on reporting to parents so that it is important for teachers to have their testing and records up to date but she thinks that this is quite straightforward, particularly at the junior level. She is confident about identifying children who have learning difficulties, and is constantly using her evaluations to improve her teaching programme.

Equity issues are not of particular concern at this school. The school is largely Pakeha with about 5% of Maori. Jill has seen no evidence of racism amongst pupils or staff. The school is in a reasonably low socioeconomic area but there are no visible problems of children not being adequately fed, for example. One or two families always have trouble finding money for trips but there is a school fund to cover this situation, and it is not a school-wide problem. Senior school teachers sometimes complain that parents do not seem to understand the importance of following up work at home, but this is not an issue at the new entrant level, although Jill does feel a number of parents appear to lack what she would consider to be adequate parenting skills. Jill does not feel sexism is an issue at the school and she herself tries hard not to separate boys from girls in any of the class activities, although she does notice boys tend to play rougher games outside.

Jill feels responsible for her own teacher development and is quite confident about planning her own self-learning. She says it is easy in the first year to be bogged down with the things that you need to keep up with within the classroom - planning and preparation - so that it is hard to find the time to do extra things in terms of staff development. There are only so many hours in the day, particularly if you have your own family commitments as well.

One of the things Jill has learnt this year is to slow down and not to try and pack too much into a day. She finds she cannot achieve as much as she thought she would when she started the year; it is not because of any lack of enthusiasm on her part, but merely a more realistic attitude to what can be achieved. Apart from anything else, new entrants are tired by 2 o'clock, so that it is difficult to fit in more than the basics of reading, written and oral language, and mathematics. There is no point in feeling guilty if you do not achieve more than this. It is more important that children do the basic things and go home feeling happy.

Jill has been struck by the fact that there are enormous differences in what individual children can achieve in their first year. A teacher may have expectations that every child will learn the alphabet, for example, by the time they are six, but some children will not. No matter how hard you work with them, they just do not seem to have those retention skills. For some children it is really hard to learn basic skills, like the sounds letters make, and yet others will fly ahead. On the other hand, you can set up reading groups and think that they will stay that way for a while but they are likely to change every week.

Discipline has not been a problem for Jill, although there are two or three children in the class who are quite disruptive. She does not let them get the better of her, largely because she is older with children of her own and has learnt to use 'a certain voice', to be firm and to take no nonsense.

Jill was lucky to have a fairly comprehensive induction to the school because her tutor teacher had just taken a course in being a tutor teacher, and one of the aims of the course was to write an induction programme for the school. It included such things as knowing what the school rules are; where various resources were kept; school procedures; and staff with various responsibilities. The problem is taking it all in at the beginning of the year, which is why the tutor teacher is such an important person to be able to go to for guidance throughout the year. Jill has not had to go to her tutor teacher with 'any huge problems' but she has been available to answer queries about planning and other classroom matters. Jill appreciates the friendly, casual relationship. The tutor teacher has not observed a lesson, and does not 'check up ' on her. Jill appreciates the fact that she has been regarded as a teacher from day one. All staff have been very supportive.

Jill appreciates the 0.2 release time when her tutor teacher comes in and takes her classroom for half or three-quarters of a day. She has occasionally used the time to visit other schools to get more ideas, but usually uses the time for testing children. In some ways she thinks it is a pity that the release time is not available in the second, rather than the first year; for example, teachers are so busy in their first year trying to get established in their classroom and getting all their programmes up and running, that it is hard to find the time to go and observe other teachers. Every time release time comes around it is such a good opportunity to get some one-to-one time with a child that Jill has rather let slip the opportunity to visit other schools.

All staff at the school are encouraged to go on courses. At the moment the focus for staff development is computers and all staff have been on a computer course. A number of staff have also been on a course called 'brain gym', a workshop designed to get children to use their whole brain. There is good financial support for courses. Teachers usually pay two-thirds of the cost and the school one-third.

She has not had much contact with the college since she left although now that she knows what the classroom is really like she would love to go back and do a few specified courses. She has some contact with other beginning teachers but not as much as she had expected when she left college. Her tutor group decided to try and keep together but they have 'scattered to the four winds' and are so busy that it is hard to keep in touch although they have had a couple of social get-togethers.

Jill is already a graduate and has not done any further university work. She does not feel her university studies have had any direct influence on her classroom teaching. Of more importance is her experience as a parent, although perhaps some of the skills she has used as a parent were learned indirectly from university courses. She finds it hard to fit in any extra professional reading. She usually does a couple of hours school work after school and quite often a bit more planning in the evening. She has had

no contact with the NZEI. She has met the school board of trustees on a casual basis but has not been to any meetings.

Jill realises that there are gaps in her performance as a teacher but she also thinks she has a realistic appreciation of what can be achieved in the first year and that she has measured up to her expectations. It is important to keep school in perspective. There are other commitments that are important, and a life outside school.

She does not really feel there are any constraints against her becoming a more effective teacher that time and experience will not achieve. The 20-minute drive to school reduces the time before school which she would otherwise put into the classroom; if she lived closer she would also be able to pop in, outside school hours. She does have a fear that, with a falling school roll, one or two jobs may go, but otherwise is happy to stay on at the school.

Jill believes all teachers should be registered and intends to apply for registration herself.

PROFILE OF BEGINNING TEACHER 2

Brent is teaching a class of 29 standard 4 children in a suburban, contributing school with a staff of 17. He applied for eight jobs and was prepared to teach anywhere in New Zealand - 'home' was going to be where he got a job. Brent included his college profile, which he considered to be accurate, with his job application, but he considers the major factor in his getting the job was a reference from an associate teacher with whom he had had two sections. The principal rang her and had a long discussion about how he had performed in the classroom. Brent, who had not visited the school as a student, describes it as being in an affluent area, with a mixed European/Pakeha and Asian roll.

At the beginning of the year Brent felt ready for the responsibility of his own class. The key to a successful start was the time he spent planning and being sure that everything was well organised. Planning for a whole year, compared with being on section for just four weeks, was a challenge. He is enjoying teaching and feels his classroom programme is going well. He's particularly pleased with the classroom atmosphere. The children know what they are supposed to be doing, work well together, and continue to work well even if he is out of the room. He acknowledges that being the only male teacher helps - at the beginning of the year there were 90 children who all wanted to be in the male teacher's room. His biggest problem is time management. At the beginning of the year, a year seemed a long time, but the year has flown by and it's difficult to give each curriculum area appropriate amounts of time.

Brent maintains, as he did when he was at college, that the most effective part of his training was being on section, and still feels that the three years could have been condensed into two, with the third year being used as a time to 'experience school life'. He feels a major problem is that a number of the lecturers have not been in the classroom for many years and were no longer enthusiastic about teaching students - it was just another year.

Brent found there were many little things that he was not properly prepared for which threw him. Report writing, along with administrative matters - how a school runs, what goes on behind the scenes, coping with the cards that have to be filled in - were all areas where Brent did not feel well prepared although he realises that all schools are different and college lecturers cannot be expected to address all the detailed issues. He found it 'really scary to be confronted with 29 reports to write and to have to make sure that all comments were positive and constructive'. Reading and language are a major focus in most schools and yet he did not know how to get a language programme started. On the other hand, Brent felt the social studies course he took helped him to get the class off to a good start by emphasising the importance of self-esteem and giving him the skills

to make the children feel comfortable with him and he with them.

Standard 4 is the level at which Brent wished to teach. He feels he could have been better prepared for this level had he known in advance that this was where he was going to teach. Because students have to be prepared for all levels, some of the courses, for example, junior school mathematics, now seem a bit of a waste of time although he does at least know something about his children's previous experience. Another problem at college was that students did not necessarily get into the courses they selected.

Over all, Brent feels that his classroom programmes in all areas of the curriculum are now running well. Physical education and science are particularly strong, because they are special interests of Brent's and subjects he majored in at college. He has a major responsibility for physical education within the school and is surprised that teachers who were at college only three or four years ago have not heard of some of the most recent ideas. He has had to work hard at his reading and written language programme. There is always room for improvement, but right now he has an approach which is working with this class. His mathematics programme is helped by the resources available in the school. Computers have just been bought for the school. Brent has been able to pick up ideas from others who did a course at the college about how to use them best in the classroom. Playing a guitar has helped the music programme as children 'like to sit down and have a good sing'. Once children get over their initial embarrassment, most of them enjoy drama which is a good way of giving them a chance to express themselves without necessarily having to speak. Brent has tried to acknowledge Maori in his classroom programme through things like learning simple names and counting. Only about 1% of the children in the school are Maori but standard 4 children have an opportunity to learn Maori for an hour a week and about 20 are doing so. The three teachers in the open-plan area plan work together which means that they select topics from health, social studies and science as units for study and these are going reasonably well.

Brent thinks he is teaching in an effective school. Most of the children from the school go on to an intermediate school. One measure of the school's effectiveness is that the intermediate school appears to be satisfied with the children's standard of work. Another measure is the reputation the school has with Asian families for having a good language programme, particularly in the junior school. One of the teachers has visited America to discuss the school's approach to reading and writing. One criticism Brent has of the school is that not enough is done to extend the very able children, partly because so much time is spent with children for whom English is a second language. There are a couple of children in the class Brent has to watch carefully to make sure they are getting on with their work but he has no child whom he would consider to have real learning problems. It is more just a matter of 'keeping and eye on them'.

Many of the Asian parents arrange for private language tuition. There are problems of communicating in the classroom, particularly as these children often do not ask for explanations when they do not understand. They tend to be strong on basic facts, for example, in mathematics, but are less able to handle topics where discussion is needed, for example, measurement. There is a teacher who comes in to work with children needing extra help, but there is less cross-grouping for particular curriculum areas, such as mathematics, than Brent expected. The teachers have swapped classes occasionally; for example, Brent took a series of lessons on making musical instruments with children in other classes, and he also takes his tutor teacher's class for physical education.

Brent has discovered the importance of keeping full records of individual children in order to assess their work. Initially, he had problems establishing appropriate standards for children to achieve because he was not sure if his standards were high enough or whether he was expecting too much of some children. He has now set up systems which are working satisfactorily, although he still has a few problems in monitoring where children are at with reading and written language.

When we discussed the various issues of equity with Brent he did not think any of them were significant in his class, although he could instance examples in each of the three categories we raised. For example, there is never any problem finding money for class trips, and Brent commented on the level of affluence of most of the children as shown by the holidays children talked about, including trips to Disneyland and London. Brent finds some girls are reluctant to do certain things and a few boys make comments such as, 'Oh, you're a girl, you can't do that', a habit Brent is quick to counteract with examples where the girls are often more proficient than the boys, for example, in running and ball throwing. Brent described an incident where racist comments were addressed to an Asian child during a rugby game at another school. Other than that, any evidence of tension comes from parents rather than children, particularly concern that children for whom English is a second language might take a disproportionate amount of teacher time. However, when this issue was raised at a parent meeting, Brent was quick to point out that all children needed extra work at certain times, and he might spend extra time on mathematics with other children.

Brent feels responsible for his own professional development and is keen to keep up to date. He thought that he would be expected to be up with all the latest ideas because he trained so recently, but he has been encouraged to go on a number of courses, and has been to about 10, mostly after school or during the weekends. Brent feels he has 'gone from strength to strength' in terms of his development as a teacher and is looking forward to starting the second year when he will have a better idea of the range of things

likely to happen during the school year. When he hears the word 'report', he 'won't shake in his shoes' but will know what to expect.

Brent appreciates the support he has received from his tutor teacher and the school principal, but his mother, who is also a teacher, has 'probably been number one', in terms of professional support. Brent spends quite a bit of time on the telephone talking to her, and he, in turn, supports his sister, now at college. However, all the staff have been supportive and they have invited him to talk with them if he has any problems. As he says, 'If you don't ask, you don't find out'. He has also kept in touch with a few of the associate teachers he had while he was at college. He has made good use of his 0.2 release time. The principal worked out a programme for him in advance, which included a list of things he would like Brent to do or see but it has been up to Brent to select those that he is most interested in. Brent has visited other schools to observe language and reading programmes. He has also used some of the time to keep his records up to date and has withdrawn groups or individual children to do tests or work on things he would not normally have time for. He has also spent time familiarising himself with the resources available in the school. His 0.2 time is staggered throughout the week, which can be a nuisance if he is in the middle of a class activity or just about to start something new. However, he finds this preferable to being away from the classroom for a whole day.

Brent has attended beginning teacher meetings each month. He has found sharing his classroom experiences with others and hearing about their ups and downs valuable. It certainly helps to know you are not the only one with problems, and it is also good to share success stories. The only contact Brent has had with the college has been to talk to third-year students about his first-year experiences.

Brent tries to read anything new that comes into the staffroom and spends quite a bit of time after school and at the weekend doing this - if he is in the mood! He has not done any further study this year but will consider Advanced Studies for Teachers' (AST) courses next year. He wanted to see how his first year went before thinking about further study.

Brent does not think he has measured up to his own expectations of himself as a classroom teacher simply because he does not think he will ever be satisfied with his performance. He can only do his best and try to address problems as they arise. What works one year may not work the next. Experience is the only constraint on being a more effective teacher apart from small things, like initially not knowing where all the school resources are kept, partly because teachers tend to keep them in their rooms.

Brent thinks it is important for teachers to become registered to prove that they have done the right kind of training. Teachers have considerable control over what

children learn and if the 'wrong types of people' are in the classroom, serious damage could be done. His goal for next year is to be confident in teaching all subjects, compared with this year when he felt strong at some but kept away from others. Teaching is hard work but it is also challenging and rewarding. At the end of the year he will miss the class he has now. They have been 'a wonderful group of children'; being his first class 'makes them a bit special'.

THE SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

An Effective School

The class and school in which beginning teachers find themselves is an important influence on their development as classroom teachers.[6] We were interested in whether or not beginning teachers considered their school to be an effective school and why they regarded the school in the way they did.

The majority of the beginning teachers thought they were teaching in an effective school. This was so for all but one of the Christchurch beginning teachers and between 75-80% of those teaching in Auckland and Wellington. Even in these regions, however, only five beginning teachers said they were *not* teaching in an effective school. The rest merely had reservations or added qualifying remarks.

The comments of the beginning teachers who thought they were teaching in an effective school were frequently very enthusiastic - 'wonderful, never want to leave' or 'best possible school you could be in!' Their responses tended to fall into one or more of the following categories:

The teachers, including:

- excellent staff relationships: staff support and care for each other and pull together as a close-knit team - no talking behind backs
- the staff enjoy the school
- the atmosphere of the school is 'alive', 'relaxed' and 'comfortable'

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[6] *See* Renwick, M. and Vize, J., (1992) *Windows on Teacher Education: Phase 3*, p.49.

- the excellence of individual teachers: teachers are professional and dedicated
- staff 'care about kids', are concerned for pupil progress and success, and have good relationships with children
- excellent support for beginning teachers; good role models.

The programme, including:

- children are the school's top priority: child-centred, catering for and empowering individual children, including children with special needs
- needs-based: children are learning and experiencing success
- caters for children from a range of ethnic groups; appropriate to the community
- well balanced; good overall education
- up-to-date methods
- high standards set and expected: systematic evaluation, thorough monitoring of children
- wide range of extracurricular, lunchtime, and out-of-school activities
- well equipped with up-to-date resources.

Leadership, management and administration, including:

- excellent leadership from the principal and senior staff - committed to school, staff and children
- positive environment; a 'good place to work'
- school well organised and run; efficient administration
- responsibilities shared by staff
- consultative management
- plenty of opportunities for staff development
- well resourced
- the school has clear objectives and goals which are adhered to
- good school discipline

Children

- are happy, 'smile and love school'
- are keen to learn; easy to handle
- have high self-esteem and are 'proud of their work'

But

- there are some children with behaviour problems, and some for whom English is a second language.

Parents and the community, including:

- good relationships between staff, board of trustees, and community
- open-door policy; parents are kept well informed
- very honest with the community who know what they can expect from the school; serves particular community well
- parents support the school; there is a lot of parental help available.

Those who thought they were *not* teaching in an effective school or had some reservations raised similar issues. The critical comments tended to be one-off remarks and sometimes referred to changes in the pipeline. These related to:

Staff

- some staff had been teaching at the school for too long and were 'just part of the furniture'
- staff not sufficiently committed; not sufficiently concerned with children's development
- backstabbing and jealousies among staff
- staff did not sufficiently reflect the ethnic mix of the pupils.

School and classroom programmes

- a conservative school, not receptive to new ideas; out-of-date and inappropriate teaching methods
- staff and sections of school isolated from each other; lack of collaborative planning
- not all children catered for, for example, the gifted; middle class children not extended
- do not encourage children to reach potential
- inadequate resources
- aspects of school life not appropriate for some ethnic groups, for example, the name of the school for Maori pupils

Leadership, management and administration

- leadership from the principal was weak, inefficient, or lacked flexibility
- hierarchical, dominant school leadership; did not allow for other staff,

particularly younger teachers, to have much say

- principal keeps wonderful statistics, but not good on people skills
- too many rules and regulations
- unclear lines of responsibility
- inconsistent or poor school discipline
- insufficient pupil input into decision making - 'our school and how we can improve it'
- anti-attitudes towards parents; inadequate public relations - ideas introduced by the school not being accepted by the community.

Individual beginning teachers spoke of

- teaching in a bilingual school meant constant interruptions to the programme for visitors and powhiri
- adverse Education Review Office report.

Examples of beginning teachers' comments:

> We've got people in this school that other schools are asking to go and talk to them. We've had a couple of teachers in this school that have talked at our beginning teacher meetings. This school has shown me how to put in a really sound written language programme. My principal came into my class at the beginning of the year and took lessons for me. It was like when I was on section watching and observing. They actually do it at school. My tutor teacher is a maths person. She's just helped me with real simple ways on how to use my topic approach, how to long-term plan, find your resources and bang, that's there for the next three or four weeks. It was so simple. The spelling programme they've helped me with and the reading programme. Our deputy principal, she's just amazing. We had curriculum meetings held at school and we covered every subject. We had all these notes on how to set out your lesson, how to evaluate and monitor processes. I wouldn't know if I would've coped in any other school. This school's just been so supportive. (Auckland)

> I don't think the leadership at the school is as good as it could be. There's a lot of backstabbing among the staff which is always very disconcerting. I was offered a job here for next year because this is only a long-term reliever job, but I was also offered a job down the road and I took the job down the road simply because the leadership is not the best. You ask for something to get done and it's not. Things are lost constantly. A child that really needs to be disciplined, you send them on and they aren't. (Auckland)

> I think it all starts from the top. I think the principal of this school is highly motivated. He's totally committed to the students of this school, he's always out

in the school grounds with his students at lunchtimes taking some kind of sporting activities. The students know who he is and they know him outside his office. He is part of the school ... he doesn't have this untouchable aura about him. He's very approachable and I've seen students relate to him just so well. I think it starts from his total commitment to the school and to the students, it's filtered down to the staff and I've never seen such a highly motivated staff. (Auckland)

Children enjoy being here.... It's a very multicultural school ... and there's the potential for the kids to go off the rails, but lunchtimes they're totally busy with lunchtime sport, class sport, competitions and other events, cultural group things happening. Staff are run off their feet with lunchtime activities keeping the kids busy.... there's no fighting, there's no trouble except the occasional thing that comes up once every term or something like that. They try to make sure all the programmes are very child-based. Just the whole feeling about the school - I got that from my interview when I walked in here, the feeling was really alive and the kids smile when they're walking round. I find that I'm just enjoying being at school. It's a small school, only 320 and 10 classroom teachers. (Auckland)

Yes, I do. In fact I've been blown away by the amount of time and energy teachers put into the job. We have special needs meetings once a month and the amount of concern they put into individuals is amazing and it's not just the classroom teacher who knows the individual ... other teachers, the principal, the deputy principal know these kids, know how to help them.... I believe it is a very effective school.... It's got very good role models for me as a first-year because it makes you stay on your toes and you realise just how much time they put into them. (Wellington)

It's changing a bit now but it's a very conservative school - not awesomely receptive to new ideas and new ways of doing things. It's a very big school and it's a bit clumsy in some ways. There are little pockets here and there in different syndicates of people who have been teaching for 20 years and, 'we've always done it this way, and we'll always do it this way.' If you look at our policies, they're all wonderful. They're just right on the Department of Education. It's exactly what they should be, but it's not done, you know it's all mouth.... On the good side, they do let you do your own thing, well in my syndicate anyway, which is good. (Wellington)

I want to stay in an open plan for a couple of years at least because it's absolutely wonderful. What else about this school? The principal - plenty of support and the door's always open to go and have a chat. And my syndicate meetings are always very structured and everything's set out - what we are doing whether it's working on our planning or how to fill out our reports. It's all there, everything is always detailed and very efficient. (Wellington)

My main concern is discipline and what we are doing about it. There are a lot of bad apples running loose in the crop and getting away with a lot of stuff. (Wellington)

They are definitely working towards becoming a much more effective school. The staff, board of trustees and the whole community are working towards the school becoming a more effective school. It will be really nice when everyone is on the same train - all going to get to the station at the same time and all working in the same programme throughout the whole school, not individual programmes. That will be the target for next year. And for children to feel good about being here and parents to feel good about their children being here. It hasn't always been the case. (Wellington)

It's hard to know what the community is here. But I think parents feel welcome here and the school is used by a few different community groups so they obviously don't feel threatened by it. We have quite a few different cultural groups and they all seem to feel pretty well accepted. The major announcements are sent out in English as well as Cantonese, or it's actually I think Mandarin, the written form of it, so they're dealing with quite a substantial part of the school population whose parents probably don't speak much English. I think all those sort of things encourage people to view the school as a friendly and accessible place. (Wellington)

I feel it has a really good communication network between staff and between staff and parents. It's a fairly smallish community and the school represents the feelings of the community. There's quite an involvement within the community in the school because it's a focus in a community like this. The staff are really dedicated, really care about what they are doing, all young and keen. (Christchurch)

Well, I think apart from one teacher they're all very conscientious and have classroom programmes that are meeting kids' needs and they're fairly innovative. All bar one have set high standards for children. There's a lot of consideration given to children who aren't making the grade. We have an 'at risk' register that we have to update once a term. Six-year nets are carried out as required, and standard 2 surveys, and we have to do a certain number of running records per term. So I think the children are fairly well monitored and that the teachers are of high quality and quite professional, bar one. (Christchurch)

I think it is becoming an effective school. The principal has only just started and he is gearing the staff meetings very much into staff development and more up-to-date approaches, and I'm really enjoying it, I'm getting a lot out of it. I think it is an awful struggle for him, in a lot of ways, but I do think it is going to become a really effective school if he keeps going. (Christchurch)

The Classes Taught By Beginning Teachers

We asked the beginning teachers a series of questions about the level of the school at which they were teaching; whether or not this was their preferred level; and how well they thought college courses had prepared them for this level. Beginning teachers were

represented at all levels of the primary school, and two were teaching in secondary schools. Table 13 indicates the distribution of beginning teachers across school level.

