

Working the Space: Locating Teachers' Voices in Large-Scale, Mandated Curriculum Reform

Donna Leigh Evans

B.Ed (JCU), P.Grad.Cert. of Ed. (JCU)

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Agency, curriculum reform, mandated curriculum reform, national curriculum reform, policy, self-efficacy, social cognitive theory, space, teacher efficacy, reform efficacy

Abstract

The educational landscape is one of significant change. This thesis is concerned with the early responses of a group of teachers to large-scale, mandated curriculum reform at one independent P -12 school located in regional Queensland. The literature on curriculum reform and teacher agency suggests that teachers respond in wide-ranging ways to curriculum change. There is, however, a gap in the literature with regard to how teachers' perceptions of their own capacities, which contribute to the formation of their dispositions, inform their engagement practices and, consequently, their responses to large-scale, mandated change. This study explored these relationships by focusing on the engagement, mediation and negotiation practices of six teachers as they made early preparations to implement Phase One of the Australian Curriculum, in 2012. This study sought to examine these practices in two ways. First, it drew on aspects of Bourdieu's (1990; 1991; 1993) field theory and utilised the concept of habitus to describe the policy field of prescribed curriculum and the enacted field of teachers' work in the classrooms where they practise. Second, in focusing on this space between policy as text and policy as practice, this study examined how teachers' dispositions influenced their perceptions of their capacity to engage with curriculum policy and undertake its implementation. The conceptual lens for the research focus used to analyse the operations of the space was shaped by Albert Bandura's (1995; 2001; 2008) theory of cognition; particularly his concept of self-efficacy. Bandura's work casts light on the way in which individual responses can move beyond the reactive to become agentive. By focusing attention on the way these teachers engaged with, mediated and contextualised curriculum change, the study aimed to provide insights into the complex nature of teachers' work within their operational space, as they negotiated and interpreted the requirements of this large-scale, mandated reform. The findings of this research indicated that whilst an individual's self-efficacy perceptions significantly influenced their professional actions and interactions, an understanding by leaders and managers of an individual's self-efficacy dispositions could mediate negative and resistant behaviours towards change. These findings have resonance for discussions around the effective leadership and management of organisational change, particularly for those working in the areas of policy reform, most specifically large-scale, mandated education reform since it promotes achieving *reform efficacy* from the teachers' perspective. Such an approach privileges teacher agency in education policy decision-making and implementation.

Certification of Thesis

I certify that the ideas, experimental work, results, analyses, software and conclusions reported in this dissertation are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

Signature

Date

ENDORSEMENT

Signature of Supervisor/s

Date

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Date

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Acknowledgements

In invoking a memorable television moment where Basil Fawlty (star of “Fawlty Towers”) suggests to his wife, Sybil, that she enter the competition “Mastermind” where her specialist topic should be the “bleeding obvious”, I am very pleased to be writing this page since it signals that my research project is finally written up. It has been a long process to get to this point and I have a number of acknowledgements to note.

I would like to first, and most importantly, thank the six teachers who were the focus of my study, the administrators who assisted at the research site, followed by my supervisors and academic advisors, initially at the Queensland University of Technology and, later, from the University of Southern Queensland. Without the considerable support of Associate Professor Andrew Hickey, Dr Jacinta Maxwell and Dr Robbie Mason, this project would have floundered and most likely never been completed.

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List of Abbreviations

ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualification
ISQ	Independent Schools Queensland
KLA	Key Learning Areas
LEA	Lutheran Education Australia
LEQ	Lutheran Education Queensland
MCYEETA	Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy & Numeracy
NCB	National Curriculum Board
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
QSA	Queensland Studies Authority
ROSBA	Review of School Based Assessment

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter contextualises the research by providing a clear representation of its nature and the contributions it makes. First, the background to the study (Section 1.1) begins with a discussion of my interest in this research and situates it within the broader framework of the nature of teachers' work and current curriculum theory. A description of the research setting (Section 1.2) follows as the school made preparations to meet the implementation requirements of Phase One of the Australian Curriculum. Section 1.3 outlines the study's purpose and aims and in Section 1.4, the significance of the study and its contribution to professional practice and scholarship is described. The theoretical framework (Section 1.5) is discussed, drawing from the work of Albert Bandura and Pierre Bourdieu, and an outline of the methodology and research method (Section 1.6) follows describing this project as a qualitative, case study. The study's research limitations are also identified in this section. In the final sections of the chapter, the research design is explained (Section 1.7) and key terms are defined (Section 1.8). The outline of the structure of the thesis is presented in Section 1.9 and a summary (Section 1.10) concludes this chapter.

This research project involved an extensive examination of the experiences of six participants. It is a record of their observations, feelings, attitudes and responses, some brought with them from previous experiences and others new, as they began working with the first phase of the implementation of the Australian Curriculum in 2011. Given that there is substantial and compelling educational research to indicate that teachers play a critical, if often neglected, role in achieving the outcomes of new curriculum policy, this project intended to provide a research-informed representation of the key participants' voices specific to this reform context.

Whilst this study contextualises this reform within the broader field of curriculum theory, it more importantly aims to examine teachers' responses to curriculum change. There is a considerable body of research that indicates the role of teachers in achieving effective implementation of reforms, particularly such large-scale, mandated reforms, is so underplayed it is a major reason for reform failure. The significance of the teachers' role in ensuring that the policy of curriculum reform is achieved in practice is not surprising since, as Michael Fullan (1982) observed more than three decades ago, educational change depends on "what teachers think and do – it's as simple and as complex as that" (p. 107).

1.1. Background

The decision to undertake an examination of the early responses of a group of teachers as they engaged with mandated, national reform, emerged from my observations of a significantly contested educational landscape where its participants were grappling with such professional challenges as: the impact of globalisation on education; the demand for measuring teacher performance; centralisation of educational decision making; intensification of teachers' work; a re-examination of teacher quality and

professional standards; critical professional issues such as falling teacher numbers, and teacher burnout and stress.

1.1.1. Teachers' Roles in Policy Implementation

Attempts by governments and education authorities to impose change on teachers are often unsuccessful (Hargreaves & Dawe, 1989; Huberman & Miles, 1984) and are considered to be a significant factor contributing to earlier, failed nationally mandated reforms in the United Kingdom and the United States (to be discussed in Chapter 2 in more depth). Political mandates, which can have a strong influence on educational policy-making and implementation, have little resonance for teachers in their daily practice. Yet, as noted by Carpenter, a “frequent feature of good ideas is that they place the burden of educational reform squarely on the shoulders of teachers” (Carpenter, 2000, p. 387). The consequence of the tension that emerges between the ‘good idea’ of educational reform and teachers’ practice is often the implementation of some hybridised form of policy, which, as Luke (2002) suggests, means the policy has not been implemented at all but merely accommodated. As he goes on to state, it is at this point that the lived reality of curriculum reform is quite different from its design, a process he calls policy slippage.

There already exists a body of educational research investigating the impact of educational reform that addresses the critical but under researched role teachers play in enacting the intentions and aims of policy initiatives (Ball, 1987; Maguire, Braun & Ball, 2015; Brennan, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Fullan, 1982, 1993; Hargreaves, 1994, 1997, 2003; Luke, 2002; Pyhältö, Pietarinen & Soini, 2014; Smyth, 2004; Spillane, 2004). What emerges is a common view that successful implementation of any new educational policy relies heavily on the teacher’s ability and/or willingness to translate it into classroom practice (Conley & Goldman, 1997; Fullan, 2010, 2011; Spillane, 1999). As Zhang and Stephens (2013) note,

Effective implementation of any curriculum reform depends on teachers’ subtle interpretations of the official curriculum document and their professional disposition to act on those ideas, which go well beyond general descriptions or statements of intent that are usually embedded in official curriculum advice. (p. 499)

Nevertheless, teachers begin their careers, as Farber (1991) suggests, “...with a sense that their work is socially meaningful and will yield great personal satisfactions”, however:

...the inevitable difficulties of teaching...interact with personal issues and vulnerabilities, as well as social pressure and values, to engender a sense of frustration and force a reassessment of the possibilities of the job and the investment one wants to make in it...leading to a growing sense of inconsequentiality. (p. 36)

Such changes, often imposed from outside teachers’ working environments can threaten and undermine the values and beliefs and the ways of doing things which make

up teacher culture (Darling-Hammond & Wise, 1985). As a consequence teachers can become professionally disengaged and their levels of commitment are reduced. As Edwards (2000), Klassen and Chiu (2011) and Van Eekelen, Vermunt and Boshuizen (2006) suggest, mandated change must then engage with the individual teacher at a fundamental level, since it is unrealistic to expect overworked teachers to move towards teacher empowerment or ownership of such change.

Plummer (2004) asserts that for reform to achieve significant, long term, sustainable change, or any instrument of it, be it policies, curriculum standards or assessments, the reform needs to be considered as an object of inquiry by teachers rather than something detached from their professional identity and sense of self. The perception that teaching is an individual and isolationist practice (Hargreaves, 1980 in Sikes, 1990) has contributed to a lack of understanding of the occupational culture of teachers and the significance of this culture since it is through its cultural wall (p. 43) that innovations and reforms must pass. The cultural wall that exists at school sites develops, Hargreaves contends, as a consequence of the many individualised characteristics of the school – its governance, philosophy, location and demographics for example (p. 43). However, a significant influence on the construction of this wall is the nature of teachers' practice. If those who develop and initiate policy do not have a clear understanding of what teachers do and think, how they construct their sense of self, even well-resourced reforms are at significant risk of failure. Spillane (2004) concludes that policy makers, therefore, need to address the “tension” between external policy representations and local policy makers constituted by teachers' internal representations of it, since “...enacting policy is complicated and sometimes an inchoate process” (p.181).

1.1.2. The Curriculum Context

In examining these teachers' responses to nationally, mandated educational change, a central element that I also wanted to further investigate was Michael Apple's (1993) view that in schools that are dominated by “behaviourally pre-specified curriculum, ‘getting done’ replaces quality teaching in their priorities” (p. 43). There was a shift to more centralised curriculum and educational practice in Australia with the introduction in 2008 of NAPLAN (National Assessment Programme – Literacy and Numeracy), an annual, national literacy and numeracy test of students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. As well, I shared Apple's conceptualisation of curriculum who contends that curriculum is not just about knowledge, but it constitutes a specific conceptualisation of knowledge. As such, concepts are fluid, re-prioritised, discarded and included, as various hegemonies have dominated education discourses. Apple (1993) further elaborates this view as he states curriculum is:

...never simply a neutral assemblage of knowledge, somehow appearing in the texts and classrooms of a nation. It is always part of a selective tradition, someone's selection, some group's vision of legitimate knowledge. It is produced out of the cultural, political, and economic conflicts, tensions, and compromises that organise and disorganise a people. (p. 238)

Whilst this research investigated teachers' responses to change due to implementation of the Australian Curriculum, its emphasis was more on examining the nature of teachers' responses rather than critiquing the Australian Curriculum. Nevertheless, the introduction of the Australian Curriculum represented a very significant set of curricula and policy innovations to examine teachers' responses to change. It was not the kind of small scale, individual school or teacher-initiated change whose impact would be quite localised as most school-based initiatives tended to be. It also was not the kind of reform that might have a state-wide influence- such as the Queensland Essential Learnings (still used in Queensland) or Outcomes Based Education (an initiative of the Queensland Studies Authority) during the 1990s and early 2000s had been which saw all schools across the State implementing these policy directions to varying degrees of depth. This was the largest, most extensive (in both its geographical and curriculum reach) and, therefore, most ambitious, of any educational reform attempted in Australian education history. Once fully implemented in three staggered stages over several years, it would have national ramifications and impact on the teaching practice of almost all teachers in Australia.

1.2. The Research Problem

The research problem grew out of an apparent paradox in a unique moment in time – as the first teachers were introduced to the implementation documents of English, Science and Mathematics representing the first phase of Australia's first nationally mandated curriculum. In this time of prescriptive national curriculum policy, the paradox that emerges is the contested terrain of teacher practice as prescribed curriculum engaged with the need for teachers to exercise considerable professional agency to meet the emergent demands of 21st century learners. Moller (2012) articulates a commonly held view regarding the professional status of teachers:

To really promote deep and broad learning in students, we need teachers as scholars who can generate their own views, openly share opinions, educational philosophies and can articulate curriculum which actually has a well sustained theory of knowledge underpinning it. (p. 23)

Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) confirmed this view by contending that teacher's professionalism had never been more important. Yet the conundrum that prevailed related to the extent to which teachers could develop their own professional philosophies of teaching and learning, which appeared to require a focus on adaptability, flexibility and mobility of thought and action, whilst also responding to the nature of a centrally driven policy mandate that focused on a managerialist view of curriculum contextualized within a standardized, globalized, performative view of education. The quandary rested in the consideration of how teachers, working somewhere in the middle, could position themselves and exercise their professional agency in this broadly contested educational terrain?

To understand how teachers enact reform, various models have been developed to categorise their actions. Language such as 'early adopter' or 'lagger' (Adamson and

Davidson, 2003) has been applied to categorise how responsive teachers have been to change. However, this is a ‘broad brush’ means of describing their actions and provides little insight into why teachers respond in certain ways. Nor does it explain the diversity of teachers’ responses even in professionally similar environments. As well, the suggestion from such categorisation is that teachers who contest or resist reform are deliberately obstructive, whilst those who engage with it positively, are leaders in their field. Again, this is an unreasonable generalisation since these labels do not interrogate the reasons for such actions but merely provide a superficial description of them.

A focus of this research has been to provide another way of understanding how teachers engage with large scale curriculum change at a personal level. In a broad sense, there is evidence to explain how teachers’ practices are acculturated in response to their engagement practices with their environment. Educational sociological research about how learning communities are formed (drawing on Lave and Wenger, 2002); how teachers are influenced by prevailing hegemonies (drawing on the work of Michael Apple, 1980; Michel Foucault, 1980; and Jürgen Habermas, 1972); and how teachers are required to work across a variety of fields of practice and policy (drawing on sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s work, 1977, 1993), provide valuable insights into what influences teachers’ responses to change. This project intended to investigate that one way of teachers mitigating the negative and marginalising influences of large-scale, externally imposed reform could have on their practice, was by examining the construct of teachers’ “capacity” (Fullan, 2008) to engage with and implement reform. The focus of this study, therefore, was to undertake an examination of how these conditions and practices influenced teachers’ responses to change rather than merely offering a description of their responses. An aim was to more closely examine how teachers’ sense of professional capacity was constructed. What were the conditions and circumstances around their responses to reform which meant some engaged with mandated reform whilst others openly rejected it without any real consideration of the reform agenda? To what extent were their responses drawn from the teachers’ conceptualisation of their professional roles and were such constructs of ‘self’ able to be influenced by their working environments? If so, to what extent can organisations learn about the influences on such constructs to more effectively manage change, specifically externally mandated, large-scale change?

Therefore, the key question which guided this research was:

How do teachers engage with, mediate and contextualise the implementation requirements of large-scale, mandated curriculum reform?

The research problem is further elaborated by the following three questions:

1. How have the teachers represented in this study negotiated, mediated and conceptualised the curriculum reform in terms of their professional practice?
2. How have the teachers’ perceptions of their professional capacity shaped their responses to this reform and, in turn, been shaped by, the reform requirements?

3. How has their agency been exercised in this context of mandated, externally imposed reform?

The research questions can be further elaborated into three major areas of inquiry. The first question was designed to examine the way teachers conceptualized the policy process and curriculum change in terms of the introduction of the Australian Curriculum. The focus of the second question was to undertake an examination of the way teachers in this study mediated and contextualized the mandated reform within their current professional practice. And finally, the third question intended to examine the way the participants' perceptions of their self-efficacy influenced their capacity to exercise individual and collective agency when engaging with Phase One of the Australian Curriculum.

As a consequence, this research project aimed to:

- i. Explore the professional spaces of the participants in this study by examining their early responses to the implementation of Phase One of the Australian Curriculum;
- ii. Investigate the way these teachers exercised their agency within this context;
- iii. Develop a deeper understanding of the role teachers play in policy implementation.

Consequently, this investigation was undertaken at two levels. First, and most importantly, the professional practices of a group of teachers were examined as they went about making preparations for implementing the requirements of the Australian Curriculum, utilising their personal perceptions of identity and self as a means of informing their practice. A key aspect for this examination focused on investigating the extent to which the teachers were able to exercise their individual agency given that the reform was mandated.

However, in a broader context, this examination further contextualised the teachers' engagement practices within the discussions around curriculum policy, shaped by the external pressures of performativity of the practice of teaching, set within increasingly globalised education systems and centralised and standardised curriculum development. Therefore, this study investigated the large scale policy implementation of the Australian Curriculum by examining the individualised responses of a group of teachers tasked with its implementation in a localised, site specific educational environment. Rather than investigating this issue by examining the adequacy of policy design and development, this research study focused on policy implementation by teachers who were understood to be working from a space between policy and practice, and undertaking the critical role of policy implementers.

1.3. The Research Site

The site of this study is a co-educational, Kindergarten to Year 12 (K -12), Christian, independent school of approximately 850 students, in regional, coastal

Queensland. Students who attended this school lived relatively close to the school, within ten or fifteen minutes' drive. This had been a relatively recent change in the demographic characteristics of the school since rapid growth in this region of Queensland in the previous ten years had seen this school, once only one of four independent schools within a forty kilometre radius, was now one of at least ten independent schools in the same area. As well, new schools were still being built.

Being centrally located within this region of Queensland, and in a high growth area, meant that many of the students, upon completion of their secondary schooling, chose to stay in the local community. Employment prospects in the region were relatively strong, enabling the students to gain high quality, long-term, post-secondary employment. Others chose to undertake further tertiary study in the area by attending the large, multi-campused TAFE (Technical and Further Education) or enrolling in the recently established, local university. As well, the school saw itself as well-connected to the broader community, and there were many students who also sought metropolitan, interstate and international employment and learning opportunities upon completing their Year 12 studies.

There were a few, site specific elements that defined the teachers' ways of working at this school, that need to be mentioned here and will be further explored in later chapters. First, amongst the sixty two teaching staff, most were generally long term employees (more than five years), drawn to the school either for its religious focus (although this was declining) or its geographical, family oriented location (which was an increasing trend) since it was close to the beach, and enjoyed a summer temperature average of 25 degrees celsius and a winter average of around 19.

Second, the school, whilst only thirty years old, was operating in a relatively stable socio-demographic environment. The student population was relatively homogenous (predominantly from white, middle-class, well-educated families); the major intake of secondary students came from the junior school which meant that for a growing number of students their whole educational experience was at this site; and there existed a state and national systemic educational regulatory authority which, whilst giving the school support in major operational and strategic decision making matters, also provided it with a considerable degree of operational autonomy. There was a sense of relative autonomy felt by the school principal and the school executive team in the day to day operational decisions of the school which, in the past, had extended to considerable flexibility around the shape and direction of curriculum offerings up to Year 10 (the years that would apply to the curriculum initiatives of the Australian Curriculum).

Third, given the relative independence of school operations, there was a strong culture of teacher autonomy in managing the requirements of their jobs rather than a dominance of imposed practices by the school's leadership team. As a consequence, teachers saw the processes of negotiation, mediation and contextualisation in response to reforms as part of their professional domain and an important way of exercising their

agency. This involved discussions, meetings and planning, as a whole school, in subject and year levels, and individually. This may have differed from other school sites that sought to centralise curriculum policy and development, as was the case in the state education sector which directed state wide curriculum practices from a centralised, metropolitan education office. The leadership structure at this school was such that there was no requirement for teachers to interrogate individually the curriculum documents, since the formulation of curriculum documents, unit outlines and work programs was primarily the responsibility of the leadership team, specifically the Heads of Department (in the Secondary School) and the Curriculum Co-ordinator (in the Junior School). Teachers also entered into negotiated and mediated consultations with their Heads of Department about the content and range of the curriculum documents developed, and Heads of Department encouraged this practice. However, final decision making fell to the Head of Department and Curriculum Co-ordinators.

1.4. My Role as the Researcher

This research inquiry emerged from my experience whilst the Director of Curriculum and Learning at the research site, where, as part of the group of teachers and school leaders, I shared the responsibility for implementing the new Australian Curriculum. Since this was the first time that such an endeavour had been undertaken in Australia, discussions that took place at my school prior to implementation, indicated that this would mean the need to develop a carefully planned preparation phase to ensure successful implementation. Specific consideration would need to be given to providing adequate preparation timelines for the teachers at the school to meet the implementation requirements since it was the shared view of the leadership team and the teachers, that they would be primarily responsible for implementing the reform.

Alongside the work and preparation that, as a group, we were undertaking to implement Phase One of the Australian Curriculum in 2012 (delayed by ACARA because of the need to review and re-write the curriculum for History), were my own perceptions of curriculum and the curriculum landscape, locally and more broadly. Whilst these points have been discussed in Sections 1.1 and 1.2, they were critical to informing my awareness that in my role, a central focus was to address the mandated requirements of the reform within my school's cultural practices. These cultural practices included acknowledging the school's mission statement and values, as well as the perceived educational requirements of the school council, leadership team, parents, students and teachers at the school. My personal definition of 'effective' management meant establishing and negotiating an acceptable alignment between these external and internal educational influences.

The external factors influencing my role in this implementation process extended beyond the requirements of the Australian Curriculum. I was also mindful of both national and global trends I had observed, over quite a long period of time, of the tendency to centralise and standardise curriculum. I was cognisant of views such as those expressed by Ball and Bowe (1992) who argued that a national curriculum (in the United Kingdom) had meant that curriculum was not so much being "implemented" in schools

as being “re-created”, not so much “reproduced” as “produced” (Ball & Bowe, 1992, p. 114). From a policy viewpoint, such comments raised concerns for me since they suggested an erosion of teacher agency and professionalism, where policy was implemented with an apparent disregard for the fundamental tenets of learning, relegating teachers to the roles of passive, policy executors overlooking their expertise in the practice of learning, activities which they undertook and developed expertise in every day of their professional lives. Such comments, from my professional point of view, also showed a lack of understanding of the authority with which teachers as policy practitioners played in the successful implementation of policy. Therefore, an Australian examination of teachers’ responses to large scale reform seemed timely given that Australia was about to embark on the implementation of its first national curriculum.

As well, I had undertaken postgraduate studies focusing on curriculum, socialisation and mentoring with specific interests in the works of Jürgen Habermas (1972), Michael Apple (1980), Michel Foucault (1980) and Peter McNally (1998) and the early, seminal work of John Goodlad (1984). In each of these areas, I took a critical stance to social policy and curriculum theory and was always concerned with individual rights and power relationships between individuals and the institutions of which they were part. The imposition of prescribed curriculum content, which constituted a national prescribed definition of “knowledge” teachers were required to teach, reactivated some concerns I had as a consequence of these earlier studies.

Finally, in my role as Director of Curriculum and Learning, I was also closely aware of the enormity of implementing such a large scale reform and achieving its intended outcomes. Given that implementation was intended to be phased in over several years, the move towards a nationalised approach to learning and decisions about content would have an impact on every primary and secondary teacher in Australia in some way. The 2010 Australian census recorded 251,421 teachers working full time or full time equivalent in primary and secondary schools across Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009) so whilst the role that the teachers and I would undertake at my school was significant, this was multiplied exponentially across the education systems of all States and Territories.

The national scale meant national impact and such impact encouraged broad ranging commentary and opinions from professional educational groups, affiliated and non-affiliated educational organisations, the media, the government, and the community at large who questioned and debated education reform within Australia and the roles schools and teachers were to undertake. These discussions, often robust and contentious, directed the spotlight not just towards education in general, but to teachers and their work practices in a way that had not happened before. It was apparent that teachers’ work would be under considerable scrutiny as they endeavoured to implement effectively a national curriculum.

The introduction of the Australian Curriculum provided an appropriate conduit through which an exploration of teachers’ responses to change could be undertaken, and

since during my professional experience I had observed the many and varied teachers' responses to reform and change, it seemed an appropriate way of examining the critical influences on the construction of these responses. Whilst recognizing the research implications relating to research bias as a possible limitation to the study because of my long association with the research site and the participants who volunteered to be part of this study, the opportunity to focus on a group of colleagues as they engaged with, made decisions about and embedded this curriculum reform into their practice, at this one-off point in time, provided a rich research opportunity not to miss. As well, in combination with the theoretical structure of the doctor of philosophy studies, this project also supported my professional interest to undertake research-in-practice as a teacher-researcher.

1.5. Theoretical Framework

This qualitative case study was located in the space, described by Ball (1994) as that between policy as text and policy as practice. In order to investigate the ways in which teachers work within this space, this study utilised Bandura's (1995, 1997) theory of self-efficacy to investigate the way teachers engaged with this reform based on their personal dispositions. In broader terms, the space was theorised with reference to Bourdieu's (1990, 1991, 1993) field theory and related concept of habitus. In this way the study sought to investigate how teachers' dispositions or habits or tendencies to act in a certain way (Bourdieu, 1977), are formed as they responded to the implementation conditions and requirements they encountered in this space where their negotiation of the curriculum policy occurred.

However, this study proposed that the practice of 'engagement' is itself a construct of Bourdieu's (1977) teacher's dispositions and an examination of these dispositions is a critical element of the research as a means of describing the various responses teachers make to change. This study supports Lingard and Gale's (2007) view that the level of teacher engagement with curriculum change is as a consequence of these personal and absorbed cognitive and somatic dispositions. The depth of embeddedness and absorption, individualised in the agent's or teacher's habitus, accounts for the many variations of responses teachers make when responding to changes in their workplaces. In broad terms, therefore, Bourdieu's (1990, 1991, 1993) theorising was used to conceptualise the ways teachers related to and engaged with a number of fields. These fields included educational policy making and their own field of practice, and provided the broader framework used to understand the variations of teacher responses to change.

Bourdieu (2000) defines a field as a structured social space where the level of autonomy of the agents is influenced by the power relations between the agents and their positions in the field. The habitus of agents in the field is affected by the extent to which they understand and influence the different social fields and the influences these fields have on them. This study examined the way teachers exercised their habitus as they negotiated the field of teacher practice, a field influenced by that of educational policy-making of which curriculum policy is a part. Whilst the theoretical framework drew from Bourdieu's (1990, 1991, 1993) theorising of habitus and fields of practice, which cast a

wide lens for establishing the field of teachers' work, the teachers' practices were further examined within the context of Albert Bandura's (2001) Social Cognitive Theory and, most specifically, his concept of self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy is a concept that informs the construction of each person's attitudes towards change, of which dispositions are a part. Albert Bandura (2001) describes self-efficacy in the context of personal agency, that is, the individual's capacity to act in a way to make things happen. This relates to an individual's belief about the control they can exercise over their own level of functioning and the events that affect their lives. Put simply, self-efficacy can influence an individual's cognition, resilience, decision making, actions, attainment of goals and emotional wellness (Bandura & Locke, 2003; Pajares, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2015; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy, 1998; Wang, 2016). To examine more critically the ways teachers responded to change, the investigation focused on the participants' responses according to Albert Bandura's (1995, 1997) self-efficacy theory. This theory became the primary means of examining the field of teachers' work, the space between curriculum policy and its practice, where the participants sought to mediate, negotiate and conceptualise their individualised responses to the requirements of this reform.

1.6. Methodological Framework

The focus of the research was to emphasise an emic view of the activities and actions of these six participants at the time of their initial engagement with the reform, by focusing on their attitudes, beliefs, behaviours and practices. Therefore, the adoption of an instrumental, case study approach enabled an 'in-depth' understanding of the phenomena under consideration (Creswell, 2005; Punch, 1998; Stake, 1995).

As an instrumental case study, this project served the purpose of illuminating a particular issue – the way in which a group of teachers responded to the implementation mandates of Phase One of the Australian Curriculum (Creswell, 2005) intending to shed light on a phenomenon – how teachers mediate and contextualise curriculum reform – by studying in depth a single case example of the phenomena as a bounded system – the implementation of curriculum at my school. It was an aim of this research to focus on this element of local and microlevel policy enactment. The voice of the research was the voice of each of the teachers who were responsible for initial engagement, then decision making and finally implementation of Phase 1 Australian Curriculum requirements as adopted by the school at this research site. Further detailing of the method deployed to gather data and frame the analysis of the case study is contained in Chapter 3.

1.7. Significance of the Research

According to Coburn and Stein (2006, p. 42), teacher practice is “always local, situated, emergent, and linked with prior practice” where teachers' attentions are directed towards their classrooms rather than the nuances of education policy. If, therefore, as Bowe and Ball (1992, p. 20) contend, teachers view and understand policy making in terms of their practice, a gap emerges when policy makers envisage policy as text and

teachers view policy as practice. This research project takes up this divergence and combines it with the views of Fullan (1993) and others such as Darling-Hammond (2005) who contend that given teachers play such a crucial role in the implementation and interpretation of policy, that policy design, development and implementation can be enriched by having a clearer insight into the activities teachers undertake prior to implementation (Darling-Hammond, 2005).

Furthermore, an intention of this project was to broaden the understanding of the role teachers played in the policy cycle. The importance of the role of teachers in curriculum policy continues to be developed. According to Ball and Bowe (1992), research has focused on principals, departments and faculties; however, not enough attention has been paid to the study of the micropolitical agency of the individual teacher in the gap between macro trends and micro practice (Ball, 1993), the space, as conceptualised by Ball (1990) that allows for negotiation and adaptation of curriculum policy. An objective of this project was to illuminate this space, between policy and practice to contribute to the discussions of the ways in which curriculum policy can be informed by teachers' professional practice.

A further aspect that has significance for this project, is the investigation of self-efficacy from a qualitative, interpretivist point of view rather than the more common large-scale, quantitative designs that dominate self-efficacy research. While large, self-efficacy studies often use quantitative tools to measure efficacy, (such as the Ohio State teacher efficacy scale (OSTES) or the Webb Scale or Guskey's RSA (Responsibility for Student Achievement) 30 item instrument), the effectiveness of employing such methods has been questioned by highly regarded self-efficacy researchers such as Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy and Hoy (1998) and Labone (2010). They contend that there is research validity in undertaking self-efficacy research using an interpretivist lens. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007) go on further to state that qualitative studies examining the origins of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, also invite further investigation. Therefore, this research project represents a different way of investigating and analysing aspects of self-efficacy and agency.

The point in time of this study also contributes to its relevance. This investigation is focused at an educational policy time of 'firsts' - when the first group of teachers responsible for implementation of Australia's first national curriculum began their engagement with the curriculum documents. Joining thousands of teachers across Australia, this research project sought to illuminate the experiences of this group of six teachers as they engaged with the implementation curriculum documents for English, Mathematics and Science on what was intended to become a long implementation journey as further Australian Curriculum subjects emerged over several years. This was certainly a 'first' for the teachers in this study who indicated they had not examined earlier draft documents available to them and were seeing the implementation curriculum documents for their first time. The importance of this time in policy implementation is reflected in Briant and Doherty's (2012) study of teacher educators anticipating the Australian Curriculum who referred to the implementation of the Australian Curriculum

as an “...opportune historical moment...a contemporary moment... [which] offered a rare space of possibility and opportunity”, a moment when the “...concerns about the power of a politically motivated national curriculum to stifle professional engagement was at hand” (p.13).

Finally, this project has research interest because of the combination of education paradigms of psychology and sociology as a consequence of its conceptualisation of dispositions, the characteristics and qualities which informed the teachers’ responses to the reform. Bourdieu and Bandura sit in different educational paradigms yet both acknowledge that dispositions shape behaviour. Bandura conceptualises this from a more psychological perspective whilst Bourdieu’s is based on a sociological view of the world. By linking the fields of educational sociology and educational psychology through the conceptualisation of dispositions, which Swartz (2002) suggests is an indication of teachers’ capabilities and capacities, this study offers a unique means of understanding teachers’ agency.

1.8. Explanation of Key Terms

1.8.1. Curriculum

It can be argued that the ‘official curriculum’ of schools, “provides us with a window on the wider educational and political culture of the country” (Goodson, 1988, p. 25). According to Goodson, curriculum is “fragmented” and “endlessly shifting”, whilst school subjects are “socially and politically constructed” and that teachers “deploy a range of ideological and material resources as they pursue their individual and collective missions” (p. 231). Goodson describes the complexity of this interplay by using the metaphor of “impersonal webs” (p. 232) which, he argues, need to be monitored and observed in any analysis of curriculum policy, development and implementation. Beavis (2008) furthers this perspective by arguing that the politics of the Australian national curriculum debate “intimately tie together subject ownership, content and assessment” (p. 24). Moreover, Beavis contends that contestation over curriculum is:

...part of the broader process by which discourses within the field of education, as elsewhere, represent a range of institutional positions and political stances, and are in constant struggle to reassert and prioritise their own interests over others. Struggles over curriculum involve conflicts over definition, ownership and purpose, fought out in the context of institutional agendas, resources and priorities. (p. 24)

Furthermore, mandated curricula reflect a nation or state’s decisions about what all students should learn and there is contention around what these common experiences should be (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Brady & Kennedy, 2005). Ross (2000, p. 10) explains “a national curriculum requires someone, somehow, to rule that certain cultural artefacts (selected by definition from particular cultures) should be elevated to be passed on to all children, and that other cultural manifestations be excluded from formal education...” Similarly, reflecting on so-called ‘entitlement curricula’ (the mandated curricula by year level and content), Moore (2006) maintains there are two unresolved

issues. First, “who decides what the entitlement should be – and what desires do those choosers bring to their choices...Second, the notion of entitlement assumes a certain commonality of desires, needs, requirements that is not necessarily reflected in society” (p. 96). Young (2006, p. 20) considers the role of central governments in setting a national curricula as an “interventionist trend in educational policy which is in danger of undermining the purpose of schools...” Brady and Kennedy (2010), commenting on the Australian curriculum, caution that a national curriculum must not serve instrumental purposes:

It should not be a political tool that simply seeks to relocate power from the states/territories to the Commonwealth and it should not be merely the basis of an assessment regime that can further regulate what goes on in Australian classrooms.” (p. 23)

Acknowledging these perspectives, this study locates ‘curriculum’ within a socio-cultural context which suggests that teachers’ engagement can include modifying, manipulating and, possibly, ignoring or discarding, the learning objectives and activities it prescribes. Therefore, since it is my contention that knowledge is socially constructed and, as such contested, teachers’ engagement with curriculum may also be contested since their responses are guided by their personal constructions of self, the nature of the learning environment and their own personal philosophies. Adopting the view that a curriculum is purposefully constructed (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996) seeking to establish “the boundaries of legitimacy” (Apple & Bromley, 1998, p. 298), curriculum inculcates cultural and economic values “supposedly shared by all” (Apple, 1979, p. 61). In this way, the curriculum acts as a means of “social selection by stealth” (Multon, Brown & Lent, 1991, p. 400).

1.8.2. Policy

As Michael Young (1971) reminds us, curriculum policy has its preferred discourses and educational sociology and “must take into account the historical and situationally specific character of both its phenomena and its explanations” (p. 24). Policy can be conceptualised as more than a document. In accepting that policy is framed by cultural forms and practices, Bowe and Ball with Gold (1992) define three interrelated areas of policy: the context of influence (policy intentions); context of policy production (including the actual policy); and context of practice (policy in use). This study examines the way teachers mediate and contextualise policy in the space between its production (the actual policy) and practice (policy in use).

For the purposes of this research it was necessary to conceptualise education policy as a multi-dimensional set of activities that inform other aspects of education, at multiple points of entry and exit, rather than viewing policy as a linear process. Using a Bourdieuan perspective, Rawolle and Lingard (2008) suggest such a process of policy production takes place at the systemic level, inside the state and its bureaucratic structures, and, defined by this policy field, is intended to be enacted in the field of the school which, in turn, has different (and possibly competing) logics of practice and

habitus. As well, a linear policy model, Nias (2003) contends, takes little account of teachers' relationships with their students and can contribute to a sense of being overridden by an "official spirit of contractualism" (p. 227). Further, teachers may subsequently not endorse the policy, given they could consider they exercise little control over it. Nias shares Ball's (1994) view that policy needs to be interpreted as a fluid process, or as a policy cycle, to be understood as "both text and action, words and deeds, it is what is enacted as well as what is intended" (p. 10).

These conceptualisations of policy emphasise the interrelationships between intention, interpretation, and enactment (Ozga, 2000). Lingard (1996) contributes to this description by suggesting that policy needs to be interpreted within a broader global and gendered context. Therefore, this study was premised upon a view that policy needs to be "mediated and recontextualised" (Crump, 1990, p. 4). Hence this research situated educational policy as part of a social field, within Social Cognitive Theory and Apple's (1979, 1980, 1982) definition of curriculum reform within a context of cultural reproduction

1.8.3. Space

This study was primarily an investigation, using Ball's (1994) definition of a space of practice, of teachers' negotiation and mediation practices as they re-interpreted and re-imagined policy so that it informed their enacted practices. This notion of space is further defined by Spillane (1999) as the space in which teachers make sense of, and operationalise their own practice. It is here that they derive their "authoritative voice" (Spillane, 1999, p.159), that is, their professional language and expertise derived from their local conditions, such as the school, programmes and classes. Ball (1981, 1987) emphasises the significance of actively examining this site as this is where the "discontinuities, compromises, omissions and exceptions are ... important" (Ball, 1990, p. 3). This space was investigated by examining the micro world of teachers within the macro environment of mandated systemic curriculum reform (Ball, 1993). It is in this way that the contradictions and contestations were investigated between the macro level of policy and the micro level of teacher practice.

Ball further defines space as both a physical and metaphorical construct. The metaphorical space comprises those aspects of cognition resulting from the interplay teachers undertake between their habitus and the reform through reflexive practices of negotiation and mediation. The physical space relates to the environmental conditions in which the teachers worked comprising the cultural, social, policy and historical environments of their workplaces. Most importantly, however, it would be in this space that teachers' understanding of the reform and their role in it would be enacted, and from where they would exercise their agency in response to the implementation of Phase One of the Australian Curriculum.

1.9. Conceptual Framework

This research project is situated as a constructivist, interpretivist study within the participants' fields of practice as Australian teachers began their journey towards the implementation of Phase One of the Australian Curriculum. It further locates these practices within the broader discourses of performativity, globalisation, and centralisation of educational decision making and adopts a critical stance in relation to each of these. The framework for the project is represented conceptually in Figure 1-1.

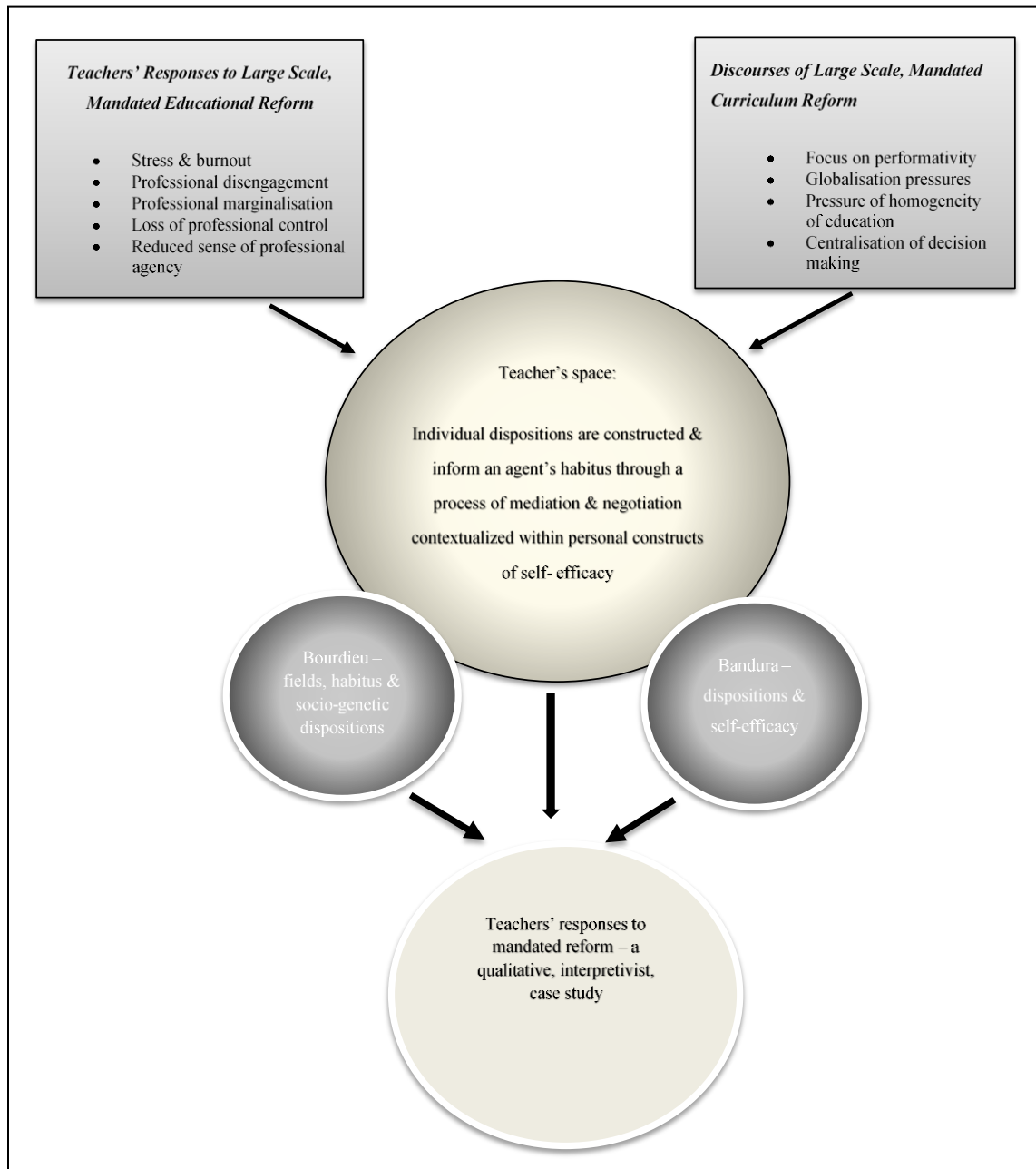


Figure 1-1: Conceptual Framework

1.10. Thesis Outline

The document is organised into six chapters. The first chapter has introduced the research underpinning this project and the context for this thesis.

Chapter Two, the Literature Review, establishes the historical and contemporary themes of curriculum policy (Section 2.1) and investigates teachers' voices in policy by examining the nature of the work practices (Section 2.2) and their responses to large-scale, mandated reform (Section 2.3). The review of the literature in each of these areas then is used to situate the research (Section 2.4) and finally, the literature review is summarised (Section 2.5).

Chapter Three provides an outline of the research design (Section 3.1) by situating the study within a qualitative, interpretivist, case study design. This chapter also identifies the site of the study, the participants and the sequence of the study. The participants are introduced (Section 3.2) and the research methodology, using thematic analysis, is explained (Section 3.3) which contextualises the study in a theoretical framework that underpins the research and outlines the data gathering and analysis methods. The structural elements of the study are outlined (Section 3.4). The use of data codes and the methods of organising and analysing the data are developed as a consequence of analysing the three focus areas of the study — the internal documents, the administrators and the teacher participants (Section 3.5). Finally, the study's validity and limitations are discussed (Section 3.6) and the chapter is summarised (Section 3.7).

Chapter Four provides an extended contextual discussion of the research site and environment. It identifies important site-specific understandings which contextualise the teachers' responses discussed in the following chapter and is developed in three sections. A narrative of the research site begins this section (Section 4.1) followed by an analysis of the documents and the interview data of the administrators, framed by the three research questions (Sections 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4). This analysis informs and contextualises the way the teachers conceptualised, mediated, negotiated and, consequently, made decisions as they prepared for the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. A review of the documents examined the schools and other external agencies' conceptualisation of the reform, since implicit in them were assumptions about teacher engagement practices also influencing their responses. The administrators' responses are organised along similar lines, as well as recounting their own reform responses, and, finally, a summary of the chapter is provided (Section 4.5).

Chapter Five focuses on discussing and analysing the narratives of the six teacher participants. The teachers' stories are presented in a way that privileges their voices in the text as they describe the actions and decisions that formed part of their early engagement practices as they responded to the implementation of Phase One Australian Curriculum. The consistencies and inconsistencies that then became evident formed a critical part of the analysis that takes place in Chapter Five. Chapter Five develops the themes that emerged from the analysis of the teachers' interviews and builds upon the analysis of the secondary data sources reported in Chapter Four. It begins with the

teachers' narratives briefly re-storied (Section 5.1) to establish the context of the emergent themes which are examined in depth in the following section (Section 5.2). The findings of the research are then collated in a chapter summary (Section 5.3).

Finally, Chapter Six begins by reviewing the purpose of the study (Section 6.1), and presents the overall findings of the research in summaries addressing each of the three research questions (Section 6.2). Implications for policy (Section 6.3) and practice (Section 6.4) follow. The findings are discussed in light of their contribution to developing new ways of interpreting theory (Section 6.5). The chapter includes a range of recommendations for further research based on discussions and findings that emerged from this research project (Section 6.6). A final summary of the project's findings follows and a concluding statement as to the significance of the study draws to a close this chapter and this document (Section 6.7).

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This qualitative case study, undertaken at an independent, Christian school in regional Queensland, gave attention to the cultural and institutional settings in which the teachers worked as they responded to Phase One of the Australian Curriculum implementation. In seeking to understand the ways in which these teachers engaged with mandated curriculum reform, this chapter examines the literature which situates the research within a broader socio-cultural context to address the project's three aims:

- i. To explore the professional spaces of the participants in this study by examining their early responses to the implementation of Phase One of the Australian Curriculum;
- ii. To investigate the way these teachers exercised their agency within this context;
- iii. To develop a deeper understanding of the role teachers play in policy implementation.

The first section of the Literature Review (Section 2.1) sets the historical context of contemporary curriculum policy making reference to mandated, large-scale reforms globally and in Australia. As has been discussed in Chapter One, the effectiveness of curriculum policy needs to be examined in the light of what teachers do with it, and suggested that a further exploration of the work of teachers will shed light on how teachers mediate and contextualize policy as part of their practice. Therefore, the following two sections of the Literature Review explore these elements. First (Section 2.2) is an exploration of the nature of teachers' work. It contextualises their policy negotiations and mediations by framing these practices drawing from Bourdieu's conceptualisation of fields and constructs of an individual's habitus. Next, the literature explores teachers' responses to large-scale, mandated change (Section 2.3) by developing further these negotiations theoretically locating within Bandura's conceptualisation of self-efficacy and agency. Upon establishing these theoretical constructs, the following section (Section 2.4) discusses the prevailing literature to situate this research within the broader field of curriculum policy and teaching practice. The chapter summary (Section 2.5) identifies the main aspects discussed in the literature and concludes the chapter. The literature suggests that while teachers face some conflicts negotiating curriculum change, it is teachers' day-to-day work in classrooms that is crucial to the success of curriculum innovation. Clandinin and Connelly's (1990) observation remains true: "curriculum plans ... founder or prevail on the activities of the teacher" (p. 246).

2.1. Scaling the Cultural Wall – Curriculum Policy in Context

Chapter One identified the need to examine teachers' roles in engaging and mediating mandated curriculum reform. Darling-Hammond (1990) suggests that policies do not land in a vacuum, but on the top of other policies, complicating the space of teacher practices and adding complexity to the way they contextualise policy into their practices (p. 240). The title of this section makes reference to Hargreaves' (1980) view that teachers encounter a "cultural wall" through which all innovations and reforms must pass before being successfully incorporated into their practices. Curriculum policy,

therefore, must also be negotiated via this cultural wall. To examine how this occurs, it was important to also examine contemporary curriculum policy initiatives, to further contextualise the participants' responses to reform in this study. Two major themes emerge when examining contemporary curriculum policy, namely the increasing dominance of economic discourse in daily life and, second, an emphasis on centralised education policy developed to manage performativity discourses both in relation to teachers' practices and assessing the effectiveness of the policy.

First, educational policy trends, of which curriculum is a part, indicate an increasingly dominant economic discourse. As Rizvi and Lingard (2010) note, over the past two decades, education systems across the world have undergone significant restructuring in an effort to link education policy reforms to securing national economic gains. Policy and the educational goals of policy are increasingly discussed in policy circles in terms of economic constructs such as accountability, outcomes, performance indicators, quality assurance with the effect of quantifying the act of education (Crump, 1993; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Fullan, 2005; Grundy, 2002). This direction has impacted on the way schools, school administrators and teachers engage with education, directing them away from their, largely singular, traditional focus on student learning to incorporate these economic imperatives into their fields of practice. Such a focus on economic imperatives and performativity indicate to Ball and Olmedo (2013) that "results are prioritized over processes, numbers over experiences, procedures over ideas, productivity over creativity" (p. 91).

Ball (1998) argues that policy direction has moved from a post-Fordist, welfare model, since World War II, to a more market model as the prevailing view that dominates education discourse and links personal wealth directly to the skills and knowledge acquired through an individual's education, as they commodify and market these in what is now called a globalised world (Brown & Lauder, 1996; Ozga & Moore, 1991). These global market influences have moved across geographical, political and social boundaries (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Taylor, 2004). Further, Sugrue (2004) argues that the influence of globalisation has led to the reshaping of the field of teachers' professional development, resulting in a form of restricted professionalism. The influence of globalisation on policy implementation is described by Hardy and Lingard (2008, p. 76) as a clash between "the monopoly of the universal and the dominance of the local in respect of the logics of practice of teachers' work". Lingard et al. (2005) and Ball (2008) suggest that education policy analysis needs to recognise the influence of these global dimensions on policy text production as ideas flow rapidly around the world (Ball, 2008; Lingard, Rawolle & Taylor, 2005). This is significant since, to varying degrees, this influences the way policy is written and education is practiced.

Second, the locating of policy making within an economic discourse, as Ozga (1995) suggests, contributes to the 'marketisation' of education and has led to the practice of education being removed from the domain of classroom teachers and repositioned within a more standardised, centralised and managerialist focus (Carter, 1995). This new 'orthodoxy', Carter (1995) suggests, focuses on improving national

economic performance by governments and policy makers gaining more direct control over curriculum content and assessment at the expense of localised and situated curriculum content and assessment. This process of standardising and centralising policy development locates teachers as recipients of policy within a policy development environment. The literature of this trend reveals that policy developed off site by centralised authorities, with the aim of standardising the process of education, can have the effect of deskilling teachers (Ozga & Moore, 1991), causing education reform to fail (Fullan, 1999,; 2006; Hargreaves, 1994; Hargreaves, 1997; Sikes, 1990) and can result in teachers and schools operating in a policy climate they distrust (Edwards, 2000). Standardisation and centralisation of curriculum suggest a curriculum hegemony which, as Connell (1991) contends, is not a curriculum for personal empowerment but for the “subservience to capitals’ and bureaucracy’s demands” (p. 9). The challenge for teachers in such circumstances is that they must “take up a position in relation to new discourses and truths” and “...look critically at the meaning and enactment of policy” (Ball & Olmedo, 2013, p. 92)

To gain a clearer understanding of the shift in Australian policy towards a more centralised and standardised approach to curriculum reform, and to deepen and extend the narrative around this specific culture of reform, it is noteworthy to examine the broader field of education policy for evidence of this direction. Selected experiences of large-scale and externally mandated reforms are discussed in relation to the United States of America (Section 2.1.1) and the United Kingdom (Section 2.1.2) to provide an insight into the way such reforms positioned teachers in the policy process. By referencing some of the problematic experiences of this kind of policy, the intention is to provide real-world examples of policies that highlighted the concerns raised by Ball (1993, 1998), Darling Hammond (1990), Hargreaves (1994, 1997) and Fullan (1993) who were key figures in the field of education policy research, and whose works significantly influenced this inquiry.

2.1.1. Teachers’ Voices in Large-Scale, Mandated Curriculum Reform in the United States

The United States has a long history of implementing standardised, top down, centralised, large-scale curriculum reform, traits shared in the design, development and implementation of the Australian Curriculum. Whilst there have been many factors that have influenced this kind of policy development, the economic downturn of the 1980s strongly shaped the policy narrative and established much of the economic discourse leading to the demand for standards based reform in the education system (Berliner, 1995). This direction was fuelled by the belief that economic failure occurred as a consequence of a declining education system. Such ‘economism’ provided the motivation for a more standardised, consistent focus for educational policy development (Eisner, 2005). In order to meet such economic imperatives, it was assumed that the most expedient path was through the writing of tough and rigorous curriculum standards measured by a high stakes testing regime. This approach was accompanied by a system that attached explicit measurable outcomes to funding, which included the development of performance pay for teachers tied to student achievement standards as a way of

ensuring that policy was implemented and policy goals were achieved (Petrosky & Delandshere, 2000).

Such standardised approaches have been criticised for a number of reasons. For example, it was claimed that this type of approach prevented different voices from being included in the development of educational policy since it precluded teachers from formulating their own questions and undertaking their own inquiry; and that it foregrounded a standardised view of thinking that did not acknowledge, nor require, alternative educational views (Eisner, 2005; Meier, 2000; Stecher, Barron, Kaganoff, & Goodwin, 1998). In some cases, such as evidenced in Stecher's (1998) study in Vermont, the desired impact of increasing student state scores was not achieved. Other studies suggested that under this approach, timeframes for consultation were deliberately short so that policy would be implemented largely uncontested and unmediated (Petrosky & Delandshere, 2000). The literature on standardisation and centralisation of curriculum policy in the United States suggests that as a consequence, teachers were positioned as implementers of standards that bore little relationship to the theoretical or pedagogical considerations of the time, and were to be fitted into an already overcrowded curriculum (Berliner, 1995; Stecher, Barron, Kaganoff, & Goodwin, 1998; Eisner, 2000; Meier, 2000; Petrosky & Delandshere, 2000). Moreover, as Ladwig (1994) theorises in Bourdieu's (1990) terms, with reference to the situation in the United States, the federal or national field of policy production in the late 1990s did not align with the field of schooling.

The movement towards standardised large-scale reform in recent times in the United States, therefore, flagged a range of potential problems requiring consideration at the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. Teachers concerns with mandated reform, Hargreaves (2003) contends, relate to perceptions of reductions in professional time to undertake their teaching tasks, problems with implementation, insufficient or inappropriate professional learning opportunities, problems sustaining teacher morale and motivations, increasing mistrust by teachers of the political reasons for change and reduced opportunities for professional collaboration (2003, p.110). The collegiality between teachers that often results when large-scale reform is imposed disappears once the "crisis of implementation" has passed (Hargreaves, 2003, p.110).

Further, the failures and concerns raised by the move towards further centralisation of education decision making suggests that sustainable reform occurs when teachers are engaged in the development phase of policy making (Hargreaves, 2003). Most particularly, this occurs when policy is aligned with their ideas of learning and their aims of teaching, and when the process of development is undertaken in a timeframe that includes and acknowledges teacher 'voices' (Ozga, 2000; Ozga & Moore, 1991).

2.1.2. Teachers' Voices in Large-Scale, Mandated Curriculum Reform in the United Kingdom

The introduction of the National Curriculum in the United Kingdom in 1989, changed the curriculum landscape as it became more directed towards standardised and

centralised policy that was driven by explicit national curriculum statements and national curricula standards. It follows, therefore, that the problems and concerns for teachers responsible for the implementation of this kind of curriculum reform in the United Kingdom, were similar to those faced by teachers in the United States. Broadhead (2001) contends that this large-scale movement away from school based curriculum development, in the United Kingdom, meant that national curriculum implementation focused on curriculum ‘coverage’ rather than ‘understanding’ (p. 3). He further claimed that under this system, teachers taught within narrower or restricted teaching styles and that teachers had to increase their focus on assessment and divert their attention away from learning and teaching (Broadhead, 2001). Foreman (1995) pointed to the resentment teachers expressed at the increased influence of centralised government control over curriculum, and feeling pressured to carry out their professional practices in less time, which they felt reduced their levels of professional control over their work.

Such was the level of teacher and school-based administrative distrust of centralised government policy making for education that even the Dearing Report’s 1993 recommendations, made following its review of the National Curriculum, were treated by teachers with “suspicion and disdain” (Foreman, 1995, p. 155), despite the fact that Dearing recommended a range of changes to decentralise policy making in the United Kingdom. As Ball (1990) contends, this approach to securing education policy outcomes through national curriculum reform would result in a hybrid form of policy implementation where policy is not realised, but, merely “accommodated.” (p. 8)

One of the major factors driving standardisation and centralisation in the United Kingdom was, as with the United States, an assumption that large-scale agendas for improvements in literacy and numeracy would bring greater national economic success and prosperity, linking economic prosperity with the practice of education. However, Leech (2010) argues that there had been little impact in narrowing the gap between the highest and lowest scores in either of these areas in schools. The growing discourse of performativity as described by Ball (2003) suggests that the performances of individual teachers were measured in terms of outputs or productivity measures which often challenged their sense of well-being and service, and emerged as personal struggles which were “often internalised and set the care of the self against duty to others” (p. 216). This suggests a disjuncture between the national field of policy production with the field of education operating at schools.

2.1.3. Towards a National Curriculum for Australia – Locating Teachers’ Voices

The purpose of including these implementation experiences of large-scale, mandated reform in the United States and the United Kingdom, was to situate the Australian Curriculum within a similar policy context, given that it too shared many of the same policy characteristics. The previous sections highlighted some of the concerns raised as a consequence of the implementation of curriculum reform when it is centralised, standardised, large-scale and mandated. Problems surrounding teacher engagement and enactment were noted. Although the literature suggests there is an awareness of the disjuncture between curriculum policy and teacher practice, the

economic focus of policy construction appears to continue as the dominant discourse of much contemporary education and policy making. Combined with an implementation model that is large-scale and mandated, it is evident that the Australian policy landscape has emerged from a similar economic context to the curriculum narratives evident in the United Kingdom and the United States.

Since the mid-1980s education policy in Australia has been increasingly seen as part of an agenda for micro economic reform (Marginson, 1993; McCollow & Graham, 1997). The gradual increase in the influence of the Commonwealth government was evident in the Report for the Triennium 1979 – 81, which outlined its obligations in setting standards. The Williams Report (1979) first mentioned the term ‘in the national interest’ which positioned the Federal government as having a necessary responsibility for education at a national level. The Whitlam Federal government, in the early 1970s, initiated the educational discourse of equality, participation and inclusion which had national repercussions on the nature of federal/state relations for some time. The first specific national policy in education was The National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1987) followed by the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Education Policy (DEET, 1989).

Arguments for and against a national curriculum in Australia have remained reasonably consistent. Advocates such as John Dawkins (past Minister for Employment), Brendan Nelson (past leader of the Liberal Party and Leader of the Opposition), Julie Bishop (current Deputy Prime Minister) and Julia Gillard (past leader of the Opposition and Australian Prime Minister), have stressed consistency and comparability issues between the States and Territories with reference to education outcomes and student retention rates (Henderson, 2010). The then Minister for Employment, Education and Training, John Dawkins, attempted to secure agreement on a national curriculum agenda from 1987 as part of the Hawke government’s efforts to link education with economic reform. From 2003 to 2007 under the Howard Government during Dr Brendan Nelson’s (2001- 2006) and then Julie Bishop’s (2006 – 2007) tenure as education ministers, the discussions around a national curriculum intensified (Henderson, 2010). Evidence of a move towards more centralised decision making and control of education outcomes can be seen in the Federal Government’s action to tie education funding to gaining agreement from the states to implement national curriculum initiatives in literacy and numeracy.

At the end of 2007, the Rudd government continued the push for a national curriculum. Education’s broad policy agenda and the oversight for its implementation was directed to the Ministerial Council on Education, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). This COAG (Council of Australian Governments) agreement was significant in that it promoted the view that education policy, including a national curriculum, would need to be reached via negotiation with the States and Territories, rather than through coercion and threats by the federal government to withdraw funding (Henderson, 2010). However, those opposed to a national curriculum questioned whether a national curriculum would make any difference to outcomes (Kennedy, 2009).

The authority tasked with the oversight of the development of the Australian curriculum has been officially vested, from 2008, with a new statutory authority, the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). Drawing from their own documents, ACARA provided a rationale for the introduction of a national curriculum:

1. The individual and combined efforts of states and territories can focus on how students' learning can be improved to achieve the national goals, regardless of individual circumstances or school location.
2. Greater attention can be devoted to equipping young Australians with those skills, knowledge and capabilities necessary to enable them to effectively engage with and prosper in society, compete in a globalised world and thrive in the information-rich workplaces of the future.
3. High-quality resources can be developed more efficiently and made available around the country.
4. There will be greater consistency for the country's increasingly mobile student and teacher population.

What young people should be taught and the quality of learning that is expected of them will be made clear in the Australian Curriculum. At the same time, it will provide flexibility for teachers and schools to build on student learning and interest. (ACARA, 2010)

The difficulties in negotiating agreement for those subjects identified in the first phase of this curriculum process, illustrate some of the complexity in securing the implementation of such large-scale, mandated curriculum reform.

2.1.4. Implementing a National Curriculum – the Australian Curriculum Landscape in 2011

As already established in Section 2.1.3, the educational climate of 2011 was quite a contested one. Discussions and debate about a national curriculum had a long history in Australia. Brennan (2011) argued that "...the particular form of politicization of national curriculum in the past decade has not served the schooling sector well, undermining the development of a high quality curriculum and making it hard for alternative contestation about curriculum to be heard" (p. 260).

Nevertheless, early support for the national curriculum came from a range of sectors. Many of the key professional educational organisations endorsed the implementation of a national curriculum. The Australian Secondary Principals Association (ASPA, 2010) welcomed a compulsory, explicit and consistent approach to curriculum across Australia. The Australian Primary Principals Association (2010) also supported MCEEDYA's decision to endorse Australia's new national curriculum. The Mathematics (AAMT), Science (ASTA) History (HTAA), and English (AATE)

professional associations prepared a joint statement that endorsed a “national K – 12 curriculum that supports teachers in meeting the needs of students in the future” (Down, Ditchburn, & Lee, 2008, p. 261). The Australian Education Union (which represented 180,000 teachers at the time) only raised limited concerns “about the scope and timeframe of the consultation process.” (AEU, 2010, p. 2 in Ditchburn, 2012, p. 261)

The state response in Queensland to the roll out of a national curriculum was articulated by the then Minister for Education, Geoff Wilson, who indicated that across the education sectors in Queensland there was enthusiasm for the new curriculum. However, he qualified this enthusiasm by acknowledging growing concerns regarding the level of preparation required on the part of teachers and principals to move forward with “confidence” (Wilson, ministerial press release, 23.06.10). He went on to state that it was incumbent upon government and education policy makers to give the Queensland Studies Authority (the then state government authority with the responsibility for curriculum oversight) and educators, the necessary support for successful implementation through adequate professional development and the provision of appropriate human and teaching resources (Wilson).

However, there were also strong criticisms at the time of a centralised, national curriculum. Ditchburn (2012) identified some concerns:

Disconnected from local realities, the Australian Curriculum is being introduced as a decontextualized edifice, depersonalized and homogenized; it has eschewed the celebration of difference and adopted a one-size-fits-all approach that appears to have been overwhelmingly accepted by the majority of educators and the wider Australian community. (Ditchburn, 2012, p. 259)

Grave concerns about the academic rigour of the Australian Curriculum also emerged from a number of other sources. These concerns were well summarised by the Australian College of Educators President Elect, Professor Alan Reid (2010), when he stated that, whilst a national curriculum may have been well overdue, there was an absence of any explicit statement in the ACARA documents about how “curriculum” was understood and interpreted, leading to questions relating to how “knowledge” was constructed within the policy discourse. Nor were the theoretical underpinnings of “learning” articulated in the documents (Reid, 2010). Tight time frames for consultation and the divergent state curriculum and assessment agendas caused considerable concern about the document and the process of implementation, meaning that implementation of the Australian Curriculum was further delayed a year. However, Reid recommended that the curriculum development process should have been put back a further twelve months so that some of these concerns were addressed. This did not occur in Queensland.

Reid raised concerns that no explanation had been provided to show how the national curriculum would link with the curriculum of the states and territories; that there was little acknowledgement of cross-disciplinary learning; there were few explanations of how issues of educational equity would be addressed, that the consultative timeframes

of 10 weeks for Phase One subjects (Maths, Science, English and History) were too short.

The reform was also criticised on epistemological grounds particularly with regard to how the embedded 'knowledge' was conceptualised and, therefore, how such understandings informed the design of the curriculum documents since there appeared to be a heavy emphasis on content. These concerns, discussed earlier by Reid, were ongoing. Atweh (Atweh, et.al, 2011) asserted that the Australian Curriculum was content driven and did not "give teachers and students greater autonomy and control over what is taught and learnt, when, where and how (p. 192). The risks of such perceived failure in engagement were highlighted by Brennan (2011) when she noted, "[u]nless teachers' own knowledge is engaged and updated, anything new is most likely to be assimilated back into existing ways of operating" (p. 270).

