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Review article

The development of primary teacher education at the Institute of Education (London), 1977–1986

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Abstract

This article expands on Aldrich and Woodin's contributions on the development of primary teacher education at IOE (Institute of Education), UCL's Faculty of Education and Society (University College London, UK). It focuses on the Primary Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE); the years before it began and its development between 1977 and 1986. Relevant literature and first-hand accounts provide background and progress. Events leading to the establishment of the Primary PGCE at IOE are discussed, before describing the course itself with its vicissitudes and progress, and internal and external politics. Changes in emphasis and structure are reviewed, together with the influences of central government and its education departments. Demographics of population decline and growth are relevant to the progress of the Primary PGCE, which grew numerically and in stature. Key organisational and structural developments of the Primary PGCE are

discussed. It will be seen how the IOE itself and Early Years and Primary courses, with its staff, influence policy and practice, internally and externally. The article concludes that the primary initial teacher education remains unfinished business.

Keywords primary teacher education; PGCE; developments; government; control

Introduction

This article considers the development of the Primary Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE), and builds on the works of Aldrich (2002) and Aldrich and Woodin (2021). In-service and higher degree courses in primary education are outside the scope of this article. Early years initial teacher education (ITE) is considered part of overall primary development at the IOE (Institute of Education), UCL's Faculty of Education and Society (University College London, UK), and the article spans over 45 years of primary ITE at the IOE.

The first section, 'Developments in primary teacher education pre-1977', provides a background to the commencement of primary ITE at the IOE. This is located within the contexts of internal and external events, policies and decisions, predominantly between 1972 and 1977, and the establishment of the Primary PGCE in 1977. Earlier historical events between 1963 and 1973 are referred to for their importance in the social and demographic changes, and changing attitudes and sexual freedoms, the latter influenced by the availability of the contraceptive pill (Aldrich and Woodin, 2021).

The Robbins Report (Ministry of Education, 1963), Newsom Report (CACE, 1963), James Report (DES, 1972a) and the White Paper, *A Framework for Expansion* (DES, 1972b), are reviewed and, as needed, critiqued. Relevant literature is discussed, particularly regarding the controversial effects of the closure of a number of colleges of education. Events prior to the 1960s are included where considered relevant, for example, the effect of the post-war baby boom on schools and teacher supply.

The second section, 'The Primary Postgraduate Certificate in Education', draws on a first-hand account by the first Course Tutor for the Primary PGCE. This is considered to add a human dimension to the events and progress of the course. This has enabled a full record of the Primary PGCE course between 1977 and 1986. The methodology underlying the curriculum of the course is described, with its rationale.

The third section, 'Post-1986 primary teacher education', outlines the further development of the course and the changing pedagogy. The setting is within a context of key central government legislation and policies. These entailed ever-increasing control of teacher education, which is discussed.

The final section, 'Conclusion', draws attention to the enormous contribution of the IOE to primary initial teacher development, and to children's education and development nationally and internationally.

Developments in primary teacher education pre-1977

The IOE's decision to introduce a Primary PGCE in 1977 took place over 70 years after the IOE was founded. Its history is provided by Aldrich (2002) and Aldrich and Woodin (2021), and it sets the scene for the development of primary teacher education at the IOE and the events that followed. These include the increasing role of the government, with the shift from a relatively laissez-faire approach to a much more directive one.

Prior to 1977, in the 1960s, major social and demographic changes had taken place, for example, the sexual freedoms made possible by the availability of the contraceptive pill on the National Health Service. For many families, this enabled control of family size. Implementation of the Robbins Report (Ministry of Education, 1963) gave qualified students the opportunity to enter higher education. This was followed by the raising of the school leaving age, first to 15 by the Education Act 1944 (Ministry of Education, 1944) and then to 16 (CACE, 1963), deferred until 1972 because of costs. Both of these increased the demand for teachers, together with the increased birth rate from the 'baby boom' of the post-war years, and so the colleges expanded to meet the demand. Elsewhere, in schools, important changes were being seen in primary schools, from a predominantly formal teaching style to a more child-centred one, reviewed in the following section.

At the time, the IOE did not contribute directly to primary teacher education, but remotely through its special courses in departments such as Comparative Education and Education in Developing Countries. Otherwise, the IOE's teacher education work was mainly the training of graduates for teaching in secondary schools or further education. It had not been considered necessary for teachers in primary schools to be graduates – a view which, this article will show, died hard and continued even after the beginning of the Primary PGCE in 1977.