Table 13

Distribution of Beginning Teachers Across School Levels

School levels	Numbers of teachers (N = 100)	
Junior school (J1 - S1)	35	
Middle school (S2 - S4)	11	
Senior school (F1 and 2)	14	29
Intermediate school (F.1 and 2)	15	
Cross groupings/whanau, e.g. S1 - S4; S4 - F2	15	
Secondary	2	
Maori/bilingual	4	
Missing data	4	

It will be seen from Table 13 that the largest number of beginning teachers are teaching in the junior school. However, if those teaching in the senior primary school are combined with those teaching in post-primary schools, the number of beginning teachers teaching senior pupils nearly equals those teaching juniors.

The majority of beginning teachers are teaching at their preferred level. This is particularly the case in Christchurch. In Auckland 30 of the 54 beginning teachers are

teaching children of an age they prefer and for whom they feel better prepared than for other ages, but six also said they had no preferred age and were happy to teach at any level. In Wellington 14 of the 24 beginning teachers were teaching at their preferred level, and four had no preferred level. In Auckland, of those 16 who preferred a different age group, it was more common for them to be teaching in the junior school, although many of them also say that now that they are with younger children they enjoy teaching them. A few commented that they had preferences but given the tight job situation it was wise not to be too fussy and they had applied for jobs at all levels. Those Wellington beginning teachers who were not teaching at their preferred level were nearly evenly divided as to whether they would prefer to be teaching at a different level. A number of students who were not teaching at their preferred level were nevertheless happy with the class they had been appointed to. One student who was not satisfied was teaching J3-S2 which she regards as a transition area, and although she felt college helped with both junior and middle school levels, students did not get assistance with bridging courses between levels, moving for example, from BSM to new growth in mathematics. She also feels there is a 'philosophical shift' between junior school and middle school teaching. Having had the experience of teaching in one area for almost a year, a few Christchurch teachers said they would like to move to different areas of the school and teach older or younger children. The majority, however, are pleased with the age group they are teaching and would be happy to stay with them for at least the first few years.

How Well College Courses Had Prepared Beginning Teachers for Their Class Level

Most beginning teachers thought college courses had prepared them well for the level at which they were teaching: Auckland 36 (54); Wellington 18 (24); Christchurch 17 (22).

In all colleges, those beginning teachers who thought the college courses had prepared them for the level at which they were now teaching, tended to do so for one of four reasons:

- the college preparation had been satisfactory across all levels
- the courses they had chosen (or assignments within courses), particularly in the third year, had enabled them to develop skills for the level at which they were now teaching
- they had taken courses that catered for different age groups influenced by the uncertain job market

- by taking a wide range of courses they have a better overview of primary schooling, 'where their children had come from and where they were going to'.

Beginning teachers who did not think the college courses had prepared them particularly well for the age group they were now teaching made a range of comments, including:

- they had created their own problems by concentrating on a preferred level and this was not where they were now teaching

- college courses had not given equal time to all levels

- college courses tended to spend less time focusing on the intermediate level (Auckland)

- college timetables (and other restrictions) had sometimes made it difficult for students to select their preferred courses

- they did not feel adequately prepared for the special characteristics of the group of children with whom they were now working, for example, new entrants, whanau groupings.

Examples of beginning teachers' comments are:

> I think so, yes, I think this particular age group S3 and 4 they did. (Auckland)

> A lot was based on beginning of a child's education. Which in the long run helps because you know the procedure, what the children are going through before they get to you - the steps of learning. But things like reading, I can take running records, I can help children with reading difficulties, I can identify all that. But there's a whole lot of children in my class who are reading below their level - they're reading at a seven-year-old or six-year-old reading age, and yet they're 10 or 11. What do I do now? Some of the courses did not say, 'What about children with special abilities', or 'what about these children who have gone right through and they're this age but they can't read at all'. That's something I think that you really can't learn at college. That's something you have to learn when you get out here. (Auckland)

> Not the courses, no. But I did most of my preparation on sections really, well I only had two at this level, and of course I went all out - I was very careful with accumulating resources and what I gleaned to have something for every level so I

didn't just focus on senior or J1 or 2. But no, not specifically the courses. The courses were more broad than that. (Auckland)

We chose courses in our third year, I took middle/senior maths and I took junior/middle Professional Studies so in terms of that I think, yes they did. (Wellington)

No. But that was my choice because I honed in on the middle school area and that was my choice to do that. But I think at college they don't prepare you - like they will say to you, 'Where do you want to do your sole charge? - intermediate, right' - and then they give you heaps and heaps on intermediate when the reality is there might not by any jobs there. So across the board they don't prepare you well. But for one specific area that you choose, then yes, they probably do that really well. (Wellington)

The only time I came across BSM was on a section that I did. I never came across it at teachers college at all. I came across new growth because I did middle school maths, but otherwise, no. And I think that comes from us as trainees and as teachers and as lecturers saying, 'well BSM is already there, all you have to do is teach it. It's written down for you'. In reality that doesn't happen. It's probably harder to teach, and harder to manage, than middle and senior school maths is, because of the resources that you have to carry for it. (Wellington)

Science, social studies, drama, you can always extend those sorts of things from what you learned at training college so that's not a problem. But reading, written language and maths is different. I concentrated on junior reading and writing so I'm coming right with those, but at the beginning I was really nervous because I hadn't really gone into that area very much - just rushed over that part. (Wellington)

I believe I've wasted a lot of valuable time at teachers college learning to wipe five-year-olds' noses and that sort of thing - doing BSM when always in my heart I wanted to teach intermediate, so I thought why am I doing my junior section? The answer could be you may not know for sure that's what you want to do unless you try other areas. You might not get a job at intermediate. But, it's almost a different job entirely, teaching juniors and teaching this lot. You can't train for both. Better to use all your energy and concentrate on one so you can be the best possibly prepared for one of them. I gave them my best shot, but I felt out of place during my junior section, sitting there with a ready-to-read book and these kids crawling away and not knowing they're doing anything wrong. That's not sort of what I was geared to do. I want to teach kids who are ready to become adults and go to college, teach them life skills. (Wellington)

Well at college you basically choose which year you wanted to go into, so we directed our own course towards upper, middle or junior. I directed my course towards middle because I felt I could then handle juniors and I could handle senior ones, so I directed myself towards middle school but when the jobs are scarce you go for whatever. (Christchurch)

... had I put all my eggs in one basket and done all junior, I would have had a lot more experience, but I didn't. I gave myself a better chance and sort of took other courses, which I don't regret because I mean you're going to need them. You have to know what your juniors are heading into anyway. (Christchurch)

Yes I stuck my neck out in choosing third-year courses because I really only did want to teach junior school, so I made a decision that wasn't recommended but I made the decision to take junior school courses instead of covering the whole sphere. So most of my courses I felt prepared me well. (Christchurch)

That was quite difficult in the fact that I always knew I wanted to teach through junior school, standard 2 and below. So right through I tried to keep everything below and when I got to the third year and thought, heck I'm not in the running for any job above standard 2 that I'll have to apply for. I've done no courses so I tried to rush through on an upper school reading programme and an upper school maths programme which is actually no use to me now. I did the upper school reading course instead of doing the junior school remedial reading for children who can't read. But I wasn't to know where I was going to teach and I had to keep my options very wide. (Christchurch)

Other Courses Beginning Teachers Would Like To Have Taken

Auckland

Seventeen teachers in looking back said that, had they known which age group they would be teaching, there were courses at college that they would have taken. Most would have taken more courses across the board related to the age group they are teaching; specific curriculum areas which are mentioned are reading, mathematics, science, English as a second language, computers, and health. However, almost the same number of teachers (15) could not think of any courses they would have taken to help them with the age group they are now teaching; a few teachers could not remember there being any courses directly aimed, for example, at intermediate-age children or at whanau groupings which would have helped them. Examples of the range of student comments are:

I think regardless of this particular age group, I wish I had done a little it more on English as a second language. I applied for a course but I missed out. I actually think that it should be compulsory. There should be more emphasis on it in training college. I have got six second language learners in my class at different levels and it's an area that does worry me a little bit because at times I think I'm not giving them the attention they need or maybe the right direction. But I think I will now. I felt college helped really well at middle school.

There were very few courses that were specifically for intermediates. I did courses that I thought would be appropriate for this age group and I also did courses that I knew were aimed at lower levels.... I did a reading in junior classes module because of the diverse reading ages. I knew that would overlap over. Third year was the time where you could actually zoom in and select extra courses and I did advanced reading and reading in the junior classes. The advanced catered more for the intermediate but it was still focused mainly around standards 3 and 4 rather than intermediate. I took junior reading for the fact of my low level readers and because I always wanted to teach multicultural. I did maths for standard 2 - form 2 but that still focused mainly around middle. The other courses I applied for, computers and things like that, which I wanted, I couldn't get into.

I sat down during the Xmas holidays, after I got this job, and went through all my resources and put everything that was junior orientated away and put everything that was relevant to senior in boxes and there were big gaps. I've always had an inkling that I wanted to teach children that are older because there were more senior things. When we had the choice of making something, I always made it for the older children, but you were always scared because you didn't know what age you would get. And I was very lucky that because I enjoyed older children, I got them.

I would have taken more in-depth language and BSM. I took a very late option, BSM through to standard 2, but I would have taken more BSM options. I felt in a way that the art programme let us down in that it was following our own development rather than giving us ideas for the classroom's practical work.

I would have taken more courses on computers. I think that really comes down to a personal preference. I don't feel confident with computers so you tend to steer away from things that you don't feel confident with when really it should be the opposite way. I would have done a lot more... because our school has a... not a heavy emphasis but they encourage children. About half of my class have got computers at home.... I think that's something I need to improve on.

Wellington

About half of the beginning teachers said that had they known while they were at college at which level they would be teaching in their first year, there were other courses they would have taken. (Two of those said there were other courses they wished they had taken, but not because of the level at which they were teaching.) Others said they would not have taken different courses but they would have concentrated at levels of the school within a course. Where beginning teachers referred to particular courses they wished they had taken, or different levels within courses, they usually referred to mathematics and reading courses. Other courses, referred to by one or two students in each case, were science, physical education, computers, English as a second language, drama, and

working with parents. Examples of the range of student comments are:

> No, I kept it pretty open and tried to get a good mix of courses. By the time I did have to choose a lot of courses, right at the end when they had crash preparatory courses for your age group, when you knew you had a job, they were really good. That was extremely well done by the college. It really did give you a bit of a preparation. It was a bit rough if you didn't have a job and you didn't know where you were going but I was one of the lucky ones because I got a job in the first lot, so I knew exactly where I was going and it was good.

> There are, but probably not because this is the age group. It would have been more because I thought that they were relevant courses to take. Computers, I would have liked to get into. That's a definite thrust in the school that I probably didn't take much notice of and I should have. I possibly would have done a bit more related science if I'd had the opportunity. More because I think that's maybe an area of lack rather than this age group.

> In my third year I just lost enthusiasm for training college. I just hated it. I could have just walked out of there, so I just opted into things which were less stressful on the mind, where I didn't have to use my mind which is really shocking now that I think of it. Now I realise how important they were but three years just seemed like such a long time and now it's gone fast. Yeah, I did sort of avoid them.

> I would have done more on reading, and more on BSM maths courses. All the courses - well most of the courses I did were targeted at the area I aimed to teach. When we were in the third ye r, we took a Professional Studies course - 300, which gave you a grounding for your sole charge and followed up your sole charge afterwards and that was the area you were going to teach in middle to senior school. I think really it would have been better if we'd been able to do both areas because in order to teach you have to be prepared for both.

Christchurch

About half of the beginning teachers could think of courses that they would have taken, had they known the level they were going to be teaching, but they were also aware of the limited time to fit everything in. Subject areas, including reading, BSM mathematics and outdoor education, were mentioned rather than specific courses:

> Yes, there are some. Reading, I would have taken extra, I would have taken more because I think that reading is very, very important. But I find now that I'm teaching, just talking to other teachers you get heaps of ideas that way. Probably better than doing lots of courses, I don't know.

> Yes, I'd like to have taken some BSM courses and I probably would have taken one last year but it clashed with the reading course that I wanted to take.

Some teachers also tended to think of courses which would have helped them with a problem they now face in the classroom, for example, behaviour modification and children with disabilities.

Other teachers commented that with hindsight one can always have done better, and yet others that, although there are gaps, they wouldn't have done anything differently:

> Oh, probably I could have said that now but it's a bit late really. I had to try and cover myself so I took junior courses as well. You didn't really know where you were going to go - you can't rely on choices these days. You go where you are given basically. So I took courses that covered everything - tried to cover everything.

The seven teachers who felt that there were not courses they would have taken generally felt that they had planned their courses to prepare themselves for teaching anywhere in the primary school and they would not have done anything differently. One teacher felt that she would not have been able to do any other course without giving up something she had done, and she had no regrets about what she had done:

> I couldn't have taken them anyway because I got into a special needs course last year which took up 200 hours in my last year, so I wouldn't have given that up for anything, no matter what. So I couldn't fit in the other courses.

Curriculum Areas in the Classroom

We asked the beginning teachers to focus on each area of the primary school curriculum and to comment on which areas they felt they were handling well, and which not so well. Where beginning teachers were having problems, we asked them why they thought this was so. We are talking here of teachers' perceptions of how well they coped in each of the curriculum areas during their first year. We have no measure of what others - adults and children - might think; no way of measuring one teacher's performance against another; and no measure of pupil progress. Our overall impression is that beginning teachers set themselves high standards and, in some cases, expected to achieve more than can be reasonably expected of teachers in their first year. Some were more critical of themselves than others. One teacher, for example, who said she was 'having a real struggle with language', went on to say that her problem was that she had constantly to try and think of new ideas to make language experiences more realistic for children,

indicating a professional approach to her teaching. Comments such as this made it impossible to quantify the beginning teachers' views as to how well they were handling particular curriculum areas. Another difficulty in attempting to quantify their responses was the degree of co-operative teaching in primary schools. Beginning teachers may be involved in syndicate planning, team teaching, or in a school with specialist responsibilities. These factors can influence what topics are taken within a subject, for example, science and social studies; whether or not individual teachers take a subject, for example, music; and how well a teacher believes a subject is handled, for example, Maori. Some curriculum areas, such as education outside the classroom, may be handled through a total school activity such as a school camp. Finally, if beginning teachers are attempting to run an integrated programme in their classroom (*see also* p.102), it is not always appropriate to single out individual subjects for comment.

Issues raised across curriculum areas, which could influence how well beginning teachers thought they were handling each subject, are listed below:

- The importance of school policy with regard to particular subjects and how they should be taught.
- The resources available in a school, for example, art and computers.
- The set books or texts favoured by a school, for example, mathematics.
- Classroom control - some subjects pose greater control problems than others, for example, art, music and physical education.
- The attitude of parents to particular subjects, for example, the place of Maori in the school curriculum.
- The priority of a subject in a classroom programme typically led beginning teachers to give priority to 'the 3Rs', which explained the neglect of other areas, for example, drama.
- The personal skills and interests of beginning teachers, for example music, physical education and art.
- Whether or not they were teaching at their preferred level of the school.

- College preparation. Beginning teachers who had 'majored' in a subject at college were usually confident in that area in the classroom.

- The importance of the assistance a beginning teacher has received from colleagues at the school, for example, in setting up reading programmes.

- The importance of beginning teachers' having good organisational and management skills, for example, in establishing reading groups.

- Earlier in the year beginning teachers may have had teething problems, in various areas, but by the time we interviewed them in the third term, things were going well.

A minority of beginning teachers referred to lack of college preparation in some areas, for example, computers in the classroom, or for pupils at a particular level within a subject, for example, either BSM or new growth in mathematics. A few also thought they had not been well prepared because some compulsory courses were not long enough or there was a lack of awareness at college of resources commonly used in schools, for example, 'Upbeat', for music.

Some Comments Analysed by College

What follows is not intended as a comprehensive account of how beginning teachers are teaching various subjects but rather a summary statement of an analysis of the interview material, bearing in mind the general issues raised above. Beginning teachers varied considerably in the way they reacted to the question of how they were coping with the curriculum. Those who thought a subject was going well tended to be very enthusiastic - a subject was 'going really well'; 'I love it'; 'it's neat'. For some, this was all they said. Others went into detailed accounts of how they were handling a particular curriculum area.

Auckland

Auckland material was the most difficult to handle, partly because of the number of beginning teachers teaching in intermediate schools or schools with some specialisation, which meant that we could not always judge whether a subject was going well as a beginning teacher may not have handled that subject with her class. The comments about the curriculum made by Auckland beginning teachers tended to divide into three categories:

- the basics, or '3Rs'
- subjects handled through centres of interest
- specialist subjects.

What follows is comment by subject under these three headings with an indication of the number of beginning teachers who said they were experiencing some difficulties and, where they were given, the reasons for this.

The basics or 3Rs:

Oral language (11)

The activities described by beginning teachers varied a good deal, depending on the level where they were teaching within the school, and ranged from news, 'buzz groups', and discussions to formal speeches and debates. The value of a college course, 'Learning in Junior Classes' was referred to by some teachers in junior schools. Two wished they had been introduced to a book *Adventures in Thinking* while at college. Others spoke of lack of guidance while at college. One spoke of her efforts to encourage oral Maori as well as oral English. Problems isolated were:

- difficulties in coping with children for whom English is a second language and who had limited vocabularies
- children from some ethnic groups are particularly shy, for example, Samoan children
- difficulty in evaluating children's speech
- not knowing how to improve children's speech, for example, poor grammatical construction.

Reading (18)

The problems referred to for reading tended to be 'teething problems' rather than on-going problems throughout the year. These were:

- setting up reading groups
- difficulty in establishing levels and being sure of appropriate books - some books in schools have not been classified at college
- difficulties of catering for the needs of all children because of wide levels of attainment, including children for whom English is their second language.

Written language (13)

If beginning teachers were teaching 'a whole language' programme written language was

integrated with oral language and reading. Only two difficulties were isolated:

- the problem of getting around all children
- not getting much help during training as to how to handle poor sentence construction and grammar.

Mathematics (21)

Comments tended to centre around the particular resources and books being used in the schools. Hamilton mathematics, based on young Australian mathematics, is favoured by a number of schools. Problems referred to were:

- lack of personal confidence in the subject
- some schools use a more formal and structured approach than that advocated by college
- not well prepared for level now teaching
- hard to cope with wide range of abilities
- it is not easy to get all children to understand and beginning teachers do not always know how to help children who cannot grasp concepts.

Subjects handled through centres of interest:

Science (21); social studies (14); health (10)

It is common for these subjects to be rotated and focused on one at a time as a centre of interest, perhaps planned by a syndicate of teachers or at least taken in conjunction with each other. The main problem mentioned was that this system meant not as much was covered in each area as beginning teachers may have hoped for. Those who had majored in a subject were pleased with the way their class programme was going, although there were divided views about college preparation in social studies, depending on which courses a beginning teacher had taken. The value of the health programme and the excellence of the health resources, for example, 'Keeping Ourselves Safe' and 'Reaching Out' were commented on.

Specialist Subjects:

Art (12), music (15), drama (30), physical education (14), and Maori (22) were the subjects most often taken by other teachers, although this was not necessarily so, and classroom teachers also spoke with enthusiasm about their programme in these areas. Beginning teachers who had majored in physical education or music had quite often taken on extra responsibilities within the school. Art majors spoke of their enthusiasm for the subject and how much they and the children 'loved art'. For others art was 'not a top priority' and several commented that college courses had focused more on the personal

development of students than on how to teach art in the classroom. Music is a subject very dependent on the skills and confidence of individual teachers. If they are enjoying it, they are very enthusiastic. It is also a common subject for shared teaching. Drama may be integrated into other subjects, particularly in the junior school, but as a subject, it is the one most 'overlooked' by beginning teachers. Physical education was spoken of with enthusiasm by those who had majored at college. Those who had not, occasionally spoke of control problems. A minority also spoke of lack of school equipment. The way Maori is handled is very dependent on the school and locality. Specialist teachers were referred to by nearly a quarter of the beginning teachers. Issues raised were: parents not wanting a focus on Maori; the appropriateness of Maori in classes where there were predominantly Samoan and Asian pupils; criticism of the political focus of the Maori studies department at the college.

Computers in the classroom (25) was an area where at least half of the beginning teachers were having problems. The most common reason was limited access to computers at the school, although about a quarter of the beginning teachers indicated they lacked competence themselves. However, this was also a common area for staff development within schools.

Wellington

The comments made by beginning teachers about their confidence in teaching the various curriculum areas suggest that these areas can be arranged in three main groupings:

1.

Reading Written language Oral language Physical education Art

2.

Social Studies Health Mathematics Education outside the classroom Science

3.

Music Drama Maori Computers in the classroom

For the first block of subjects, between 80% and 90% of the beginning teachers thought they were coping well; for the second block, between about 70% and 75% did so; and for the third block about a third thought they were having difficulties. It is interesting to note that the rankings of the curriculum areas are remarkably consistent with the rankings derived from the beginning teachers' responses when, as final year students, they had been asked which curriculum areas they were *most* or *least* looking forward to teaching.[7]

Christchurch

The comments of the beginning teachers suggest that the curriculum areas can be arranged into three main groupings:

[7] *See* Renwick, M. and Vize, J., (1992) *Windows on Teacher Education: Phase 3*, p.33.

1.

Reading
Written language
Mathematics
Art
Physical education
Oral language

2.

Drama
Social studies
Health
Education outside the classroom

3.