Gilbert (2011) agreed that the ACARA History curriculum was overly content driven suggesting that it focused on the learning of historical facts rather than modes of inquiry. This approach, he argued, would lead to an unnecessary overcrowding of curriculum and a delivery model of historical knowledge based on chronology, which he considered to be an outdated mode of teaching history. Prescriptive historical content, Gilbert suggested, reflected the political and media campaign responsible for driving the inclusion of History as a compulsory subject in the Australian Curriculum based falsely on patriotic and nationalistic arguments. Rather than focusing on the selection of which historical content should be included (and excluded), the focus of the document should have been more directed towards why the learning of history was important. Atweh and Goos' study (2011) was also critical of the emphasis on content learning, in Mathematics, rather than on developing real world relevance for its study. Their argument was that Mathematics needed to be oriented towards generic mathematical capabilities rather than disciplinary knowledge which was the focus of the new ACARA Mathematics curriculum (p. 194). Macken-Horarik (2011) was concerned that the focus in the English curriculum was on content and this view was shared by professional English organisations such as QETA (Queensland English Teachers' Association).

There were criticisms of each of the syllabus documents. Regarding the Science curriculum, Aubusson's interviews (2011) with Science educators suggested that the curriculum was not a syllabus but rather a document providing broad guidelines and directions. Whilst there were positive outcomes, such as the new curriculum included a stream of study called Science as a Human Endeavour, he was critical that it had overlooked 'science literacy' as a focus. His other concern was the nature of implementation and the level to which teachers would have autonomy regarding the nature of implementation:

Aligning the national curriculum to national testing regimes is likely to take the Australian schooling sector down the path of high-stakes testing as in the USA which many have argued, 'regulates pedagogy in poor schools, and stops teachers

from generative transformative pedagogies that could make a difference'. (Aubusson, 2011, p. vii)

Whilst the implementation model of the Australian Curriculum shared similar patterns with the curriculum implemented in other nations, it did acknowledge the important role that teachers played in its implementation procedures when it was stated:

Whilst the Australian Curriculum will outline the scope of what is to be learned, it will be teachers in classrooms who will make decisions about how best to organise learning, the contexts for learning and the depth of learning that will be pursued for each child in their class. (ACARA, 2010)

Yet, the way teachers appeared to be positioned within the ACARA documents suggested that they would engage with the proposed curriculum reform relatively unproblematically and presumed its implementation would be largely unmediated and uncontested by them. This also indicated that from its inception, the onus of responsibility for the Australian Curriculum's success or failure would be based on how teachers enacted it yet there was no explicit representation, discussion or explication of how teachers might initially engage with it. The procedure that describes the nature of engagement and then its enactment was absent from this document. Sikes (1990, p. 43) describes this process of engagement and enactment of policy as a deficit model of policy implementation and Edwards (2000) also criticises this approach to curriculum reform, describing it as a colonial model of implementation since it presumes uncontested adoption and enactment.

Finally, criticisms emerged in relation to the apparent absence of public scrutiny or debate around broader academic issues, particularly by the media (Atweh & Goos, 2011; Brennan, 2011; Ditchburn, 2012); the ability of the content to enable inquiry learning (Lupton, 2012); the tight time frames which prevented adequate and informed consultation (Allum, 2010); and the design of the curriculum which appeared to be focused on content at the expense of lifelong learning (Gilbert, 2011).

These comments, selected from within the education sector and outside it have been included with the intention of providing readers with a sense of the contested education landscape that existed at the time of implementation of the Australian Curriculum and stops short, deliberately, of critiquing the Australian Curriculum as a policy instrument. The discussions are presented here to provide a representation of the kinds of views and responses that were prevailing in the education sector, and even more broadly in society in general. Whilst the aim of this study was its focus on the impact that large-scale, mandated reform had on teachers' practices, it also indirectly sheds light on Spicer's (1995) contention that a national curriculum imposes "quite serious limitations on curriculum autonomy at the micro level" and shifts the "locus of decision making away from educators." (p. 217). Crump further interrogates this view when he asks:

Will a national curriculum improve education or is it just a subtle means to control the work of schools and teachers? (1993, p. 8)

In summary, conflicting comments and opinions as to the nature, quality, even necessity, for an Australian Curriculum were still reported widely within the media and professional and political educational contexts as the teachers in this study were preparing for its implementation.

2.2. Working the Space – the Nature of Teachers’ Work

This section of the chapter will propose that contextual factors, such as culture and individual personal philosophies about teaching, exert considerable influence on teachers’ capacities to effectively engage, mediate and recontextualise large-scale, mandated curriculum reform. As noted, this study is concerned with the space between policy and practice where teachers actualise the personal, or self. This section of the chapter has two foci. In this section, the cultural influences of teachers’ work and how this directs their responses will be explored. In the following section (Section 2.3), the way teachers learn to teach and the nature of their daily practice will be examined as a means of understanding why they respond to change in different ways is discussed.

It can be argued that first an understanding of the occupational culture of teachers and the significance of this culture is necessary to understand teacher responses, since it is through this ‘cultural wall’, Hargreaves (1980) suggests, that all innovations and reforms must pass. Research by Fullan (1982), Huberman and Miles (1984), Invargson and Greenway (1984), and Nias (2003) has explored different ways in which culture can influence the divergent perceptions and experiences of change in schools. School cultures develop as products of the beliefs, values and characteristics of the staff, students and community which combine to make up the shared understandings, the rules and norms which become normalised workplace practices (Nias, 1989). Some argue that cultures can resist and redefine educational innovations (Sarason, 1971; Whitty, 2012). Changes from outside can threaten and undermine the values and beliefs of operations that constituted teacher culture (Darling-Hammond & Wise, 1983). Fullan (1999, 2007) emphasises that failure to acknowledge culture in the reform process by leaders and managers of change can result in reform that is full of conflict, uncertainty and ambiguities. Leadership styles, teachers’ professional relationships and the climate of an organisation influence the way teachers engage and implement educational change (Bakkenes, Vermunt, Wubbels & Imants, 2006; Juraiste-Harbison, 2009; Spillane, Gomez & Mesler, 2012). Failures in any of these areas can mean that teachers lose their sense of meaning and direction, their confidence in what they do; the conditions under which they work suffers and their commitment to their profession decreases.

As a consequence, secondly, some research literature suggests that teachers’ cultures closely link with the ways in which they perceive their own identities which, in turn, influences the way they will respond to change. For example, Sikes (1990) suggests that teachers are shaped by their life experiences and teachers of similar age and gender share similar perceptions, attitudes and concerns. Moreover, she acknowledges that variations may occur as a result of differences in ethnicity, school type and location, subject areas and management structures (Sikes, 1990). Sikes (1990) emphasises that the central common interests shared by teachers create a ‘cultural’ bond. The possibility that

individual values become culturally shared values is also highlighted in Ingersoll and Smith's (2003) research which contends that teachers usually seek out jobs in schools that align with their personal philosophies, and where they can be the kind of teacher they want to be.

Collectively, these understandings of teachers' work have been underplayed in much of the research on educational policy. A possible explanation of this may be linked to the nature of teachers' work. For example, Lortie's (1975) seminal study of teachers describes teachers' work as conservative, individualistic and consumed by the present. Other researchers point to the ways in which teachers' work is private and isolated (Plummer, 2004; Hargreaves, 1986). Moreover, school structures resulting in professional isolation can make it difficult for teachers to engage with curriculum reform. David Hargreaves (1996) contends that teachers generally learn on their own, and reflect upon their own practice repertoires, and the consequences and perceived results of such practice.

The literature on large-scale, mandated curriculum change suggests that imposed approaches present a range of concerns from teachers' perspectives (Butler, Schnellert & MacNeil, 2015; Hargreaves & Dawe, 1989; Huberman & Miles, 1984; Priestley, Edwards, Priestley & Miller, 2012; Spillane, 2004). Problems occur when reforms fail to acknowledge teachers accumulated professional knowledge and consequently leads to negative engagement and mediation responses to curriculum change (Fullan, 1993). Teachers begin their careers believing their work is socially meaningful and will yield great personal satisfaction and seek to protect their perceptions of identity (Eisner, 2005). According to Nias (2003), teachers will go to considerable lengths to protect their sense of the 'individual' and, put under stress from "meso" and "macro" forces of such mandated policy environments in which they work and tasked with implementing mandated policy reform, the cost of "accommodation can be as high as non-accommodation" (Nias, 2003, p. 225).

2.2.1. A Bourdieuan Perspective

In this study, the work of French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu (1990, 1991, 1998b) provides the broad theoretical framework as a way of contextualising teachers' responses to this reform. Bourdieu's theorising was used to frame the operational practices of the teachers' space. It enabled the conceptualisation of the teachers' sifting, mediating and negotiating practices amid the myriad of interactions they undertook between themselves and the reform as their dispositions acted to shape their responses to it.

Bourdieu conceptualised the way individuals engaged with their world by developing concepts such as field, habitus, hierarchies of capital and logics of practice'. In this way, he conceptualized the means by which an individual's engagement with society and their power relationships can be understood, as well as how explicating their positions within the hierarchical structures of society. Bourdieu (1990, 1991, 1993) envisaged society as consisting of a number of autonomous-like social fields, each with

their own logics of practice. These fields were not static, since the individual and collective habitus of the agents changed within the field as they engaged with the hierarchies of capitals (social, cultural, economic, political, symbolic and national). Fields both limited and enabled the activities of those they influenced; enforcing an individual 'nomos' or specific law, which gave each field its individual character (Bourdieu, 1998a).

In this study the field, constituted by the case site - a school undergoing major curriculum reform - will be examined to offer explanations for how individual teachers responded to the implementation mandates of Australia's first national curriculum.

Field

Pierre Bourdieu (1998b) defined a social field as:

...a structured social space, a field of forces, a force field. It contains people who dominate and people who are dominated. Constant, permanent relationships of inequality operate inside this space, which at the same time becomes a space in which the various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of the field. All the individuals in this universe bring to the competition all the (relative) power at their disposal. It is this power that defines their position in the field and, as a result, their strategies. (pp. 40-41)

Applied to this study, this description of field is used, in broad terms, to locate teachers' 'space' within a field of teacher practice and their interactions and construction of this field as their acts of practice mediate with other fields, such as that of policy. Bourdieu theorises that fields are made up of social hierarchies where the level of autonomy of the agents (participants in the fields) is influenced by the power relations between the agents and their positions in the field. These agents compete for control of the field by utilizing their economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital. The degree to which the field is autonomous is reflected in its strength to repel or refract influences from other fields. Collectively, however, all fields are overlayed by a field of power. The habitus of agents in the field is affected by the extent to which they understand and influence the different social fields and the influences that these social fields have on them.

Teachers work within and respond to a range of different fields. Bernstein (1996) suggests that, as recontextualisation takes place within and between official (state dominated) and pedagogic fields (dominated by schools) where lack of alignment creates contested sites. It is in this way that policies can work to interrupt or conflict with other long standing school practices. Teachers are further required to mediate and recontextualise reform in a secondary field of reproduction to implement programs in schools possibly contributing to further conflict between policy and practice (Bernstein, 1996). The practices that take place within the field, that is, the ways in which teachers make meaning in this space, are critical since it is here, Bernstein contends, that the agents (in this case, teachers) have the capacity to construct their field of knowledge. This field of knowledge shapes the way teachers enact and respond to curriculum change.

Furthermore, it could be argued that this field is critical for curriculum implementation since this is the site where teachers engage with their sense of ownership as curriculum workers and make professional and personal decisions about their role in the curriculum change process (Bernstein, 1996). The construct of this space is clearly influenced by the relationship between the official and pedagogic fields.

The strength of a field lies in its ability to resist interference from other fields. These fields and the habitus of the agents in the field are characterized by individual particular traits or dispositions. These dispositions, or more specifically for this study, individual perceptions, act to locate the agents within the field of their professional role as teachers. The way in which these personal perceptions accumulate, affects the way that agents exert their influence constituting the nature of the agent's habitus. This then shapes the way the agent mediates, negotiates and contextualizes their interactions within the field, as they exercise specific capitals - social, cultural, economic, political, symbolic and national – to gain power and construct their own logics of practice. Agents within the field compete for control of the specific interests of the field. The boundary of the field exists, Bourdieu (1993, 1998b) contended, where the rules of operation and the characteristics of the field (the logics of practice) no longer have an influence over the agents.

Bourdieu's (1990, 1991, 1993) conceptualisation of fields provides a useful theoretical context for positioning the work of teachers (the field of teacher practice), within, yet separate to, a landscape of other related fields (such as that of policy). Hardy and Lingard (2008) suggest that fields are social sites (schools, classrooms) in which teachers social dispositions (which in this study relates to their attitudes towards change, philosophies around their own practices, levels of confidence about their capacity to enact change, their self-efficacy beliefs), develop over time. They engage with one another in a process of contest over the forms of capital (social, cultural, economic, political, symbolic, national - national curriculum, status as professionals, power of political agencies to mandate curriculum reform, power of policy) which collectively constitute the field (Hardy & Lingard, 2008).

These observations were used when developing a means of describing the formation of teachers' perceptions about their capacity to implement the Australian Curriculum at a time when their beliefs were being formed. It was my contention that their interactions and negotiations between these two fields, their own field of practice, the other, the field of new policy, influenced their engagement practices and, subsequently, shaped how they positioned and located themselves within the broader reform field. Using this theoretical lens, the teachers' personal interpretations of these interactions between the elements of the fields, was used to describe their contributions to the teachers' habitus and logics of practice. Therefore, this inquiry into these participants' practices offers an explanation as to how individuals, working in relatively homogenous organisational environments, faced with the same challenges, respond quite differently. The way the teachers located themselves within this change environment,

from a Bourdieuan perspective, therefore, was strongly influenced by the interpretations they made around their own fields of practice and their dispositions.

Dispositions

It is in the area of dispositions that Bourdieu is able to describe the creative, flexible, abstract behaviours of individuals and is most relevant to this research since it is via dispositions that the generative structure of a person's habitus is understood, and offers an explanation for their varied and irregular responses to their environment. It is by enacting their dispositions that a person generates meaningful practices, perceptions and actions. These are influenced by their negotiations within their fields of practices as well as ideas that have been shaped by their early socialisation experiences. Such earlier socialisation experiences predispose, but do not determine, individual action.

Bourdieu theorises that dispositions are formed over time, become entrenched and influence an individual's habitus based on their level of reliability and enabling outcomes. This explains an individual's pre-disposition to respond in a particular way, but is not necessarily a determinant of individual action. Whilst dispositions are individualised and pre-dispose individuals to certain actions without being determinants of their actions, dispositions provide an explanation of how individual actions vary within structurally homogenous environments. In light of the construction of self-efficacy perceptions, this explains the wide variation of responses from individuals who work in what appears to be relatively similar environments.

A person's dispositions subsequently define them as having specific character labels such as quiet, reserved, extroverted or resistant for example. As a person's lived experiences act as a filter through which individuals make decisions about their actions, their actions constitute their habitus, which in turn shapes the teachers' agentic practices within the various fields they participate. This presents a divergent view from other structural theorists, since it acknowledges the influence of the past on present behaviours (Swartz, 2002). Consequently, Bourdieu interprets human practices in dispositional terms, and as dispositions shift, new agency and actions can result.

Whilst this, from Rawolle and Lingard's (2008) point of view, does not on its own "...explain why agents...will selectively oppose some policies while engaging others" (p. 731), they suggest that the relationship between habitus and practice is socio-genetic in that "it could be that genes provide a disposition to the expression of different characteristics in living things" (p. 731). Consequently, habitus is a system of dispositions from both the past and present that tends to be perpetuated into the future, shaping structurally similar practices. As such, dispositions act as a 'structured structure' to shape future action constituted of a person's dispositions which in turn acts as a 'structuring structure' that shapes an individual's action.

Rawolle and Lingard (2008) advance this discussion by suggesting that habitus is shaped by a series of socio-genetic dispositions where agents' actions are influenced by both social factors (such as the power relationships and the exercise of their capitals and

the influences of fields and their logics of practice on habitus) and genetic factors (such as their psychological and emotional state). This socio-genetic aspect of dispositions was the construct that linked education sociologically to psychology in this study, since it suggests that the variation of responses to change that individuals, in this case a group of six teachers, could be explained because:

...it is in the interaction of genes and environment that the predisposition is expressed. The environment provides the stimulus for the expression of dispositions, with the concept of field providing the stimulus in Bourdieu's theory. (p. 731)

Teachers' personal and professional beliefs, from Bourdieu's perspective, develop as a consequence of their engagement with personal, environmental and social influences, interacting to construct their dispositions towards this curriculum reform. Dispositions exist inside the head of the individual and are constructed as they interact with each other and the environment. They are generated to be compatible with the conditions in which they are to be acted. The 'socio' element of dispositions relates to those that are constructed which relate to interpretations of power relationships and the exercise of capitals whilst the 'genetic' element relates to an individual's psychological state, emotions and personal qualities such as resilience and motivation. In this way, socio-genetic dispositions are built over the course of a person's life as they engage with a wide range of real work experiences.

Therefore, dispositions, of which perceptions are a part, are central to the way teachers work within a field of teacher practice since it is these perceptions that shape their operations in their educational field. Practice or the practice of dispositions is contingent upon the nature of their habitus. Bourdieu (1990) connected practice and agents in a system of dispositions which makes up an agent's habitus. Bourdieu's theorising of the way each individual conceptualised their space provided an insight, for this project, into the negotiations and mediations teachers undertook as they moved from the environment of the known to the new environment shaped by the requirements of this reform. To delve more deeply into how these perceptions translated into the teachers' beliefs about their capacity to effect change or personal agency, it was important to examine more closely how these perceptions, or dispositive characteristics, emerged within this particular space. Albert Bandura's (1995, 1997, 2006) concept of self-efficacy was the means by which this research examined such negotiations and mediations, understood upon investigating how teachers negotiated their "inner spaces".

2.3. Negotiating Inner Spaces – Teachers' Responses to Change

In this section, I take up Beavis' (1997) well-established view that while the central focus of the literature dealing with curriculum change addresses the implications for stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents, students and consultants), limited attention has still been paid to:

..the implications of such reforms for teachers' perceptions of the subject and of themselves, and how these things in turn contribute to the shape and nature of curriculum change. (p. 1)

It has been argued that experienced teachers over time develop a 'pedagogical repertoire' and are reticent to incorporate the new pedagogical routines which sometimes accompany curriculum reform (Edwards, 2000; Eisner, 2005). Moreover, when teachers don't support a curriculum reform, they can feel demeaned or undermined with devastating consequences. According to Hargreaves (2003) teachers can be:

...distressed to see so much discouragement among staff and students
...demoralisation, alienation, disillusionment and even prostituting themselves as professionals in the service of ends they regarded as morally indefensible. (p. 118)

Furthermore, it is claimed that teachers view their relationship with their pupils as a personal one from which they derive a moral relationship (Fullan, 1993; Hardy & Lingard, 2008; Hargreaves, 1998). In such circumstances, teachers can believe that their professional accountability is to their students (and, sometimes, their parents) not to external policies and reforms, and it is this view of accountability that drives their practice (Nias, 2003). The problem, as Nias contends, is that recent government policies often take little account of these views, emphasizing instead formal relationships and legal accountability.

Hargreaves' (2003) research indicates that several factors raise teachers' levels of concern when implementing mandated change. Teachers assume that they will need to implement such policies in timetables that are already stretched, that professional development will be insufficient and/or inappropriate, and that they will encounter problems associated with personal (and group) motivation and morale. He contends that these concerns are also compounded by a mistrust of the political reasons for change, a perceived reduction in the opportunities for professional collaboration and that any professional collegiality constructed as a result of participating in large-scale reform dissipates once the reform or "crisis of implementation" (p. 110) has passed.

Teachers can also suffer stress and burnout when their personal interests, commitment and resources are not aligned with, or pull against, key aspects of their social, economic and institutional environments (De Nobile, McCormick & Hoekman, 2013; McCormick & Barnett, 2011; Nias, 2003; Sass, Seal and Martin, 2011; Woods, 1999) or suffer from what Farber (1991) describes as a growing sense of inconsequentiality. These teacher concerns do not just cause stress at an operational level, but can undermine teachers' sense of professionalism (Sikes, 1990). Hargreaves (2003) contends that a current dilemma for teachers is not that they are required to respond and manage reform to create dynamic learning organisations but they appear to be required to do so as a means of "endur[ing] the manufactured chaos of politicians' power" (p. 112). Moreover, as Darling-Hammond (2005) observes, changes from outside can threaten and undermine the values, beliefs and the ways of doing things which make up a teacher's culture.

Contributing to these feelings of disengagement, stress and marginalisation, may be the inadequacy of salaries, their personal poor status beliefs, their feelings of powerlessness and an inability to have influence in their work environments (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Boote (2006) discusses teacher discretion in these times of centralised policy making, defining its importance as “the capacity and obligation to decide what actions are appropriate and the ability to take those actions” (p. 465). He suggests that teachers still need to use their professional judgment to interpret the intent of the curriculum; make appropriate choices where there is ambiguity or options; decide how to prioritise elements of the curriculum; address the particular needs of their students; accommodate community concerns; be true to their own values; select from available resources; fit in with their colleagues’ approaches and many other possible variables (pp. 464-465). Therefore, teachers’ perceptions of their capacity to meet the reform requirements of the Australian Curriculum are indicated by their willingness to confront new challenges and will “depend on the meanings they give to their own teaching success or failure” (Day, 2004, p. 73).

Some researchers have utilised specific frameworks and scales to represent teachers’ responses to change. At their most simplistic level, frameworks can rank teacher responses on a continuum from acceptance to rejection. For example, early research undertaken by Havelock (1973) described six different phases teachers experienced before accepting and implementing innovative reform. In chronological sequence, teachers moved from awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, adoption and then to integration. Rogers’ (1995) later research refers to the rate of adoption of an innovation or the diffusion of an innovation being dependent upon whether the teachers involved (in a group and in an individual context) was/were, what she classified as, innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. In 1992, Ball and Bowe’s research suggested that teachers responded to change in one of four ways to change - resistance, accommodation, subterfuge and conformity. Adamson and Davidson (2003) contend that convergence and co-construction should also be considered where most of the elements of innovation are integrated into a practice that is new. They also refer to the phenomena of pseudo-compliance, occurring when teachers might profess or attempt to indicate compliance to the imposed change, but, in reality, there is little or no alteration to their underlying practices and beliefs.

Resistance has been widely researched in relation to teachers’ responses to change (Edwards, 2000; Crump, 2005; Fink & Stoll, 2005; Ozga, 2000; Vidovich, 2002; Wallace & Flett, 2005) and is significant for this research since by exploring teachers’ responses to change, resistance is one possible response. Resistance can occur for a broad range of reasons and at various stages of the teachers’ engagement with curriculum reform. For example, teachers may resist as a consequence of either rejecting the reform outright, with little negotiation and engagement, or as a consequence of considerable negotiation and contextualising of the reform.

Rejection also occurs when teachers fail to envisage an alignment of the proposed reform with their own moral and ethical priorities, the needs of students and their own

skilled pedagogic knowledge based on individual perceptions and professional experience of what they consider to be best practice (Edwards, 2000). McBeath's (1997) work, which focused on the implementation of a new TAFE curriculum in Australia, documented the resistant responses to change by the teachers when the curriculum was imposed in a pre-existing environment of low morale, job insecurity and increasing workloads. Such resistance, she describes, was a consequence of incompetently handled, centrally mandated change initiated by the Federal Government. Whilst externally imposed reform implemented in an already low morale and overworked environment encourages resistant behaviour in teachers, the reverse is also true. Resistant behaviours, occurring as a consequence of externally imposed reform can cause low morale. Described as change fatigue, Dilkes, Cunningham and Gray (2014) suggest that it [change fatigue] is "currently a silent killer of mandated curriculum reform and needs to be seriously considered in any examination of teacher perceptions of, and experience with, change management, job satisfaction and burnout" (p. 59).

Most broadly, teacher resistance can result from several factors and can be expressed in various ways. For example, it may occur as a consequence of the incompatibility teachers perceive as existing between the reform and the organisation's structure (Lipson, 1981) or it may originate because teachers believe that the external source where the policy is developed does not take into account the classroom teachers' perspective (Butt, 1982). Resistance can occur if it is assumed that the reform will intensify teachers' work and increase the pressure on their time (Hall, 1991) in an already time poor environment; or if curriculum change is not supported by administrative change (Huberman & Miles, 1984). Similarly, teacher resistance to reform may occur when they believe curriculum change to be of little use when compared to their experiences with previous reforms (Bandura, 1997; Levine, 1980; Rogers, 1983). Hargreaves (2003) argues that standardised reform has consistently undermined teachers' trust in the integrity of governments and administrators in terms of their moral sincerity and therefore compromises teachers' professional integrity. He claims that this occurs when teachers are required to prepare students to attain educational outcomes that they find increasingly hard to justify (Hargreaves, 2003).

Teacher burnout is a serious consequence of resistance as a result of frustration emerging between the demands of the curriculum policy and the teachers' perceptions of their practice. Burnout is a much used term in the teaching profession and is used to describe the stresses and strains of the job and the toll it takes on its teachers. Schwarzer and Greengrass (1999) cite Maslach and Jackson's (1996) definition of burnout as:

...a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced accomplishment that may occur among individuals who do 'people work'. (p. 242)

Yet, teachers may not appear to resist reform (Gardner, 1998). Outwardly, a teacher might create the impression that they have accepted and accommodated a reform agenda, for, as Riseborough (1993) notes, a teacher might have developed an "empirically rich unofficial underlife to official policy intention" (p. 171). Such teachers,

marginalised by the process of reform, develop their own “cover stories” which provide an explanation of their perceptions of change, and also enables them to practise and sustain their own personal narratives of control (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996, p. 25). Eisner (1995) suggests that it is not unrealistic to imagine that the skepticism of veteran teachers is acted out in the form of passive resistance where they simply ‘ride out’ the new policies. He argues that these teachers assume this can be done without too much difficulty since educational reform policies come and go every five or six years and are, seemingly, more visible in the media than the classroom. Put simply, once the classroom door is closed, the ways in which teachers teach is largely a “private affair” (p. 5).

As part of this study’s aims, developing an understanding of how teachers undertake these mediation practices was critical to shaping their responses to Phase One implementation of the Australian Curriculum. The teachers’ responses were not just a consequence of their negotiations between the broader fields of policy and pedagogic practices which constitutes their work but were as a consequence of more personal and intense “insider” negotiation and mediation with the reform. These were conducted in light of their personal dispositions and enacted in the private spaces of their own practice. The literature suggested that teachers’ responses are closely linked to their perceptions of their capacity to implement the reform. In this circumstance, mandated reform meant that developing perceptions of capacity could not be avoided. Understanding the formation of the participants’ perceptions was, therefore, a requirement of this research and was investigated using Albert Bandura’s concept of self-efficacy which suggests that highly self-efficacious teachers are more resilient and able to manage change. It was an aim of this project, to see if this was the case for these teachers.

2.3.1. A Bandurian Perspective

This section focuses on Albert Bandura’s (1995, 1997, 2006) theoretical concepts of self-efficacy and agency. It was through these lenses that the teachers’ perceptions of their capacity to engage with, mediate and implement Phase One of the Australian Curriculum was examined. Bandura’s (1997, 2001) work represented a significant shift in educational psychology and is considered to be a bridge between behaviourist and cognitive learning theories. It moved away from the preceding behaviourist tradition that proposed human functioning was caused by external stimuli and that individuals were only reactive to environmental influences. According to Bandura, individuals live in a psychological environment that is primarily of their own making. The way this state is constructed depends on how individuals cognitively construct information arrived at through personal, biological and environmental interactions. These interactions, in turn, involve the interplay of cognitive, affective and biological events, behavioural patterns and environmental influences. The critical element which separates Bandura’s work from other social learning theories is his emphasis on the role that cognition plays in people’s ability to construct reality, self-regulate, encode information and perform behaviours.

In Social Cognitive Theory, Bandura (1997) suggests that this interplay determines what we come to believe about ourselves and affects the decisions we make and the actions we take. Bandura suggests that individuals live in a psychological

environment constructed by the cognitive interactions which take place between personal, biological and environmental situations, interacting with each other in what Bandura calls reciprocal determinism. As such, we are the products of the interactions between the external and the internal, our past behaviour and our current behaviour. He saw human behaviour as more than merely being reactive, but proactive or agentive as well, with individuals being able to exercise control with regard to their behaviour as they interacted with their environment. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 2001) describes learning as situated within the "social, historical and cultural milieu" (p. 15) and links the environment with psychology by theorising that:

Although the self is socially constituted, by exercising self-influence human agents operate generatively and proactively, not just reactively, to shape the character of our social system. In these agentic transactions, people are producers as well as products of social systems. Personal agency and social structure operate interdependently. Social structures are created by human activity, and sociostructural practices, in turn, impose constraints and provide enabling resources and opportunity structures for personal development and functioning. (p. 15)

Human agency (Bourdieu) is linked to self-efficacy (Bandura) in that self-efficacy is a contributor to a person's dispositions because it becomes practised as a consequence of their human agency. Teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy influence their beliefs about their capacity to effect change. Bandura contends an individual's formation of dispositions occurs through the reciprocal interactions between an individual's cognition, behaviour and their environment (Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory) with their resulting actions informed by their self-efficacy beliefs. The practice of engagement itself is a construct of teachers' dispositions, themselves constituted by their perceptions of their self-efficacy. Pajares (2002) suggests that individuals exercise agency on the basis of how their dispositional qualities enable them to symbolise, exercise forethought, learn vicariously, self-regulate and self-reflect enabling them to evaluate and modify their own thinking and behaviour in varied and complex environments.

Dispositions shape action and, as such, link Bandura's self-efficacy theory to Bourdieu's habitus and agency. Bandura suggests that a person's actions are shaped by their perceptions of their capacity to undertake the task, hence suggesting that perceptions shape action. By referring to Bourdieu's worldview, an individual's dispositions (of which their self-efficacy perceptions are a part) constitute their habitus and guide their interactions with a range of fields of practice, evidenced in their agency. Therefore, the way individuals act in social fields, the exercise of their capitals, is influenced by their habitus, which in turn is based on acts of reflexive cognition as individuals interactively engage with their environment.

Social Cognitive Theory is grounded in the belief that individuals are agents who proactively engage in their own development and can make things happen by their

actions. As people work together on these shared beliefs and aspirations individual human agency becomes collective agency. The level to which they enact their individual human agency is shaped by their perceptions of self-efficacy. A further elaboration of how individuals' responses to change are enacted follows with exploring the constructs of self-efficacy and agency as described by Bandura.

Self-efficacy

Efficacy beliefs contribute significantly to an individual's level of motivation and performance (Bandura & Locke, 2003), and self-efficacy beliefs influence an individual's decision-making, resilience and emotional reactions (Bandura & Locke, 2003; Pajares, 2002). According to Bandura:

The stronger the sense of personal efficacy, however, the greater the perseverance and the higher the likelihood that the chosen activity will be performed successfully. (2006, p. 312)

As such, Bandura contends self-efficacy beliefs are major mediators of our behaviour and the changes that ensue.

Self-efficacy can influence an individual's cognition, resilience, decision making, actions, attainment of goals and emotional wellness (Bandura & Locke, 2003; Pajares, 2002). The construction of self-efficacy beliefs is based on both societal and genetic factors as evidenced by Bandura's conceptualisation of efficacy as an interplay of three contexts – behavioural, environmental and personal situations which he identifies as triadic determinism (Bandura, 2006).

There are four sources which construct a person's level of self-efficacy (Alderman, 2007; Bandura, 2001). First, levels of self-efficacy are based on mastery experience or prior task accomplishments. Perceptions or beliefs of past success raise self-efficacy, those interpreted by individuals as failure, lower it. The second influence on self-efficacy levels comes from the observational or vicarious experience of behaviour modelled by others. Individuals are influenced by the modelled behaviours of colleagues, contemporaries or those considered to be experts in their field. These actions and behaviours are strong influences most specifically on inexperienced teachers but also for those who have high levels of self-efficacy. Social or visual cues that individuals receive from others and their environment is the third source of self-efficacy beliefs, taking the form of positive or negative verbal comments or visual observations which act as feedback and subsequently engendering a belief about the attainability of the desired outcomes. The fourth influence on self-efficacy beliefs is the physical and emotional well-being of the person. Bandura calls these somatic and emotional states, the weakest source of self-efficacy, influenced by states associated with anxiety, stress, arousal and mood change (Bandura, 2001). The interpretation and elaboration of these four influences on self-efficacy applied to this study are represented in Table 2.1.

These sources do not, in themselves, directly translate into judgements of competence and agency. Bandura's theory suggests, that an individual's ability to

construct their reality, encode information and exercise behaviours emerges through reflexive cognition. These interpretations inform judgements about their personal level of capacity. Through this process of reflexivity individuals select, integrate, interpret and recollect information which influences their self-efficacy beliefs (Pajares, 2002).

Table 2-1: *Descriptions of Self-Efficacy Influences*

Bandura's Sources of Self-Efficacy	Interpreted to include:
Mastery Experiences	Participants' narratives of experiences with past curriculum and educational reform as a teacher or pre-service teacher.
Vicarious Experiences	Experiences in response to spoken and written communications generated by the school's leadership team, members of the school's Executive and relationships with teaching partners who all possessed a level of expertise.
Social & Visual Cues	Demonstrated and inferred feedback from the broader school community and cultural context as it made structural and operational preparations for implementation. Also included are the activities of external education authorities.
Psychological & Emotional State	Perceptions of professional satisfaction, constructions of professional self and levels of confidence around the task of teaching, stage of professional individuation.

There has been significant research that indicates that teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy positively influences their teaching, students' academic performance, and development of affective skills as much as cognitive skills (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990; Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy, 1998). Self-efficacy studies suggest that teachers who exhibit high levels of self-efficacy effected greater levels of planning and organisation (Allinder, 1994), were more open to new ideas and were more willing to experiment with new methods (Guskey, 1988; Stein & Wang, 1988), exhibited greater enthusiasm for teaching (Allinder, 1994; Guskey, 1984; Hall, Burley, Villeme, & Brockmeier, 1992) and had greater commitment to teaching (Coladarci, 1992; Evans & Tribble, 1986). Further research has established positive relationships between self-efficacy and task persistence, academic achievement, goal setting and career aspirations (Nevill, 2008). As well, there is a growing body of evidence that suggests teachers' self-efficacy perceptions are linked to their levels of perseverance, engagement, commitment, intrinsic interest, resilience in experimenting with new pedagogies and professional well-being (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Klassen & Tze, 2014; Pajares, 1997; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy, 1998). Wang, Jen-Yi, Tan, Tan, Lim and Wu (2016) found that teachers with high levels of self-efficacy were more confident using instructional strategies in their classroom management and in their engagement with students.

Woods (1999) contends that those teachers with low self-efficacy beliefs may suffer from stress (or worse, burnout) which would limit and constrain their level of teacher agency. Using self-efficacy as a means of understanding teachers' responses to

change becomes a theoretically relevant research approach since, as described by Bandura (1995, 1997), an individual's self-efficacy perceptions are demonstrated when a person undertakes and completes a task believing they can meet the imperatives of change and be resilient in response to setbacks. Highly self-efficacious teachers, faced with mandated reform, confidently draw on their repertoire of strategies, developed over time in response to a broad range of professional experiences (Schwarzer & Greengrass, 1999). Conversely, those teachers who lack self-efficacy sometimes develop anxieties and self-doubt, exacerbated by their negative perceptions of the demands of the role (Pajares, 1997; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy, 1998). Consequently, it was important to examine the ways in which self-efficacy beliefs translated into teacher agency as the participants in this study became more engaged with Phase One of the Australian Curriculum and to record and observe the changes that emerged.

Agency

Bandura (2001) describes personal agency, that is, the individual's capacity to act in a way to make things happen, in terms of self-efficacy, since self-efficacy influences individuals' beliefs about the control they can exercise over their own level of functioning and those events that affect their lives. Bandura (2001) contends that efficacy beliefs are the foundation of human agency and that among the mechanisms of personal agency, none is more central or pervasive than an individual's belief in their capability to exercise some measure of control over their own functioning and environmental issues, the power to produce effects by their own actions.

Agency is related to people's beliefs about the control they can exercise over their own level of functioning and the events that affect their lives. According to Bandura (2001) it is exercised in four stages. The first is intentionality which occurs as an individual decides on a future course of action. This is followed by forethought when plans are made to actualise this course of action, usually as a consequence of establishing some goals. Next, thoughts may become actions through self-reactiveness, where the individual matches the intended action with these goals or standards or moral agency. Moral knowledge, reasoning and moral conduct, Bandura suggests, need to be aligned for agency to be enacted. The final element of agency is self-reflectiveness, where, through an individual's metacognitive processes, motivations are evaluated and a self-examination of their own functioning is undertaken. However, the initial decision around undertaking a future course of action is predicated on the individual's belief of their capacity to engage with the requirements of the action. It is in this way that the strength of their efficacy beliefs act to influence their sense of agency and are significant contributors to their personal levels of motivation and performance (Bandura & Locke, 2003). Pajares (2002) suggests that individuals are able to act agentively:

...because of their human disposition to be able to symbolise (by extracting meaning from their environment, solving problems, support courses of action), exercise forethought (by setting goals, anticipating consequences, planning courses of action) learn vicariously (by observing the behaviour of others), self-regulate (by self-observing and self-monitoring their behaviour and making judgements

regarding their actions and choices) and self-reflect (by exploring their own self beliefs, engaging in self-evaluation and modifying their thinking and behaviour accordingly). (p. 3)

In this study, the demonstration of agency provided a focus for the inquiry; to explore the ways that a group of teachers negotiated curriculum change and underwent the process of incorporating new practices into their pedagogies, interactions and routines since “[t]he perceived fit between teachers and their working environment can either promote or hinder teacher learning in terms of active professional agency (Pyhältö, Pietarinen & Soini, 2014, p.320) As an expression of efficacy, these reactions to the curriculum change provide a case from which broader understandings of the personalised nature of curriculum change might be further considered.

2.4. Situating the Research

In acknowledging trends in current curriculum reform practices, it is evident that centralised decision making has been a central element of curriculum policy design. However, as Fullan (1999) argues, critics of failed reform blame teacher resistance, bad design or poor implementation, yet they rarely question their own assumptions about schools, learning or young people. Further, as Brady and Kennedy (2005, p. 23) note, while teachers are largely excluded from decisions made by curriculum writers, “they do get the last, and perhaps most important, say about how it will be translated into practice.”

Whilst much of the research suggests that it is common for teachers to feel resistant towards large-scale, externally imposed mandated change, it is not necessarily a ‘given’ in such circumstances – an area of investigation that this study intended to explore. A study undertaken by Smeed and Bourke (2012), for example, which examined the use of external change agents to implement curriculum reform in three Queensland schools showed that teachers do not necessarily respond negatively or cynically to externally imposed curriculum reform. Their study found that teachers responded positively to the requirements of the mandated reform because the teachers perceived the external agents to be knowledgeable and experienced, were supportive and collegial of the teachers at the schools and had professional credibility from the teachers’ points of view. This outcome is not surprising given that perceptions of self-efficacy are socially constituted (Bandura, 2012) and can be manipulated by policy makers and educators (Pajares & Schunk, 2001). Therefore, relevance for this research study also extends to the larger body of research which investigates the role and influence school leaders and managers play in shaping the way reform is enacted at the policy site by the teachers (Fullan 2007; De Nobile et al., 2013; Sass et al., 2011) and the influence school leaders and managers can have on teachers’ self efficacy (Türker, Duyar & Calik, 2011).

However, a central focus of this study remained the examination of the concerns about teacher agency in curriculum enactment as a consequence of this new era of increasing school accountability and managerial approaches to education (Boote, 2006; Brady & Kennedy, 2005; Craig, 2012; Gleeson & Husbands, 2003; Ross, 2000). This is

most particularly relevant when the enactment of curriculum policy into curriculum practice remains a relatively linear construct, as was the case with the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. Whilst leaders and managers of change can influence the decision making processes teachers undertake in such circumstances, this study sought to investigate how such internal mediations and negotiations were undertaken by teachers in this policy environment.

Whilst broadly acknowledging a socio-cultural and critical perspective to learning and knowledge, this study endeavoured to conceptualise the research within the perspectives of both Bandura and Bourdieu contending that it is the nature and construction of a person's dispositions that informs their self-efficacy beliefs in turn shaping their actions and agency. Dispositions emerge and inform ways of doing things, the nature of interactions between self and society, and shape personal attitudes about change and a person's capacity to enact it. It is in this way that an individual's habitus is fluid and reflexive, not only generative, and provides an insight into the broad range of responses individuals make within similar environments. These variations of response provide a challenge for policy construction and its effective implementation, since failure to acknowledge the critical role teachers play in this process is a dominant reason for reform failure.

2.5. Chapter Summary

This Literature Review has positioned this research within a broader educational environment, providing a framework in which this project can be examined. Through the examination of the literature relating to teachers' responses to change, this chapter aimed to link the significance of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs with the ways teachers respond and engage with large-scale, mandated curriculum reform. It also highlighted the curriculum context for this study and the challenges associated with the implementation of large-scale, mandated curriculum reform in an historical and contemporary context. Chapter Two also discussed the implementation challenges documented in the literature that teachers encounter when engaging with this kind of reform, in the context of their perceptions of their work and the way these were influenced by their self-efficacy beliefs.

Education systems around the world have experienced wide ranging changes as nations respond to the forces and processes of globalisation and link education outcomes to securing national productivity (Christie, 2008; Christie & Sidhu, 2002; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). As Rizvi and Lingard (2010) observe, "globalisation has affected education policies of all types" (p. 96) including those pertaining to curriculum. The introduction of high stakes testing regimes and more managerial approaches to schooling are also significant moves since these actions intended to gain greater control over the curriculum in many nations and are evident in the push for mandated curricula (Boote, 2006). The literature suggests that global educational trends tend to disempower and de-professionalise teachers at a time when Australia is embarking upon its first national curriculum. This literature review has endeavoured to explore these trends in educational policy and curriculum development at a global and national level to provide a context in which this study took place.

Conceptualising the worldview of teachers by using the theorising of Bourdieu enables the interpretation of the role that space and context plays in shaping individual beliefs and practices; in this case, via the responses of a group of teachers to contexts of change, contestation, power and resistance and their struggles to identify “self” in a world of conflicting information and practices. To examine their responses, self-efficacy provides an appropriate framework to investigate how teachers will engage with large-scale, mandated curriculum reform. This kind of examination was undertaken because rather than identifying the types of responses that teachers’ actions could be collectively described, as had been the case in earlier research focused on this area, my concern was to try to develop a deeper understanding of why teachers’ responses were so varied and, often, quite unpredictable. Problems with curriculum slippage, resistance on the part of teachers, the lack of fidelity between policy conception and its practice and the way schools mediate between their cultural practices and the proposed changes all point to the need to examine closely what teachers think and do in these environments. Examining levels of self-efficacy perceptions indicate that teachers with high self-efficacy levels will engage more positively with education reforms which then has a positive impact on student outcomes.

Research undertaken by Albert Bandura, Frank Pajares, Megan Tschannen-Moran and Anita Hoy indicate that teachers who have high levels of self-efficacy are able to improve student learning outcomes because they have a more grounded belief that their practice works. Beliefs about how confidence and capacity to engage with and meet reform requirements was the lens through which I intended to investigate this task. The construct of self-efficacy provided an appropriate framework. It was timely, therefore, that an investigation of more localised teachers’ responses to such large-scale, mandated reform, took place. Discussion surrounding the design and methodology of how the research was undertaken follows in the next chapter.

Chapter 3 Research Design

This chapter describes the research design applied in this study. To commence, the study focused on addressing the primary research question:

How do teachers engage with, mediate and contextualise the implementation requirements of large scale, mandated curriculum reform?

This question intended to explore the specific dynamics related to the experiences of a group of teachers as they engaged with the implementation requirements of large-scale, mandated curriculum reform.

As identified in Chapter One, this research aimed to:

- i. describe the nature of teachers' responses to curriculum change;
- ii. investigate the way teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy informed and was informed by the implementation of Phase One of the Australian Curriculum;
- iii. build upon self-efficacy and agency concepts using a qualitative analysis of the actions of a small group of teachers.

The research aims could have been achieved by conducting a large-scale, quantitative study as was generally consistent with self-efficacy research. However, the opportunity to investigate the role teachers played in policy reform and to do this by privileging their voices in the policy continua resonated more closely with my theoretical and analytical stance. The study aimed to foreground and privilege teachers' voices as they engaged with Phase One of the Australian Curriculum. Hence, a qualitative method was used. This provided the direction to investigate, in a close, theoretical way, how the teachers' responses were constructed by the context of this reform and to what extent they were agents of change within this mandated, large-scale curriculum reform.

The first section of this chapter (Section 3.1) discusses the methodology used in the study, the stages by which the methodology was implemented and the research design; the second section (Section 3.2) details the participants in the study; the third section (Section 3.3) lists all the techniques used in the study and justifies their use; the fourth section (Section 3.4) outlines the procedure used and the timeline for completion of each stage of the study; the fifth section (Section 3.5) discusses how the data was analysed; finally, the last section (Section 3.6) discusses the ethical considerations of the research and its problems and limitations.

3.1. Methodology and Research Design

3.1.1. Research Design

This study was designed as a qualitative, interpretivist case study using a research design that focused on exploring the narratives of the participants and the discussion of themes from the data. Using a qualitative methodology was somewhat unusual since

traditionally quantitative research methods have held a dominant position when investigating self-efficacy (Labone, 2004). Whilst quantitative studies have emphasised measurement and the analysis of causal relationships between self-efficacy variables and teacher practice, the processes of negotiation and filtering required in constructing self-efficacy beliefs were well suited to a qualitative, interpretivist research design. As such, the research adopts a qualitative method, conducted in a natural setting, using a constructivist, investigative focus (Creswell, 2005; Lincoln, 2001). Data were examined through interpretive analysis with critical themes drawn from the constructs of self-efficacy used to frame the data collection (Patton, 1990). The data reduction process sought to clarify those environmental, cognitive and behavioural influences which shaped the way the teachers perceived their own levels of self-efficacy as they engaged with this large scale curriculum reform.

Furthermore, qualitative research encompasses broad approaches that seek to understand and explain social phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Merriam, 1998). This is consistent with the purpose of this study, which sought to understand how a group of teachers in one school responded to the implementation requirements of a national curriculum. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) define a qualitative research approach as “a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible” and suggest that qualitative researchers “study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 4). According to Merriam (1998) a core philosophical assumption of qualitative research is that it is based upon “the view that reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds” (p. 6). This philosophical assumption aligned with the purpose of this study and research questions, as I was interested in exploring the negotiations and mediations that this group of teachers in one school undertook in their professional space as they worked towards implementation.

Conducting the research within the participants’ natural setting also influenced the choice of a qualitative, interpretivist design. Whilst selected aspects of the theoretical perspectives of Bourdieu (1990, 1991, 1993) and, more significantly, Bandura’s (1995, 1997, 2001, 2008) concept of self-efficacy and its influences were used, the method of data collection also enabled broader perspectives and insights to emerge. This design intended to provide the opportunity to foreground participants’ meanings, understandings, relationships, social setting and events over time (Janesick, 2003; Lincoln, 2001).

Finally, this design was also chosen since it was appropriate for research where “the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis” (Merriam, 1991, p. 7). Whilst qualitative researchers often share an “intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situation constraints that shape inquiry” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 10), a qualitative method also supported the research context where, at the initial design stage of research, I was still an employee at the research site, with the participants reported in this study professional colleagues of mine (as discussed in Chapter One). Even though this relationship imposed limitations and

restricted the research representativeness of the study, which will be discussed in the final section of this chapter, there were significant strengths that were drawn from having this ‘insider’ knowledge.

Therefore, a qualitative design was chosen since it served three purposes. This type of design supported research undertaken in its natural setting (Creswell, 2005; Lincoln, 2001); sees data gathering as interpretivist and that reality and meaning is a social construct (Eisner, 2005; Guba & Lincoln, 1981); finally, it meant that I could undertake this research within the context of my relationship with the participants and the research site (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

3.1.2. Methodology

Case study research is designed to gain an ‘in-depth’ understanding of the phenomena under consideration in a real life context, enabling the researcher to identify the complexities and uniqueness of these contexts (Punch, 1998). Case studies offered a range of attributes that suited the research design. For instance, case studies are well suited to constructivist paradigms (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). Further, various studies in education (Stake, 1978, 1995) have researched the individual as the unit of analysis, and have used the case study method to develop rich and comprehensive understandings about people.

Although Yin (2003) contends that a case study offers “a comprehensive research strategy” (p.14), this research drew more heavily on Stake’s (2000) design that describes a case study not as a form “of methodological choice” but rather, a method that “involves a choice of what is to be studied” (p. 435). As an instrumental case study (Stake 2000), this study intended to promote an understanding of the specific issues this group of six teachers faced when presented with the task of implementing large-scale, mandated reform. It investigated their responses to this kind of reform in the space where they undertook policy negotiation and mediation since it was their task to interpret policy so that it could be practiced. The intention was to develop a deeper understanding of the role teachers play in this process.

In particular, a case study approach was suitable since it enabled me, as the researcher, to “document participant and stakeholder perspectives, engage them in the process, and represent different interests and values” (Simons, 2009, p. 18). One of the advantages of this approach is the close collaboration between the researcher and the participant, while enabling participants to tell their stories (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). A case study draws on narrative conventions to convey the “particularity and complexity” of the phenomena being researched (Stake, 1995, p. ix). Stake’s model of the bounded case provided an emic view highlighting the importance of what was happening and deemed important within the boundaries which formed the basis of this research.

Methodologically, this qualitative research adopted a critical realist view of the social world to frame its investigation. As the research aimed to gain an understanding of participants’ perceptions of their engagement with curriculum change, teacher accounts

of lived experiences provided rich empirical data. The data generated from the interviews with the six teachers described their ways of knowing and relating their individual experiences as they engaged with this reform. Using informant narratives is a research strategy designed to elicit the voices of the research participants where, Mischler (1986) suggests, many research methods do not give voice to the concerns of the participants nor how they construct meaning. It was from the method of case study, and the opportunity this provided for me to be ‘in the field’ that ‘narratives’ of experience developed. Each of the participants, through the process of interview, conveyed a rich sense of their lived experience, and it was via these narratives - as an act of dialogue - that I gained my understandings of their experiences.

Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggest that narrative epistemological orientations are decidedly constructivist and situated, drawn from convictions that social life is, in reality, an enacted narrative. Thus, people’s stories afford unique insights into their development as moral agents, as complex historically – and socially – situated individuals (Bowman, 2006). Using informant narratives meant that data analysis was focused on close readings of the stories they told since “...narratives lend themselves particularly well to relating human experience as it unfolds in time: a lived present with an experiential past, anticipating a future” (Bowman, 2006, p. 8).

Analysing the data via informant narratives enabled, as Bowman (2006) states, “the voices and stories of people marginalized or silenced in more conventional modes of inquiry” (p. 8). As referred to in Chapter Two, teachers are often critical about the success of implementation but their roles remain under researched. (Ball, 1994, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 1990; Fullan, 1993, 1999, 2006). Their voices were often silent in the development and implementation of curriculum policy so by focusing on their narratives as a research method, this provided an opportunity to acknowledge their voices in light of understanding their role in this large scale, curriculum reform and to investigate their interpretations of their own agency in light of the mandated nature of the reform. The intention in analysing the teacher narratives was to acknowledge perceptions, understandings and interpretations of their own feelings and responses to the reform to privilege each participant’s voice. Teachers’ accounts were referenced using their first initial, the date of the interview and the page number from the typewritten interview transcript from which their comments were drawn.

As well, an integral function of using informant narratives was the ability to focus on reflection and a person’s sense of self or identity (McAdams, 1993). This function was relevant to this inquiry since the research design focused on each participant’s perceptions of the way they engaged with, mediated and contextualised this particular curriculum reform. This emphasis supported a key element of the research design in that it enabled the participants to talk about themselves, share their experiences, identify how their interpretations shaped their discussions about the site and enabled me, as the researcher, to openly discuss my relationship with the participants and the site (Creswell, 2005). This analytical emphasis on reflection aligned with Bandura’s concepts of self-efficacy and agency where he notes that self-reflectiveness is one of the four stages of

agency. As well, Stake (2008) argues that being reflective is essential to the data analysis of case study work since, as a method, case studies afford the researcher the opportunity to spend extended time at the site of the research, reflecting and revising descriptions as they go. As Stake suggests, “local meanings are important, foreshadowed meanings are important, and readers’ consequential meanings are important” (2008, p. 128). Since this research describes a relatively close relationship between theory, specifically Bourdieu’s concepts of field and habitus and Bandura’s self-efficacy theory, and the data collected, reflexivity was also an essential element of ensuring validity of the research design. Opportunities for reflexive action on the part of the participants and the researcher privileged the participants’ “local meanings” in their narratives, which was central to this inquiry. As such, opportunities were provided in the design for multiple and recurring reflexive actions by both the researcher and the participants.

My initial position as a teacher-researcher, following a long relationship with the participants, who had been my colleagues when I was employed at the school, provided me with an ease of access to the site and enabled me to have a broader and deeper understanding of the culture of the organisation. As Danermark, Ekstrom, Jakobsen, and Karlsson (2002) contend, the position of teacher-researcher can be challenging and problematic since the researcher is “interpreting other people’s interpretations” (p. 32). This long standing relationship I had with the school and the participants in this study, and the knowledge I had of them as colleagues and professionals needed to be acknowledged when I analysed their narratives. Nevertheless, it was relatively unproblematic to establish a professional distance from the participants since I no longer worked at the school when the interviews occurred, nor was I employed on site when these teachers began their engagement with this reform. However, unlike a researcher with no knowledge of the research site, acknowledging my relationship became part of the reason for including my own story in the research design.

In summary then, there were several attributes of using informant narratives extensively within a wider case study design that supported the aims of this research. This supported the ‘close’ nature of the research design (Creswell & Garrett, 2008). It emphasised relationships and collaboration between the researcher and others (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). The data collection and analysis of their narratives that followed enabled the teachers as participants to voice their stories of curriculum implementation in a way that other design elements would not have been able to. The flexibility of a case study meant that I was able to capture the complex and changing stories of the participants as narratives (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) analysed according to the specificity of the site.

3.2. Participants

There were two groups of participants in this study, although only one group formed the focus of the research, with the second group providing an insight into the working life of the six teachers. The focus group, whose self-efficacy perceptions were under examination, comprised six teachers drawn from a range of learning and teaching environments across the whole school who were all involved in some way with

implementing Phase One of the Australian Curriculum. For most, this meant implementing at least one of the Phase One curriculum areas of English, Mathematics or Science the year following the first round of interviews. During the year that this research project began (2011), these teachers were preparing and working towards implementation of the curriculum in 2012. Few teachers would have been excluded from this project based on the subjects of the first phase of implementation. Six teachers responded to a whole school email I had generated where I provided a brief outline of the research project and identified ways in which teachers could register their interest in participating in the study (see Appendix A).

The second group of participants for this project contributed to contextualising the focus group's work and the work practices at the site. This comprised three administrators who were also interviewed at the time the first interviews were conducted with the focus group. These administrators were approached directly – the Head of English, the Head of Science and the Deputy Head of the Junior School/Junior School Curriculum Co-ordinator – with the objective that their interviews would provide an important educational and environmental context to the work the teachers were undertaking in readiness for implementation of Phase One. Interestingly, and importantly, members of this group were also undertaking their own negotiation and mediation practices in light of this reform and their interpretations of the new curriculum were key to shaping the operational space in which the teachers at the school were working. Therefore, their insights were important in contextualising the work of the teachers whose self-efficacy perceptions were under examination and as such, they were asked similar questions to the teachers in the focus group.

Whilst Patton (1990) states that there are no strict criteria for determining sample size in qualitative research, a group of six teachers, supported by the interviews of the three administrators, (drawn from a teaching population of 54 part time, full time and casual teaching staff) was considered adequate to provide a range of experiences appropriate to support the 'bounded case' characteristics required within this case study methodology. The range of participants was also representative of the group of teachers employed at this site. Two were primary school teachers, four were secondary school teachers, one was a Mathematics specialist, two taught across all Phase One subject areas, another was an English specialist, a third taught both English and Mathematics in the secondary school. One was a graduate teacher, two others were relatively new to the profession, and three were relatively long term, experienced teachers. Three had long standing relationships with the school whilst the other three were relatively new to the school, two of whom had wide ranging experiences at other schools – locally, nationally and internationally. One was also a parent of a student at the school. The participant profiles, with all allocated pseudonyms is presented in Table 3.1.

Given that the participants did not all work together – the two sub-schools, Junior and Senior School, operated in separate physical and educationally distinctive spaces, even though they were located on the same geographical site – they knew each other professionally, as a consequence of shared meetings and other whole school activities.

Some were also part of shared social networks that extended beyond the school. Some (n=3) of the participants worked within a vertical, subject discipline structure across both sub schools (e.g. for the purposes of Australian Curriculum implementation, Science worked in a P – 10 mode) whilst others (n=5) worked together for other educational reasons e.g. within the school’s P - 12 Learning Support program. At the initial volunteer stage, none of teachers who comprised the research group knew who else had registered an interest in participating, and nor were the administrators aware of which teachers had indicated they wanted to be part of this study. The pseudonyms were chosen randomly yet reflected their gender and euro-ethnicity.

Table 3-1: *Participant Profiles* Pseudonyms have been applied*

Teachers *	Teaching Sector	Experience	Teaching Areas	Employment Status	Professional information
Emily	Secondary	1 st year	English/Drama	Full-time contract	Past student Graduate
David	Primary	5 years	General/ Specialist area - IT	Full-time permanent	Took over wife’s teaching contract
Shelley	Secondary	7 years	Legal Studies/Social Sciences/English	Full-time permanent	Past student Parent of Junior School student
Penny	Secondary	10 years	Science	Full time permanent	Head of Department at second interview
Tina	Early Secondary	20 years	Generalist /Maths specialist	Full time permanent	Year 7 co-ordinator Primary teacher trained Wife of the Principal Parent of students currently at the school
Jane	Early Years	3 years	Early Childhood Education	Full time permanent	Long term teacher aide at the school Parent of past students at the school
Administrators	Teaching Sector	Experience	Teaching Areas	Employment Status	Professional Information
Ryan	Deputy Head Junior School/Curriculum Co-ordinator	20+ years	Primary	Full time permanent	Responsible for implementation of Phase 1 AC in Junior Years
Ann	Head of English/Social Science: English teacher	30+ years	Secondary	Full time permanent	Parent of past students at the school Head of English & Social Sciences
Kate	Head of Science: Biology teacher	30+ years	Secondary	Full time permanent	Retired after first round of interviews Responsible for Science curriculum P - 12

Interviews provided the primary data collection technique within the case study method. Interviews with each participant were scheduled separately and times were negotiated and agreed upon in consultation with each of the interviewees. The administrators were interviewed only once, during the first round of interviews in 2011, since the purpose of those interviews was to provide a context for the nature of the change environment that was evolving as the teachers began their initial engagement with the curriculum document. The three administrators with whom I requested

interviews were important leaders in the school. They each had direct responsibility for implementation but were also the three leaders with the most contact with the group. It was the decisions of these three administrators whose actions would have the most impact for the teacher participants. Each administrator had the responsibility for implementing the new curriculum in one or more of the three specific areas of Phase One. Since primary teachers would need to implement all three disciplines (English, Mathematics and Science) in Phase One, the Junior Years Curriculum Co-ordinator (Ryan) was responsible for managing implementation of these three subject areas across the whole Junior school. However, the Heads of Department in the secondary school, Ann in English and Kate in Science, were each responsible for implementation within their discipline area from Years 7 to 10.

As a consequence of being employed at the school, I was aware that the Deputy Head/Junior Years Curriculum Co-ordinator and the Heads of Department had already participated in meetings, professional discussions and professional development with the school's leaders and external education authorities prior to 2011. During 2010 and early 2011, Ryan, Ann and Kate had made a range of implementation decisions, some of which would have been prescribed by available time, resources, and professional skill sets of the staff and community expectations (i.e. parents' and the School Council's). Decisions made were guided and directed by the school Principal and the respective heads of sub-schools. As a consequence, by the beginning of 2011, the administrators had already developed their own perceptions of the nature and requirements of reform implementation. Such decision making represented a process of filtering curriculum policy further occurring prior to the teachers' first engagement with the curriculum documents. By the time the participants began their engagement with the ACARA documents, it may have been the case that curriculum slippage, referred to by Luke (2002) had already occurred. Luke suggests that curriculum slippage occurs when policy is filtered by school leaders, middle managers and teachers such that the implemented curriculum is different from the intended curriculum. This theme provided an early point of inquiry for the later interviews and analysis.

3.3. Data Collection Techniques

The semi-structured interviews (Merriam, 1998) of the six teachers provided the primary data collection technique used in gathering the data for this study. In addition interview data from the three administrators also provided critical background information for this research, as did observation-based field notes and an analysis of school generated and national policy documentation which had been developed to support the implementation of Phase One.

Semi-structured interviews provided the opportunity for the six participants to be directed by my pre-determined questions but to also become narrators of their own stories. This shift, away from the researcher as narrator was intended to conceptually position the interviewee as the voice of the research where they could express their own sense of agency, enabling them to feel that they were not required to have 'answers' to all of the interviewer's questions (Chase, 2005).

In conducting research to examine levels of self-efficacy, it was important to identify the teachers and administrators' general perceptions of change and reform and this was the starting point in developing the interviews. One of the design aims was to further explore Bandura's (1996, 2006) view that people's self-efficacy beliefs vary in generality, strength and level so gaining an understanding of each of the participant's perceptions of their self-efficacy across the range of their teaching practice was important. Since weak efficacy beliefs are negated, Bandura (2006) contends, by "disconfirming experiences" (p. 311), it was important to gain an overview of how each teacher described their self-efficacy beliefs both specific to curriculum reform and in more general terms.

Bandura (1997) argues that perceptions of success raise teacher efficacy, perceptions of failure lower it. However, he goes on to qualify this statement. Success that is attributed to luck or the intervention of others may not strengthen self-efficacy beliefs whilst success that is attributed to ability or effort or internal or controllable causes, enhances self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). Therefore, the interview questions (see Appendix B) made general connections to each of Bandura's (1997) four self-efficacy influences and were developed to draw upon the experiences of the teachers, the administrators and their perceptions. The interview questions derived were then grouped using Bandura's (1997) four sources of self-efficacy as a loose organiser. The terms used for the teachers were not mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social and visual cues and psychological and emotional state but mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, reviewing and reflecting and personal perspectives. The 'softening' of some of Bandura's descriptions was to personalise these self-efficacy influences in a context that the teachers could relate to. In devising the interview questions, mastery experiences referred to participants' past experiences not only with mandated or national curriculum reform but with broader educational reforms that participants had engaged with and their perception of whether these experiences had been personally professionally successful. Initial questions asked included:

1. What kinds of educational reforms have you been involved with in the past?
2. How would you describe the way you have engaged with curriculum reform in the past?
3. Have there been reforms that you feel have been more successful than others?

The intention here was to provide the participants with the broadest parameters to discuss their personal experiences with reform since only providing the opportunity to discuss curriculum reform would have limited the responses of new teachers to the profession. Second, the Australian Curriculum was characterised by two unique qualities – it is a national reform and is mandated. Given the first time nature of this reform, none of the participants could have had a similar reform experience in Australia. As such,

designing the interviews around general parameters of education reform meant that all of the participants had experiences to reflect upon.

Bandura's (1997) view is that the more confident a person is with regard to their personal sense of capability, the more they are likely to exercise their personal agency. In developing questions to investigate the influence of vicarious experiences on the self-efficacy perceptions of the teachers, discussions focused on the influence of the actions of members of the school community, those with whom they identified and respected such as their teaching partners or Heads of Department or the school's leadership and executive team.

Questions relating to their vicarious experiences were those that asked the participants about the way they went about interpreting the nature of the curriculum reform based on their perceptions of how leaders and curriculum specialists within the school engaged with the reform. These perceptions may have been derived from written and spoken formal and informal texts from their Heads of Department, the school Principal, the school's Executive team, the Junior Years Deputy Head/Curriculum Co-ordinator, or, as is the case in Junior Years, their teaching partners. Bandura (1997) suggests that influences on self-efficacy from vicarious experiences refers to the influence of modelled behaviour and actions from a person who is held in high esteem. Drawing from the way the school's hierarchy was structured, these senior personnel held positions of authority because of their expertise and level of skill within each of their professional areas. These positions of authority located them as professional role models for the teachers. Sample questions asking the teachers to consider the influence of school leaders, professional colleagues as well as external education authorities included:

1. To whom will you be looking (or what e.g. education/government authorities) for assistance with your implementation of this reform?
2. How would you describe your role in the decision making processes that will enable this curriculum initiative to be implemented?

Bandura's (1997) third influence on self-efficacy, social and visual cues, refers to observational feedback, interpreted by the individuals, from the broader community which informs their feelings of self-confidence. In this study, these experiences were interpreted as those that may have originated from actions or activities of members of the broader educational community as they responded to the reform agenda, or from professional colleagues at the school or in the wider community. Feedback may have been interpreted from subtle signs and signals, messages perceived by the teachers that indicated the intention and direction of the reform as demonstrated by others. Such subtleties could have also included allocations of time within teaching timetables and the school calendar for staff meetings where discussions about implementation could take place or further clarification could occur; the quality and quantity professional learning opportunities available to teachers to provide engagement opportunities with the new curriculum; the way tasks and duties associated with learning and teaching about the new curriculum were distributed amongst the staff; and the organisational and structural

arrangements which were put in place to manage implementation such as how leadership roles were organised to support the reform. These kinds of actions were interpreted as constituting sources of ongoing feedback and were influential factors in shaping the teachers' personal levels of self-confidence.