Before this, however, and as the James Report (DES, 1972a) notes, graduate primary teacher training and education began with the introduction of the Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree in 1964, mainly in the colleges of education and polytechnics. The IOE was not, at the time, involved with the BEd, but it introduced a common one year, part-time 'refresher' course, for home and overseas certificated teachers for Part I of the BEd in 1981 (Warren, 1986). This enabled access to Diploma courses which formed the main element of Part II of an in-service honours BEd (Lawton, 1988). The IOE also began to receive enquiries from overseas students who wanted a London BEd degree. The regulations were amended to enable this, and a BEd Centre was established (Lawton, 1994). The interest in this article, however, lies with the introduction at the IOE of the Primary PGCE which, at the time, was only provided by a minority of institutions, including universities.

Prior to the introduction of the Primary PGCE, important events took place. Edward Short, then Secretary of State for Education, stated that a major review of almost all aspects of initial course training was needed. This followed the concern which had been expressed that the lengthening of the Certificate of Education course from two to three years in 1960 did not appear to have improved the quality of new teachers entering schools (Taylor, 2008). This concern may have had merit, but it would be unrealistic to suppose that newly qualified teachers should emerge as 'fully fledged butterflies from their chrysalis'. Lawton (1990), too, makes the point that initial teacher education is no more than an introduction. Newly qualified teachers continue to need support to develop their abilities, and to plan content and appropriate teaching for children with a range of abilities. The current system of mentoring for newly qualified teachers recognises this.

Following a change of government, Short's successor, Margaret Thatcher, established the James Committee in 1971, which reported its findings in 1972 (DES, 1972a). The White Paper *A Framework for Expansion* followed (DES, 1972b). Reactions tended not to be favourable to the consequences of these reports, with some exceptions. One was that teacher training should be directed towards a graduate profession, as recommended in the Robbins Report (Ministry of Education, 1963). A cycle of three stages was proposed and accepted. Intending teachers were to follow a three-year subject-based course, leading to a degree or higher education diploma. The second stage would be a two-year professional training, leading to the award of a BA Education. The third stage, in-service training, was intended to give serving teachers the opportunity for release of one term in seven years. This has never been implemented, but the White Paper did accelerate the process of reorganisation of teacher education.

The provisions of the White Paper, as Simmons (2017) and Cortis (1985) note, marked a further step in the increasing involvement of central government, as distinct from a consensus among relevant groups. Criticisms were many, including the decision to give the colleges independence from the universities. Elvin (1972) pointed out that this was not desired by the colleges; on the contrary, they valued the association with the university sector. Henke (1978), in a comprehensive and forensic analysis of the proposals and actions over reorganisation of teacher training provision, was particularly critical of several aspects. One of these was what he considered to be a lack of transparency on how consultations were carried out. Another, and here he was very forthright, was his criticism of the lack of coherence, and sometimes contradictions, in how the decisions on closures should be made. Taylor (2008), more moderately, nevertheless noted the lack of statistical evidence or projections presented in the report. He also considered that other evidence, including the Plowden Report (CACE, 1967), could usefully have been included. It should be noted that the pedagogical approaches described by Plowden were influential in the methodology underlying the conduct of the Primary PGCE in its first years. This is set out more fully in the following section. Nevertheless, Taylor (2008), too, acknowledged the importance in the James Report of the three cycles of a teacher's development: higher education, training and professional development.

A further major criticism was the decision to end the BEd degree in the colleges, other than for in-service work (Parry, 1972). Parry argued that this was unlikely to enhance their status. This was after the expansion in the 1960s, already described, with the introduction of free higher education in 1962. However, forecasts of teacher supply and demand would lead to a major contraction in numbers

entering the colleges of some ten thousand a year by the end of the decade (Parry, 1972). Consequently, and controversially, as Simmons (2017) notes, nationally, a number of colleges of education closed, including locally to the IOE. Stockwell, Philippa Fawcett and Furzedown Colleges accepted their last intake of students in 1978 (Aldrich and Woodin, 2021). Froebel, Whitelands, Southlands and Digby Stuart Colleges merged to form the Roehampton Institute of Education (Simmons, 2017). For some time, the IOE continued to validate their degrees. Nevertheless, the proposals made in the White Paper (DES, 1972b) which followed the James Report (DES, 1972a) laid the foundations for the eventual decision of the IOE to look at postgraduate training for primary school teachers. The closures of nearby colleges, and corresponding staff redundancies, had repercussions on relationships with the IOE, which were occasionally uneasy in the beginning. This was particularly the case when the IOE began its Primary PGCE in 1977/8. The progress of this is discussed in detail in the following section.