Music
Science
Computers
Maori

As with the other colleges, beginning teachers were more likely to be positive about their teaching skills than otherwise. Over three-quarters of the teachers identified the subjects in group one as 'going well'. By contrast, only about a quarter of teachers feel the subjects in group three are 'not going well'. The response from this teacher illustrates a typically confident view:

> There is nothing that is going badly, because I think if it had been the case, I would have done something about it by now.

The first block of subjects are those that the majority of teachers feel are going well, and are most enthusiastic about. The second block are subjects which the teachers do not see as problem areas but neither do they count them amongst their strengths; as one teacher put it 'they are just going' as opposed to going well. Most of the subjects included in this group are those that the teachers do not often teach, usually because of insufficient time and/or resources in the school. The third group of subjects are those that some teachers feel are not going well; only about a quarter of teachers feel happy teaching these topics. Approximately the same proportion are unhappy with these subjects for various reasons which include:

- lack of personal talent or expertise

- criticism of the preparation received in college courses; some teachers felt that compulsory courses were not enough

- lack of facilities and resources in the school

- insufficient time available to teach the subject.

An Integrated Curriculum

In answering the question about individual curriculum areas, a number of beginning teachers mentioned that they tried to integrate their programme across curriculum areas, an approach favoured during training.
As one commented:

> Well, you can't really sort of separate them but it's nice to have them separated here [on the interview sheet] but it doesn't really work out. Like reading involves oral language as well as your reading and written language and drama and art, so it's not broken down like that anyway.... The only one that would be separated in reality would be physical education. You can't combine that with anything. (Christchurch)

When asked specifically whether or not they ran an integrated programme in the class, most beginning teachers said they favour an integrated approach to teaching although not all have achieved as much integration of curriculum areas as they would wish. It was common for beginning teachers to say that they had started the year by keeping the various curriculum areas separate but had moved towards a more integrated approach as their confidence increased.

Teachers also commented on:

- The importance of co-operative planning with other staff, particularly when teaching in an open plan situation.

- The importance of working together on syndicate or school-based integrated curriculum plans.

- The complexity of teaching an integrated programme using learning centres and the need to make children see linkages between subjects. The teacher has to be alert to the skills children need to learn, and be able to monitor progress.

Those who described how their programme was integrated tended to refer to:

- Whole language programmes where oral language, written language and reading were integrated.

- Integration around a centre of interest, unit studies, or focus studies. Topics studied in these cases tended to be selected from social studies, science and health and usually became the focus for language and reading, but examples were also given when music, mathematics, art and physical education were included.

- Mathematics with language, particularly BSM which is language-based.

- Art and drama with whole language programmes.

- One or two beginning teachers referred to their attempts to make sure Maori language and culture were integrated into all curriculum areas.

Where teachers have tried to integrate the curriculum, it has usually worked well. Those pleased with the progress they had made said they thought it made the programme more meaningful for children and allowed them to cover more in the time. They also commented on the fact that they did not have to plan in such detail as previously to ensure an integrated programme but could do more by 'ad-libbing'. Many of the teachers give the impression that integrating the curriculum is a natural, preferred way of working, which they would use more if they were not constrained by some of the factors mentioned below.

Those beginning teachers who gave reasons for not running an integrated programme, or for limited integration of curriculum areas, referred to the following issues:

- It is easier to integrate some subjects than others; two of the most difficult are mathematics and physical education. For most, getting a successful, stand-alone mathematics programme up and running is a sufficient achievement without trying to integrate it with other subjects.

- The range of abilities and ages in the classroom.

- Limitations to integrating the curriculum associated with cross-groupings of children from other classes for various subjects, usually within a syndicate. The most common occasions are for mathematics and reading.

- 'Multi-level' approaches within the school, for example, ability groupings in the senior school, make integrated curriculum difficult.

- The age of the children; a few teachers who were teaching junior children felt that it would be easier to teach more of an integrated curriculum to middle and senior school children.

- Limitations imposed by school timetables.

- The difficulty of finding reading material, particularly for young children, at the right level related to unit studies.

- A beginning teacher with a strength in a particular area, for example music, has a strong, independent programme going and wants to keep it that way. (However, one teacher with a strength in music said she integrated music with all curriculum areas.)

- The rest of the school does not run integrated programmes or beginning teachers cannot integrate across the curriculum because the topics they are to cover are set by the school or syndicate.

- Release time causes interruptions to the daily timetable.

- It is difficult if teachers are teaching as paired teachers.

- If a beginning teacher had taken over a class part way into the year, the timetable the previous teacher operated had to be kept.

- It is not possible in a secondary school.

Examples of beginning teachers' comments:

We're actually moving more into that this year. We've rearranged our timetables so that we can have reading and language in one block together in the morning whereas last year it was separated by lunch which we all found not good. And so we've rearranged it this year. We're just talking about it now, how we can integrate that more and then of course integrating all of that into our afternoon programmes which are a centre of interest. In fact we do it but we've got to do it more. (Auckland)

Well I integrate music through everything. I like music. When we have a unit going, like we're going camp at the moment before they go on camp in a couple of weeks and we do that with every subject. Talking about oral language in camp, outside education. They're putting tents up, lighting fires, rope work, music; we're singing camp songs. Maths measuring how many steps it takes or how many degrees in orienteering kind of thing. But we do integrate really throughout the whole thing. Maths, not always so much integration. Like you might be doing the marae. It's quite hard to integrate maths into it. (Auckland)

I like doing that. I like putting things on paper and playing around with them, seeing which things can go where. As far as putting it into practice goes that's pretty good as well although there can be times when there's a bit of confusion. (Auckland)

My curriculum is largely integrated. Every now and then I take out reading. I usually integrate it into my topic or language theme but at the moment I'm working on developing high level comprehension skills, or evaluation of skills so that I'm using journal stories and it is unrelated to the actual topic I'm doing. That's a change but I don't think it hurts the kids to occasionally switch off and do something different. I'm not integrating maths at all or any of the physical activities. Music is a different programme because I have different groups of children every week. But apart from that much of my art and written language and a certain amount of my reading and oral language, they're all fairly well integrated. (Wellington)

Probably most of the things. I think every curriculum area that I do there's always one or two other curriculum areas integrated into it. Sometimes for instance because my confidence is down on Maori then I sort of keep it isolated which my senior teacher says try not to do that, try and integrate it just so it's like regular language, but as my confidence builds then it will flow easier but at the moment I feel more comfortable in saying, 'This is time for Maori', and we get down and we do our activities or whatever we're doing and then I don't try and leave it. I try and bring it out but it just doesn't come all that naturally to me at the moment. (Wellington)

Very much not integrating at all. The reason for that is not that I'm against it - I think it's wonderful but because I've only been teaching six months, I feel it's important to get one going at a time and get confident across curriculum. That will come. I've very for that but I haven't done it yet. (Wellington)

Heaps of it. I mean in terms of integrating science into reading, all the time. That's what we tend to do as a whole, the whole syndicate or the whole school in fact as far as I'm aware. The syndicate we do basically, we try and integrate whatever unit or topic study we're doing at a time into our reading and language programme, and reading and language of course is incorporated and you know we can try and do anything where Maori language and things will come into the whole curriculum and also when you use maths and all that sort of stuff as well, try and integrate everything as much as possible. (Wellington)

I do my best. I try to integrate the topic within reading. That's quite difficult when you've got children working on the colour wheel. But I have got some children who have moved on to journals so I'm integrating within that. Maths again is very hard to integrate if you work with BSM. It's a very non-integrated topic unless you set aside a certain time to do a whole class lesson that's integrated with something. I feel the junior level isn't as open to be integrated as much as perhaps middle to upper school. I think I would be integrating a lot more if I had middle to upper school class. (Christchurch)

Not as much as I'd like to because of the programmes we run at school, where we, my class is split up. Other teachers take some of my children for maths, reading and PE, so I don't see my children enough to actually integrate the whole curriculum which is a pity. I would like to have taken some of my social studies lessons and integrated them into everything, but I just couldn't. But as much as I could it's been reasonably successful. My science lessons I've tried to integrate as much as I could. Art lessons again, integrated with science, integrated with social studies, but yeah, it's a matter of timetabling as well. (Christchurch)

Yes, well maybe that probably stems from college because most of our units and everything was integrated. I suppose when we came into the school this year, they probably didn't do a lot of integration work, they kept them all separately. But, no, I actually enjoy working like that and the children do too. I think I've actually broadened some in all areas. (Christchurch)

Planning with Other Teachers: Shared Classes

Having to fit in with other teachers was mentioned by some beginning teachers as a barrier to teaching a more integrated curriculum, but most also saw working with other teachers as one of the many satisfying aspects of the job. The extent to which beginning teachers plan co-operatively with other teachers and share class teaching, ranges all the way from those who do none of either to a few who regularly plan with their colleagues and have shared responsibility for a group of children. At the least, there is shared planning of topics to be covered to make sure children do not repeat work and resources are available for teachers who need them. We have already seen that 80 of the beginning teachers teach in a single cell classroom, although many of these are also part of a

syndicate structure within their area of the school. The most common pattern of planning appears to be when teachers in a syndicate or particular area of a school, for example junior school, meet at regular intervals, ranging from once a week to once a term, to plan their collective work. The most commonly mentioned focus of this planning is the selection of unit studies or centres of interest topics. The group may collectively establish objectives, discuss teaching approaches, and collect resources. More commonly, individual staff concentrate on selected topics and do background work for other teachers, who may then draw on this resource for their own classroom teaching.

Swapping of classes or groups of children is, in the main, limited to a few specialist areas, the most common of which are music and physical education. Children may be cross-grouped for a subject, for example, mathematics, which is essentially a form of ability grouping, with teachers being responsible for various levels. For some areas of the curriculum, usually 'cultural' subjects such as art, drama and music, a syndicate may plan a programme for which individual teachers take a subject responsibility and the children rotate for, say, an afternoon a week. Individual children may also be moved from one class to another, for example, children with disabilities, or children with special abilities, for example, art, and children who need extra help with English (ESL).

Children with Learning Difficulties

When the beginning teachers had finished talking about the various curriculum areas in their classroom, we asked them how they were coping with children who had learning difficulties in one or more subjects. As with most questions, the beginning teachers' responses were influenced by their class and the nature of the school. About a dozen beginning teachers felt they had been given a handpicked class; their children were all achieving at appropriate levels; and apart from one or two who might need 'a bit of extra attention', they did not have any children with learning difficulties. At the other end of the spectrum were beginning teachers in schools they had already described as being in a low socioeconomic area with a range of attendant problems typically associated with low income families, including a higher than average number of children with learning difficulties. However, children with learning difficulties were not confined to these areas, and most beginning teachers had a few children they considered to have particular problems. Where beginning teachers specified the number of children in their class having learning difficulties, the numbers ranged from two to five, the most likely number being two or three. One Christchurch teacher had been appointed to a position where she was responsible for children with learning difficulties who were withdrawn from their normal classes to spend time with her. Three Auckland teachers and one in Wellington

were in the same position, or worked with special needs children for at least part of the day. Children needing special help were occasionally described as being 'slow to learn' across all curriculum areas, and others had behavioural problems or had 'problems concentrating'. On the whole, children needing special help fell into three rather different categories: those whose level of attainment was lower than expected in one or more subjects; children with special needs who had been placed in mainstreamed classes; and children for whom English was a second language. Where curriculum areas were referred to, the most frequently mentioned were reading, mathematics and written language, with a few references to oral language and poor motor skills in physical education.

There is no doubt that most beginning teachers find it difficult to deal with children who in various ways are not in the 'mainstream' of the class. However, only three beginning teachers described themselves as 'not coping'. One spoke of four children in her class who were 'driving her crazy'. Another felt staff in her school do not get the support they need to deal with such children, and the third had started the year working enthusiastically with a pupil who needed special help, but lack of interest and support from the parents made it hard to continue. While the other beginning teachers might acknowledge that coping with children with learning difficulties was hard work; that progress was often slow; that a disproportionate amount of time had to be spent with such children; and that they, as teachers, put a lot of extra time into such work (the most extreme example was one teacher who claimed to spend one and a half hours every Sunday preparing individualised programmes for each of three children), most gave the impression that they believed the children's needs were being addressed. The reasons they outlined included one or more of the following:

The school had extra staff, and classroom teachers were assisted by:

- Teacher aides who either withdrew children or worked for set times with individual or small groups of children within the class.

- A reading recovery teacher.

- English as a second language (ESL) specialists.

- Extra staff appointed under the 1:20 policy.

- A guidance and learning unit/teacher/counsellor within the school who helped teachers identify children who needed special attention, provided

extra materials, and perhaps removed children for special help. Such assistance was sometimes provided by equity funding to schools identified as having special needs.

Beginning teachers had excellent support and guidance from other teachers.

- Within the staff there may be a teacher who has a special responsibility for special needs children, or has a particular responsibility for a curriculum area, for example, beginning school mathematics, and is available to give advice to teachers who have children with learning difficulties in this area.

- Tutor teachers were a common source of support.

- If a teacher worked in a paired or team-teaching situation, support was usually available.

- A beginning teacher had the good fortune to be in a school with a clear policy and practices for helping children with special needs.

The beginning teacher had worked out various strategies for addressing the needs of children with learning difficulties. These included:

- Isolating the difficulties of individual children.

- Using ability groupings for various curriculum areas.

- Providing individualised programmes for some children, commonly referred to as IEPs (individual education programmes).

- Adapting the classroom programme to suit individual children.

- Peer tutoring, or setting up buddying systems where more competent children assisted others.

- Putting children on contracts to complete work.

- Running a flexible classroom, either in a single cell or open plan situation, with flexible groupings within curriculum areas to cater for individual needs.

- Making use of 0.2 release time to work with individual children.

- Using parent help.

- Making sure classroom organisation allowed plenty of time for one-to-one teaching.

- Withdrawing children to specially designated areas for short periods of time.

- By using assembly time and 'tech' time in intermediate schools, and short spells before or after school or in the lunch hour for individual teaching.

We did not ask beginning teachers to comment on the extent to which their training had prepared them to work with children with learning difficulties, but two said they had selected courses at college with this focus. Two others regarded the area as one of special interest to themselves and said they had a special empathy with such children.

Examples of beginning teachers' comments:

> The good thing is that at our school there is the support from parents and I've got some parents who come in and take the children out and give them special help - remedial reading, and some parents who are willing to come in and spend half an hour just helping children to learn spelling lessons and things like that. Things that you don't really have time in the classroom to do. How am I coping with that? Well you find that you don't actually have time for one-to-one; it takes a little organisation. I'm still learning to do that I'm learning that I can use times like music assembly time. I've got one girl in my class who is a really, really poor reader, probably reading on a 7 to 8 level and she's going to high school next year. So I've decided that I'm going to get her to read to me like the whole 40 minutes while the rest of the children are at music assembly. I find it hard trying to give them the help they need while keeping everything going at the same time. (Auckland)

> Sometimes. Two of my readers I didn't pick up until early this term so that was two terms before I realised I knew they were below their chronological age but I didn't realise how far below but generally because this year my class was hand-

picked that hasn't really arisen too much. (Auckland)

It's normally the same four that come up again and again and two of them are ESL. There's no specialist for form 1 for that subject, so they don't get any extra, only what I can give them. But because it's such a small group and the rest of the class is so good and independent I can work with them. But they're not benefiting as much as they would from being either taken out or having someone come in regularly. In his own culture, he'd be a special needs kid anyway. But one of the kids, I know that it is her ESL that is holding her back. (Auckland)

Good. I've got four children with major learning difficulties and they've got real bad behaviour problems as well. I've sorted out the behaviour for two of them and now they're actually open to learning. The other two at this stage still aren't open to learning because of their behaviour so we're still working on their behaviour and getting them through as much as they're capable of doing, but they're not interested so it makes it very hard. But I feel fine with them. They are actually learning. Sometimes I feel as though they're not but I can see it sometimes. Occasionally I pull my hair out with them but I feel good about them as well. (Auckland)

I think I have a strength in children with learning difficulties. One of my children got 10 in their mastery when I first started; now she's got 100. That's what I love to see. She's a little girl below average and she's just thrilled. But I have children with difficulties, I don't put pressure on them and they relate to that. They try. Anyone who has a problem if you apply pressure you increase the problem but if you take that off and accept them where they are at they just get better and better. That's what happened. (Wellington)

To be honest, I've got a pretty flash class. So there's only really a couple of children and I found that to give them individual programmes has been pretty effective with some of these say, flash kids, for want of a better word. I've been able to use them really effectively as peer tutors for a lot of things. I've had parents in to support within the classroom as well so there has not been a lack of support at all from the kids in the classroom through to parents and all the rest of it, so it hasn't been a problem at all. I've made the time to build in individual programmes for them. Simple as that really. As I said I've been lucky, there's only really a couple that sort of stand out in that respect. (Wellington)

I've got two children on an IEP, so that's basically just that. I'm finding out where they are and then taking it from there, getting it to where you have contact with special services. I also have a lady come in once a week and take like a circle of friends, takes a group out. It's like a self-esteem builder for my special needs boy to get him involved with the other kids more. I've got my teacher's aide too, so that's quite helpful for one-to-one. She's in my classroom from 9 till 12, five days a week. (Wellington)

I haven't really got any in my class, so I haven't really had to cope with that yet. (Christchurch)

I just find it really hard in the class, giving her the time that she needs, so I use my release time with her or I use my tutor teacher to take her out and do things with her and that's basically where she gets her main help from. There's nothing else available. (Christchurch)

Oh yes, we have difficulties but I find there is no real problem. Because of the low numbers I am able to spend time with them one-on-one and if someone is having problems in an area such as say, fractions, I could pull him out and spend more time with him .... so with a small class, it is a lot easier to have that individual time and effort put into it. (Christchurch)

I feel in reading I'm doing a lot for those kids, with peer reading and buddy reading using other children in the classroom. Often I think it's a lack of time. Like some of those children you could sit next to them for the whole day and you could spend the whole day with them but realistically you can't do that ... We have a teacher who is taking out these children about three times a week ... but yeah, I try to nab the kids after school or during school or whatever. (Christchurch)

In the areas where I don't feel confident because of my teaching and my preparation, I do get very worried. But areas where I feel that I'm quite confident in teaching, I can see strategies to avoid their lack of confidence and try and build it up a wee bit. It depends on the subject; if it's maths then I can think of a dozen ways of solving problems; if it's reading I tend to fluster a bit and try different approaches until one strikes home.... I'm feel I'm still learning the strategies in some areas. (Christchurch)

All of the beginning teachers felt confident to identify children who were having learning difficulties. One even went so far as to say that it was easier to identify children with a problem and more of a challenge once you had done so. Another teacher felt that it wasn't identifying the child with a difficulty that was the problem, but getting the necessary help for that child, especially if it involved getting outside help.

Assessment of Children's Work

We asked the beginning teachers whether they thought they were able to assess children's work reasonably well, including children who appear to be experiencing difficulties, and whether teachers were able to use their evaluations to improve their teaching programmes. Most beginning teachers gave the impression that they acknowledged the importance of assessing children. Virtually all of the beginning teachers in Auckland, and most in Wellington (18 out of 24) and Christchurch (16 out of 22), also said they were confident to assess children's work. However, about half made it clear that they had not been as

confident at the beginning of the year. This was usually for one of two reasons:

- they were not sufficiently confident about how to set up systems of assessment and
- they did not know what standard to expect from a particular age range of children.

In Wellington, one or two beginning teachers acknowledged help they had received from college lecturers and courses but rather more were critical, saying they had not received the guidance they needed at college and, in several cases, that this was because college lecturers tended to regard evaluation, assessment and monitoring of children's work as of secondary importance - an unhelpful attitude in the view of at least one beginning teacher in the changed climate in schools, where more grading of children is now expected. One or two Auckland beginning teachers would have liked more information from the college, particularly guidance as to how to get started at the beginning of the year, but most felt a teacher had to be in the classroom to really learn how to implement assessment procedures. Christchurch beginning teachers made a similar point. Many of them commented that, perhaps more than with curriculum content or teaching methods, assessment was an area where confidence only came with experience.

It is clear from the comments of beginning teachers that their views on their ability to assess children's work is influenced by the support they have received at the school, either because there is a clear school policy on assessment with consistent school-wide procedures in place; or the beginning teacher is in a syndicate where team discussion on children's assessment takes place; or a beginning teacher has particular support with assessment from a tutor teacher.

Beginning teachers may be more confident about assessing children's work in some curriculum areas than in others - reading and mathematics were two where beginning teachers usually appeared to be comfortable with assessment procedures. These were areas where, at college, students were likely to have had most help, influenced by the fact that reading and mathematics are two subjects with well-developed, nationally prescribed courses with assessment procedures built into them.[8] Other subjects, for example, written language, music and art, with less explicit assessment procedures, may be more difficult. Subjects where teachers need to gauge children's attitudes are also difficult, for example, social studies and health. Beginning teachers may also feel that, for the age group of children with whom they are working, formal assessment in these areas is

[8] *See* Renwick, M. and Vize, J., (1991) *Windows on Teacher Education: Phase 2*, p.109.

inappropriate.

Beginning teachers gave examples of systems they had in place to help them with children's progress including:

- a file on each child with samples of recent work and checklists
- folders for each curriculum area, which include lists of all children and notes of points a teacher needs to discuss with individual children
- class book with notes on individual children to help focus on points that need attention
- systems for children for self-marking or evaluation which help teachers to see where children are at and which areas need revision.

Some issues related to assessment of children's work raised by beginning teacher were:

- The need for assessment to be linked to a teacher's aims and objectives in teaching a unit of work - an approach stressed at college.
- Not being confident about the level appropriate to a particular age group, which makes it difficult for a beginning teacher to know whether their expectations are too high, a child's work is acceptable or not, and how hard they can be 'pushed' to improve. This is particularly the case if a beginning teacher has not had much previous experience with an age group, for example, new entrants.
- The difficulty of being critical enough of poor work - a concern not to damage children's self-esteem, particularly at the beginning of the year.
- Even if assessment methods are introduced to students at college, putting them into practice in the classroom is not as straightforward as it appeared then. It takes time for processes to become automatic and for a beginning teacher to be sure they are covering all aspects.

- Keeping checklists is one thing; more meaningful assessment is much more complex. Conferring on a one-to-one basis with children tells much more than lists of numbers.