Furthermore, questions in the interview schedule that were designed to explore the extent to which social and visual cues affected the teachers' self-efficacy, related to the way the feedback was interpreted through: informal discussions and comments made by teachers who were either directly involved or not yet involved in the implementation of the Australian Curriculum; positions adopted by the media with regard to the change; the way educational authorities external to the school (e.g. Queensland State Government education departments, Lutheran Education Queensland) positioned themselves with regard to the reform; and the perceptions of parents and students. These sources of feedback influenced the ways the participants' personal self-efficacy levels were constructed. Evidence of strong relationships and a clarity of direction worked, from Bandura's (1997) point of view, to strengthen the teachers' conviction that they had the capabilities to set and achieve goals and increased their sense of individual agency. Sample questions included:

1. What role does feedback play in implementing such changes?
2. How important is it to the way you will design, plan and implement change?

The fourth source of self-efficacy, physiological and emotional states, was investigated by developing questions that asked the participants to discuss how they felt the reform would align to their personal construct of professional identity. Bandura (1997) argues that individual affective states influence how individuals interpret and react to the range of challenges they face and are demonstrated in their tolerance for pressure and crisis. States of anxiety or excitement are influenced strongly by the sociocultural aspects of the work environment such as the teachers' sense of the level of professional trust and professional respect evident in the school's culture. Questions relating to personal pressures outside their work environment, career history, length of time in the profession, personal states of mind were seen as indicators of this fourth influence on self-efficacy. A sample of questions used in the interview schedule to prompt responses regarding the teachers' state of mind and tolerance for pressure and change were:

1. In looking ahead to the process of change, how prepared do you feel personally to negotiate and implement change?
2. What do you see the impact of this reform will be on your own teaching practice? What do you hope will be achieved?

The interview schedule (Appendix B) was emailed to each of the teachers and administrators who were participating in this study two weeks prior to the interviews so that they could take some time to consider the context of the research and their responses

to the questions. The beginning of the interview schedule contained a statement making reference to the context of the research: (see Appendix C).

The questions for consideration were then listed. It was not my intention to follow strictly this line of questioning at the interview, however, by providing the questions prior to the interviews, it was intended to act as an encouragement to the interviewees to become the narrators of their own experiences rather than operating in a question-response mode enabling them to focus on areas of importance or personal importance for them.

The one hour interviews took place two weeks after providing the teachers with the interview schedule and began by making reference to the interview schedule but also included general topics of conversation (e.g. the weather, their day etc.). My aim was to encourage a discussion where the interviewee's story was the focus which participants needed to know was a relevant part of the interview process. During the interviews, it was my intention to encourage their storytelling, without interrupting, actively listening and using their stories to frame and encourage what Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000) call participants' use of "spontaneous language in the narration of their events". The interview process followed Jovchelovitch and Bauer's phased approach with this as part of the Preparation phase enabling the phases of Initiation, Main Narration, Questioning and Concluding Talk phases, all part of the genre of the face to face interviews.

The interviews were cordial, relaxed and friendly, beginning with a few general 'catching up' questions and proceeded where I introduced the overall nature of my research focus with the intention of providing a context from which the participants could begin to tell their stories. Before the interviews began, I asked permission to record the interview and the recording device (4GB Sony PX Series MP3 IC voice recorder) was placed centrally on the table in full view of the participants. The interviews were recorded without interruption and the recording stopped when the participants indicated there were no further comments they wished to add. All interviews took a minimum of sixty minutes with the longest being approximately eighty minutes (Tina's first interview).

The reduction in emphasis of a question/answer response structure to the interviews enabled the interviewees to relate their stories, and also enabled themes and topics beyond the structure, initiated by the participants, to be discussed. This reduced the impact an imposed structure had on the ordering of the questions and minimised the impact of my language choices with regard to the way the questions were worded (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000). Whilst I did not have a different list of questions for the face to face interviews, I was conscious that my role in those interviews was to elicit the interviewees' stories. Samples of the kinds of prompts which I prepared for use in the interviews are provided in the table that follows (Table 3-2):

Table 3-2: *Sample interview questions*

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Just to clarify, what you are saying there is.....?• Is there anything you would like to add?• How did this relate to your sense of.....?• What was that experience like?• How would you describe what happened there?• What were the sorts of ways you came away from that experience differently? What was the consequence of that difference?• Can I draw you back to thinking about.....?• How did you see that?• We may need to talk about that further.• Can we explore your response to that?• Can we just go down that path a little bit further and explore this? |
|--|

A further set of interview questions was developed for the second round of teacher interviews. (See Appendix C) These questions were designed to provide an opportunity for the teachers to reflect upon their practices post implementation but to also consider the curriculum journey that had taken since the first interview. At their second interview, the teachers, guided by these questions, were encouraged to discuss their interim experiences since the first interview. This was an opportunity for them to reflect upon how their self-efficacy perceptions played out at implementation. As referred to in Chapter Two, Pajares (2002) suggests that it is through reflexivity that individuals are able to select, integrate, interpret and recollect information that influences their self-efficacy judgements and such judgements are strong influences on individual agency. Plans for actions are actualised as individuals exercise forethought, self-regulatory behaviours and self-reflectiveness (Bandura, 2001). As well, the engagement and implementation practices they undertook to enable implementation to occur in January, 2012, would now be part of their mastery experiences and become a contributing influence on their self-efficacy perceptions moving forward through the rest of the staged implementation of the Australian Curriculum, a procedure unfolding over the next several years. Since self-efficacy and agency are closely linked, the data gathered from the second interview was intended to provide an insight into efficacy actualised as agency with the aim of developing a clearer insight into the way teachers are positioned, and position themselves, in the policy cycle (Ball, 2008).

The first round of interviews took place in August 2011 over two days. During my time on site, I collected some documentation that later formed part of the document analysis I undertook as part of the research design. The interviews were electronically forwarded to a professional transcriber contracted by the Education Faculty of the Queensland University of Technology (where I was enrolled at that time), who transcribed the interviews verbatim, returning the transcribed interviews in Word format. The transcriber noted points of emotion such as laughter in the transcription. The process of transcribing the interviews took place over approximately a ten week period. After the interviews were electronically returned to me, I forwarded them electronically to the

participants to provide an opportunity for them to comment or include any feedback they felt was necessary. The second round of interviews, which took place in March the following year, were again transcribed by the same professional, with the written transcripts returned and forwarded again to the teacher participants to review.

3.3.1. Field Notes

As well as using semi-structured interviews to gather research data, field notes were also used as part of the research design. Permission was asked of each of the interviewees to make written notes during each interview. In writing up field notes it was important to take into consideration the way in which the ‘field’ is described and the influences that act upon the process of writing up. As Atkinson (1992) states, the field is:

...something we construct both through the practical transactions and activities of data collection and through the literary activities of writing field notes, analytic memoranda and the like. (p. 5)

Such activity suggests that a researcher’s notes will be influenced by their own particular research interests and their own professional and personal views which, in turn, may influence what the researcher deems relevant to record. This needed to be taken into consideration when examining the validity of the research design. Field notes were used along Emerson’s (1995) interpretation which suggests that they are used to record specific events, adopting a ‘participating-to-write’ approach. The field notes were important when reading and coding the interview transcripts since they added another layer to the analysis. Field notes were a secondary method. Examples of the different ways the field notes were manually recorded are demonstrated in the following table (Table 3-3).

Table 3-3: Coding of field notes

Samples of Field Notes	Examples
Diagrammatic representation Example from: <i>Interview 1 with Jane</i>	<p>Mandatory reform – have to follow rules & regulations</p> <pre> graph TD A[Mandatory reform – have to follow rules & regulations] --> B[Like an Umbrella] A --> C[Drips coming down – policy] C --> D[- coming down from above] C --> E[- from outside] </pre>
Abbreviated notes with relevant excerpts Example from: <i>Interview 1 with Emily</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Message is often confusing Politics? Lots of acronyms! - Politics – new teacher – vague is deliberate to blend in with ACARA No history/experience – “I’m a blank canvas....a perfect candidate”
Direct quotes Example from: <i>Interview 1 with Tina</i>	<p>“Curriculum doesn’t define educational outcomes – implementation does. Responsibility of others to facilitate implementation procedures for teachers – that’s their focus.”</p>
Summary undertaken after interviews were completed Example from: <i>Interview 1 with David</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change is a shared process – particularly for students as well - Critical to have trust in the principal & leadership – principal is the conduit between policy & practice - Greatest threat to change process – not enough time - School structure needs to support the work of teachers enabling them to collaborate - Critical to have a strong and supportive teaching partner - Change assists own exploration of professional identity

3.3.2. Participant Observations

Participant observations, although more limited than initially intended, were used on occasions when I visited the school to undertake the interviews and were recorded as part of the field notes. Schensul, Schensul and LeCompte (1999) define participant observation as “the process of learning through exposure to or involvement in the day-to-day or routine activities of participants in the researcher setting” (p. 91). As a person well known at the site, but returning now as a visitor, I was given open access, visiting staffrooms, talking generally with staff, attending morning tea and meeting with, informally, the school’s Executive. I was at the site for two days on each interview occasion. Based on the interviews I had undertaken and the field notes made during the interviews, I was able to gain a deeper understanding of the way Phase One of the Australian Curriculum was being implemented at the school. This guided the nature of my participant observations. DeWalt and DeWalt (2002) suggest that:

The goal for design of research using participant observation as a method is to develop a holistic understanding of the phenomena under study that is as objective and accurate as possible given the limitations of the method. (p. 92)

During the time of the research, I also recorded my own professional recount, storying my professional journey, reflecting upon the events and circumstances of my cultural and philosophical underpinnings which led to undertaking this research project. It was not only important to establish my stance acknowledging that it too was part of a socially constructed reality, but to add to the validity of the research by including my reflection to strengthen the study's 'critical validity' as defined by Erickson (1986).

However, it was also important, as Bernard (2004) argues, to maintain a sense of impartiality regarding these interactions by removing myself from the setting and focusing on the data to understand what was happening. This was possible due to the long distance I lived from the research site as well as the research interval of six months between the first and second interviews. Between the interviews, I had time to put together the threads of each interviewee's thoughts; to 'read' their narrative in the light of my own observations, field notes and themes emerging from earlier interviews. This space also enabled me to consider carefully my next steps; where I should take interview discussions and what might need to be altered from the original schedule of questions. This process indicated that my time as a participant observer extended beyond time spent at the site of the study, or with the participants in interviews. It also included time spent in reflection during the drive to and from the site and as I worked through the growing stock of data in the quieter moments at home.

3.3.3. Document Analysis

Document analysis was also used as part of the research method. The documents included meeting agendas (e.g. English department meeting), email communication (e.g. Dean of Studies), whole school planning documents (Planning Day program, January 2012) and sub-school committee meeting minutes (e.g. Teaching and Learning Committee). The purpose for using the documents was to further describe the context in which the teachers were working and the way implementation was being understood and translated from policy to teacher practice. As another source of data, the analysis of the documents represented another way in which to triangulate the interview data.

The documents used were not developed for the purpose of research but as evidence of ways everyday practices were described and interpreted at the school, and as such were based on particular assumptions which researchers, as noted by Scott (1990), need to take into consideration when using them as a means of analysis. Payne and Payne (2004) state that the value of documents is that they are naturally occurring objects with a concrete or semi-permanent existence which can be used indirectly to describe the social world of the people who created them. The documents analysed were more specifically related to those constructed at the site that were used to interpret the Australian Curriculum and guide its implementation. The following table (Table 3-4) identifies the documents used for the analysis:

Table 3-4: *Documents used in analysis*

Documents
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACARA Curriculum Presentation, January 2011 (PowerPoint) 2. Australian Curriculum Roll Out Plan of Attack!!! 3. Letter to Teachers from Deputy Head of Junior Years and Curriculum Co-ordinator 4. Teaching and Learning Committee Minutes 29th August, 2011 5. Teaching and Learning Committee Minutes 20th February, 2012 6. Curricquest 7. Australian Curriculum Implementation Plan, Semester 1, 2011 8. ISQ Memo – Update on the Australian Curriculum – March 2011 (2011/051) 9. Professional Learning Activity – Compare New Australian Curriculum Documents (Maths – Junior Years & Science – Junior Years)

In this interpretivist design, the documents were used to read beyond the text, to shed light on the cultural, social, political and economic forces at play at the research site. Further discussion relating to the documents will follow in Section 3.5. However, an excerpt of the conclusions drawn from an examination of a range of school produced documents and external documents is included below (Table 3-5) where the documents were analysed in light of the three research sub-questions modified for their analysis:

Table 3-5: *Sample Summary of Findings from Documents*

Research sub-questions relating to the documents	Summary of perspectives conveyed in the documents
How is the reform conceptualised in the documents?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The school Executive was following externally mandated requirements 2. Reform needed to be embedded in existing school practices and culture 3. Process of auditing current practices with the reform was preferred way of operating & recommended to schools by external authorities 4. Teachers would be given the authority to determine their level and means of engagement rather than school mandated 5. Engagement with the reform would need to take place largely in teacher non-contact time

In summary, the primary type of instrument used for data collection was semi-structured interview with the teachers who volunteered to participate in this study and three administrators at the school. To further contextualise the self-efficacy perceptions of the teachers' field notes were constructed during the interviews, and, an analysis of school generated documents and curriculum policy documents was also undertaken.

3.4. Procedure and Timeline

As discussed in Chapter One, the research project was conducted in four stages. The three part research framework – interviews, document analysis and participant observations recorded in field notes – was drawn from the research site. I visited the site on two occasions for two days each time to conduct the interviews. The first visit was in August 2011, when preparations were well underway for implementation in 2012.

As a past employee of the school, I had been part of general discussions which had taken place in readiness for implementing the Australian Curriculum, specifically at that time, Phase One, for at least a year with a more focused and directed approach being adopted since the beginning of 2011. The whole of 2011 had been designated by the school's Executive as the year for preparation and transition by the school leadership team. This influenced the decisions and organisational structure of the year for the school administrators as they calendared professional learning, staff and department meetings. They needed to consider the time required to enable the teachers in the three subject areas to prepare work programs and units of work for implementation of the new curriculum in 2012.

The teachers were gradually introduced to the Australian Curriculum, from whole staff meetings at the beginning of 2011, to more directed department meetings as the year progressed. The Principal led discussions at the beginning of the year to provide the broad scope and impact of implementation in a general sense; however, discussions became more focused and directed towards Phase One as teachers in these areas worked more closely with the new curriculum documents, as guided and directed by their Heads of Department (in the Secondary School) and the Deputy Head/Curriculum Co-ordinator in the Junior School. Decisions that were made about implementation, even during the time I was employed at the site, had little relevance for me as the researcher since my goal was to examine the engagement practices and experiences of implementation of the teachers. The focus of the research was their interpretations rather than evaluations of how effectively the teachers interpreted decisions made by the Executive.

The decision to conduct the interviews on site was made in line with a number of considerations. First, it was more convenient for the teachers to undertake the interviews at their place of work rather than endeavouring to organise interviews off site. The timing of the interviews could fit within their schedules. Second, I was employed in a regional centre some 200 kilometres away from this site and it would not have been feasible for the interviewees to travel to where I was located. Whilst these two circumstances

appeared a logical solution to the problems of timing and distance, interviewing at their work site also supported the principles of case study where the comfort of the interviewees is acknowledged as central to supporting them in telling their stories (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000).

Conducting the research in the participants' familiar surroundings reduced possible levels of concern and anxiety, encouraging them to relax and consider the nature of the research project from their perspective. A fundamental quality of case study is being able to provide an insider's view of what happens at a research site and the interactions that occur between the participants and the researcher. In this project, how teachers engaged, collaborated and learnt with regard to their implementation requirements of the new reform was understood as both an observer and participant as I interpreted and described the cultural processes taking place at the research site.

Each of the interviews was scheduled for 60 minutes with the provision for an extension should the interviewee wish to take more time. The interviews were generally divided into three, unequal, segments. Initially, for both the first and second interviews with the teachers and the only interview with the administrators, setting the context of the interview took place. Discussions about the nature of the research, combined with the comments regarding developments within the Australian Curriculum externally or at the school, or, for the second interviews, reviewing points discussed in the first round of interviews were designed to settle the interviewee into the interview process. The bulk of the interview time focused on their discussions loosely related to the interview schedule they had received by email, for the first round of interviews, some two weeks before the interview. By the second round of interviews, the interviewees had received transcripts of their first interviews which they had been able to comment on further and had also received a set of questions, via email, two weeks prior for them to consider, in much the same way as the first round of questions was sent.

3.5. Data Analysis

This amalgam of techniques enabled the development of a data set that conveyed narratives of the experiences of each participant, infused with contextual pointers gained from the participant observation and document analysis techniques specifically. To analyse this data, an approach that prefaced the elicitation of the participants' narratives was taken. Reissman (2008) identifies four approaches in analysing informant narratives — thematic, structural, dialogic/performance analysis and visual. Thematic analysis was the method chosen to interpret the participants' narratives so that thematic meanings and understandings of the narrative are prioritised over language and form (Reissman, 2008). It was the common contexts of the storied experiences of the interviewees which were particularly relevant to understanding their experiences with regard to working in this space, between curriculum policy and curriculum practice. Whilst data analysis in this study consisted of examining, categorizing, tabulating, and recombining the evidence to address the initial propositions of the study (Yin, 1994), the reconstruction of the interviews aimed at giving voices to the participants rather than decoding their interview texts, since, as Bowman (2006) contends, this method enables voiced narratives of those

who are often silenced or marginalized in other kinds of research. Reconstructing the interviews around themes that emerged from the narratives enabled participant voices to be most clearly established. This method was also important in making transferability decisions and corroborating findings in relation to the outcomes of the research. As Ellis (2004) notes, “[t]hematic analyses treat the stories as data and use analysis to arrive at themes that illuminate the content and hold within or across stories” (p. 196). Creswell (2005) further states:

...researchers might detail themes that arise from the story to provide a more detailed discussion of the meaning of the story... Thus, the qualitative data analysis may be a description of the story and themes that emerge from it. (p. 56)

An important aspect of undertaking this kind of analysis, was to present the data in a way that acknowledged each interviewee’s voice; hence the emphasis, in *Chapter Five, Teachers’ Narratives*, on retelling significant aspects of the interviewees’ narratives verbatim.

3.5.1. Analysing the Interviews and Field Notes

A step by step approach described by Braun & Clarke (2006) as to how to undertake thematic analysis was used to guide the analysis of the data. The first stage involved repeated reading of the interviews after transcription was undertaken by a professional recommended by the Faculty of Education, QUT. Once the transcripts were returned, I compared the written transcripts with the audio taped interviews to ensure accuracy of the transcription process. In some cases where the transcriber had not been able to identify all of the language, specifically that associated with various acronyms, and discipline or site-specific jargon and vernacular, these terms were added to the transcripts.

These verbatim transcripts provided a central element of thematic analysis in that they recounted information that was “true” to its original nature (Edwards, 1993 in Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 88). In re-reading the transcriptions, alongside the field notes and written observations made on site during the interviews, the field notes and observations added a deeper contextual layer to the recorded stories of the participants. The transcripts acknowledged some non-language features such as noting laughter. However, the field notes provided a closer insight into the tone and demeanour of the interviewee during the interviews and were used to augment interpretations of the transcribed data. Following each of the individual interviews, on both occasions, the field notes were summarised identifying key points made by the interviewees and noting their demeanour and mood at the time of the interviews. At the end of each day of interviews, as I reflected on the pattern and progression of the interviews, I made notes on the most significant elements emphasised by each teacher as we explored their response to this reform. These key points shaped the analysis of the narratives and also formed part of the summary of the first round of interviews which was used at the beginning of each of the second round of interviews. An example of the field notes made during the interview (Figure 3-1) and the summary notes made after the interview (Figure 3-2) are included below:

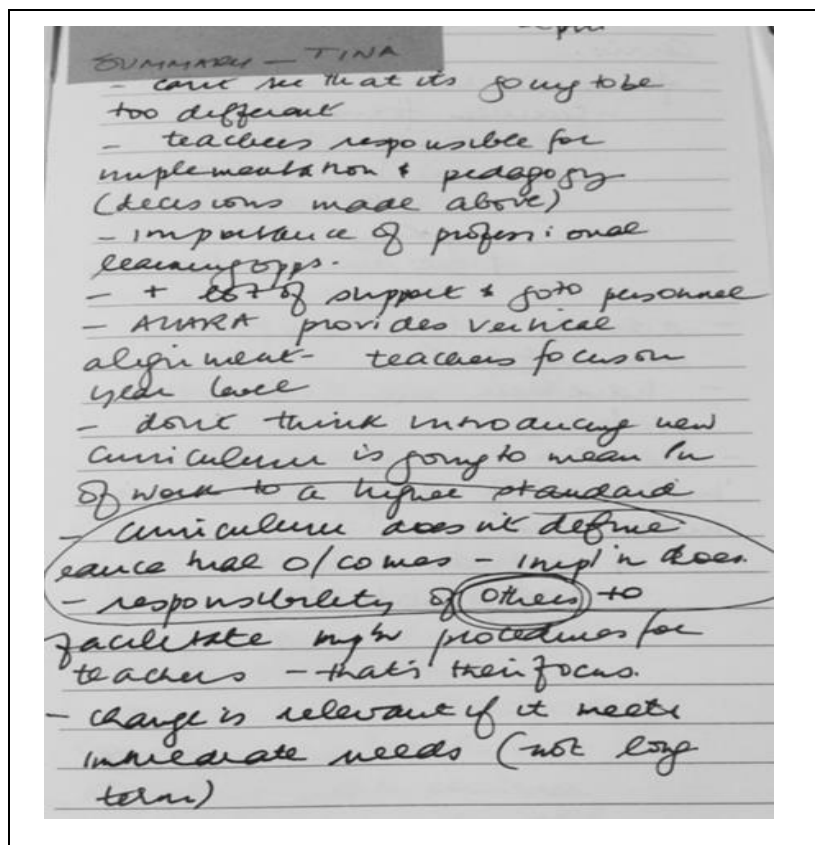


Figure 3-1: An excerpt from Tina's field note summary made the evening after her interview.

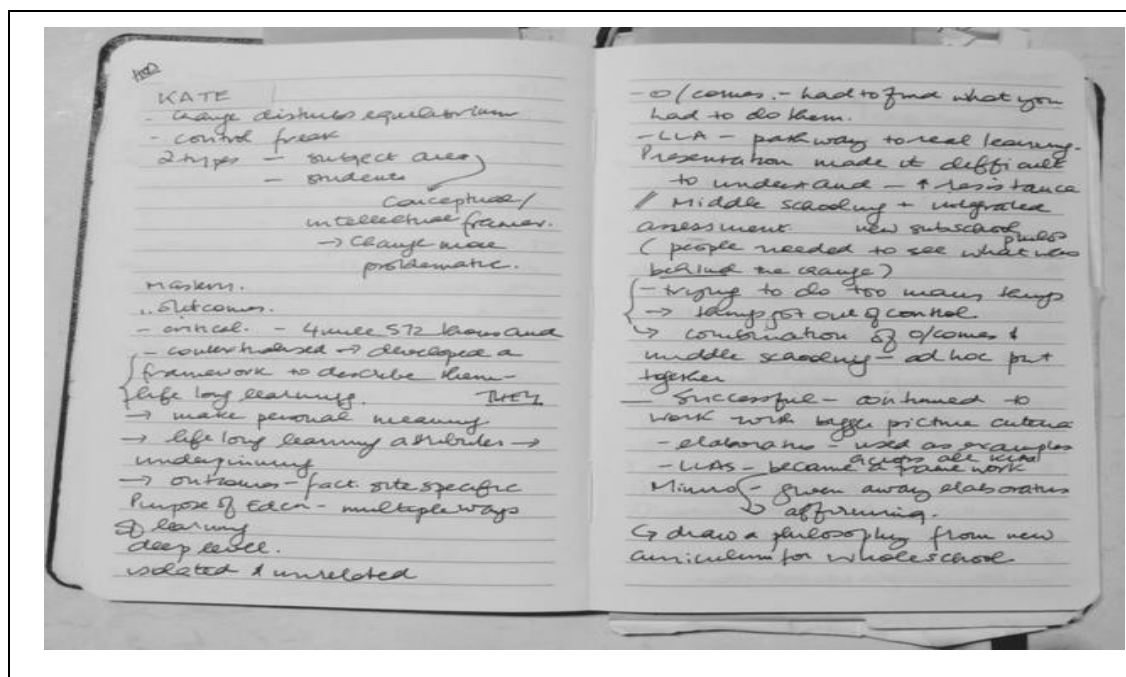


Figure 3-2: Kate's field notes made during her interview but later notated using a highlighter

The next phase of analysis involved generating codes from the data. Whilst the interviews were shaped by Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy, (as discussed in Section 3.3) it was intended that they would be the triggers for the participants to talk broadly about their specific situation at this point in time, i.e. preparing to implement the Australian Curriculum in its first phase. Bandura's four influences on self-efficacy were also used as a data management tool when beginning to code the data. This method of organising the data was not strictly a template, as outlined by Crabtree and Miller (1999), but the four influences on self-efficacy theory were used as a means of organising the interview questions for subsequent interpretation. Since the intention of the interviews was to enable participants to voice their own stories, coding was developed to reflect data that went beyond the parameters of self-efficacy theory and offered by the interviewees as part of their own stories. Whilst it might be considered that using the theoretical elements of Bandura meant that the data was 'theory-driven', this was not the intention and methods of triangulating the interviews with document analysis, field notes and my role as a participant observer all acted to gather data specific to the research context rather than the theory alone. Data was examined in relation to the theory but was also drawn from the teacher narratives emergent from their individual interviews.

Software was not used to code the data, with all data coded manually. I noted information of interest, using post-it notes, notes in margins, making photocopies of interesting sections to establish a conceptual 'picture' of the data. The image that follows (Figure 3-3) shows the first step of note-taking after an initial reading of the interview transcripts, where my own written notations and highlighting formed the first stage of analysis.

Table 3-6: *Deriving the codes from using the interview transcripts*

Illustrative excerpts from the interviews	Summary/Notes	Code
<p>I probably prefer to be told, to be more prescribed as to where to go (because) some things are so open you want to make sure you are delivering it at the right level and your expectations are correct (J, 1, vi)</p> <p>I did really hope that it was going to simplify and...just give me less to do and...give a bit more focus on the essentials rather than race to tick all the boxes like we've covered everything. I really think that was my biggest hope with ACARA and I'm not sure whether that's going to happen. (D, 1, ix)</p> <p>I know that models work for me so if there's one already done that I can see that it's been changed to incorporate what needs it needs to incorporate, then I'll be okay with it because I'm not scared of that process. If it's just "here's the book you need to do" then I wouldn't know where to start. (Sh,1,iv) If there's going to be a new fad in a few years' time and you have to do it all again...that's annoying. (Sh,1,v)</p> <p>...taking something that you have to do and making it work within the area that you are in...a mandated thing...it's like an umbrella basically and you are the drips coming off it, they roll down it and come off it...(J2,1,viii) (discretionary change is like a) fountain...where you've got it here and it just flows out...it's coming out, you are the fountain...Whereas the ACARA to me is the umbrella and the drips are coming but they're basically rolling and coming down aren't they? (J,1,ix)</p>	<p>expectations correct (J. 1, vi)</p> <p>rather than race to tick all the boxes (J,1, ix)</p> <p>a new fad in a few years' time (Sh,1,v)</p> <p>umbrella and fountain metaphor (J,1,ix & J2. 1, viii))</p>	<p>Personal attitudes to change</p>

More than twenty data codes were developed as a consequence of this process with descriptions of the codes becoming more explicit. However, each code needed to be further defined for consistency and clarity of analysis. An example of the detailed code descriptions is provided in Table 3-7.

Table 3-7: Elaborations of codes

Codes	Descriptions
Timeline for reform – time between engagement & implementation	Timeline for reform relates to the amount of time allocated by the school (sometimes in response to external timelines) between teachers' initial engagement and implementation. Teachers consider longer timelines are considered more supportive of teachers' work than shorter timelines
Nature of change – mandated/discretionary/personal level of commitment to change	Educational reform can be discretionary (i.e not mandated), school based (to individual school) to state wide reform to national, mandated reform. National, mandated reform represents the higher end of regulatory practices within the field of education policy
Personal attitudes to change	Attitudes of the participants towards change in general terms as well as within their professional areas
Alignment between curriculum innovation & individual's current practice	The extent to which the teachers feel that the reform will impact on their current practice – relates to their personal teaching philosophies
Leadership	Style of leadership preferred of the leadership team – a flat model of leadership, shared/distributive leadership, transformative leadership, hierarchical leadership
Culture of change in the workplace	The way change, of any kind, was viewed generally in the workplace – at an emotional level - with hesitation? Scepticism? And at a practical level – provisions made structurally to support change – within the timetable? With qualified personnel?

The coded data was then managed in two ways. First, data was grouped into categories relating to the four influences on self-efficacy. At this stage, it was not essential to have reached any kind of conclusion as to whether the existence of the information around the code supported Bandura's conceptualisation of self-efficacy; more, it was that the informant narratives contained text that had some relationship to the theory. An example of how this occurred is provided in Figure 3-5.

Vicarious Experiences	Ways of working	<p>skip C and go to D and then go to F and that's okay. But we know that ultimately we all have to end at G and that's what is important. But how I drive my vehicle to get there and the route I take might be particular to me and that's okay. Because in my vehicle I've got someone that's really super at putting a seatbelt on this way and playing with the fluffy dice that way and I've got to consider that. C p3</p> <p>You know, so I guess what I'm saying Donna is we try to give people fair opportunity so everyone feels that they've had a chance, but if they don't want to take that, that's perfectly fine. We're not going to hold them to account. And I think again, it's a polarised notion of some will really want to own it, others will want to own what they do in the classroom more than the process and the change itself. C p8</p> <p>That we've tried to prepare people enough and we have left enough rope go so that they are comfortably trying to engage with it for their own growth and development and understanding. C p10</p> <p>Yeah and we've done the audit down in the Junior school and fortunately, which I'm very grateful for is that when Donna and I and Donna and Donna got together and checked the booklets that...the prac booklets that I'd written for teachers against the ACARA for the Junior school we pretty well could use them for all booklets p16</p> <p>Fortunately we've got very dynamic people in our Science Department and our new teacher Donna has jumped on board and has already made changes to the Year 7 course based on ACARA and in consultation with Wendy. I guess Wendy is the key, Donna really is the key driver here because she was charged with that responsibility. This is for the younger classes of course. Donna has worked in the Physics units at Year 9 and 10 and made changes there. So basically people.</p>	Making decisions about mediating and contextualising mandated curriculum reform
Timeline for reform – time between engagement & implementation		<p>Look, for me to implement ACARA, I've met with staff, English staff and I said right we've got this six months, this semester one, semester two, and we need to be prepared for semester one 2012. So we have one semester to get ready. Judy H p4</p> <p>But once we can work, and I've given them a time frame, they have to by the end of October have two units written. Now I will have to constantly tell them this and if I don't supply PD time, then they will say they can't do it, I know that. So I'm looking at verification date for PD time to give them and I'm hoping for one other afternoon. So they can have two blocks of time to prepare one unit per semester. Donna p5</p> <p>I set the timeline purely for the end of October because November becomes intense with year twelve but also I need to get my work programs, my in school work programs typed and done before the end of the year. So it just gives me November to get work to the teacher aides to be, and for me to proofread. So</p>	Influences on their capacity to exercise individual and collective agency

Figure 3-5: Coding the interview transcripts to self-efficacy beliefs

The following table (Table 3-8) provides an excerpt of the interview codes using the four influences on self-efficacy as the organising construct. The complete list can be viewed in Appendix E.

Table 3-8: *Codes related to self-efficacy perceptions*

Influences on Self Efficacy	Codes
	Teacher's perceptions relating to:
Mastery Experiences	Previous reforms
	Stage of career
	Relationship between university and/or professional training and practice
	Level of discipline (i.e. Subject) knowledge & expertise
	Personal attitudes to change
Vicarious Experiences	Support for change from the parent body
	Ways of working
	Nature of change – mandated/discretionary
	Timeline for reform – time between engagement & implementation
	Leadership
	Way students will engage with change
	Role of the media

The coded data was then examined and grouped into possible themes. The process of building the themes from the coded data is shown in Figure 3-6.

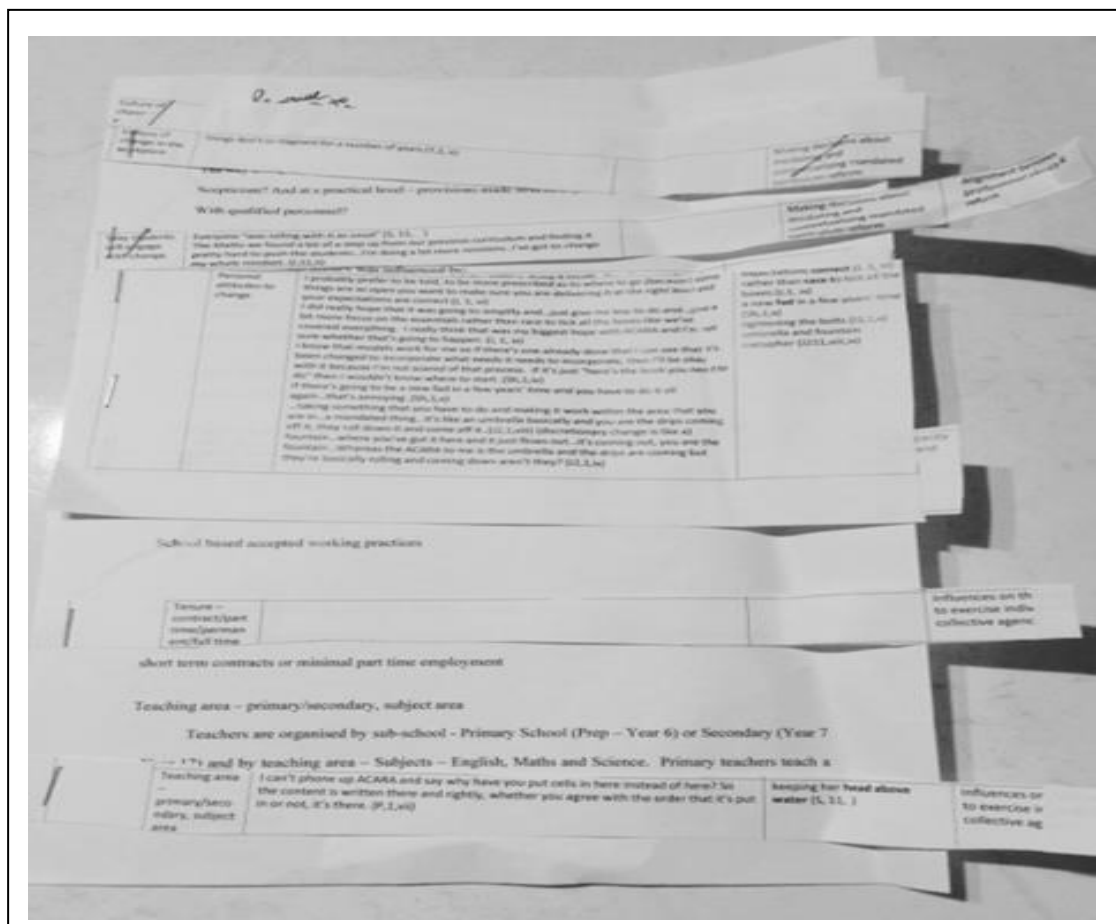


Figure 3-6: Organising the themes by cutting and pasting the codes and interview text

The development of such themes was based on the relationships that emerged from within the codes. Whilst Braun & Clarke (2006) note that there are no hard and fast 'rules' for determining what a theme is, "it captures something important about the data in relation to the research question" (p. 82). The process of deriving the themes was based on prevalence (the incidence of an idea or comment or perception as it appeared in the transcripts, reflected in how often data were coded with the same or similar code). The themes were then used to re-examine the entire data set.

The next step involved reviewing the themes and codes. At this stage, it was important to review the grouped coded data extracts to determine whether they constituted a theme or would be collapsed into other themes, or might not be themes at all since there was insufficient data to support them (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A process of axial coding was undertaken in the re-examination of the data using the codes and themes that had been derived. This process was applied to the whole data set to ensure that the themes worked with the data and provided an opportunity to include any

additional data that may have been overlooked. The relationships between the codes and themes are described in Table 3-9:

Table 3-9: *Codes & Themes*

Codes	Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiences with previous reforms • Past workplace practices 	Lived Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Styles of leadership • Relationships with peers • Role of the principal and the leadership • Role of educational authorities external to the school • Decisions & directions by school aligned professional organisations • Availability of resources, support texts and specialist personnel 	Critical ‘Others’
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture of change in the workplace • On site work practices • Embeddedness of reform within the school’s strategic planning • Reform timeline from engagement to implementation • Engagement interactions with the new curriculum documents 	Place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferred ways of working • Stage of career • Personal attitudes to change • Tenure of employment • Nature of reform • Level of discipline (i.e. subject) knowledge and teaching area expertise • Perceptions of alignment between curriculum innovation and current teaching practices • Role of professional learning 	Self

At this point, all interview data had been coded and thematically organised. The themes were teased out to provide a broader representative view of the interviewees’ stories. As Braun and Clarke (2006) offer, “it is important not to try and get a theme to do too much, or to be too diverse and complex” (p. 92). This stage of re-contextualisation focused more closely upon the underlying meaning of each theme. By the end of this phase, the themes could be clearly described in a couple of sentences and decisions as to what they referred to could be clearly understood.

Upon completing the data coding and deriving the themes from the interviews, writing up of the analysis needed to provide a “concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive and interesting account of the story tell – within and across themes” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 93). Examples of text that best described the theme were preferred in the final write up to voice the teachers’ narrative by going “beyond” description of the data (p. 93).

3.5.2. Analysing the Documents

The analysis of the documents began in a similar way to the interview data analysis with reading and re-reading the range of documentation that had been collected from the site.

The analytical approach to examining the document data initially was deductive using the codes and themes derived from analysing the interviews and applying these to the reading of the documents. However, not all codes derived from the interviews were apparent in the document analysis since the purposes of both sources of data had similarities (both focusing on Phase One Australian Curriculum implementation) but the contexts were quite different. An extract of the data codes as applied to the documents is provided in Table 3-10 with the full detail available in Appendix F.

Data collection and analysis was reflexive, iterative and occurred constantly when examining the transcripts. Stages of the process were returned to in order to ensure that the emergent themes were grounded in the data. Rigor in this method of analysis, as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), comes from careful transcription; avoiding an ‘anecdotal’ approach; checking themes; coherence and consistency of the themes; analysis of themes rather than just description; congruence between extracts and analytic claims and balance between analytic narrative and extracts and the researcher is positioned as active in the research process (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In summary, using a qualitative design, data were examined in a holistic fashion, through inductive analysis with critical themes emerging from the data (Patton, 1990). Through the data reduction process, the aim was to clarify those variables that most significantly impacted on the way this small group of teachers perceived their own levels of self-efficacy as they engaged with curriculum reform and how that might be enacted in their professional practice.

Table 3-10: *Document Codes*

Codes	Evidence in the documents
Previous reforms	Suggested methods of initial engagement & negotiation were to ‘audit’ current documents to compare with new documentation
Level of discipline (i.e. Subject) knowledge & expertise	Related to the way implementation was organised
Ways of working	Time provisions available in documents which enabled teachers to engage with the documents Ways staff were organised to engage with the new reform Evidence of responding to the ways staff preferred to work
Nature of change – mandated/discretionary	Obligations evident in the document that drove implementation timelines
Timeline for reform – time between engagement & implementation	Timelines that were whole school, department & teacher developed
Leadership	Evidence of the leadership role of the School Executive, Heads of Department Interpretations of these roles within the documents
Perceived level of value placed on the reform within the workplace	Textual features of the documents that signalled ‘value’ of the reform
Operational modes of departments – collaborative/directed	Documentation that guided modes of engagement
Level of support & availability of resources (including personnel)	Provisions of professional learning, time to engage with professional learning, provision of key personnel, sharing of knowledge & practice within the documents
Support for reform from professional organisations	References to professional organisations associated with the teaching of Maths, English and Science e.g. ETAQ (English Teachers Association)
Support/level of commitment from educational authorities	Reference to organisations such as QSA, LEQ and ISQ and the interpretation of these references in determining their perceived level of professional support
Relevance of PD	Incidence of the types of professional development as well as notes in documents that might comment on the importance of the professional development offered
Level of importance within the school’s strategic plan	Examining other strategic matters within the school planning framework to gain an understanding of the importance placed upon ACARA implementation
Alignment between curriculum innovation & individual’s current practice	Evidence of documentation plans and strategies that acknowledged the qualities, personalities and professional status of the teachers responsible for implementation
Quality of working relationship with colleagues	Evidence from the documentation that demonstrated ‘value’ in acknowledging current working practices or ways of strengthening collegial working relationships.

3.6. Ethics and Limitations

Prior to conducting the study, consideration was given to the ethical risks that the research posed to potential participants. Ethical clearance approval was required to interview teachers on the school site. It was considered there was no more than a negligible risk as teachers would be interviewed at their work site, a site familiar to them.

The study qualified for the Level 2 (expedited) ethical review process in accordance with Queensland University of Technology guidelines for human research (Queensland University of Technology University Academic Board, 2008, section 6.2.1: Australian Government, 2007).¹ An application for Level 2 (expedited) ethical review was made to the Human Research Ethics Committee (UHREC) via the Committee Application process and was granted for the period (June, 2014). Human Ethics Approval Number (1100000810) was granted for the project entitled “Working the space: An examination of the way teachers’ engagement with their professional environment influences the construction of their self-efficacy beliefs in the context of implementing large scale mandated curriculum change” although this title has been since modified with approval. Progress reports on the study were submitted to the Committee via emails annually in September 2011, 2012 and 2013. As part of the ethical clearance approval documentation, the following documentation was prepared to be sent to schools and prospective participants: (1) a recruitment flyer advising the school of the research study; (2) a letter/email to follow up the study; and (3) a letter of consent for potential participants in the study. All data collection for the study occurred between August 2011 and May 2012. The nature of the research was considered low risk as I did not enter classrooms, observe classes or interview students.

The most problematic ethical issue which remained throughout all phases of this research project was the influence of the long standing relationship I had with most of the participants and my pre-existing knowledge both of the workings of the site and the roles and actions of the school’s leadership team who were responsible for implementing any kind of change or reform. This was more problematic at the beginning when calling for volunteers since I was still employed at the research site where a major part of my role was assuming responsibility for the management of the implementation of the Australian Curriculum, the reform context in which the study was grounded. Upon leaving the school prior to the interviews, this ethical issue was diminished. Returning later, not as a member of staff but as a researcher to conduct the interviews and subsequent research, no longer did I hold a formal position of authority within the school but I did have a clear understanding of the nature of the working space the interviewees occupied.

¹ The research project began at QUT but was later transferred to USQ with commensurate transfer of approvals

It is difficult to determine the extent to which my relationship with the school and the participants had on the integrity of the interviews. Such relationships are examined by Connelly and Clandinin (1990) who argue that the nature of collaborative research implies a relationship between the researcher and the respondent and such a relationship can be viewed as something beyond acquaintanceship but empowering. Lincoln and Guba (1985) contend that techniques used to enhance credibility in qualitative research involve techniques such as prolonged engagement and persistent observation. Therefore, maintaining researcher objectivity is difficult to achieve in narrative analysis. Luttrell (2000) suggests that research reflexivity, rather than objectivity, can address what might be perceived as a weakness of this analytical method, where the researcher describes their own background in the context of how this may have affected their relationship and exchanges with the participants (p. 500). It was important, therefore, to describe my own role as a teacher researcher, as presented in Section 1.4.

The setting (the school), the participants (the teachers), the events (the implementation of Phase One of the Australian Curriculum) and the process (the way the teachers engaged the curriculum) were examined (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The use of semi-structured interviews at six month intervals allowed for progressive subjectivity checks and member checking. The opportunity for the participants to read interview transcripts to comment on their accuracy and provide further explanations where necessary was important in adding to the validity of the study.

These concerns also relate to the role of the researcher in the way the data is described. The role of the researcher in qualitative studies involves subjective decisions being made about the way the data is used. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) liken the researcher to a *bricoleur* (p. 4) who understands that inquiry is affected by histories, disposition and circumstance. However, unreliability of narrative studies is a perceived weakness of thematic analysis since a wide variety of interpretations are made of the themes and once the themes are derived they are applied to a large amount of text (Guest, 2012). In this study, for example, I made judgements about how the data was managed, coded and themed, a process which involved selecting, interpreting, analysing and describing the experience of the participants (Merriam, 1998). The way I addressed this concern was to continually refer to the research questions and sub-questions, using the research sub-questions as part of the tables when deriving codes and themes; and by viewing the process of data analysis as reflexive and iterative, reviewing the codes and themes with all of the data on several occasions during analysis.

My pre-existing relationship with the interviewees could also be seen as possibly contributing to reduced reliability since sampling errors in qualitative studies occur when respondents do not tell the truth in an endeavour to impress the interviewer or because they may feel they are not able to tell the truth if it might be perceived as a source of conflict. As well as a process of recursive data checks, other steps taken to address these concerns were that the verbatim interview transcripts were returned to participants for them to review; the interviews were structured to enable participants to contribute comments they felt were important outside the question schedule; a summary reviewing

the participants' positions regarding how they felt they would engage with reform (derived from the first round of interviews) was presented to them six months later at the second round of interviews to check their intentions and meaning; and, large sections of the participants' responses were recorded verbatim at the interpretation stage of the analysis to ensure that it was their voice that resonated with the research rather than relying on the researcher's interpretations of their narratives. This style of recounting the experiences of the participants directly was also designed to add to the study's confirmability since recording their practices in this way thickly contextualised their experiences (Huberman & Miles, 2002). These measures were part of the research design to strengthen the study's reliability, measured by the extent to which the researcher's interpretation of the phenomenon under investigation is grounded in the understandings and feelings of the research participants (Denzin, 2002).

Confidentiality and anonymity were part of the ethical requirements of the research. However, the scholarly requirements of the inquiry required disclosure of the participants' responses that might have compromised this since the teachers were speaking about personnel and a school culture of which I had quite specific knowledge. Clandinin (2000) acknowledges this conundrum but puts forward the view that such ethical concerns are not so apparent since she argues participants will only tell the interviewer what they want to. To preserve the relationship upon which the interviews were conducted, I assigned all participants pseudonyms and outlined the procedures to the teachers of the arrangements around protecting their disclosures and confidentiality. I also spent some time at the beginning of each interview outlining the context of the research; and, the method and use of the audio taping and field notes I would make during the interviews. At the end of each interview, the participants were provided an opportunity to add any comments they wished.

Member checking was also a key element in ensuring research credibility. Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe this procedure as the most important method of achieving credibility. Verbatim transcripts of the participants' interviews were sent, via email, to each of them on the occasion of both of the interviews where they were provided with the opportunity to change or elaborate upon their responses as recorded in the interviews. Data reliability also refers to the extent to which the researcher's interpretation of the phenomenon being investigated is grounded in the understandings and feelings of the participants (Denzin, 2002). To strengthen reliability, the interview schedules and document analysis needed to align with the research question and sub-questions, and the structure of the interviews enabled the participants to comment, amend and review their responses during the interviews as well as after the interviews were conducted.

Ways in which I endeavoured to further enhance the credibility of the research was by triangulating the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) describing different "modes" of triangulation, and emphasising the use of "multiple and different sources" (p. 305). It was for this reason that the interview data obtained from the Heads of Department and Junior Years Deputy Head/Curriculum Co-ordinator was included in the research analysis and

write up, and also the document analysis of on-site handouts, department meetings and school directives regarding the implementation of Phase One Australian Curriculum, was also included. In Chapter Four however, it became apparent in analysing the teachers' narratives that it was important to establish the context. The secondary data sources presented representations of the reform, the way the school interpreted it at its site and a 'behind the scenes' context of recent school history which provided rich contextualisation of the teachers' responses. These contextual factors were deemed to be critical to the study since, in many circumstances, the six teachers' responses were not consistent with those that the literature [discussed in Chapter Two] indicated would be the case in circumstances of implementing large-scale, mandated reforms in schools. Each source, it was anticipated, would provide a different view with which to 'read' the narratives.

When verifying the validity of the interviews, self-efficacy also needed to be examined in light of its theoretical construct. This meant re-examining Bandura's notion of efficacy as it informed the development of the interview questions which in turn, informed the research's construct validity. The depth of an individual's self-efficacy beliefs, for example, as weak or strong, and the area in which these beliefs were held, also had an impact on the generalisability of the research. Some teachers, for instance, might be amenable to some elements of reform whilst opposed to others. Whilst they perceive that their overall self-efficacy beliefs may be quite strong, stating this in a general rather than specific context could be interpreted differently in different environments and therefore, inappropriately attached to other areas of self-efficacy research. In examining the idea of gradations of self-efficacy and its impact on this study's generalisability, Bandura (2012) notes:

Human life involves diverse spheres of activities. One cannot be all things. Hence people differ in the areas in which they cultivate their self-efficacy and the levels to which they develop it even within their chosen pursuits. (p.30)

Stake (2003) argues that the selection of the case for study should be guided by the typicality of the case and that the opportunity to learn is greater than its tie to representativeness. As Lofland and Lofland (1984) indicate, access to sites is more likely if researchers make use of their contacts who can act to help remove barriers to entrance. Having had a long standing working relationship with members of the school and the school's executive assisted my access to the site, although, once the interviews began, distance provided some difficulties. As already mentioned, I had taken up full time employment at a school more than two hundred kilometres away from the research site so the interviews were organised for outside of school hours for myself and the participants. Interview times were booked well in advance and were negotiated via email between myself and the participants with administrative personnel at the school site booking the school's boardroom and a meeting room for the interviews to be held. The time frame of six months was chosen since it fitted relatively closely to the timeline the participants had in their teaching areas (subject departments and sub-schools) to become familiar with the new documents and to have developed them into classroom practice.

The research by its very nature was limited in its generalisability since its focus was on the responses to teachers working at this site. The sample size, as well as other site specifics such as the school's geographic location, its religious affiliation, its demographic context and governance structure all identified this as a particularistic inquiry. As well, in general terms, the school was well resourced with newly built and well-maintained facilities; had a generally engaged parent body since it was a relatively high fee-paying independent school of choice; a stable and well regarded leadership team; clearly defined working roles; and well established organisational and operational structures; with the majority of staff relatively long serving (beyond five years at the school). Such high levels of stability and organisation may not be an experience shared across all schools in Australia.

However, whilst these factors act as limitations to the study, the context in which teachers' self-efficacy perceptions was being researched, at the time of the implementation of the Australian Curriculum, could broaden this study's generalisability since this particular reform was nationally mandated and, therefore, part of a national experience shared by thousands of Australian teachers. This enhances the study's transferability even though only six cases were studied as part of this project. All primary teachers and a majority of teachers in the secondary sector in Australia were engaging with the same documents of the Australian Curriculum, at the same time as the participants in this study. The narratives of these teachers' experiences become more significant if they are considered a snapshot of the broader experiences of teachers across Australia at this important point in policy implementation. As such, this study's contribution to self-efficacy theory is also part of these considerations since, according to Merriam (1998), theory is often built from qualitative research based on a small number of cases.

3.7. Chapter Summary

This chapter presented this study's methodological framework within a case study design. The research design undertook a qualitative, interpretivist approach and was conceptualised within the theoretical frameworks of Pierre Bourdieu and Albert Bandura, with a particular emphasis on Bandura's theorising of self-efficacy. It established that the research was organised as an instrumental case study using a thematic analysis method, to examine the ways this group of six volunteer teachers, across primary and secondary sectors, responded to the Phase One implementation requirements of the legislatively mandated, national Australian Curriculum. The examination of the data was intended to develop research findings in response to the original research question: How do teachers engage with, mediate and contextualise the implementation requirements of large scale, mandated curriculum reform? The analysis of the documents, field notes and participant observations are collated in the following chapter to provide the context in which the decisions about implementation were made and from which, the teachers' voices emerged.

Chapter 4 Setting the Context

What emerges from this research is an insight into the critical influence contextual factors at the research site played in shaping and directing the decisions the participants made about implementing Phase One of the Australian Curriculum. These factors influenced the (re)iterative and reflexive processes each participant undertook as they negotiated and mediated the policy requirements preparing for its implementation. This chapter serves to detail these ‘contextual factors’ as I came to call them as they were drawn from the secondary data techniques used in this study. These techniques included the review of relevant documents, interviews with administrators, my own observations, field notes and journal notes.

As discussed in Chapter Three, six teachers were interviewed and were the focus of this study. The primary research question asked: How do teachers engage with, mediate and contextualise the implementation requirements of large scale, mandated curriculum reform into their teaching practice? The research questions further developed this central question by examining the engagement factors which influenced the way the teachers conceptualised the reform, the decisions they made via processes of mediation and negotiation with the reform, and finally, how such decisions informed their individual agency as they came to implement Phase One of the Australian Curriculum at their work site.

The recounts from the secondary data focused largely on the document analysis and the administrators’ interviews, organised using the research questions to frame the discussion. The data collected, once coded, was examined in light of these questions, from which the themes (as highlighted in Chapter 3 and discussed in further detail in Chapter 5) were derived. The first section of this chapter (Section 4.1) serves to further situate this particular time at the school within the broader demographic, cultural and historical setting. The following sections (Sections 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4) organise the secondary data sources around each of the three research questions. The focus of this chapter is to elucidate the specific contexts in which the groups of participants- teachers and administrators- worked as they set about shaping and defining the parameters of the working spaces which sit between curriculum policy and its practice. A summary of the findings drawn from this data (Section 4.5) concludes this chapter.

4.1. The Story of the Research Site

Whilst this school was largely similar to other P – 12 schools in the area, there were three specific circumstances in its recent history, occurring while I worked there, that influenced the way teachers worked at this site when this study began. These were all related to problems the school faced in managing growth as a consequence of rapid regional development. The impacts that these changes had on the school’s operations and the staff at the school were the initial prompts for undertaking this study as I became interested in how organisations manage change in such high change environments.

As discussed in Chapter One, whilst not being a very old school, it was one of the oldest in the region and had established a well-regarded reputation within the community. The provision of facilities increased in line with growth in enrolments since a risk averse strategy influenced all aspects of the school's culture, including its financial tolerance around levels of institutional debt. However, the landscape changed significantly during the 1990s, peaking in the early 2000s.

As part of a much broader economic rationalist view, left over from the Thatcher era in the United Kingdom and the Howard government in Australia, the Victorian government, under the premiership of Jeff Kennett, undertook sweeping changes to public institutions by beginning a wide scale process of rationalising and privatising the public sector. As such, many Victorians lost their jobs and headed north to the sunnier climate of Queensland, in particular to this region with its beautiful beaches and close proximity to large metropolitan centres and international airport. Many families had school age children and arrived with redundancy packages enabling them to establish small businesses to fund their new lifestyles. Around the same time, the Australian government was supportive of migration of South Africans and Zimbabweans as a consequence of the political turmoil in these countries, and expedited immigration to Australia. These immigrants also needed to meet certain financial thresholds and often their successful immigration was contingent upon establishing new businesses upon their arrival in Australia. Whilst these two circumstances were not solely responsible for the rapid growth in the area around this school, they were catalysts for the broader, rapid expansion that took place, the sharp increase in population and growth in local industry, and the building boom that ensued which impacted on the economic growth and profitability of many in the local area. The initial growth which occurred in the primary and secondary sectors, led quickly to a growth in the service and tertiary sector. Within a period of ten to fifteen years this area changed from being a regional, local government centre largely supporting a hinterland primary industry as well as being a haven for retirees, to a much more sophisticated complex of towns, once separated along the coastal fringe, but now joined by new housing developments that had spread out to accommodate the new settlers.

The school's student population grew quickly by a further three hundred or so over this time representing a 33% increase in enrolments. New leadership structures were put in place to manage the increase in student numbers. The school separated into three distinct sub-schools – Junior, Middle and Senior Years. New staff were employed and the curriculum expanded. Facilities were built and upgraded, the school took on bigger projects. All of the participants, other than David, were at the school during this time either as students (Shelley and Emily) or as teachers or teacher aides (in Jane's case). Two of the three administrators – Kate and Ann – were also working at the school at this time. This rapid expansion brought with it three major problems that the school was only just recovering from in 2009 when my research interest in this project began.

4.1.1. Competition in the Education Marketplace

The rapid growth in the region meant a growing demand for education facilities. Existing schools expanded, and there was growth in independent and state schools in the region. Where this school was one of only three or four independent schools in the region in the early 1990s, ten years later there were four more large state secondary schools and five more independent schools within an easy commute of this one. Whilst mathematically it might be assumed that the increase in population might have been absorbed by the increase in schools and also have little impact on the school at this research site, this was not the case.

Unlike other major regional and metropolitan centres, the “newness” of this burgeoning community meant many new families arrived with little historical or familial ties to the region. In choosing a non-state school for their children, where school fees were required to be paid as a condition of enrolment, many new families made schooling decisions based on word of mouth testimonials, often from other newly arrived families. In essence, this meant that decisions about their children’s schooling were heavily influenced by the parent’s friendships or business networks.

The school was relatively conservative in its response to these new dynamics within the region. After the rapid increase in school numbers peaking in the early 2000s, these gains, and more, had been lost by 2006 and 2007. With wider educational choices, a much more competitive education sector, combined with the Global Financial Crisis, the enrolment gains were very quickly superseded resulting in an oversupply of classrooms, underutilised resources, a lack of funding for maintenance of facilities, and staff redundancies both voluntary and involuntary. Falling student enrolments became a self-fulfilling prophecy that was hard to stop. As student numbers fell, community perceptions sharply focused on falling student numbers and the reasons why. These perceptions, shared and discussed by a growing number of concerned parents, fuelled further losses, as they withdrew their children from the school. Interestingly, the teaching staff remained largely unchanged and, whilst lauded for their expertise in growth times, now felt that it was those same professional practices that were somehow one of the major reasons for falling numbers. Forced and voluntary redundancies were undertaken.

4.1.2. Leadership Challenges

The rapid growth in the 1990s gave the school’s leadership team, specifically the Principal, an opportunity to be innovative in charting a new course for the school. New buildings were erected to accommodate current and future growth projections. The relatively conservative path of the previous long term (foundation) Principal was re-directed in the 1990s to encompass a considerable number of new buildings and expanded school infrastructure. As this Principal left and was replaced by a person who had earlier been a teacher at the school now returning as the new head, it was apparent that the period of rapid growth was not sustainable as numbers started to decline, at first slowly and then rapidly.

The leadership team consisted, during this time, of various combinations of the Principal, the Deputy Head of the Secondary School, the Heads of Junior, Middle and Senior Years, the Deputy Head of Junior Years/Curriculum Co-ordinator, the Director of Staff and the Director of Teaching and Learning. Fundamentally, however, the Principal and the Heads of the Sub-schools were the key educational leaders and change managers.

In this study, what emerged was the importance that the teachers placed on the management and leadership role of the Principal in any change. This entrenched view held by the teachers could be tracked back to this period of time. Placed in a professionally invidious position of managing a school through a time of rapidly falling enrolments, the Principal was seen by the teachers as the “face” of redundancies, cut backs and significant revisions downwards of future plans and practices. The perceived lack of consultation and transparency of decision-making was considered by staff as a critical absence of leadership at a very testing time, resulting in considerable teacher disillusionment.

As this reduction in growth reached a critical level, the Principal left the school in complex and strained circumstances, followed some months later by the Head of Senior Years and the following year by the Head of Middle Years. The Head of Senior Years was replaced with a new appointee from outside the school, while an external consultant, whose reputation was based on stabilising schools in problematic times, was brought in as Acting Principal by the School Council for eight months until the end of the school year. The Head of Middle Years stayed on longer (the end of 2007) after the new Principal (the previous Head of Senior Years) was appointed towards the end of 2006.

All of these changes in leadership structure and personnel occurred within the space of four years. The new Principal was tasked with bringing stability back to a school where staff and student numbers had been depleted, and negativity and frustration were running high. A new leadership team was formed, of which I was a part. At the same time, whilst the Global Financial Crisis had hit, the Australian Federal Government’s BER (Building the Education Revolution) initiative provided the school with much needed funds to undertake overdue maintenance and refurbishment, and to begin a building program to ensure a stronger and more sustainable future for the school.² Teachers viewed these changes as a signal to a more positive future.

4.1.3. Managing Rapid Education Reform

During the expansionary days of the 1990s, the school grew to a size that made the separation into three sub-schools viable. As such, the desire to shape the separate identity of each of the sub-schools became a focus. An example of this was the decision

² BER was an economic stimulus package (Building the Education Revolution) initiated by the Federal Government under then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd used by schools to undertake large infrastructure projects.

that was made to have three distinctive school uniforms, different for students within each of the three areas of the school. The major curriculum and pedagogical focus, however, turned to the newly created Middle School. Many of the practices for the Junior Years students and teachers remained largely unchanged, and the same was apparent for the Senior Years where curriculum was influenced by external authorities such as the Queensland Studies Authority.³ However, with the growth in discussions about the specific learning requirements of young adolescents and the emergence of discourses around ‘middle schooling’, the Head of Middle Years, the Year level co-ordinators of Years 7, 8 & 9, the Director of Teaching and Learning and the teachers in these year levels, took on the task of constructing a curriculum and pedagogical framework for Middle Years and Middle Years teachers which met these emergent and perceived needs.

During this period, the Middle Years was re-timetabled (thirty minute lesson blocks that could be singular, to support learning of languages, or tripled, to support the practical requirements of subjects like Home Economics and Manual Arts); the behaviour management program changed from being punitive to one which incorporate the philosophies of Restorative Practice⁴ with a heavy emphasis on reflection and mediation; subjects were integrated (for example, Social Sciences and Music); and students worked on ‘rich tasks’ or ‘culminating tasks’ in line with the New Basics program initiated by Professor Allan Luke and adopted by the Queensland Studies Authority via the newly constructed Queensland Curriculum Corporation.⁵ External education consultants and experts were brought in to the school to identify ways to improve teaching and learning; many of these initiatives emerged as a consequence.

Whilst all of these changes could be linked to reputable and extensive research and discussion, and were drawn from the prevailing pedagogies of the time, the rapidity of the introduction of the reforms and the perceived lack of epistemological clarity around the reforms led to confusion, resistance and angst by many of the staff. In such circumstances of disaffection and angst, quick, knee-jerk decisions were made which often acted to erode the efficacy and the intent of the reforms.

Once again, the teachers looked to those who provided steady and clear leadership, personnel they felt they could professionally trust, and for most, that was their respective Head of Department. This group of department heads became a strong and stable influence in the operations of the school. Largely as a consequence of their

³ Queensland Studies Authority had oversight for curriculum initiatives in Queensland and is a state government authority

⁴ Restorative Practices was a no-blame behaviour management program developed locally and implemented at the school as a way of developing positive behavioural outcomes

⁵ A defunct state government authority that had some influence in implementing Outcomes Based Education (OBE) reforms during the late 1990s and early 2000s

steady leadership, little evidence of this internal disarray was evident externally to the students or the parents.

After this period of instability, I was interested to understand how the teachers and the school would undertake this curriculum reform, the implementation of a national curriculum, a reform they would most likely choose not to undertake given their circumstances, if it was not that its implementation was mandatory. Nevertheless, it was within this somewhat contested and educationally fragile environment that my study was contextualised. Using the research questions as a framework, I gathered a range of secondary data to situate the teachers' responses and engagement with the Australian Curriculum. Analysis of the secondary data consisting primarily of the documents and administrators' interviews, follows.

4.2. Conceptualising the Reform at the Site

The first question sought to explore how the teachers at the site went about undertaking early engagement with the reform. Analysing relevant internal and external documents presented at this time was particularly relevant since they provided the context for the teachers' initial engagement practices. Policy documentation related to the new curriculum had been thoroughly reviewed by the administrators at the site by the time the teacher participants began close engagement with it in practice. Many of the attitudes and opinions formed by the participants, and, therefore, their perceptions of their capacity to undertake the task of implementation effectively, were influenced by the way the administrators had also responded to policy requirements and the implementation strategy they had developed. The theoretical lens which informed the nature of the teachers' early engagement assumed that the fields of curriculum policy and teacher practice were often contested. The documents represented the 'text fields' of policy; the administrators were working across multiple fields: of policy, their own professional practice and the logics of practice required of them as administrators according to the bureaucratic and procedural contexts specific to the site itself. Any contestations within and between these fields were critical factors in influencing the spaces of the teachers' practice. They were, therefore, also strong influences on the teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy in meeting the requirements of the reform. This first question, thus, provided scope to explore the nature of the site as it came to formulate its enactment of this curriculum reform, via the way that administrators responsible for the initial formation of the school's response configured the landscape of the school for this change.