The Primary Postgraduate Certificate in Education

The Primary PGCE course at the IOE began in 1977, following the appointment in January 1977 of a Dean of Professional Studies, Dr Terence Davis. Davis, a strong advocate of primary postgraduate education, emphasised that graduates wishing to teach should achieve a teaching qualification. He persuaded the IOE's Management Committee and, subsequently, the Initial Courses Committee of the importance of postgraduate primary initial teacher training; a Primary PGCE course. The Initial Courses Committee, whose membership were all PGCE staff, was a greater hurdle, with hostile reactions from a number of staff associated with the Secondary PGCE. Some of the reasons advanced included limited financial resources was that the Institute should remain at the level where there was substantial expertise, as the IOE was historically associated with secondary school teaching and research. Further arguments were that the constituent colleges of education of the IOE would object and, finally, that the Institute would not get students of quality. This was soon shown not to be the case, as is discussed in more detail in this section.

After discussions, objections were met, and a small Representative Committee was established, including Rosemary Carr (Principal of Stockwell College). Although unhappy at Stockwell's closure, she enabled support from the colleges, arguing that the infant primary sector would benefit from having the powerful IOE involved with training primary teachers. The Initial Courses Committee finally approved this.

The Primary PGCE, initially located in the Department of Child Development and Educational Psychology (CDEP), had its first intake of 16 students, all holding good first degrees. The intake number was decided by the Directorate as constituting a seminar group and being financially viable. One new member of staff, Rosemary Clayfield (Dr Davis from 1985), was appointed as its first Course Tutor in January 1978. She had been Head Teacher of three primary schools and, among her qualifications, held a University of London master's degree in child development.

The first term of the course was led by Margaret Roberts, Senior Lecturer in CDEP until Clayfield took up post. She was ably assisted by Dora Wood, made redundant by the closure of Stockwell College. At the time, the course was not always welcomed by Secondary PGCE staff, and Clayfield and Wood were informed that primary teachers did not need degrees; they needed to be 'nice motherly people'. It is assumed that this patronising and gender inappropriate attitude was part of the prevailing perception of a higher status of secondary as compared to primary teachers. This attitude died hard, but, more generally, Furlong (1996) concluded that higher education was an important basis for intending teachers as professionals.

Wood unstintingly supported Clayfield, which was particularly valuable as Clayfield, although a highly experienced former head teacher, was new to formal teacher training. Wood shared the seminars which followed the Friday Education block lectures given to all PGCE students. The task was not only to relate the lecture's content to the primary domain, but also to discuss social issues, including gender equality, the multicultural society and racism. She accompanied Clayfield and the students on a Field Studies course in 1983, but sadly died later that year. The students followed similar experiences to those provided to 6–7-year-old pupils from Clayfield's second headship school, but related to the learning needs of children of primary age, then 5–11.

Staffing was an issue due to ongoing financial restrictions, and subject teaching was provided by IOE departments, with physical education from the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), with whom

IOE enjoyed good working relationships. The appointment of Bill Bailey improved staffing, although he was on a limited contract of three years, due to the ongoing financial restrictions and in 1979 the grant to the IOE was reduced by 28.6 per cent. Bailey taught mathematics and, later, computers in education, then an emerging technology. Child development was taught by Roberts. Clayfield taught language and teaching of reading, later adding drama and aspects of special needs. She was well qualified and had hosted special units of Language and Communication, and also Learning and Behavioural Disorders. Her teaching load was unduly heavy, and the varied sources of staff input meant a lack of coherence for the course. It was not always clear, either, that all contributing staff had primary experience.

The course pedagogy was of a progressive, participatory education model for students in schools, and child-centred, as typified in the Plowden Report (CACE, 1967). Contrary to Aldrich (2002) and Aldrich and Woodin (2021), reforms in primary education practice long predated Plowden, evidenced by publications such as *The Play Way* (Caldwell Cook, 1917; Gardner, 1966) and the Hadow Report, which emphasised activity and experience (Board of Education, 1931). Actual school organisation varied, and during the three-block teaching practice in London schools, students encountered a variety of situations, such as an integrated day, mixed-age classes (vertical grouping) and first and middle schools. These had populations from varying socio-economic backgrounds and ethnicity. Additionally, in 1982, students, with a tutor, engaged in team teaching in a school (Clayfield, 1983). These varied experiences, good and poor, made for valuable learning, and fruitful seminars and tutorials, although sometimes it was necessary for tutors to be tactful about a school.