- Confidence in assessing children's work may be slow to develop. A beginning teacher can have some basic principles and methods but, until he or she knows a particular class of children well, the teacher cannot be confident of assessing them successfully.

- Working out the most appropriate method of assessment for any given skill or task, for example, observation, test, checklists, self-marking by the children.

- Not having done enough assessments at the beginning of the year, not having enough facts and figures written down when it came to writing reports half-way through the year.

- Always looking to vary the method of assessment instead of relying on, say, checklists for everything.

- Having to fit in with a school system of assessment that does not match up with their own beliefs (a minority view).

- Finding it difficult to deal with parental expectations, especially in terms of comparing children with their peers.

Beginning Teachers' Evaluation of Their Teaching Programmes

Beginning teachers commented on two related topics: assessment of children's work, leading to decisions about the next step necessary for a class programme or for individual children; and evaluation of their total teaching programme and methods. Beginning teachers frequently said that both processes were ongoing. They claim to be constantly thinking about what they are doing, reflecting on what does and does not work, in an attempt to teach more effectively. Various processes were described. About half of the beginning teachers were using some sort of written evaluations. A few of these wrote comments in a notebook as issues arose; others sat down at the end of each week or month and evaluated each subject area and their performance over all; others were

required to assess their own teaching as part of the monitoring of their performance by the tutor teacher; and in a few cases self-appraisal is part of a school's teacher appraisal system for all teachers. The other beginning teachers evaluated their teaching in a less formal way, usually because they felt they did not have sufficient time to do more than make a mental note of what was going well, and what was not going well. A number of teachers operated like the one who commented:

> I don't always write it down but I know what is successful and where I need to pick up on things.

A number of teachers, in discussing evaluation, made the link between assessing children and evaluating their own teaching. One fed into the other; the teacher had to assess the children to know how well he or she was teaching. If, through the assessment of children, the teacher found areas that the children still did not know, even though the focus had been taught, it was necessary to teach the topic again. In the same way, the cycle of assessment and evaluation was linked to planning:

> You can't do your planning unless you look at what they can do, so you adjust what you want to do to what they can do.

Some issues raised by beginning teachers were:

- Beginning teachers were encouraged to evaluate at college, but in the classroom they are not always sure what should be evaluated, for what reason, and how it should be done.

- It is easier to know that something is wrong with a child's work than to know how to put it right, for example, written language.

- A beginning teacher may be aware that a particular approach to a subject or individual lesson did not work, but not know how to improve it next time.

- A beginning teacher may be confident with his or her own systems of evaluation, but not be comfortable in conforming with school requirements.

- As the year progresses, the need to evaluate does not decrease but the need for formal procedures may do so. Increased confidence means more can be done 'on the wing'.

- The importance of critical support from tutor teachers and principals who help beginning teachers to evaluate and improve their classroom performance.

- The importance for beginning teachers of having the safety valve of sharing their 'disasters' with other beginning teachers - 'the only people you can be completely honest with!'

PROFILE OF BEGINNING TEACHER 3

Daphne wanted to teach in a local school so she is pleased, after applying for 29 jobs, to be teaching within five minutes of where she has lived all her life. She is now responsible for 26 junior pupils ranging from new entrants to standard 2, in a single cell classroom. The pupils are mainly Maori and Pacific Islanders.

Daphne's main reactions are relief and pleasure at having got a job in a school where she wanted to teach. She is well known in the district because she was a pupil at the school, did voluntary work there before she went to college, and had her first teaching practice section at the school. At first she wondered whether being so well known would be a problem but this has worked to her advantage, as parents are relaxed with her. She feels she can talk easily with them which is important because they tend to be shy with outsiders. Her parent interviews were 'fantastic'; Daphne was so pleased she thought she would like to hold them every month! In other respects, the job is much as she expected it to be, particularly the hard work. She was definitely ready for the responsibility of a class and was disappointed at the beginning of the year that she did not get into her classroom earlier. She had left work two weeks early so that she could be well prepared, but the principal told her to relax and not to worry - not very helpful advice as she 'sat there panicking anyway'.

Her only problems relate to her being new as a teacher, and not having the resources that experienced teachers would have. She has used about 90% of the resources she made at college but it takes such a long time to build up all she needs particularly when, as a beginning teacher, she keeps experimenting with new ideas. This has meant regularly working at night and at the weekend. There is a temptation to spend a lot of extra time at school when one lives close by. She realises now that she was overdoing it a bit earlier in the year when the principal advised her to slow down.

In retrospect Daphne is less critical of the college than she thought she would be. Beginning teachers who had talked to the students in their final year warned them that they would not use half of the material that they had covered at college, so Daphne started teaching with that attitude, but she finds that she has used a good deal of what she learnt. She also realises that the college could not have completely prepared her for teaching - 'some things you just have to fall over yourself'. One of the reasons Daphne was 'not shocked' by classroom experiences at the beginning of the year was because lecturers had stressed the fundamental importance of planning. The work she had done in the third year on planning units of work was particularly valuable. In fact, she cannot think of any ways in which the college did not prepare her, so there cannot be any that were important.

Daphne considers that the lack of commitment of some of the teachers means the school is less effective than it should be. It may be that because she is young and new she feels there are some teachers who are 'slack'. There are plenty who are 'prepared to give their all', but it is difficult for the staff to have clear goals and to work together when some teachers do not pull their weight. Daphne realises that her enthusiasm for the job means that she sometimes 'works herself stupid', but she hopes that in 20 years' time she will still want to be well prepared and organised.

Daphne felt well prepared to teach juniors, but not to cope with the wide age-range in her class. She is relieved at how well she is managing because she does not think she was prepared to work with vertical groupings of children. At college, she got the impression that not many schools grouped children in this way largely because it is not a system favoured by parents. She did visit one school as a student where new entrants to standard 4 were grouped together for one particular curriculum area and the thought of that 'just blew our minds. We thought we would never have to handle that'. One of the things she finds difficult is that she believes new entrants need more developmental periods than standard 2 pupils.

Daphne attended a course earlier in the year on language for children from non-English speaking backgrounds which impressed her and gave her much that was helpful for all children. The whole school has been involved in some of the suggested changes for oral and written language as well as reading.

Daphne would appreciate a course that would help her focus on the range of levels within her class. She gets quite upset that she does not seem to be able to give all the children what they should be getting. Mathematics was a problem at the beginning of the year. Daphne started off with 10 groups for BSM, as well as the standard 2s, which was unmanageable. Other staff were not keen on cross-grouping for mathematics so Daphne had to reduce the number of groups in her class. She was relieved that she had done an extra course at college on mathematics for standards 1 and 2 children; this proved its value as at least she knew how to write a unit plan for a term. Daphne concentrated on science in her third year at college. She finds science is a subject where the age range is not such a problem because her programme is not based on ability levels and she is able to work with the whole class. She has no experience of computers in the classroom as the school only has one broken one. Some are budgeted for next year. Daphne missed out on music at college and she is not happy with what she is doing in the classroom. She is pleased with her drama and also with art, which was a major at college, although art is another subject where the range of levels has been a problem. She has tended to choose activites which are appropriate for the younger children and then to extend the older ones, but this is only partially successful. The same is true of physical education. How does

one plan a programme to teach skills to children who are all at different levels? Maori language and culture is a strength because Daphne is a fluent speaker herself, and the children are familiar with Maoritanga. Daphne has taken more health and science than social studies, and tries to integrate them with other subjects.

Daphne has quite a few children she considers have learning difficulties and does not feel she has coped well with them. She is disappointed at the lack of support for a beginning teacher. The guidance unit did help one child who had come to the school from a health camp and the one-to-one attention made a big difference. A speech language therapist comes in for two hours a week to work with a Vietnamese pupil who has made good progress. This little girl also goes with her brother to reading recovery. The boy was already on the programme when he moved from another school so he had priority, but Daphne thinks there are other children in her class who need support which they are not getting because of the competition for places. The assistant principal helps from time to time with some other children but there are several who need more individual attention than Daphne can give them.

The teachers within the whanau share a few ideas about which topics they are going to cover but they do not plan co-operatively. Daphne would like to do more co-operative planning but the mixed ages are a problem. All of the teachers in the whanau have some standard 2 children in their class but some of the other classes include children up to standard 4, and it is difficult sorting out work for the various levels.

Daphne feels strongly about issues of equity and is adamant that children should be treated equally regardless of ethnicity, gender, or economic background. Sexism is not an issue in the class because 'in Maori culture everybody is the same', and the children know that that is Daphne's view. Racism is not an issue, although some of the children are sensitive about who they are and Daphne thinks it is important for children to share something of their backgrounds and feelings. She joked with one child who said he was 'just a coconut', replying 'I didn't know you could climb so high up the tree!' Daphne will not stand for any kind of racist comments and believes that making a joke of them is one way of helping the children to cope with the situation. She works hard to build up the children's self-esteem so that they do not feel 'a nobody'. As far as the economic background of the children goes, they are 'all pretty much in the same boat', so it is not an issue.

Daphne feels responsible for her own professional development. She has high standards and is hard on herself when it comes to judging her performance in the classroom. She has developed in so many ways during the year that it is difficult to isolate particular areas. When she was a student, the classroom seemed so far away she wondered how she would manage when she finally got there. As a beginning teacher she

felt very new, was full of self-doubt, and looked around for help. When she was on section she tended to stick to basic approaches and did not try out new or unusual things. However, once in the classroom she realised she had to try things to survive and is now excited at what she has been able to achieve. She has really extended herself and greatly increased in confidence.

At the beginning of the year, Daphne found the sharing of experiences at beginning teachers' meetings helpful. The organisers wanted the beginning teachers to focus on particular topics, but the teachers themselves got most from just swapping experiences. Daphne has 'filled in' for another teacher on two extra courses - English as a second language, and art. She thought she was to go on others but there was confusion about who could go and in the end she opted out. Daphne does not get any of the 0.2 release time and thinks this is because she was appointed to a pool relieving position, although she is just an ordinary teacher in practice. She feels it is unfair that she has not got the allocation as it would have meant she could have reduced the extra hours she has had to put into preparation. Daphne has also had virtually no support from her tutor teacher. She says she has basically been left to get on with it. The tutor teacher made reports in February and March, but nothing has happened since then. Daphne had to ask the tutor teacher to come into her class the only time she has observed her teach. The tutor teacher seems to be too busy doing '50,000 other things' even though she has not got a class of her own. Fortunately, most of the other teachers are supportive.

Daphne's standards for herself are so high she does not think she will ever achieve them but will always be striving for more. Lack of resources within the school are the main constraint on being a more effective teacher. She thinks the resources are 'pathetic' and commented that one reason given for their lack is that 'kids steal and all that sort of garbage', which makes her angry because these are the very children who most need resources. She does not think that the money the school has is well spent - even the supply of library books is inadequate.

Daphne is looking forward to her second year. She is no longer a student or the 'associate's slave'. She is the teacher now, and she knows she has the skills to succeed.

PROFILE OF BEGINNING TEACHER 4

Jacky applied for 25 jobs and is now teaching in an intermediate school with a staff of 35. She has 29, mainly Maori and Pacific Island pupils, in her Form 1 class. Jacky wanted to teach in an intermediate school although she would have preferred Form 2. She thought college prepared students well for applying for jobs and for job interviews. She included her college profile, which was really good, with her job application, along with two references from associates.

Jacky feels she is coping well but teaching is hard work. She is constantly tired and has been often, sick, 'picking up every little bug that comes along'. The extra things she has to do, such as taking electives and sport, have taken it out of her. However, she enjoys the school which is 'a bit old-fashioned in a lot of ways', no doubt because many of the teachers have been there for between 10 and 15 years and some of them are resistant to new ideas, particularly from younger teachers. Nonetheless, the teachers do their best and the school serves its purpose, particularly in an area where there are 'some really tough kids'.

Jacky is finding that now that she is in the classroom some of what she learnt at college is not applicable and there are gaps in her knowledge. For example, a pupil from Korea has just joined the class. She was put in Jacky's class because she had the fewest children but she has no idea how to cope with a child who cannot speak English. Students had some preparation at college for working with Polynesian children but 'none for the influx of Asian children'. Nor does Jacky think she was well prepared for children with special needs. She finds coping with one or two children with seven-year-old reading ages, along with others who are reading at a 15-year-old level, as well as all the ones in between, one of her greatest problems. There is a special needs teacher in the school but she has only enough hours to take the extreme cases. There is also a teacher's aide but she is not available for Jacky's class. The school certainly needs more resources in this area. One pupil who is advanced in mathematics and another with particular artistic gifts go to other classes for these subjects.

Despite these problems Jacky was ready for the responsibility of a class at the beginning of the year and is enjoying teaching. Her class was not handpicked but the children are very friendly and she thinks she has established a good rapport with them. She is particularly pleased with a whanau session she has introduced on a Friday when they talk about being a family within a class. Jacky takes the chance to talk about things such as bullying, gossiping, confidence and self-esteem which are really part of the health programme. There were problems at the beginning of the year so Jacky is pleased that the class has 'really come together' in the last few weeks, and proud about what they have

all achieved together. She has also put a great deal of work into the classroom environment.

Jacky described her school as being in a mainly working class area but there is also a small pocket of affluent homes in the district. This does not create problems but the religious background of some of the families does. A number of families are Brethren, Mormons or belong to the Church of Christ. These parents tend to take offence easily. Racism is not a problem in the classroom, where Jacky is careful to discuss any issues that arise, but it can break out in the playground. There are five Indian children in Jacky's class and she often has to cope with tears as a consequence of playground abuse. Sexism is also something that is talked about openly in the class. Jacky feels the children have good attitudes. As pupils at the school come from a range of ethnic backgrounds, the focus of the school is multicultural rather than bicultural. As well as the Polynesian, Maori and Indian children, Jacky has pupils with Dutch and Bulgarian backgrounds. The children are knowledgeable and proud of their family roots and their cultural backgrounds are frequently expressed in their work, particularly their art. Some of the parents would like Jacky to teach Maori but the school policy is to recognise all cultures, and there is a recurring problem of fitting everything in.

Jacky thinks she was well prepared for the age level she is teaching, particularly in language and art. She has a lively, creative writing programme based on what she learnt through lecturers at college. Unfortunately, because there is an art specialist in the school she does not take art. She should perhaps have taken more mathematics and health courses at college, because health issues are so important at this school. Jacky did three intermediate sections while she was at college so was able to prepare many appropriate resources, most of which she has used. She is disappointed that she did not have any preparation at college for the particular social studies topics she is now working on, and thinks that the Form 1 syllabus could have been looked at more closely. Jacky learnt a lot about management at college and has also taken extra courses on management since she started teaching.

The school works on a syndicate basis. At the beginning of the term teachers were given a term overview of what must be covered in each subject, with suggestions of how topics might be taught. It is up to each teacher to decide how they handle each subject, provided the specified content is covered. A specialist teacher plans the social studies programme, which the classroom teachers then just have to follow. The children love the programme which is dealing with the zoo at present. Jacky has managed to integrate a number of curriculum areas with this study, particularly problem-solving and graphing in mathematics as well as creative language, including poetry, where children imagined that they were one of the animals they saw at the zoo. Each class only does one six-week

block of science a year; the programme lacks experimentation and is not as varied as Jacky would like. The children work out of young-scientist books and encyclopedias. The school could do with a science specialist.

Teachers have to keep to a school timetable because of fitting in things like 'tech time' and sharing resources, but Jacky does not find this particularly restricting. The way the school is organised means that class programmes are sometimes interrupted. This is a problem with reading, for example, which is in period five, a time that is often taken up with culture groups, assemblies and sport. Reading is restricted to pupils working off individual contracts and book reviews, although Jacky has 'heaps of other ideas' she just cannot fit in.

Music, art and drama are all covered by specialists. There is a computer room which the class is timetabled to go to. There is also a computer in the classroom which children use every day to 'publish' their work. The school is 'fairly sporty'. The class does physical education twice a week as well as having fitness every morning and sport every day. Jacky is a netballer so enjoys sport herself and the class 'all get out together and have a good time'. The school used to have a Polynesian culture group but the staff member who took it left which is very disappointing because of the high Polynesian roll. Jacky offered to take the club herself but the principal thought she had enough to do as a beginning teacher.

Jacky had problems with assessment at the beginning of the year, particularly with reading, but is quite comfortable now. Pupils' progress on computers is difficult to assess, especially when it comes to writing report cards. She constantly uses her evaluations to improve her teaching programme.

Jacky feels competent to monitor her own progress as a teacher and has no problems identifying what she could do better. She is particularly pleased with her increased knowledge of the mathematics curriculum. She now realises that mathematics can be fun - something she is constantly trying to impress on the children.

Jacky is pleased with the number of parents who are available to help. There are always plenty who are willing to go on class trips.

Jacky has hardly ever seen her tutor teacher because they have different release times, depending on when their classes have their 'tech time'. The tutor teacher is also incredibly busy at the school with responsibilities for netball, social studies, and civil defence. Jacky gets most of her support from her syndicate leader who is 'just great'. She is very willing to share her ideas and resources. There are two other beginning teachers at the school who know exactly what Jacky is going through and are supportive. There is no point in trying to talk to the deputy principal because he is never available. None of the beginning teachers get their 0.2 allocation so it is a case of 'fending for

yourself at the moment'. The 'tech time' is useful for planning and marking.

The three beginning teachers at the school meet with the deputy principal every week but the meetings just turn out to be 'a big gossip session'. Jacky does not think they ever do anything worthwhile. However, the beginning teachers' meetings which they go to twice a term are valuable because they have a focus on things such as reading or resource making.

Jacky's aim is to teach at a secondary school. She intends to complete her degree but she took this year off to settle into the classroom. She feels responsible for her own university studies although the school would help with fees. She has taken courses in New Zealand literature, phonetics and linguistics, which she has not found of any practical use in the classroom. Her other professional development she thinks is a shared responsiblity between herself and the school. There is a problem with the school supporting teachers to go on courses during the day because of the shortage of funds for relief teachers. (The limits to the money available for relief teachers Jacky puts down to the school being bulk funded and decisions being made to spend the money in other ways, including new netball courts.) Jacky is annoyed that the deputy principal does not always keep her informed about possible courses. She has been to one on management, arranged through the beginning teacher meetings which was excellent.

Jacky's mother is a bilingual teacher, but her partner is her main source of support. He helped put down a hangi for 90 children which made him realise what a big job Jacky has taken on. Since then he has helped by taking a group of children to the zoo. Jacky has not had any contact with the NZEI or the board of trustees. She does not do any professional reading and has no links back to the college.

Jacky is pleased with her achievements this year - she has developed beyond her expectations. She is particularly pleased with the change in the children in her class because there were 'a few horrors' in the class and she thinks their work habits have improved greatly and they are just generally more mature. The main constraint on being a more effective teacher is the six-day timetable, linked with lack of time. Assemblies and sport mean that a seven-period day gives only five teaching periods. When technicraft class time is added to this, the class teachers 'hardly ever see' their own class. The other thing that bothers Jacky is the school limit of $75 a year for photocopying. She has used up all her allowance which makes it difficult to prepare materials for each group.

Jacky's goals for next year are to start the year with stricter guidelines for the children in terms of acceptable standards of work and behaviour. She 'basically wants to get the class into gear in the first term instead of waiting until the second and third'. This will be easier because she will not have to start from scratch setting up a full classroom programme.

EQUITY ISSUES

In each year of the study we questioned the trainees in our interview sample about their attitude towards various issues of equity - sexism, racism and socioeconomic status - and how well they thought the college addressed these issues. Biculturalism was also discussed. We wondered what the experience of beginning teachers was with regard to these issues and asked those we interviewed if they had any comments they wished to make.

This is particularly difficult material to analyse and impossible to quantify. First, a distinction has to be drawn between the number of beginning teachers who referred to an issue and the number for whom the issue was a problem. References to sexism in Wellington would be a good example. Of the three equity issues, this was the one most frequently referred to by beginning teachers but also the one where the lowest proportion felt it to be a problem. Second, it was sometimes difficult to decide whether, when a beginning teacher said an issue such as racism was *not* a problem, the teacher meant it was not a problem because it did not exist, or that it did exist as an issue but was not a problem because it was being dealt with in the school or class. The former was the most likely explanation. Third, we must stress that we are referring here to beginning teachers' perceptions. Whether or not there are, for example, sexist or racist practices in these schools, is a separate issue. With these provisos in mind, various trends have emerged.

Socioeconomic Status

The issue most likely to be considered important in schools by beginning teachers is the socioeconomic status of the children's families. Of the three issues raised, this was the one referred to by the highest proportion of beginning teachers in Auckland and

Christchurch - in Auckland by virtually all teachers - and thought to be an issue by at least half the beginning teachers across the three regions.

In a minority of cases, particularly in some districts within the Auckland region, the beginning teachers' comments referred to the relative affluence of their children's backgrounds and the effect this had on school resources. Children from well-off, middle class families were also considered to adjust to school readily, and made teaching more straightforward for beginning teachers.

More commonly, teachers working in low socioeconomic areas commented on the effects of poverty - lack of money for school trips and stationery, and children not having enough to eat and coming to school without a lunch. A few comments were also made about lack of cleanliness and children being cold because of inadequate clothing. These schools tended to have multicultural rolls. Several beginning teachers indicated that this was their first experience of a school with predominantly Maori and Pacific Island children, and for some, any close contact with Maori and Pacific Island children. One commented, 'It's scary actually, what I take for granted that those kids don't have'. Others spoke of the patience needed when you had to wait for children to bring things like stationery to school, and children's distress when they knew they would have to go home and ask for money for class trips. The fact that some children could not afford to go on even subsidised class trips added to the problems of paucity of experiences typical of some of these children - experiences beginning teachers considered necessary for them to benefit from classroom programmes. As one beginning teacher commented:

> The biggest 'ism' is the socioeconomic status - the kids saying to one another, 'You're poor, you can't do this, you can't do that.' That's far worse at the moment than racism is. (Wellington)

This same teacher went on to say that the school held competitions each week to see which class banked the most. She had refused to let her class take part in this activity because she believed it was unfair to highlight the lack of money of some children.