Whilst the participants were just beginning their engagement with the documents in August, 2011, documentation relating to the Australian Curriculum had been developed at the school site for some time. The School Executive team had spent some time in 2010 examining the Australian Curriculum documentation and discussing implications for implementation. I used these secondary data sources, as well as field notes and observations, to establish the context of the participants' engagement practices.

Figure 4-1 and Figure 4-2 show some of the planning and preparation undertaken.

2011 Preparation				
	Action strategies	Accountability	Time line	Comments
Purpose/Philosophy Identify what is most important for your learners and learning and the purpose for change • Key school documents, practices and philosophy	Investigate our Mission (Christian, Values, Pedagogy, People) Set up small project teams to investigate key areas Teaching and Learning Committee Free program Pastoral Care ICT Values program Curriculum Outdoor Ed Rubric/Class Assessment	Principal Deputy Head JS Dean of Teaching and Learning Leaving staff	Term 3 and 4 Staff meetings 2010 Term 2, 3 and 4 Staff meetings 2011	Expansion of values Curriculum Strategic plan 2011 Contribution of small project groups
Priorities List the complete array of school missions and their associated key tasks in 2 or 3 brief sections, goals, accreditation, ICT projects, staff professional learning, school promotion, the Can Do's, Values	• Accreditation - June 2011 • Staff professional development - Maths • Parent info sessions - Audit the Curriculum • School based document updates • Building Capacity • Values • ICT project priorities	Principal Deputy Head JS DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING ICT Reference Group	Accreditation - October 2011 Staff PD Maths - Terms 3, 4 2011 Parent Information Sessions - Term 4 2011 School-based documents 2011 English (Term 1/2) - under revision Maths (Term 1/2) Values (Term 3, 4) 2011 ICT (Term 1, 2, 3, 4) 2011	Begin collating all necessary paperwork for Accreditation (review frameworks, unit plans, book work etc.)
Personnel Identify activities already undertaken for school leaders, staff, parents to become familiar with AC (e.g. parent information evenings, staff curriculum meeting topics, briefings attended, ACMA web activities etc)	• Investigate coping with change • Managing stress and work/home balance • Information mornings/evenings for parents • AC interactions for staff - school documents and Website, NAPLAN • Continual consultation	Principal Deputy Head JS DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING	Terms 2, 3 and 4 2011	Allocated time for teachers to peruse the AC website
Processes Mapping processes to prepare for AC (e.g. budgeting, pupil free day allocations, staff meeting cycles, etc)	• Introduction to English, Maths, and Science - mapping what we already cover in existing units • Bring the gaps in 2011 • Prioritise and emphasise some content • Budgeting necessities • Allocation of Pupil Free Days with an AC focus • Staff meeting Curriculum sessions • Voluntary curriculum meetings	Principal Deputy Head JS DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING	Term 1, 2, 3 and 4	Staff meetings to map AC against current planning Scope and sequence

Figure 4-1:
Planning for transition document – Whole School 2011

2012 Year of Transition to English, Maths, Science, History				
Key transition elements	Action strategies: What needs to be done to transition successfully to AC while maintaining a student focus?	Accountability	Time line	Comments
Representing with and planning incorporating elements of AC	• Teachers use their original plans in English and Maths to plan units, modifying to address requirements of AC • All is mapped to identify areas already being covered in current units • Modify planning to meet AC needs of school and AC • Review this unit of the AC in planning during staff meetings	DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING Deputy Head JS	Term 1	Staff Meeting allocation
Teaching PE Pedagogy focus	• Planning and re-evaluating teachers own educational philosophy • Evaluate the strategies and documents to complemented approaches to teaching and learning • Discussions to school Learning Communities	Staff DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING Deputy Head JS	Term 2	Staff Meeting allocation
Scope and Sequencing	• Continue to create and phase Scope and Sequence documents	DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING Deputy Head JS	Terms 3-4	Meeting time for DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING to attend curriculum meetings Conduct teacher group and ask for feedback on planning templates
Teaching and Learning Organisation	• Review school structure for planning - clearly increase PPSL and resources • Continue to develop the use of ICT in the classroom	DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING Deputy Head JS	Ongoing	
Strategic Planning	• Continue to review and add information to whole school Curriculum Strategic plan to address the changing nature, scope of the AC and requirements and challenges of school culture	ICT Reference group DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING Deputy Head JS	Ongoing	Feedback to T&L Committee
Parent Education	• Develop parent meeting dates to inform parents of curriculum changes, such as AC, update on key topics such as NAPLAN and the AC • Changes to whole school documentation	Deputy Head JS DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING Staff according to expertise DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING Deputy Head JS Project Team	Ongoing	
Assessment	• Mapping and update assessment practices • Continue authentic assessment practices • Public Writing • Post test assessments • Continue discussion around standards	DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING Deputy Head JS Project Team	Summer 2 2011	
Reporting	• Report card format - discuss current model and discuss any changes that need to be made prior to 2012 reporting	DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING Deputy Head JS Heads of sub-school	Term 3, 4	
AC Cross-Curricula Priorities (CCP) and General Capabilities (GC)	• Exploring Cross Curricula Priorities and General Capabilities • Mapping CCP against LGL • Mapping GC against LGL • Audit Learning resources against CCP in particular Reader resources both home and guest • Capacity build teacher knowledge in CCP and GC	PRINCIPAL DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING	Term 3, 4 ongoing	Copies of LGL and relevant documents School based Values program
English	• Continue to map English - audit of current units against AC • Audit current programs to identify missing content in units • Map English units and overview units whole school plan • Library literature audit • Write an exemplar unit of work for English clearly working through the strands while identifying the models	DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING Staff Small Project Teams Teacher Librarian	Term 1, 3, 4	Staff meeting allocation for project teams Teacher Release for Librarian and DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING to meet
Maths	• Continue to map Maths - audit of current units against AC • Identify missing content in units • Review yearly plans for each Year Level • Write an exemplar unit of work for Maths investigation using AC documents	HOD DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING GUS Staff Small Project Teams	Term 1, 2, 3, 4	Staff meeting allocation for project teams Deputy Head JS available to consult Perhaps ISG input through funded project CTJ focus
Science	• Continue to map Science - audit of current units against AC • Create yearly plan for Year Levels in Science • Write an exemplar unit of work for Science using AC • Audit Resources and construct a budgetary plan to purchase necessary items over the next two years	HOD DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING Small Project Team Deputy Head JS	Term 2, 3, 4	Investigate Science Resources current and essential (Project Group) Primary Connections (LRE)
History	• Map History - audit of previous units against AC • Identify missing content in units • Create yearly plan for Year Levels in history	DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING Small Project Team	Term 3, 4	Investigate History Resources Current and essential (check for accuracy and cultural suitability)

Figure 4-2: Planning for implementation document – Whole School 2012

4.2.1. Reviewing the Documents

A range of reform specific documents, largely those developed on site, were analysed since they each described various aspects of the context in which the teachers acted to mediate, negotiate and subsequently implement Phase One of the Australian Curriculum. The intention of examining relevant documentation was to gain a contextual understanding of the space of teachers work, specific to this school, at a time between curriculum policy engagement and teacher practice. The overall research questions were then tailored to relate more specifically to the documents. These revised questions are elaborated in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1: *Research questions applied to the documents*

Research questions	Research questions as applied to the analysis of the documents
How have the teachers in this study conceptualised the policy process and curriculum change in terms of the mandated Australian curriculum?	How does the document text describe the way the curriculum reform has been conceptualized?
How have the teachers in this study made decisions about mediating and contextualising mandated curriculum reform?	How does the document text describe the way teachers will make decisions about mediating and negotiating the mandated curriculum reform?
How have their perceptions of their own self-efficacy influenced their capacity to exercise individual and collective agency when engaging with curriculum change?	How does the document text describe the expectations of individual teacher agency, as they meet the implementation requirements of Phase One, Australian Curriculum?

These re-designed research questions were focused on gaining a deeper understanding of the workings of the research site as the school leaders interpreted what the reform meant directly for their work spaces. The documents analysed ranged from those developed prior to implementation (2010) to beyond implementation of Phase One (2012).

The focus of question one was to gain an understanding of how the school's Executive Team (made up of the Principal, Heads of Secondary and Junior school, Dean of Curriculum and Learning and the Finance Manager) and the middle managers (Heads of Department, Curriculum Co-ordinators) had conceptualized the curriculum reform, prior to discussions with teachers at the site. The second question focused on determining what kinds of implementation decisions had been made, which were evident in the documents. The third question intended to examine the documents in light of the way teacher agency was conceptualised at the school site, indicated by the tone and stated intentions of the documents.

Two locally prepared documents- distillations of wider policy and governmental procedures connected to the curriculum reform- provided an early insight into the ways

the School's administrators came to condense the detail of the reform for the teachers. A PowerPoint developed by Ryan, Curriculum Co-ordinator and Deputy Head of Junior Years (See Appendix H) and the school's 'Australian Curriculum Roll Out Plan' also authored by Ryan (See Appendix I) were shared with teaching staff across both sub-schools and were designed to provide all teachers with the implementation context of the Australian Curriculum with particular focus directed at Phase One. Given that I had left the school at the end of 2010 and no replacement had been made at the beginning of 2011, Ryan had been given the task of undertaking the bulk of the role responsible for rolling out the Australian curriculum. Hence, many documents were authored and presented by Ryan but all had been endorsed by the school's leadership team.

The AC PowerPoint was presented at the Staff Development Days in January, 2011, as the school year began. The PowerPoint established the national case for reform and indicated the stance that the school leaders had chosen to undertake as a consequence of their initial engagement with the reform. It positioned the school leaders as part of the working group of teachers, both following the mandates of the policy but also leading the change to support the teachers at the school. This tone of collegiality in the documents was deliberate given the recent circumstances where the authority and ability of the leadership team to lead effectively had been clearly challenged by the teachers.

The early slides of the PowerPoint explained the need for the leadership team to take this direction by explaining the mandate of the reform. Ryan began by explaining the pathway towards a national curriculum by discussing the Melbourne Declaration (2009) and the agreement that emerged between the state premiers and territory chiefs to implement a national curriculum. Ryan pointed out that implementing the Australian Curriculum was a requirement of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) through the body responsible for implementing COAG decisions, the Ministerial Council on Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA). The reform mandates imposed by COAG and MCEECDYA highlighted the extra work required by those external to the school site. Paraphrasing from the ACARA website, Ryan indicated that the Australian Curriculum was intended to be inclusive of all young Australians, founded on a shared view of education held by all States and Territories. Emphasis on these particular aspects of the reform were intended to present a positive case for mandated change to the teachers, reducing resistance to the change from the teachers.

After establishing the national case, Ryan's presentation then focused on the way the reform would be managed within this site by contextualising the reform within the specifics of the mission statement and values of the school. This served as a reminder reaffirming and reassuring the staff that the school's prevailing ethos would accommodate this reform rather than the reform requirements dominating its ethos. The school's identity and core focus areas for operation would remain intact and this was important in the cultural life of the school. The slide (See Appendix H) called "Core to our school's foundation" included an elaboration of the five key principles underpinning Lutheran Education:

-
1. We are about learners
 2. We emphasise how to learn as well as what to learn
 3. A well-rounded education includes a range of extra-curricular activities
 4. Developing social and relational skills are important alongside the development of intellectual skills
 5. An ethos that emphasises hope, forgiveness and service grows from our Christian values. (Staff Professional Development Day, PowerPoint, January, 2011)

‘Curricquest’ (See Appendix G), was one of a range of internally developed documents which was used by the leadership team to assist the teachers to conceptualise the implications for implementation of the national curriculum. It was used on the Staff Professional Development Days in January, 2011. This activity was an inquiry based activity that staff members needed to complete to check their understanding of the presentation, and questions were aimed to develop knowledge recall about the ACARA website. For example, teachers were asked to visit the ACARA website to find out what was the four stage approach to implementation adopted by ACARA (Curriculum Shaping Stage, Curriculum Writing Stage, Implementation Stage and Evaluation and Review Stage).

The document known as the Australian Curriculum Implementation Plan (Figure 4-3) elaborated the Executive team’s vision of the whole school’s response to the national curriculum. This plan, developed by Ryan, defined an operational framework for implementation of the national curriculum at this site and was designed to further assist teachers.

Australian Curriculum Implementation Plan											
DRAFT PROPOSAL											
2010				2011				2012			
Term 1 – 4	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin investigating hot spots in second semester of the draft Maths and English documents Begin to work on implementation of the AC and the process from which it has been developed (National Curriculum, English, Maths etc.) Feedback on draft Staff to identify what is unique and non-negotiable about and how do we make this happen? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development: develop and document mathematics curriculum, auditing and mapping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review assessment practices Mathematics Curriculum Auditing and Mapping English Curriculum Auditing and Mapping Science Curriculum Auditing and Mapping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise English Scope and Sequence Implement the draft A.C Maths Scope and Sequence documents Develop Science Scope and Sequence and audit existing resources PD teachers on how to write investigative units for Maths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final implementation English and Maths Review implementation of English and Maths and modify documents as necessary Develop History Scope and Sequence and audit existing resources CTJ Day – AC priorities (LEG) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full transitional implementation of Science, English and Maths Prepare for The Arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to write and revise Geography with staff input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement geography Continue to write and revise The Arts with staff input Prepare for Languages Begin discussions with staff about phase 3 Learning areas, in particular (Economics, Business, Civics and Citizenship) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement The Arts Continue to write and revise Languages with staff input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement languages, history, Geography Prepare for implementation of Phase 3 subjects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HPE • Design and technology • ICT • Economics • Civics and citizenship • Business 		
Reporting – Ongoing (twice annually in line with national mandate)											
Important Considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development will be offered to all teaching staff to support implementation of the Australian Curriculum. On-going purchases of Australian Curriculum suited resources Teacher input into the process of Curriculum Development (continued small project teams) 											

Figure 4-3: Australian Curriculum Implementation Plan

After establishing the broader educational context designed to demonstrate to the teachers where the reform fitted in the school's philosophical space, and also identifying the role of the leadership team, a key indicator of how this would be accommodated was gained by examining the language used in the documents. The choice of language, particularly metaphors and analogies, was intended to position the teachers' engagement practices, and, therefore, their responses to the reform, in specific ways.

The activity, used later in 2011 with Junior Years Science staff (Figure 4-4: Professional Learning Activity: Science) asked them to find curriculum hotspots, or those areas that represented to them the greatest differences or omissions between their current curriculum documents and the ACARA documentation. To find the hotspots, staff examined the ACARA documents, using coloured highlighters, underlining sentences that "resonated with your understanding and philosophy of this subject".

Professional Learning Activity		COMPARE NEW AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS	
Purpose To make links between new content and current student knowledge, to understand the standards and expectations and to connect new content (and pedagogical practices) with existing practices			
Examine Science Australian Curriculum to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the Rationale and layout of the subject • Make links between the learning statements and elaborations of the subject • Examine the standards for the subject at different year levels. Note progression from the year below and to the year above • Identify gaps or 'HOT SPOTS' necessary for consideration for teaching and learning in line with ACARA requirements. 			
Shifting from the known to the unknown and identifying links to current work program/ JS Curriculum documents		Audience Whole of Junior School Academic Staff	Time 1 – 1.5 hours
Essential Question/s Can I find what I need to know about each subject on the ACARA website? How are the content descriptors explained in the elaborations? What standards are expected of my students? How does this differ from current expectations? What knowledge can I expect they will bring to my year level? Where will the learning in my year-level take them in following year levels? How does the language of the Standards assist my tracking of student progress? IDENTIFY 'hot spots'. That is, what are the crucial differences between our current curriculum requirements and ACARA requirements?		Documents required: ACARA Science Draft Syllabus ILC JS Science Curriculum Document Strategy Group learning activities during staff meeting times	
In year level cohort groups use your copy of the Science Australian Curriculum Document and follow the process below.			
A. Examine the rationale. Underline any sentences that resonate with your understanding and your philosophy of this subject. B. Identify with how the content descriptors explained in the elaborations? C. Identify what standards are expected of students? How does this differ from current expectations? What knowledge can I expect they will bring to my year level? Where will the learning in my year-level take them in following year levels? D. Identify key content and standards for your year level. NOTE down, on the sheet provided, the 'HOT SPOTS' or gaps which appear. It is important to do this activity thoroughly as this will serve to further your understanding of some of the crucial differences in this KLA. E. Examine the scopes and sequences of particular Capabilities and identify how these may be linked to Science at your year level F. Explore how to find and use key curriculum documents in an on-line mode.			

Figure 4-4: Professional Learning Activity - Science

Similarly in Figure 4-5 Professional Learning Activity, Mathematics, the staff were directed to underline the verbs and highlight the related content. By underlining the verbs, the teachers were directed to the kind of actions they would need to undertake to meet the implementation requirements of the new reform. A process of comparing and contrasting was then undertaken by addressing the following questions:

How are the content descriptors explained in the elaborations?

What standards are expected of my students?

How does this differ from current expectations?

What knowledge can I expect they will bring to my year level?

Where will the learning in my year level take them in the following year levels?

Professional Learning Activity			COMPARE NEW AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS	
Purpose To make links between new content and current student knowledge, to understand the standards and expectations and to connect new content (and pedagogical practices) with existing practices.				
Examine Mathematics Australian Curriculum to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the Rationale and layout of the subject Make links between the learning statements and elaborations of the subject Examine the standards for the subject at different year levels. Note progression from the year below and to the year above Identify gaps or 'HOT SPOTS' necessary for consideration for teaching and learning in line with ACARA requirements. 				
Shifting from the known to the unknown and identifying links to current work (highlighted in Curriculum documents)		Audience Whole of Junior School Academic Staff	Time 1 – 1.5 hours	
Essential Questions Can I find what I need to know about each subject on the ACARA website? How are the content descriptors explained in the elaborations? What standards are expected of my students? How does this differ from current expectations? What knowledge can I expect they will bring to my year level? Where will the learning in my year level take them in following year levels? How does the language of the Standards assist my tracking of student progress? IDENTIFY 'hot spots'. That is, what are the crucial differences between our current curriculum requirements and ACARA requirements?		Documents required: ACARA Mathematics Draft Syllabus ILC JS Mathematics Curriculum Document	Strategy Group learning activities during staff meeting times	
In year level cohort groups use your copy of the Mathematics Australian Curriculum Document and follow the process below. Different coloured highlighter pens and felt pens on the table to share will aid in this process.				
A. Examine the rationale. Underline any sentences that resonate with your understanding and your philosophy of this subject. B. Choose one colour and ask the following question as they read the content descriptors and elaborations at their particular year level. Use the highlighter to highlight the verb and underline key content. - How are the content descriptors explained in the elaborations? C. Connect. - What standards are expected of my students? How does this differ from current expectations? What knowledge can I expect they will bring to my year level? Where will the learning in my year level take them in following year levels? D. Identify key content and standards for your year level. NOTE down, on the sheet provided, the 'HOT SPOTS' or gaps which appear. It is important to do this activity thoroughly as this will serve to further your understanding of some of the crucial differences in this KLA. E. Examine the scopes and sequences of particular Capabilities and identify how these may be linked to Mathematics at your year level F. Explore how to find and use key curriculum documents in an on-line mode				

Figure 4-5: Professional Learning Activity - Mathematics

After searching for verbs, teachers moved to the next stage of engagement which involved 'mapping' current practices. The intention of the mapping metaphor suggested to the teachers that this activity would provide a set of directions which would assist them in conceptualising the implications of the reform and enable them to reach their destination, effective implementation. Whilst this mapping technique was used more extensively in the Junior School, it was the agreed view of the leadership team that this was the most expedient method of determining how the current curriculum needed to be modified in light of the reform and the new curriculum which needed to be implemented. Undertaking a gap analysis by comparing current curriculum documents with the new curriculum was considered by the leadership team to be the most expedient and least problematic way for teachers to implement the requirements of Phase One, Australian Curriculum.

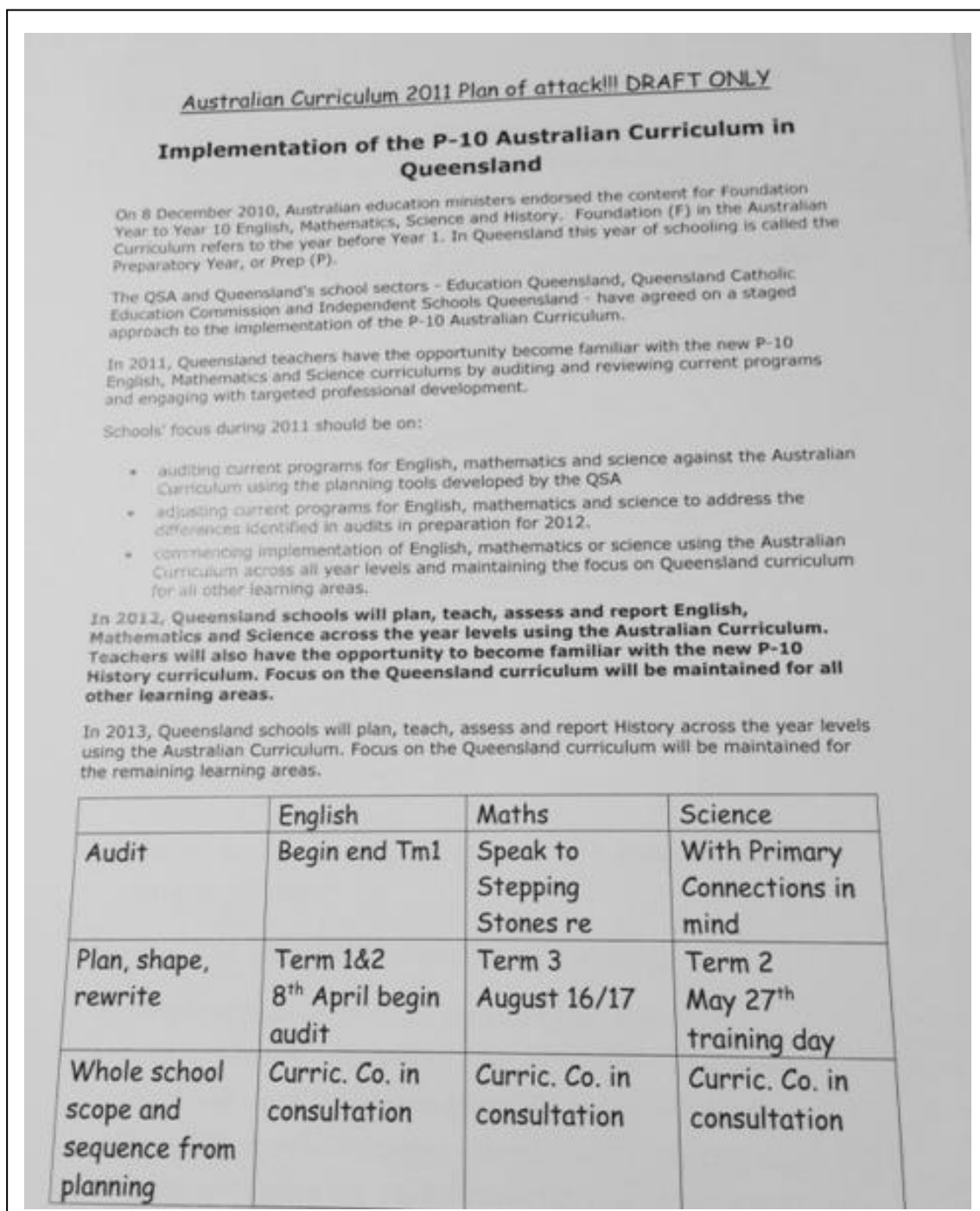


Figure 4-6: Australian Curriculum: Plan of Attack!

‘Plan of Attack’, was another phrase chosen by Ryan in a separate document (Figure 4 6: Australian Curriculum 2011 Plan of Attack). This suggested that the leaders may have felt there could be a battle on the way in relation to achieving the reform

outcomes. However, what was distinctively different in using this rhetoric was that Ryan was not driven by the administration team or school's Executive and forced upon teachers but rather the Executive team were united, unusually, with the teachers in ensuring implementation requirements were met. The Executive team were bound by the same mandated imperative of reform as that of the teachers and it was incumbent on all members of the school to engage with and implement the reform requirements. Similar language was used across the documents such as mapping, comparing and contrasting, non-negotiables and plan of attack. Relevant engagement processes were described as identifying the hot spots, establish what staff already know and identifying what was not negotiable. Terms such as not negotiable located the teachers as receivers of the reform rather than reform developers.

Language choices, therefore, positioned the teachers very quickly as curriculum practitioners. At this stage of their engagement, this was a position which they were not resistant to or critical of and will be further elaborated upon in Chapter Five. It indicated that the documents were well developed to suit the workplace environment and the teachers' preferred working style, and developed initial positive responses to the reform. Nevertheless, plan of attack and hot spots encouraged teachers to undertake a focused, planned and sustained approach by auditing their current curriculum and the new curriculum areas. Whilst this strategy did not position the teachers as developers of policy, it also suggested that the leadership team were not requesting them to undertake close and critical re-examinations of their practices.

Such developments also indicated that from the very early stages of working towards implementation, the School's Executive Team was aware of the need to develop a language of shared responsibility, between them and the teachers, to achieve effective implementation. This mandated, external reform positioned the school leaders in the same field as the teachers – both were responsible for meeting its implementation requirements.

4.2.2. Administrators' Perspectives

Interviewing the administrators was a way of gaining access to the decisions and engagement practices they had already made prior to the teachers engaging with the reform. The teachers operated within a range of individualised and separate sets of organisational practices which influenced the way the teachers worked in their space. The three administrators, Ryan, Ann and Kate, were part of the leadership team at the school and Ryan, as the Deputy Head of Junior Years was also part of the School's Executive. Each of the administrators had a specific curriculum role at the school. Ryan was the Curriculum Co-ordinator for the Junior School (P – Year 6), Ann was Head of English (Years 7 – 12) and Kate was Head of Science (Years 7 – 12). Each were involved with the subject areas requiring implementation in Phase One which provided the implementation context. Each were interviewed at the same time as the first teacher interviews, in August 2011, to establish a context in which the teachers were working, and to provide an insight into the ways both the administrators and teachers envisaged implementation would occur at the same point in time.

Kate's audio-recorded interview was held on August 8 and took approximately 60 minutes, whilst Ryan and Ann's audio recorded interviews took a similar amount of time the following day. Each had received the same interview questions as the teachers via email some two weeks prior to the interviews with the intention that this would enable them to have some time to consider their responses. However, each of the face-to-face interviews followed a similar pattern to the teachers where the interviewees were provided the opportunity to discuss their experiences more broadly beyond the questions identified in the interview schedule.

These three administrators exercised considerable influence over the working spaces of each of the teachers involved in this study. Areas of influence included the scheduling of meetings, the department organisation, structures that were put in place to manage the change, the provision of professional learning, and the distribution and allocation of tasks. The administrators established reporting and assessment procedures, developed guidelines for preparing and presenting units of work, and distributed tasks within their professional groups. In effect, these activities and processes represented sub-cultures of the organisation as a whole. Decisions about these practices were usually made in consultation with their staff, however, the administrators expected the teachers to understand and work within these structures. This could mean a secondary teacher, teaching both Maths and English, might be required to work very differently in each department because of the different methods of organisation. Each of these organisational ways of working reflected, to varying degrees, the administrators' own philosophies and ideas of how best to manage the reform and, therefore, impacted on the self-efficacy perceptions of the teachers quite differently. This is important to note since the impact of this, discussed later from the teachers' perspectives in Chapter Five, shaped their responses to the reform.

The environments that the administrators shaped varied quite considerably yet needed, ultimately, to reflect practices that demonstrated the shared whole school understanding and interpretation that the school had defined during initial engagement meetings and discussions.

Professional Experiences

Key factors administrators identified as influencing their capacity to manage the reform were perceptions of past experiences regarding the management of similar reforms, the length of their teaching career, and the quality of the relationships they had with the teachers. It was apparent that Kate, Ann and Ryan shared many of experiences of education reform and responses with the six teachers in this research project. They had participated in change they interpreted as both negative and positive and, therefore, were prepared for any tensions and concerns that would inevitably arise in this reform.

Ryan had been part of three whole school curriculum changes in his 14 years of teaching and the Australian Curriculum would be his fourth. His observations about the management of each previous reform were that support and assistance from policy developers and those who initiated the reform, in most cases government education

agencies, were not sustained. With regard to the implementation of OBE (Outcomes Based Education) he commented, “There was a lot of consultation in the ‘let’s look at what it would look like’ before it was published but post that, it was almost ‘go away and have fun’ and that was the challenge with outcomes in my opinion”. (R, 9.8.11, p3) Discussing OBE, he felt the teachers had “...to navigate our way through this...It became relatively successful in the school that I was in purely because there were a couple of folk who took it on board to in-service teachers” (R, 9.8.11, p. 2). Ryan felt “stung” by this professional experience. “Again being, for want of a better term, part charged with implementing it at schools and not having ownership myself or a level of depth of knowledge or understanding about it, [it] really left one floundering” (R, 9.8.11, p. 10). “Here are the outcomes go and have fun and it kind of wasn’t as primitive as that but it wasn’t too far removed from that in my experience (R, 9.8.11, p. 2).

Kate’s experiences with OBE were somewhat similar to Ryan’s. Her initial engagement with the documents, particularly the Science curriculum, presented some problems:

So I wasn’t at all comfortable with, you know, four million, five hundred and seventy two thousand outcomes [smiling, exaggeration]. But the only way I could make myself feel ...happy with what was going on, was to see it at a different level and interpret it at a different level and then I felt that there was a successful way of moving forward with it. (K, 8.8.11, p. 4)

Kate’s reflections suggested that a deeper engagement with the reform at a more critical level was necessary rather than merely undertaking what she felt was a superficial auditing experience:

...not looking at why you were trying to do at a deep level or what you were trying to do from your particular key learning area that has its own sort of jargon and its own way of interpreting the world...The outcomes were so explicit and there were so many of them that it was almost unmanageable so, therefore, you had to find what you were fundamentally trying to do with them” (K, 8.8.11, p. 5).

Moving past her initial responses around implementing OBE, Kate “picked the things that we believe best suited the teaching and learning of a particular concept” (K, 8.8.11, p. 8) and continued to develop the Science curriculum until the next reform, Essential Learnings, appeared in the Queensland Curriculum. Kate’s comment about selecting elements of OBE that best suited their teaching and learning practices was clearly supportive of Apple’s (1993) view that implemented curriculum is part of a selective tradition, where the authority for selection rests with policy makers but also with teachers tasked with its implementation. This foregrounded the important role teachers played in ensuring positive policy outcomes.

However, Essential Learnings, Phase 1 of the Queensland Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting (QCAR) framework was completed in conjunction with the Queensland Studies Authority and released in all schools. It was well received by Kate. She supported the idea that the learnings were written as “big concepts” (K, 8.8.11, p. 15)

building appropriate skills from one year level to the next. As Kate noted, "...you could see this spiraling concept which actually is very interesting because that still came from the outcomes. (K, 8.8.11, p. 15)

The School's Initial Engagement

As identified by Ryan, critical to achieving effective implementation "on the ground" (R, 9.8.11, p. 10) was the important role the school leaders undertook during their first engagements with the reform. He felt they needed to make explicit a clearly defined and well-articulated site specific understanding of the reform requirements. The intention would be to clearly outline the school's direction towards achieving effective curriculum implementation:

So I guess site specific support and understanding and common understanding I guess is important because particularly in a P-12 school, whilst they're a unique thing from a junior's perspective to a secondary perspective, we are one school and I think it's... from an executive level there is a common understanding that the left and right foot know which way they're going, that's crucial. (R, 9.8.11, p. 11)

Ann agreed that the school's Executive was also responsible for the development of these processes, clearly setting the direction for achievement of the reform. However, she acknowledged that the school leaders, with responsibilities to the Executive, external educational authorities, government agencies, and parents, were required to make decisions and take responsibility for them in ways that were not always as consultative and collaborative as desired. Ann was not concerned about this since she felt this was the task of the Executive and these practices were accepted by the staff as the general ways of operating. "Big picture decisions are made without consultation because I am sure they (the Executive) would think that the HODs would come on board and support decisions made, which they do" (A, 9.8.11, p. 9). Nevertheless, Ann felt that the HODs generally supported the Executive since the team was "fairly progressive here. I don't see it as a retrograde school in anyway...like [the Principal] and the exec team are very happy for us to go in innovative ways, directions. And that's good. So the support is there" (A, 9.8.11, p. 9).

Each of the administrators conceptualised policy implications in the same way by looking for alignment between current curriculum and teaching practices and the new documents. This was an agreed approach which acknowledged the current sound practices of the teachers, rather than highlighting deficits, and was considered to be the path to least resistance around implementation. It also preserved the leaders' intentions to move away from the disruptive angst of the school's recent past. It was the degree of alignment between current practices and the requirements of the new reform that each discovered which determined the extent of change they felt the teachers would need to undertake in implementing the reform. Ryan explained the importance of undertaking this process:

We've got this one, we've got... here's our existing, here's our future, where are the gaps? So I'm tying the loose ends together and trying to provide a level of

scaffold support for that process as well as then identifying what units have we done in our humanities etcetera and what will need to change so that the conversation will happen for next year. (R, 9.8.11, p. 7)

The School's Implementation Process

The extent to which the administrators adopted the school's overarching implementation strategies had particular influence on the responses of the teachers. Whilst they were all in general agreement about this school's view and adopted similar approaches to examining the documentation, each administrator adopted quite different implementation strategies.

The English Australian Curriculum presented few concerns for Ann since "...it's been a more fluid change" (A, 9.8.11, p.3). Ann had adopted a very structured and organised means of meeting implementation goals. She had elicited the assistance of the school's teacher aide before the beginning of the school year in 2011 to set up electronic English department profiles to manage the documentation required to implement the reform, accessed via the school's computer network. A number of resources, guidelines, templates, unit overviews (largely modified from those developed by QSA) were available to the English teachers upon their arrival at the beginning of the school year in 2011. Each English teacher in Years 7 to 10 also had access to the ACARA English syllabus documents, a hard copy booklet, a CD with the ACARA English curriculum burnt to the CD, electronic and hard copy templates to be used for writing units of work, as well as, "...everything is there for them electronically" (A, 9.8.11, p. 7). The aim of these electronic packs was to make the writing of the units easy for the English teachers so that the teachers "...can cut and paste, so it's really easy" (A, 9.8.11, p. 7).

Rather than representing a perfunctory and mechanistic action, "cut and paste" came to represent a philosophy of engagement and implementation for the teachers in the English department. As will be further discussed in Chapter Five, the teachers understood this term to represent the intensity with which they were required to engage with and implement the reform. It appeared to them that this meant policy being accommodated into their current practice, rather than an extensive redesign of practice, a simplistic process requiring little critical examination of their current curriculum content.

Whilst Ann hoped that this kind of support would reduce teacher anxiety and enable them to focus on what was most critical to meet the implementation requirements, Darling-Hammond, 2005 suggest such distillation of policy disempowers and marginalises teachers. As she noted: "I've refined it [ACARA English document] to suit our school situation without losing the integrity of ACARA... so I've done the unit" (A, 9.8.11, p. 7). Ann was "...going to do the whole overview myself. I won't ask them to do it. So basically I'm starting with the end in mind, producing the units to go, when I've got the big picture of all the units and I'm asking staff to throw out what's no good and to come up with creative ideas" (A, 9.8.11, p. 4). For Kate, negotiating the new curriculum began from a more deficit perspective. She had already indicated that early examination of Phase One Science Australian Curriculum led her to believe that the curriculum was

not as pedagogically sound as what was currently being taught. Therefore, she felt that significant reworking would be required by herself and teachers in her department to ensure current educational standards were, at the very least, maintained. This was evident when she stated:

I was told, miss-told I guess, that the Australian Curriculum would be very similar to the Essential Learnings. And then when the Australian curriculum came out, I was just devastated to see how patchy it is, how disjointed. That it is very content based because they haven't looked at those big picture ideas. I don't know who wrote it because it could not have been people with a Science background. (K, 8.8.11, p. 15)

In investigating teachers' responses to reform, it is interesting to note from these observations, that an important influence on how they responded was drawn from the way the administrators interpreted and operationalised the reform within their own leadership paradigms. Reform, for Ryan, required a strategic context for teachers to develop an understanding and, therefore, appropriate responses; Ann looked for ways to operationalise the reform with the least disruption paying little attention to its strategic context; and Kate examined the curriculum reform from an epistemological point of view within the broader field of her discipline. These different approaches were important in influencing the way each of the teachers would need to respond.

4.2.3. Engagement Narratives – A perspective from the secondary data

The sample of documents analysed conveyed a range of perspectives as to how implementation of Phase One was to occur. In providing a conceptualisation of the reform for the teachers, the document texts suggest that the school's Executive, as well as the teachers, were following externally mandated requirements, and were co-participants in this curriculum journey. It was important for the reform to be embedded into existing school practices and culture whilst maintaining a specific school identity. Since teachers would be given the authority to determine their own level and means of engagement rather than being school mandated, the process of auditing current practice with the new curriculum was the critical first step. The documents reviewed in this section, suggested ways in which the teachers should begin their engagement with the documents but also made it clear that teachers would have the authority to determine their own practices and means of mediating and negotiating the curriculum rather than having this directed by the school leaders.

The administrators' initial responses to the implementation requirements of Phase One were heavily based on their own previous experiences with reforms where they shared more negative experiences than positive ones. They generally agreed that lack of ongoing school-based support and lack of specialist advice were major contributing factors for reforms not to be sustained or become embedded in teachers' practice. This affirmed for them the importance of creating positive working environments that supported teacher engagement which included developing well planned and carefully considered implementation strategies prior to the teachers engaging with the

documentation. Therefore, it was essential that the Executive and school leadership team, particularly the Principal, develop both short and long term implementation plans and strategies. The administrators were also aware of the importance in establishing a shared understanding of the curriculum reform between themselves and the teachers, even when implementation strategies could be quite varied between their departments. They also acknowledged that the teachers required a certain degree of autonomy in undertaking their own conceptualisations of the reform. Effective implementation was also predicated on the level of alignment the teachers could find between the reform and their current practices. The administrators recognised this as one of their primary tasks, requiring acknowledgement of their own prior engagement with the reform and conceptualising it within their own fields of practice.

In summary, the context established by interviewing the administrators and analysing these documents, the major secondary data collection techniques, was critical to understanding the responses of the six participants. The administrators themselves operated within a range of fields, and their interpretation of the field of policy shaped the insights and strategies they outlined to their staff. Since the school had been through a relatively turbulent time in its recent history, it was apparent that this shaped the sensitivity with which the administrators approached the new task of implementation.

4.3. Making Decisions about Mediating and Negotiating Mandated Curriculum Reform

The second research question focused on how the teachers made decisions about the nature of their engagement which occurred after early introductions and discussions around the curriculum reform had been undertaken. Having developed a broad conceptualisation of the reform and their place in it, the teachers entered the more structured phase of working towards implementation, beginning with their close examination of the various policy and procedural documentation that corresponded to the curriculum reform. This documentation included formal government policy, filtered via the Australian Curriculum and Reporting Assessment agency (the national body responsible for the Australian Curriculum), as well as 'local' school-derived procedural documentation that specified the nature of the school's response to the new curriculum.

Working at different times both individually and collaboratively, the school's administrators and teachers were required to make a range of decisions about how they would implement the new curriculum. The process they undertook was a reflexive one, requiring cognitive processes of mediation and negotiation as they re-examined their position in relation to the reform requirements. This process influenced the extent to which the teachers perceived the requirements of the reform would impact on their practice. To make these decisions, therefore, the participants needed to locate themselves within this specific reform context which they did by determining the level of alignment they perceived between their practice and the reform requirements. The factors that influenced how this alignment was established provide the focus for addressing this research question. As referred to in the literature (Luke, 2002; Nias, 1991; Ozga &

Moore, 1991; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010) lack of alignment can lead to resistant behaviours on the part of the teachers causing increased levels of personal stress and professional marginalisation and disempowerment. It was at this stage that these kinds of behaviours might be evident for the participants in this study. This research question was examined in the documents and the administrators' interviews to gain a closer understanding of how the teachers made decisions about reform implementation and shaped their responses to it.

4.3.1. The Documents

The process of decision making that was recommended by external authorities such as QSA and ISQ⁶ and adopted by the school's Executive and members of the Teaching and Learning Committee⁷ suggested an approach which would minimise the implementation impact on teachers of the reform. The use of templates from QSA, some of which could be downloaded and pre-filled, was deemed valuable by the committee members and indicated a further reliance on externally generated documentation rather than those internally developed. This established the direction of implementation which would take place in line with recommendations by state wide educational authorities and represented a further distillation of policy by these external agencies.

The Teaching and Learning Committee minutes of 29.8.11 (See Appendix J) note that Ann had already collected QSA resources she deemed suitable and had used these to develop a unit plan template for English. At this meeting, Ryan recommended that these be chosen for use across the whole school since the templates "...could be easily downloaded and pre-filled [with year level content from the ACARA site] for each year level" (see Appendix J).

These minutes also recorded comments made by the HOD Science (Kate) and the Dean of Teaching and Learning who both felt that the school should be looking at ways of minimizing the documentation required to support implementation. As such, the Dean of Teaching and Learning presented a "modified and simplified version" of the QSA, Year Level Curriculum plan for HODs and Junior School to use (see Appendix J). Heads of Department in Science and English, as well as the Junior School Curriculum Co-ordinator/Deputy Head indicated that they would use this template with their teachers.

⁶ ISQ – Independent Schools Queensland – the state authority providing governance, legal & curriculum support (including professional learning opportunities for teachers) for independent schools in Queensland

⁷ Teaching & Learning Committee was a whole school committee which included representatives from learning support, gifted & talented programs, heads of department, information services, IT staff, curriculum co-ordinator JY, school leadership team, Director of Teaching and Learning and met two times per term to discuss whole school policy and direction in relation to teaching and learning practices.

However, combined with the use of such templates, the leadership team was keen to affirm that significant work had been undertaken by the leadership team to develop site-specific documentation. A letter sent to staff prior to implementation indicated this:

Considerable collegial conversations and planning have taken place with members of the Junior School and Secondary School so as to ensure a quality level of *consistency, transparency* and *progression* within and across JS and SS curriculum areas. (see Appendix K, emphasis added)

Subsequent curriculum documentation developed by the teachers needed to aim at providing “meaningful, sequential and developmental teaching and learning” (Planning Teaching & Learning Requirements, Semester 2, 2011). As well, the units of work already developed should have been identified and planned across the scope of Preparatory to Year 6 such that a “...fair and reasonable spread of learning opportunities occurs throughout a child’s academic development within the Junior School” (see Appendix K).

There were several other documents used at the school which shaped the decisions that the school’s Executive and the teachers made during this early phase of engagement. The statutory authority for education in Queensland, the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) circulated to schools in July, 2011, a statement referring to the national curriculum ‘entitlement’ (QSA Time Allocations and Entitlement: Implementing the Australian Curriculum F (P) – 10). Whilst this document explained that ACARA’s responsibility was to develop the curriculum content in these subject areas, the delivery of the Australian Curriculum was “ultimately, the responsibility of the schools acting within jurisdictional requirements” (QSA, 2011, p. 6). Yet, it was still difficult for administrators and teachers to gain an understanding of the breadth and scope of the new curriculum when fully implemented. This document explained that upon completion of all phases of implementation, the national curriculum should take up no more than 80% of the school’s timetable. The remainder of the time was available for school based events and subjects which fell outside the curriculum areas.

4.3.2. Administrators’ Interviews

The decision to offer professional learning in this way, suggested that external organisations such as ISQ and QSA’s access to teachers was via the school’s leadership team suggesting a further distillation of policy and formal reform documentation. Therefore, decisions about policy and curricula implementation were filtered at several levels, not just at the school level, before reaching the teachers who were required to implement it. The language choice used to name the sessions offered by ISQ, “Train the Trainer”, suggested a transference of pre-established knowledge constructs having overtones of modelled, repetitive practice as the means of gaining professional understanding and knowledge. Whilst this name for the professional learning may have been intended to provide the clarity and prescription desired by teachers, it could also be interpreted as being a mechanistic and passive means of providing professional learning.

As shapers of implementation strategies, the administrators recognised the importance of developing clear and robust short and long term plans for implementation, aiming for these plans to assist the development of a shared understanding of the implementation requirements at the site. Whilst it was accepted that all teachers may not engage at the same time or with the same responses to the reform, the administrators' role was to ensure that the implementation outcomes were achieved. As their starting point, they chose to examine the policy to determine the level of alignment between it and current school practices. The degree of alignment would shape the role the administrators needed to undertake and their level of involvement with negotiating the reform to meet site requirements. This same process would be one that the administrators recommended that the teachers also undertook.

Workplace Culture

In early planning meetings the importance of providing time and support for the teachers to effectively meet the implementation requirements of the reform was acknowledged by the administrators and the school Executive. This acknowledgement led to very early detailed plans for 2011 as the year of preparation and transition. The early planning meetings that took place that year, involving the Heads of Department, the Dean of Teaching and Learning (the reconfigured Director of Curriculum and Learning position) and the Heads of Sub-Schools (Secondary and Junior Schools) considered the development of a professional learning calendar, establishing department and staff meeting times, scoping the engagement opportunities for the teachers and establishing broad time lines to meet implementation requirements.

Whilst these preparations were considered to be important to put in place, they also added to some concern and stress, felt, at least initially, by the administrators. Each of them shared in their interviews that they held some concerns about the magnitude of the task, feeling that another imposed change would further stretch an already very busy timetable for teachers.

The administrators worked between the Executive and the teachers in their departments or areas of operation, therefore, it was important for them to manage this balance effectively. An effective balance was achieved when they felt supported by the school's Executive and when they felt that their authority and credibility as middle managers and effective teachers were also acknowledged by their staff. Ryan elaborated on his understanding of this concept of balance by stating:

We have to be able to have a level of understanding about what it is we're doing and why we're doing it. ... But then it's not tying people up professionally that they feel they're in binds and they can't breathe and that's a balance point. (R, 9.8.11, p. 4)

Kate, Ryan and Ann remained classroom teachers in addition to their leadership roles and this duality assisted them in understanding what the teachers needed to do to implement the reform. As well, they were obliged to meet the implementation requirements of the school Executive and their effective management of both of these

sets of expectations was an important part of their role. Each of the administrators felt well-supported by the school's leadership team. Ann indicated this when she said, "No well actually I'm lucky because they [the school leaders – Principal, Head of Secondary School] allow me the freedom to go with it and they trust my judgement and I haven't been answerable to anyone... So I think I'm valued then as a HOD that they see any direction that I take is in line with educational policies and direction. It's nothing radical. So I've got a lot of autonomy" (A, 9.8.11, p. 10).

Given the varied nature of their roles, each of the administrators interacted differently with the teachers and so each had different understandings of how the staff and the school would work with the reform. Based on past experiences of implementing OBE, Ann felt that "...from an English point of view, those curriculum evolutions were well supported in the school [so] in a sense, it wasn't a difficult thing to really bring about that change" (A, 8.8.11, p. 3). She was also aware that the teachers whom she had worked with may have had different perspectives. "Well I don't think it was an onerous task, but then, it's the people you work with" (A, 8.8.11, p. 3). Ryan was concerned that teachers at the school, many of whom were long standing teachers and would have been part of a number of internal and external change initiatives, might become:

...sick of constant change because we've been through so many...So, I think teachers become very cynical in some regard and I think what's crucial, and I've said again to staff here...it's about how we engage the learner...how do we engage the learner?" (R, 9.8.11, p. 3).

Ryan, therefore, was careful as to how he set about preparing teachers, most specifically the Junior School teachers, for implementation. What he had observed in similar situations was that teachers don't "...necessarily want to go through the hard yards. Just give me what I've got to do and let me be, tell me what I've got to do and teach and I'll go away and I'll be professional in my own domain, in my classroom and I'll do it" (R, 9.8.11 pp 2-3).

As a consequence of each administrator's differed and varied experiences, and whilst change may have been considered to be somewhat commonplace for teachers at this site, the school administrators felt that they needed to be mindful of the layers of change evident at the site. Ryan and Ann commented that their awareness of this was a strong influence on their plans for implementation at the school and needed to be part of their management strategies.

Therefore, the administrators were in a difficult situation. Whilst they recognised very early that another educational change was going to place extra burdens on a teaching staff they felt was already stretched, they were still bound by pre-specified implementation deadlines of a nationally mandated reform and needed to push ahead regardless of these personal concerns for the teachers. The administrators were pressed to meet the deadlines and were aware that the teachers would find this difficult as well. It spurred them on to put in place as many support mechanisms as possible that they considered would be of assistance to the teachers as they planned for implementation.

Leadership Styles

The administrators acknowledged that they needed to be mindful of the preferred ways the teachers liked to work for implementation requirements to be met effectively. Teacher cynicism and teacher burnout could be reduced, Ryan felt, if the leadership team, including the Executive and the other curriculum leaders and Heads of Department, had some “fundamentally agreed upon processes or systems or plans” (R, 9.8.11, p. 4). He described this as a “baseline” (R, 9.8.11, p. 4) which set a minimum expectation of what teachers needed to see and do, leaving the individual teachers to make their own decisions about how they would teach the new curriculum. The baseline also ensured that teachers knew there was room to individualise the experiences and requirements of implementation. Ryan felt that more intervention than this would be viewed as being “big brotherish” (R, 9.8.11, p. 4). This included careful consideration of the amount of direction the teachers felt was supportive and the amount of distance that enabled them to make personal meaning of the change with regard to their professional practices. Ryan elaborated, “...it’s about not being dictatorial, a top down model, it’s about having a shared leadership approach. And whether people want to be part of it or not and want to own it or not is fine but they’re given the chance to” (R, 9.8.11, p. 8).

Ryan explained that individual pathways to implementation might vary based on personal qualities and values of the teachers engaging with the reform. He did not contest these divergent pathways. Ryan felt he needed to acknowledge such differences whilst still achieving the implementation outcomes required. He went on to say:

...as I’ve explained to staff here, through our processes of change, it’s the road map. You know we’re going on a journey and it helps us navigate our way through along that journey you know and it’s important. And it doesn’t mean that we all have to take the journey from A through B to C, some might take A to B then skip C and go to D and then go to F and that’s okay. But we know that ultimately we all have to end at G and that’s what is important. But how I drive my vehicle to get there and the route I take might be particular to me and that’s okay. Because in my vehicle I’ve got someone that’s really super at putting a seatbelt on this way and playing with the fluffy dice that way and I’ve got to consider that. (R, 9.8.11, p. 3)

Later, Ryan further explained the process of implementation and the responsibility of leaders by developing the analogy of a family going on holiday:

...if you’re going on a holiday, a family holiday, if I said to my family we’re going to Cairns and we’re going out via Longreach and then we’re going up through Tully or whatever, that might be nice for me but it might not be nice for my wife or my kids because they might want to go through Bundy and Gladstone and take that journey. So it’s about having the shared journey and the conversation around that. and we might agree on one point, we take a diversion to Longreach and come back in, I don’t know if that’s making any sense but I do think it’s, we know the end goal, we know where we’re headed but we’ve kind of got to drive it ourselves. All of us have to drive part of it. Whether it’s driving it from a systems or a process

perspective or whether it's driving it from a classroom delivery and teaching and learning perspective, we all have a level of in the driver's seat. (R, 9.8.11, pp. 8- 9)

Ryan's language and use of analogies were important to note since these provided a clear indication of his leadership philosophy. Policy implementation was a shared journey, leaders needed to map [interrogate and interpret the policy] the way and clearly navigate the path [develop an implementation strategy] allowing for the many drivers to drive the vehicle [the policy] to reach its destination.

For Kate and her staff, the process of working with change involved auditing existing practices and, as earlier discussed, undertaking a very careful examination of the new curriculum content since all Science students worked from booklets specifically developed by Kate and the Science teachers at the school. Whole department collaboration (with teachers drawn from both the Junior School and the Secondary School) was important since it clarified for all of the teachers how implementation was intended to occur.

Both Ryan and Kate identified that it was important for them to determine how the teachers in their areas preferred to work to accommodate these preferences into their planning. As Ryan stated:

Ultimately I guess my responsibilities are to try and drive the change via open conversation, clear professional learning opportunities which has happened, and then allowing the staff freedom of scope and will to provide feedback and written and verbal and then I'm tying the loose ends together. (R, 9.8.11, p. 7)

This enabled Ryan and Kate to understand more clearly the extent to which ways of working were enculturated in their spheres of operation. Common for both was the need to have time to individually negotiate and mediate the new curriculum followed by discussions and collaboration to determine how the new curriculum aligned with current practices leading to an identification of any gaps.

As well, Ryan's previous experiences with reform indicated to him that implementation strategies that provided the opportunity for teachers to work collaboratively were effective. "...I think it's probably shaped some of the philosophical belief that, look, we're in this together, let's try and have a shared knowledge of this together" (R, 9.8.11, p. 10).

External Support and the Role of Professional Learning

Each administrator's' discussion about previous reforms generally included reference to the role of professional educational organisations. Each of the administrators noted that their levels of confidence were challenged and compromised when professional organisations external to the school site seemed disorganised, lacked direction or withdrew support because of cuts in funding.

Fortunately for the administrators, these concerns did not emerge to any considerable extent in August 2011 when their interviews took place. The processes of implementation adopted by ACARA which included on line consultation; opportunities to respond to draft curricula documents and the negotiation and consultations from a broad range of educational stakeholders, were supported by the administrators. Ryan, in particular, because of his overall responsibility for curriculum implementation in the Junior School for multiple rather than just one discrete discipline area, requiring high levels of teacher knowledge and expertise across a range of disciplines, felt that the consultative processes adopted by ACARA indicated a more supportive approach. He commented that this suggested "...they're [ACARA] hearing similar messages that schools need support, schools need help...I think there's been certainly much more scaffolded process support in terms of...giving teachers or people charged with the challenge of the opportunity to move through that change in terms of documentation" (R, 9.8.11, p. 11).

Ann felt that the Queensland Studies Authority was also particularly supportive of the reform, developing templates for unit plans and curriculum overviews of the documentation for teachers in school to use. "We're not short of external help if necessary...I know I can ring them (QSA) and they're always supportive. I haven't used our own system (LEQ) a great deal, but I know it's there, I know they would help" (A, 9.8.11, p. 10).

What was of particular note for Ryan were the:

...collegial conversations and the opportunity to network with people who are, again for want of a better word, charged with the implementation or the process development. And I think having the chance to network and share ideas and thoughts and experiences is really good...I think there's been a lot more professional conversations from those bodies around the renewal process and moving to ACARA...And I think that has been much more evident this time. (R, 9.8.11, pp. 10, 11)

Professional learning opportunities were important influences on initial engagement responses in two ways. First, such opportunities provided the administrators with support as they undertook their own engagement, decision making and implementation practices. Access to professional learning opportunities provided the administrators with affirmation regarding the approach they were undertaking since the school's Executive had already identified themselves as both reform leaders and learners. Second, as will be discussed in Chapter Five in relation to the teachers' expectations of the leadership team, it was important that they provided appropriate and relevant professional learning opportunities so that the teachers could undertake their role effectively.

Ryan felt that there had been many professional learning opportunities available to him offered by external authorities such as QSA to further develop his understanding of the Australian Curriculum. On the day of Ryan's interview, he was driving to

Brisbane to attend a “Train the Trainer” professional learning session offered by QSA. However, Ann was keen to access further professional learning specifically targeted at assisting Heads of Department with implementation advice. The purpose of this would be to “...make sure that I’m totally au fait with what’s happening out there, in all systems” (A, 9.8.11, p. 11). Providing time for professional learning for her teachers was also important since Ann stated:

...they’d feel valued, because you know, if you’ve got the money and you can do that and times are tight at the moment and we all know that, in every school. But, if you’ve got the money to do that, it has the benefits of buoying up the staff because they feel valued...as a professional. (A, 9.8.11, p. 4)

The flow on effects of developing and promoting the teachers’ self-esteem and self-confidence were important.

During 2011 emails, briefings, and updates were circulated to schools from a range of educational organisations to assist with their preparations for implementation. The peak body representing Queensland’s independent schooling sector, Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ), designated one member of staff to provide support and guidance to all independent schools in Queensland with regard to implementing the Australian Curriculum. The professional learning opportunities offered by ISQ included Train the Trainer sessions directed towards Principals, Deputy Principals, Curriculum leaders and Heads of Department offered in metropolitan and regional centres. The aim was to provide information, ideas, strategies and tools for schools with the trainers returning to their schools sharing the information gained from these sessions. The later professional learning sessions invited teachers to work with the assessment standards so that clarity could be gained around “the complexities of developing assessment tasks and making decisions about student grades” as well as pedagogical discussions centred around the inquiry approach to “support teachers utilising all aspects of the Australian Curriculum” (ISQ, 2012).

Participating in relevant professional learning opportunities was important for the administrators, and for their teaching staff in seeking validation for the approach they were undertaking. In light of the recent site experiences with perceptions of weak leadership, the administrators appeared to be affirming their capacity to effectively lead the reform by gaining the affirmation from external “experts”. It was their intention that this would ensure that the teachers had confidence in them and their capacity to lead the change. Professional learning is discussed in this section, and in Chapter Five, because it appeared at the early stages of policy engagement; both the administrators and the teachers highlighted its importance for effective policy implementation. However, what became evident from the teachers’ narratives, was that the significance they placed on undertaking external professional learning was considerably weakened by the rise in importance of professional learning that took place on site between colleagues working collaboratively. This will be further explored in Chapter Five.

Engaging with the Curriculum Documents

Ryan, Ann and Kate had been working with the ACARA documents since 2010, earlier than the teachers in their departments. Their perceptions of the robustness of the curriculum were formed during this time and each of the administrators varied in the way they had engaged, mediated and negotiated the documents.

For Ryan, based on past experiences, new curriculum always needed to be modified to suit specific characteristics of the school site and he felt, in this circumstance, this was possible. “From the planning perspective, I think there’s enough scope for us to put our flavour into things whilst there is certainly mandated elements” (R, 9.8.11, p. 5). To describe the scope and parameters of the ACARA curriculum, Ryan used the metaphor of goal posts, suggesting that the ACARA goal posts, whilst evident, still had room for individual interpretation from each school and teacher’s point of view. They were:

...cemented, but the cement hasn’t hardened yet. And I think that we need to look at, when those goal posts are cemented and hardened, then we can make some definitive suggestions about good bad or indifferent. (R, 9.8.11, p. 5)

Ryan believed new units of work could still be written acknowledging site specific contexts. However, Kate appeared less confident since, as discussed earlier, she felt considerable working was necessary to maintain existing standards in Science. Mandated reform meant she needed to work with the documents and led her to say:

Well, we will do what I guess ACARA says but we’ll make it better. We’ll have to because it’s not good enough. So we’ll have to fill the gaps and make the links and so on. (K, 8.8.11 p. 16)

Kate felt that the problem arose because of the national nature of the reform. In ACARA’s endeavours to try to combine different state curricula to meet nationally agreed standards, Kate felt difficult and problematic compromises had been made. “...I don’t believe that they’ve [ACARA] actually come up with an educationally sound underpinning” (K, 8.8.11, p. 18). It seemed to Kate that the process was more like “...oh, Victoria is doing this, NSW is doing that, West Australia – what matches the most? Oh, it’s that – so we’ll do that. (K, 8.8.11, p. 18)

Kate was still concerned about the school’s responses to the reform and the way the school would be required to embed it within its existing structures. She expressed concerns about the relationship between the two fields, and the extent to which each field (the policy and the operations of the school) needed to negotiate to implement the reform. Kate’s view was that the reform needed to be modified to fit the school’s practices and it was the responsibility of the school’s leaders to make this happen. The following excerpt demonstrates how this decision evolved:

I mean it’s almost like with a new curriculum you have to draw out of it a philosophy that is not just for your particular subject area but that works for the whole school and that’s where I think...oh now I’ve got all these ideas coming now

I'm talking, that's where I think schools probably go really wrong. Is that they get a new curriculum and then they're spending so much time trying to find the meaning behind it. Whereas in fact if ...there's no reason why schools couldn't....and in fact should, set up their own philosophical statement about learning and then you incorporate your new curriculum into that. (K, 9.8.11, p. 8)

Ann's view was that engagement with the Australian Curriculum was mandatory suggesting limited teacher negotiation, so regardless of the standard of the new curriculum content or the challenges of implementing the reform, she and the teachers at the school were required to implement it. Therefore, Ann looked for ways to align the new curriculum with current practices to minimise the amount of work and levels of stress on the teachers in the English department. Ryan shared a similar view regarding the mandatory nature of the reform. Whilst wanting to adapt the reform to make it more appropriately site-specific, he was aware that mandated reform directed certain actions that might compromise the extent to which site negotiations could occur:

Coming to a common agreement among the staff of what it is that we can do beyond this and what are the givens that we can't change? ... So ultimately, it's a collective, open and transparent process that says this is what we all have to do whether we like it or not and in fact I've even used those words with staff. (R, 9.8.11, p. 6)

It was evident from their interviews, that each administrator approached the task of implementation quite differently. Ann encouraged the teachers to adopt the process she had, which was a minimalist approach to engaging with the document by comparing and contrasting the new curriculum with the current documents. Identifying the gaps as a first step was the way she began the process of meeting implementation deadlines and she encouraged the English teachers in her department to undertake an audit in the same way. Professional interpretations about the educational efficacy of the new curriculum were not part of Ann's engagement practices, unlike Ryan, who saw the curriculum directives needing to be adapted to embrace site specific characteristics or Kate, whose responses were more emotive. Ann's engagement procedures focused on developing the new documents by looking for alignment with current practices, Ryan wanted the teachers to examine the documents in a way that would enable them to make them their own and Kate's interpretation that the new was not as good as the old meant that the current curriculum took precedence and was preferred over the reform.

4.3.3. Decision Making Narratives – A perspective from the secondary data

The documents suggested that teachers needed to make implementation decisions around an already mandated curriculum 'entitlement'. As such, professional learning opportunities had already been developed by external authorities and were designed to provide the necessary support and guidance for school leaders to be able to effectively translate curriculum policy at their school sites. The internal focus was on simplifying the engagement process and the work teachers needed to undertake by communicating the tasks in a positive way, using easily understood metaphors and colloquialisms such as looking for 'hot spots' and drawing metaphorical likenesses of policy implementation to

generally accept activities such as a car journey. School based documents sought to initially develop content knowledge of the reform through engagement with the ACARA website and comprehension/inquiry activities associated with such engagements. Yet, from their first engagement with the documents, the documents developed by the administrators made the teachers aware that the reform needed to be embedded within the school's philosophy and site specific environment. This acted to position the teachers as more than passive recipients of policy and encouraged them to take an active and agentive role in its implementation. This will be a critical part of understanding the teachers' responses to mandated change further developed in Chapter Five.

The administrators, as part of their role, were required to manage the reform but were aware of the possibility of conflicting interests between them and the Executive. They felt that considerations needed to be made for teachers who might be cynical or resistant to the reform and one way of achieving this was to offer a range of approaches that the teachers could use. In acknowledging that some liked a more directed approach whilst others more autonomy, the underlying important factor for consideration was that the administrators needed to come to know their staff well and their preferred ways of working. Failure to incorporate this knowledge as central to their own decision making would only contribute to resistance and negative outcomes. Generally, collaboration emerged as the preferred mode of working for the teachers. Whilst they looked for validation of their leadership and management practices from external authorities, they also acknowledged the importance of working within the boundaries of the cultural practices at this site. However, what emerged that is of interest for the following chapter, was that the administrators' decisions about how to best manage the implementation of the reform were quite varied with different levels of emphasis. This meant that the teachers working within their departments needed to engage with a range of implementation decisions. The impact of such variations is further explored in the following chapter.

In light of these observations, it appeared that the leadership and management styles of the administrators were not consistent. Whilst they each may have been comfortable in knowing where this journey needed to end, each adopted different ways of leading and managing the reform. Fundamentally in this study, the significance of such diverse approaches was the way in which they influenced the teachers' responses to the reform and raised questions about the extent to which the administrators' decisions about implementation would impact them. Whilst the administrators were clearly impacted by their own negative mastery experiences, the decisions of other members of the leadership team and external education authorities, they had a unique role in this reform implementation. They were both teachers and leaders of it. They were the conduit through which policy as text was transformed into policy as practice.

4.4. Influences on the Teachers' Capacities to Exercise Individual Agency

As teachers began to engage with the reform, the process of engagement drew them closer to enactment. This was understood theoretically as a reflexive process as a consequence of the interplay that Bandura (1997) talks about between the environment, their cognition and their behaviour. The third research question focused on this aspect of their engagement, as the teachers' self-efficacy perceptions became more established, and was examined by considering how such perceptions shaped their agency. As discussed in Chapter Two, the degree to which agency is enacted is influenced by an individual's perceptions of their capacity to meet the expected outcomes, with a central element of this relating to the perception of self-efficacy. The process from initial engagement to agency is undertaken by filtering the information through processes of self-regulatory and self-reflective behaviour (Pajares, 2002; Bandura, 1997). The third question focused on how the participants' self-efficacy perceptions informed the exercise of their agency.