With time, the reputation and stature of the course grew, helped by Clayfield and the IOE hosting a first National Conference in 1982 on the Primary PGCE route into teaching. Following this, Clayfield became a member of a new Primary Group of the University Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET). Early fears about recruitment proved unfounded. As a measure of the course's reputation, large numbers of applications were received, predominantly female. All shortlisted candidates were interviewed by Clayfield and a colleague, with one applicant offering 'inducements'; not accepted. The rigorous process meant that there were few failures on the course.

Criteria for selection were not only academic success in the first degree, but also evidence of care for, and desire to serve, children. At least an A level relevant to a teaching subject was required, together with GCE (O level) passes in English and mathematics. Subject-based degrees were prioritised.

In the first few years, the course grew gradually, with over 35 students by 1984/5, and 68 from 1985/6. However, prior to this, in 1982/3, the course was threatened with closure for a year, due to a fall in demand for primary teachers. This was because of a decline in the primary school population and a predicted lower birth rate. Clayfield strongly opposed this, with one of her arguments being that the course would lose the confidence of the schools who worked with the course. Importantly, against the trend for newly qualified teachers failing to obtain teaching posts during the period of low demand, IOE's Primary PGCE students tended to be successful, including in the ILEA.

The decision to remain open was vindicated by evidence that the numbers entering primary schools were growing, as was the birth rate. Not only was the demand for primary teachers increasing, but there was also a decline in demand for secondary schools. The IOE Directorate suggested that surplus staff should be relocated to the Primary PGCE. Clayfield opposed this; the relocation did not take place. Appropriately qualified staff were recruited to the primary course, as needed, including successful former students and local head teachers.

With the growth of the course, accommodation needs grew. Originally, one room was allocated, which did have the merit of a sink for practical work. This was questioned by a senior administrator, who remarked that there were handwash facilities nearby. Accommodation increased by a second room by 1984/5, but, even so, in 1985, Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) noted that accommodation was barely adequate (DES, 1986). This point was repeated in an oral report of a three-day HMI inspection in November 1986, minuted in the report of the initial teacher education programme, archived in the IOE library. Conditions improved rapidly as the course grew and diversified.

The IOE's Report of Activities for 1981–6 noted that, as a result of this trend and the positive report from HMI in early 1985 (DES, 1986), the Primary PGCE would gradually expand to 100 students. HMI praised the substantially school-based nature of the course, and the evidence of recent and relevant experience of staff. Clayfield provided an example. Responding to a request from the ILEA, she had supported a city school in 1983 by teaching a class of 8-year-olds for a month when a class teacher had become unwell and unable to manage her pupils. HMI also praised the students' positive attitude towards their training. One former Primary PGCE student of the time, Professor Usha Goswami CBE,

asked to be quoted: 'The time spent in schools was the most instructive part of the course. I learned such a lot from the class teachers I was assigned to' (personal communication by email 8 November 2021). Later, Professor Jane Hurry (1985/6) commented that she enjoyed the course, but found her second teaching practice school 'challenging' (personal communication by email 23 December 2021). However, a point made by HMI was that certain aspects of the course needed strengthening, with more time for English and mathematics, and that early years' work needed more closely relating to the curriculum of schools. These were valid comments, especially in the changing climate where subject specialisms were being required, and they were later made, too, in 1986 by the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE), which accredited the course (Graves, 1990). The point was relevant, but an increase in one thing means a decrease in time for others. Such points were nevertheless taken seriously by the staff of the Primary PGCE, with appropriate developments in the course design. This process is discussed in the following section about post-1986 primary teacher education.

Close relationships were being established, with the schools contributing to teaching practice. Course staff became able to select schools, with administrative work being done by the Schools Relations Office. By 1984, the course had developed considerable freedom over its way forward. It developed its separate Course Book for the Primary Education Programme Session 1984/5, which more closely related the course structure and its curriculum to the needs of primary education and of schools.

In 1984/5, the form of the final examination also changed to one similar to the Alternative PGCE located in the Social Studies Department. Through an extended essay, it theorised the practice of teaching and became more relevant to students' professional development. Suggested reading included work by Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky on the question of how children learn and how to support it, for example, by scaffolding. It also fostered reflective practice, as advocated by Schön (1992) and Ince and Kitto (2020).