Competition amongst children about material possessions was a perceived problem in a range of schools. This often focused on clothing and was particularly noticeable on 'mufti days' in intermediate schools:

> There's a lot of peer pressure - who's got roller blades, and who hasn't. This sort of thing happens a lot and the children realise very quickly on mufti days, who got the most clothes and that sort of thing. They do hassle each other then and it's hard. (Christchurch)

Running counter to this trend was another teacher's comment:

> Quite often children will say to you, openly in front of the rest of the class, 'We can't afford it at the moment'. And there doesn't seem to be any sort of bias towards those people, or negative attitudes, which is good. (Auckland)

In their comments, the beginning teachers tended to focus on one or other of the issues of equity rather than connecting one with the other. In fact, because most children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds were in schools with multiethnic rolls, questions of poverty in those schools may be linked to those of race. In the examples they gave of problems of poverty, few of the beginning teachers themselves made comments with racist overtones. A few, for example, did not appear to consider the possibility that children from minority ethnic backgrounds may have rich and varied experiences in their life outside school.

> We can't get money for trips so their experiences are pretty limited here. (Auckland)

Other teachers implied that those with experiences they considered to be limited were somehow not normal.

> It's exciting if you know that some child actually has a stable background ... you really, really think, 'Oh, that one's normal. That's one child that's actually grown up in a normal family'. Whereas some of those kids ... most of these kids aren't.... (Auckland)

Racism

In Auckland, about half of the beginning teachers said there were no racist practices in schools, either amongst staff or pupils. Most of the remainder had nothing to say on the topic. In Wellington, about half of the beginning teachers commented on evidence of racism within the school but rarely substantiated what the issue was, and usually felt it was being dealt with. In Christchurch, two-thirds of the beginning teachers said there was no racism or had nothing to say.

When beginning teachers did substantiate their views on racism at the school or in their class, three related views emerged:

1. They did not have to take racism too seriously, 'because younger children are less likely to be aware of ethnic differences, or to be upset by racist attitudes' - 'I don't

think these kids understand it at the moment'. One beginning teacher, referring to Maori in her class commented:

> I think they're at an age where they don't quite understand they're being laughed at.

2. Racism is an issue for adults who 'put people into boxes', but children, 'don't realise they are different' or are 'more open-minded than adults'. Teachers holding such views may not 'wish to make racism an issue in the classroom'.

3. Racism amongst parents is sometimes reflected in children's attitudes - for example, a child who refused to speak Maori because 'I'm not Maori, and you're not going to make me'.

A few beginning teachers referred to parents who were concerned about the number of Asian children in a class for whom English was a second language, and how much teacher time is going to be devoted to them.

Racism amongst children, when it was mentioned, was most likely to be in the playground. The few examples given usually referred to Indian, Chinese and recent Asian migrants; antagonism was based on appearance, speech, dress and religious observance.

> ... It's not so much a European/Polynesian thing. It's more the Indian children out here. They really cop it quite badly. (Auckland)

> I'm not going to play with you because you speak funny, you look funny. (Christchurch)

However, one beginning teacher in a bilingual class referred to antagonism between Maori and Pacific Islanders:

> ... a lot of racism goes on between the Maoris and the Pacific Islanders at this school. It's a total turn around. Very bad. There's a lot of fighting and abuse. They don't mix in the playground. It's really bad at this school.

She went on to say antagonism was also directed towards Pakeha:

> I've got a little Pakeha in my class at the moment and she has been given a really hard time over being white and having long blonde hair. I felt really sorry for her. It's not racism, it's just that she looks different to everybody else. [*sic*] A lot of that goes on out here. (Auckland)

A few beginning teachers referred to 'hidden' or 'latent racism':

> I wouldn't tell them that I thought they were racist, but the unimportance of other cultures to them has rather shocked me at times. (Auckland)

One beginning teacher teaching in a post-primary school felt that 'hidden' racism had to be combated. For many pupils at the school, their only view of Maori was through the media, for example, the 'crime watch' programme and newspaper reports, and these turned them off Maori issues.

One or two beginning teachers said they had been given strategies at college to cope with children's racist behaviour. One or two also referred to school policy on the matter. However, a number of beginning teachers, who were aware of the issues of equity we discussed with them, said that although they acknowledged the issues they did not always feel they had the skills to address them. One Wellington beginning teacher said that when she was at college 'the message kept coming across' to acknowledge ethnic differences, but 'nobody ever said how'. This was particularly the case with racism (one teacher went so far as to say she just ignored it) and how to handle such things as lack of cleanliness with children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. One who had sought help from her deputy principal was also disappointed with the lack of guidance within the school. Another said she had handled a 'little eruption' but 'not the core problem'.

Sexism

We have already noted that sexism was the equity issue most likely to be referred to by Wellington beginning teachers, although a third said they were not aware of sexism in their school or class. This was also the case for more than half the beginning teachers in Auckland and about half those in Christchurch. At least one Wellington beginning teacher felt the issue of sexism was overdone at college, had turned her off and made her 'anti'. Almost all the comments about sexism focused on the classroom and strategies used by beginning teachers to counter sexism, often minor, such as having mixed lines for boys and girls. A few spoke of heightened awareness of such issues as boys taking a disproportionate amount of teachers' time or dominating behaviour in the classroom including classroom discussions - issues students had been introduced to during college courses. A few spoke of trying to be role models for girls and one or two spoke of children picking them up for making sexist remarks.

A few linked sexist behaviour with 'cultural' conditioning - girls are expected to tidy up, and boys are not. Others linked sexist behaviour with ethnicity. The few

examples given were of Samoan cultural values, such as boys displaying dominating behaviour at home and in the classroom; and Pacific Island parents not letting their daughters play sport.

Biculturalism

The term biculturalism in the New Zealand context has a specific meaning referring to Maori/Pakeha relationships. Our data do not allow us to paint a clear picture of the attitudes towards biculturalism of beginning teachers, more than half of whom did not mention the topic. We do not know whether this was because beginning teachers did not wish to discuss the topic; felt the school was running a bicultural programme, so it was not an issue; or the school was not running a bicultural programme and the beginning teachers did not think it was an issue. Lively bicultural programmes were described by some students, but there were also isolated references to tokenism and lip service to biculturalism. It was common for beginning teachers in schools with multicultural rolls to say they thought the school programme should be multicultural rather than bicultural. In their view, te reo Maori in schools with, for example, predominantly Polynesian and/or Asian rolls was inappropriate. School policy may be influenced by community attitudes. Individual beginning teachers referred to their uncertainty about speaking Maori because they did not knew whether it was 'acceptable'; parents wanting them to teach Maori but the school putting limits on the time spent; parents who do not consider Maori a part of their lives; and children who put the teacher off using Maori. The beginning teacher who made the following comment probably sums up the view of many.

> The school is supportive if you do teach Maori language and culture but if you don't nobody is going to mind.

THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF BEGINNING TEACHERS

A beginning teacher is not a fully trained, experienced teacher. It is generally accepted that the first year in the classroom needs to be regarded as a continuation of the pre-service training students have received in college, and the first stage of their ongoing professional development.

Beginning Teachers' Responsibility for Their Own Professional Development

Most of the beginning teachers we interviewed regarded themselves as responsible for their ongoing professional development and, with a few exceptions, were confident about appraising their own performance as classroom teachers, and in planning their own self-learning. Most were emphatic about their responsibility for their own teacher development - 'very much so', 'definitely', 'always have done', 'very self-motivated' - were typical comments. While acknowledging that it was appropriate for beginning teachers to 'look to others to help identify weaknesses', most also felt the responsibility of being a 'good teacher' was up to them. They did not expect to be spoon fed. If they want to get ahead, particularly in a tight job market, they need to set their own goals and do something about what they know to be weaknesses. Beginning teachers did also comment, however, that although they accepted that their teacher development was their responsibility, their first priority was the successful running of their classroom, which did not always leave the time and energy necessary for taking on more formal teacher development activities.

Those beginning teachers who placed limits on their responsibility for their own teacher development spoke of a joint responsibility between themselves and the school - 'a certain amount of responsibility is with me, the same as we put responsibility for learning

on to kids ... the school also has to support the teacher in their professional development.' If a school wants better teachers they have to accept some responsibility for teacher development. This may be done in various ways, for example, by the principal or tutor teacher guiding a beginning teacher in skills they believe they still have to develop; by involving all teachers in school-based staff development programmes, for example, staff meetings focused on a new syllabus or when all staff visit a marae and use the opportunity to discuss the Maori language syllabus; by the school having a good staff library; or by encouraging beginning teachers to go on appropriate courses. This latter option was the one most frequently mentioned by beginning teachers (*see also* p. 152). Where individual staff, including beginning teachers, attend courses, they may have a responsibility within the school for a particular curriculum area, and this usually means a responsibility to share their experience with other staff. The board of trustees, who have overall responsibility for the school, also have a duty to see that teachers attend appropriate courses.

Once again the importance of the support a beginning teacher receives from the school to which he or she is appointed was clear in responses to this question. One of the few teachers who did *not* think she was responsible for her own professional development said how hard it was for a teacher in the first year to know what was needed, particularly if, as in her case, she was left very much to her own devices. Several of those who did accept full responsibility for their own professional development added that they also valued guidance from others who may see faults more clearly than the beginning teachers themselves. However, beginning teachers also value their own independence. As one put it:

> I know what I need to know. It's just getting there. I'd rather do it by myself than with anyone else. I'm probably harder on myself than anyone else would be. (Auckland)

Skills of Self-appraisal

Virtually all beginning teachers thought they had well-developed skills of self-appraisal, one or two acknowledging that these skills had been fostered at college. They also commonly felt that they had very high standards for their own performance and were probably overly critical and too hard on themselves. They were also perfectionist and have to learn to leave school behind them at the end of the day, because their private life was non-existent or suffering.

Once again, the attitude of other staff at the school is important. Where other staff regularly evaluate their own programmes and discuss their programmes with others, a

beginning teacher is supported in her own self-appraisal. Beginning teachers, in Auckland particularly, referred to effective school-based schemes of staff appraisal which were in operation or being trialled. One beginning teacher, for example, said several staff were doing a course on management and regularly brought ideas back to the school. Teacher objectives were tied to job descriptions, and teachers were required to do self-appraisals. Self-evaluation was part of total school appraisal. In another school the beginning teacher described how the assistant principal went around the junior school staff once a fortnight to look at classroom planning and environments. In this situation the beginning teacher was not singled out. Plenty of staffroom discussion, and the generally positive attitude of staff towards children, supported the beginning teacher who learnt, as she said, not to put herself down too much.

How Beginning Teachers Feel They Have Developed as Teachers

We asked beginning teachers the question, *How do you feel you have developed yourself as a teacher this year? In what ways have your ideas changed and why?* We expected the beginning teachers to raise issues related to their knowledge of children; the curriculum; their teaching styles and techniques; preparation and planning; and their relationships with staff and parents. If they did not raise such issues, we probed for further information. By this stage in the interview, beginning teachers had frequently already referred to such topics in response to earlier questions, for example, in things that were going well or not so well in the classroom, or their perceptions of how they were handling individual curriculum areas. When this was the case they tended not to repeat themselves here.

All but two of the beginning teachers thought they had developed as teachers during the year. One of the exceptions commented, 'I don't think I've grown. I think I'm surviving at the moment from what I learnt out there before I came'. Several overarching themes come through in the beginning teachers' comments:

- The difficulty of singling out any specific area of development, because they have increased their skills across the complete range of classroom competencies, and a sense of being overwhelmed by how much they have learnt - they had gone 'from strength to strength', developed in 'leaps and bounds'.

- Increased experience as the year progressed had led to increased confidence in most aspects of classroom practice.

- Increased confidence led to increased enthusiasm for teaching - they 'love going to school'.

- The importance of good role models from other experienced teachers.

- They had started out 'wanting to be the perfect teacher', 'not wanting anything to go wrong', and 'having all children performing up to standard'. They had now developed a more realistic approach to what is reasonable to expect children to achieve and what they, as beginning teachers, can achieve.

- Most beginning teachers had entered the classroom with fairly clear ideas of what they hoped to achieve. The first year is essentially a year of refining skills, of experimenting, and of trial and error, as beginning teachers attempt to translate theory into practice.

- The sense of responsibility for the children in their class and the increased maturity associated with taking on this responsibility, particularly for young teachers, who had 'never grown so fast before'.

- As students they learnt to handle children one at a time or in small groups. Total responsibility for a class of their own requires a big adjustment.

Various topics emerged from the beginning teachers' comments under the various headings already referred to:

Knowledge of children and how they learn

- You have to know children well to teach well.

- Having a class of your own allows you to appreciate the links between theory and practice, which increases your understanding of how children learn.

- You develop a more realistic appreciation of what children are *really* like and 'what makes them tick'. Children do not all want to do what you want them to do even if you're a 'really cool' teacher; you learn to 'read children' better.

- You knew about individual differences but had not really appreciated the range of abilities and backgrounds and the complexity of coping with the diversity; this proved much more difficult than anticipated, particularly with children from underprivileged families.

- The meaning of 'the whole child' and the impact of out-of-school experiences on children's school behaviour and performance. Confirmation of the importance of home background in influencing children's development.

- The volatility of children and their interactions with each other.

- Although you already know a good deal about children, you do not realise what hypochondriacs they are - 'fussing about every cut and scratch!'

- How children and teachers learn from each other.

The curriculum

Beginning teachers made occasional references to individual curriculum areas but more commonly they referred to their increased confidence across the curriculum as a whole - 'the act of teaching increases your knowledge'. Beginning teachers acknowledged that they had been introduced to the primary school curriculum at college but had not always seen the relevance of courses. Having to deal with the specifics of each curriculum area in the classroom increased their knowledge, as did the discovery of new resources in the school. When they arrived in the classroom they might not have realised 'how much they did not know', but they learnt quickly enough - 'You fall off your bike the first time round, but not the second'. Now that they are in the classroom they can also see the relationship of one subject to another more clearly. They can also look at the curriculum as a whole rather than being influenced by the particular subject enthusiasm of individual lecturers. School principals, more experienced teachers, and advisers may all play a role in extending beginning teachers' knowledge of the curriculum.

Teaching style and techniques

The most frequently made comment was that beginning teachers had experimented with a range of styles and then settled for what suited them best, usually trying to be flexible and maintain a range of approaches influenced by the teaching styles of colleagues. Having

their own class, after having previously been a student in someone else's classroom, allowed them to experiment and settle for what suited them and their class. Developing their own teaching style was an area where a number of beginning teachers still felt they would benefit from more constructive criticism, similar to that they had had from associate teachers on teaching practice sections. However, tutor teachers tended to fulfil this role (*see also* p.149). Beginning teachers also referred to:

- Increased confidence as beginning teachers are able to confirm through having total responsibility for a class that they have got the skills to teach; the chance to translate theoretical knowledge into practice.

- Starting the year with a more structured, formal approach and moving to a more child-centred, developmental model; understanding the value of giving children the responsibility for their own learning.

- The problems of following some of the practices advocated at college, for example, if something is going well stay with it and don't be a slave to the timetable. This is difficult in syndicate struc res and with the interruptions typical of a school day, and may be a particular problem in intermediate schools

- Pitching teaching to the right level for particular children; knowing how 'to get things across' to children.

- Knowing when children are on task; they do not have to be quiet to be learning.

- Development of a new range of teaching skills appropriate to the level at which they are teaching, particularly if a class is not a teacher's first choice of age group and is different from their sole charge experience.

- Increased experience has led to a more relaxed approach, a preparedness to let the children plan more, rather than direct from the front.

- Surprise at how busy they are and how little time there is to give the attention they would like to individual children.

- Their developing ability to recognise where a child is at and plan appropriate work.

- Problems of catering for individual needs within a class of 30 children.

- Being willing to admit mistakes to children and encouraging them to be risk takers.

- A more relaxed relationship with children as the year progresses and less anxiety about control leading to a more relaxed teaching style which also allows teachers to take things more slowly after initially rushing things because they were so concerned about what children needed to learn.

- Setting and expecting higher standards of work - early in the year beginning teachers may accept poor work, particularly if they are concerned that demanding high standards might mean failure for both pupils and teacher.

- Adapting teaching approaches to the age level of the class, particularly if it was not one with which they had had much experience, and to the range of abilities within a class, for example, the range of skills possessed by children entering school.

Classroom management skills: behaviour and discipline

Being more realistic in their expectations of themselves and the demands they placed on themselves was a common response. A few beginning teachers implied that some of their initial idealism was the consequence of the college itself being too idealistic in its preparation of teachers. Some lecturers were out-of-touch with 'real' children and the day-to-day reality of present-day classrooms, particularly in underprivileged areas and for schools with high numbers of children from different ethnic backgrounds. Schools in such localities 'came as a shock' to some beginning teachers. A number spoke of looking forward to their second year when they would be able to profit from their first year's experience.

A few students admitted to still having problems with classroom management which had 'always been a weak point'. The problem now may relate to managing the behaviour of specific children, for example, a particularly disruptive group of boys. Several students said they did not think the college had prepared them adequately to cope with difficult children. This was something they had not really had to face up to on teaching practice sections when the ultimate responsibility was with the classroom teacher. However, most first-year teachers thought their skills had improved. Individual teachers spoke of:

- Classroom management being much more complex with the daily responsibility for a class, compared with short teaching slots as on teaching practice sections.

- The value of sharing strategies with other teachers, particularly those currently taking management courses.

- Improved time management.

- The importance of starting the year with firm classroom discipline and good management.

- Learning to match discipline to individual children and so being able to keep children disciplined and working.

- A school with a good behaviour and discipline policy makes it easier for a beginning teacher.

- Development as a consequence of attending courses, for example, assertive discipline, and transactional analysis. The latter course ran in a school once a week for six weeks, and all staff attended. It proved excellent for management skills, and varied approaches to children.

- Refocusing and experimenting with management skills, and trying new approaches.

- Learning to cope with the myriad of little problems that are with children throughout the day.

- Looking forward to starting a new class next year when they will profit from their first year's experience.

Preparation and planning

Those beginning teachers who commented on their development in terms of classroom planning and preparation tended to say that they were now able to teach effectively with less planning. At the beginning of the year they had 'overplanned', writing down every detail as a safeguard against disaster. They still acknowledged the need to plan to ensure that a classroom runs smoothly and children learn, but now that they were 'into the swing

of things' they did not need to spend so much time on it. For many, planning and preparation were activities carried on outside school hours and many beginning teachers felt that streamlining their planning and preparation was a necessary step to maintaining their sanity and a life apart from teaching. Many of them reflected back on a first term of non-stop teaching where they were taking work home at evenings and weekends. Not only is there not so much planning and preparation happening in the third term, but what there is, is more relevant and better focused on the children's needs:

- Planning skills were introduced at college but it is not until a teacher has the responsibility for a group of children that he or she can really set objectives that suit the school's community, and plan to suit individual children's needs.

- Each school has its own methods of planning and these have taken over from those advocated at college.

- The college did cover short- and long-term planning but most schools plan in six-week cycles. At college students tended to think in lessons rather than in units to be completed over a longer period of time and they have to learn to plan long term.

- The need to be flexible and not worry if the day does not go to plan.

- Planning has to take account of school interruptions.

Relationships with parents

Beginning teachers usually spoke positively of the relationships with parents, including:

- pleasure at how supportive parents were
- parents' gratitude for what the teacher was doing for their child
- how much they like working with parents and their value on trips
- the value of the life experiences in talking with parents, particularly for mature beginning teachers.

A small group of beginning teachers spoke of difficulties they had had with parents - usually nervousness in talking with parents, particularly if a child was not doing well. A

few spoke of anxiety prior to parent-teacher interviews, and said they did not think they had been well prepared for these at college, but were usually pleased at how well the interviews went. One or two were concerned by how parents 'looked up' to even young teachers. There were a few reservations, mostly on the part of younger teachers, about the expectations of them as teachers and many had not expected to be privy to many of the personal problems parents had. One young teacher was obviously surprised to have had parents who were much older telling her their troubles and crying on her shoulder. One or two were also concerned about parents who did not wish to be involved.