4.4.1. The Documents

Whilst implementation of the reform was mandated, the extent to which the teachers exercised their agency was individual and discretionary. ACARA set the implementation timelines and the school, necessarily, adopted them. However, from the evidence presented in the documents analysed, teacher agency was downplayed.

Language use in the documents, particularly the 'Australian Curriculum: Plan of Attack!' was used to establish actions necessary for teachers to effectively implement the reform. Language such as "sharing", "writing", "auditing", "shaping", "embedding" and "adjusting" all suggested procedures the teachers would be required to undertake. Teachers were directed to: "scrutinise" the Australian Curriculum documents, underline the verbs in the document, analyse the "gaps", "match the enacted curriculum with the new AC documents", "map, conduct an "audit", "get[ting] our teeth" into the project, to achieve a "fair and reasonable spread of learning opportunities" with the aim that "hot spots or gaps should be mapped whole of school so all can see the scope of the transition". Of the seventeen points identified by Ryan as to how the transition to implementation of the new curriculum would occur, eleven were directed, at some level, towards teachers' level of agency. It appeared that it was the intention from the school's point of view that the teachers needed to be active in their negotiations with the curriculum and embedding the reform in their practice.

As already mentioned, and will be further discussed in the following chapter, the language of the Heads of Department in their memos and curriculum documents assumed relatively passive levels of teacher agency. This was evident, for example, in the language used by the English Head of Department, Ann, who referred to their process of engagement and negotiation as "tweaking" and "cutting and pasting", a passive, osmotic process. The internal documents indicated that implementation of English, Mathematics and Science would take place from the beginning of 2012 in Prep (the equivalent of

Foundation) to Year 10. Yet, after working towards implementation for much of 2011, critical elements were yet to be developed to complete the teachers' engagement with the reform. The timelines set down by ACARA and the school's Executive were still to be completed. Whilst the content had been written into unit outlines and work programs by then, the minutes of the first Teaching and Learning Committee meeting indicated that none of the Junior School teachers had "yet to come to terms with assessing via the standards of the Australian Curriculum" (See Appendix L). This demonstrated that whilst the implementation strategies were intended to be supportive, evident in the language and scope of the documents, the reality of implementation raised unanticipated problems delaying the implementation process. What was also important in the analysis of the internal documents, was identifying their silences. None of the internal documents examined suggested that the teachers needed to re-engage with their own constructed understandings of knowledge, curriculum, pedagogy or practice in light of the new direction in curriculum, or to consider the way such changes might be played out in light of the mission and values of the school environment where they worked, or the students they taught. Some of these considerations may have been discussed elsewhere, and whilst referred to in Ryan's initial PowerPoint in January 2011, were not explicit in any of the later documents used to assist the unfolding implementation of the curriculum.

In identifying then the nature of the teachers' agency, the documents, largely written by the administrators [particularly Ryan], did not attempt to break through the teachers' "cultural wall", Hargreaves, 1990, or force a deep re-consideration of their professional practice. Darling-Hammond (2005) suggests the "cacophony" of policy disempowers teachers and it appeared that the documents reflected a recognition by the school which encouraged them to adopt this 'light touch' approach to implementation with the intention of minimising resistance to it. Therefore, whilst the mandated reform required some level of teacher agency, internal documents indicated that the anticipated level of teacher agency would mean working within the existing cultural and work practices at the school site.

4.4.2. Administrators' Perspectives

Level of Discipline Knowledge and Perceptions of Professional Expertise

Having highly capable and competent teachers within their department areas was critical from the administrators' points of view in implementing the requirements of Phase One of the Australian Curriculum. First, the teachers' discipline knowledge significantly impacted on the administrators' individual agency. Teachers who were highly regarded within the profession by their peers and the school's leadership team, confident about their teaching practices, were expected by the administrators to have the professional skill set and expertise to develop the ACARA documents into high quality unit plans and teaching units of work. As well, they felt the proactive involvement of these teachers sent positive signals to other members of the department encouraging their positive engagement as well. These specialist teachers also reduced the workloads, since the administrator could share tasks rather than assuming sole responsibility for them.

Ann highlighted this when she explained that the absence of specialist English teachers within her department was causing her to take a more active role in developing and writing the units of work. The contributions of specialist teachers were lost at this crucial time of developing new units of work since she felt specialist teachers have "...creativity...that love of English...I need specialist teachers" (A, 9.8.11, p. 12). As well, Ann was concerned with some of the older teaching staff in her department area whom she saw as "... just happy to regurgitate what we already have and just put it in ACARA terminology" (A, 9.8.11, p. 4) which she felt would compromise the quality of the units of work developed.

The importance of teacher expertise within their curriculum area was further supported by Kate's comments which suggested that she saw the value of such talents. "Fortunately we've got very dynamic people in our Science Department and our new teacher has jumped on board and has already made changes to the Year 7 course based on ACARA and in consultation with Penny" (K, 8.8.11, p. 16). These teachers appeared to have taken on implementation requirements regardless of Kate's particularly negative views, accepting that the reforms needed to be implemented and their role was to ensure that this would happen. This suggested that the teachers' agency dominated the prevailing negative views held by Kate as the leader of implementation in Science and further suggested that enacting agency decisions were individually informed rather than that of the collective hegemony.

The administrators also had high levels of specialist knowledge, one of the reasons for their roles of added responsibility. Therefore, the curriculum developed by ACARA needed to reflect their own high standards. Ann was very satisfied with ACARA's English curriculum "...There's a blending of different theories that are working now with ACARA. But essentially, ACARA in English, jumping the gun, I know I'm jumping the gun. But ACARA in English is a pretty good reflection of our senior current English syllabus in Queensland" (A, 9.8.11, p. 3). The kinds of changes indicated by the new English curriculum were not significant from Ann's point of view and enabled her to feel confident about implementing the reform effectively.

So there's nothing new or drastic there because we already do that. We have our literature component because there are three stands. We do that, we just make sure that when we do our audit that we align their descriptors and their elaborations to make sure that we are covering at a particular year level what ACARA want us to cover. (A, 9.8.11, p. 7)

Again, the words "audit" and "alignment" were key elements of the engagement and implementation practices Ann would suggest the teachers undertake.

However, as already discussed, Kate held grave concerns, and was becoming angrier and more frustrated as the interview progressed, with the quality of ACARA's Science Curriculum. Kate followed these concerns up with stronger comments:

Well I have to tell you and I hope this gets to somebody somewhere, I actually find the Australian curriculum for Science educationally unsound. There is no

development of concepts, there's disconnected, disjointed units of work, it is very prescriptive. (K, 8.8.11, p. 14)

These particularly negative comments emerged largely because Kate had clear views about the nature of Science and scientific inquiry which meant that the content knowledge of Science was critical to its effectiveness as a subject. Her view was that Science, as distinct from Humanities subject areas, "...examines the whole universe and no one can ever do that, it's just too much for anybody" (K, 8.8.11, p. 5). In English/Humanities:

...they tend to take something....well I'll use the word 'small'. I don't mean that in a disparaging way, but they tend to take something small and create something big out of it. So, for example, in English you might be given something like you know something as simple as a leaf you know or a scrunched up piece of paper or a torn piece of paper and you were told to create a story from this of where did it come from and you know what happened before this. So from something small you synthesise and create something complex but Science is the other way around. The universe is so complex that it is unmanageable so we try to get really clear, simple things out of it. And I guess that's what I was trying to do with what I perceived to be a very complex curriculum... (K, 8.8.11, p. 5)

Kate found this situation so difficult that it led her to question her tenure as Acting Head of Science. As Kate noted: "But anyway I said to them [members of the Science department] though look I haven't got any real agenda to push because I don't know if I'm going to be in this position you know for longer than this year anyway" (K, 8.8.11, p. 11). Kate's negative perceptions created some tension within her department which acted to erode some of the Science teachers' sense of agency. By the time implementation occurred the following year, Kate had resigned and Penny had taken over as Head of Department (Science).

Personal Attitudes towards Change

Kate and Ann shared the view that teaching was a profession where change was fundamental to its daily practices. Kate described teaching as not "...just like producing a product, it's this interplay of all different things" (K, 8.8.11, p. 2) and Ann described education as "...an evolving process and with English I don't think we've looked back at all with the process" (A, 9.8.11, p. 3). She followed up by saying, "...If you're happy to see what's on offer and go with it because you know you've got to be progressive, you can't just stay back in the dark ages" (A, 9.8.11, p. 3) suggesting that change was something she felt particularly positive about in her area. Kate and Ann both recognised the inevitability of change but differed in their engagement practices with it.

But I think most people who are, you know, implementing a particular curriculum they believe that they are doing that in the best possible way...but generally as soon as you feel like you've got everything going smoothly sure enough a change, a new change will happen...People who are very, perhaps very self-confident or very secure in themselves wouldn't find that so difficult to manage because they'd be

thinking well it's a new challenge or I have to do this anyway but I feel like I can cope with it. But other people might think, well, you know, I've just got everything organised. (K, 8.8.11, p. 2)

In this statement Kate was alluding to the various perceptions of teacher agency affected by reforms. For some teachers, the opportunity for change is a positive one, a time for renewal and refreshment with regard to their teaching practice. For others, they can experience feelings of resistance because the reform disturbs their status quo, particularly when perceptions about the personal, educational or professional benefits emerging from the reform process were weak. Ann and Ryan felt that as leaders in their respective areas, it was their responsibility to highlight the positive aspects of change to encourage teachers to act more positively and pro-actively towards it. Kate however, felt that this could be seen as being educationally superficial and eroded teacher professionalism by trying to engage them in a reform that was poorly constructed and presented.

Nevertheless, Kate's comments above indicate that she felt that change was better managed, by the individual and the school, when the person possessed a strong sense of self confidence about their professional practice. Difficulties arise when this conflicts with the intended reform, which for Kate was the case with the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. It was harder to initiate, motivate and direct a change in practice, from Kate's perspective, when teachers were working in, "...an efficient and effective way of learning for them, then a change comes along and it disturbs that equilibrium, and they find that... extremely stressful because it means having to modify a whole series of factors, not just what they teach but it means upsetting them as human beings I guess". (K, 8.8.11, p. 2) Kate expressed concerns about engaging with change for the sake of change. Rather she would suggest that attitudes towards change should be predicated upon on feelings of capability, confidence and competence upon which effective engagement and management of reform is required. There appeared to be little need for change in her current situation:

...it's very difficult for change because you actually believe that what you're doing is really good, otherwise I don't know whether you'd persist in doing it, you'd probably leave teaching altogether. (K, 8.8.11, p. 3)

Kate's comments were particularly noteworthy when considering teacher agency. She aligned professional "security" and "self-confidence" with an individual's capacity to manage change and to achieve the expectancy outcomes that Bandura suggests are a consequence of such actions. However, being "organised", Kate suggested, could be an impediment to achieving this. She was implying that becoming organised developed as a consequence of clearly examining one's personal practices and preferred ways of working or habitus. "Organisation" became a problem when an individual's understandings of practice (habitus) lacked alignment with the imposed change. Therefore, Kate accepted that in such circumstances, resistance was the most likely outcome. Examining resistance in light of informed and critical analysis of practice will be further examined in Chapter Five but it does raise the view here that not all resistance

is by definition necessarily negative and drawn from an unwillingness to engage (as discussed in Chapter Two).

Ann was largely optimistic, seeing change as a movement forward, a progression of past and current practices, as part of what the job required and with that point of view came a relatively uncontested acceptance that positive engagement was required to meet the implementation requirements of the reform. Ryan offered another interpretation of managing educational change from his perspective and experiences. His view was that the significant element to consider regarding this reform in particular was not the curriculum content, (the ‘what’) but the ‘how’. He explained:

...we continually navigate our way through ‘the what’ because ‘the what’ seems to change and is again changing, but what is crucial ultimately is ‘how’ we deliver the what. And how well are our staff and ...our schools and teachers equipped with the teaching and the learning of ‘the what’. (R, 9.8.11, p. 2)

Ryan’s car analogy was used again to explain the difference between ‘the what’ and ‘the how’:

... listen folks, we know that we’ve got to end up at point F, okay some of you might take a slight deviation, but we know as a minimum in our car, you might drive a beamer [BMW], you might drive a Saab, I might drive a Holden, that’s okay but we know we’ve got to have unleaded petrol as a common. We know that we’ve got to have 32psi in each of our tyres and they’ve got to be Dunlop tyres, that’s our common. Now once we’ve got that and we know that, then let’s go on our journey. (R, 9.8.11, p. 15)

Whilst the three administrators accepted change as part of their roles, these extracts from their interviews describing their personal attitudes towards change demonstrated divergent individual approaches towards managing it. These perspectives each shaped the way they understood their leadership and management roles regarding implementing the Australian Curriculum, and they exercised considerable influence over the ways the teachers in their departments and fields of operation engaged, mediated and acted in response to these varied perspectives.

Timeline for Reform between Engagement and Implementation

Providing an appropriate amount of time and high quality opportunities for the teachers to effectively engage with and implement the reform was an important consideration for the administrators. Ann was critically aware of the demands of staff as evident in this exchange between myself (Do) and Ann (A):

Do: What are you feeling is the thing that you as a leader have to be most sensitive to in bringing about this change within your department?

A: Time.

Do: Time of what? Implementation or...?

A: Timeline, implementation timelines.

Do: For whom?

A: For the staff to complete what I ask them. (A, 9.8.11, p. 12)

Ann felt that providing appropriate time for the teachers to work with the documentation prior to implementation was the major requirement to enable effective implementation. This would provide staff time to engage with and negotiate the change. Time to undertake relevant professional learning and discussion surrounding implementation was essential since it enabled staff to “evolve” new curriculum rather than “reinventing” it. (A, 9.8.11, p. 4). However, the administrators were also working closely with the timelines that were mandated by the ACARA curriculum and further developed at the school site prior to the teachers engaging with the new curriculum. They were aware that the expectations of both groups were different and would, most likely, cause conflict which they would need to manage well for all parties’ needs to be met hence their evident concern about time.

Each administrator had set clear timelines prior to the roll out of the curriculum and communicated these to members of their departments and the teacher teams with whom they were directly working. The timelines provided a structure to the approach each of the departments and teacher teams took in working towards implementation. In the identification of the importance of time for effective implementation the administrators were linking “effectiveness” with minimising resistance. Providing time, from their point of view, meant providing the circumstances that supported engagement with the documents in a timeframe that suited the work practices of the teachers in their departments. The intention was to enable them to clearly identify the alignment between their current practices and the policy and to reconcile (harmoniously, was the intention) such differences. The circumstances that the administrators each established were opportunities to work collaboratively whilst coming to understand the leadership structure and arrangements in their departments. The administrators were developing strong vicarious experiences and positive social and visual cues that supported the agency of the teachers.

The administrators generally agreed that the teachers required a degree of autonomy in the way they approached their implementation responsibilities but differed in their views of the extent to which the teachers should be involved in that process. Ann felt that a sense of ownership by the teachers was critical in effective implementation. In practice, this meant acknowledging their professional skills and qualities as a teacher and encouraging them to approach the reform from this perspective contributed positively to their sense of individual agency:

They would value it and if they value it, they see it as important so there’s important aspects that they’ll transfer to the kids so that they will push and try and get the kids to see that this is valuable to them as the all rounded learner etcetera, etcetera. So one complements the other, any way that you look at it. (A, 9.8.11, p. 8)

One way in which Ann set out to achieve this was by ensuring that the teachers in her department were allocated a unit (by Ann) with a topic or focus closely related to their area of specialty. For example, Emily, the new English/Drama teacher, was allocated the performance based units to write. “I’m sure that she will be fantastic and I’m sure she’ll do her best and she wants to... I’m not going to step in and say no you’re doing the wrong thing... And, they’ll feel, I’m sure they would feel proud of themselves. (A, 9.8.11, p. 8)

However, the balance between establishing ownership and providing the support teachers felt they needed was problematic. Teachers’ experiences with previous reforms, Ryan asserted, would be a strong influence on how they exercised their agency in new reform environments. “...from a teacher’s perspective, the message that I read is just give it to me and let me go. I don’t care what I’m doing just let me go and do it well and let me be in my classroom” (R, 9.8.11, pp. 2-3). Ryan believed that teachers see themselves as unique and individualistic, “...teachers get busy we all get busy in our own worlds” (R, 9.8.11, p. 3). He acknowledged, “... some [teachers] will really want to own it, others will want to own what they do in the classroom more than the process and the change itself” (R, 9.8.11, p. 8). Nevertheless, both the elements of time and ownership, whilst important to the teachers to meet the implementation requirements, were understood by the teachers in different ways. This meant that it was incumbent on the administrators to provide enabling environments so that the teachers could exercise their individual agency in these matters.

4.4.3. Agency Narratives – A perspective from the secondary data

The internal documents made little reference to negotiations about teacher agency since the reform was mandated. Teachers of English, Mathematics and Science in Phase One, then teachers of other subjects as the ensuing phases were to be implemented, had little discretion about their agency and this was apparent in the documents which assumed teacher engagement. The text of these documents suggested that the authorities and the school Executive were careful in their choice of language to engender the most positive response from teachers as possible, and were mindful of other factors that might influence the teachers’ engagement practices, such as implementing realistic implementation timelines and professional learning that supported the work of the teachers.

The administrators were aware of problems with previous reforms where there appeared to be a lack of direction, financial or professional support, and the outcomes of these resulting in the failure to engage teachers in the reform process. Critically, the teachers’ [and their own] perceptions of the lack of professional “relevance” between the policy and classroom practice for teachers had led in the past to poor implementation outcomes. These experiences were the insights that the administrators brought with them to this reform environment and shaped their perceptions of teacher agency in reform environments. Establishing alignment between individual professional practices and the nature of the reform was an important influence on the way the administrators viewed their leadership role. Lack of alignment reduced agency. The mandated nature of reform

guaranteed teacher involvement but it was apparent that the administrators saw that teachers' engagement and interrogation of the curriculum was critical for its successful implementation, hence their concerns about the level of expertise of the teachers, their personal attitudes towards the change, and the extent to which they were prepared to interrogate the documents. The teachers' sense of professionalism would shape their responses over and beyond the requirements of the reform. However, the difficulty for the administrators was that they operated in both fields of practice and of policy. Successful implementation from their point of view was based on their management and leadership of the conflicts and contestations of these two fields.

4.5. Chapter Summary

The intention of the school to engender a sense of professional wellbeing at this time of curriculum change was evident in the actions of the administrators and the tone and direction of the internally generated documents. The focus on looking for alignment between current and new practice was intended to affirm and strengthen the teachers' professional habitus. Habitus is constructed over time, so too the dispositions which constitute it. These constructions are informed not just by workplace experiences, but by experience in general engagement with private and public places beyond the workplace environment. The entrenched influence of previous mastery experiences (in light of the negative recent circumstances at the school), shaped the documentation developed by the administrators. Combined with an acknowledgement of each teacher's mastery experiences, it was evident that the documents formed a critical influence in establishing new and positive, vicarious experiences for the teachers, and positive social and visual cues. The focus of the administrators was that where they could find alignment between policy and school practices, they appeared less concerned (and more self-efficacious) in implementing the reforms. These were the practices that they undertook themselves and recommended to their staff.

Each administrator adopted a different approach to leading reform implementation. Ann was keen to do much of the ground work without involving the teachers in an endeavour to make it easier for them, rather than disempowering them, whilst recognizing the importance of instilling a sense of professional ownership so that the teachers would work positively towards engagement and implementation. Ryan saw the 'big picture' and used a critical literacy approach to deconstructing the policy text, the same kind of approach he might have used in his classrooms teaching primary age children. Nevertheless, his intention to achieve a shared outcome was the same. Kate was resistant since she had only recently re-written the entire Science program and felt that this program had greater resonance and site relevance than an externally imposed curriculum document. She made these feelings known and in the process tended marginalised some of her staff who felt compromised since while respecting Kate's scientific knowledge and leadership they also knew they were required to implement the Australian Curriculum Science program. Kate found what she perceived to be a necessary compromise difficult.

It emerged therefore, that each of the administrators had different understandings of how this space, where policy and practice merged, should operate based on their own perceptions of change, perceptions of the culture of the worksite, and the imposed and non-negotiable directives from ACARA and the school's leadership team, as well as the professional qualities, capabilities and personalities of the teachers with whom they were working. These different understandings meant that there were varied implementation pathways for the teachers depending upon in which department or sub-school they were working. This presented another layer for the teachers to negotiate as they began working towards engaging and implementing the ACARA curriculum. It was in these varied and sometimes quite fluid environments, from their own individually constructed spaces, that the teachers began their journey, which is the focus of the following chapter.

Chapter 5 Teachers' Narratives

Failure of educational policy to impact educational practice has long been a concern in education reform research. For instance, Butt, Townsend and Raymond (1991) presented revealing research citing the Rand Studies undertaken as early as 1978, which asserted that after more than fifteen years of attempted reform in the United States, only 5% of these change attempts had been successful. The central premise of this project has been that education policy makers and initiators have failed to acknowledge the significant contribution teachers make to ensuring successful policy implementation and, as a consequence of this oversight, education reform either fails or is not sustained, particularly in the case of large-scale, externally mandated reform. Bowe et al. (1992) provide an explanation as to why teachers are important to reform success:

[p]ractitioners do not confront policy texts as naïve readers; they come from histories, with experience, with values and purposes of their own, they have vested interests in the meaning of policy. Policies will be interpreted differently as the histories, experiences, values, purposes and interests which make up the arena differ. This simple point is the policy writers cannot control the meanings of their texts. Part of their texts will be rejected, selected out, ignored, deliberately misunderstood, responses may be frivolous, etc. (Bowe, Ball & Gold, 1992, p. 22).

For education reform to be effective and sustained, Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) point out that “educational change is a process of coming to grips with the multiple realities of people, who are the main participants in implementing change” (p. 95). They suggest that it is critical to examine the relationship between the policy and the “...thousands of subjective realities embedded in people’s individual and organizational contexts and their personal histories” (p. 43). In this research project I have taken up this view by endeavouring to gain a deeper understanding of the six teachers’ “subjective realities” (p. 43). The way this has been undertaken has been to focus on the construction of their perceptions or dispositions of capacity and capability which are central to shaping their reform responses.

This chapter begins (Section 5.1) with a brief re-storying of the six participants, followed by an examination of the teachers’ responses to Phase One of the Australian Curriculum (Section 5.2) explored using the four themes that dominated their narratives. This analysis is offered to provide understanding of the multiple realities of the participants and the ways that they engaged with the case site, their work and curriculum change. The findings of the research are then summarised (Section 5.3) to conclude this chapter.

5.1. The Participants

To establish the context of the deeper analysis that follows, this section provides a brief storying of the six participants’ perceptions and professional stance drawn from both interviews, and my observations and field notes made at the site.

Jane was an enthusiastic and energetic participant, keen to be part of this study as she was engaging with her first significant educational reform. She was well-known to the school community as a parent, a long term teacher aide, and, at the time of the interviews, a newly graduated teacher of Year 2. As a recent graduate, Jane was reflective about her practice, to learn more about the pedagogy and practice of teaching. The interviews with all participants on the first occasion was held in the office of the Principal, who was away from the school at the time, Jane's second interview took place in a small conference room on site. On both occasions, Jane was very positive, unconcerned that the first interview was in the Principal's office, and was confident and prepared for the interviews since she had taken some time to consider the interview frameworks sent to her before each of the interviews. Jane described her professional journey in a very rich, unique and contemplative way, often using metaphors and analogies to convey a deeper understanding of how she wanted to address the questions. Jane's interviews were fast paced and she was very animated, keen to engage in the conversation that ensued.

As an experienced, but still relatively young teacher, Penny presented at both interviews as a thoughtful and professionally engaged teacher, possessing a firm belief in the critical role that she and her colleagues played in policy implementation. She was held in high regard by her Science colleagues, and was emerging as a strong curriculum leader within the school's leadership team at the second round of interviews when she had taken over as the Science Head of Department. Her experiences teaching in the United Kingdom were the most significant influences on her professional practice. She liked the clarity of direction that centralised, mandated, large-scale reform provided, but realised that this meant uncertainties for the way she viewed the operation of her own professional space in relation to the dominance of policy over her practice. Nevertheless, as a consequence of these experiences in the UK, Penny was able to clearly articulate the boundaries of her professional practice. Her experiences of mandated, externally imposed reform in the UK contributed considerably to her belief that teachers' practice in such circumstances was not necessarily passive but could still be strongly agentive. This was important in this reform context. She turned the construct of passive practitioner into very much an agentive one. Penny saw the act of planning and preparing as a fluid one, involving teachers negotiating and re-negotiating their practices with those of their colleagues and their work environment, as new individual dispositions added to and modified existing ones. At the interviews, Penny was both enthusiastic yet contemplative, thoughtful and animated, angry but optimistic, and keen to tell her story.

As a first year teacher and a past student at the school, Emily was the least confident about her capacity to meet the implementation requirements of this new, national curriculum. She returned to the school, on a one-year contract, with a very strong and positive reputation as a past student but it was still difficult to work with colleagues who had recently been her teachers. It was evident that Emily was looking for guidance and keen for affirmation from key personnel. Her concerns were consistent with many new graduates facing their first classes; however, the difference for Emily, which gave her considerable confidence, was that she was familiar with the environment

and culture at the school. Whilst Emily understood the wide reaching and long term impact of the Australian Curriculum, she had few past experiences of reform to understand what the future would hold for her professionally. At the first interview in particular, her major day-to-day focus was on effectively managing student behaviour and meeting administrative deadlines, consistent with the usual concerns of many new teachers. Emily described herself as a very malleable and flexible professional learner at this time. This implementation journey would establish her very first mastery experiences in relation to educational change and reform.

Shelley too was a past student and had returned to the school upon graduating as a teacher. In the beginning, she was working with many colleagues who had been her teachers; however, after seven years at the school, she was well established as their professional peer. Shelley presented at the interviews as confident and relatively relaxed about the impending changes required to implement Phase One. She had been through quite a lot of personal adversity in recent times, often shared with members of staff who had supported her through these situations. As a consequence, Shelley described herself as quite resilient and this transferred to managing the requirements of this new reform, which did not appear to be particularly stressful for her. She too was a teacher with a very clearly defined sense of her professional space and it was from this context that she prepared to negotiate and mediate the implementation requirements of the Australian Curriculum. However, she consistently referred to the need to protect her teaching space and appeared to be somewhat resistant to an imposed reform, rather than one initiated at the school from a site-specific identified need.

David was a young teacher in the Junior Years, who took over this job from his wife when she left on maternity leave. He presented as a thoughtful and somewhat frustrated teacher, belying the engaging, relaxed and cheerful persona he displayed to his colleagues and students. Previous professional experiences had shaken his confidence and he did not present as particularly confident about his capacity to implement successfully this reform, although he had strong personal opinions about the educational requirements of any reform. David defined his professional strengths as being more pastoral than curriculum related. He was concerned about implementation because there were many elements of his professional practice that he was still unsure about, specifically his curriculum and content knowledge. David was also concerned that the emphasis on curriculum in this reform would consume his practice.

Tina, the wife of the Principal and Year 7 co-ordinator, was a confident and articulate interviewee on both occasions. Her broad experiences of teaching established patterns of engagement and methods of working in times of change that she felt confident would enable her to meet these requirements without too much disruption to her current practices. Of all the participants, Tina's negative past experiences weighed most heavily on her willingness to engage with this reform even though they appeared to have enriched her practice and sense of professional capability. She was animated and assertive, angry and sometimes frustrated at the interviews. As the wife of the Principal, she had some access to 'behind the scenes' decision making; however, both she and her

husband had established fairly clear lines of discussion about their respective roles at the school. Tina was an advocate for the high professional status of teachers and, through her language and demeanour, clearly expressed her viewpoint that effective policy implementation was contingent upon teachers embedding it in their pedagogical practice.

These brief narratives identify a number of points that are part of the considerations in the following analysis. The diversity of the teachers who volunteered to participate in this study is of particular note. They were of mixed gender, had a diverse range of teaching experiences and years of teaching practice, and taught different age groups in a range of discipline areas. This diversity provided a rich context from which to analyse the nature of teachers' responses.

5.2. Themes

This section of the chapter examines four dominant themes emergent from the inquiry. There were four major areas of influence shaping the six teachers' responses to this reform.

1. The teachers' lived experiences.
2. The teachers' relationship with critical 'others'
3. The cultural construct of place
4. The teachers' sense of self

Bandura (1986, 1997, 2001) theorises that individuals engage in a cognitive process which examines and interrogates the interactions that take place between their personal, behavioural and environmental conditions, which in turn, act to inform their sense of self-efficacy and agency. The research challenge for this study was to examine those interactions, in the operational space of six teachers as they engaged with a new reform. A significant body of research has been undertaken on the nature of teachers' work (Hargreaves, 1980; Sikes, 1990; Fullan, 1999; Nias, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2005), and the teachers' experiences, responses and ensuing actions in this study were consistent with much of this research. At a macro environmental level, the teachers' responses ranged from engagement to resistance based largely on the way they located themselves within this reform environment. However, individually their responses were quite different which provided rich data for the project.

The themes are examined in light of the central tenets of Bandura's view of learning, a process of reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1977b) which is based on the interactions between a person's behaviour, internal personal factors and their environmental influences (Bandura, 1978). The interactional nature of the operation of these three areas means that each of the elements can act as the stimulus, response or the environmental enforcer (Bandura, 1978). This analysis of Bandura's theories is linked to Bourdieu's (1990, 1991, 1993) conceptualisation of behaviour via habitus and field by

investigating the nature of an individual's dispositions, a concept shared by both Bourdieu (1990, 1991, 1993) and Bandura (2001).

“Self-efficacy is a cognitive process in which people construct beliefs about their capacity to perform at a given level of attainment” (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy, 1998, p. 203). In so doing, individuals have an outcome expectancy of how well an assigned task can be achieved. Whilst there are many influences on outcomes, self-efficacy beliefs are significant contributors to outcomes since these beliefs:

...influence how much effort people put forth, how long they will persist in the face of obstacles, how resilient they are in dealing with failures, and how much stress or depression they experience in coping with demanding situations. (p. 203)

To understand the agency of teachers in this circumstance, it is necessary to go back to the beginning of this sequence of action. As such, an investigation of self-efficacy via the four themes identified is undertaken in the following sections.

5.2.1. Lived Experiences

Whilst the use of the term “lived experience” does not, in this study, carry with it the meanings associated with its use in the field of psychology, particularly mental health, it is used to describe knowledge gained through direct, first hand involvement in everyday events. Through an individual's lived interactions of spatiality (lived space), corporeality (lived body), temporality (lived time) and relationality (lived human relation), Van Manen (1990) contends our self is revealed (Mish, 2002; Van Manen, 1990). Van Manen's conceptualisation of lived experience provides a nuanced conceptualisation of the way the teachers' past professional experiences informed their current practices, and as a consequence, were influential in shaping their responses to this reform.

Two sub-themes from the data emerged in relation to this theme. Firstly, the teachers' perceptions of their previous experiences with reform were important in informing their initial responses as they began their engagement with Phase One. Secondly, past workplace practices, either at the research site or other sites, were also important influences.

Previous Reform Experiences

The variation in the teachers' responses demonstrated the influence of their individual experiences with previous reforms and highlighted the influence of mastery experiences on current practices. Teachers focused on negative reform experiences from which they located themselves within the next reform. Such learned behaviours become future ritualised behaviours in the event of change. The teachers' narratives reinforced Bandura's view that mastery experiences, influenced by perceptions of previous performance success, were the strongest contributors to the teachers' expectations of their proficiency in implementing the requirements of this reform which is consistent with the efficacy research of Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy (1998). As

positive experiences build, teachers become increasingly confident in their ability to successfully undertake this role, enabling them to set more challenging tasks, achieving higher educational goals for themselves and their students. As a consequence, they report better interpersonal relationships with parents, students and colleagues (Bandura, 1997; Fenyvesiová & Kollárová, 2013; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy, 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2000). As Bandura (1997) contends, mastery experiences are the strongest influences on an individual's levels of self-confidence and efficacy, and once formed, are difficult to change. Bourdieu too suggests that:

...only a thorough going process of countertraining, involving repeated exercises, can, like an athlete's training, durably transform habitus. (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 172)

In this study, the influence of teachers' previous experiences largely supported that view and provided an insight into the situation which often confronts leaders and managers. Given similar workplace environments, individual perceptions about their capacity to engage effectively with new tasks often seem to be more influenced by teachers' perceptions of their past engagement experiences rather than current circumstances.

Tina's interpretation of negative past experiences supported this view. When asked about her previous involvement in curriculum reform, she described work she had undertaken with a program which developed Student Performance Standards (SPS). Her experiences were not positive:

It was forced upon us...I just remember the hours that we spent on it and you had to have the documentation done by this time and forget about the teaching and forget about your social life it was just SPS [Student Performance Standards]. (T, 9.8.11, p. 7)

In commenting on her previous experiences she frequently recounted negative experiences, "So, you've done that over and over and over, when another thing comes out, whoa I'm taking the back step. It's the young person's turn because you know what - in five years' time it'll be out (T, 9.8.11, p. 14).

Whilst Shelley's experiences with previous change were relatively limited, she held such strong views it could have been interpreted that she had had multiple experiences with reforms and change.

...so many things come and go that are maybes and never happens and it's been talked about for years but nothing has really come about it. So now that it's (the Australian Curriculum) actually here I have to start showing interest. (S, 9.8.11, p. 5)

Nevertheless, this was Shelley's subjective reality supporting Bandura's view that perceptions of self-efficacy are drawn from an individual's perceptions of their lived experiences, not necessarily its reality.

As a young teacher, Penny spent some time teaching in central London between 2000 and 2003 after having grown up in Queensland and trained as a teacher. In London, she encountered a very centralised and externally controlled education environment. These experiences had a pivotal influence in shaping Penny's professional practice and influenced the way she approached teaching tasks and engagement with curriculum reform. During her time in London, she was involved in the rewriting of curriculum in every year she taught, including middle years' Science, writing for the GCSE and the school's vocational science qualification GMBQ (P, 8.8.11, p. 1). Penny commented on her experience of rewriting the Biology syllabus after her arrival back in Australia:

What was acceptable one year became unacceptable the next year as they (Queensland Studies Authority)... well as it appeared to us as staff teaching it and panelists...this was okay one year and then you turn up next year and they say no you actually can't do that. (P, 8.8.11, p. 2)

Penny described her sense of frustration. "The syllabus has been going for seven years now and it was only after four years that it was clearly identified by the body that's governing the course...that when kids respond to this they actually have to make a decision as a part of their response if they want to get an A" (P, 8.8.11, p. 3). Unsurprisingly, this made her feel "frustrated" because she felt that this kind of approach could be overcome by "spending some time developing models of implementation...so that clear and sensible approaches" could be developed (P, 8.8.11, p. 2). However, Penny supported the centralised approaches to curriculum reform she had worked with in London, and saw centralised, nationally mandated reform as having many benefits from her professional point of view.

In London, she was able to implement a program that ensured students "...on the same day at the same time, if you're in year nine, you sit down and you do your key stage three science test paper one and paper two, nine o'clock, eleven o'clock, everyone sits the same test" (P, 8.8.11, p. 4). The certainty and consistency of this framework equipped Penny to deal more effectively with curriculum reform upon her return. "But I think my experience in England with the course work made the new syllabus here, when I first came back, much easier because I could see the value of it and I implemented it across a range of grades for four years so it wasn't a shock to me" (P, 8.8.11, p. 14).

However, even within this educationally prescriptive environment, Penny saw evidence of some levels of teacher agency. Whilst the sequence and timing of the national curriculum was mandated and exams were nationally prescribed, Penny observed that teachers "could teach the content in whatever order [you] want" (P, 8.8.11, p. 4). These UK experiences of professional individuality in mandated reform environments, combined with her observations of the Queensland system of senior curriculum programs highlighted higher levels of teacher agency than might have been initially thought:

...most schools and most teachers don't get the benefit of seeing other teachers' work and how they implement a program and, you can take with the Queensland system, the great view of it is, that you can take the same syllabus and go to fifty

schools and you'll see fifty different programs but they will all meet the criteria. (P, 8.8.11, p. 3)

Penny's experiences in London with large-scale, mandated reform gave her an experience of its policy implementation which tended to allay her concerns about the impact the reform would have on her teaching practice and was important in allaying the concerns of her colleagues as they began their engagement with it. Penny saw the implementation cycle, even of mandated reform, as cyclical rather than linear, confident of the agency that teachers could exercise within a regulated reform environment. She felt, "implementation should start, policy and practice should be pretty close and then off you [the teacher] go" (P, 8.8.11, p. 3).

Whilst the frequency of reform was important in shaping teachers' responses to the current reform, their narratives also indicated that it was the intensity of engagement required of these previous reforms that strongly influenced their future responses. Importantly, intensity alone was not enough to shape their responses but it was the intensity in light of the outcome that emerged as more critical.

Based on examining their previous experiences with reform, it was evident that each of the teachers approached this reform differently as a consequence of different experiences and outcomes. Negative past experiences strongly influenced the teachers' responses to this reform. They were wary of wholly embracing the requirements of this new reform in light of past experiences, critiquing its various elements based on those of the past. Nevertheless, what emerged from this study was that past experiences also established ritualised engagement practices and actions which the teachers used in their initial engagement activities. It was in this way, that the teachers initially positioned themselves in this reform and positioned the reform within their own constructs of professional practice.

Previous Work Practices

Not all of the teachers had experience with previous reforms but they had developed ritualised patterns of behaviour as a response to engaging with previous workplace cultures and practices. This was important. As new teachers or inexperienced in change contexts, they had little confidence to exercise agency. Lack of support from the school and colleagues, a limited understanding of the role they were required to play, limited experience with the trajectory of change in their workplaces, and an inability to prioritise where they should direct their attention, meant teachers in these circumstances felt marginalised, disempowered and resistant. However, upon gaining clarity in these areas, the teachers indicated that their levels of confidence and professional capacity significantly improved.

David's situation clearly demonstrated this. He described his early years of employment as jobs where there was "no real structure" (D, 8.8.11, p. 3), and no units of work to use "I kind of feel like I was sinking in hindsight" (D, 8.8.11, p. 3) and his conclusion: "I had nothing to go off, it was brutal... To be honest, like my first year

teaching, I was the only Year 5 teacher and it is very much a blur, it was kind of sink and swim (D, 8.8.11, p. 3).” However, he went on to state that, “...I was aware that that wasn’t a good experience and I wanted to have another experience before I... Yeah I gave up teaching I guess (D, 8.8.11, p. 4).”

David felt that the schools were too busy to support and mentor new staff and that leaders were providing new teachers like him with little direction. He just, “worked it out for himself” (D, 8.8.11, p. 6). David accrued little professional knowledge from this site and found little alignment between his constructs of what effective teaching looked like and what he was involved with. In these early days he “didn’t actually look at the curriculum too much, I was just focused on delivering it (D, 8.8.11, p. 4).” “I just felt like I was pretty, yeah, I can relate to kids (D, 8.8.11, p. 4).” Once David was able to recognise his professional strengths, he felt capable of continuing as a teacher. He learnt what worked to make him feel successful about his practice. “I probably prefer to be told, to be more prescribed as to where to go” (D, 8.8.11, p. 6) because “I just feel confident you’re doing the right thing then... I guess because some things are so open, you want to make sure you are delivering it at the right level and your expectations are correct” (D, 8.8.11, p. 6). It was evident that these negative past experiences eroded his agency at the time; however, they also built agentive behaviours by building David’s resilience. These experiences were critical influences on his understanding of his preferred ways of practice. They continued to have long-term impacts on his reform engagement strategies.

Emily, as a graduate teacher, described herself as “a blank canvas” and “probably the perfect candidate” (E, 8.8.11, p.4) when commenting on her role in the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. Her understanding of the Australian Curriculum was mostly derived from her university studies where she commented that her lecturers had taken a relatively passive approach to its implementation. They indicated to Emily that the transition to the Australian Curriculum would be a relatively smooth one, moving from working with Essential Learnings, the current curriculum model, to the new reform. As a consequence, Emily was not particularly anxious about what would be required of her. However, her lack of experience also meant that Emily felt she had not earned the right to exercise her voice in any of the discussions around implementation decisions at the site. In the first round of interviews, Emily commented:

If I had been teaching for twenty or thirty years, I would be a lot more forthcoming with my opinions and how things should be dealt with and implemented but at the moment, I am happy to just sit back, watch, listen and look. (E, 8.8.11, p. 4)

However, whilst discussion may suggest marginalisation, and even an absence of agency, Emily also felt that her lack of experience was an advantage. She “didn’t have twenty, thirty years’ experience [so didn’t] have backlogs of syllabus running around in my head” (E, 8.8.11, p. 8). Earlier, she relayed to me: “And yeah, give me another ten years and I’ll be in there fighting, going that’s not right” (E, 8.8.11, p. 4).

Jane’s narrative further developed the point that there was an obvious relationship between personal perceptions of agency and years of teaching experience. After more

than fourteen years at the school, although only recently as a teacher, she identified strongly with this school and its working environment. Her long term association with the school as a teacher aide meant she had formed long term professional and personal relationships which contributed towards her confidence. Given that Jane had limited personal involvement in reform, she had witnessed many changes in educational practices over her fourteen year association at the school. Her observations of effective reform implementation were a requirement for the school to exercise its “financial will” to support the changes required (J, 8.8.11, p. 7). In drawing from more general experiences with the way she made meaning of new environments, Jane described what she considered her role to be in this reform as one of “tightening the bolts” (J, 8.8.11, p. 5).

The range and variety of previous work practices impacted on the teachers’ first engagement patterns with Phase One implementation. Compared to those teachers who had a wide range of reform experiences, newer teachers generally began with fewer concerns but also with fewer strategies as to how they should engage with it and embed it as part of their practice. Those with limited past experiences were more passive and less agentive when it came to exercising their authority over the reform and, it will be noted further in the chapter, would become more observant of the visual and social cues and the actions of others, particularly the leadership team, as guides to inform their implementation strategies, negotiations and mediations.

Perceptions of Reform Efficacy

It emerged from the interviews that teachers needed to conceptualise their agency, even in a situation of mandated change since this was critically influential in shaping their responses to this reform. In examining their responses to previous reform experiences and educational change (particularly for newer teachers), the teachers possessed, often sub-consciously, a set of loose but unarticulated criteria they shared and exercised at various levels based on their past practices which I have called reform efficacy. The quality and nature of the reform fitted an efficacy construct developed as part of the teachers’ professional practice. Three factors appeared to be important in establishing the reform’s efficacy from their point of view – the strength of the relationship of the policy to current teaching practice; evidence of the likelihood of its implementation; and, evidence of its long-term sustainability.

Any new reform required alignment with the teachers’ current practices. For newer teachers this was not a significant issue since, as Shelley commented, they are in “the learning phase of putting it all together” (S, 9.8.11, p. 3). However, after some years of experience, she identified successful engagement as one where there hadn’t been “...huge changes as far as I was concerned because it really meant taking what we already had and just tweaking it to fit in with a different framework” (S, 9.8.11, p. 1). Jane was confident that the Australian Curriculum had been developed by educational experts and from her perspective aligned with current practices. She felt that implementation would have minimal change for her practice. Penny too was confident that development of the new curriculum had been undertaken by experts and whilst none

of the teachers engaged with the policy on-line, as was part of ACARA's process of gaining feedback during the phases of development, they saw rigour in this process. Whilst the Australian Curriculum was a mandated policy requiring their engagement at some level, the rationale for a national curriculum resonated with them.

Failure of previous reforms was generally interpreted by the more experienced teachers to be a consequence of weak links between policy and practice resulting in poor long term change outcomes. Each of the teachers, other than Jane and Emily (who were relatively new to the profession), had been part of reform agendas that were initially well resourced, with adequate time allocations, but ongoing support for change in the classroom had not been forthcoming either from the initiators of the policy or the school's leadership team. These more experienced teachers realised that high confidence levels could be eroded easily particularly if they observed current reform problems in critical areas observed as failures of past policy, such as the removal of resourcing or critical personnel, perceptions that constructed their sense of reform sustainability.

This was particularly highlighted by Tina who was concerned and agitated about the reform's sustainability by the second round of interviews as a consequence of post implementation discussions she had had with colleagues outside the school and comments made privately by her husband, the Principal. In the first interview, whilst having some misgivings based on negative past experiences, her concerns seem to be allayed with this reform agenda: "[t]his is real, this won't be phased out so anything we do now will stand". (T, 9.8.11, p. 7) and "I've jumped on board. I've committed, if I've committed then we have to keep going. (T, 27.3.12, p. 13). However, by the second round of interviews, she was reconsidering her position, "...If it wasn't to proceed, [I would]...just shake my head and if they ever try to introduce anything ever again, I would have nothing to do with it" (T, 27.3.12, p. 13). Tina's comments demonstrated a level of fragility around individual levels of commitment to change, most notably when it was perceived that the initial rhetoric and levels of commitment did not appear to be sustained by those responsible for its implementation. As well, the teachers felt there was no pressing need to change their current curriculum practices.

In assessing the efficacy of this reform the teachers needed to feel confident that it would be fully implemented. Tina, Shelley and Penny's perceptions were strongly influenced by past experiences; particularly negative ones. Tina's negative responses developed when she was part of reforms that "fizzled out" (T, 9.8.11, p. 7). Shelley was reticent to engage too early before the school's leadership team confirmed implementation at the site, since "...so many things come and go that are maybes and never happens" (S, 9.8.11, p. 15). Penny's frustration with previous QSA (Queensland Studies Authority) curriculum initiatives made them each wary about the efficacy of this reform initially. As mentioned, Tina was prepared to commit to this reform because of its national scope:

But I know that's not true with ACARA because it's a national curriculum. It's going to stay, it's going to stay. So I'm more willing, with time permitting, to be involved. (T, 9.8.11, p. 15)

What was observed in the engagement practices of these teachers was that it was not just the number of negative experiences with previous reform that contributed to feelings of low self-efficacy but the depth of such experiences. This study showed that only one negative experience deeply felt by the individual, could dominate the teachers' attitudes to future reform. In other words, low self-efficacy was not always a consequence of repeated negative previous experiences leading to negative mastery experiences but could have been the consequence of one, particularly negative experience.

Teachers used their previous experiences with reforms to evaluate the sustainability of the current reform. Whilst research (Labone, 2004; Pajares, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy, 2001) suggests that the more years of teaching experience a teacher has increases their levels of self-efficacy, initial positive engagement experiences with reform needed to be confirmed and sustained by ongoing supportive practices to maintain these high levels of efficacy. This is based, largely, on mathematical probability, since teachers exposed to more reforms have a higher probability of acquiring more positive reform experiences. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy and Hoy (2001) would suggest the reverse is also true, that teachers who continued to have negative experiences with change, were less resilient and more likely to leave the profession.

Narratives of Lived Experiences – An Overview

In summary, perceptions of how this group of six teachers had managed previous reforms were a powerful indicator of the way they initially engaged with, made decisions and intended to enact the new reform. It was evident that previous positive experiences with reform, either in number or intensity, increased teachers' confidence in their ability to undertake new roles and challenges and supports the research that indicates this increases teacher efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Fenyvesiová & Kollárová, 2013; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, & Hoy, 1998; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, & Hoy, 2001). However, past negative experiences had a negative impact on the teachers in this study and supported the view that mastery experiences, of the four influences on self-efficacy, are the strongest and, once formed, the most difficult to change (Bandura, 1997).

Those teachers with negative past experiences (Tina, David and Shelley for example) were initially more reluctant to engage with the reform and became more reliant on vicarious experiences and social and visual cues to locate themselves within the current policy agenda. Their unwillingness to embrace fully the reform did not indicate that they were resistant or negative change agents. Rather, their response was a consequence of their initial perceptions of minimal agency regarding the reform. They remained skeptical of how the reform would impact on their current practices which Shelley and Tina deemed to be more than professionally adequate. This confirmed the importance of linking policy to teacher agency and emphasised a need to address concerns that policy underplays the role of teachers in effective implementation (Apple, 1993; Ball, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Fullan, 1993; and Hargreaves, 2003). In

these situations, it would be the challenge of the leadership team to change teachers' perceptions.

Unsurprisingly, the teachers with longer professional careers had a larger 'bank' of experiences to draw from than new career teachers; therefore, their perceptions of the way they interpreted their effectiveness in managing those interactions played a dominant role in initial engagement in this context. However, what also emerged in investigating the extent of teachers' engagements with reform, was not just the number of reforms they had professionally experienced but the intensity of each engagement. This suggested that a graduate's one negative experience had similar impacts on confidence and perceptions of capability as the repeated negative experiences more consistent with teachers who had taught for many years. It emerged that it was the accrued level of professional self-confidence that was a stronger contributing influence on shaping the teachers' responses to reform rather than the quantity of teachers' negative experiences with previous reforms.

Ryan and Ann understood this situation since they had shared experiences based on negative past reform engagements themselves, which influenced their leadership and organisational decisions. This was evident in the language these administrators chose in presenting the documents and implementation strategies. Kate's negative responses to the reform were also shaped by her past experiences, and the lack of professional confidence she drew from these difficult past experiences was influential in her engagement responses to this reform. Consequently, such concerns about the educational 'robustness' of the reform were transmitted in her dealings with the staff, which initially reduced their self-efficacy perceptions as identified by Penny in the first round of interviews.

The administrators and school leaders had been very active at the school in creating a positive implementation environment. Many aspects of the teachers' workplaces were checked, examined and reviewed to determine ways in which implementation could be supported. Ways in which they endeavoured to achieve this was by providing relevant professional learning opportunities; extending time frames for teachers to meet and discuss implementation timelines and requirements; professional support from experienced and well qualified staff from within the school; and establishing a rhetoric of low stress, emphasising foregrounding the mission and values specific to this site in which the reform would be embedded. All of these aspects promoted the positive and professional elements of the teachers' work at the school, strengthening its specific culture and education practices. However, whilst these social and visual cues at the site were increasingly positive and supportive, entrenched personal experiences drawn from previous reforms initially dominated the teachers' responses to the new curriculum. It was evident that perceptions of past experiences (their mastery experiences) were difficult to influence, and dominated their early responses to change.

Finally, previous experiences with reform led the teachers to anticipate that to exercise agency in this reform, the importance of their role in its effective implementation needed to be acknowledged. Tina's comments, based on her previous

experiences with reform, best summarised this view, “[to gain an] understanding of it (curriculum change), we need to have a say” (T, 9.8.11, p. 8). She concluded that weak engagement meant loss of agency at implementation “...you can’t whinge and moan about it when you don’t like it because you know... if you haven’t been part of it then don’t say anything (T, 9.8.11, p. 8).

Therefore, these experiences which formed the teachers’ subjective realities as they approached their engagement with this reform, are important considerations for conceptualising education policy. As Ball (2003) contends, policy should be viewed as a cycle which includes the work of teachers as they engage in the space between policy as text and policy as practice, and strong links need to be evident between the fields of policy and the fields of practice. These narratives of the teachers’ early engagement practices support Spillane’s view that it is in this space, between policy and practice, that teachers derive their “authoritative voice” (Spillane, 1999, p. 159). Already in the analysis, at the stage of first engagement, the six teachers were responding in quite different ways with differing emphases about their position in this reform context, which were drawn from their diverse past experiences. This certainly provided a considerable challenge for the school’s leaders in developing appropriate strategies to achieve their mandate of effective policy implementation.

5.2.2. Critical Others

It was apparent from the teachers’ narratives that as they engaged more intensely with Phase One of the Australian Curriculum, they felt that the actions of their colleagues and the working relationships established would be important in shaping their reform responses. The analysis of the teachers’ narratives that constituted this theme focused on the critical relationships of leadership at the work site. Three critical relationships were identified. First, the actions of the Principal and the role he adopted would inform their early responses to the reform; second, the middle managers at the school, the Heads of Department and curriculum co-ordinators were important in providing both initial and ongoing guidance as to the conditions and requirements of engagement and implementation; and the final group was their peers and colleagues from whom they received feedback via their comments and actions. Whilst the participants’ previous experiences constructed their mastery experiences, the strongest influence on forming their self-efficacy perceptions to this curriculum reform were the other influences on their self-efficacy perceptions as engagement began. Most significantly, vicarious experiences, or the actions undertaken by respected peers and colleagues, emerged to challenge their mastery experiences.

As described in Chapter 2, vicarious experiences are those experiences that shape self-efficacy beliefs as individuals observe the behaviour modelled by others. Bandura contends that individuals are influenced by models (colleagues, contemporaries or those considered to be experts) who demonstrate (in their view) better ways of doing things, particularly when this is demonstrated by those they respect or believe share similar attributes. Vicarious experiences are influential in shaping dispositions both for those with limited experiences as well as others who have high levels of self-efficacy. In this

study, Bandura's vicarious experiences have been interpreted to be behaviours that result from spoken comments, written statements in policy documents, statements and emails and written texts exhibited by respected colleagues at the school site such as the leadership team and members of the school's executive since these groups possessed the authority of their positions to have 'expert' status in curriculum policy matters at the school.

Relationship with the Principal

At the top of this administration 'tree', the person whom the participants identified as exerting the strongest influence on how they conceptualised and engaged with the reform was the Principal. The administrators, Kate, Ryan and Anne, took their leadership cues from the Principal as well. During their interviews, Jenny, Shelley, Penny, Tina and David spoke about the critical role that clear and strong leadership played in establishing and guiding the change.

In their view, the Principal was responsible for ensuring that the changes had been embedded into the strategic thinking of the school, provision had been made to include reform considerations in the school's planning, budgetary provisions had been made to support implementation requirements, and appropriate professional learning was provided as required by the teachers. Activities in these areas provided important signals to the participants of the importance and level of priority the Principal placed on the reform. The extent to which he was prepared to make structural and cultural changes at the school site was also an indication to the teachers of the Principal's perceptions (as well as being representative of the school community he led) of the importance he placed on the work of the teachers in effectively implementing this reform. It was an indication of the regard which the Principal held for the professional nature of teachers' work. If these areas were appropriately attended to, the participants' confidence regarding the reform, and constructing their role in it, increased.

The status of pre-existing relationships between the teachers and the Principal was also an important point in shaping teachers' responses. David's trust in the leadership of the Principal was evident when he stated after the first staff meeting, "...he [the Principal] like obviously spent a lot more time analysing it and I haven't, and he makes a good argument, so whether he's right or wrong, I'm not sure, but I'm convinced" (D, 8.8.11, p. 8).

The Principal's continued relaxed, unstressed and seemingly unconcerned demeanour was important in sustaining the positive momentum established at the first staff meeting. Emily particularly noted that her early concerns, "... I get really mixed up with all the...politics of it all and those acronyms that people throw around all the time - what they think and what this group thinks and they're trying to lobby for this. I just go, I've got no idea, and you've lost me now. (E, 8.8.11, p. 5) When the Principal suggested that her concerns were largely unfounded or, at the very least, able to be managed, she then saw it as a "good idea" (E, 8.8.11, p. 6). This reassurance from the Principal was represented the authoritative response she needed.

Penny was also closely observing the actions and statements of the Principal which she was using as a guide to inform the way she and her colleagues needed to conceptualise the policy at the school. Penny reflected that "...Principals just have to be supportive" (P, 8.8.11, p. 8), and to provide a clear direction for the teachers, intervening if problems occurred with implementation (P, 8.8.11, p. 9). This view stemmed from a previous situation where this Principal had provided little feedback on what Penny felt was a significant professional achievement. His hesitance to be forthcoming in acknowledging her achievements made her begin to question herself and the work she was undertaking. Whilst change provided the teachers with an opportunity to change the dispositions that constituted their habitus, the challenges for the teachers led some to question their taken-for-granted practices. As a result, Penny realised how important feedback from the principal was in influencing the way she managed any future tasks. Creating an environment conducive to supporting the reform was "the role of the Principal" (P, 8.8.11, p. 8).

Consequently, the Principal's role in establishing the teachers' engagement responses and their ongoing actions in supporting the implementation of the reform, was critical in establishing their initial perceptions around the reform and their ongoing engagement with it. It was the quality of the relationship between the participants and the Principal that critically informed the teachers' responses to the reform, most particularly in circumstances where the dominating views from the external environment were contrary to the Principal's. Again the participants used language such as faith and trust as important qualities in building their confidence in meeting the implementation requirements of Phase One of the Australian Curriculum.

Relationship with Middle Managers – Heads of Department and Curriculum Co-ordinators

Teachers, as in any workplace, become used to an accepted way of working which is comprised of the way the leadership of the organisation is structured; the way leadership responsibilities are delineated; administrative practices are organized; which preferred teaching methods are promoted; and the way working relationships operate and are mediated and negotiated at the site. At this site, Heads of Department in the Secondary School and teaching partners in the Junior School were the most critical in shaping the teachers' sense of agency. The effectiveness and strength of these relationships had a strong impact on their engagement and decision making processes in light of the new curriculum, and were very influential in shaping the teachers' perceptions of their agency.

As discussed in Chapter Four, each of the administrators was mindful of the needs of the teachers as they developed their implementation plans and strategies. This section focuses on the interpretations of such practices undertaken from the teachers' perspectives. The development of a shared culture of practice in relation to implementing the reform emerged as the most critical factor influencing the teachers' responses to the reform. Discussions in Chapter Four indicated that each of the administrators adopted a different style of leadership and different expectations of the teachers' engagement with

the reform. Ryan adopted a broader context for implementation within a metaphorical space of ‘attacking’ the reform, ‘mapping’ it, identifying necessary action via an analysis of the verbs. Whilst Kate was concerned about the quality of the Science curriculum, her first strategy was to suggest a curriculum audit of the new curriculum in line with current practices. Ann adopted a more directed approach, distilling the ACARA English document quite extensively and incorporating it into existing units of work as well as developing new ones. Yet, almost by default, it was also in this way that her actions were seen by her teachers as an acknowledgement of their curriculum expertise.

Shelley particularly felt this strongly when she commented that Ann had suggested implementation of Phase One was, “...no big deal, you don’t need to know too much, all you need to know is this and this and go and do it.” (S, 9.8.11, p. 15) This meant:

I never felt as though I was on my own and it was here, take this, go off and do it. It was always done...there was just a level of support and there was never, it was never, you have to have this done by this date...it was never forced, it was always encouraged. And she (HOD English) led by example too because she did a lot herself and she never said that but we could see that she had done a lot. She’d always be full of encouragement. (S, 27.3.12, p. 4)

This encouragement was very important to Tina as well since she needed “...someone to say, yeah, you’re on the right track, keep going. I definitely need that” (T, 27.3.12, p. 17). Tina went on to describe the importance of professional trust in the way it impacted on the operations of the English department:

It might not necessarily be the direction that we go in but I will be heard. And I feel comfortable enough with that person to say well, I don’t really agree with that, what about this? And because in the past I’ve been able to do that successfully and I’ve felt valued, then in that situation I can do it in that department. (T, 9.8.11, p. 18)

Emily also confirmed the importance of this relationship. She noted that if she needed to find someone whom she “could have trust in...who knew ACARA well to go to if I couldn’t get answers or couldn’t see [her] way clear” (E, 8.8.11, p. 3) then Ann, as the English HOD, was someone she would turn to. The English HOD provided the engagement pathway by developing the ACARA English syllabus into an internal document which she had already aligned with her perceptions of the school and department practices. This process was described as “updating and revamping” (T, 27.3.12, p. 3) which meant for Tina that “the thinking was done”. (T, 27.3.12, p. 5) Ann was held in high regard by Tina, so in this situation she trusted Ann’s judgment. Tina was sure that the “kids [would be] provided with the best possible teaching and learning” (T, 27.3.12, p.3). The demeanour of the HOD was also important for Emily. “So if she’s relaxed then I’m like okay it’ll come together” (E, 8.8.11, p. 10).

From their perspective, the curriculum leader who presented a clearly articulated set of practices and procedures at the initial meeting and followed through with these, instilled a sense of confidence that carried through the whole implementation process. Tina discussed the importance of this even when the HOD might have reservations about the reform. She explained, "...you're the HOD not only battling with your own misgivings about it [the Australian Curriculum] but you have to be positive to get your team onside. (T, 9.8.11, p. 10)

These comments by Tina were particularly apt when reflecting upon the problems she was encountering in Maths where the Maths HOD demonstrated a very different style. From Tina's point of view, as the only secondary teacher in this study teaching in the secondary Maths department, the Maths HOD gave little direction and failed to communicate the plan for implementation of the Maths Curriculum. This sidelined her involvement as a member of the Maths department. As she highlighted, "I don't feel he's [Maths HOD] ever encouraged me to come on board so I don't know anything about Maths" (T, 9.8.11, p. 11). The style of the Maths Department meetings was very different from those of the English department.

I'll often get positive feedback [in English] or just something like when I say to her, just yesterday, "Do you want to see it [Tina's planning]?" "No, I trust you. I know that you'll do a good job." So I feel like, oh, if she thinks I'm doing a good job then a) I want to do it and b) I want to do another one because she trusts me. Whereas I don't think in two years of teaching Maths, anyone has ever said anything to me about my ability as a Maths teacher. (T, 9.8.11, p. 13)

Another problem with leadership was encountered in the Science Department as outlined in Chapter Four in the discussion which focused on Kate's perspectives towards the reform from an administrator's point of view. Penny commented that Kate spent one term "looking at it [the ACARA Science documents] going - this is just ridiculous" (P, 8.8.11, p. 12). This made it difficult for the teachers in the department since they respected Kate and had worked with her for many years, yet, since implementation was mandatory, her resistance towards it made their involvement with it problematic. Whilst this new environment could have been viewed as an opportunity to engage with new knowledge and practice, Kate was resistant to seeing it in this way. Penny felt compromised between her professional respect for Kate and the need to implement what Kate felt was a less than adequate curriculum. To some extent, she felt professionally stifled. "I tend to have all these ideas and then [Kate] looks at them and says, "Well, let's look at this sensibly"" (P, 8.8.11, p. 12).

Shelley had sought advice and guidance, in previous reforms at the school, from the Head of Department, colleagues within her teaching area, and finally, other members of the broader school community. The effectiveness of this approach enabled her to say confidently, when asked if she was concerned about implementing the Australian Curriculum, "No, I'm not" (S, 9.8.11, p. 14). In the first English meeting, her feelings of confidence were quickly established when Ann, the English HOD, indicated that changes would be small and with these small changes "everything else will run as normal" (S,

9.8.11, p. 14). This was very affirming for Shelley. Ann established her leadership of the change at the first meeting and her relationship with the teachers continued to be based on considerable professional trust. As a consequence, Emily felt comfortable asking for assistance when she encountered difficulties, "...when I get stuck into it and there is a problem, I'm not going to be worried about asking her for help" (E, 8.8.11, p. 4).

Consequently, it was largely because of the high levels of professional trust that existed between the teachers and the HODs that the secondary teachers accepted the filtering of policy that the HODs, particularly Ann, had undertaken in readiness for implementation. To further establish trust, Ann used language that nurtured this relationship. She suggested that to embed the reform, she and her staff would undertake a procedure of aligning the new reform with their current practices, by cutting and pasting, matching existing units of work with new curriculum, and it would happen over time by taking baby steps. The change would not be "dramatic" or "significantly large" which for Emily meant that "if she's [English HOD] relaxed, then I'm like, okay, it'll come together" (E, 8.8.11, p. 10). This reduced her levels of stress and anxiety. Emily, with Shelley and Tina, felt reassured and confident of the way the English curriculum would be implemented as a consequence of the English HOD's direction and what appeared to them to be a deep understanding of the reform requirements. Again, the importance of professional trust was a dominant thread in their narratives and emerged as a critical construct of their engagement practices and responses to the reform.

Relationship with Colleagues and Teaching Partners

The quality of the relationships with colleagues at work contributed strongly to the teachers' sense of individual agency. The way collegial relationships operated and the extent to which professional trust had been established, influenced the teachers' agency. Shelley's comment on the importance of colleagues in influencing her early engagement practices was reflective of the concerns raised by the other participants, "...if you don't know much about it [reform] someone who you presume does know a lot about it speaks negatively, you're kind of worried that maybe you don't know enough about it yet to think it's a good idea" (S, 9.8.11, p. 7). Tina also commented on the importance of collegial relationships at this time, "...I think I've got a lot of good staff, more good than not, so good staff around me, so I don't think it's difficult to produce quality work" (T, 9.8.11, p. 9). Emily, as a graduate teacher, may have been less aware of the school's cultural and organisational practices, but described her early observations of the way the school was intending to implement the reform as "pretty cruisey" (E, 8.8.11, p. 10). From her point of view there were no heated debates about the Australian Curriculum or implications for its implementation at the site taking place in staffrooms, between staff or at staff meetings, leading her to feel that there was "no reason to panic or to worry about the change" (E, 8.8.11, p. 10).

The importance of close collegial relationships, however, was more pronounced in the Junior School, since in the absence of a Head of Department structure, teachers worked most closely with other teachers working in their year level. Jane commented that even though policy engagement practices should first be established by leadership

personnel such as the Curriculum Co-ordinator in the Junior School to ensure that the school based documents and units of work developed were “rigorous” and “relevant” (J, 8.8.11, p. 10), the most critical relationship was her relationship with the other Year 2 teacher.