Externally, and post-1986, but relevant here, writing by McIntyre (1995) stressed the practical role of schools and staff, rather than theoretical input. This is considered a valid point, but good teaching does not exist in a vacuum, rather within a context of knowledge. Furlong (1996), Graves (1991) and Barrow (1990) take similar positions, with Graves (1991) regarding it as a 'non-issue'. Barrow (1990) pointed out that the issue of 'theory or not' is not an either/or one, but rather a question of what theory and how it is treated; this point is not always adequately addressed. Nevertheless, the Alternative and Primary PGCE courses organisation helped to closely relate selected educational theory, for example, how children learn, to the practice of teaching and fostering reflective practice (Schön, 1992; Ince and Kitto, 2020). This process of reflection was helped by the IOE's organisation of four days per week in schools, and the fifth morning in the IOE during teaching practice. Students were enabled to express their responses to their days in school, privately with other students or tutors, or more publicly, with the group as a whole. One unfortunate student arrived to the seminar, distraught, as she had picked up headlice during the week. Others also sometimes had harrowing experiences, and it was often therapeutic to share these.

Sometimes students learned more what not to do, as in the use of the 'integrated day' in which subject boundaries were blurred. Davis (1986: 11) pointed out that this form of 'organisation' is successful only in the hands of 'the exceptionally talented teacher' and, 'when applied by a poor copy, becomes a destructive force in education'. The example of the chaotic William Tyndale school in North London represented a case in point (Auld, 1976). Nevertheless, in the seminars, poor experiences were often able to become fruitful learning opportunities for reflective practice (Schön, 1992; Ince and Kitto, 2020). Serious issues were dealt with separately, as with the incident of a student being exposed to unmistakable and unacceptable racist comments in a school during the Brixton riots. Needless to say, the school was not used again, and the student accepted apologies.

During this period of the early 1980s, the course had become more strongly school based, with serving teachers from good schools contributing to the mentoring of students. This took place within the schools, with primary head teachers being given a small honorarium in return for their tutoring of students. They became partners in the training process, a development which endures to date and which is discussed in the following section.

The changing pattern within the IOE, together with trends in school organisation towards first and middle schools, provided students with the opportunity to choose whether to make a close study of children aged 4–8 years or 9–12. One afternoon per week was devoted to this option, with first school option students experiencing the opportunity to explore a wide variety of materials, including constructional. This reflected the discovery (learning to learn) approach enshrined in the Plowden Report (CACE, 1967). Pedagogically, this was good at its best, but too often weak, unless a teacher ensured

that there was something to discover. Similarly, the middle school option students had an afternoon of topic work to assist them in developing sound learning experiences for their charges. However, the curriculum of these options, and the course itself, did not facilitate students in developing a teaching subject specialism; this was pointed out by HMI in their report (DES, 1986). Rather, at the time, the intention was to enable students to understand the learning process from the child's point of view. In this, it substantially succeeded, but the climate was changing. The course developed in order to meet the demand for specialisation in a teaching subject, particularly for those students intending to teach the upper years of primary school. Furthermore, there were implications for the course following the report *Better Schools* (DES, 1985), as for all teacher education providers.

In the third term in 1984/5 school-based experience was extended to one day per week. Students spent time in an ILEA inner city school, where they developed the theme of 'The Lives of Children' with 8–9-year-old (Year 2) children. The outcome was high-quality social studies work based on grandparents and others' memories, and the children's reading, and also mathematics, using measurement of time involving considerable historical research by the children. A visit to the nearby Bunhill Fields Cemetery, once a plague burial pit, enabled complex subtraction calculations of age from the dates of birth and death. Literacy, language and written work, and art and creative work, were also obvious products of this topic. The work was excellent, and aspects would still meet some requirements of the National Curriculum, but not specific levels of attainment within Key Stages. However, what the children gained in terms of confidence in their own abilities is harder to measure, but was nevertheless apparent. It also contributed to school and family links being strengthened, as advocated in the Plowden Report (CACE, 1967). The model for the topic, with a flow diagram, is described in Davis (1988).

The approach taken at the time came during a period of transition between a developmental child-oriented pedagogy and that required to enable a more measurable standards-based approach, which remains an issue. The strengths of the child-centred approach were seen in such activities as close observation drawing. Davis (1988) reported the episode of a student, observed during a teaching practice, who had provided a tulip as one material for the 8-year-old children. A child went to break up the flower, whereas another told him not to do so because the flower was lovely. That experience could not be easily assessed, but it had considerable intrinsic value for the individual pupils and for their agency. This was an example of the unmeasurable benefits to the human condition of aesthetic experience, perhaps not sufficiently emphasised in the National Curriculum.