The following are examples of the comments made by beginning teachers when they spoke of the ways they had developed as teachers:

> I think a lot of things are just pulling together - are beginning to make me really understand the things that we learnt in education at training college. They were really meaningless then. Now that I'm in the classroom and I can see for myself how children are learning and developing and what stages they go through, it's beginning to pull together for me. It's not so much of a problem now that I'm physically here doing it. (Auckland)

> ... the age group. I found it very difficult after relating to form 2s and standard 3 and 4, all of a sudden going to these little tiny kids, six and seven, and relating to them. When I think about it I wrote them a letter on the first day to tell them about me and to find out about themselves and they would have probably only been able to read about eight words on it. Now if I had this age group again then I would know exactly what to do and how to present it. So on the first day they were probably wondering what on earth was coming to them. (Auckland)

> I probably set higher standards for myself and for my children than I did at the start of the year. You've been on section in all these sections for a month or maybe six weeks but that's easy to cope with. I guess I was scared to start with. My behavioural standards haven't changed but the standard of presentation and things like that did because I was too scared to set them too high in case I failed I think. The higher you set, the harder you make it or the more challenging. They have still got to be able to succeed but there's got to be a challenge there. (Auckland)

> When I left training college I used to have this attitude that if my programme was really interesting, kids would learn. But some kids have got no concentration. There's just a lot more happening in their lives ... I can't expect them to come to school and be tuned in totally for six hours and go home and retain it all. I thought I was just so cool when I came here, I'd have a neat programme and the kids would just do what they were told. I think I'm a bit more realistic now for the goals I set for the kids. Probably for myself as well. (Auckland)

It's very frustrating working with the parents because traditionally parents think that we are there to educate their children and that we know the best thing for their children and that's sad. We don't get enough parent participation at all and I've tried and I've tried. I ask parents personally. They say, 'Yes we'll come,' and then they don't. It's very difficult because their English is poor and it's hard to get across. It's very difficult and yet they just love their children so much and they want the very best for them and they think that we're doing the very best and that we know best and it's not true at all. I mean they know their children best of all and if we could just share a wee bit more on that area I'd love it .... I came to the Samoan Sunday School one Sunday just to sit in on it because most of the children in my class come to Samoan Sunday School. I thought, 'Well I'd just love to have a nosey to see how they react in a Sunday School situation which is all spoken in Samoan.' I was just amazed at those kids, very fluent Samoan, and yet in the classroom they're reluctant to speak Samoan. (Auckland)

Heaps, heaps! Sometimes I have to pinch myself and think that it was a little over a year ago that I'd completed my sole charge and that seemed like a huge hurdle - six weeks in charge of a class. And now it's been a year in teaching. It's amazing really when you think of it like that - control strategies, management, refining planning, evaluation, just everything. It's been a growing year as I'm sure it will be for the next couple of years. (Wellington)

I think I've probably become a little bit more realistic. I started off having exciting programmes of work running all day, every day, and I realise that I was wearing myself out and the kids were getting tired. I think they work short bursts. I still have problems with fill-in stuff. I can't bring myself to do fill-ins yet. I can see that I might get to it but I think there's a lot of fill-in stuff that goes on in schools but I really don't like it. I've become a bit more realistic. (Wellington)

I've become more realistic in the sense that I've had to accommodate my ideals to an uncomfortable reality. The maths programme, for example, I'm just doing numeration for a second time and I realise how well I taught it the first time but I'm not able to teach that way anymore. I'm just too tired. I'm unable to organise my time properly to teach that way so I'm limiting my expectations of myself in trying to deal with what I am doing as well as I possibly can without expecting too much. (Wellington)

I've lowered my standards to the kids' work. I expected to have all amazing work presented to me. I've actually had to come round and say, 'Hey look, they are not all at varsity'. I didn't think I was like that until I actually got into my own classroom but then again I've brought a lot of the children's standards up, so it works both ways. (Wellington)

I've become more confident in what I'm doing - being able to say well 'this is the way I do things, this is why I do things and I'm happy with it'. Perhaps earlier I was trying things out, thinking 'gosh I hope I'm doing this right'. I've probably got more faith in myself, what I'm doing now than what I did have - that's my biggest kind of development personally. (Christchurch)

I tended to stick to one approach but now you get to know the children and you know what they can cope with. Like you tend to use a lot more peer tutoring because you know there are children who can cope and the ones who like reading to older children. (Christchurch)

It's become firmer and more directive, pushing kids a lot more and demanding a better standard of work. I've just seen that you've got to spend more time giving children skills, actually teaching them skills. (Christchurch)

I've probably become much firmer in my classroom control. I wish I had been earlier on, I think I was too nice to them at the start. Now I think I have a good balance between being a friendly, sort of easy-to-come to person and being someone who is a manager, and who can manage children. I think it took me a while to get that balance in myself. I feel now that I'm more in control of what's going on. (Christchurch)

Where Beginning Teachers Get Their Professional Support

Beginning teachers vary in the range and amount of professional support they receive once they are in the classroom. All schools employing a beginning teacher are entitled to an additional 0.2 teaching entitlement per week in order to assist the beginning teacher's professional development and to release either the beginning teacher or other teachers in the school to work with the beginning teacher.[9] The other teacher released is usually a tutor teacher with designated responsibilities to work with the beginning teacher. We questioned the beginning teacher about these and other forms of professional support they had received during the first year in the classroom.

Introduction to the school

The knowledge beginning teachers had of their school at the time they started teaching and the speed with which they 'learnt the ropes' varied considerably and was influenced by such factors as:

- the time of the year when they were appointed
- the size of the school

[9] *See* Ministry circular to schools, No. 1991/21, on staffing of schools for 1992.

- whether they were already familiar with the school through being on section or because of family or other associations.

Few beginning teachers had had what they would describe as a specific 'induction' programme, although those lucky enough to be appointed before the beginning of the school year had usually had the opportunity to spend a day or two in their classroom before the year began and to attend a teacher-only day along with other staff. As one would expect, most beginning teachers were at least introduced to other staff and shown around the school although, as described by the beginning teachers, induction experiences ranged from a quick tour around the school to a year-long induction to teaching:

> There is an induction programme that has been going for most of the year covering essential things I ought to know like the sort of comments you can put on progress cards and reports and policies in the school, how they operate, how children actually get enrolled etc. But also flexible and I can incorporate other things if I want to. (Christchurch)

In many cases it was not so much the experiences themselves, as the terminology used by beginning teachers to describe the experiences, that differed.

The best prepared for the school year were probably those few who had been appointed before the end of the previous year, and started teaching at the beginning of the school year. One of these described her experience:

> I came in and spent the last two weeks of school here last year. I had quite a bit of time with my tutor teacher and I spent time observing the children who I was going to be working with as well as odd observations of how the junior classes were running and their different programmes. That was a good start because it gave me straight away an overall view of how the junior school operated. My tutor teacher also had a list of the things that we had to organise for next year, which even included coming and looking around this room to see what furniture and equipment was in here. I then drew a plan of how I thought I'd set out the classroom. I looked at the levels of the children and grouped them so that at the beginning of the year I already had them in groups. Observing the children was really useful. (Auckland)

The experiences of four Wellington teachers who had spent time in the school prior to the school's opening for the year, are typical of other beginning teachers. One had had a relieving position in the mornings during the first half of the year and was appointed to a permanent position for the second half of the school year. The second had visited the school regularly while she was a student and had done her sole-charge teaching practice

section there. The third had spent a week with her tutor teacher before she started with her class. The fourth visited the school daily the week before it opened.

0.2 teaching entitlement

We did not carry out a detailed study of the use made by schools of the 0.2 teaching entitlement. Our comments are based on beginning teachers' responses to the use they are making of what is commonly referred to as their '0.2 time' as part of the larger question on professional development. What is clear is that, although most beginning teachers benefit from the entitlement, there is considerable variation in the amount of time within the 0.2 teaching entitlement which is allocated to what might be properly described as the professional development of beginning teachers. Those who get the full entitlement describe the support it provided in such ways as 'a blessing', 'lovely', 'it's wonderful', and 'I'm spoiled'. At the other end of the spectrum are a few beginning teachers, bitter and disappointed that they had not received the professional support to which they were entitled through the staffing allocation. Those who said they were getting most or all of the '0.2 time' were: Auckland, 36 out of 54 (66%); Wellington, 19 out of 24 (79%); Christchurch, 18 out of 22 (82%).

Many of those who were not getting this time allocation, or had reservations (particularly in Auckland), were teaching in intermediate or secondary schools where they did receive free periods when their pupils were taking technicraft classes, usually referred to as 'tech time' in intermediates, but this allocation was the same as for any other teacher at the school. The other beginning teachers who were not getting their full allocation tended to be teachers appointed to other than full-time permanent positions, but this was not always the case. Those who did not get the full 0.2 allocation probably also received less professional support from a tutor teacher. Beginning teachers spoke of allocations being regularly less than the full amount to which they were entitled; being perhaps dependent on other school activities; or being used by the tutor teacher to work on her own records or other school activities; and being whittled down as the year progressed. In some cases the 0.2 time was regularly split between the beginning teacher and the tutor teacher. There were isolated examples of two beginning teachers sharing an entitlement within a school, or of having to 'fight for entitlement' at the beginning of the year. One or two beginning teachers appointed late in the year, who did not get the entitlement, were so relieved to have got a job they did not feel like complaining. One or two others were so engaged with their class they had 'to be persuaded to leave it' for half a day. However, most beginning teachers appeared to be satisfied with the amount of time allowed and the use they were able to make of it.

There was considerable variation in the ways in which the 0.2 time was allocated. These included one full day a week; two half days; regular, but shorter time slots, for example, one and a half hours at a time; and irregular, shorter time slots. The use made of the time varied considerably from teacher to teacher and was influenced by such factors as:

- the role played by the tutor teacher and other staff who may release the beginning teacher (*see also* p.149)
- the time slots by which the time was allocated
- the preference of the beginning teacher
- the total school programme - for example, the allocation may disappear if the whole junior school goes on a trip.

Obviously the shorter time slots, particularly if the allocation varies from week to week, makes planning more difficult and restricts the activities which can be carried out in the time. It is not possible to quantify the activities undertaken by beginning teachers in their 0.2 time, but they include nine main types of activities:[10]

- Observations of other teachers, both in their own school and at other schools. At least half of the beginning teachers had used some of their time in this way.
- Being observed by the tutor teacher, principal, or deputy principal (where these latter were not also the tutor teacher), followed by informal discussion or more formal reports.
- Working in the classroom alongside the tutor teacher.
- Attending beginning teacher meetings (*see also* p.151).
- Attending courses (*see also* p.154).

[10] It was also common for us to interview beginning teachers in their release time.

- Classroom planning.

- Working with small groups or individual children, including those with language and reading difficulties, and special needs children; doing checkpoints for mathematics and running records for reading. (These activities could be done by either the beginning teachers or the tutor teacher.)

- Organising, taking or preparing resources for school-based activities for which they had volunteered or been allocated a particular responsibility, for example, music, sport, speech competitions, Polynesian clubs, science and mathematics. (These activities were not always considered appropriate use of the 0.2 time by the beginning teachers themselves.)

- General classroom administration, and resource making - including report-writing, marking, making phone calls, photocopying or general 'catch-up' time.

Having extra time for these activities was undoubtedly helpful to beginning teachers, although not all the activities, particularly those in the last four categories, could be described as strictly for professional development. Even when beginning teachers described the support they had received when tutor teachers assisted them in their classroom, it was often in the context of helping with activities which needed 'more than one pair of hands'. Such support certainly eased the burden for beginning teachers and could lead to increasing their knowledge of various teaching techniques, but could only be regarded as professional development in the broadest sense.

Typical comments made by beginning teachers were:

> I use it in all sorts of ways. I missed out once on my 0.2 because my release teacher was sick and they couldn't get a reliever at the time, but I get every little bit. Sometimes my tutor teacher and I will sit down and discuss things. Other times my tutor teacher will come in and observe me teaching. Other times I'll take small groups by my own choice, like my remedial children. I'll take them on a one-to-one basis. I'll do testing, preparation, planning, or evaluating. I attend my beginning teacher meetings once a month. I've visited other classes. Anything to help me within the classroom. (Auckland)

I used to have a 0.2 teacher in the room for the whole day, but we didn't really click and I always found it more stressful to have her in my room than to be released. I'd rather not have been released at all because she doesn't have my style of teaching. She didn't follow my programme. We just disagreed. We got on out of the classroom, but we just didn't get on, so she now takes my tutor teacher's room and my tutor teacher comes in here with me. That works really well. Sometimes I stay in and I do one-to-one with children or testing, or running records, and reports, or that type of thing. But I also take the choir for an hour on Thursdays or I go out and do whatever I need to get done that week. (Auckland)

I have yes, but in reality it's a 0.1 time. It's going well but I wish it was a bit longer. There's not a lot I can do in a limited period of time. Generally she [the tutor teacher] comes in on a Wednesday morning and a Thursday morning and either helps me or watches me or something like that, and I can do my things; like I've been out to a couple of schools. I worked on my learning centres or I went and watched other people in this school. I looked at the resources - all those sort of things. Sometimes I just tidy up my act and I don't tell anyone that, but that's what I do because sometimes things get behind me and I just tidy it up and to me I think that is professional development because I'm learning what I haven't done. (Auckland)

I am, but only because I fought for it at the beginning of the year. We were getting the time but my tutor teacher was using large chunks of it to do her own work with her own special needs children, when I needed the time to work with my special needs children, so we had to redefine what the time was supposed to be used for and work that out quite tightly and now I'm certainly getting it. (Wellington)

I don't use it as wisely as I know I should. I go and observe other teachers in specific areas which I think I need to look at, for example, maths in this school. I'd like to go out to other schools but I just haven't got round to doing it. I suppose I'm lazy. I haven't got out there and phoned someone and said, 'Let me come and see you'. I tend to do quite a bit of catching up or planning and preparation. I'm starting now from this time on, working with the teacher who takes my kids on Tuesday. She and I will sit down and start working on blue cards and reports and year-two placings or form 2 placings, so that's how the time will be spent now from this time on. It's a lot of becoming familiar, rummaging around the school, finding resources for units and things like that. (Wellington)

I suppose a lot of that's myself. If I actually said I wanted time and look somewhere you know, I'd get it, but I don't like kicking up a fuss or anything. (Christchurch)

More often than not I don't get it. When I do get it, it's to go on a course, or my tutor teacher has used it to go on a course. It's been used for observation of me by my tutor teacher, and the principal and I have used it for evaluation discussion. (Christchurch)

> Two hours a week out of five. They use the rest for senior teacher release time when the other teachers get released for their own professional development. But if we say we want more time we'll generally get it, but not usually a whole day. If we want to go and see someone teach, it will be either for the morning or the afternoon. I think it really stinks. At the beginning of the year I didn't want the release time, and I still probably think that two hours is OK. I can cope with that. But Wednesday afternoons when we get it, it's not much use because nobody does anything exciting on a Wednesday afternoon, it all happens in the morning in junior schools. They didn't tell us at the beginning of the year that we wouldn't be getting all of our release time for that purpose. (Christchurch)

The tutor teacher and other staff at the school

The value of the 0.2 allocation is influenced by the relationship between the beginning teacher and the tutor teacher. For most beginning teachers, other teachers, particularly the tutor teachers, are undoubtedly their main source of professional support. Taking the tutor teachers as a group, the comments made by beginning teachers suggest that they tend to fall into one of five categories:

1. Tutor teachers who are very supportive, have regular planning sessions when they decide jointly on the best use to be made of the time, observe the beginning teacher teaching, provide feedback and constructive advice, and have a wealth of experience and knowledge that they are willing to pass on, but at the same time allow the beginning teachers to develop their own teaching style.

2. Tutor teachers who are always supportive if asked for advice but are not proactive. Generally they have not observed the beginning teacher teaching or inquired about their classroom programme.

3. Teachers who go through the motions of regularly meeting with the beginning teacher but do not give advice that the beginning teacher finds useful.

4. Tutor teachers with whom the beginning teachers personally get on, but who do not have meetings or reports, and from whom the beginning teachers do not get professional advice they find useful.

5. Tutor teachers who are ineffective because they are inexperienced, have very different teaching approaches from the beginning teachers, are not particularly interested, or are too busy within the school to be of regular help.

The majority of tutor teachers - probably between two-thirds and three-quarters - fell into the first two categories, particularly the first. Those tutor teachers acknowledged as a prime source of support were described in terms such as 'very wise', 'persistent, reliable and realistic', 'always available - open door policy', 'great', 'brilliant', and 'a second Mum'.

The same was true of comments about support received from other members of staff. As one beginning teacher put it, 'Ask and you shall receive is the motto here'. Other teachers who are singled out as supportive are: teachers 'next door', always there if help is needed; other teachers on the staff who have been through the same experience recently; teachers within a syndicate; staff with specific curriculum responsibilities; and principals. One beginning teacher described her principal as '...fabulous. He's always got a smile on his face and asking, "What can I do to help?" It was also common for beginning teachers to refer enthusiastically to the total school staff, as one teacher put it - 'Everyone, right down to the caretaker'. Staff were referred to as 'really wonderful', 'amazingly supportive', and 'fantastic'. In the majority of cases the impression given by beginning teachers is of a teaching profession that is:

- welcoming and respectful of beginning teachers
- ready to pass on their knowledge and expertise where this is of help to the new teacher
- supportive in giving practical advice and resources to beginning teachers.

As we saw, when we talked about effective schools, there were exceptions. One was a beginning teacher who had nearly reached the point of resigning because of a 'cliquey staff' and personality clashes with one staff member known to have 'psychological problems'. Despite being a mature beginning teacher, she felt she was treated like a 'recalcitrant child'. Another felt teachers kept to themselves and there was no feeling of collective responsibility among the staff. Yet another spoke about being in a very hierarchical school with a lot of unspoken rules about what a beginning teacher may or may not do. This teacher initially found her job very lonely.

There were three further comments about principals who were also tutor teachers. One beginning teacher commented on the excellent feedback she received from the principal who observed her frequently, liked what he saw, and provided written reports. A second commented on how the principal enjoyed having beginning teachers on the staff and that this led to a particularly supportive atmosphere. A third said that no matter how

good a principal was, she could find it difficult to find the time to fulfil the obligations of being a tutor teacher as well.

Other beginning teachers

Most beginning teachers find other beginning teachers a source of support. A minority, usually those who are teaching in areas where there are few other teachers in their first year, or are teaching at a different level of the school from most of their contemporaries, said they had little contact with other beginning teachers. The rest get their support in one of five ways:

- Informal meetings, get-togethers and social activities, although some have agreed to limit the 'talk about shop'.

- Beginning teachers' meetings, attended by between 50 - 60% of teachers.

- Partners or close friends who are also beginning teachers - a consequence may be lengthy phone calls for mutual support.

- Another beginning teacher on the staff or at a nearby school.

- Links with other beginning teachers' classrooms for the teachers themselves and, in a few cases, with the children, for example, exchange of correspondence.

We have not done a systematic study of beginning teachers' meetings, but as described to us by beginning teachers the pattern varies from district to district as does the reaction of the teachers. They are commonly held at a teachers' centre or run by a principals' federation, or teacher support services. College lecturers may be involved. The frequency of meetings varies from being held once a month to once or twice a term. Teachers are divided in their views as to whether or not they appreciate 'gossipy' sessions where they have the chance to share successes and problems. Several commented on the support they received through such sessions but others considered them to be a waste of time. The most successful meetings appear to be those focused on a particular curriculum area or a topic relevant to the first year in the classroom, for example, classroom management. In Auckland, meetings arranged at the West Auckland Education Centre were spoken of enthusiastically by a number of teachers and are obviously pitched at the

right level for beginning teachers - informative, without just going over the same old stuff as college. Other courses are also appreciated by beginning teachers but it was not always possible from the teachers' comments to identify where they were held. Critical comments included:

- The focus of meeting was fine but the person running the course talked too much.

- Some meetings were rather 'wishy washy', but it is particularly important in the first few months to be able to share worries with others.

- The coverage of topics was too similar to college experience.

- The topics were interesting enough, but the tutor concentrated on a different area of the school from that where the teacher was teaching.

College lecturers: links, if any, beginning teachers now have with the college

Beginning teachers divided almost exactly in half as to whether or not they now had any links back to the college. For those who had had contact with the college during their first year in the classroom, the contacts tended to be restricted to one or two lecturers or to one or two occasions. Those beginning teachers who had had some contact with the college had done so in a variety of ways, including:

- A visit/s to the college to see an individual lecturer, perhaps for classroom support. Examples given were to lecturers in music, physical education, mathematics, computing and tutor/s.

- Visits to talk to final-year students about the beginning teacher's first year in the classroom.

- Attending meetings set up by lecturers. One example given in Auckland was to meetings in the mathematics department for beginning teachers who had majored in mathematics.

- Attending beginning teacher meetings where lecturers were involved.

- Attending a course that happened to be located at the college when lecturers may or may not have been involved.

- Visits to the library or resource centre.

- Personal contact with a lecturer who was also a personal friend or shared a particular interest, for example, tramping or politics.

- Membership of a committee, working group or association which also included college lecturers, for example, mathematics and reading.

- Opportunity to talk with a lecturer because they visited the school where the beginning teacher taught, for example, for curriculum or research purposes, or to visit students.

In Wellington, two beginning teachers referred to college courses they would like to take if only it were possible, for example, working with children with hearing impairment. One, grateful for the help he received at college, would like to repay a lecturer by making his class available for students, but found it difficult to organise a system that would work. One Christchurch trained teacher who was teaching in Invercargill had had a lot of help and professional guidance from the Southland off-campus tutors rather than contact with the college.

The main reasons given by those beginning teachers who had not had any further contact with the college were:

- The college was too far away for them to visit easily - this was particularly the case for Auckland-trained teachers in Whangarei, but was also an issue for those in urban schools.

- The hours when they could visit were limited and were often when lecturers would not be readily available.

- The world of school had taken over from the world of college and they no longer felt they belonged, or needed its support. School staff are of more practical help because they are familiar with the children and the school.

Professional development courses

It was common for beginning teachers to have attended at least one, and frequently two, three, or more courses during the year. We do not have exact information as to when these courses were held but most appeared to be during school hours although some were after school or in the holidays. In some cases teachers referred to sessions which had been taken as part of beginning teachers' meetings, but for the most part they appeared to be courses open to classroom teachers in general which beginning teachers had chosen to go on or had been selected by the principal. The most frequently mentioned courses were on language, mathematics, reading, computers, and sports or physical education. Others, referred to in each case by five or fewer beginning teachers, were: Maori, social studies, English as a second language, primary progress records, running records, evaluation, discipline, spelling, science, health, art, hearing, talented and gifted children, music, drama, telecommunication and religion.

Further study: university and Advanced Studies for Teachers

It was rare for beginning teachers to also be enrolled in university or AST courses. Only two or three indicated that they were pursuing such courses of study. The most common explanation given was that in their first year, teachers wanted to concentrate on having a successful year in the classroom and this meant there was little time or energy left to contemplate regular study. It was also common for beginning teachers to say that they intended to consider further study in their second or third year.

Professional reading

By their own account, beginning teachers are not great readers of professional publications. They tend not to turn to books as a source of professional development, rather more than half saying they were doing virtually no professional reading. These latter tended to be apologetic about this circumstance, usually explained by lack of time because of the demanding and time-consuming nature of their classroom responsibilities. Those beginning teachers who said they did read professionally, and few of them could be regarded as regular readers of professional books or papers, said ideas for pertinent reading came from courses or from other staff, including associate teachers while they were at college. Books they found helpful were practically based and either related to a particular curriculum area, perhaps one for which they had a school responsibility or was of concern to them in the classroom. Those who gave examples of their reading also

referred to ***set*** articles, and curriculum drafts. One atypical beginning teacher put it, 'I'm always reading because I'm a resource freak!' One spoke of reading she was doing to prepare her for her professional development certificate, a certificate all staff in her school were aiming for.

Family support

Virtually all beginning teachers said they received support from their families and friends. For some this was from parents, for others it was partners, and in a few cases, their own children. One gets a picture of young teachers still living at home or with families nearby very appreciative of family support, or of beginning teachers with partners who are also supportive and, in some cases, long suffering! At least 15 of the beginning teachers said they had particular support from parents or other family members who were also teachers.