David’s relationship with Karen, his teaching partner, provided important support and guidance for him when he began working with the new curriculum documents. Karen’s comments at their early discussions resonated and influenced the approach David adopted towards engagement. He recalled “she said...it’s just something we’ve got to do so let’s do it. This is what’s required of us, so let’s smash it out” (D, 8.8.11, p. 8). Her matter of fact approach to working with the change enabled him to set goals and be more organised. Karen was an important influence in guiding his interactions with the new curriculum since he felt she had considerable experience and curriculum expertise.

Yeah, I feel pretty confident, especially in working with Karen [his teaching partner]. I think, like having a good partner to work with and share the load, yeah I think...I feel pretty confident implementing it. (D, 8.8.11, p. 2) ...I think this is the first time that she [Karen] really made me accountable to her and yeah, she’s been really good for my teaching I think. Probably the most significant person for my growth I think as a teacher...But, she was very focused...She’s very...yeah we just set goals, we’d achieve things rather than just talking about things I felt. (D, 8.8.11, p. 6)

This was important since David’s confidence levels as a consequence of negative previous past experiences were still somewhat uncertain. Karen’s confidence encouraged David and enabled earlier self-doubt to be replaced by the positive attributes derived from these vicarious experiences. As David’s confidence about his capacity to meet the task requirements grew, his dependence on Karen for assistance and advice lessened to the point where, at the second round of interviews, he felt she was quite an intrusion to his practice.

I feel a lot more confident in my own abilities and not so reliant on my partner. And that’s why I guess maybe I am feeling a bit more frustrated in her attitudes towards the documents because I’m not so reliant on her and finding I’ve got a bit more of an opinion...(D, 8.8.11, p. 6)

Jane’s observations about the importance of her relationship with her teaching partner were similar to David’s. She felt it was important to find someone whom she “could have trust in”, who “knew ACARA well” (J, 8.8.11, p. 3). If:

...there’s something that I don’t understand in ACARA, there’s something I don’t know, there’s people that are perceiving it differently, I just need to nail it for myself. You know, I go to those people that I trust around me in the school. (J, 8.8.11, p. 3)

Jane’s teaching partner was one of those people who was important in shaping her responses to this reform. Getting together in a “cluster..., to discuss it regularly” (J,

8.8.11, p.6) was important. With her Year 2 teaching partner, Jane audited their current curriculum documents by comparing them to the new curriculum. They identified differences and incorporated any changes into the new units of work which helped them both to develop a sense of "...ownership because you're actually dealing, you're almost re-writing the document if you like. I think that's a great way of engaging with something because you're pulling it apart" (J, 8.8.11, p. 5).

The influence of colleagues' opinions and approaches to the reform for many of the participants, particularly the Junior Years teachers, was also important in shaping their responses to this reform. Where they valued the professionalism and expertise of their colleagues, usually based on past and present interactions with them, were as important as the leadership of the Principal in shaping their engagement responses and feelings of professional confidence. The narratives of the teachers indicated that positive and encouraging vicarious experiences privileged the forms of cultural capital that resulted in increased confidence and capacities, and, consequently, their self-efficacy. However, this aspect of the investigation identified that perceptions of capability are fluid, with different influences acting upon and shaping responses at different times and in changing circumstances. Again, this would be an important consideration for the management of change in organisations.

Culture of Leadership

The style of leadership offered by the school leaders, primarily that of the Principal and the Heads of Department, established a culture of leadership that provided guidance for the teachers in the way they responded to the implementation requirements of Phase One of the Australian Curriculum. The narratives of the participants indicated that they each identified a range of responsibilities they attributed to the leadership team rather than working in an environment where the leaders imposed the reform upon the teachers. Again, whilst many elements of their habitus shared the same fields of practice, in these circumstances, they were quite separate. For effective implementation from the teachers' point of view, they and the leadership team were required to have clearly defined logics of practice to enable each to feel confident about their roles in this process. From the teachers' perspectives, it was critical that their Heads of Department would exercise their agency by establishing structures and procedures that supported the teachers' implementation requirements. Heads of Department who did not undertake to do this, or who were deemed as not supporting practice, were not highly regarded by the participants which was reflected in negative and resistant responses to the implementation of Phase One of the Australian Curriculum.

The role the participants assigned to their leaders was evident in that none of them had independently initiated any interaction with the ACARA website. Their understanding of the requirements of the reform, its context and expectations about implementation, was derived from Ryan's PowerPoint presentation and the Principal's presentation, both presenting a filtering of policy and adapted to suit what the leadership team believed would work at this site. These presentations were effective in that the outcome was that the teachers were generally positive about the reform. This was the

first indication, in this iteration of policy change and implementation, that the leaders' style and direction would be critical influences in shaping how the teachers responded to the reform. It was in this way, as well, that the participants' vicarious experiences and observations of social and visual cues became more dominating influences on their dispositions to the reform than their mastery experiences, although the extent of this dominance varied for each of the participants.

There was general agreement by this group of six teachers that the Principal, in the first instance, should make negotiation and mediation decisions about how the reform would be implemented from a whole school perspective. Ideally, this would then be further filtered by curriculum specialists on site such as the Dean of Teaching and Learning, the Heads of Department and the Junior Years Curriculum Co-ordinator. This hierarchical approach was the accepted way of doing things at the school and, therefore, not considered by the teachers or the administrators to be disempowering. Shelley referred to this arrangement when she spoke of the high regard she had for the duties of the Dean of Teaching and Learning, since someone, she felt, needed to have "confidence in it [the Australian Curriculum] too and believe in what the change is and that it is for the better for the system" (S 9.8.11, p. 7). From Shelley's perspective, the Dean needed to be responsible for "setting the time frames and providing direction to the HODs as to what really needs to be doing. They [the teachers] need to know this" (S, 9.8.11, p. 15). She further stated that a central element of the Dean's role was to "create the time for people to work on it [implementation of the Australian Curriculum] too" using the communication channels via the existing structure of staff and department meetings (S, 9.8.11, p. 16).

Shelley was the most accepting of the group with regard to the degree of filtering that others in the leadership team undertook on her behalf. She saw her role as an implementer of the policy documents describing herself as a "foot soldier" who would "...do what I'm asked to do. I will write units that I have to write and I will make changes with the other ones that I have to teach that someone else has changed" (S, 9.8.11, p. 14). However, she also had a clearly defined habitus which sometimes resulted in conflict and resistance between the requirements of the reform and her professional practices, "...it's funny because I might want them to tell me exactly what I need to do to write my unit but if they told me how to teach it, I think I'd resist that." (S, 9.8.11, p. 6)

Shelley's unwillingness to respond to different modes of working suggested, in these circumstances, that her field of practice might be changed to respond to the reform but her habitus was unyielding to these changes. Whilst the lack of alignment between field and habitus had the potential to lead to new learning and changed practice, it suggested that Shelley was prepared to acknowledge the dominant capital of the reform and the school's practices, without accepting it. This is consistent with the type of resistant behaviour that Ball and Bowe (1992) refer to as subterfuge and Adamson and Davidson (2003) call pseudo-compliance where externally, it appears that the reform has been accepted, but little changes take place in practice. It can be seen that one of the reasons for this response is the way Shelley protected the space in which she worked

which was so closely an extension of her expression of self. Her response was not from a position lacking agency but one where exercising her agency was central to her resistant actions. This will be further discussed in the following chapter.

In the English department, Ann, the Head of English, was constantly encouraging the teachers in this department to embrace and engage positively with change. As Tina noted, the continued encouragement from the English HOD (Ann) still evident at the second round of interviews had kept her confidence levels high.

It never felt as though I was on my own and it was “Here, take this, go off and do it”. It was always done, I mean little things like having the food and drink provided and it was an air conditioned room. I know that’s only minor but there was just a level of support and there was never, it was never, “you have to have this done by this date”...It was never forced, it was always encouraged. And she [Ann] led by example too because she did a lot herself and she never said that, but we could see that she had done a lot. She’d always be full of encouragement. (T, 27.3.12, p. 5)

This contributed to Tina’s sense of “ownership” (T, 27.3.12, p. 5) and a level of confidence that working in this department had given her from the very beginning. She felt confident about her part in reform implementation. She described how this occurred:

...rather than being handed the task sheet and “This is what you’re going to be doing for Year 7 English”...I have been part of the process and just to take more ownership of it and in fact I rewrote the Year 7 first unit (T, 27.3.12, p. 8)...It felt good to be going up to those meetings on whatever afternoon and talking about it and having a bit more of an awareness of what it is and how it was being implemented (T, 27.3.12, p. 9).

In the Junior School, Ryan was progressing steadily towards implementation generally following the timelines earlier established and shared with staff at the January meeting. However, his role as Junior School Curriculum Co-ordinator and Deputy Head of the Junior School conflicted at times with the Heads of Department which caused confusion for David and Jane. This was evident in the second round of interviews where Jane discussed the confusion that ensued with the implementation of the Science curriculum:

Our HOD (Science - Penny) suggested we move towards what they [in the Secondary School] were doing with their work books and assessment books... [She] was saying just take the bits you want from that [the recommended textbook suggested by Ryan] because she didn’t overly like it...Whereas we were told that this is what we’re doing...I guess we have to follow our Head of Curriculum [Ryan]. So yeah just do that for now. (J, 28.3.12, p. 5).

Penny, Shelley, Tina and Emily’s stories raise questions about the operations of hierarchical structures of leadership usual in schools such as this. Tina identified this when referring to the role of the Head of Maths: “He’s the expert, he’s the Head of Department for Maths, I’m just the little follower” (T, 9.8.11, p. 13). The secondary

teachers identified that whilst the Principal and other senior leaders, such as the Dean of Teaching and Learning, were very important in influencing their dispositions towards the reform and their feelings of confidence, it was the Heads of Department to whom they turned when they needed to focus on how to implement the reform. From the perspective of Tina, Jane, David, Emily and Shelley the curriculum leader who presented a clearly articulated set of practices and procedures at the initial meeting and followed through with these, instilled a sense of confidence that carried through the whole implementation process.

Ryan and Ann had consistently told the teachers that the reform would only require some cutting and pasting, some tweaking, identifying hot spots, developing a plan of attack, so the Junior School teachers (David and Jane) and the secondary English teachers (Shelley, Tina and Emily) understood that meant they were not required to undertake a deep examination of their teaching and learning beliefs to enact the requirements of implementing the Australian Curriculum. Their acceptance of this way of working, without undertaking critical re-examination of current practices or beliefs, demonstrated the professional trust they had in these leaders.

These feelings contrasted with a somewhat more contested state of practice in the Science Department. Due to a range of external circumstances combining with a sense of some level of professional frustration, Kate resigned at the end of 2011 and by the second round of interviews, Penny had taken over as Science HOD. She moved quickly to work within the parameters of the new ACARA Science Curriculum and was developing as a leader in her own right as implementation occurred in 2012. In the second round of interviews, Penny was confident in meeting the reform requirements and felt that the teachers within the Science Department were feeling equally confident of their capacities to meet the implementation requirements of the Science program.

Ann, Penny and Ryan's leadership styles, which encouraged and supported collaborative practices, tended to increase the self-efficacy of the teachers working in their departments. The opportunity to work collaboratively in English indicated to Shelley and Tina a leadership style that valued and supported their professional expertise. Tina commented on the raised confidence levels she felt as a result of receiving encouraging feedback from Ann in relation to the unit of work she was developing. This was in marked contrast to circumstances where teachers felt feedback and consultation was not a focus of leaders' practices.

Teachers with multiple experiences of previous reform worked differently from the new teachers and had differing expectations which needed to be acknowledged and accommodated in the planning undertaken by the leadership teams. Some had worked directly with policy (Tina, Shelley and Penny) requiring significant interpretation on their part and, in other situations, the teachers were required to implement reform that had already been deconstructed from policy. It was the cultural practice at this site that the school leaders, of whom Ann, Ryan and Kate were a part, undertook this process as part of their leadership roles. This process presented few concerns for the teachers who

had been at the school for some time (Penny, Shelley, Tina, David and Jane) since this was considered an effective way of managing reform and as such was not contested by them. Again, professional trust played a strong part in such feelings of confidence.

Narratives of Critical ‘Others’ – an Overview

Chapter Four explored the leadership and management decisions made by the leadership team using their narratives and the internal documents generated to explain the implementation strategies they had chosen to adopt. This theme further established what the teachers valued and appreciated from the leadership team as they engaged with and conceptualised the reform. This theme also provided an understanding of the nature of the decisions the teachers made about the reform by way of offering an explanation of the nature of their responses to it. In this way, the teachers’ narratives provided an assessment of the efficacy of the decisions and actions made by the leadership team as discussed in the previous chapter.

The teachers agreed with most of the implementation strategies and decisions made by the leadership team. Each of the teacher respondents viewed the Principal’s initial observations and understandings, followed by the broader leadership team’s, as critical indicators of how they should begin their engagement since it was the task of the school leaders to provide the structural means and cultural context for implementation. The teachers needed the Principal to demonstrate a clear path for implementation developed from his own engagement practices with the new reform. It was important that he gave the teachers a clear indication of what the reform meant for the school’s practices and highlighted the impact that it would have on the school’s operations.

Clarity around the leaders’ roles and responsibilities was also shared by the teachers since it was in this way they could assign realistic task expectations around the implementation process. Leaders who did not undertake these roles, or where there was role ambiguity, lowered teachers’ self-efficacy perceptions, increased their levels of stress and encouraged negative and resistant responses to the reform to emerge. This was evident in several of the participants’ responses. Tina, for example, was critical of the Maths HOD who she felt did not provide enough direction regarding implementation of the Maths Curriculum in Years 7 – 10; as David’s confidence grew he was keen to be more independent, placing less emphasis on the influence of his teaching partner; and Penny became increasingly frustrated with what she felt was Kate’s negativity.

The administrators were aware of the importance of establishing a positive and collaborative environment for teachers to work in particularly for the new teachers. Emily understood that Ann’s recommended approach of cutting and pasting was designed for “us not to be shocked” but she also saw this as Ann’s way of building Emily’s confidence since they would manage the process of engaging with and implementing the reform by taking “baby steps” together. Ann’s use of the language of “cutting and pasting” and “tweaking” resulted in the desired outcome since Emily concluded after the first English meeting “...I went OK, yeah I will be able to give that a

shot” (E, 8.8.11, p.11). She also commented that Ann’s low level of stress acted to relax her and allay early concerns.

It was also evident from the interviews with the newer teachers, (Jane, David and Emily), that encouragement and leadership from colleagues, and feedback supportive of their endeavours were strong influences on the way they engaged with and made decisions about how to implement the reform requirements. Both David and Jane commented on this specifically.

To summarise, the “critical others” for the respondents were most prominently the leadership team upon whom they placed a number of requirements to meet their demands of effective leadership and support at this time. They anticipated that the leadership team would: provide a clear direction as to how the reform would be engaged with and implemented at the school site (Ryan’s PowerPoint at the beginning of the year, the Principal’s role in setting the direction for instance); establish clear communication guidelines (letters, emails and memos as represented in the document analysis); invest time and personnel into the reform process (professional learning of leaders, staff meeting and department meeting time with a focus on curriculum implementation, both whole school and subject specific); undertake clear and well thought out strategic decision making processes (planning by Ryan, Ann in the early stages of implementation); acknowledge and incorporate into strategic and operational plans, the professional experiences and voices of the teachers (English department meetings, allocating unit writing tasks to teachers in English and Science based on their levels of interest and areas of expertise).

When these elements were evident, the impact of negative past experiences with reform tended to dissipate, teachers’ levels of self-confidence increased and their comfort levels about their capacity to undertake and meet the requirements of this reform were heightened. The administrators in Chapter Four emphasised the importance of supporting teachers by acting to minimise the disruption to their practice of this reform. Getting these relationships “right” was critical to achieving positive reform responses. From the teachers’ perspective, the leaders were largely successful in this role. Previous negative reform experiences were reduced as the teachers’ engagement intensified, provision was made for them to work collaboratively, a sense of autonomy was evident over their engagement practices, and they were provided with clear directions and appropriate timelines. This indicated to the teachers that the leaders demonstrated an awareness of how they preferred to work and valued their professional expertise enough to incorporate it central to any implementation plans. As a consequence, teachers developed greater self-confidence and felt more capable to engage with the reform. Negative dispositions were challenged and diminished by strong, positive vicarious experiences and, as a consequence, teachers’ habitus shifted.

5.2.3. Cultural Constructs of Place

There were a range of workplace and institutional characteristics that acted to influence the teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs demonstrating the importance that the

teachers' working environment had on shaping their reform responses. These highlighted the important influence workplace conditions and culture have on self-efficacy beliefs, dispositions, habitus and agency. To determine the impact of the reform, the teachers began their examination of the documents initially seeing alignment between their current practices and the requirements of the reform. Whilst the degree of perceived alignment was of critical importance to the nature of their engagement, elements associated with decisions about the policy also provided important visual and social cues as to how the teachers should interpret the implications of this reform. For instance, self-belief related not just to the degree of alignment they found between their own professional values and beliefs and the reform (Sikes, 1990), but also the adequacy of the length of time to plan and prepare for implementation to achieve the required reforms (Hargreaves, 2003). The way the implementation procedures acknowledged and valued the teachers' contributions to the reform agenda (Darling-Hammond, 2005) and the perceived level of support from the broader educational community (Nias, 2003; Woods, 1999) were also influential in establishing their self-efficacy beliefs. This section explores the broader implementation decisions and strategies of the school, largely their management practices, which influenced this school's culture. The emphasis, therefore, is an examination of how the culture of the school was shaped by the reform and how this in turn, shaped the teachers' responses.

Influence of External Education Authorities

Mandated, national curriculum meant engagement and implementation of the reform were not negotiable. Therefore, all of the teachers' narratives were transition stories, to varied degrees, as they commented on their movement across the social spaces of their habitus from engagement to implementation. Their stories each represented the way the participants endeavoured to reconcile their habitus with the new policy field presented by the implementation of the Australian Curriculum, and raises questions about ways a teacher's habitus is influenced by change. Tina expressed the implementation burden of this reform, indicative of the way the teachers felt, by stating, "Somebody above says we're recommending this new curriculum but it falls down on us to implement it." (T, 9.8.11, p. 8)

Each of the teacher's narratives made observations and comments about the way development of the national curriculum documents occurred. It was generally agreed that the processes undertaken by ACARA were robust. Jane's initial perceptions were that the policy had not been "...something organised at an office level with no real consultation with people that are at ground level" (J, 8.8.11, p. 4). Penny, reflecting on her experiences with previous centralised and externally mandated education reforms, observed that developers of policy were often "...not necessarily the people who have been teaching recently" (P, 9.8.11, p. 2). However, in this reform context, she felt the ACARA curriculum writers had been drawn from currently practicing and leading educators (P, 9.8.11, p. 2). Tina agreed that the curriculum writers were highly regarded professionals and this assisted her to conceptualise the policy more positively:

...it's written by teachers then it shouldn't be too different to what I'm doing anyway because we're all basically on the same page. And if they have chosen to write this program, then they're obviously the best in their field, so they want the best for the curriculum and I want the best for the curriculum so I think that won't be too different. (T, 9.8.11, p. 16)

What was also particularly illuminating about each of the individual's narratives was what was absent in their observations about the new reform. In none of the teacher's interviews did they make any reference to the political imperatives that drove the development of a national curriculum. None made reference to the Melbourne Declaration or the political machinations behind the development of the Australian Curriculum. There was no reference to any of the newer elements of this policy such as cross-curricula perspectives. None of the participants, at the time of the first interviews in August, had taken up the on-line opportunity to provide feedback to ACARA in response to the new policy, even though this opportunity had been highlighted by Ryan at the beginning of the year staff meeting. As a way of explaining why this was the case, Shelley commented that there appeared to be little interest in the reform from the broader community, "there's no real sense out there that the school community is on the edge of their seats about ACARA" (S, 9.8.11, p. 12).

Acknowledging these experiences, the participants in this study were more focused on their immediate environment and the impact the reform would have on their practice than in attending to the broader discourses of policy and education politics. This may have been because the reform was perceived to be inevitable since implementation was mandated. Nevertheless, the participants shared a general confidence that this curriculum policy, since it had been developed by specialists and experts, should represent current curriculum thinking. Engaging with the policy at the level of policy development did not engage their interest, since the greater focus was on how the policy would work at their site, and how their habitus would engage with their field of practice. It was also important to note that the participants, from their very first point of engagement with the new curriculum documents, were prepared to accept that their role in the policy process was as its implementers. Jane's observations indicated that she understood policy implementation as hierarchical, referring to the teachers as those on the ground level of the implementation process.

Each participant's stories in relation to how they perceived policy and policy development raised questions about the nature of their responses and whether these early perceptions remained consistent throughout the implementation of the policy over the following six months. Nevertheless, these early responses were important because it was from these positions that each of the teachers undertook future actions. However, the teachers' levels of self-confidence were supported by the activities of external educational providers such as organisations like QSA (Queensland Studies Authority), LEQ (Lutheran Education Queensland) and ISQ (Independent Schools Queensland). What seemed apparent was that the level of activity of professional organisations acted as further encouragement for their self-efficacy perceptions and encouraged more

positive responses towards the reform. Whilst each of these groups and organisations acted as filters to policy, the teachers in this study saw their actions as supportive rather than acting to erode the teachers' professional status. This contributed positively to the teachers' sense of agency locating their agency in the areas of policy interpretation and its classroom practice.

School's Engagement Practices

The aspects of the narratives discussed in this section relate to the ways the participants understood the required implementation strategies, to support their positive engagement with the reform. Whilst for many this focused on the leadership structure in place at the school and the decisions the leaders made, it also related to the requirements they felt were necessarily in place to support them. These aspects of their narratives related more to the way they interpreted the school's decisions about the reform's requirements for effective implementation.

Established structures and practices of operation, evident in the leadership structure, the organisation of subject departments; the meeting structure; and the existing practices of leading and managing change; were not specifically different. This enabled the reform requirements to be incorporated as an adjunct to school practices rather than something that might be perceived as more anachronistic. Initially, as the teachers saw workplace changes and a growing discourse emerging around the new curriculum, their attention to engagement and implementation also intensified. Whilst this might be unsettling in some environments, the 'tolerance' for change at this site was relatively high since, as noted by Tina, "Things don't lie stagnant here for a number of years" (T, 9.8.11, p. 5). This was an important on site cultural characteristic that supported and encouraged teachers to engage actively with the reform rather than being resistant towards it. Implementation strategies were informed, therefore, by characteristics of the workplace culture of this site.

The extent to which the teachers felt positive about the reform was drawn from how robust and accepted these cultural practices were operating in their departments and the extent to which they aligned with and supported the teachers' preferred ways of working. The staggered nature of implementation presented some problems since the leadership team needed to manage staff engagement with the reform over several years of implementation (depending on the subjects they taught). Since first experiences with reform have already been identified as important to this group in shaping their future responses to it, the school needed to be mindful of how to maintain positive early experiences. Teachers, whilst realizing they had to engage at some level, were resistant to being overwhelmed by too much information about the reform. This was largely because they felt their attention would be diverted from their daily practices upon which they placed much higher value.

Tina commented that whilst at this stage (prior to implementation) she did not have a clear understanding of the 'big picture', "...successful implementation would be predicated on how clearly the process and the outcomes are identified" (T, 9.8.11, p. 6).

Shelley echoed these concerns as she recalled:

We had a staff meeting at the beginning of the year on ACARA and, to be honest, I switched off because to me, it was all frameworks and policy and government this and maybe this and that. There was so many uncertain things so I really did switch off. I haven't paid attention to ACARA until we had a department meeting where I was told how it would directly affect me and my subjects. (S, 9.8.11, p. 4)

Even in August Shelley felt that she had had little engagement with ACARA and hadn't "... paid attention to it" (S, 9.8.11, p. 9).

To me, it hasn't been discussed enough for me. Like I said, to show an interest in, because I didn't know really when it was going to happen or if it was going to happen. (S, 9.8.11, p. 7)

She felt that the provision of time for teachers to engage with the documents should be a major consideration at the school. Implementation decisions should be developed by the school administrators to acknowledge the cultural practices of the school, rather than passively following any externally imposed time line. She felt such discussions about policy implications should also be facilitated by the Heads of Department (in the Secondary School). Therefore, confidence in the Head of Departments' abilities to lead the implementation process was critical to the way Shelley conceptualised and engaged with the reform. Time to engage with the documents, provided for in the planning undertaken at the site was seen as critical to reducing teachers' stress and anxiety. "I guess you'd need to have faith that they [school administrators] can give you time to do it." (S, 9.8.11, p. 8)

There were two timelines at play that influenced the level of the teachers' responses to the reform. The first timeline, was the one adopted by the school in making internal preparations for implementation of Phase One at the beginning of the school year in 2012, and the second was the nationally mandated timeline for implementation set down by ACARA. These timelines were not always consistent and this impacted on the teachers' responses to the reform. The timelines were important, in principle, since the participants used timelines to measure the significance and importance placed on the change by those who developed them. The allocation of time to prepare indicated a level of consideration for the important work of teachers, established the importance of the reform from the teachers' point of view, and represented the seriousness of the intention to bring about sustained change rather than were suggested by short or rushed time frames. Time also had a financial element, and the provision of extended time for implementation indicated a financial commitment to reform by those authorities seeking the change. David's major concern was whether the school's decision makers would provide an appropriate time frame to support implementation. In reflecting upon past experiences he noted:

I think too often we are given things to do and not just trusted to use the time. I kind of felt like, you're so time poor. (D, 8.8.11, p. 9)

His concerns stemmed from the negative consequences that poorly implemented policy might generate.

Because, I think so often, like your first experience is going to taint the rest of it. So, it's kind of like almost too late to implement it and then change it. (D, 8.8.11, p. 8)

During 2011, there had been a range of school developed professional learning opportunities and provisions formally added to the school calendar designed to prepare the teachers at the school involved in Phase One for its implementation. The school's Executive and leadership teams were keen to provide an extended time frame to ensure this would be the case. However, the teachers in this study were not always enthusiastic about a lengthy preparation time frame, with some of them more focused on immediate concerns that related to how the reform impacted their practice.

This extended timeframe, which was intended to give teachers enough time to prepare for implementation, did not always achieve that aim. Tina felt that there was still considerable resistance by some teachers that was not alleviated by the extended timeframe for implementation. Teachers who exhibited resistant behaviours, she felt, needed to be redirected by the leadership team (Head of Department, Dean of Teaching and Learning, Deputy Head) and told "...this is what you have to do" (T, 9.8.11, p. 12) although she acknowledged that "...there'll be people that will dig their heels in, people that think they know better" (T, 9.8.11, p. 12).

It was also important to note the participants' language choice, identified in *italics*, in these earlier statements. Shelley and Tina spoke about the need to trust and have faith in the implementation decisions made by the school's leadership team. Each of these participants was indicating the importance of initial experiences with policy in the way this shaped their future actions, and the obligations teachers attributed to policy makers and school leaders to get policy right.

Therefore, the physical environments of the spaces in which the teachers, administrators and school staff usually worked were also significant influences on self-efficacy perceptions informing the nature of their responses. As discussed, initial responses to the reform were dominated by the nature and type of previous experiences with reform and were followed by an examination of the reform in light of teachers' practices. However, as the teachers became more involved in working with the curriculum documents, their perceptions of capacity and capability were also influenced by their observations of the way their workplace was readying for implementation. Again, visual and social cues and vicarious experiences dominated the influences of mastery experiences in shaping their perceptions of self-efficacy and their responses to the reform. Finding alignment and professional support from their workplace led to increased levels of confidence and a reduction in the teachers' anxiety and stress.

The participants shared the belief that the responsibility for the early introduction and ongoing management of the reform was that of the school leaders and the Heads of

Department. Their stories emphasised that whilst their acceptance of these decisions, made by the school, meant some level of acceptance of cultural capital, it also highlighted that the school's acceptance of the preferred practices of the teachers was evidence of the school acknowledging the teachers' cultural capital. It was apparent, even in these early stages of analysis, that the reciprocal practices of negotiation and mediation were critical to informing the teachers' responses to the reform as well as providing an explanation of the ways different dispositions elicited differing responses.

Managing Difference

The way conflict was resolved, how different points of view were incorporated in the decision making procedures, the relationship that the participants had with their colleagues and their Heads of Department were all factors that played a significant role in shaping the participants' responses to the reform. For some of the participants, their confidence about their capacity to implement the reform was further strengthened by the way conflict was managed within their spheres of practice since conflict and negativity could quickly erode their confidence and self-efficacy perceptions.

Tina identified problems in the Maths department. From Tina's perspective, the Maths Department meetings were not collaborative, and, whilst the reasons for this were not clear, Tina felt that there were ingrained underlying problems as a consequence of other members of the department who were quite resistant to the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. These difficulties were still evident in the second round of interviews where Tina observed, "...there's a new overview [in Maths]. There's a new marking system, it's massive...they're just nowhere near as supportive as they are in the English department" (T, 27.3.12, p. 5).

Shelley, a relatively long time member of the English department, discussed how effectively problems were dealt with there, "...when I get stuck into it and there is a problem, I'm not going to be worried about asking her [English Head of Department] for help...there is no shame in coming forward." (S, 9.8.11, p. 9)

Tina's dissimilar experiences between working in the Maths and English departments impacted clearly on her engagement with the relevant curriculum documents in each of these areas:

...I don't get close to those people [negative and resistant colleagues] because it's not me. If you... everybody gets in, everybody helps out, I'll do my bit. I might have to do it at midnight, but you know what, I'm going to do my bit. As long as you do your bit and you don't bitch and moan about it. Come on. Let's work together. (T, 9.8.11, p. 19)

It was evident from these teachers' narratives that the presence of professional trust in the cultural practices of the school was a strong influence on shaping their sense of capacity and response to the reform. Where professional trust was encouraged and built, evident in situations where the participants did not feel threatened or embarrassed

by expressing differing points of view and were confident in professional risk taking, the participants felt more confident about their capacity to meet the reform requirements. This further confirmed the importance of accepted and agreed workplace practices on influencing and shaping teachers' reform responses.

Use of Textbooks & Resources

As will be discussed in the section relating to professional learning (Section 5.2.4), some of the teachers' practices that informed their responses to this reform were quite ritualised as a consequence of actions they had previously undertaken and found effective. Another way the teachers' responses to the reform were established and reaffirmed was derived from the textbooks and resources available providing them with curriculum guidance. Reliance upon these resources was varied and depended largely on the participants' self-efficacy perceptions derived from their previous experiences with reform. Whilst all of the participants saw these as important, those teachers with more limited experiences tended to seek out such resources more actively, particularly at this early stage of engagement. This was the case for Emily and David who, as newer teachers to the profession, saw the resources as a valuable support to their practice.

David spoke about how textbooks had helped him in the past and was very pleased when a new one became available which he was keen to use to assist with the implementation of the new Mathematics curriculum. This meant he could focus on developing resources to support the implementation of English and Science. Along with Shelley, he looked to modelled exercises and resources to provide the necessary support for implementation rather than relying on his own capacity to develop resources. David was appreciative of having a relevant textbook in Maths:

We were given Primary Connections...and it apparently lines up with ACARA so we're just following it, rather than really looking at the ACARA documents. And yeah, it's really filled our timetable... So, it's worked pretty well. (D, 28.3.12, p. 5).

David's comment that he was "just following it" suggested a lack of agency on his part. However, his reliance on resources and textbooks served as an important reminder that the two primary teachers in this study, he and Jane, were responsible for the implementation of all of the Phase One subjects at their year level, each requiring detailed knowledge of all Phase One subjects. Thus, they needed to acquire that detailed knowledge of each curriculum area. Having a relevant textbook was not considered marginalizing from David's perspective but rather a support as he endeavoured to build his knowledge about the curriculum across the four areas he was responsible for implementing. More experienced teachers, such as Tina and Jane, also relied on high quality texts to assist with the way they conceptualised the reform.

Whilst few resources existed in August 2011 to support the teachers' requests, again it was more that their previous experiences had demonstrated a usefulness of having resources available to them as they engaged with changes, than the availability and quality of the resources themselves. This appeared to be further evidence that some

of their engagement practices were more ritualised in nature than specifically developed in response to the requirements of this reform. Past practices were carried forward in new environments providing a ‘blueprint’ for engagement that the teachers drew on in each new reform or change context. It was apparent that the influence of mastery experiences was very strong at these early stages of engagement. These existing forms of capital were considered by the teachers as valuable even if they were not, in reality, truly transferable. Textbooks and resources were not ‘solutions’ to inexperience and time constraints but were a way of working that supported the focus of the teachers in reform agendas. Their focus was the practice of the reform, the role that resonated most in constructions of their habitus. Importantly, it was in their classrooms where the teachers exercised their pedagogical expertise focused on achieving the implementation outcomes of the policy. Textbooks and resources provided a helpful support.

However, at a more important level, the availability of textbooks and resources written to support the Australian Curriculum subjects provided important visual cues of the reform’s efficacy, as would be expected. This was an indication of the extent of the financial and educational ‘investment’ that publishers and schools had placed in the Australian Curriculum and acted to affirm the reform’s sustainability, a criteria established in earlier discussions around reform efficacy. This raised the teachers’ confidence about the reform and their role in it.

Importantly, the teachers in this study who saw professional value in early access to textbooks and resources did not perceive these acts as reducing their agency or de-professionalising them. They did not examine the texts in any depth or consider the hegemonic practices which might be evident as part of the selection of curriculum content, but saw the textbooks as simply another reference point serving to assist them to locate themselves within the reform environment.

Observing Teacher Knowledge

Levels of confidence were further enhanced when teachers were able to work within their fields of expertise. For Emily, this meant working in Drama whenever possible since she was a Drama specialist. As a new teacher with limited experience, she was concerned about her lack of English subject knowledge and was pleased when Ann allocated her the task of writing the Drama units for the new English curriculum. Ann’s intention was that this would increase Emily’s ownership of the reform changes and the impact would result in more positive learning outcomes for the students:

I’m sure that she will be fantastic and I’m sure she’ll do her best and she wants to. I think it’s that ownership and I’m not going to step in and say no you’re doing the wrong thing... And, they’ll feel, I’m sure they would feel proud of themselves. (A, 9.8.11, p. 8)

This certainly was the outcome from Emily’s point of view. Her confidence and self-efficacy were considerably strengthened in this new, and often challenging, environment. She commented:

Yeah and it did make you feel also on a personal level, a bit important in the process when she [Ann] asked me specifically to look at the drama units, whereas the other teachers are working solely within a year level. I thought that was a nice way of recognising what I can bring to it with my strengths from the drama background. (E, 8.8.11, p. 11)

The social and visual cues, evident by the responses of Emily's colleagues, contributed to her levels of confidence. "Actually the reaction from the other teachers when they heard that, they were like wow she's got you doing a lot then!" (E, 8.8.11, p. 11). Combined with the trust that Emily had in the direction provided by Ann, the English HOD, she was feeling confident that the task of writing and implementing the new English curriculum was within her capabilities:

And oh, I went oh ... I always go back to that copy and paste thing. I'm very good at doing that at first and Ann is very relaxed and has said you know well, you know then we'll tweak it so it's not like it's got to be an entirely new unit or entirely new resources and the information is there and I always try and not make a big deal of something, it's probably like, I'll cross that bridge when I come to it. (E., 8.8.11, p. 12)

Penny's decision to "fit the teacher to the task, rather than the task for all teachers" (P, 28.3.12, p. 11) met with some initial resistance by the teachers in the Science department. The shift of task, from the HOD to the teacher, did not occur without some questions. Penny recounted this experience, "I found it a little bit of a surprise when teachers would look at me and say "you want us to change this?" And I think, well, who else would change it? You're the ones teaching it." (P, 28.3.12, p. 4) This was a different way of working for the Science teachers, but Penny felt strongly that the teachers of the year levels needed to be responsible for developing the course that they would be required to teach while acknowledging the specific content knowledge and teaching experiences that these teachers already possessed.

Encouraging the Science teachers to take greater responsibility for the units of work they were to teach ultimately proved to be an effective leadership decision. At the second interview, Penny was able to report, "There seems to be more interest and engagement with it [the Australian Curriculum]" (P, 28.3.12, p. 4). There was little evidence of resistance in the second round of interviews and the staff appeared, from Penny's point of view, to be "pretty happy to try everything" (P, 28.3.12, p. 4).

These observations were consistently recounted in the participants' narratives. As has already been discussed, working within her preferred teaching area of English made Tina feel more confident about her capacity to meet the reform requirements compared with her perceptions of her capacity to implement the new Maths curriculum, less familiar to her. Jane's professional confidence was high because she had a strong sense of personal capability to undertake the task due to the close relationships she had established with her co-teachers. Concerns about discipline knowledge were more evident in the Junior School since the primary teachers were responsible for

implementing all of the Phase One subjects. David reflected on this when he described the importance of his relationship with his teaching partner, particularly with regard to his feelings that he was not a Maths/Language specialist. In areas where he felt he had less expertise, his agency was lessened as well.

Narratives of Cultural Constructs – An Overview

With little option other than to engage (at some level) with the reform, the teachers' negative mastery experiences tended to be put aside as they became more aware of the positive signs of engagement evident in their workplace environment. Such signs indicated that the reform was well developed and resourced, would be implemented and sustained beyond short term imperatives, supported by the school's leadership team and broader groups from the educational and political communities. It emerged, therefore, that social and visual cues became very influential in the development of the teachers' self-efficacy perceptions around the reform requirements diluting any early negative mastery experiences they may have had. Therefore, it was evident that the teachers' self-efficacy perceptions could be changed and influenced by the environment in which they worked, leading to the view that the workplace conditions created by the school's leaders and managers had a strong bearing on the teachers' responses to the reform.

There were many consistencies with the way the less experienced teachers, Emily, David and Jane, made the necessary decisions about reform implementation. Unlike the policy makers and even some of the school leaders, their concerns were more immediate, and the guidance and direction that leaders, the Principal and their colleagues could provide were considered to be helpful. As will be discussed in Chapter Six, as the participants moved more actively to make decisions about the reform, social and visual cues became significantly stronger influences on developing their perceptions about the reform and their responses to it. Their initial established dispositions did not necessarily remain constant, particularly those based on previous mastery experiences. Social and visual cues, along with vicarious experiences, challenged the mastery experiences gathered over years of practice and this was important for the school leadership team to understand as they, too, were making decisions about implementation.

Whilst the reform was mandated, the teachers still needed to undertake complex and detailed mediation and decision making practices to find a satisfactory and comfortable professional space for them to work within this change agenda. The operation of the workplaces was important in either reinforcing pre-conceived attitudes of their capacity to implement the reform, based on their previous experiences, or being responsible for new and changed responses to this reform, as they worked through implementation requirements. The nature of this reform could have easily meant that teachers felt they had little discretionary influence or personal agency in defining their levels of engagement. The social and visual cues of their workplace encouraged the teachers to mediate and negotiate the reform, to define the professional space where they could exercise their individual agency and enabled them to articulate their professional voice.

5.2.4. Self

'Professional self' was a broad theme that emerged from the data and relates to ways the teachers would describe themselves. These constructs were strong influences on their engagement practices with this new reform. In examining how the teachers made decisions about the reform, it became apparent that a deeper explanation of 'professional identity' needed to be undertaken since, Bourdieu (1977) suggests, identity is more indicative of conformity and it was quite evident that the six teachers in the study shared diverse constructs of teacher identity. This term lacked a certain authenticity, particularly authenticity of 'self', since it is often used to refer generally to a stereotypical construct of self – the identity of the teacher, or the truck driver or accountant. It suggested, often without intent, certain preconceived behaviours, actions and responses because of our collective understanding of the generic range of tasks undertaken in these professional areas. Professional identity can conjure up stereotypical images and practices of what constituted the label teacher. Yet one of the primary motivations of this project was to undertake an exploration of this construct, since my experiences suggested a wide range of teacher responses, indicating as many differences as similarities in their practices. This led to an examination of the influences on teachers' responses in this study, through the lens of individuation in addition to identity.

Individuation has its roots in both educational psychology and sociology, with Jung and Bourdieu sharing the term to describe the way individuals emerge as separate and independent entities from the collective. Bourdieu identifies this as part of our personal development where this process presents the possibility of uniqueness as we become capable of countering and transcending the status quo (Bourdieu, 1977). When the balance of cultural appropriation is shifted toward cultural identity, for example, Bourdieu (1977) suggests that cultural conformity predominates. When this is shifted toward cultural individuation, the conditions are set for radical social change. Enabling teachers' responses to be viewed through the lens of individuation, allowed their actions to be understood within a broader concept of self, one not merely bounded by a stereotype of teacher identity.

Self was an important construct since the school was an independent, Lutheran school and teachers generally sought employment there because of one or both of those two characteristics. Any kind of change was generally considered in terms of the needs of the teachers, becoming a normalised practice in the way the culture of the organisation operates (Nias, 1989). Acknowledgement of this shaped the administrators' strategies for implementing the change, particularly Ryan's and the Principal's as they linked the reform to the central tenets of Lutheran Education at the first staff meeting of the year in 2011. It was this deliberate action on their part, at its introduction to the whole school, which positioned the reform within the life and culture of the school rather than it being viewed as an extraneously imposed reform. This focus directed their attention toward achieving collective efficacy and collective agency. The six teachers were each aiming for individual efficacy and individual agency. These two paradigms, to be effective, however, needed to align.

Practice and Policy Alignment

Conceptualising the reform meant that the teachers needed to understand the proposed change thoroughly since they believed responsibility for its implementation rested with them. Minimising any potential collision between the teachers' habitus and field of practice indicated that the dominant capital could be more easily accepted. As Jane said, "...my responsibility to ACARA is that I know it inside out. I know it so well that I'm confident with it and I can teach it well" (J, 8.8.11, p. 2). It was clear from their comments that the degree of alignment between their current practices and those required of the reform established their initial levels of professional confidence. Shelley described 'confidence' as being "more organised", "content is...more relevant, you don't go off topic, you stay with what you need to get to the end result for them [students]" (S, 9.8.11, p. 12). Confidence, she continued, also meant the unit of work was not "vague" or "nebulous" (S, 9.8.11, p. 12). Establishing alignment between current practice and the reform resulted in engagement that reflected, "...more clarity and a deeper understanding of your unit because you've had to work it from the ground up rather than be given it then to deconstruct it." (S, 9.8.11, p. 11)

Tina's confidence too was quite high since initial perceptions of the new curriculum indicated that her current practices required little change. "But I don't think it's going to impact our curriculum too much apart from...a few gaps that we have in the curriculum that we are just going to slot in." (T, 9.8.11, p. 2)

As already discussed, Ann had suggested it would be more like a process of "cutting and pasting" from the current documents to the new documents, a process she described as "tweaking" (T, 9.8.11, p. 5). Each of these actions emphasised a passivity of action, simplistic and limited in their imposition of time or effort on the part of the teachers. Such approaches were intended to reduce possible resistance or negative responses to change. Penny was also keen to see a close alignment between policy and practice. If this was the case, she felt that implementation was less problematic "...policy and practice should be pretty close and then off you go" (P, 8.8.11, p. 3). Whilst there were early concerns about what implementation would mean for units of work and teaching concepts, particularly in her department of Science, Penny felt the teachers had compromised and looked for ways of bringing ACARA into their current practices rather than making a completely new beginning:

..we just say okay, well we don't like it but we know we've got to ...implement it the best way we can, following within approximately these guidelines...we've stopped being grumpy that it's ACARA and we can't work their website and just got on with teaching things I suppose. I think we've done a little bit of compromising. I think, I would prefer to describe it as bending ACARA to our will. (P, 28.3.12, p. 16)

The language used by the participants suggested a lack of tension in relation to the way the reform fitted current practices. Passive and unproblematic actions such as cutting and pasting and tweaking did not suggest significant disruption to their existing

teaching practices. In fact, Penny's view that ACARA would be bent to our will privileges the influence of the teachers as change agents rather than having them feel disempowered by the mandatory aspects of this reform. Not only did teachers position themselves as critically important in the reform process as its implementers, their narratives also indicated that they did so with some considerable authority.

A lack of alignment, an inability to establish a sense of 'ownership' and a divergent understanding of their role with that of the school leadership team (and others external to the school environment) made positive engagement problematic and reduced self-efficacy perceptions. As a consequence of locating their role largely as practitioners, these teachers accepted that curriculum was mediated and negotiated and filtered by others further up the 'line' on the proviso that these decision makers provided an environment which enabled them to engage, mediate and embed the reform within their own practice and that they would have responsibility for how the reform was enacted. It was in this way that teachers exercised their professional sense of self (Sikes, 1990). The degree of clarity achieved related to the extent to which the teachers could evaluate the reform requirements and locate their role in it. If such an examination was favourable, it was evident that levels of self-efficacy increased and responses to the reform were more positive.

Developing a Sense of Ownership

Jane spoke about getting the reform "right". This simple statement indicated that she had a sense of what conditions needed to be met to achieve this. For her, the conditions were those developed and pursued by the education authorities, the school's leadership team, the Heads of Department and the teachers themselves. To get things "right" Tina and Jane were keen to undertake professional visits to other school sites to affirm the work that they were doing towards implementation. This motivation also explained the importance the teachers attributed to the leadership role of the Principal, specifically identified by Shelley, Emily, David and Penny, in contextualising the reform, and leading the change at the school. The decisions and directions he adopted were interpreted as his understanding of this change within the broader school's context.

Alongside requiring the institution itself to acknowledge a sense of ownership of the policy by filtering and distilling the reform to make its implementation more culturally site specific, Jane, Tina, David and Shelley identified the importance of developing for themselves a sense of individual engagement to be able to meet effectively the implementation requirements of the reform. Essentially, this process involved reciprocal interactions (elements of Bandura's reciprocal determinism) between their values (cognition), practices (behaviour) and policy requirements (environment) to establish alignment and links between the policy and their practice. Shelley and Tina were initially dismissive of the ties between the reform and their current practice but complied with the requirements of reform since, primarily, it was mandated. However, Ryan and Ann understood very quickly the importance of establishing and sustaining their teachers' positive attitudes to achieving the reform outcomes and quickly adopted a supportive non-threatening approach to their leadership and management styles. Each

provided a structure and clarity around their implementation strategies whilst also enabling the teachers to exercise their agency within external and internal policy mandates. Both understood and achieved this balance as recounted by the participants in the study.

As discussed earlier, their first suggestions for engagement encouraged the teachers to look for similarities between the current and new documents and to ‘cut and paste’ or to ‘tweak’ the curriculum, identifying ‘hot spots’ that would need to be addressed. This less disruptive way of conceptualising the changes required was designed to acknowledge the professional status of the teachers, reduce stress levels in what Tina described as an already high change environment and to smooth over any initial resistance whilst affirming the similarities rather than highlighting differences. The central tenet of both leaders’ implementation strategies was to observe the practices of the teachers rather than impose a means of operating. They were both keenly aware from the very beginning of their engagement with the reform that imposing implementation and directing teaching practices would not have positive outcomes for effective implementation.

The intention of their approaches was to enable the teachers to achieve close alignment between their professional self and the requirements of the reform since this would mean that their professional status was strengthened (Edwards, 2000; McBeath, 1997). The use of metaphors like ‘tweaking’, ‘cut and paste’ suggested a relatively simple process of engagement and an affirmation of the teachers’ current practices. Again, for new teachers, this was particularly important since their sense of self was still relatively new and unformed, at its most easily influenced state as suggested by Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy and Hoy (1998).

The problems associated with not adopting an approach that considered the preferred work practices of the teachers was manifested in the problems that emerged in the Science department. Kate’s negative comments about the rigour of the new Science curriculum and criticisms about the deficiencies of the policy caused tension within her department as they began their interactions with the reform. Nevertheless, five of the six teachers in this study, Jane most particularly, found close alignment between their professional practices and the reform. As a consequence this assisted in building their self-efficacy beliefs and engendered more positive responses to meeting the requirements of this reform (Bandura & Locke, 2003; Pajares, 2002).

Maintaining low levels of stress and anxiety was also important since this enabled the teachers to develop and strengthen their self-efficacy perceptions. Responses that were more resistant and negative tended to increase levels of stress and anxiety and occurred not just as a consequence of negative past experiences, but also where the teachers identified a lack of alignment between their practice of teaching and the reform. Tina, Shelley, David and Penny possessed strong negative mastery experiences and, as such, their early responses were also somewhat resistant or ambivalent. However, Shelley and Kate, who could not identify the same kind of alignment, also exhibited

more resistant behaviours (Crump, 2005; Ozga, 2000; Vidovich, 2002; Wallace & Flett, 2005). Lack of alignment contributed to weakened levels of self-efficacy and increased the propensity for individuals to feel higher levels of stress and anxiety (Woods, 1999; Nias, 2003). This observation supports the body of literature that discusses levels of teacher stress and resistance (Adamson & Davison, 2003; Bowe, Ball, & Gold, 1992; Crump, 2005; Edwards, 2000; Havelock, 1973; Ozga, 2000; Rogers, 1995; Vidovich, 2002)

Personal Attitudes towards Change

The teachers' attitudes towards change were strong influences on the way they conceptualised their agency and were drawn from their past and current experiences. For most, the implementation of new programs provided them with an opportunity to re-examine and reflect upon their professional practices, modifying their habitus, as well as giving them an opportunity to demonstrate their levels of professional competence.

Penny, as a longer serving teacher on staff, and one of the most experienced Science teachers in Years 7 to 9, and, at the time of the second interview, the Science Head of Department, had both a personal and professional obligation to contribute to the discussions and negotiations involving implementation of the national curriculum and the broader discourse of change in the school. Penny undertook these roles with considerable enthusiasm and gusto. Whilst she remained professionally skeptical on many occasions, her behaviour was not defiantly obstructive but rather concerned as a consequence of the deep engagement, negotiations and mediations of policy Penny had undertaken in examining the reform requirements.

It surprised Penny that in taking a more public role in light of these various positions of responsibility, her peers and members of the school's hierarchy openly acknowledged and recognized her contributions to the whole school discussions and decision making that were taking place. This further strengthened her level of professional confidence.

Penny also made some important personal decisions about sustaining her professional enthusiasm and positive engagement. She had deliberately punctuated her teaching career by changing jobs and taking breaks from teaching. Penny had never been at a school for more than four years continuously. She was the only teacher in this study who had taught overseas and Penny had recently returned from two years of maternity leave. In this way, she felt that this kept her professional practice fresh. "So, I haven't been somewhere for fifteen years doing the same thing" (P, 8.8.11, p. 10). She relished the opportunity to experience as many professional opportunities as possible, whilst raising a young family.

Jane described her practice as the "business of teaching" (J, 8.8.11, p. 7) and her role as a kind of journeyman, "walking" with the student (J, 8.8.11, p. 1). She felt that change encouraged her to examine her understandings of this business.

I'm not afraid of change because for me, change gets me out of a comfort zone and I don't like being in a comfort zone...Change for me brings about getting back to philosophies and what I truly believe in". (J, 8.8.11, p. 11).

After initially undertaking a process of deconstructing the curriculum documentation with her teaching partner, then auditing her current units of work and incorporating the required changes, Jane concluded that much of the curriculum she currently taught aligned with the reforms. As a consequence of this process, she decided that "...there wasn't actually great changes at all" (J, 8.8.11, p. 5). Early and detailed preparation made her feel "confident, very confident" (J, 8.8.11, p. 5) in her capacity to effectively implement the new curriculum and confidently exercise individual agency.

For Jane, encouragement and confidence came not just from her teaching partner, but also from colleagues whom she respected and trusted. She was disappointed when she saw:

... teachers that really didn't want to change and dug their heels in...you know, the day that I'm like that, but I will never be, but, I would resign...(J, 8.8.11, p. 2). I need to nail it for myself. You know, I go to those people that I trust around me in the school. (J, 8.8.11, p. 3)

Therefore, for those teachers comfortable working in change environments, the requirement to implement the Australian Curriculum was not perceived negatively, although their attitudes to the nature of the reform or the quality of the reform may have been. Previous positive experiences with change environments, as well as support in times of change for new teachers, meant that their levels of stress and anxiety were minimised. A clear sense of self, where clear practice boundaries were established and identified, contributed positively in raising confidence levels for the teachers who perceived themselves as active change agents

Nature of the Reform and Implications for Implementation

The nature of the reform had a significant influence on the way the teachers interpreted their role in this reform environment and, therefore, the agency they exercised. Teachers across Australia were obliged to engage with it and legislatively required to implement it. It was the teachers' shared view that whilst they were generally positive about their capacity to undertake the task before them, they would not have undertaken these changes had the reform not been mandated. There was no acceptance by any of the teachers that their current teaching practices or curriculum content were deficient. This supported Bandura's (1997) view that teachers' practice remains largely unchanged unless presented with significant and compelling evidence to re-evaluate it.

Each of the teachers understood the mandated nature of the reform in different ways. Jane described mandated change as reform where "you've got rules and regulations which you have to adhere to" (J, 8.8.11, p. 8). She used the metaphor of an open umbrella and a fountain to describe the difference between mandated and

discretionary reform and established her sense of individual agency by doing so. Mandated reform meant Jane needed to undertake a process of:

...taking something that you have to do and making it work within the area that you, are in...a mandated thing...it's like an umbrella basically and...the drips are coming off it, they roll down it and come off it. (J, 8.8.11, p. 8)

Jane described discretionary change as being like a:

...fountain...where you've got it here and it just flows out...it's coming out, you are the fountain. Whereas the ACARA to me is the umbrella and the drips are coming but they're basically rolling and coming down. (J, 8.8.11, p. 9)

However, Jane accepted that there were benefits to mandated change:

...certain philosophies can be lost, as much as I hate to say it, in the day to day of what you do. Change often brings about getting back to those philosophies and saying how does this fit within what I really truly believe. (J, 8.8.11, p. 11)

David and Shelley indicated that this reform disrupted current work practices which, from their point of view, were already effective and not requiring any change (Bandura, 1997; Levine, 1980; Riseborough, 1993; Rogers, 1983;). Shelley's focus of engagement was strongest closest to its implementation. Her reasoning for this was that she felt that her involvement was a 'fait accompli', "...I guess maybe there is that mentality that the work horses [teachers] will just do what we [ACARA] tell them" (S, 9.8.11, p. 10). The feeling that teachers may have felt marginalised by centralised decision making around the reform and the implementation timelines imposed by ACARA, was identified as a concern raised by Tina:

...these people, the government, have made the decision, what are they doing to support it? It's almost as though we're, they've decided, that we're going to do it, we weren't really involved in that decision but we're the ones who have to pick up the pieces...But you know, it's just another thing that they want us to do where it's like...now you want us to implement a new curriculum...Who else is going to do it? (T, 9.8.11, p. 19)

Penny further commented on her concerns about ACARA's centralised decision making processes and the impact this might have at the site of implementation. "I can't phone up ACARA and say, "Why have you put cells here instead of here?" (P, 9.8.11, p. 7). As Penny further noted, "...so, the content is written there and rightly or wrongly, whether you agree with the order that it's put in or not, it's there" (P, 9.8.11, p. 7).

Initial misgivings by David were focused around the mandatory nature of the reform. Implementation was "...more of a burden placed at the feet of teachers who were responsible for doing all the work since they were interpreting it and turning it into practice" (D, 8.8.11, p.8). David went on to say he had been in tight positions before when he was:

... just constantly rushing, rush, rush, rush, get this done, get this done and oh...even when they (the students) say funny things sometimes like you almost don't laugh because you're so focused and...I don't enjoy that as much. (D, 8.8.11, p. 9)

Nevertheless, he was somewhat optimistic as to what the Australian Curriculum would contribute to his teaching practice:

I am hoping that it improves like my teaching and, yeah, makes more sense I guess and give[s] me more direction. (D, 8.8.11, p. 8)

And later:

I did really hope that it was going to simplify and ...just give me less to do and ...give a bit more focus on the essentials rather than race to tick all the boxes like we've covered everything. I really think that was my biggest hope with ACARA and I'm not sure that's going to happen. (D, 8.8.11, p. 9)

At the second round of interviews post implementation, David, who had been keen to engage in the Australian Curriculum but hopeful that his daily practice would not be overwhelmed by curriculum, confirmed some of these early concerns. When discussing his experiences with the implementation of the new Maths curriculum, he commented:

I guess I was thinking that ACARA would be a big, sudden change and it hasn't overly been...I do think, well in Maths I can clearly see it, because it's clear to me, it is a clear change. With that, I guess my teaching of it hasn't changed like I'd hoped. In some ways, it's gotten a bit more boring and hard work than exciting. (D, 28.3.12, p. 5)

David felt that he was required to push through the content, describing this process as a "nightmare" (D, 28.3.12, p. 6) and:

...still finding the ACARA documents very, very 'jargonese' and finding it really hard to totally understand it and unpack it to be honest...it's sort of open to a lot of interpretations...So I think in one way you could just justify what we're doing already but I don't know, I just think it's important to probably try and change. And yeah, I'm finding we're not changing so much in our English curriculum. (D, 28.3.12, p. 2)

Responses from some of the other participants also suggested some negativity towards the mandated nature of the reform since it demanded their engagement. However, they accepted this with more fatalism than resistance. Shelley, Tina and Emily all indicated that they just needed to "[s]uck it up. Just suck it up. We've got to do it, just let's do it. (T, 9.8.11, p. 16), and that it was "...no use in whinging about it, you've got to get on with the job and do it" (E, 8.8.11, p. 8). Shelley felt that it was "... something that I need to do, it's just on the to-do list, you need to start incorporating this" (S, 9.8.11, p. 5) whilst Jane was able to see the mandated reform as an opportunity to get back "...to

those philosophies [that may have been lost] and saying how does this fit within what I really truly believe” (J, 8.8.11, p. 11). Emily’s final comment was, “I’m pretty good at sucking it up” (E, 8.8.11, p.8).

Mandated reform encouraged Shelley to be more engaged in its implementation. “I’m definitely interested but I just need to have faith that it’s something that will happen. It’s just, you don’t want to put a whole lot of work into something and change things and then it never comes about. (Shelley, 9.8.11, p. 5) Nevertheless, since her participation was not negotiable she approached the task of implementation from the point of view that, “...it’s part of my job... Yeah, I just see it as something that I need to do, it’s just on the to-do list, you need to start incorporating this”. (S, 9.8.11, p. 5) However, Emily was keen to point out that at this early stage of her career, she was not keen to participate in this reform at all but was only doing so because it was mandated:

Q: Okay do you think you’d do this differently if it wasn’t mandated?

E: Oh... I don’t think I’d do anything if it wasn’t mandated. [Laugh] I need direction, definitely. (E, 8.8.11, p. 12)

Nationally mandated curriculum reform also reduced early concerns Tina had about embarking on another curriculum change that might ultimately fail, as many of her past experiences had played out with reform. Whilst she was not sure that the new curriculum would necessarily improve the quality of her practice, having national curriculum alignment had undeniable benefits (T, 9.8.11, pp. 6 & 8). As she said, “[t]his is real, this won’t be phased out so anything we do now will stand”. (T, 9.8.11, p. 7). She was confident that the national element of this reform would mean an ongoing commitment to sustain the reform, therefore, any effort on her part would be worthwhile, “...because it’s a national curriculum. It’s going to stay, it’s going to stay. So I’m more willing, with time permitting, to be involved.” (T, 9.8.11, p. 15)

However, in the second interview, Tina recounted two subsequent experiences that challenged these perceptions and her continued involvement with the reform. The first related to a conversation, post implementation, with a colleague at another school where the interpretation of the ACARA documents around assessment and marking practices differed considerably from those adopted at Tina’s school. Tina’s frustration and confusion was considerable:

We’re adopting this. And I’m like, well aren’t we all doing the one curriculum now? How come you’re all adopting this style of marking? And I don’t have enough understanding of that. I mean, we’re doing Understanding and Skills. There must be another way of doing it, with the three [criteria]...No, I don’t know, I just do what I have to do. (T, 27.3.12, p. 7)

The second concern that emerged for Tina was a comment made by her husband, the Principal, that ACARA, whilst being nationally mandated, may not be nationally implemented. Tina interpreted this to mean that schools did not have to adopt the ACARA curriculum. Her response was one of considerable anger, “Why are we doing

this if we don't have to be doing it? Why are these guys [the teachers] bending over backwards, killing themselves?" (T, 27.3.12, p. 2) She went on to explain:

The only reason I got involved in this is because they said it is here to stay. You do not have a choice, but it seems like you sort of do...I've jumped on board. I've committed, if I've committed then we have to keep going. (T, 27.3.12, p. 13)

Tina expressed deep concerns if this reform were not to proceed. She said she would, "...just shake my head and if they ever try to introduce anything ever again, I would have nothing to do with it" (T, 27.3.12, p. 13).

In considering each of the participant's narratives, it was apparent that this reform did not, of itself, reduce (nor increase) the participants' agency. Whilst it mandated their engagement at some level, their perceptions of themselves as agents of change was not necessarily nor obviously linked. As Fullan (1993) suggests, the nature of the reform influenced the nature of the teachers' engagement. However, the nature of their agency was influenced by the way the Heads of Department, their workplace environment, the school leaders and the operational practices of their school interpreted and implemented the reform requirements. It was the nature of those decisions that had the strongest influence on the participants' perceptions of their agency and it was in this way that the teachers were still able to exercise control and individual agency within a mandated reform.

Resistance

It was evident that the teachers' quest to locate their voice, their sense of agency in this reform, strongly shaped their conceptualisation, negotiation and mediation practices. The work of Fullan (1993), Hargreaves and Dawe (1989), Wise (1977), Eisner (2005) and Nias (2003) contend that the imposition of large scale, mandated reform can be problematic since, to manage change effectively, teachers draw on professional knowledge that they have constructed and developed over long periods of time (Fullan, 1993). Should teachers become stressed by such reforms, Nias (2003) contends they protect themselves either through actions of non-accommodation and resistance. In circumstances such as these, teachers make presumptions about their professional role and can presume reforms like this will have a range of negative outcomes. Changes from outside their working space can threaten and undermine a teacher's culture (Darling-Hammond, 2005). Bandura (1997) suggests that the learner's physiological state (in this study referring to the teacher participants), which includes fear, anxiety and stress, affects an individual's self-confidence in their capacity to achieve desired tasks. High levels of anxiety and stress have been shown to be significant contributors to teacher burnout and can occur for many reasons (Maslach & Jackson, 1996; Nias, 2003; Woods, 1991). It might be as a consequence of teachers feeling that there is less time to implement policies or an absence of relevant professional learning, or a concern about the lack of collaboration on site, all of which can lead to a mistrust of the political motivations behind the change (Hargreaves, 2003). Where the teachers in this study could find alignment between the reform and their current professional practices,

resistance levels were low. Where alignment was not consistent, resistance levels were higher.

This research demonstrated that resistance was not one action but a range of responses. At one level, resistance may be responses that demonstrate refusal to engage without due consideration of the task. However, resistance may also be in response to a person's careful consideration of the task at hand, from which they conclude their engagement with the reform requirements is problematic. In other words, resistant behaviours can occur as a response to carefully considered interactions between personal, behavioural and environmental contexts, not the neglect of such contexts.

In this group of teachers, it was the shared view that whilst they were generally positive about their capacity to undertake the task before them, their engagement with it was predicated on the fact that it was mandated, otherwise they did not see the need to change current practices (Bandura, 1997). David and Shelley indicated that this reform disrupted current work practices which, from their point of view, were already effective, requiring little need for change (Bandura, 1997; Levine, 1980; Riseborough, 1993; Rogers, 1983).

Analysis of the teachers' narratives indicated that negative past experiences, identified by four of the participants brought some degree of cynicism and resistance to all of them. Emily and Jane, both relatively new to the profession, had few previous experiences to draw upon whereas Tina, Shelley, Penny and David's negative past experiences carried over and influenced their initial attitudes towards this reform confirming previous research commenting on resistance (Bandura, 1997; Butt, 1982; Hall, 1991; Hardy & Lingard, 2008; Hargreaves, 2003; Levine, 1980; Ozga, 2000; Rogers, 1983). Tina and Kate appeared to be the most emotionally agitated about the reform, and skeptical and anxious about its ability to achieve its outcomes. Kate's criticisms as the Head of the Science department towards the ACARA Science Curriculum, "...it's not good enough" (K, 8.8.11 p. 16) and "...I don't believe that they've [ACARA] actually come up with an educationally sound underpinning" (K, 8.8.11, p. 18), had a negative influence on the teachers in her department. Shelley was particularly concerned that the Australian Curriculum might be a "new fad" (S, 9.8.11, p. 5) which led her to adopt a 'wait and see' approach as a consequence. Several times during her first interview Shelley expressed her hesitance to get too involved with the reform too early until it had some direct impact on her practice. As well, David's early experiences, referred to in the discussion around resistance, as a "kind of sink or swim" (D, 8.8.11, p. 3) situation, also encouraged him to approach the implementation of the Australian Curriculum cautiously, at least initially.

The mandated nature of the reform also acted to reduce these teachers' resistance. Tina and Jane were encouraged by a strong commitment from the school, its leadership team, and the broader educational community, to support initial and ongoing change since each state and territory had, through legislation, agreed to implement the national curriculum. In this change agenda, the fact that the reform was backed by nationally

agreed upon legislation supported and affirmed Tina, Jane and Shelley's professional role and the importance of the work they felt was needed to undertake implementation of the national curriculum. For Shelley, Penny and Tina national reform represented a shared journey and sharing a commitment to the reform was also important for its sustainability. This encouraged their efforts to engage positively with it and strengthened their levels of self-confidence.