Parallel with this, however, an important event took place – the introduction of CATE, following the White Paper: Circular 3/84, *Approval of Courses* in 1983 (DES, 1983). It was chaired by Sir William Taylor, a former director of the IOE. As noted by Graves (1990), CATE approved the IOE's Primary PGCE course in 1986.

As the pressure for specialisation grew, the trend was followed and developed further by Davis's successors. This was particularly necessary with the advent of the Education Reform Act of 1988 (DES, 1988) which introduced the National Curriculum, followed by its implementation in 1989. These two were symptomatic of increasing central government control of education in general. The report, *Better Schools* (DES, 1985), is a case in point where calls for reform in schools must necessarily affect teacher education. Further significant internal and external events were to take place in the coming years, and they are discussed in the following section.

Post-1986 primary teacher education

This section considers aspects of the changing pattern of primary ITE. The growth of central control is reviewed, but the plethora of Circulars and agencies is considered only as appropriate.

In August 1986, Davis retired, but took up a senior post at the University of Botswana, albeit reluctant to leave a successful and expanding course. Considerable change relevant to the IOE and primary teacher education took place in subsequent years.

After Davis left, John Coe led the course with, subsequently, Jeni Riley. This period was notable for the passing of the Education Reform Act (DES, 1988) and the implementation of the National Curriculum in schools, which followed in 1989. The trend for closer integration of theory and practice begun in the 1970s and early 1980s continued and, as Graves (1986) noted, the partnership between schools in London and the IOE grew too. He phrased it: 'practising teachers in secondary and primary schools are seen as colleagues in the process of training new teachers. Thus, teachers in schools are designated

teacher-tutors and help students on teaching practice' (Graves, 1986: n.p.). Practising teachers and head teachers provided substantial expertise to the quality of the teacher education being provided (Graves, 1991). Such partnerships were developed across the sector as a whole, not only by the IOE, becoming mandatory in 1993, following Circular 14/93 (DfE, 1993). As already noted, the period after 1986 saw a rapid expansion in the IOE provision of primary initial teacher education, together with evidence of ever-increasing government control, and Circulars. Furlong et al. (2000) noted the effects on teacher education autonomy.

The introduction of Teaching Standards, by the Teaching Regulation Agency (DfE, 2011), was an example, which set out the competencies and standards needed to obtain Qualified Teacher Status. This was an important requirement as it removed ambiguity from all parties. There was, too, a desire for more accountability of schools, and therefore a major impact on the Primary PGCE curriculum. The Education Reform Act (DES, 1988) with implementation of the National Curriculum in 1989, and its revisions, clearly had relevance for the content of ITE.

Students needed to be adequately equipped for their work in schools, and Naish (1990), a senior tutor for ITE at the IOE, set out the structure, theoretical and practical content, and personal qualities for IOE students. These are considered appropriate, and they are generalisable to other institutions. He described the course design, with its school-based emphasis of two days a week in schools, and the partnership of teachers and tutors. These ensured that students acquired the necessary skills and knowledge. Students intending to teach in Years 1–6 of primary school follow a subject specialism. Those opting for what is now the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) study a curriculum linked to the development, teaching and learning of younger children, including language, literacy and mathematics. The education component is issues based and focuses on critical examination of school, classroom and societal issues. This is in keeping with the IOE's promotion of a culture of tolerance and respect, while contemporary issues of curriculum are currently the subject of review.

All this is a clear demonstration of the value and significance of the relevance of the IOE's work in developing its primary, including early years, teacher education. Its influence is, and will be, felt over many countries through its students, courses and research. A worthwhile contribution indeed, and a fitting tribute to the 120 years of the IOE's life.

Conclusion

It is 50 years since the introduction of the James Report (DES, 1972a) and *A Framework for Expansion* (DES, 1972b). In that time, developments in primary ITE, including early years, have expanded immensely since the beginnings of the Primary PGCE in 1977, in a way which could not have been foreseen.

Not all the extensive developments and changes have been reviewed, only those most relevant to the IOE. Particularly significant has been the increase in central government control over the content and delivery of initial primary teacher education.

Sir Peter Newsam (1989: n.p.), a former director of the IOE, considered that the mission has always been to help teachers to ask: 'Why am I teaching this individual group in this particular way? And how can I do it better?' This is the implicit question for the IOE, and for its students, staff, schools and the children they teach.

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