New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI)

Apart from one or two beginning teachers who are on NZEI committees, two who are ordinary members, and three who have talked to an NZEI counsellor (one about the school's failure to arrange for her to get her 0.2 allocation), most beginning teachers have little or no contact with NZEI. A few said that a staff member was very active but most beginning teachers did not consider that they had had any direct professional support from NZEI. One commented, 'I'm not a member. I'm trying to become one and I've asked for a form twice but haven't got one. I must try again!' (Wellington)

Board of trustees

Beginning teachers divided into two groups as to whether or not they considered they received any professional support from boards of trustees. About half of the beginning teachers appear to have little contact with any members of boards of trustees, in some cases saying they have never been introduced to any. An equal number speak of how supportive and enthusiastic members of their boards of trustees are, usually to the school and staff as a whole rather than to individual beginning teachers. Such teachers had often had regular contact through joint social functions. It was not uncommon for beginning teachers to have children of trustees in their class and to have regular contact with them as parents. A few beginning teachers spoke of support from their board of trustees for staff development.

Beginning Teachers Who Had Taken University Courses

Of the 100 beginning teachers who were interviewed, over half (57) were either university graduates or had taken some university courses during the course of their training at the colleges of education. The numbers by college are given in Table 14.

Table 14

Beginning Teachers Who Had Taken University Courses

College	University graduates (N = 16)	Those who took university courses (N = 41)	Interview sample (N = 100)
Auckland	5	16	54
Wellington	4	13	24
Christchurch	7	12	22

It will be seen from Table 14 that Christchurch had the highest proportion of students who had university experience (86%) and Auckland the lowest (39%). These differences are largely accounted for by differences in college policies related to university study operating in the three colleges at the time of our study and discussed in previous reports.[11]

About half of these teachers in Auckland and Christchurch felt that their courses at university had had an impact on their classroom teaching. Almost all of the Auckland teachers, compared with only half of the teachers from Christchurch, claimed the impact was direct, as opposed to indirect. Wellington teachers were less convinced that their university courses had had any impact on their teaching, with only six out of the 17 who had experienced university courses saying that this was the case. As with those in Christchurch, they were evenly split as to whether they believed the contribution to be direct or indirect.

Teachers mentioned the direct usefulness of specific courses as wide ranging as child development, linguistics, computers in the classroom, special education, oceanography, guidance and counselling, courses on gender issues, and educational

[11] *See* Renwick, M. and Vize, J., (1990) *Windows on Teacher Education: Phase 1*, p.70.

administration. They also mentioned departments whose courses had been useful to them in the classrooms. These were: education, history, Maori, psychology and sociology.

Teachers were less likely to name the courses that they considered had had an indirect influence on their teaching. They were more likely to comment that the experience of university had broadened their outlook on life generally or increased the value they put on learning.

Teacher Registration

All of the beginning teachers interviewed, except one, were provisionally registered with the Teacher Registration Board and intend to apply for full registration once they are eligible. The most common reason for registering, given by approximately a quarter of the beginning teachers, was a strong belief that a system of registration gave an assurance of quality for the profession. Registration was a guarantee that those who were registered had met certain standards. Registration was a mechanism for ensuring untrained teachers were not employed in schools. As one beginning teacher put it:

> I think it is important to be registered. You have to satisfy the board of trustees and the principal and the Senior Teacher that you're overall competent; you can handle managing the kids; you can give them an appropriate programme; you can show that you like what you are doing; you are responsible and trustworthy throughout; I believe you've got to do your time to show that. (Christchurch)

A number of beginning teachers had been employed in schools that had adopted a policy of employing only registered teachers and so had become registered to get the job. None of those we interviewed were unhappy about having to register and many told us that they thought it had been the right thing to do anyway. A few teachers had not realised that they had had any option about registering and had done so simply because every other beginning teacher seemed to be doing it, or because the rest of the profession, in particular their work colleagues and NZEI as their professional body, seemed to expect it.

There was also a perception amongst a few beginning teachers that being registered would help them return to teaching if they left for long periods, for example, to look after a family or to travel overseas.

Beginning Teachers' Expectations of Themselves as Classroom Teachers

Most beginning teachers had lived up to or exceeded their expectations of themselves as

classroom teachers (Auckland 37 out of 54; Wellington 14 out of 24; Christchurch 16 out of 22). The fact that the remainder said they had not, or had reservations, does not necessarily indicate that they considered themselves to be any less effective in the classroom than those who had measured up to their expectations. A good deal depended on how high their expectations were. Several of the teachers who said they had not measured up to their expectations made comments such as, 'I'll never be satisfied with myself in the classroom. There are always things to be improved,' or 'If you strive for excellence there is always room for improvement. I'll never be 100% happy.' Such comments were also common amongst those teachers who said they had measured up to their expectations. This latter group, however, while having high standards for themselves, also had a realistic view of what they as a beginning teacher could expect to achieve. A few of those who had not measured up to their expectations, or were disappointed that they had not achieved more, had not been teaching for the full year and hoped for a better start in their second year.

Those who had measured up to their expectation were proud of their achievement. They may have had their 'ups and downs', particularly at the beginning of the year, but they are pleased with their classroom programme, their contribution to the progress and development of the children, and the confirmatory support of other teachers. Teachers who had measured up to their expectations tended to have achieved their own goals. These were commonly of two kinds:

- to provide a stimulating programme in a happy and safe learning environment, which caters for the needs of individual children

- simply to survive; to make it through the first year.

One did not exclude the other. More specifically, beginning teachers referred to getting the classroom running; establishing routines; establishing groups; finding where children are at; developing resources; and experimenting with various teaching approaches.

Those teachers who had not measured up to their expectations sometimes referred to specific aspects of their teaching with which they were dissatisfied - planning; keeping their written work up to date; being less well organised at the beginning of the year than they would have liked (perhaps because of late appointment to the job); being tidier in the classroom. Others referred to the juggling act in which they had been constantly involved, trying to balance the time and effort they put into school with the rest of their lives.

Examples of beginning teachers' comments are:

> No. I still find it really embarrassing when people say, 'You do really, really good things in your class'. As far as I'm concerned I'm just doing the norm, I'm just doing what is expected to be done. My goals were just so high. Now that I read them, I think what a joke. I thought because I'm organised this would be a breeze. All my kids will be reading junior journals, totally dismissing the fact that most of them are only six. But now, if one child has progressed one level, I don't feel devastated anymore. I think great - one level - marvellous! It took a lot of people to explain that to me. I used to go down to my tutor teacher and say, 'What am I going to do? This child has been on this level for three months'. She'd say, 'Don't panic. Just calm down.' (Auckland)

> At the end of last term and the beginning of this term, beyond my expectations, I was really happy. I got further than I expected to go. At the start of the year it was such a battle that I thought I was not going to be able to be a teacher. I felt I didn't have what it took, and so I wasn't reaching my expectations. I set my goals very high and sometimes I do set them too high. But that was why it was so lovely when I found that I was doing better than I thought. (Auckland)

> Yes, I did surpass them, I suppose. I don't think many people leaving college really know categorically that they can teach and that's the main thing you have to find out. I think I found out the hard way really, going relieving because it was really hard to my self-esteem. The first two days I just came home and felt physically sick because I did have an extremely difficult class in an extremely difficult school and it was awful because I didn't know if I could teach or not. Whereas if I had the same class now it would be a different story. (Auckland)

> I have and I haven't. I always have high expectations of myself, so from the attitude of other teachers I know that I'm doing well and I know that I'm not going off track and I know that I can do a lot better and I get frustrated because again it's that time of getting the knowledge. But I think I started getting worried about it last term but really when I think about it, a lot of it just comes with experience and finding your own way and also I have to think to myself, I haven't worked before in my life. I went straight from high school into training college. Now I'm working. I've got a lot of personal routines which I've just finally got into. Working routines and then the teaching routines, so I try and remember that before I get dissatisfied with myself that I'm not succeeding as much as I'd like to. Also, I used to always try and do it all at once. When talking to the other first-years, I realise that you've just got to take one thing at a time and if you've got a problem in one area take that area and concentrate on it. Since I've taken it slowly rather than doing everything in a hiss and a roar, I do things more thoroughly so I'm always improving. I always think I can be better and I know I can. Sometimes I won't let myself be better. Sometimes just to keep your own sanity, because I could easily spend seven days a week at school, no problem. (Wellington)

In the first three weeks if you could read the evaluation I've done, you'd think what the heck is this woman doing teaching in a classroom? Go and throw her under a bus any day. But yes, I believe I have. I'm actually quite proud of the efforts that I've made considering what I've had to cope with to achieve it and that you can see in hindsight you know. I think I'm going to make a good teacher even if I say so myself. (Wellington)

No, no I haven't. I had set objectives for what I wanted to achieve in each of the three terms and I think I'm only just beginning to achieve the first term's. It's frustrating! (Wellington)

Exceeded expectations really. I was very nervous at the beginning of the year and I suddenly thought 'can I do this?' But I really think I've done a lot better than I imagined and I'm really happy that I have chosen the profession. I seem to fit in well and it's going well and I'm enjoying it. (Christchurch)

I think I'm realistic, you can't run before you can walk and I'm only just learning. I don't feel a failure but I do feel that there are areas that I know I can improve on and I feel I will as time goes on and I get more confident. I've got other commitments and a life that is important too. (Christchurch)

Constraints On Being a More Effective Teacher

We asked beginning teachers the question, *What are the constraints on you of being a more effective teacher?* We assumed that beginning teachers would refer to both personal and professional factors, including the effectiveness of their pre- and in-service education; aspects of class or school organisation; and possibly even wider issues, such as the impact on teacher morale of job insecurity. What was interesting was that, although most beginning teachers thought there were constraints on their being a more effective teacher, the majority held the view that most would be addressed by more time and experience. Those who thought there were no constraints were usually of the view that it was the responsibility of individual teachers to be effective. Many of those who thought there were constraints on their being a more effective teacher also thought the same, but referred to other factors as well. By far the most important of these, mentioned by at least half of the beginning teachers was time. This was largely because there was so much to achieve and so few hours in the day, but also included the amount of time during the school day spent on activities other than teaching, particularly administration and paper work and interruptions to the class programme because of such things as assemblies and sports commitments.

Other constraints mentioned by beginning teachers were:

- Personal constraints, including family commitments; outside interests; lack of energy; inability to 'switch off'; and, in isolated cases, personality characteristics such as 'being lazy', 'stubborn' or 'procrastinating'.

- School constraints, including conflict between the teaching philosophy of the beginning teacher and the school's policy; school organisation, for example, open plan; the need for a school to have a school-wide discipline policy which was enforced; a fragmented programme which made it difficult to implement an integrated curriculum; lack of support from colleagues; a school atmosphere more conducive to teacher development; and time spent on administrative matters.

- Lack of money and resources particularly in schools in less well-off communities.

Two or three beginning teachers also referred to:

- having too many children in the classroom to be effective with all of them

- insufficient opportunity for professional development because of the location of the school away from the main centres, the lack of collaborative planning and teaching in a particular school, or not getting the 0.2 release time

- the problems children bring from their home environment into the classroom.

It was interesting that these last examples were not explicitly stated issues for most beginning teachers. They emphasised their own responsibility as teachers for developing their professional skills to become more effective teachers.

> I suppose if I put in more time, I'd be more effective. If you go too far time-wise then you just get burnt out, don't you? But basically I know that if something doesn't go right you need to put in more time planning and think it through more and I just automatically do that. I suppose I assume that I'm going to get better with more experience. (Auckland)

The children. Sometimes I've planned something and picture that I was teaching this in a totally different area, with a totally different lot of kids. They would get it straight away. They would understand. It's not a problem, but I sometimes forget that these kids - you cannot talk about anything that they haven't experienced. Even talking about a circus is totally abstract to them. I still take a lot of things for granted. Without actually stopping to realise these kids have no first-hand experience. All kids should know what to expect on Easter and things like that. It hasn't stopped me from being an effective teacher. (Auckland)

... budget is always a major problem because we never have enough money. I'm supposed to be in charge of music and I'd love to buy some musical instruments but there's no money in the budget. It's mis-use of remarks. We get extra grants but most of them are taken up in the total immersion. (Auckland)

My time, the demand on my time outside of the classroom. Office work or what I call office work is a real nuisance for me. The circulars, the newsletters, the this or that, collecting money, the signing of absent roll, checking up and handing out uniform notices to go home. If we could do away with 80% of that, it would be really great. The other constraint is the demand the school has on my classroom teaching. They've got to have two periods of manual, they've got to have an afternoon of sport, they've got to have two days of enrichment a term, no sorry four days, so six days of enrichment a term. We've got to do this choir, we've got to do this and you turn round and you look at your timetable and you say 'where the hang am I going to put this wonderful linked, integrated programme together' and you just, some days I just go home and beat my head against the wall, because it's frustrating, but that's the sorts of things that intermediate schools are like apparently. Because I haven't learned to cope with that yet, so therefore I haven't measured up to my mature objective - to be mature, to be able to look at things objectively and not get so het up about it. (Wellington)

Personal to myself I would really like to be able to switch off sometimes like when I go home, quite often I find that especially around report writing time last year, I found I would get very stressful and sometimes, I know it sounds pathetic but I'd go to bed and actually wake up and I'll be worrying about something from school, so I'd really like to be able to feel comfortable when I leave here. That was the end of my day. I think that will be a while. There are things that come up all the time that I'd like to learn more about. Different learning approaches, different teaching styles, things like that which through my release time I've been able to observe but I just wish I had more time to actually look at these things you know. Because you find by the time you get home and have dinner and things then you do a bit more work. It's just impossible. (Wellington)

Not to have so many children in the class. I think that would make a big difference. Sometimes just having other people's ideas, just to give you something new. There are also constraints in that there is often not enough equipment, not enough reading books. (Christchurch)

> The problems that the children bring with them into the classroom. I mean they are not all sitting there really open to information and some of them have been up all night watching the rugby until 4 in the morning and stuff like that. Or they come to school sick because Mum and Dad work and so they just sit on the pillows in the back of the class. (Christchurch)

> Time is probably the biggest constraint. Time to actually sit back and analyse and to talk things over with people and to plan. I've got heaps of information I've gathered over the three years and I know it's there, and I've got heaps of information in my head but it's just overload. And probably the fact that it does encroach on your whole life. It's a lifestyle and it's the adjustment that does make a difference. (Christchurch)

> The training has limited my effectiveness in some subjects but I've overcome that or will have overcome that by the end of next year. (Christchurch)

The Goals and Priorities of Beginning Teachers for Their Second Year

As a final question in our interview we asked the beginning teachers about their goals and priorities for their second year. In answering this question, beginning teachers also provided an insight into their perceived weaknesses in their first year.

An important point to emerge from this section of the interview was that all but two beginning teachers immediately referred to their plans for their second year in the classroom. There was no question but that this was where they hoped to be; no suggestion that their first year in the classroom had caused then to think again about teaching as a career. The exceptions were one who didn't know whether he would stay in teaching longer than two years - 'I'll pay off the car, get overseas and get out of teaching. I've been at school since I was five!' (It is interesting to note that on entry to training, this beginning teacher's first choice of career was teaching and at that stage he expected to make a lifelong career in education.) The second beginning teacher wanted to start a business but also hoped to remain part-time in the classroom. She did not want teaching 'to take over my life'.

About 15 of the 100 beginning teachers interviewed did not yet have jobs for their second year. Their main goal was to get a full-time permanent position. About a quarter of the beginning teachers referred to general, overall goals - they wanted to 'improve on weaknesses'; to further their professional development; to consolidate what they already knew; to 'do better what I've already done well'; and generally 'just give it another go'. The comments of those with more specific goals and priorities fell into the following categories, ordered according to the numbers of beginning teachers who referred to them. In each case about 10 to 15 beginning teachers made comments under each heading:

Classroom organisation and management, including:

- time management so that less time and energy, both theirs and their pupils', is wasted
- increased efficiency
- refined management skills
- early establishment of routines.

Evaluation and assessment, including:

- improved monitoring and documenting of children's progress
- better record-keeping
- self-evaluation.

More relaxed approach to teaching, including:

- more balanced life style, with more time for self and family
- less stress and panic.

Learning and teaching including:

- more varied teaching approaches
- more exciting programme with new ideas
- greater encouragement of children to be independent learners
- greater responsiveness to individual children
- more focus on children's progress
- less teacher-dominated methods
- maintenance of higher standards of work.

Discipline, including:

- tighter control early in the year
- clearer ground rules and guidelines
- less conflict amongst pupils (F2).

The curriculum, including:

- improvement across all areas
- improvement in specified subjects (the most frequently mentioned were mathematics (10) and reading (10), followed by music (8) and physical education (8); other subjects mentioned were computers (6), written language (5), and Maori (2))
- a more integrated approach.

About six beginning teachers referred to specific courses of study they wished to pursue: university; Advanced Study for Teachers; English as a second language. Individual beginning teachers spoke of setting up a programme for children with special abilities, having a tidier desk, and better handwriting.

PROFILE OF BEGINNING TEACHER 5

Meredith was lucky not to have to apply for jobs because, while she was doing her sole charge in a suburban school as a student, a relieving vacancy occurred and she was offered the position. This suited her well because her husband is employed locally and she did not want to teach too far from home. The school has a largely middle class, European/Pakeha roll.

Meredith has relieved in three different classrooms during the year and is now responsible for 26 J2 to S1 pupils. She is pleased she has had such a variety of experiences. She had concentrated on senior school at college but having to change classes has forced her to broaden her skills. She has had a brilliant tutor teacher from whom she has learnt much. She has been surprised by the workload involved in teaching but she could not have asked for better support. Classroom managment has been a challenge, particularly working in three different areas of the school and having to adapt prcoedures to each level, but the results have been positive. It was also difficult switching programmes for reading and mathematics because the junior school work in particular was new, but after a term Meredith feels confident in both BSM and new growth mathematics and also with the requirements of reading at different levels. Fortunately Meredith majored in mathematics at college and although, she concentrated on older children, BSM is easy to follow so she is enjoying teaching mathematics.

There is nothing that Meredith can single out which is not going well. She thinks that the management skills she learnt when she was working, prior to going to college, probably helped her to get established quickly. She has to say she has learnt much more in the year since she left college than in the three years that she was there. The college course did not include sufficient practical experience. She also thinks there should have been more compulsory reading courses. She did learn about things like the colour wheel for reading, but even when she was on section she did not ever have to organise junior reading because that was always done by the associate teacher. Not knowing how to get a programme started meant that the first few weeks were a bit chaotic but after that it became much easier. She is glad she took a course on reading difficulties which undoubtedly helped her to survive. To be fair, she thinks she left college with a good basis for teaching but it was not until she was in the classroom that she really knew the specific things with which she needed more help. It would have helped if the follow-up from teaching practice had been more effective and given students a chance to pursue questions raised in the classroom. The resources she made at college have been helpful, especially Maori songs and mathematics resources. She has had to make many more since she has been in the classroom but she got the basic ideas at college.

Meredith is fortunate to be teaching in a school she considers to be effective largely because staff have clear objectives to follow. Policies are worked out from the school charter. Staff work as a syndicate and plan co-operatively. The school is supportive of children and classroom programmes, and uses a child-centred learning approach. The school also has good relationships with parents and the community.

Social studies is probably the only curriculum area Meredith is still having problems with, not that she has done a great deal. The staff tend to choose a topic each term, but Meredith is still confused about what social studies is actually about. She knows the focus is meant to be on 'how people think, feel and act the ways they do', but she finds planning along these lines difficult. Her language programme is fine, although she wonders now if she tried to 'teach' too much this year and did not let children have the opportunity to work from their own experiences; she may do that differently next year. Part of Meredith's professional development has been to focus on language for children for whom English is not their first language, which has been helpful because she has one such child in her classroom. Science at college was great and she feels well prepared to teach using an interactional approach, which is an approach still not commonly used by teachers. Her school does have a science fair running and it is very successful. Meredith is an ex-computer operator so has no problems with the use of computers in the classroom and encourages the children to use them. She has experience of drama outside school so finds working with children in that area easy. She does not have a musical background but co-operates with other teachers for that. She enjoys teaching art and spends a good deal of time looking up books in the library to understand relevant processes rather than just relying on basic approaches such as crayons. Management was a bit of a surprise for physical education; Meredith assumed that all children would be keen to join in but some were not. She had not realised that basic things like setting boundaries would be necessary but she has learnt by experience. The school has a largely Pakeha roll but Maori culture is considered to be an important part of the programme. The Maori courses Meredith took at college have proved to be very helpful and the school also has good resources. Health is an easy subject to take because the guidelines and associated booklets are so clear. She felt a little uncomfortable handling topics in 'Keeping ourselves safe' which she did when she taught standards 3 and 4 but she survived it, along with a parent evening she ran. She thinks this experience reassured parents. It helped that although she was a beginning teacher she was not straight from school and college.

Meredith has five IEPs (individual educational programmes) running, mainly for children with reading problems, not that they are severe. One child is reading behind her chronological age but the others are not using cues correctly. As Meredith looked at

reading as a major apart of her professional development associated with her 0.2 time allocation, she is keen to work individually with these children. She visited other classrooms and talked with reading recovery teachers.

Meredith wants to run an integrated curriculum, but changing classes and fitting in her release time has made that difficult. Next year she aims to run a whole language programme including handwriting, reading, oral language and written work.

Initially, Meredith had a few problems with assessing children's work associated with moving from teaching standards 3 and 4 to junior children. The younger children are very capable but she found she sometimes expected too much of them in minor things like setting out their books. That has passed now and Meredith is quite comfortable with assessment. She constantly evaluates her work. For example, her ideas about using learning centres have been modified considerably during the year, partly as a result of issues she raised with her tutor teacher.

Meredith did not concentrate on equity issues at college. She tried to get into a course on gender equity but could not fit it into her programme. She is aware that some of the concerns raised by lecturers, such as boys being more dominating, do occur but she tries to counteract this and concentrates on always taking turns during class activities and sharing resources. She is not aware of racism amongst the pupils. There are almost no Maori and Polynesian children at the school, but she does have several nationalities in her class including a girl from Cambodia and a boy from Taiwan. How to cater for children from different ethnic backgrounds interests Meredith and she took a course at college on English for children for whom it is a second language which was excellent. She has also visited the Multicultural Resource Centre. The socioeconomic status of children is not an issue because their backgrounds are so similar, apart from a small group from a poorer housing area.

Meredith appreciates her 0.2 release time and has been keen to benefit from it as much as possible, realising that it will only be available to her this year.