Shelley was the most accepting of the group with regard to the degree of filtering that others in the leadership team undertook on her behalf. She saw her role as an implementer of the policy documents describing herself as a "foot soldier" who would "...do what I'm asked to do. I will write units that I have to write and I will make changes with the other ones that I have to teach that someone else has changed" (S, 9.8.11, p. 14). However, Shelley's habitus conflicted and resisted the requirements of the reform and her professional practices, "...it's funny because I might want them to tell me exactly what I need to do to write my unit but if they told me how to teach it, I think I'd resist that." (S, 9.8.11, p. 6)

Shelley's unwillingness to respond to different modes of working suggested, in these circumstances, that her field of practice might be changed to respond to the reform but her habitus was unyielding to the change. Whilst the lack of alignment between field and habitus had the potential to lead to new learning and changed practice, it suggested that Shelley was prepared to acknowledge the dominant capital of the reform and the school's practices, without accepting it. This is consistent with the type of resistant behaviour that Ball and Bowe (1992) refer to as subterfuge and Adamson and Davidson (2003) call pseudo-compliance where externally, it appears that the reform has been accepted, but few changes take place in practice. It can be seen that one of the reasons for this response is the way Shelley protected the space in which she worked which was so closely an extension of her expression of self. Her response was not from a position lacking agency but one where exercising her agency was central to her resistant actions. This will be further discussed in the following chapter.

An interesting outcome of the research was that when examining the nature of their resistance, the teachers' resistance was not a consequence of being deliberately negative or obstructive. Resistant behaviour for some of these teachers was not a consequence of low self-efficacy but rather, high self-efficacy, not because they lacked capacity to engage with the reform requirements but that the reform, from their professional perspective, lacked efficacy. Therefore, resistant behaviour occurred as a result of high levels of self-efficacy. For example, Tina, Shelley and Penny, were quite confident about their capacity to undertake the task before them but were initially resistant because of their past experiences with reform. It was their experiences of active engagement, of critique and analysis of previous reforms that led them to initially be more resistant than positive about future reforms. It was from a strong sense of self-efficacy that they chose to resist the reform initially and it was the influences of vicarious experiences and social and visual cues they observed in their workplace that were responsible for changes in their attitudes and subsequent responses to the reform.

Conversely, it was also apparent from teacher responses in this study that strong self-efficacy beliefs did not automatically mean they would positively engage with the reform. Teachers enact their agency by declaring their professional voice so that it is valued and acknowledged as an important part of any localised discourse relating to educational change (Boote, 2006; Craig, 2012; Kelly, 2004). Agreement with policy, in this study, was shown not to be a necessary pre-cursor to the exercise of their agency. Teachers in this study demonstrated that resistance can be an important and effective element of agency. This understanding is critical for those tasked with managing educational change since it indicates that the voices of resistance should not be dismissed but examined in light of the school culture and the reform requirements. Resistant voices can collectively build cultural capacity but requires careful management and leadership of the school leaders and decision makers.

Preferred Ways of Working

Each of the teachers undertook relatively similar pathways in examining the new curriculum documents. They began by familiarising themselves with the detail of the reform. Jane adopted an approach she described as “chewing off small pieces” (J, 8.8.11, p. 2). This meant developing tables and checklists to make sure she was doing it “...right. I like that because I think it left no stone unturned” (J, 8.8.11, p. 2). This close attention to detail meant that the curriculum reform could be something that she could “embrace...own...you have to make it work well for you” (J, 8.8.11, p. 2).

Even though Emily was a new graduate, she drew on her experiences as a pre-service teacher to assist her to manage the requirements of the reform. Whilst her practicum experiences were quite unsettling, her mentors “merely sat in the corner and took notes” (E, 8.8.11, p. 6), the mentor in her final practicum had been so positive and encouraging that the resulting growth in her confidence and sense of professional capability turned around Emily’s hesitation about becoming a teacher. It was the powerful influence of these experiences that Emily developed patterns and methods of engagement in new professional situations that helped her cope in times of change. She began by “sitting down and sifting through” the new documents with the aim to “map out” a suitable plan (E, 8.8.11, p. 6). However, these few practicum experiences identified some professional strengths that Emily felt she would draw on when working with this reform. She felt she was good “at making links and connections” between the documents and teaching practice, and that she had been “gearing up for ... ACARA” suggesting a level of personal agency as she prepared to meet the requirements of the reform. This process of making links, connections, sitting and sifting, was one suggested by her mentor in Emily’s previous practicum. The language indicates a necessity on her part to reflect (sitting), prioritise (sifting) and make meaning (making links, looking for connections). The use of the mapping metaphor carries with it the nuanced understanding that by undertaking such an exercise, a pathway to effective implementation would emerge. The confidence she drew from adopting this procedure was enough to encourage her to complete her degree. Until that point, Emily had still been quite unsure that this was the profession for her.

For Kate and her staff, the process of working with change involved auditing existing practices and, as earlier discussed, undertaking a very careful examination of the new curriculum content since all Science students worked from booklets specifically developed by Kate and the Science teachers at the school. Whole department collaboration (with teachers drawn from both the Junior School and the Secondary School) was important since it clarified for all of the teachers how implementation was intended to occur. Ann implemented this approach in the English department and Ryan used this method at the first staff meeting to encourage enthusiasm and engagement from the whole staff as they began their initial engagement with the reform.

Both Ryan and Kate identified that it was important for them to determine how the teachers in their areas preferred to work and to accommodate those preferences in their planning. This enabled them to understand more clearly the extent to which ways of working were enculturated in their spheres of operation. Common to both groups was the need for time to individually negotiate and mediate the new curriculum followed by discussions and collaboration to determine how the new curriculum aligned with current practices leading to an identification of any gaps.

In summary, working contexts at the site that encouraged collaboration were the most effective ways to assist in making informed decisions about the reform requirements. Where this was evident, the teachers were more confident about their capacity to meet the reform requirements. Newer teachers wanted close supervision, careful direction and less autonomy whilst the more experienced teachers preferred a more flexible, collaborative approach. Teachers expected that the implementation decisions made by the school and its leaders would acknowledge their preferred working practices to support positive reform responses.

Role of Professional Learning

Whilst all of the participants were keen to align their current practices with curriculum reform, and placed considerable emphasis on working within the parameters of their own school culture, they also indicated that it was important to ‘see’ how policy was conceptualised elsewhere. This suggested that the teachers were keen to undertake professional learning and saw it as a way of confirming their engagement practices and implementation strategies with the reform. This was specifically noted by Penny, Tina, Shelley and Jane in their narratives.

Tina felt that the school’s willingness to commit funds to support requests for professional learning would be a further indication of the importance with which the school’s leadership team viewed this reform. Time release was quite costly since teachers would require replacement or cover for the time off campus. Such actions by the school would certainly encourage her to come ‘on board’. Release time to visit schools during her work day was even more appreciated given that her available time outside of school hours was limited given family commitments. “Release time would be amazing. But is it possible?” (T, 8.8.11, p. 10). Emily, as well, expressed a desire to undertake professional learning opportunities and was concerned that, up until the time of the first interview in

August, she had not participated in any (E, 8.8.11, p. 9). Shelley attributed her lack of enthusiasm for the implementation of the Australian Curriculum to limited access to professional development and learning opportunities, "...it just hasn't been spoken about." (S, 9.8.11, p. 10).

Whilst the teachers noted the importance of undertaking professional learning, they were noticeably vague about the specific nature and topics of the activities they would like to undertake, except to see how other schools and teachers were engaging with the reform. This may have been because they had limited involvement, at this stage, with the documents and observing others enabled their understanding of the range of reform requirements to be expedited. This was the kind of professional learning they felt was most valuable since it had immediate, real world applications to their practice. Their intention was to draw upon the cultural capital from elsewhere as a means of establishing the reform within their habitus.

Nevertheless, the participants consistently referred to the need for professional learning to be "relevant". Their desire to implement the reform effectively, as a consequence of positioning themselves as policy implementers, shaped many of their decisions around learning about the reform requirements, supported by Jane's comments that her primary focus was knowing that she was "hitting the mark" (J, 8.8.11, p. 10). With a lack of specificity around what "relevant" meant, it appeared that this related to the need for any professional learning to give them tools that they could immediately use in meeting the reform requirements, including support documents relating to unit writing templates and already completed units of work. Given that the teachers accrued cultural capital as they engaged in these types of activities, actions to align the learning associated with professional development to the teachers' habitus also acted to encourage the teachers to embrace the reform. In defining the kind of professional learning most desired by the teachers, their narratives suggested they privileged certain forms of cultural capital over others, which enabled the participants to establish their place in the reform and define their professional space.

However, from their narratives it emerged that their desire to undertake professional learning was more a legacy of formulated engagement procedures from the past and appeared in this context as more of a ritualised practice than anything that they could identify as being specific to this reform environment. At their second interviews six months later, there was general agreement that these early requests for professional support and learning had not been as critical as first thought. What became more important was the guidance and support from school personnel, such as their Heads of Department and teaching partners, rather than access to external professional learning opportunities. The feedback and implementation guidance offered by their colleagues at the school, rather than anything offered by educational specialists external to their worksite, were more meaningful because they were presented with site-specific understanding and knowledge. Again, alignment with the school's cultural capital affirmed the practices of the participants and, in this way, encouraged positive responses to the reform. Essentially, it was early, site specific and in-house professional support

which was more critical to developing early feelings of self-confidence and became strong influences on the ways these participants conceptualised the reform and their role in it. The emphasis on in-house rather than external providers of professional learning has gained greater legitimacy both by teachers and school leadership teams in more recent times. The participant teachers in this study confirmed this direction in the provision of professional learning.

The teachers also felt it was important for the school leadership team, the school's Executive and leaders, to engage in professional learning as well to ensure that implementation understanding was consistent with their perceptions of the reform. "She [Ann, English HOD] brings that stuff back and she gives it to us" (S, 9.8.11, p. 15). Shelley felt even more confident about her tasks in the implementation process since the external professional development Ann undertook confirmed the procedures the English department was undertaking. The type of professional learning developed and selected by the school or Heads of Department to provide for teachers, encouraged particular forms of cultural capital. However, cultural capital that constituted the field of policy was also informed by the preferred ways the teachers learnt about the reform via professional development opportunities. Therefore, cultural capital was not just offered to teachers within the policy field, but was informed by their preferred ways of working and habitus which, in turn, was influenced by their individual dispositions relating to the reform. This further supported the view that at the centre of any change management process, should be a clearly observed and shared understanding of the cultural norms at play at the change site. In this circumstance, central to the construct of "relevant" professional learning, was the development of strong perceptions of alignment between the teachers' habitus and the field of policy using the "right" kinds of capital. This was capital drawn from within the school site but reaffirmed by the fields of practice doxa adopted in other authoritative professional spaces external to this research site.

Employment Status and Stage of Career

Employment status had an impact on the nature of the teachers' agency. Those longer serving, more experienced teachers acted with a stronger sense of individual agency than the teachers who were new to the profession or did not have tenure. Emily felt that as both a new graduate and employed only on a contract, she was in a position where she could contribute little to the conversations about the implications of implementation or feel comfortable in presenting her point of view. As already commented, as a new teacher Emily was "...pretty happy just to sit back, watch, listen and look" but given another ten years in the profession, "...I'll be there fighting going "That's not right!" [Laugh]. I'm just happy to sit back at the moment and let other people fight it out." (E, 8.8.11, p. 9) At this stage of her career, Emily described herself professionally as a "blank canvas".

Not only did Emily describe herself as the youngest and newest member of staff but being on contract meant that she was not keen to be seen as "too opinionated and put people offside" by coming into the school being "too opinionated about change" (E, 8.8.11, p. 10). Initially, she was more subdued and circumspect about her commitment to

the reform but felt that the experience of preparing for and implementing the national curriculum was very valuable.

David was more confident given that he had tenure. His earlier employment experiences were largely contracts and this tenuousness contributed to his indecisiveness about being a teacher and led him, on several occasions, to consider his long term employment in the profession. Tenure shaped the teachers' agency. Those most confident of their employment status were more confident in exercising their agency.

For Emily, Jane and David, as relatively new teachers, classroom 'survival' and maintaining their 'head above water', were the key elements in determining how they engaged with change and generally meant they exercised limited agency. Emily was grappling with day to day management tasks saying "...I am more concerned about what I do in the classroom than what is floating around" (E, 9.8.11, p. 3). With limited previous reform experiences, they were keen to learn from their colleagues and the experiences of their environment to understand how to meet the reform requirements. For David and Jane this meant developing close collaborative relationships with their teaching partners so that they felt confident working with them. Emily felt fortunate to be working with Ann, who had organised for her to write the Drama units which was Emily's area of expertise.

It is not surprising that newer teachers or those without tenure respond differently to education change from those who do. Ball, Maguire, Braun and Hoskins (2011) suggest that new teachers act as policy "receivers" since they are concerned with "coping and defending" with a focus on "dependency" (p. 626). It was evident for the new teachers in this study, that little self-initiated engagement occurred initially, and patterns of participation and reification were limited to what was absolutely necessary to achieve a minimal level of what they felt was satisfactory classroom practice. They tended to rely more on working from completed, modelled units of work and textbooks with already prepared resources, since managing students and administration tasks was more their immediate focus than developing their own curriculum. This also meant each had a greater reliance on the leadership and managers at the school in supporting their engagement with the reform since they were less comfortable working autonomously. Therefore, it was because of the way these teachers preferred to work that required different management and leadership practices were to be undertaken at the site. This also provided another set of reasons why teachers' responses to reform are so diverse.

Narratives of Self – An Overview

In summary, the theme of professional self emerged from the interviews since it was apparent that the teachers' beliefs about themselves as teachers and their responses to the reform were closely connected. Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs were strengthened when they felt confident. Their confidence was in turn strengthened when their teaching practices and perceptions about the nature of their work were affirmed. To develop these perceptions, it appeared that the teachers needed to have a clear understanding of their operational 'space' – the norms and behavioural practices and expectations that provided

the boundaries to their teaching practices, as they undertook personal and institutional negotiations of policy at this site. The clarity of their operational practices shaped their confidence in relation to implementing the reform and acted to increase their feelings of professional confidence and capability.

Examination of this theme via the data focused on the way workplace practices and professional cultural experiences influence self-efficacy perceptions from a psychological perspective (Bandura's fourth influence on self-efficacy). Whilst the professional practice spaces of mandated implementation might suggest an environment where there is little negotiation and personal agency (Hargreaves, 2003), it was evident in this study that the teachers did not feel particularly limited in relation to policy enactment. Seeking a space to embed the reform was the primary goal for the teachers and there were intrinsic professional qualities, developed as a consequence of their years of experience, which identified where the reform would fit. Whilst negative past experiences did act to discourage some teachers from engaging, largely resistance occurred as a consequence of seeking, and failing to find this alignment. Increases in stress, frustration and anxiety were the resulting behaviours. The best fit for the teachers occurred when aspects of the reform aligned with their practice. It was evident that when practices at the site acknowledged their preferred ways of working, years of experience, and acted to establish a sense of ownership and control for the teachers, their psychological and emotional states improved and this also encouraged positive reform responses. Again, this demonstrated that entrenched negative mastery experiences could be changed as teachers' psychological and emotional states were strengthened.

5.3. Chapter Summary

This chapter drew together the participants' narratives, organised using four themes, after they were ascribed codes as part of the thematic analysis undertaken. This chapter began (Section 5.1) with storied teachers' narratives to provide a context for further analysis and discussion directed by the focus research question - How do teachers engage with, mediate and contextualise the implementation requirements of large scale, mandated curriculum reform into their teaching practice? The focus was to examine their self-efficacy perceptions as these were constructed and shaped, and enacted in the teachers' space where they participated as both "receivers and agents of policy" (Saunders, 1987, p.103 in Ball, Maquire, Braun & Hoskins, 2011).

The participants were introduced at the beginning of the chapter. Jane was enthusiastic, keen to be involved yet uncertain. Penny was cautious but with similar previous international experiences, confident that she could manage the reform requirements. Shelley and David possessed some reservations, were a little resistant to the imposed reform yet became more positive about their capacity to undertake the necessary changes. Tina was assertive about the reform requirements and demanding of the role of the policy makers to construct strong and sustainable policy. Emily, as a very new teacher, had very limited previous experiences to draw upon, and, whilst hesitant and somewhat concerned about what the future held, was working actively to establish

her role in the reform agenda and willingly accepted guidance from her Head of Department and school colleagues.

In transitioning from initial engagement to implementation, the participants' dispositions shifted and were further re-defined as implementation of the reform drew closer. In reviewing each of their experiences, four recurrent themes emerged as the strongest influences on their responses to the reform and the strongest influences on their sense of self efficacy. Their observations and reflections also provided an interesting insight into the way their habitus was informed by their dispositions. Instead of viewing themselves as passive respondents to mandated reform, the teachers saw themselves as agents of change, from their very first engagement with it, and this directed their future negotiations and mediations with it. Their acts of engagement suggested that the participants saw their role as of equal importance in ensuring the policy's success as that of the policy designers and developers. However, whilst each located themselves as agents of change, not all shared the same capacity or professional confidence (as evident in their perceptions of self-efficacy) to voice these positions within the reform at the school nor in the broader educational and policy context.

As this process of engagement and implementation unfolded, what emerged was that each of the teachers felt well prepared for the requirements of the new curriculum and demonstrated relative confidence in their capacity to implement the first phase of the Australian Curriculum as they began their engagement with it. Some concerns were raised with regard to specific subject areas in the first round of interviews [Maths in the Secondary School most specifically], and at the second round of interviews [English and Science in the Junior School and continuing concerns with Maths in the secondary school]. However, these did not appear to be significant impediments in the teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about their capacity to meet implementation requirements. The longer term teachers, Shelley and Tina in particular, continued to refer to the process of preparing for implementation as 'tweaking' or 'cutting and pasting' whilst the newer teachers, Emily and David, were prepared to accept the curriculum in an open way with Emily using metaphors such as describing herself as a "blank canvas" without "...backlogs of syllabus running around in my head" (E, 8.8.11, p. 8).

Longer term teachers in this study, Shelley, Tina and Penny, expressed the shared view that their engagement and enactment of the policy were reinforced by the nature of the reform, that it was national and mandated, which meant that teachers across Australian were working in similar ways to them and were supported by the legislative aspect of this curriculum, in that each State and Territory had agreed to its implementation. The level to which the teachers moved from this point to embed this reform within their professional practice was then influenced by their personal professional mediations between the change before them and their own interpretations of the range of sources identified by Bandura (1977a) – previous mastery experiences, the influence of vicarious experiences, their interpretations of social and visual cues and their own psychological and emotional state.

During this process of engagement, mediation and contextualisation, in the space between policy and practice, each of the teachers undertook a critically reflective process examining the new curriculum with their current curriculum. Not only was this the suggested means of engagement by each of the administrators, Alicia, Ryan and Jan, but it also appeared that it was a natural first step for each of the teachers as they endeavoured to establish ownership of the new curriculum. Ownership was reflected in the degree to which the new curriculum could be embedded in the space of their current practices.

However, the ways they embedded the reform shifted along the implementation time frame as a consequence of the interplay between the four influences on their self-efficacy. Those participants who were either new to the profession or had relatively negative mastery experiences were more willing to respond to the vicarious experiences and social and visual cues within their environment to shape their responses to this new reform. States of stress and wellbeing were not largely impacted individually, however, each of the participants could clearly articulate the range of environmental factors that caused them the most stress and concern in times like this. By undertaking this process, the participants were able exercise their agency.

Whilst the teachers who had the most clearly defined boundaries of their field of practice were able to engage more easily with the reform, this only occurred if there were fewer contested spaces between the reform and their operational space. Initially the teachers attempted to embed the reform into their existing practices rather than changing their practice by assessing the reform's efficacy, particularly for those teachers who were clear about their role. The leaders enacted and supported the school's cultural ways of working (Nias, 1989) so the teachers accepted, and expected, that initial details about how curriculum implementation was to occur would be made by them, leaving the deconstruction and filtering of curriculum policy to the school leadership team. This distillation of policy was an accepted cultural practice where high levels of professional trust existed between the teachers and the school's leaders. The teachers accepted a number of leadership practices that may have been considered to be disempowering and marginalising of teachers' practices in other environments. The teachers generally appeared confident that the school's administrators and hierarchy were acting to support the professional space of their practice. Whilst this was not evident for all teachers in all situations, where it did exist, it raised the teachers' levels of self-efficacy and engendered more positive attitudes towards the reform.

The influence of the prevailing school culture (Fullan, 1982; Hargreaves D, 1980; Huberman & Miles, 1984; Invargson & Greenway, 1984; Nias, 2003) with regard to normative practices of operation was strong and important in this reform. The teachers needed to feel that their workplace as a whole shared similar values with regard to education, operating on an agreed upon set of expectations. They needed to observe that the leadership team valued their work by acknowledging their preferred ways of working as well as providing a clear direction as to the way they envisaged the teachers needed to proceed towards achieving effective implementation of the reform mandates.

At the close of this chapter it is important to encapsulate some of the contributions that this research project endeavours to make to the discourse of educational policy reform and change management. It has identified the importance of establishing professional trust at worksites to engender positive responses to reform; it described the many patterns and actions that comprise resistance; it explored and elaborated the space in which teachers work by describing the mediated and negotiated practices undertaken by them as they engaged with education policy; it highlighted the many ways in which teachers negotiate reform and identified the significant influence that workplace environments, and more specifically the leaders at the site, had on responses to reform. It identified the authority of the teachers as they engaged with reform through a new concept - reform efficacy. Each of these elements of the research findings had relevance for the way educational policy is developed, and for extending our understanding of the critical space of teachers' work between intended and implemented policy. As its central focus, this project has identified the place of teachers' voices even in mandated, externally imposed, large-scale curriculum reform. In this chapter, I have worked with the narrative data to discuss these themes and the many sub-themes that have emerged from the analysis. The grouped data will be brought together in the final chapter to address the central research question: How do teachers engage with, mediate and contextualise the implementation requirements of large-scale, mandated curriculum reform?

Chapter 6 Conclusions

This research inquiry emerged from a period of time in my professional practice where significant changes were taking place in Australian education, both at a national and local level. This had particular personal relevance since as a middle manager and later, a member of the school's Executive team, I was tasked with the responsibility of effectively leading and managing many of these changes. It provided the encouragement for me to undertake further study in the areas of managing educational change, informed by concerns consistent with those raised by Darling-Hammond (2005) who warned:

If teachers are to focus on essential goals rather than a cacophony of competing directives, government policy makers will need to restrain themselves from thinking that the only strategy for change is to enact an ever-increasing pile of mandates from the top, leaving regulatory gridlock and intellectual chaos in the schools that must reconcile these conflicting impulses. (p. 377)

As the school's Director of Teaching and Learning, I had responsibility for seeing that Phase One of the Australian Curriculum was effectively implemented. More specifically, this meant that the policy requirements were met at the school, the curriculum documents in English, History, Mathematics and Science incorporated the new curriculum developed by ACARA, and the teaching and learning practices at the school reflected this. It was my intention to achieve this with the assistance of the Heads of Department, the Junior Years Curriculum Co-ordinator, and the teachers at the school. From my point of view, successful implementation meant that the teachers felt capable and confident about the changes required whilst minimising their stress or negativity. The school's philosophical model of 'servant leadership' meant that I saw my role as implementing the reform in an environment that supported and acknowledged the expertise of the teachers at the school.

This interest in how to manage and lead this process was informed by my broader interest in learning about managing and leading change. In earlier post-graduate studies, examining responses to change had always been an area of professional interest. I had undertaken investigations into the experiences of pre-service teachers negotiating their practicum experience as an agent of socialization; I had undertaken studies in areas of post compulsory education [as secondary students leave school] and transition education [junctures in education such as when primary students move into secondary schools, or middle years' students move into senior school].

With discussions around the implementation of a national curriculum in Australia, I became particularly interested in investigating teachers' responses to large-scale, mandated educational reform. I had read of the situations where this had occurred in other countries such as the United Kingdom, United States and South Africa. As a consequence, I was very keenly aware that effective implementation of policy was best achieved when teachers possessed some sense of ownership and it appeared that this might be difficult to achieve given that this policy, whilst national in its spread, did not emerge from any perceived deficit from teachers generally, and more specifically at my

work site. This would present another challenge around gaining engagement from the teachers and minimising resistance.

However, within the broader realm of examining teachers' responses to mandated reform, I was more specifically interested in gaining a deeper understanding of the reasons for such varied responses to reform. I had seen in my professional experience, teachers who were very similar in their philosophy and practice respond quite differently to change. I was keen to gain a deeper understanding of why teachers' responses to reform, their professional dispositions towards such changes, were so varied and, at times, individually unpredictable and inconsistent. This led to my early investigation of Albert Bandura's theories on self-efficacy and the way individual's constructs of professional capacity and capability were formed. To provide clarity around these negotiations and mediations of belief, I then examined the way such dispositions were constituted as seen from Pierre Bourdieu's perspective. The application of each of these elements of my research was intended to provide a context from which I could undertake the requirements of implementing the Australian Curriculum and the general elements of change that seemed to be the usual pattern of work for teachers at that time.

This chapter begins with a critical analysis of the purpose and context of the research (Section 6.1), and discusses the findings and the key issues of the research by providing an analysis of the emergent themes (Section 6.2). From these key issues, implications for both policy (Section 6.3) and practice are drawn (Section 6.4), and the theoretical implications raised by this study are summarised (Section 6.5). The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research (Section 6.6) concluding with a chapter and thesis summary identifying the significant outcomes of this research (Section 6.7).

6.1. Purpose and Context of the Study

In undertaking an examination of the ways this group of teachers responded to the implementation challenges presented by a large scale, mandated, curriculum reform at its first phase of implementation, the research intended to shed light on a range of policy and practice areas. My intention was to provide an opportunity to further examine the relationship between educational policy and educational practice; the role teachers play in policy implementation; the impact of large scale and mandated reform on teachers' practice; the extent to which teachers exercise their agency in environments of increasing levels of centralised control; and, further illuminate ways management and leadership teams within their organisations can influence their workplace environments to effect organisational change when it is imposed via external mandates.

Although new for Australia, the implementation of large-scale mandated reforms has occurred in other countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom. Research there revealed that embarking on such large scale reforms was highly problematic. The lack of policy/practice alignment, failure to provide ongoing support professionally to teachers to achieve the desired policy outcomes, as well as unwieldy implementation practices all contributed to the limited successes of such policy

initiatives. The literature also indicated that the role of teachers in achieving policy outcomes had been significantly underplayed.

As a consequence, this investigation took place in the space between policy and practice, at a time when teachers first engaged with the curriculum documentation of Phase One and came to understand its implementation requirements. It took place at a time when they were developing their conceptualisation of the curriculum reform, and clarifying and defining the role they perceived they would be required to play in it. To examine how teachers reached this point, the research focused on how self-efficacy beliefs, beliefs that informed their perceptions of their capacity to implement the reform, were constructed and the extent to which these beliefs shaped their engagement and implementation responses to mandated reform. Developing a clearer understanding of the behavioural, cognitive and environmental influences on their self-efficacy beliefs at times of significant and mandated change was intended to provide an insight into the ways these beliefs could be shaped by the practices of management and leadership within organisations, when the intended outcome was to build teacher capacity.

The title refers to locating teachers' voices in this externally developed and mandated education reform. This construct is used in this study drawing from Raymond, Butt and Townsend's (1992) view that:

The notion of teacher's voice is important in that it carries the tone, the language, the quality, the feelings that are conveyed by the way a teacher speaks and writes. In a political sense, the notion of teacher's voice addresses the right to speak and be represented. (p. 57)

Elbaz (1991) goes on to argue that it is "used against a background of previous silence" (p. 10). It appeared that this was an appropriate metaphor to use, since the research (Brennan, 2011, Darling-Hammond, 1990, 2005; Fullan, 1993, 1999, 2005; Grundy, 2002; Maquire, Braun & Ball, 2015; Pyhältö, Pietarinen & Soini, 2014; Spillane, 2004; Zhang & Stephens, 2013) noted the significant deficits which occurred in achieving effective policy implementation if teachers' voices were to remain silent in education policy discourse, most specifically in situations of large-scale mandated reform. It was always an intention of this study to present the full meaning of voice as described by Raymond, et al., by extensively recounting the teachers' language and comments when undertaking the analysis of their narratives (as was evident in Chapter Five) which has been a key factor in adding to the length of this document. The use of teachers' narratives directly, their choice of language and personal descriptions and recounts was intended to provide a rich context to their stories of engagement and working with change. As a consequence, in adopting this approach, it would be their voices that were privileged in the analysis addressing the second aspect of Raymond's definition, the teachers' right to speak and be represented.

Initially, based on my early readings around examining teachers' responses to change, my inquiry led to Albert Bandura's (1978) Social Cognitive Theory and his concept of self-efficacy. He described human behaviour in terms of continuous,

reciprocal interactions between environmental, cognitive and behavioural influences as people played a role in the “social milieu” that arose in their daily activities (Bandura, 1978, p. 345). Bandura’s contention is that it is the interplay between these three influences that directs a person’s behaviour. Behaviour, personal factors and environmental influences operate as interlocking determinants of each other, which Bandura calls “triadic reciprocal interaction” (Bandura, 1978, p. 346), since it is through these interactions that people create the environmental conditions that affect their engagement with their world. Critical to the inquiry I was undertaking was that these interactions influenced the nature of the responses that individuals made to their environment. Bandura described this in relation to outcome expectancy, where his research, and the research of others such as earlier research undertaken by Pajares (2002) and Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy (1998) and later supported by Briant and Doherty (2012), McCormick and Barnett (2011), McCormick, Ayres and Beechey (2006), Smyth (2004), Spillane, Gomez and Mesler (2012), Wang (2016) and Zhang and Stephens (2013) suggested that teachers’ engagement with change was closely related to their personal belief about their capacity to meet the change requirements. Therefore, this presented the theoretical underpinning for understanding not only how responses to reform were constructed but also the ways they could be shaped by changes to the teachers’ environments.

However, in my thinking about the nature of these “interactions”, my observations from many years working as a teacher were that teachers’ interactions with reforms or change in their workplaces were broad, often inconsistent and difficult to anticipate. As discussed in the Literature Review, whilst some embraced reform finding it professionally challenging, others were resistant and negative. Nor did it appear that each teacher’s responses were always consistent i.e. consistently negative or consistently positive. In some circumstances, they might appear positive about reform but in other situations, the same teachers were negative and resistant. The question emerged – what influenced the nature of their interactions with reforms? How influential were the specific characteristics of the reform in shaping the teachers’ responses or were there other factors at play, for instance, their perceptions of their professional sense of self?

This led to an investigation to further understand how individuals’ responses to their world are formed. Whilst it would have been appropriate to adopt Bandura’s view that this happens in response to the interactions of the three aspects of triadic reciprocation, I was keen to investigate at a deeper level the nature of their responses not just the types of responses. I had read about various categorisations of teachers’ responses (Adamson & Davison, 2003; Havelock, 1973; Rogers, 1995), but the work of Ozga (2000), Nias (2003), Hardy and Lingard (2008) and Rawolle and Lingard (2008) for example, suggested that there was much more to the examination of such responses, indicated by the nature of teachers’ resistance to reform, that could provide a more appropriate explanation of their responses. This directed my attention towards the way an individual’s world view is constructed, leading to the work of Pierre Bourdieu.

Bourdieu's work aligned with my own theoretical stance within a more critical tradition. His explanation of habitus and fields of practice and policy provided an explanation of the tensions and contestations of the operational spaces that teachers developed as part of their professional practice. My investigation focused on a closer examination of the nature of dispositions as they influenced an individual's habitus and their engagements in their fields of practice. Dispositions of habitus are acquired informally, "...through the experience of social interactions by processes of imitation, repetition, role play and game participation" (Swartz, 2002, p. 635) and are part of an individual's early socialisation experiences. However, Swartz further states that Bourdieu's view of dispositions suggests "... a way of thinking about habit that is more active than the more popular idea of sheer repetition or routine" (p. 626). In this way, internalised dispositions predispose people to generate new forms of action and are suggestive of capability. As dispositions shift, new acts of agency can result and as elements of habitus, the dispositive belief in one's capacity to achieve the desired outcome becomes influential in habitus, and in turn, agency. Therefore, it seemed that a closer examination of dispositions would be critical in meeting the challenges of my inquiry. "Habitus is an active residue of his or her past...that functions in the present to shape his or her perceptions, thoughts and bodily comportment" (p. 635).

This line of inquiry then led back to Bandura (1995, 1997, 2006) and his concept of self-efficacy which he described as a person's perception of their capacity to achieve task requirements. He contends that self-efficacy provides the basis for human motivation, well-being and personal accomplishment, and is predicated on the view that individuals have the authority to change their environments by altering their own thoughts and feelings. Importantly, Bandura suggests that an individual's sense of self-efficacy is not based on their capacity but more on their perceptions of capability and capacity. This was relevant in my position as a manager and leader of change since there already existed an extensive body of research into self-efficacy and teacher efficacy (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991; Pajares, 1997; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy, 1998) that indicated higher perceptions of self-efficacy increased teachers and students' participation levels; they worked harder, persisted longer, showed greater interest in teaching and learning, achieved at higher levels, were more apt to engage in self-regulation, and create effective environments for learning. These were the qualities and conditions of policy engagement I was hoping to achieve at my school.

Whilst accuracy and validity of the research were demonstrated through research practices such as prolonged engagement, persistent observation, peer debriefing, and progressive subjectivity checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), this study has several limitations. Firstly, the study employed a relatively small sample, therefore, it does not seek to develop generalisations. As well, the timeframe for the study was relatively short. Whilst the first interview was well timed when considering the nature of the inquiry since it occurred as teachers began their engagement with the curriculum, the second interview, which reflected the storied journey of the participants occurred only ten weeks after implementation of Phase One.

However, other limitations are related to situational and temporal contexts of this reform. For example, even at the time of writing, there continues to be uncertainty around the broad and complete implementation of the Australian Curriculum. Whilst all states have now (as at 18th September, 2015) officially agreed to implement all three phases of the national curriculum, implementation timelines are staggered between the states. Sustaining a consistent focus across several changes in federal governments and the negotiations which have been required across changing State governments, have impacted on the reform's implementation. At the research site as well, personnel changes in the school, particularly in the leadership team, may further impact the sustainability of this reform.

Ethically, using a case study model for data collection and description, could also be seen to be a limitation of this study. My prolonged engagement at the site of the study could be seen as compromising the study because of the tension between the requirement to validate the teachers' narratives with the scholarly requirement to disclose and publish the participants' stories with the promise of anonymity (Clandinin, Pushor & Orr, 2007). As well, my own biases needed to be checked because of my long term pre-existing relationship with the site and the participants of this study. All of these factors influence the broader validity of the study.

However, the beginning point for this research was to explore, in a group of teachers at the research site, perceptions of their self-efficacy as they began engaging with this large-scale curriculum reform. In understanding their perceptions of their own self-efficacy, it was my intention to also learn more about being an effective leader and manager of change.

6.2. Summary of the Findings: Responding to the Research Questions

6.2.1. Responding to Research Question 1: Conceptualising the Policy Process and Curriculum Change

The first research question asks:

How have the teachers, represented in this study, negotiated, mediated and conceptualised the curriculum reform in terms of their professional practice?

This question directs attention to the point in time when the teachers initially engaged with the policy and began the process of locating the reform within their professional practice. It refers to the way teachers began to think about the policy, their attitudes and professional feelings about it, their sense of its own efficacy, all of which was heavily influenced by their previous experiences with reforms, observations of their colleagues' preparations and their constructions of their own professional identity. As Bourdieu (2000) indicates, there is a strong genetic influence on the way we grow up and are socialised reflecting the strength that such influences, rather than the environment alone shape a person's dispositions:

In each of us, in varying proportions, there is a part of yesterday's man; it is yesterday's man who inevitably predominates in us, since the present amounts to little compared with the long past in the cause of which we were formed and from which we result. (Bourdieu, 1977, pp. 78-79)

Past experiences form the schemas of perception, appreciation and action, "inscribed" in our bodies that enables us to perform acts of practical knowledge (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 157). Initially, it was past experiences, which were the strongest influence on the way these teachers made meaning of the reform.

Conceptualising the policy process and curriculum change meant that the teachers needed to develop an initial understanding of this reform. The Australian Curriculum had three critical and specific characteristics which influenced the way it was conceptualised by them. First, as a policy, it had been developed external to their sphere of practice; second, its implementation was mandated through government legislation; and third, it was to be implemented nationally across all Australian states and territories. These three characteristics significantly shaped initial conceptualisations that were formed and later influenced decisions made about the teachers' role in its implementation.

These qualities propelled the participants into a space where they were required to make a number of individual decisions around how these implementation requirements would be achieved. At the broadest level, the teachers looked beyond their school environment at discussions and directives undertaken by governments, both State and Federal, educational authorities such as Lutheran Education Queensland, the Queensland Studies Authority and the education community beyond their workplaces. The second area of focus was observing the activities being undertaken at their school to support implementation, the actions of their work colleagues, and most particularly, those of the school's leadership team. And finally, their focus was directed towards themselves, undertaking a process of reflection that resulted as a consequence of the mediations and negotiations the participants undertook as they worked towards embedding the reform changes into their practice.

In examining the way the participants conceptualised the reform I was interested to observe how each person's habitus interacted with and was affected by the many varied fields of policy and practices with which they were required to engage. As well, another area of interest was directed towards the way the teachers positioned themselves within the cultural capital of the reform to understand more clearly its impact if it and their habitus were not aligned. This raised the question that if the teachers embraced the reform, to what extent were they positioning themselves within its cultural capital or was new cultural capital being generated?

As a consequence of limited involvement in policy development but legislatively mandated to implement it, the teachers located themselves very early in the implementation process as policy practitioners. This role was drawn relatively easily from their past actions and experiences and supported by documentation and the early actions of the school leaders. Both Bourdieu and Bandura emphasise the significance of

the past on the present and future actions of individuals. Bourdieu notes that habitus is the past being reproduced in the present, that the social practices of agents are culturally reproductive (Bourdieu, 1977). Bandura (1977a) emphasises the significant role that mastery experiences play in individual perceptions of self-efficacy, the strongest of any of the four influences and the most difficult to change.

This space of teachers' practice, operated separately from the field of policy, but by necessity was also required to engage with it. It was both a metaphorical and virtual place where they identified and exercised their professional talents and expertise. The participants assumed the authority of this space and were protective of the work that they undertook within it. The teachers quickly defined the boundaries of their fields of practice and one reason for this appeared to be as a consequence of the mandated nature of the policy. Initially they acted to protect the boundaries of their field of practice until they developed a clearer understanding of the nature of the reform and the requirements it would place on their practices. Therefore, their actions which located them outside the field of policy meant the teachers were firmly entrenched in the discourses of their own practices, in a professional space where they had engaged with the reform to establish stability and security. Those with longer career histories did this more quickly and the newer teachers undertook similar processes by emulating the examples of those around them. Externally imposed change initially reinforced its cultural walls allowing the teachers' time to negotiate and mediate the reform within their own habitus. However, from the beginning, it appeared that the teachers intended to exercise their agency by taking control of the practice of the policy which they saw as empowering rather than being disempowered by externally, mandated reform.

Past experiences with curriculum change and reform had already become "socially individuated" (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 157) through their systems of dispositions which, in turn, were both biological and social aspects of their habitus. It was in this way that these teachers did not see themselves as isolated from policy. Instead they were quite demanding of the policy makers and the quality of the policy documents. The teachers actively protected their space and held the view that poor policy could not be improved by excellent practice. Since they felt that they would be held to account for the success of the policy, the developers of policy were, in turn, held to account by the teachers to produce a high quality educational policy. The teachers examined the reform using their own set of criteria (reform efficacy) to ensure that this was the case. In conceptual terms, therefore, the teachers saw themselves more as partners in the reform context not the passive recipients of policy. These views were central in establishing their professional voice within this implementation framework.

Teachers' conceptualisation of the reform was also assisted by the fact that this was a national reform and this acted to legitimise it within their field of practice. The influence of the other was both powerful and affirming as this group of teachers joined the many thousands of teachers undertaking similar engagement negotiations of this nationally mandated policy at the same time. The national scope of the policy was also interpreted by them as providing a sense of certainty about implementation. This was

further indication to the teachers that they would play an important role and encouraged them to respond positively to its implementation. This built their self-confidence and encouraged them to persist in these early stages of conceptualisation when negative mastery experiences re-emerged.

Interestingly, the emphasis at this initial stage of engagement focused on looking for alignment between policy and practice, between the leaders' interpretations of the reform and the teachers, and the old and new curriculum. Language use provided a lens with which to further understand the locating of the teachers' voices within the broader context of reform. The language used by the administrators to introduce the reform to the teachers clearly indicated differing conceptual views of the reform. Leaders' language choices were intended to convey to the teachers that the reform requirements would be easily incorporated into existing practices, thereby reducing any potential resistance and established the locus of control within the teachers' field of practice. This was essential in locating the teachers as change agents even within externally imposed reform. This was also an indication that the leaders acknowledged the workplace practices and cultural aspects of the site when structuring engagement activities for the teachers.

It was within this context that the teachers' self-efficacy perceptions about this reform were being shaped and influenced their dispositions. They each came to this reform with a range of past experiences both positive and negative from which they had drawn various conclusions about their capacity to engage with it. However, Bourdieu describes habitus as a generative structure that not merely reproduces the past but is also a producer of future action (Bourdieu, 1977). As discussed, habitus suggests capability not just repetition of past action. What was evident at this early stage of engagement was that the teachers were changing their positions, and, as a consequence, their dispositions, as they worked more closely with the reform. Whilst Bandura suggests that mastery experiences are the strongest of all influences on self-efficacy, anxieties and negativity towards the reform were being reduced by the positive vicarious experiences and social and visual cues that were emerging at the site in response to this reform. It was in this way that each teacher's agency acted to change and modify the inscriptions of their past (Bourdieu, 1977). Bourdieu suggests that this occurs as a consequence of agents engaging in "cognitive construction" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 175) while Bandura suggests this occurs as a process of the reciprocal interactions between an individual's cognition, behaviour and their environment. Both conclude that these actions occur as a consequence of our own attempts to respond to our external environment, the outcome of which is that individuals not only shape their environment and the social world they inhabit, but also act to shape it. The way this occurred for the teachers in this study is the subject of the second research question – How do teachers make decisions about mediating and contextualising mandated curriculum reform?

6.2.2. Responding to Research Question 2: Making Decisions about Mediating and Negotiating Mandated Curriculum Reform

The second research question asked:

How have perceptions of their professional capacity shaped their responses to this reform and, in turn, been shaped by, the reform requirements?

This research question refers to the different decisions the participants made in response to the reform and refers to a different point in time as they transitioned towards implementation. As already discussed, a limitation of Bourdieu's construct of habitus is that in viewing it as a continuous repetition of past action, it fails to acknowledge that we know our views and interpretations of our world are, in reality, in a constant state of flux. Therefore, habitus needs to be viewed as generative as we respond to changes in our environment. The behaviours that emerge are as a consequence of changing dispositions, of which self-efficacy perceptions are a part. Perception, Bourdieu suggests, shapes our dispositions. It has been my contention in this study that our dispositive capacity to undertake a task successfully (in this case, implementing Phase One of the Australian Curriculum) is based, from Bandura's point of view, on our perceptions of our capability hence the link between the theorising of Bandura and Bourdieu. Perceptions of capability, drawn from our self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1977a), align with the generative nature of habitus as part of the dynamic process of becoming our social selves (Bourdieu, 1977). The social self, Bourdieu argues, is both a product and producer of a social environment that moulds and transforms culture, transcending cultural constraints and resisting the status quo (Bourdieu, 1977).

Decision making was happening concurrently with the teachers' early conceptualisations of the policy becoming more confirmed and entrenched as engagement intensified (as outlined in Section 6.3.1). This phase was characterised by a range of reflective practices such as negotiation, mediation, reconceptualisation, seeking alignment, and where necessary, resolving any perceived lack of alignment between policy and practice that might have resulted. As discussed in the previous section, most of the teachers came to believe that the new reform would have little influence on their current practices. Whilst this was partly as a consequence of the alignment that they established between policy and practice, it was more a consequence of the actions of the leadership team positioning the teachers within the reform context in such a privileged and important way. This affirmed for the teachers the importance of the role they would play.

Without a theoretical understanding of the constructs of teacher efficacy and self-efficacy, the importance of self-reflectiveness in agency, habitus or field, each of these concepts was in play as these participants made decisions in relation to this reform. For instance, their general rule for decision making was looking in detail for any similarities or points of alignment (factors which might increase their self-efficacy) and differences (factors which might, at least initially, decrease perceptions of their own efficacy) to determine their own professional capabilities and attributes to effectively implement the reform.

Using a term such as individuation rather than identity, was intended to reference the specific and individual constructs of a professional self, reflecting an aspect central

to this study, of the socio-genetic nature of dispositions as they shape a person's habitus and agency. For each teacher, the term professional individuation acknowledged the processes and interactions they undertook where their professional practices and philosophy are recognised as specific and individual to them, rather than deliberately or inadvertently making reference to stereotypical constructs which might be suggested when using terms such as teacher identity or professional identity. In adopting the concept of individuation, rather than just identity, it allowed for the transformative aspects of teachers' work, their field of practice, their operational space and their habitus to be acknowledged as critical influences on their reform responses.

The continued negotiations that the teachers undertook between their individual professional spaces and the change environment around them were informed by their understanding of their professional individuation as it related to the reform requirements. Each of the teachers was at a different stage of individuation. The longer term teachers were more comfortable in understanding and describing their professional self. Newer teachers were strongly influenced by the cultural practices of the collective so had not yet individualised their practice, nor had they clearly defined their field of practice and constructions around their operational space. Those newer to the profession developed their self-efficacy beliefs from the visual and social cues observed in their environment and from vicarious experiences drawn from their relationships with their peers and colleagues. In this time of decision making, each teacher's stage of individuation clearly impacted on the decisions and responses they made.

At this time, vicarious experiences and visual and social cues also challenged the embeddedness of mastery experiences for the longer serving teachers. This was significant since it supported the view that a person's dispositions influenced their habitus and, therefore, their agency. Changing self-efficacy perceptions, an aspect of a person's dispositions, was also critical in accounting for the variety of responses made by individuals. This suggested that responses could be different for an individual based on the specific context of the reform and the point in time in which the individual was engaging with the reform, as well as for the collective based on the same considerations. The transformative nature of individuation enabled teachers' responses and self-efficacy beliefs to change and adapt to changed environmental conditions as was evident when the negative mastery experiences of the longer term teachers gave way to the positive vicarious experiences and social and visual cues they were observing at the school site.

The leaders at the school had been working actively to support the teachers in this reform process. They began the conversation around the reform early, a year before implementation. They had conducted their own interrogation of the policy to be fully informed of the reform requirements. The leadership team, particularly the Principal, was generally on board in creating and managing the reform from the perspective of the teachers, building professional trust through their procedures of collaborative practice with regard to implementation decisions and strategies. This established a positive and supportive culture which was a strong influence on shaping their responses. In a policy situation similar to other large scale, externally imposed and mandated reforms discussed

in Chapter Two, teachers at this site entered into decisions about implementing the reform with generally a positive attitude and little resistance.

When the reform was introduced, both at the school and at a broader, national level, the participants in this study engaged with it from a position of professional authority and expertise, privileging their own role in effective reform implementation. There was little evidence from their narratives that indicated they felt disempowered or marginalised from this externally imposed, mandated reform even though they were still hesitant as a result of negative past experiences. Whilst some of the participants exhibited some resistance to this reform, they were not acting in this way because they felt the reform was being implemented because of their poor teaching practices. Rather, it was the interference to their current practices that the teachers felt were required by this reform since its implementation was mandated. Most intended to incorporate the reform requirements within their current practice whilst acknowledging the importance of engaging with the reform. Using Adamson and Davison's (2003) categorisations, the teachers' decisions represented pseudo-compliance rather than open resistance or being fully compliant.

The conditions of the environment and the cultural practices that constituted the embedded characteristics of this school site were critical elements in shaping teachers' responses to the reform. For teachers who were initially skeptical and resistant to the reform based on their previous experiences, there were shifts in their habitus informed by the changes to their dispositions as a consequence of new and different perceptions of their self-efficacy. Negative mastery experiences still existed but were diluted by their observations of the activities taking place at their workplace. This also reduced their levels of stress and anxiety, thus increasing the teachers' levels of self-efficacy. These outcomes were important from my perspective since an important reason for undertaking this project was to develop a deeper understanding of my role as a leader and manager of change. The teachers' accounts indicated that workplace practices and environmental conditions had a significant impact on the nature of their responses to the reform. Finally, the following table (Table 6-1) provides a summary of the environmental and workplace factors that had the greatest impacts on the teachers' self-efficacy.

Table 6-1: *Environmental Factors Influencing Self-Efficacy*

Environmental Factors increasing levels of teachers' self efficacy:

- i. Teachers' expectations are clearly described and understood
- ii. Teachers' opinions and values are encouraged and acknowledged by school Executive
- iii. Teachers' opinions are incorporated in the school's overall strategic direction for implementation
- iv. Timeline for implementation is clear and representative of the perceived process of implementation
- v. The perceived level of commitment of the whole school is evidenced in the school's strategic plan, the information the school communicates to parents, the funding allocated to resource the reform, the level of priority it devoted to discussions about the reform e.g. in school briefings, newsletters and staff meetings
- vi. The level of commitment of the school executive particularly the Principal

Environmental Factors decreasing levels of teachers' self-efficacy:

- i. A lack of information from authorities devising and developing the reform
- ii. A lack of ongoing/continued support
- iii. A lack of professional development to support change
- iv. Under-resourced at the school level with the failure of the school to provide adequate resources and time to engage and implement change
- v. A general 'failure' to see the evidence of their efforts in their own practice, in the learning achievements of the students (or both) and in the ongoing support of the school evidenced in their curriculum or pedagogical processes

6.2.3. Responding to Research Question 3: Influences on the Teachers' Capacities to Exercise Individual and Collective agency

The final research question focused on the concept of teacher agency and was intended to explore more precisely the role of teachers as agents of change. It asked:

How has the teachers' agency been exercised in this context of mandated, externally imposed reform?

Bandura describes agency as "acts done intentionally" (Bandura, 2001, p. 1) and suggests that individuals are able to act agentively (as discussed in Section 2.3.1.1) because of "...their human disposition to be able to symbolise..., exercise forethought ..., learn vicariously ...and self-regulate..." (Pajares, 2002, p. 3). Central to the concept of agency, or capacity to make things happen (Bandura, 2001), is self-efficacy, an individual's belief in their capacity to produce an effect on their own functioning and the environment in which they live through their own actions. Bourdieu suggests that it is changes in an agent's dispositions that result in new agency and actions (Swartz, 2002). Rawolle and Lingard (2008) contend that it is the socio-genetic elements of dispositions that can explain "...why agents...will selectively oppose policies while engaging with

others” (Rawolle, 2008, p. 731). Consequently, central to this study was the application of this perspective to examine the agency of these teachers as they responded to the implementation of this new reform.

Whilst there was some early resistance to the imposition of the reform, and later with concerns around the sustainability of the reform, the participants exercised their agency in ways that were critical to ensuring the successful practice of the policy. All shared, to varying levels, an understanding of what effective, sustainable policy looked like, referred to in earlier sections as reform efficacy. These decisions were based on their previous and current experiences, and were critical in locating them within the reform agenda and the agency they would exercise. Reform efficacy for this policy initiative was relatively high since it appeared to be well resourced, carefully developed by experts in the curriculum field and was being undertaken as a national initiative. Resistance tended to fall away given that the negative mastery experiences were reduced by the positive practices observed at the school. The school’s leadership team was critical in influencing this culture by providing consistently positive feedback (social and visual cues), promoting collaborative and positive collegial relationships (vicarious experiences), developing considerate and supportive timelines for implementation (social and visual cues), developed their own levels of expertise around the policy (vicarious experiences), led from the front, and undertook structural and organisational changes to support the implementation of the reform (social and visual cues). The importance of leaders in knowing and understanding the teachers both as professional practitioners and in more personal, social ways was significant in allaying stress and concern (psychological and emotional states).

It appeared that agency, therefore, was not necessarily contingent upon the conditions of the reform, but rather evidenced in the perceptions of those tasked with the reform’s implementation. The teachers in this study, due to the conditions and culture operating at their workplace, felt that they were capable of exercising considerable agency in relation to this reform. Their early location as policy practitioners, largely because the reform was mandated, supported rather than eroded agency. The teachers privileged their extensive knowledge and expertise of practice as being as important as the development of the policy itself. The teachers were acutely aware, both from their previous experiences and their feedback and observations from their current environment, of the critical role they would need to play in effective policy implementation. They actively pushed against the boundaries of policy fields (established by the policy makers) and exerted their own influence by scaling the cultural wall of the field of policy. They exercised their professional voices to guide and direct policy implementation strategies at the school, which was further strengthened by a supportive and knowledgeable school leadership team. This further suggested that local, site-specific actions have a greater influence on self-efficacy beliefs, and, therefore, agency, than the experiences of the past or the conditions beyond their fields of practice.

6.3. Implications for Policy

This study revealed a number of implications for the development and implementation of educational policy, specifically large scale, and mandated curriculum reform. A key finding from the research indicates that effective policy cannot be developed without consideration of the role that teachers play in its implementation and confirms Bandura's (1997) belief that high levels of anxiety and stress affect an individual's self-confidence to achieve the desired tasks particularly as changes from outside their working space can act to threaten and undermine a teacher's culture (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Fullan (2010, 2011). What was apparent from this study is that even in cases of mandated reform, teachers exercise considerable agency with regard to its implementation. These teachers looked for the professional 'spaces' in the policy where they could exercise their authority and direct its implementation. Therefore, to achieve effective policy implementation, teachers need to feel confident in their capacity to meet the challenges of reform implementation, otherwise, as Nias (2003), McCormick, Ayres and Beechey (2006), Briant and Doherty (2012), Spillane, Gomez and Mesler (2012) suggest, non-compliance and resistance can be the outcome. Effective policy development requires a collaborative and reflective focus which incorporates a robust consultative phase where policy makers consider teachers' contexts with a focus on ways in which teachers intend to undertake implementation.

Acknowledging that a 'one size fits all' approach is not the best policy design also makes provision for policy to be implemented effectively within a range of diverse cultural practices and workplace contexts. Teachers, and the schools in which they work, operate across a broad range of fields and often competing fields of influence that require negotiation and mediation. Whilst the aim of national policy may be the 'delivery' of consistent and clearly defined outcomes, the process which is undertaken to achieve them is often quite site- specific. Policy that is developed with diversity of context makes provision for a range of responses to act upon it rather than a policy merely developed to meet an implementation timeline. Maguire, Braun and Ball (2015) contend that a problem with achieving effective policy implementation is that it remains largely undifferentiated. This is reinforced in the findings of this study in that the first actions leaders undertook and encouraged teachers to also undertake was to differentiate the policy by examining it in the light of current practice to find the extent of alignment between the two. The level of alignment found had a significant impact on the initial engagement attitudes and responses of the participants. The capacity for policy to adopt a more flexible approach to implementation provides education systems, as well as teachers, with a sense of individual and collective agency even in circumstances such as this when policy implementation is mandated. If teachers perceive weak links existing between policy developers and curriculum/policy practitioners, effective implementation will always be problematic. As a consequence, the policy context is important for policy developers in considering the implementation process.

Clarity around the practice of policy from the teachers' perspective is as important as the political mandates that drive externally developed, large scale policy

initiatives such as the Australian Curriculum. Making provision for policy review and adjustment at the time of policy development also acknowledges that national policy should not have a 'one size fits all' intention. A cyclical design to policy which provides junctures to reflect upon the responses and actions of teachers enables teachers' voices to inform effective policy development and implementation.

This study also has implications for the role that school leaders play in the implementation of policy. In responding to reform, teachers applied their own conditions of reform efficacy - based on their views as to its sustainability and alignment with their professional practice. The constructs of both of these criteria were largely informed by the culture and workplace practices at the school site. Therefore, to achieve the policy mandates, school leaders who were situated across the fields of policy and practice, were more effective in leading the reform process confirming studies undertaken by Adam and Nati (2006), Butler, Schiellert and MacNeil (2015), De Nobile et al. (2013), Fullan (2007), McCormick et al. (2006), and Sass et al. (2011). Their knowledge of policy alongside their deep and extensive knowledge of the implementation site, particularly the teachers working within it, was critical to locating and clarifying the role of teachers and achieving mandated policy implementation whilst encouraging teachers' agency. As Maquire, Braun and Ball (2012) found, senior school personnel can shield teachers, particularly new teachers, from policy imperatives, confirming the key role subject departments heads and the culture of their departments play as policy mediators. This was also a consistent finding in this research as they filtered and distilled policy at the implementation site. The school leaders were important conduits of policy since the mandated reform required them to undertake quite specific actions associated with implementation, but its effectiveness rested to a considerable extent on the way they 'read' their work site and the teachers who would undertake the task of implementation.

To elaborate further on the way policy needed to acknowledge the role of teachers, there were a number of outcomes from this study that should be considered. Teachers' perceptions of their capacities to undertake the task ahead were shaped by several factors: where they felt the school positioned them within the reform agenda; the degree of professional influence the teachers felt they had over their actions and the policy outcomes; the avenues that they could access to exercise this influence; and the clarity of the role they felt they were expected to undertake as directed by the policy developers and the school leaders. This study suggests that consideration of these specific aspects of the role of teachers by policy developers would have a significant influence on the achievement of policy outcomes. Two factors most consistently challenged teachers' attempts in achieving policy outcomes – conflict between the fields of policy and practice, and fragmented field boundaries.

In summary, a shared view of policy and policy intentions between the developers, the school leaders and the teachers presented the best conditions for effective implementation. Rather than a top down view of policy development and implementation, the implications for policy drawn from this study suggest that it requires a collaborative approach with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each of the

agents involved in its implementation. Whilst the teachers in this study were aware of the narratives around performativity (Ball, 2003), standardization and centralization (Leech, 2010) and globalization (Hardy & Lingard, 2008; Sugrue, 2004), they chose to distance themselves from these technicist approaches to curriculum and curriculum policy by adopting a role of teacher as curriculum implementer (Craig, 2012; Kelly, 2004), operating from a space where they could exert their agency even in circumstances of mandated reform such as this. Ball and Olmedo (2013) suggest that such a space recognizes educational systems within the “possibilities of power, the fragility of freedom and the limits of contingency and domination” (p.94). The capacity to reflect and review not only provides an element of policy design which more effectively achieves implementation outcomes, but also provides for the acknowledgement of teachers’ voices by attending to their sense of agency, perceptions of capacity and professional status - three elements the teachers in this study felt were critical for achieving effective policy implementation.

6.4. Implications for Practice

Implications for practice relate to the way teachers implement policy in their professional practices. This required a close examination of the teachers’ space, where they participated as both “receivers and agents of policy” (Saunders, 1987, p.103 in Ball, Maquire, Braun & Hoskins, 2011). The literature discussed in Chapter Two highlighted the problems around implementing mandated reform since it can compromise teacher agency, even working to de-professionalise them as was suggested by Boote (2006), Darling-Hammond (2005), Fullan (1999), Hargreaves (1980), Nias (2003), and Sikes (1990). However, this was not the case in this situation of implementation of mandated, externally imposed reform.

Essentially this did not happen since the school’s leadership team established clear boundaries around teachers’ roles at the beginning of their engagement with the reform, privileging current work practices and the professional status of teachers when making implementation decisions. Instead of policy being enacted as “...an ever-increasing pile of mandates from the top, leaving regulatory gridlock and intellectual chaos in the schools” (Darling-Hammond, 2005, p. 377), generating the resistance referred to in Chapter Two as discussed by Bandura (1997), Butt (1982), Hall (1991), Hardy and Lingard (2008), Hargreaves (2003), Levine (1980), Ozga (2000) and Rogers (1983), here was evidence at the school site that processes had been undertaken to reconcile “these conflicting clear impulses” (Darling-Hammond, 2005, p. 377). As a consequence, the teachers in this study felt empowered and valued and possessed considerable agency in relation to implementing mandated reform.

Whilst research undertaken by Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy and Hoy (2001), Pajares (2002) and Labone (2004) suggest that the more years of teaching experience a teacher has increases their levels of self-efficacy, initial positive engagement experiences with reform needed to be affirmed and sustained by ongoing supportive practices to maintain high levels of efficacy. It was a dominant finding from this research that the strongest influences on the way teachers mediated and

contextualised the reform, hence informing their responses to it, were related to the operational practices at their workplace and their sense of positionality within the organisation (Spillane, 2004). The teachers initially made decisions about implementation based on the ways they observed the policy was engaged with by the Principal, the Heads of Department and the Junior Years Curriculum Co-ordinator. The early engagement and leadership by the Principal importantly established the engagement narrative and clarified the role the teachers would be playing within the broader educational framework of the site in relation to implementing this reform. Even the concerns of those teachers who may have been the most resistant were somewhat allayed by these actions suggesting the importance of linking policy to teacher agency and further reflected the work of Apple (1993), Ball (2008), Darling-Hammond (2005) and Fullan (1993).

This raises the importance of the contributions that professional trust plays in establishing workplace cultures, mediating resistance and shaping the work practices that take place in times of change (Browning, 2013, Fink, 2013, Smyth, 2004 and Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Whilst Hargreaves (2003) suggests that in professional environments of mandated reform there might be little negotiation and personal agency able to be exercised by the teachers, the teachers in this study still exercised considerable agency because of the high levels of professional trust that operated in most areas of the site. Where high levels of trust were in play, evident when the teachers were confident that the school's administrators and leadership team were acting to support their professional practice, the leadership team's actions of filtering, distilling and re-writing policy in developing school specific curriculum units and work programs were viewed by the teachers as being supportive of their work rather than an erosion of their agency or acting to de-professionalise or marginalise them. As well, the acceptance by the teachers of this approach also indicated that they located themselves within the agentic space of policy practitioners, again, not viewed by them as a marginalised or professionally diminished space but one where they could exercise their considerable professional expertise and talents. It was evident that the school's culture and the actions of its leaders developed the narrative around the construct of this space. The clarity with which this narrative was articulated influenced considerably the responses and actions of the teachers.

As discussed in Chapter Two, Eisner (2005), Fullan (1993), Hargreaves and Dawe (1989), Nias (2003) and Wise (1977) contend that the imposition of large scale, mandated reform can also be problematic since the act of imposing confronts the teachers' repertoires of professional knowledge constructed and developed over long periods of time (Fullan, 1993). Again, the affirmation and acknowledgement of the importance of the teachers' roles as operating from a space where they felt they could exercise their professional skills and talents, a place where the importance of these attributes was foregrounded, enabled teachers in this study to retain a strong sense of individual agency. It also enabled them to shift their agency and direct their professional expertise towards the challenges of effective implementation rather than focusing on the policy itself, over which they had little influence.

In summary, it was evident that previous positive experiences with reform, either in number or intensity, increased teachers' confidence in their ability to undertake new roles and challenges supporting research undertaken by Bandura (1997), Fenyvesiová and Kollárová (2013), Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy and Hoy (1998) and Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001). However, it also emerged from this study the strong influence school leaders have in shaping and directing the ways teachers respond to change when they undertook actions that built teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. This was evident in a range of ways: professional self-confidence can be built by leaders making appropriate provision for time and funds to be allocated to resource the change; incorporating the reform process into the school's strategic short and long term planning; presenting a united and consistent 'voice' in relation to implementation strategies, tasks and outcomes; acknowledging the important role that the Principal plays in establishing the tone and commitment to change as a significant agent of change; recognising that the actions and knowledge of the curriculum 'experts' at the school are also important in influencing the way teachers perceive the results of the impact of the reform; providing opportunities through collaborative practices and the provision of appropriate professional learning that enable teachers to develop 'ownership' of change; creating a professionally 'trusting' environment. Each of these elements is critical to creating environments where teachers' voices can resonate in mandated reform contexts.

6.5. Developing Theory

A central focus of this study was an examination of the nature of dispositions including the way these are constructed and their influence, via an individual's habitus, on individual agency. This study adopted Rawolle and Lingard's (2008) view that dispositions were socio-genetic in nature, as a way of explaining the variety of actions of individuals in relation to their responses to policy. Whilst the genetic aspect of dispositions was not the focus of this study, the way social interactions shape a person's dispositive behaviours was. A person's dispositions influence their self-efficacy beliefs and is reflected in their behaviour, which Bandura (2012) contends is "...socially situated, richly contextualized and conditionally manifested" (p. 30). This construct of self-efficacy provided a theoretical lens through which teachers' responses to this mandated reform were examined. It is a contention of this research that a teacher's belief about their capacity to undertake reform is critical to the way they will respond to it. Whilst not developing theory as such, an intended outcome of this research was to seek a deeper and broader understanding of the way dispositions and self-efficacy might be viewed to further develop an understanding of the varied responses teachers make in these circumstances of mandated reform.