In terms of her own development as a teacher, the greatest change has been an overall increase in confidence. She probably appeared confident in the classroom at the beginning of the year but she was quite 'edgy' in her mind at first, not being sure how well she would manage. Increased knowledge has certainly led to increased confidence. Her planning has improved, helped by her facility on the computer. She has had a particularly good report from her tutor about her planning. At first she thought planning would be complicated. Lecturers had talked about short- and long-term planning but she did not really understand long-term planning until she got into the classroom. She thought she should just set objectives from week one to week six, but in this particular school, teachers work from a chart and everything is clearly specified. Teachers have to have a

reason for doing things which cannot just be an individual teacher's preference. She finds planning now 'a bit of a breeze'.

Meredith's professional development is helped by the fact that all the staff are working for a professional development certificate. Meredith works to her tutor teacher but other teachers work to whoever is next in charge.

She has not had much contact with the college since she left. Lecturers are hard to get hold of if she rings the college, as she is generally at school between 8.00 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. It is impossible to get hold of them during lunch hours. There are definitely lecturers she would like to talk with if she could.

Meredith got married this year, and coping with the class and buying a house left no time for extra study but she expects to do some courses next year. She has done part of a degree but has not found the courses she did on English literature of practical use in the classroom. The board of trustees is very supportive. She has not had any contact with the NZEI.

Meredith has more than measured up to her expectation of herself, assisted by the fact that she has had such a wide experience through relieving. She is thrilled by what she has achieved. There are no constraints on being a better teacher other than personal ones - one of these is learning to leave school behind at the end of the day rather than waking during the night and worrying about school, which she did at report-writing time. The only other constraint is having enough time to learn more about different teaching approaches and other professional matters relevant to the classroom. Her main priority for her second year is to get a job so that she can become a registered teacher.

PROFILE OF BEGINNING TEACHER 6

Mary started applying for jobs in July of her third year at college. She did not want to move away from the region where she trained, largely for family reasons, but she applied unsuccessfully for about 80 jobs. She started the year doing voluntary work and occasional relieving. She also wrote to as many schools as she could think of where she would be prepared to teach. A friend drew her attention to an advertisement about a new community taskforce scheme. Schools had previously been able to use this scheme for people such as gardeners and librarians but it was now available for teachers. Those eligible for the scheme had to be listed with the Employment Service for 13 weeks. If they were taken on the scheme they were paid $5 a day above the payment for the dole. Mary was not on the dole because she had been doing some part-time teaching but she went through the normal process of applying for a job and was selected for the scheme.

Whereas most of those working in schools are assisting teachers in the classroom rather like parent helpers, Mary is regarded as a reading resource teacher, taking children with reading and language problems for remedial work for three days a week for $5 a day - as she says, 'an enormous amount'! The advantages are that Mary is able to use her training, and has been able to attend various courses at the college. She has gained experience through using the reading resources, and in planning individual programmes for pupils, as well as in evaluating pupils and administration. It is an advantage for Mary that she is at a full primary school so that she has had experience from new entrants to Form 2. She will also have the benefit of the principal being willing to act as a referee when she applies for further jobs. She can stay on the scheme for up to six months. She has also continued to do relief teaching which has averaged about three days a month, but relief pay is slow to come through, taking three to four weeks.

A meeting was held earlier in the year for those trainees who had not been successful in finding jobs which was also attended by a number of school principals and a representative from the Employment Service. The advantages and disadvantages of the scheme were discussed. There is a concern in the profession that the scheme is a way for the government to appear to be doing something about teacher unemployment by using trained teachers as cheap labour. In some ways Mary does feel she is being 'used'; on the other hand she is happy to help the school where she is spending most of her time. The staff have been very good to her and she is relieved to get whatever experience she can. She was disheartened when there was no position available for her after three years of training. She learnt a great deal at college, but there is so much more to learn in schools and she feels she has been able to do that. It has also been helpful to be in a position to observe beginning teachers who were successful in getting a job.

One of the aims of the scheme is to give unemployed teachers the chance to broaden their experience and improve their skills. It is expected that they should go on courses which will help them to improve their chances of getting a permanent job. Mary has been on courses on how to improve her CV and cope with interviews as well as others on language, gross motor skills, and computers.

The guidance on CVs has been particularly important. Mary now thinks the college has very traditional ideas about applying for jobs and they are not always effective. The course she took was run by ex-teachers who specialise in CV writing and interview techniques. The response from principals to the improved CVs has been amazing. Mary is critical of the similarity of student profiles from college. She thinks tutors should be required to sign them. It is not what they have in them so much as what is not included which is important for principals who have to read between the lines. Mary still includes her college profile with job applications but it is not a 'priority reference'. It would have been more helpful for principals if students could have included their section booklets from associate teachers which sum up their performance. Initially, Mary worked with another beginning teacher but she got fed up and went to England as a restaurant manager.

On a day-to-day basis Mary works with individual children and small groups for three days a week, concentrating on reading and language, although the problems with children in this particular school are not nearly as bad as Mary has seen elsewhere. She is to start a gross motor skills programme as well. There is a reading recovery teacher at the school who concentrates on the 'nitty gritty'. Mary works more with children who need to have plenty of time to practise reading skills. She uses co-operative reading programmes in which children either have a reading partner with a high reading ability, or the teacher and pupil take different parts in a story and there are planned follow-up activities. They also encourage children to read stories they have written to them.

There is no way Mary could have got the position she has without her college training. On the other hand, she has learnt a great deal from being in a school, working with other teachers, becoming familiar with resources, and having to make decisions for herself. She thinks her main lack was an in-depth knowledge of the resources available and how to use them. She felt at ease with planning and has made an effort to keep up with her long-term planning because she was well prepared at college but these are skills which are easily lost if not used. She and the other beginning teachers on the staff often talk about the things they think the college did not prepare them for, but Mary cannot now think of any off-hand.

At the beginning of the year Mary thought she was ready for the responsibility of a class but looking back she now wonders if this was so. A relieving teacher's behavioural

management and behavioural modification skills have to be 'pretty sharp'and she feels she has developed considerably in these areas.

Mary definitely regards the school she is in as effective. The atmosphere is friendly and the children are contented. The classrooms run smoothly and have a 'happy aura'. The school has a good community base, and although it could not be described as a rural school it has many country children attending. It is a 'school with a difference... happy, calm, and at peace. It's really amazing!' The other teachers regard Mary as part of the staff and have included her when they do classroom planning, particularly in relation to the children with whom Mary is working. They agree on appropriate books and worksheets. It is important if the children are going to progress that Mary works closely with classroom teachers and she is happy with the way they consult her and keep her informed about what they are doing.

When Mary left college she thought she would like to teach in the middle school. She now thinks that she is most at ease with standards 1 and 2, or juniors. She wishes she had taken more junior courses at college instead of concentrating on middle and upper school as she did, particularly in the third year when students had more choice of courses.

Because Mary has been relief teaching, she feels she has kept abreast of most curriculum areas, although for her specialist work she concentrates on reading and language. Mathematics is one of her strengths although she needs some updating on BSM. There is a wonderful science room at the school and she has taken a science unit while she was relieving for a week. She is going to get extra experience in computers quite soon because someone on the community taskforce is running a course. She has not had much chance to teach drama, music, or health.

Mary aims at teaching in an integrated way and it is easy in individualised programmes to focus on a child's interest and use that as a focus for reading and language. Mary regards her assessment of children as particularly important. She was given the classroom teacher's running records for the children and had access to their files. She has now built up individual files on the children which include systematic observations. She sees clear objectives for the children and uses checklists regularly to see that they are achieved.

Mary has not got much to say about the various issues of equity we have raised in student interviews. The school community is European/Pakeha and homogenous, with most children coming from semi-rural, stable backgrounds. She is not aware of any racism or sexism amongst staff or pupils, and there is no evidence of poverty in the local families.

Mary feels responsible for her own professional development. In her position she has not had a tutor teacher. The principal plays that role in an informal way. He is there

if guidance is needed and always visits the class if she is relieving. He always has ideas if Mary has had to take over a class at short notice. The other teachers are also supportive and willing to share ideas for resources. Mary thinks she has developed more creative and original ways of working, being partly influenced by a second beginning teacher who is on the same scheme. She also feels she has developed in terms of co-operative planning. She is still very enthusiastic about teaching. She supposes there will be a few adjustments needed when she finally gets a class of her own but she has no real worries. She has not had much experience of working with parents although she has kept the parents of the children with whom she is working informed of what she is doing. She realises that she will have to update some of her curriculum knowledge. That is on her list of things to do but right now it is 'on the back burner'.

Mary loves reading but does not have much time for professional reading. She visits the college resource centre but has no other contact with lecturers apart from one who is now a school principal. She has received notices of meetings for ex-students who have not got jobs, but the times have not been convenient. From what she has heard, the meetings have been more of a chat session than anything else.

Mary did four university papers while she was at college but she is not comfortable at university. She knows she can cope with the work because she got reasonable marks. She can go back and finish a degree if she wants to, but it is not something she wants to do at present.

Mary is provisionally registered but the work she is doing this year will not count towards registration. Her only ambition is to become a registered teacher but if she does not complete her registration within five years she will have to retrain which, in her view, would be a complete waste of time. Her goal for next year is to get a full-time job where she will be able to put into practice all she has learnt this year. Unfortunately there are still not many jobs being advertised, and most schools are looking for experienced teachers. Mary does not want to give up as some of her contemporaries have done, and move to other professions, because teaching skills are quickly lost if they are not used. She hopes her wide experience at a number of schools will be to her advantage.

DISCUSSION

This report is an account of the first year in the classroom of 100 beginning teachers, according to their own perceptions of that experience, seen against the backdrop of their training in three colleges of education. We have considered links between training and classroom practice by asking beginning teachers to think back to the college and their preparation for the classroom. However, we have not attempted to draw any conclusions here. A more detailed analysis of the material has yet to be undertaken; this will be an important part of our next and final report. Meanwhile, certain issues have emerged which can appropriately be commented on.

Enthusiasm and Confidence of Beginning Teachers: Their Commitment To Teach

We were impressed during the interviews, and in later analysis of our data, by the level of commitment of most beginning teachers. Even those who began the year nervously, and were sometimes overwhelmed by the magnitude of the job, had usually become more confident as the year progressed and, judging by their comments at the end of the interview, were looking forward to the challenge of their second year in the classroom. It was clear from the comments of beginning teachers that, while their classroom teaching was giving most of them considerable satisfaction, it was also stressful. This is hardly surprising. One would expect beginning teachers embarking on the full responsibility of a class for the first time to find it rather a strain, no matter how confident they were that they would succeed. Similar tension is probably experienced by members of other professional groups when they move from being students of a profession to practitioners. An initial settling-in period is to be expected. The important finding is that by the end of their first year the majority of beginning teachers were coping well and looking forward to their second year. This says much for their commitment to teaching, for the quality of

the training they had received from college lecturers and associate teachers, and for the support of staff in their first teaching position.

We wonder to what extent the tight job market influenced the teachers' commitment. Certainly, many of them expressed relief at having got a job. Are these beginning teachers particularly dedicated and hard working because they realise they are fortunate to have won a postion, or did they win a position because of their commitment, or would they have performed in a similar manner regardless of the job market? We had isolated examples of beginning teachers in relieving positions taking on extra responsibilities in the school in an attempt to ensure they get a permanent position the following year. As one beginning teacher put it, she was trying to make herself 'indispensable' so that the principal 'would have' to appoint her to a permanent job. A similar commitment to teaching was demonstrated by the perseverance in applying for jobs of those who, nearly a year after the completion of their pre-service training, were still without a permanent position. A high proportion of them were employed as relief teachers or in teacher-related activities.

Employment of Beginning Teachers

In our discussion about the graduating students who have not found full-time teaching positions, we commented on the difficulty of estimating exactly how many were not employed in the classroom because of the problem of keeping track of students once they had left the college. We have not been in a position to carry out comparisons between the employment rates of graduating teacher trainees with those of other professional groups, but the latest report from the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee on Graduate Employment in New Zealand (1992) notes that graduate unemployment is rising, that graduates are finding it takes a lot longer than expected to get jobs, and that they need to be more flexible and realistic about employment. That report summarises the destination of the university students graduating in the period 1 June 1991 to 31 May 1992. It is reasonable to assume that nearly all the graduates in the university sample completed their qualifications in 1991 and would therefore be contemporary with the three-year primary teacher trainees in our sample. In the following May of 1992, nearly 16% of university graduates were still looking for employment. Our information about the trainees in our cohort was collected several months later in November 1992. Our data are not precise but our conservative estimate of at least 24% who were still looking for teaching positions, nearly a year after graduation, suggests that unemployment was a greater problem for primary trainees in 1992, than for university graduates.

The position for graduating teacher trainees worsened during the course of our study

because of the Government decision, announced in conjunction with the 1991 budget, to discontinue various staffing provisions from the beginning of the 1992 year. These included the removal of the financial provision for above-establishment beginning teachers. This scheme had allowed the appointment of a number of those two-year trainees in our study who graduated at the end of 1990 and were appointed to classroom positions in 1991, but such positions were not available for the three-year trainees the following year.

Schools Do Make a Difference: the Professional Development of Beginning Teachers

Most beginning teachers believe they are teaching in effective schools and gave good reasons for their belief. One of the most important of these was the professional commitment of staff. Experienced teachers undoubtedly support beginning teachers in their on-going professional development. The movement towards greater school accountability means that beginning teachers have moved into a school environment where teachers are increasingly aware of the need to evaluate their classroom practices against clearly defined goals. Where this is the case, beginning teachers are also encouraged to develop and practise their own skills of self-evaluation - skills they have been introduced to during pre-service training.

Beginning teachers have also moved into schools where teachers are encouraged to attend extra courses as part of their professional development. Our data confirm the picture described in the report on Staff Development and Teacher Apraisal (1992), as part of the Monitoring To-day's Schools research project, of the number and range of courses classroom teachers had attended over a two-year period. Virtually all beginning teachers had attended courses as part of their professional development. Some of these were after school or during the weekend but others were part of a beginning teacher's 0.2 release time. We have referred to the value beginning teachers place on their 0.2 allocation. The activities they described fell within the guidelines for the Induction and Professional Development of Beginning Teachers in Primary Schools (1986), although we also commented that the use made of the time could not always be described as strictly for the professional development of beginning teachers.

The fact that most beginning teachers are teaching in schools they consider to be effective does not mean all schools are the same. We did not make a detailed study of the schools themselves, but listening to the beginning teachers describe their experiences, and even from casual observation when we visited schools to conduct interviews, it was obvious that the schools varied in their physical plant and resources, in the kinds of

communities they served, and in the stability and commitment of other staff. Some beginning teachers undoubtedly had an easier introduction to teaching than others. We would not want to suggest, however, that beginning teachers in well-resourced schools, serving predominately 'middle class' families, necessarily had the easiest introduction to teaching, although this was often the case. Several beginning teachers in such schools had 'problems' with their school principal and found the parents overly protective of, and ambitious for, their children, and quick to criticise teacher performance. While it is true that a few of the teachers experiencing the greatest difficulties were teaching in schools in lower socioeconomic areas, with the added complexities of coping with children from varied ethnic backgrounds, several beginning teachers in similar schools had consciously chosen to teach in these localities, identified closely with the children, were impressed with the children's pride in their work, and enjoyed the rewards of assisting their development.

Three Training Institutions - One End Product?

We noted in our earlier reports the difficulty we have had in handling material from three colleges. Had we recorded all of the student perceptions by college, there would have been considerable repetition. On the other hand, had we reported student reactions across colleges, we would have given the impression that the experience students had in the three colleges was largely the same when we considered that there were some differences between colleges which were sufficiently important to be recorded. In the introduction to this report we said that we would focus on the beginning teachers, rather than the colleges where they had trained, and noted the range of factors which influence a beginning teacher's performance in the classroom. Because we have not done a detailed study of the classroom practices of beginning teachers, nor talked systematically to children, tutor teachers, school principals or parents, we are not in a position to pass judgment on the performance of beginning teachers, or to suggest that those from one college may be doing better or less well than another.

What has struck us is the similarity of responses from beginning teachers from the three colleges. Reading the transcripts of our interviews of beginning teachers, there are few clues to indicate where they had trained. Once they are out in the classroom, beginning teachers blend into the New Zealand primary school system. In describing their classroom practice they emphasise features that are among the strengths of that system - the focus on child-centred learning; the need for regular and thorough diagnostic assessment of children; the value of an integrated approach to the primary school curriculum; the merits of co-operative planning; and the need for on-going, reflective,

self-evaluation.

We were not able to question school principals about the performance of beginning teachers in their schools, but one recent Auckland study where this was done (Cameron and Grudnoff, 1992) indicates that by and large principals are very satisfied with their choice of beginning teachers. The writers comment that the principals think that beginning teachers' personal qualities tend to be better developed than their professional skills, which is hardly surprising, and that pre-service courses need to prepare students better for 'the complexities of teaching'. This would certainly be the view of the beginning teachers in our sample, but the beginning teachers themselves also acknowledge that no pre-service course can completely prepare teachers for the classroom. It is not until beginning teachers are placed within a school, with responsibility for a particular class of children, that they can develop and refine the skills to which they have been introduced during the course of their training.

A second study in Wellington (Shaw, 1992) also focused on perceived weaknesses of beginning teachers as viewed by school principals and, among other things, identified concerns about how well the college programme had managed to integrate theory and practice, leading to some beginning teachers having initial problems in getting their classroom programme up and running. It is worth noting that both of these studies were initiated by the colleges as part of their on-going concern to monitor the performance of their graduates as part of the college's accountability mechanisms.

The Real World of the School, and the Relationship Between the College and the School

On entry to college, the main concern of students was to train to be effective classroom teachers. Not surprisingly, once they enter the classroom, they put the college behind them; the 'real world' of the school takes over. This may mask the vital importance of the relationship between the colleges and the school system in the pre-service education of trainees and in their on-going professional development. This key relationship is one we will look at more closely in our final report. Two issues which arose in our interviews of beginning teachers were the use made by trainees of associate teachers' reports in their job applications, and the role of tutor teachers in the successful induction of beginning teachers into the classroom.

Reports written by associate teachers at the completion of a student's period of teaching practice in the classroom have traditionally been intended for individual students and the lecturers who supervise their work. They are a means of indicating to the student and to lecturers how an experienced teacher has viewed the development of the

student's teaching skill, and, through constructive criticism, how the student's classroom performance might be improved. In a tight job market, particularly when students have to compete with more experienced teachers, students are looking for any evidence of their skills as a classroom teacher to include with their CVs and job applications. Despite the fact that the colleges have cautioned against it, many if not most students included associate teachers' reports with their job applications. They say associate teachers' reports contain precisely the kind of information prospective principals are interested in and not to include these reports raises questions in the principal's mind about how well students have fared in the classroom. If this is now common practice, it obviously has the potential to influence the kind of comments associate teachers may feel free to make, and could limit the usefulness of the reports for diagnostic purposes in the course of the students' college course. Perhaps two reports are required, one of which is confidential to the student and the college.

The role of tutor teachers is a very different issue. There is no doubt that those beginning teachers who developed a good relationship with their tutor teacher valued the relationship and considered it a factor in the speed and confidence with which they settled into the classroom. For these students the tutor teacher became a bridge between the college training and the beginning teacher's induction to teaching. A number of beginning teachers suggested that tutor teachers had to assist them with activities for which both they and the tutor teachers thought the colleges should have prepared them more thoroughly. Because the role of the tutor teacher is so important, it would be enhanced if tutor teachers were familiar with the training just completed by the beginning teacher, and college lecturers were familiar with the activities undertaken by tutor teachers. We do not know to what extent this is the case, although at least one college, Auckland, has introduced one-day training courses for tutor teachers, run by the lecturer at the college responsible for liaison between the college and the school.

Reflective Practitioner or Technician; or What 'Throws' a Beginning Teacher?

Students, particularly in their final sole-charge teaching experience, do have the opportunity to work with a full class of children but most of their practical work at college tends to be with groups of children or on a one-to-one basis with children. This could be likened to a snapshot or 'still' picture. The big adjustment beginning teachers have to make when they assume responsibility for a class of their own is how to cope with the moving picture: the constant demands and interactions of the mobile crowd scene.

A number of beginning teachers emphasised that one of their priorities at the

beginning of the year was to make sure that they had good management systems and control mechanisms in place so that the classroom ran smoothly. However, establishing such systems and coping with the administrative detail required for the successful running of a classroom, along with the detailed requirements of monitoring and assessing children, were things that 'threw' beginning teachers. A similar emphasis on developing the skills necessary to ensure that the class programme runs smoothly comes through in the comments made by beginning teachers when they talked about their priorities for their second year. The aspects beginning teachers refer to could be described as 'competencies' or the skills needed to get a class up and running. It is noteworthy that relatively few beginning teachers talked about their satisfaction with implementing the educational philosophy they had developed as students, or even talked much about their increasing knowledge of child development or how children learn. This is not to suggest that they are not aware of these issues, or are not capable of taking a broader view of what education is all about. Rather, it indicates that at this point in their career, their priorities are focused on making sure that the class runs smoothly so that they are free to concentrate on the more important issues. McNamara (1992) makes a useful distinction between ' ... preparing a person to become a competent teacher in a general sense and providing the teacher with specific, nominated competences' (p. 278). These are closely interrelated issues. Management style is an expression of a teacher's philosophy. An orderly learning environment has to be established for that philosophy to be put into practice - a structure is needed so that the philosophy can be expressed. The issue here is the stage of development of a beginning teacher. Certain 'competencies' in the classroom are necessary for survival. Without them, the beginning teacher cannot confidently and comfortably move to the next stage. But it is not until beginning teachers know the school and class to which they are appointed that they can concentrate on some of these specific competencies.

This raises questions about the relationship between pre-service and in-service training and the role of the school in inducting beginning teachers. The fact that beginning teachers are not eligible to become registered teachers until they have had two years' classroom experience implies that at least that amount of time is required before beginning teachers can be considered to be competent. No course of training can possibly meet all the needs of individual students. Colleges necessarily provide generic courses which aim at meeting the needs of most students. A college programme will never be able to prepare beginning teachers for *specific* classroom situations. Perhaps the role of the school in assisting the beginning teacher with the more specific 'competencies' necessary in a particular school and for a specific age group of children should be more clearly articulated.

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