The experiences of the teachers in this study supported Bandura's view that of the four influences on self-efficacy, mastery experiences were the strongest and most difficult to change. Initial engagement with the Australian Curriculum by the more experienced teachers whose past experiences with reforms were negative, made them reticent and hesitant to engage. For some, it was openly resistant. There was clear evidence that when the reform appears to be floundering, or agreed practices were

contested, their past negative mastery experiences re-surfaced to dominate the vicarious experiences and social and visual cues that were acting more positively on their self-efficacy perceptions.

Whilst these actions differ little from much of the research already undertaken into efficacy beliefs, it is noteworthy to comment that the dominance of the four influences on self-efficacy beliefs did not remain the same over the course of the teachers' engagement with the reform. Findings from recent research with pre-service teachers and early career academics (Al-Awidi, 2012; Hemmings, 2015; O'Neill & Stephenson, 2012; Temiz, 2013; Wang, 2016; Woodcock, 2011) confirm the importance that vicarious experiences and social and visual cues have on their self-efficacy perceptions. These outcomes would be anticipated given the limited career histories of pre-service teachers that would suggest a limitation to the influence of mastery experiences on their self-efficacy. However, whilst this was confirmed in the study for the participants newer to the profession, vicarious experiences, and to a lesser extent social and visual cues were also strong influences on shaping the self-efficacy beliefs of the more experience teachers, particularly for those whose mastery experiences were predominantly negative towards mandated change.

As the teachers in this study became more deeply engaged with the reform, the experiences and observations of their environment (those relating to vicarious experiences and social and visual cues) grew in influence on their sense of capability and self-confidence largely as a consequence of the work undertaken by the leadership team as already discussed in previous sections. The significance of such an observation suggests that the on-site practices of negotiation and consultation can act to mediate resistant behaviours. As such, leaders and managers should not view resistance as entrenched, unresponsive or intractable. For those teachers who appeared reticent to engage with the reform, skeptical or openly resistant, it was the actions of the school leaders that turned their perceptions around including the leaders' choice of language and the clarity with which they were able to articulate their own conceptualisation of the policy reform. Whilst habitus is difficult to change (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991), it was apparent from the teachers in this study that certain behaviours towards the reform were quite fluid. As already discussed, it was largely through the actions of the school leaders who enabled each teacher to make their own meaning of the policy, in a directed and guided way, and acted to align the reform with current practices, that the space of teachers' work was positioned and conceptualised. This suggests a fluidity around habitus, or elements of habitus, and was more obviously apparent at the juncture of field boundaries between policy and practice that were clearly delineated and defined. However, whether such changes have long term sustainability and influence on a person's habitus remains an area for further inquiry but has relevance for those working within the field of self-efficacy particularly in similar contexts.

In revisiting his self-efficacy construct, Bandura (2012) describes a person's dispositions as the "patterned individuality of self-efficacy" (p. 35) and as such making meaning of policy is an individual practice. It is this act of making meaning, via the

construct of self-efficacy, that has been my focus and the evidence in this study that shows self-efficacy beliefs ebb and flow invites further investigation to develop a deeper understanding of the way mandated policy reform can be managed and led, with specific relevance for implementation in resistant environments. A conceptualisation of how I perceive a person's self-efficacy beliefs shift over time in reform situations is represented in the diagram (Figure 6 1) that follows.

Changes in Teacher Practices over Time from Initial Engagement to Implementation

Changes in Teacher Practices over Time from Initial Engagement to Implementation						
Initial Engagement	Mediation & Negotiation		Implementation		Post Implementation	
Teachers approach engagement with attitudes derived from <i>previous experiences with reform</i>	Teachers look to the <i>school setting, school leaders & external environments</i> to gain a sense of external attitudes towards reform. In mandated reform they locate themselves as responsible for implementation	Teachers begin a process of <i>auditing current practice with curriculum reform</i> . Undertake a 'gap' analysis	Teachers <i>adapt current practice to curriculum reform</i> by adding elements of reform to (in preference to replacing) current practices	Teachers <i>implement curriculum reform</i>	As <i>implementation unfolds</i> , teachers undertake a <i>process of review and reflection</i> . New practices are more likely to replace previous practices as a consequence of evidenced successful implementation	Teachers' <i>new practice</i>

External to Space of Teacher Practice: (ongoing & parallel to teacher engagement, negotiation, mediation & implementation)

1. Legislation setting out implementation requirements
2. A national perspective meaning a shared national experience for Australia's teachers
3. Clearly articulated and enacted workplace implementation practices & procedures

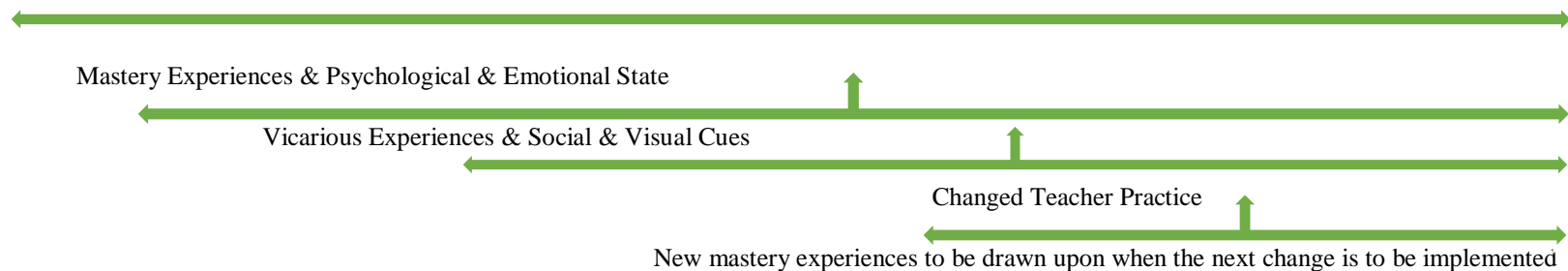


Figure 6-1: Timeline to Implementation: Practices of Engagement, Negotiation & Implementation

6.6. Recommendations for Further Research

The recommendations from this research study have particular relevance for the way teachers work, since it is their interactions with these environments that have been shown to strongly shape perceptions of their self-efficacy. A range of recommendations stems from this project relating to theory, practice and policy.

6.6.1. Undertaking Qualitative Self-Efficacy Research

This study was an investigation of teachers' responses to reform by using the concept of self-efficacy. In so doing, the less usual research approach of using a qualitative methodology was utilised. Further self-efficacy research using a qualitative method is the first recommendation for further research from this study. Using a qualitative method enabled the rich insights of the participants to be foregrounded in the research and was an articulation of Smyth's (2004) view that qualitative research undertaken to investigate teachers' relationships with policy and reform provides legitimization of teachers' forms of knowledge; articulates a more respectful and trustworthy view of teachers' work; provides teachers with a way of appropriating policy; and, regards teachers as critical constructors of their work rather than technicians (p. 274). Yet, whilst there appears to be considerable support for the use of a qualitative, interpretivist approach to efficacy research, quantitative methods still dominate self-efficacy, teacher-efficacy and collective efficacy research. The depth and individuality of the teachers' responses gained from interpreting the data using their own language and voices, suggest that qualitative methods have considerable resonance for this kind of research and invites further research investigation.

6.6.2. Linking the Paradigms of Education Psychology and Education Sociology

In this study, the paradigms of educational sociology and education psychology were entwined since it conceptualised the space of teachers' work through the theoretical perspectives of Pierre Bourdieu and Albert Bandura. 'This design was intended to provide a theoretical link between what was happening in the lives of the participants, offering Bourdieu's work as a context when undertaking their inner negotiations and mediations of the reform, examined using Bandura's construct of self-efficacy, with the intention of laying the foundation for a more critical understanding of teachers' responses to large-scale, mandated reform. This broad conceptual field, therefore, provided an analytical lens which acknowledged that teachers' responses to large scale mandated reform were shaped by both societal and genetic factors. Research extending across theoretical paradigms offer a less restrictive theoretical lens and less rigid research boundary. Acknowledging and including a wider range of theoretical perspectives acknowledges the multiplicity of thought and brings together a richer interpretation of the actions of an individual's life experience.

6.6.3. Investigating Dispositions, Self Efficacy and Teacher Agency

It has been my contention in this study that a person's dispositions are critical to shaping behaviour and it is as a consequence of understanding this element that provides

a legitimacy in explaining what often seems to be unpredictable and random behaviour. Repertoires of agency exist along a continua from imitation (least agentive) to transformative action (most agentive). The journey to agency is often contested, problematic and fragmented as individuals navigate the “social milieu” (Bandura, 2001, p. 15) toward a deeper identification of ‘self’. Bandura (2012) asks whether disposition operates “unconditionally or as a patterned proclivity that is conditionally manifested” (p. 35). Whilst the findings from this research tend to support the latter view, this study also identifies the need for further investigation into the fluidity of self-efficacy beliefs and, as a consequence, a person’s dispositions, to provide valuable understandings into the way self-efficacy beliefs shape a person’s behaviour over time. Identifying the fields of influence on a person’s dispositions was a focus of this study in relation to teachers’ responses; and has relevance for the management of behaviour by those in positions of influence across all environments, not just that of teachers. Further investigation of dispositions from this perspective could illuminate broader understandings in this area

Bandura’s construct of self-efficacy also assumes an internalized, mediated and contextualized relationship exists between an individual’s private and public spaces. These negotiations influence the levels of an individual’s level of confidence and sense of professional capacity to be agentively transformative in their practice. Undertaking further research into the temporal patterns and emphasis of the four influences on self-efficacy would provide organisations with information to select and sequence site-specific implementation strategies in institutional change contexts. Whilst previous experiences with reform were very strong influences on the teachers’ initial engagement practices, vicarious experiences and the social and visual cues observed by the teachers in their environment, and their existing emotional and psychological states, were areas which became increasingly more influential on their self-efficacy perceptions. This was most evident when this group of teachers moved beyond initial policy engagement to make their own decisions about how they would manage the reform and its implementation. The knowledge for leaders of organisations who understand how this operates at their workplace could be particularly empowering, and make a positive contribution to the theoretical understandings of change management.

While mastery experiences were strong influences of teachers’ self-efficacy in this study, it was not necessarily only the number of negative past experiences that shaped resistant or negative attitudes to reform but also the depth of feeling around those experiences. A single negative experience, common in the teachers’ narratives, had long ranging impacts on their perceptions of their capacity to achieve the desired outcomes. Further research into the nature of past experiences and the way these contribute to overall mastery experiences would provide greater clarity around this view. Developing an understanding from the teachers’ point of view about the influence of mastery experiences on their beliefs is valuable from the school leaders and managers’ perspectives as well. Research into this area would further assist school leaders and managers in understanding the nature of their own previous experiences and the extent to which it positioned and voiced their leadership practices.

Another area of academic interest with regard to self-efficacy and agency would be an analysis as to whether, and to what extent, self-efficacy beliefs can be manipulated by hegemonic practices particularly those referred to by Sinclair (1996 in Smyth, 2004) as the policy hegemony of managerialism, evaluation, review and accountability he describes as “synthetic discourses”(p. 265). Transformative practice suggests a distinction between genetic and societal influences on self-efficacy and agency. An individual’s genetic pre-disposition would act to limit agency whilst environmental influences provides a multitude of opportunities to exercise individual and collective agency. It would follow then, that a further examination of the extent to which individuals can develop self-efficacious beliefs and agentive behaviours that are independent of such policy hegemonies, would be worthy of investigation.

6.6.4. Conceptualising the Space where Teachers’ Work meets Educational Policy

In general terms, the literature referred to in this research suggests that policy underplays the importance of the role of teachers in its effective implementation. This is further supported by the educational research of Fullan (1982, 1993), Spillane (2004) and others who contend that effective implementation of policy rests squarely on what teachers do with it. It follows, that if teachers are resilient, confident and persistent in the face of new policy implementation, (rather than stressed, marginalised, resistant and disempowered) as this research suggests and consistent with perceptions of high levels of self-efficacy, then understanding how policy develops self-efficacy is a research area that would provide a valuable insight into the ways high change organisations, such as schools, can effectively implement reform without creating resistant workplace cultures. As well, research to examine ways in which teachers can still be agentive in centralised and somewhat homogenised change contexts, which has the flow on effect of reducing levels of stress and anxiety and sustaining high levels of professional satisfaction, invites further consideration. Further implications from this study suggest that even imposed, externally mandated policy can be ‘individualised’ to specific organisational contexts which acts as an important influence on shaping attitudes towards change. However, it is also the task of the policy makers to consider the implementation environments into which the policy will be delivered if externally developed and imposed. Obviously, this area of research has relevance across a range of organisational environments.

The influence and importance of the environmental conditions in this study has on generating positive and confident attitudes towards the tasks individuals are required to undertake in large scale, mandated change also requires further investigation. As this study showed, the culture of the workplace, often sensitive and fragile, can be strengthened or weakened depending upon the influence of environmental and workplace factors deemed important in affecting positive change by policy developers, organisational leaders and administrators. What was particularly evident in this case study, is that there is space for teachers’ to exercise their agency, for their professional voice to be developed and acknowledged even in reforms which suggest that the new environment is one that will be more influenced by a standardised, centralised set of operational practices, heavily influenced by factors like performativity. As the literature suggests, such environments can increase levels of individual stress and anxiety and

result in resistance or feelings of marginalisation or disempowerment. However, these effects can be moderated by the practices of managers, leaders and policy makers who take a more inclusive approach to policy development and implementation and undertake as central to their role, establishing the organisational narrative around reform. Policy theory research in this area would certainly be illuminating.

Since the literature of self-efficacy shows that those with high levels of self-efficacy are not only more confident about managing task requirements, but are also more persistent and resilient, further research into the areas of policy implementation and its impact on self-efficacy invites further investigation. Such studies would provide a more in-depth understanding of how policy makers can use this knowledge to bring about more effective implementation practices and, ultimately, feel more confident that policy goals can be achieved.

6.6.5. Investigating the Role of School Leaders as Agents of Change

The strength and porosity of cultural boundaries emerged as an important influence on the way teachers at this site engaged with the reform. Cultural boundaries consider the organisation's culture, climate and ways of doing. As discussed in Section 6.6.4, the initial acts of the teachers' engagement strategies with the implementation of the Australian Curriculum was to make meaning applying their own "indigenous theories" relating to reform efficacy (Marcus 1998 in Smyth, 2004, p. 274). However, the meaning making process was strongly influenced by the site-specific cultural meanings which in turn were influenced by the actions of the school leaders. The generally positive and confident responses to reform reflected in this study's participants was as a consequence of them. The school leaders clearly identified the cultural parameters of practice at the site, they led an informed and challenging discourse around the reform, and in clearly conceptualising the identity of the organisation, they contributed to the development of a stronger sense of professional identity and self for the teachers in the study. Whilst this description might be consistent with the notion of change needing to scale an organisation's "cultural wall" as noted by Hargreaves (1980 in Sikes, 1990, p. 43), it more accurately suggests that, given that the cultural wall would inevitably be required to be scaled since the reform was mandated, the 'scaling' that took place was undertaken within the cultural constructs and boundaries of the organisation as conceptualised by the school leaders. As such, the imposition of an externally mandated reform was less invasive but more like that of a mediated and negotiated treaty of engagement.

The importance of the role of the Principal in leading change cannot be underplayed. Their initial and ongoing support, clarity of directions, consistency and acknowledgement of the important task the teachers undertook, were critical in sustaining strong self-efficacy perceptions for the teachers in this study. Whilst more layered interpretations of the reform were the province of the teachers' immediate leaders, the Principal's actions and reactions were a consistent point of reference which the teachers used to validate their responses. Principals undertake a range of roles appearing sometimes to be continually more complex. However, further examination of

the role they play in reform environments, with specific reference to the way they locate themselves and the leadership team in reform contexts, would be valuable to gaining a deeper understanding of their effective management of change

This research also highlighted the critical role that the school's middle managers (department heads, curriculum co-ordinators and team leaders) played in enacting the policy initiatives and directives, and the considerable influence that they each had in establishing the language and narrative of policy enactment and engagement that lasted beyond implementation. Further research into defining the teachers' critical relationships around policy implementation and the role that Heads of Department, team leaders and curriculum co-ordinators played, would provide valuable educational insights around the parts they are required to play in effective policy implementation. Furthermore, investigating the role professional trust plays in change management is an important line of inquiry since it was apparent from this research, that the extent of self-efficacy beliefs was considerably influenced by the level of professional trust the teachers felt existed in their working environments. Key figures in developing this trust were the middle managers tasked with negotiating policy directives and ensuring they were represented with site-specific contexts. The relationship between the teacher and their middle manager was a critical one in achieving positive outcomes in externally imposed, mandated reform.

6.6.6. Examining the Role of Professional Trust in Reform Environments

For educational leaders, policy makers and managers, further self-efficacy research can have relevance in understanding both the teachers' responses to change, and the responsibilities they have to manage positive and sustainable change environments. This research has shown that teachers can become anxious that imposed curriculum change will stifle their professional growth and disrupt the rhythm of their existing good practices contributing to resistant attitudes towards the reform. However, such anxieties can be ameliorated by a range of actions on the part of the school leadership team as discussed in Section 6.6.5.

Critical in influencing the nature of the teachers' responses, was their perceptions of the level of professional trust operating at their work place. Recent studies by Browning (2013), Fink (2013), Tschannen-Moran (2014) and Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) for instance, highlight that strong trust relationships are critical for school improvement, effective leadership, building collective efficacy and are important pre-conditions for developing collaborative practices and professional learning communities. The presence or absence of professional trust had a strong influence on the way teachers in this study responded to mandated reform. High levels of professional trust enabled the teachers to focus their attention away from policy frameworks and the "tyranny of transparency" which Strathern (2000 in Smyth, 2004, p. 266) contends "leaches away" trust and re-directs their attention to the areas where they felt they could effectively exercise their agency. Where there were high levels of trust, this acted to support and privilege individual and collective agency even in this externally imposed reform environment. It enabled the teachers to focus on their professional space of practice,

confirming Fink's (2013) view that high trust environments more effectively navigate resistance, anger, incompetence and disengagement (p. 30). The actions of the teachers in this study also support Tschannen-Moran's (2015) contention that trust bolsters teachers' risk taking behaviour leading them to more confidently achieve their goals (p. 266).

Further investigations into this construct would provide greater clarity around the major factors influencing professional trust perceptions at a workplace, most specifically focusing on an examination of how professional trust engenders the exercise of individual agency within mandated reform environments. To what extent does the level of professional trust counter the confinements and resistance that can be associated with the de-professionalising actions of mandated reform? Such an investigation could provide another theoretical lens through which to examine the influence of the environment on a person's behaviour and would have relevance for those tasked with implementing change.

6.6.7. Investigating Resistance within the Construct of Reform Efficacy

The first action undertaken by teachers in this study was to make meaning of the reform which they did by looking for alignment between their current practice and the requirements of the reform. In this way, the teachers were selective about their engagement with it. It has been my contention that this 'selectivity' was as a consequence of each teacher's perceptions of the reform's *efficacy* which they applied, almost instinctively, based on their mastery experiences and contemporary professional instincts. These actions shaped the way they engaged with the reform and influenced the expectations they had of those around them, such as the school leaders and policy developers.

As Bandura (1977a, 1997) suggested, whilst self-efficacy is related to an individual's belief in achieving a task outcome, high self-efficacy beliefs do not necessarily transfer into actions. Whilst the findings of this research supported the view that high self-efficacy perceptions generally resulted in pro-active and positive engagement practices with the reform, it was also the case that highly self-efficacious teachers could choose not to engage with the reform or were resistant to it. This occurred when teachers perceived that there was a lack of alignment between their practices and the reform and resulted not from refusal to engage with it but as a consequence of quite intense and critical acts of engagement. Resistance of this kind was a consequence of deliberate and informed action, and presents a greater obstacle to change management than that associated with refusal alone, since it occurs as a consequence of considerable mediation and negotiation, and cognitive processing. Situations such as this indicate that further research to gain an understanding of the influences that shape agentic practices and the extent to which these are informed by self-efficacy would be valuable. In these situations, it would be even more important for schools to look to many of the practices suggested to try to influence positive engagement with reform. Again, for leaders and managers at schools, and educational policy makers, findings from this kind of research would be beneficial in influencing positive teacher engagement with change in their workplaces.

Individually and as a group, the teachers in this study expected to see, at the broadest policy level, alignment of their professional values and philosophies as being consistent with those of the policy reform and, at a more localised level, with the school's leadership team's interpretation of it. When this was observed, feelings of disempowerment and marginalisation are minimised, even within a mandated reform environment. The teachers' focus shifted towards aspects of the reform where they could exercise their agency, the classroom, and it was with this specific context in mind that they could then embed this reform into their occupational 'space'. Further research examining teachers' practices of curriculum implementation would also provide an extended understanding of their responses to change beyond initial engagement as was the focus in this study. As well, it would be interesting to note if the term "*reform efficacy*" has a theoretical robustness that could be applied to interpretations of policy in other reform contexts or different time frames.

6.7. Significance of the Study and Summary

Whilst this study focused on the experiences of six teachers as they began their engagement with Phase One of the Australian Curriculum in a regional, independent school in Queensland where many of their experiences supported earlier research findings, the study provides new insights into the implications of implementing, leading and managing educational change. These insights are of particular relevance for policy makers, school leaders and managers providing guidelines for the way they might develop and create teachers' spaces enabling them to achieve their professional goals and exercise their individual agency as a consequence of having high levels of self-efficacy beliefs.

Within the broader socio-cultural framework of Bourdieu (1991, 1998b, 2000) the critical curriculum context described by Apple (1993) and the interpretations of policy and practice taking place in a 'space' as described by Ball (1990), teachers' work was understood to be constructed by their interactions with their environment, where power exists in language and actions, and non-action and silences, and where aspects of their sense of self were both permanent and transient. Their responses to the implementation requirements positioned them as both respondents to the reform practices but also importantly as constructors of their space of practice. The interplay between these two influences required them to make their own meaning, combining a deliberate cognitive process with subliminal interpretations of the signs and cues they observed in their environment, as this reform was being rolled out.

The theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu (1991, 1993, 1998a, 1998b) and, more specifically, Albert Bandura (1997, 2006) was used to describe how this process was undertaken. It was a process of engagement, mediation and negotiation as the teachers conceptualised, made decisions about and exercised their role in meeting the reform requirements. Their responses were shaped by the interactions that took place between their cognition, behaviour and the environmental conditions in which they worked. Each of these interactions, constituting reflection and action, contributed to the teachers' sense of self-efficacy, a belief judgement they made in assessing their capacity to undertake

successful implementation of Phase One of the Australian Curriculum. Past successful experiences, behaviour or actions modelled by respected peers, a supportive environment providing informative verbal and non-verbal feedback, and their individual sense of well-being combined in various ways to influence how each individual teacher perceived their levels of self-efficacy. It was the combination of these elements, their sequence, and the depth of each, that contributed to the variation of individual's responses to change environments and was an early area of interest for this study. Therefore, an examination of the teachers' engagement, conceptualisation and decision making practices at the initial phase of implementation of Phase One, Australian Curriculum was intended to reveal the complexity of their curriculum work. The implementation of this reform provided a unique 'moment' in research associated with the development of an individual's self-efficacy beliefs as it recorded their initial responses to policy reform that Ball (1990) describes is the point between policy prescription and policy implementation, where policy "discontinuities, compromises, omissions and exceptions" occur (p. 3).

Undertaking to further understand self-efficacy using a qualitative inquiry provided a different lens with which to view the way these perceptions were developed since the method of data collection focused on the stories and language of the six participants. Their narratives provided a richness and depth to self-efficacy studies beyond the quantitative analyses that have been the most common research methodology in this area of theory. As well, this research endeavoured to link the paradigms of educational sociology and educational psychology by describing the research project within the theoretical contexts of Bourdieu and Bandura, using their conceptualisations of 'dispositions' as the integrating link between their theoretical frameworks.

This procedure was used to provide a deeper understanding of how an individual's habitus shapes their responses to the fields with which their operational practices necessitate engagement, in this circumstance, policy fields, and the ensuing power relationships that develop as a consequence. Each participant's agency (responses to change) was examined in light of the way external influences (policy change) could be understood through their habitus by examining those dispositions which were influenced by their perceptions of their capacity to undertake the task (self-efficacy).

Decisions that the teachers made about their capacities to meet implementation requirements were most strongly influenced by the actions and activities occurring at the teachers' workplace. Critically, perceptions were initially created by the leadership team's actions and their interpretations and decisions of this reform. This was followed by a range of teacher-specific professional characteristics such as the degree of alignment between policy and their practice as well as their years of professional experience. Whilst each of these characteristics was individual to each teacher, what emerged from their interviews was that influences on their self-efficacy perceptions were fluid and interrelated, rather than self-efficacy perceptions that were static or sequential, with mastery experiences remaining the most influential but not always the most dominant.

The quality and intention of the relationships teachers had with work colleagues and immediate leaders were strong influences on their confidence and sense of self were manifested in the way they acted as agents of change. Higher levels of confidence increased their participatory levels within their work environments. Even with limited professional experience, there was an awareness of what worked for them in fostering positive working relationships and this needed to be supported by structures set up in the work place to encourage collaborative decision making and practice. The teachers' perceptions of the level of professional trust, central to the culture of the working groups, also shaped the nature of their actions.

For their personal agency to be enacted, the teachers interviewed expressed a need to feel confident that they were getting policy implementation 'right'. This affirmation came initially from their curriculum leaders and would be reaffirmed later by the students they taught. What is also evident from this study, is that working collaboratively during the early design and development phases of implementation had sustained benefits for implementing policy into practice. Collaborative practices indicated to the teachers that their practices and professional knowledge were valued in the policy cycle and affirmed the essential role they played in effective policy implementation. This built self-efficacy perceptions and helped to sustain positive efficacy beliefs at times when formalised implementation practices faltered.

The extent to which each teacher's professional sense of self varied, was evident in their sense of individual personal agency and dependent upon a broad range of influences individual to each. Their sense of self was influenced by factors such as their perceptions of emotional confidence and professional wellbeing, and, personal philosophies of teaching and learning. Therefore, whilst the school and the leadership team may have had a clearly defined, shared vision for implementation, which was evident in the internal school documents analysed, the teachers implemented the curriculum individually distinctive from each other. The development of this individuality has been described in this project as a process they undertook toward professional individuation.

Whilst this study sought to generate a deeper understanding of teacher agency in the light of mandated, large scale curriculum reform and the role teachers played in it, the research found that teachers were still particularly agentive even in such circumstances where it might have been easy to assume that they would be marginalised and disempowered. Significantly it identified the critical role that the school workplace, its operations and cultural practices, and the key personnel at the site played in influencing teachers' responses. In actions and practices where they felt supported and acknowledged, the teachers possessed a strong sense of agency. The study indicated it was to individual perceptions of capacity rather than to the collective that promoted agency rather than the reverse. It indicated that attitudes and beliefs, whilst often unchanged, were able to be changed by responsive and affirming management and leadership practices.

Fundamentally the findings of this research study supported Fullan's (1982) powerful statement that suggested the success of education policy is based on what teachers do with it. However, its relevance lies in understanding that it is what teachers do with educational policy that determines its success or failure and to what extent their actions can be shaped to ensure policy success. This was the position from which this study began but it became evident that the teachers were shaping the school's responses to the reform as much as, if not more than, the direction adopted by their leadership team.

This study showed that even in this reform circumstance, where teachers' agency and professional status might have been compromised, this group of teachers were powerful and influential agents of change at their worksite which was the critical space for them in policy implementation. This appeared to be as a consequence of their belief that the school and the school's leaders would acknowledge their professional voice in their implementation strategies and activities undertaken at the work place. Where the teachers observed this happening, their responses to the reform were largely positive. Where they did not observe this happening, they were reticent to engage and were resistant to the reform requirements.

Essentially, the teachers showed little interest in engaging with or contesting the mandated field of policy. However, rather than feeling professionally disempowered, they instead actively sought a space where their agency could be affirmed which was the space of their practice. It emerged from their narratives that it was always their sub-conscious intention to look for ways to exercise their agency from their very first engagement with the curriculum documents. It was in this way that they felt capable and confident of critiquing policy and exercising considerable influence on the leadership strategies of the school's Executive and leadership team. This space, constituted by their previous experiences, influenced by the environment in which they worked and the relationships they had with their colleagues, where their professional self was identified and acknowledged, was the site where teachers' dispositions were shaped to inform their habitus to be enacted in this reform context. It was from this space that the teachers were able to determine their capacity to enact the reform requirements, to normalise it within their current practices, to seek alignment dependent upon their state of professional individuation, and to exercise their agency.

Finally, the teachers working within this large-scale, mandated reform environment, adopted the role of curriculum implementers. However, contrary to the view that such roles disempowered, marginalised and de-professionalised teachers, what was evident in this group was that the teachers sought out ways to exercise their agency within this field of practice. Those with stronger self-efficacy beliefs were able to engage more productively with the reform, were more confident about meeting the reform requirements and establish a revised working space that more closely reflected their professional identity and teaching philosophy within this reform context. To these teachers, this space was no less authoritative than that of the policy makers. This sense of authority and importance enabled them to voice their views as agents of change and

provided compelling evidence confirming the critical influence and authority these teachers exercised as implementers of large-scale, mandated reform.

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Appendices

Appendix A Invitation to Participate Email

Dear

I am conducting a study into the way teachers respond to curriculum reform. For this study I need volunteers to take part in two individual interviews over a period of six months and, during that time, provide feedback into the processes surrounding the activities that they undertake as they implement Phase 1 of the Australian Curriculum and I am inviting you to be part of this study.

To participate, you will need to undertake an interview at the beginning of your engagement and planning process for the new curriculum and again, as implementation occurs. Your participation in the interview is completely confidential, and your identity, should this research be published or produced for a public audience, will not be disclosed. Your responses to the interviews will remain confidential and used only in relation to the frame of reference for this research. During the planning phase for implementation, I would also need to attend, as an observer, department and faculty meetings, have access to email communication relating to this task that you might send to staff members within your departments or sphere of reference, and, minutes to department meetings where implementation is discussed.

If you are interested in participating in this study or have questions about the study, please contact me (*my email address inserted*)

Donna Evans

Email Attachment:

Hi

I am on the coast to do the first round of interviews on August 8 & 9 so if you agreed, we would arrange for an interview time then.

Can I book an interview time with you on one of those days? I am attaching some of the sample questions that will form the basis of our interview for you to think about. The interview will take about an hour.

Can you let me know of a suitable time?

Take care
Donna

Appendix B First Interview Schedule

Introduction

The Australian Curriculum is beginning its implementation phase next year. As teachers within the key learning areas of English, Maths and Science, you will be part of the planning and implementation of this curriculum change. This research project is focusing the way teachers engage with change and the role they play in the implementation of educational and curriculum change. It is designed to explore in a focused and individual way how teachers perceptions of self, influence their engagement with change and the way they feel about it – in the design, planning and implementation phases. The questions focus on four areas - teachers previous professional experiences with change both personally and as a member of a teaching community, the influence that their professional community plays in the way their engagement with change, the feedback, review and reflection that takes place as they implement change and the way they perceive themselves as teaching professionals. The kinds of questions which relate to each of these areas are listed below:

Mastery Experiences

- What kinds of curriculum reform have you been part of in the past?
- What has that involved?
- How would you describe the way you have engaged with curriculum reform in the past?
- Have there been reforms that you feel have been more successful than others?
- Do you feel that these experiences will influence your view of the implementation process involved with the Australian curriculum?

Vicarious experiences

- What influence does the external environment play in your engagement with curriculum change? In thinking about this question consider the role of ACARA, government policy, education policy external to the school and the school itself.
- How would you describe your role in the decision making processes that will enable this curriculum initiative to be implemented?
- In this planning and development phase, what do you feel you need to facilitate effective implementation?
- Who (or what e.g. education/government authorities) will you be looking to, to assist with your implementation of this reform?

Reviewing and reflecting

- What role does feedback play in implementing such changes?
- How important is it to the way you will design, plan and implement change?
- If feedback is important, how is it best communicated? By whom?

Personal perspectives

- In looking ahead to the process of change, how prepared do you feel personally to negotiate and implement change?
- From your point of view, what will you require to successfully manage, engage and implement the Australian Curriculum?

-
- What do you see the impact of this reform will be on your own teaching practice? What do you hope will be achieved?

Personal Data Form (accompanying attachment)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. Would you please complete the following information prior to the interview?

Name.....

Teacher of (year level/s & subject area/s)

.....
.....
.....

Teaching experience (months &/or years)

Qualification/s:

Undergraduate.....

Postgraduate.....

Age grouping: 21 – 30.....

31 – 40.....

41 – 50.....

51 – 60.....

60+

Background:

Teaching experience in

- This school
- Other independent schools
 - a. Christian schools
 - b. Non-Christian schools
- State schools

In the space provided below, would you describe your personal philosophy of education? As a teaching professional, how would you describe your role in this context?

.....
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Thank you

Appendix C Second Round Interview Questions of Teachers

(Attachment to email sent March, 2012)

1. What has been your involvement so far in implementing the Australian Curriculum?
2. How has implementation rolled out at this school/in your classroom?
3. What has the experience been like – for you? For the students? For the parents? For the school executive/admin team? Please include your perspectives on the successes and the challenges.
4. How has your experience of implementation reflected your anticipation of what this process would be like? For example, has it been much harder than you anticipated or not as difficult as you thought?
5. To what extent has the practice of implementation reflected first, the official ACARA documents, and second, this school's approach and its strategies for guiding the implementation process? Please make reference to any specific school policy documents you think appropriate for this process.
6. Explain the ways in which you perceive your own involvement in the implementation process at this school. What do you see as your strengths in approaching the task of implementation? What have been the challenges you've faced? How well do you think you've met these challenges? Comment on your personal successes or disappointments in implementation?
7. Comment on your perceptions of your own personal successes in dealing with this process so far. What factors impact on your sense of success or your sense of disappointment? Explain.
8. What do you envisage for the next phase of implementing the Australian Curriculum in this school?
9. What other factors have impacted upon the ways in which you see yourself as teacher/administrator/HOD (select which is appropriate) dealing with curriculum change in this school?

Appendix D Data Codes Defined

Derived Codes used in the data analysis	Elaborating the Codes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous reforms 	Incorporated reform broader than curriculum. May have been educational reform of some kind, reform that was discretionary, school based reform –but included reform within an education context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship between university and/or professional training and practice 	Relevance or relationship between current practice and theoretical underpinnings gained from university studies – undergraduate or postgraduate – in education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timeline for reform – time between engagement & implementation 	Timeline for reform relates to the amount of time allocated by the school (sometimes in response to external timelines) between teachers’ initial engagement and implementation. Longer timelines are considered more supportive of teachers’ work than shorter timelines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support/level of commitment from educational authorities 	Extent to which external authorities support or commit to change evidenced by levels of communication, provision of professional learning and other support materials, extent to which external authorities support individual schools as well as degree of support between external organisations in the broader educational sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenure – contract/part time/permanent/full time 	Nature of employment type – permanent full time (ongoing non-contested tenure) ranging to short term contracts or minimal part time employment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature of change – mandated/discretionary/personal level of commitment to change 	Educational reform can be discretionary (i.e not mandated), school based (to individual school) to state wide reform to national, mandated reform. National, mandated reform represents the higher end of regulatory practices within the field of education policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceived level of value placed on the reform within the workplace 	“Value” placed on reform within the workplace is a highly value-laden judgement but relates to the level of negotiation and engagement undertaken by the school/workplace with regard to reform implementation, evidenced in the elements the organisation has oversight of e.g. school timetable, provision of resources, staff meeting agendas, directions to administrators responsible for implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage of career 	Early or late stage teaching career relating to number of years teaching. Early stage careers would be teachers who have taught for less than 5 years. Late stage teachers – those who have taught longer than 15 years.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of discipline (i.e. Subject) knowledge & expertise 	Discipline knowledge relates to the level of perceived knowledge of the subject area taught and whether teachers are teaching within their subject/expertise area or not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal attitudes to change 	Attitudes of the participants towards change in general terms as well as within their professional areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Way students will engage with change 	Perceptions by the participants of how they feel students in their classes will engage with the reform – relates to their personal philosophies of good teaching practice and student learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment between curriculum innovation & individual’s current practice 	The extent to which the teachers feel that the reform will impact on their current practice – relates to their personal teaching philosophies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching area – primary/secondary, subject area 	Teachers are organised by sub-school - Primary School (Prep – Year 6) or Secondary (Year 7 – Year 12) and by teaching area – Subjects – English, Maths and Science. Primary teachers teach a specific year level but in cross-discipline areas whilst Secondary teachers would generally in single-discipline areas across year levels.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ways of working 	Preferred working styles such as collaborative working models, hierarchical working models
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership 	Style of leadership preferred of the leadership team – a flat model of leadership, shared/distributive leadership, transformative leadership, hierarchical leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture of change in the workplace 	The way change, of any kind, was viewed generally in the workplace – at an emotional level - with hesitation? Scepticism? And at a practical level – provisions made structurally to support change – within the timetable? With qualified personnel?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support from colleagues not involved with change 	Implementation of the Australian Curriculum is a staggered model with specific subject areas implemented at various stages. Some teachers will be heavily involved in the initial implementation process whilst other teachers will have no direct involvement. This refers to the degree of support for the reform from teachers who are not currently part of the implementation of Phase 1.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of working relationship with colleagues 	Describes the way teachers work with their colleagues – if they have a personally and/or professionally satisfying or conflicting relationship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of importance within the school's strategic plan 	The school's strategic plan is the manifestation of strategic decisions made by the school council and the school executive. Any new initiative would usually be part of and acknowledged in the school's strategic plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational detail of implementation process 	Texts – both written and spoken – that have been communicated to the teaching staff relating to the implementation process developed for that particular school site and developed by the Principal, the Dean of Teaching and Learning, the Head of Junior Years and/or the Head of Secondary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational modes of departments – collaborative/directed 	Texts- both written and spoken – that have been communicated to the teaching staff relating to the implementation process developed for particular subject departments and sub-schools and developed by Heads of Department or Deputy Head Junior Years/Curriculum Co-ordinator.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of support & availability of resources (including personnel) 	Support, resources and communication texts from ACARA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for reform from professional organisations 	Support, resources and communication texts from Queensland Studies Authority, Lutheran Education Queensland, professional organisations e.g. QETA – Queensland English Teachers' Association, ISQ (Independent Schools Queensland)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevance of PD 	Professional development opportunities provided and funded by the school on the school site or external sites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for change from the parent body 	Ways in which the parents demonstrate their support for the education reform
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum documents 	Curriculum documentation received from outside the school site e.g. ACSA (Australian Curriculum Studies Association), ACER (Australian Council for Education Research)

▪ Role of the media	Articles and reports via the media relating to the implementation of the Australian Curriculum e.g. statements by politicians, editorials and other commentaries by the media or members of the public recorded in the media
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Appendix E List of Codes

Influences on Self Efficacy	Codes
	Teacher's perceptions relating to:
Mastery Experiences	Previous reforms
	Stage of career
	Relationship between university and/or professional training and practice
	Level of discipline (i.e. Subject) knowledge & expertise
	Personal attitudes to change
Vicarious Experiences	Support for change from the parent body
	Ways of working
	Nature of change – mandated/discretionary
	Timeline for reform – time between engagement & implementation
	Leadership
	Way students will engage with change
	Role of the media
Social & Visual Cues	Culture of change in the workplace
	Perceived level of value placed on the reform within the workplace
	Operational modes of departments – collaborative/directed
	Level of support & availability of resources (including personnel)
	Support for reform from professional organisations
	Support/level of commitment from educational authorities
	Relevance of PD
	Support of colleagues not involved with change
	Level of importance within the school's strategic plan
Psychological & Emotional State	Curriculum documents
	Organisational detail of implementation process
	Tenure – contract/part time/permanent/full time
	Alignment between curriculum innovation & individual's current practice
	Teaching area – primary/secondary, subject area
	Quality of working relationship with colleagues

Appendix F Document Codes

Codes	Evidence in the documents
Previous reforms	Suggested methods of initial engagement & negotiation were to 'audit' current documents to compare with new documentation
Relationship between university and/or professional training and practice	Models of professional development existing within the school & the way professional development was to be delivered
Level of discipline (i.e. Subject) knowledge & expertise	Related to organisation of implementation
Ways of working	Time provisions available in documents which enabled teachers to engage with the documents Ways staff were organised to engage with the new reform Evidence of responding to the ways staff preferred to work
Nature of change – mandated/discretionary	Obligations evident in the document that drove implementation timelines
Timeline for reform – time between engagement & implementation	Timelines that were whole school, department & teacher developed
Leadership	Evidence of the leadership role of the School Executive, Heads of Department Interpretations of these roles within the documents
Way students will engage with change	Evidenced in unit outlines and assessment practices
Culture of change in the workplace	Culture of change within organisational structure Culture of change within departments
Perceived level of value placed on the reform within the workplace	Textual features of the documents that signalled 'value' of the reform
Operational modes of departments – collaborative/directed	Documentation that guided modes of engagement
Level of support & availability of resources (including personnel)	Provisions of professional learning, time to engage with professional learning, provision of key personnel, sharing of knowledge & practice within the documents
Support for reform from professional organisations	References to professional organisations associated with the teaching of Maths, English and Science e.g. ETAQ (English Teachers Association)
Support/level of commitment from educational authorities	Reference to organisations such as QSA, LEQ and ISQ and the interpretation of these references in determining their perceived level of professional support
Relevance of PD	Incidence of the types of professional development as well as notes in documents that might comment on the importance of the professional development offered
Support of colleagues not involved with change	Other agenda items in documents that did not relate to ACARA and Phase 1 implementation.
Level of importance within the school's strategic plan	Examining other strategic matters within the school planning framework to gain an understanding of the importance placed upon ACARA implementation
Curriculum documents	Examination of unit plans, assessment plans etc to determine how teachers were to be guided towards implementation
Organisational detail of implementation process	Clarity of implementation process as described in the documents
Alignment between curriculum innovation & individual's current practice	Evidence of documentation plans and strategies that acknowledged the qualities, personalities and professional status of the teachers responsible for implementation
Teaching area – primary/secondary, subject area	Decisions evident in the degree of alignment between primary and secondary documentation (of a P – 10 reform)
Quality of working relationship with colleagues	Evidence from the documentation that demonstrated 'value' in acknowledging current working practices or ways of strengthening collegial working relationships.

CURRICQUEST



Names		
Room		
Submission Time		

PURPOSE

The purpose of this CURRICQUEST is three-fold:

To become familiar with the background of the development and structure of the Australian Curriculum

To search for relevant information to support your familiarisation with the content and structure of the curriculum documents

To have fun learning together and offering peer support

Even though there is not a Number 4 – TO WIN!

TASK

With your partner, complete the CURRICQUEST accurately by consulting the ACARA websites: http://www.acara.edu.au/home_page.html and <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Home>

You will need to login using your username (email address) and password to access the material for the CURRICQUEST on the <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Home> consultation site.

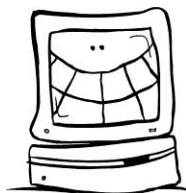
Submit your completed CURRICQUEST sheet and note the submission time.

PRIZES

There will be prizes for those who demonstrate outstanding achievement and an ability to work efficiently. Small, random prizes will be distributed to working partnerships during the course of the CURRICQUEST when focus on the task is observed.

The winning team will be the one that has the most accurate answers, submitted in the shortest possible time.

GOOD LUCK!



What are **4 reasons for having an Australian Curriculum**?

- 1.The individual and combined efforts of states and territories can focus on how students' learning can be improved to achieve the national goals, regardless of individual circumstances or school location.
- 2.Greater attention can be devoted to equipping young Australians with those skills, knowledge and capabilities necessary to enable them to effectively engage with and prosper in society, compete in a globalised world and thrive in the information-rich workplaces of the future.
- 3.High-quality resources can be developed more efficiently and made available around the country.
- 4.There will be greater consistency for the country's increasingly mobile student and teacher population.

Four learning areas have been developed in Australian Curriculum Phase 1. What are they?

The development of the Australian Curriculum in the first phase includes English, mathematics, science and history.

What learning areas are being developed in Phase 2?

The second phase will see the development of geography, arts and languages, followed by a third phase involving the rest of the curriculum.

What are the **four stages of the curriculum development process**?

Curriculum Shaping Stage, Curriculum Writing Stage, Implementation Stage, Evaluation and Review Stage.

When will K (P)-10 Phase 1 learning areas be available for online publication?

Feedback from the consultation on the draft Australian Curriculum will be analysed and will shape revisions and refinements ahead of the final online publication of the K–12 Australian Curriculum for English, mathematics, science and history later in 2010; OR August 2010; OR December 2010 – depends where you look!

What are 3 **ways to provide feedback**?

As you view the curriculum on the website, you can provide feedback by using rating scales and/ or writing comments with the click of a feedback button.

The website is also the place where individuals and groups can complete an online feedback survey.

Teachers in many schools will also be examining the curriculum materials in detail and providing feedback on the appropriateness and usefulness of the online curriculum. This practical application will provide very useful feedback to help review and improve the draft curriculum.

What are the two main categories that each learning area will be structured around?

What support documents will illustrate achievement at each year level?

Each learning area includes content descriptions and achievement standards.

a) In English in Year 8, what is the content descriptor for writing clear sentences?

11. Writing clear sentences

Sentences, clauses and word groups need to be carefully crafted for clarity and coherence (E8LNG11)



b) Click on the _____ and find the elaborations that go with this (from 8 a). How many elaborations are there?

2

In English, apply the following filters and identify the 3 highlighted curriculum elements that apply to your selected tabs:-

The screenshot shows the Australian Curriculum Consultation Portal interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like Home, Learn, Explore K-10, Explore 11-12, Consult, Survey, Guide, and Glossary. Below this, there are tabs for English, History, Mathematics, and Science. The 'English' tab is selected. Under 'Filter results by:', there are four sections: Year Level (a grid with '4' highlighted), Strand (checkboxes for Language, Literature, and Literacy, all checked), General capabilities (a dropdown menu showing 'Thinking Skills'), and Modes (a dropdown menu showing 'Speaking'). At the bottom of the filter section, there are buttons for 'Apply filters' (highlighted with a black arrow), 'Clear filters', 'Save view', 'Download', 'Print', and 'Email'. The 'Organise curriculum columns by:' section shows 'Strand' selected over 'Year level'.

Then click ‘Apply filters’

1. Recognising and responding

2. Meanings of texts

8. Engaging with texts

Each learning area is set out in a generic manner and utilises strands to organise content. What are the strands for each of the Phase 1 learning areas?

English	History	Mathematics	Science
Language	History K&U	Number and algebra	Science understanding
Literature	Historical skills	Measurement and geometry	Science as inquiry skills

Literacy		Statistics and probability	Science as a human endeavour
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What are the general capabilities that are embedded in the Australian curriculum?

In each curriculum document there is mention of cross-curriculum priorities/dimensions. What are these?

These perspectives are (as outlined in The Shape of the Australian Curriculum p. 13):

Indigenous perspectives, which will be written into the national curriculum to ensure that all young Australians have the opportunity to learn about, acknowledge and respect the history and culture of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders

a commitment to sustainable patterns of living which will be reflected in curriculum documents

skills, knowledge and understandings related to Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia.

What are the 3 broad questions of inquiry for Year 10 History?

Students will consider broad inquiry questions, including:

why do nations go to war and how does war change a society?

how do people struggle for rights and freedoms?

how does a nation deal with its past and attempt to shape the future?

In Mathematics, Year 7, Numbers and algebra strand, what 2 work samples are provided?

Fractions and algebra

At what year level in Science, under which strand, would we expect to find:-

Grouping Living Things

Grouping living things, including humans as animals, on the basis of observable characteristics (S4SU1)

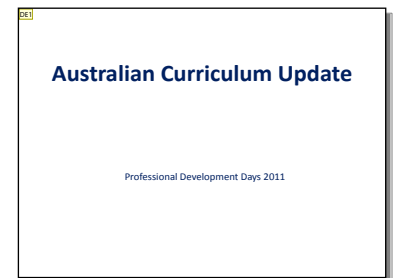
Year 4 Science understanding

Appendix H PowerPoint from Ryan, January 2011

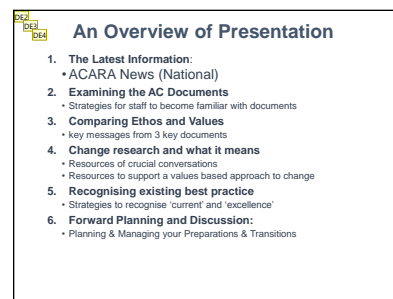
Slide 1



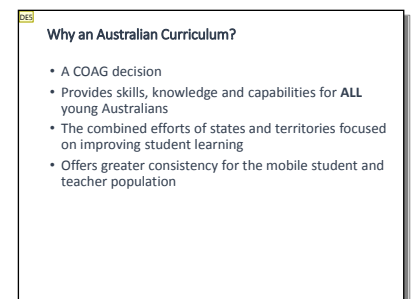
Slide 2



Slide 3



Slide 4

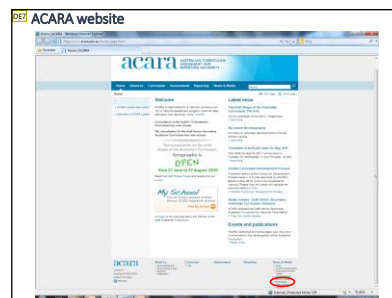


Slide 5

ACARA Development

- Phase 1 Learning Areas:** *English, History, Maths, & Science* - available early December.
- Phase 2 Shaping Papers:** Geography (feedback closed), *the Arts* (currently available and feedback requested) *Languages* forum in Sept and shape paper released subsequently.
- Phase 1 Senior Learning Areas:** Content feedback supplied (no standards yet available). Standards currently timed for Semester 1, 2011 (along with trials).
- Initial year now called **F = FOUNDATION** (previously K/Prep)

Slide 6



Slide 7

Melbourne Declaration (2009)

LEARNING AREAS

- * English
- * Mathematics
- * Science (inc. physics, chemistry and biology)
- Humanities and Social Sciences** (inc. history, geography, economics, business, civics and citizenship)
- Languages** (focus on Asian languages)
- The Arts** (performing and visual)
- * Health and Physical Education
- Information and Communication Technologies**
- Design and Technology

Slide 8

Learning Areas across Years 7 - Year 10

Learning Area	Subject	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
ENGLISH							
MATHEMATICS							
SCIENCE							
HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES	History						
	Geography						
	Economics and Business						
	Civics and Citizenship						
THE ARTS							
HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION							
LANGUAGES	Language A						
	Language B						
TECHNOLOGICAL DESIGN							

Core for all, with some areas also stating ways in which learning can be extended for some
 Students able to choose to continue learning in these areas
 Focused on developing proficiency with flexible delivery

Produced by the Queensland Studies Authority - QSA 2010

Slide 9

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM LEARNING AREAS

Phase 1 Year K(P)–10	11 & 12
English	4 courses
History	4 courses
Science	4 courses
Mathematics	2 courses
Phase 2	
Arts	
Geography	
Languages	
Phase 3	
Health and Physical Education K(P)–10	
Others may be announced	

Slide 10

Years 11 and 12

Learning area	Senior courses
English	English Literature English for life and the workplace English as an additional language or dialect (EALD)
History	Ancient history Modern history
Science	Biology Chemistry Physics Earth and environmental science
Mathematics	Essential mathematics General mathematics Mathematical methods Specialist mathematics

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TIMELINES				
	Phase 1 English, mathematics, science and history		Phase 2 Geography, languages and the arts	Phase 3 "The whole curriculum" TBA
Development stage	K(P)–10	Years 11–12	K(P)–12	2010
Curriculum framing	April 2009	April 2009	Term 3, 2010	Advice is being sought regarding ACARA's approach to the development of the whole curriculum and those learning areas not currently being developed by ACARA
Curriculum development	May – Dec 2009	June 2009 – Feb 2010	Begin late 2010	
National consultation and trial	1 March – 23 May 2010	April – June 2010 & April 2011		
Digital publication	December 2010			

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Australian Curriculum Structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rationale Aims Organisation of the learning area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strands content descriptions content elaborations Achievement standards samples of student work

Slide 13

General Capabilities
7 Main Capabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy Numeracy ICT Creative and Critical Thinking (Creativity, Critical Thinking) Personal and Social Learning (Self management, social competence, teamwork) Ethical Behaviour Intercultural Understanding

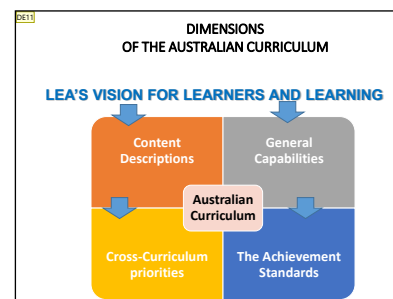
Slide 14

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope and sequences for Literacy, Numeracy, ICT to be released with Phase 1 Learning areas (Years 2,4,6,8,10) [linked to NAPLAN] Other Capabilities- Years 2, 6, 10
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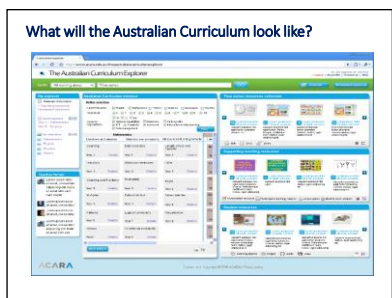
Slide 15

CROSS CURRICULUM PRIORITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander History and Culture (local); Asia focus (regional); sustainability (global) SPECIAL EDUCATION: 3 options (one option for students with very high levels of need) STANDARDS: "Each achievement standard will make explicit the quality of learning necessary for students to be well able to progress to the next level of learning..." A- E <u>or</u> equivalent.

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Slide 17



Slide 18

ASSESSMENT — PROCESSES AND CERTIFICATION

- States and territories will be responsible for:
 - assessment
 - certification
 - quality assurance
 - tertiary entrance
- Where there is a nationally developed course states/territories will cease to offer any comparable existing course
- The number of courses may grow over time

Slide 19

AC's PHILOSOPHY

- The 'big 4' subjects: As the intensity focuses on 'what' we are teaching... our stated ethos in Lutheran Education is focused upon the whole child and a well-rounded education
- The increased focus on NAPLAN results: We need to be deliberate (and confident) about our ability to progress map students' learning

Slide 20

AC's PHILOSOPHY

- As subjects are organized by year level with associated achievement standards: We need to encourage students to appreciate the progress they ARE making... and be watching all students
- Time allocation for new subjects: we need to remember that Christian Studies, chapel and class devotions are vital anchors in a world full of busyness – and are core to our school's foundation

Slide 21

Qld: Implementation Timeline

STATEMENT: STATE EDUCATION MINISTER

<http://statements.cabinet.qld.gov.au/MMS/StatementDisplaySingle.aspx?id=703>

Independent School have 3 options:

- As per the 'Qld Plan';
- 'Early adopter'
- Federal Government Option (all Phase 1 - before Dec 30, 2013)

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The implementation plan for Queensland has now been approved by Minister Geoff Wilson as follows:-

- 2011 a year of planning and engagement with the Phase 1 Australian Curriculum for Prep to Year 10 teachers
- 2012 full implementation (meaning the planning, teaching, assessing and reporting) on English, mathematics and science for all year levels from Prep up to and including Year 10 by the end of the year
- 2013 full implementation of History for all year levels from Prep up to and including Year 10 by the end of the year
- Independent schools may choose to be 'early adopters' and implement the Australian Curriculum earlier than these times

Slide 23

**WHAT DOES LUTHERAN EDUCATION
SAY ABOUT THE NEW
CURRICULUM?**

Slide 24

Anything new in our schools is based upon these 5 KEY PRINCIPLES...

1. We **care** about learners
2. We **emphasise how to learn** as well as what to learn
3. A well-rounded education includes a range of **extra curricular activities**
4. Developing **social and relational skills are important** alongside the development of intellectual skills
5. An **ethos** that emphasises hope, forgiveness and service **grows from our Christian values**

Slide 25

2010 – Preparation

Mapping **ES** Australian Curriculum with existing LEQ

Resources:

- **Cross Curriculum Priorities/Dimensions :**
 - *Faith Courage and Hope DVD* (issued to all schools)
- **(General) Capabilities:**
 - Capability 5,6,7 (Personal and Social Learning/Ethical Behaviour/Intercultural Understanding) may be featured when attending to Relational Mangement & Service Learning projects, CS, Pastoral Care)
 - Alignment of capabilities and LQLs
- **Pedagogy:**
 - EQUIP contains a pedagogical component in each of 10 Modules

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5 Ps **DE22**

5 Ps that are important during the year of preparation are:

- People
- Pace & Time
- Process
- Priorities
- Philosophy

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Preparation to Implementation

We propose:

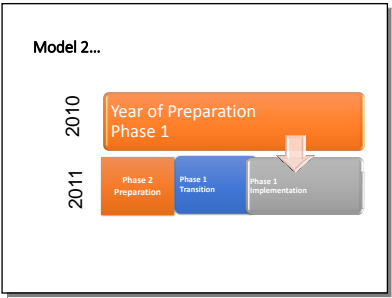
- 2010 Year of **Preparation**
- 2011 Year of **Transitions**
- 2012 (and beyond) Year of **Implementation**

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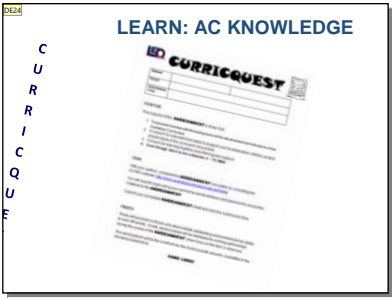
MODEL 1...

2010	Phase 1 Preparation		
2011	Phase 2 Preparation	Phase 1 - Transitions	
2012	Phase 3 Preparation	Phase 2 Transitions	Phase 1 – Implementation

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Appendix I Australian Curriculum Roll Out Plan

Australian Curriculum 2011 Plan of attack!!!

Implementation of the P - 10 Australian Curriculum in Queensland

On 8 December 2010, Australian education ministers endorsed the content for Foundation Year to Year 10 English, Mathematics, Science and History. Foundation (F) in the Australian Curriculum refers to the year before Year 1. In Queensland this year of schooling is called the Preparatory Year, or Prep (P).

The QSA and Queensland's school sectors - Education Queensland, Queensland Catholic Education Commission and Independent Schools Queensland - have agreed on a staged approach to the implementation of the P-10 Australian Curriculum.

In 2011, Queensland teachers have the opportunity become familiar with the new P-10 English, Mathematics and Science curriculums by auditing and reviewing current programs and engaging with targeted professional development.

Schools' focus during 2011 should be on:

- auditing current programs for English, mathematics and science against the Australian Curriculum using the planning tools developed by the QSA
- adjusting current programs for English, mathematics and science to address the differences identified in audits in preparation for 2012.
- commencing implementation of English, mathematics or science using the Australian Curriculum across all year levels and maintaining the focus on Queensland curriculum for all other learning areas.

In 2012, Queensland schools will plan, teach, assess and report English, Mathematics and Science across the year levels using the Australian Curriculum. Teachers will also have the opportunity to become familiar with the new P-10 History curriculum. Focus on the Queensland curriculum will be maintained for all other learning areas.

In 2013, Queensland schools will plan, teach, assess and report History across the year levels using the Australian Curriculum. Focus on the Queensland curriculum will be maintained for the remaining learning areas.

	English	Maths	Science
Audit	Begin end Tm1	Speak to Stepping Stones re	With Primary Connections in mind
Plan, shape, rewrite	Term 1&2	Term 3	Term 2

	8 th April begin audit	August 16/17	May 27 th training day
Whole school scope and sequence from planning	Curric. Co. in consultation	Curric. Co. in consultation	Curric. Co. in consultation

Term 1 - (Reports formatting)

- 16th of March - week 8 - Staff Meeting
Update information/ Scootle resources / Introduce English Audit document (QSA)
- 8th of April -Week 11 - Student free day
Audit towards planning, shaping, adjusting and writing English units to align with Australian Curriculum for terms 2,3,4,1(2012)

Term 2- (Report writing)

- Staff meetings x1 unpacking Science
- Friday May 27th Pupil free day - Science - Primary Connections training
- Staff meetings x1 auditing, shaping, writing, adjusting Integrated Units to imbed Science

Term3 -

- Monday 11th of July - Student free
Cont. Science Audit + Planning, Adjusting and Programming, shaping Science + assessment
- August 16th and 17th
Maths Audit / planning etc. possibly with Grace Primary & Stepping Stones

Term 4 - (CTJ with LENS schools/ Report writing)

- Complete English/ Maths/ Science ready for 2012
- Look at History , Geography, The Arts, HPE , Languages- (decisions need to be made restaffing when released)
- Plan 2012 attack strategies - do we block student free days together to allow for deeper opportunities to get our 'teeth into planning'???
- Phase 3 - Design and Tech. , ICT, Economics, Business, Civics and Citizenship

Appendix J Teaching & Learning Committee Minutes 29.8.11

MINUTES

TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Monday, 29 August 2011 at 3.30 pm in K5

ATTENDEES:

[REDACTED]

APOLOGIES:

[REDACTED]

Meeting opened 3:35pm

Implementation of National Curriculum in Phase 1 Subjects at *research site*

1. Progress to date in each subject area

a. Junior School

- Staff have completed **gap analyses** (Essentials vs National Curriculum) in each subject and have documented current QSA Essentials based units and their timing.
- During 2011, some mathematics units have been modified to become **transitional units**.
- **Ryan has identified QSA resources/exemplars and modified them to provide a set of resources and templates to assist staff** eg QSA Year Level Curriculum Plan template, QSA Whole School Curriculum Plan template, QSA audit of Essentials against ACARA etc

b. Secondary School

i) English

- In 2010, **Ann** developed a **transitional Yr 7-10 Curriculum Plan for English** which has been **implemented in 2011**.
- **[REDACTED]** has collected suitable QSA resources and developed a **Unit Plan template suitable for English**. She used the template to develop several exemplar English Unit Plans. A sample Year 10 English Unit Plan was tabled.
- **Ann** also identified the same QSA template for a Year Level Curriculum Plan as **[REDACTED]**. This template can be downloaded pre-filled for each year level for English (and Maths and Science).

ii) Mathematics

- [REDACTED] indicated that he intended to implement the National Curriculum at Year 7 and 8 level in 2012 but not Year 9 and 10 because these year levels would be disadvantaged by gaps in their previous learning. As the 2012 cohort of Yr 7 and 8 students moved through [REDACTED], they would continue to study the National Curriculum – Yr 9 in 2013 and Yr 10 in 2014.
- It is intended to purchase new textbooks for Yr 7 and 8 in 2012 to resource the new curriculum.

iii) Science

Year 7-10

- Science has been transitioning to the National Curriculum for Years 7–10 over 2010 and 2011. This resulted from a desire to refresh the curriculum and resources in 2010 and it was decided to look to the future and plan towards the National Curriculum rather than to continue with QSA Essentials.
- Penny has written the Year Level Curriculum Plans (Scope and Sequence documents) to document the transition process and the associated Unit Outline documents and science workbooks have been written.
- Full implementation will occur in 2012 and all Curriculum documents have already been prepared. Modification of the booklets is also in progress. Examples of the Science Year level Curriculum Plans, Unit Plans and booklets were tabled.
- It has been decided not to purchase new texts yet as the science workbooks and digital resources on the e-learning portal which have been developed by science staff are still considered valuable and sufficient resources.

Years 1-6

- The Junior School Essentials Science program currently in use was developed by [REDACTED] has now modified the program to match the National Curriculum and has completed the Year 1-6 Year Level Curriculum Plans.
- [REDACTED] willing to work on updating the suggested activities to resource [REDACTED] curriculum documents. Once this is done, Junior School staff will be able to use these documents to prepare detailed Unit Plans.
- [REDACTED] has indicated that the Junior School is interested in exploring the option of using the Primary Connections resources in their Science curriculum possibly as additional to [REDACTED] program. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] will continue to discuss this possibility to decide on the best way forward.

2. Planning Documents

██████████ commented on the importance of minimising the levels of documentation between 'syllabus documents' and day-to-day teacher planning documents. It was decided that a Year level Curriculum Plan (also known as a Scope and Sequence document) and a Unit Plan would be sufficient if well designed.

██████████ tabled a modified, simplified version of the QSA Year Level Curriculum Plan template. It was agreed that this design contained all the necessary information in a simple format and that this would be the template that would be used for planning implementation of the National Curriculum in 2012.

The simplicity and detail of the sample Science Unit outline was seen as desirable but it was recognised that different formats would be better suited to different KLAs and different year levels. It was agreed that it was not appropriate to mandate a single Unit Plan template across KLAs and year levels. However some degree of uniformity was seen as appropriate so HODS and Ryan in consultation with ██████████ will establish appropriate sample templates for use in their areas.

3. Tasks to be done

At this stage all Queensland schools are committed to implementing the National Curriculum in 2012. Given the volatile politics surrounding the National Curriculum, ██████████ advice is to 'hasten slowly'. Given the political uncertainty and the fact that critical planning documents such as the assessment standards are not yet available, staff are in a difficult position.

- Finalising Scope and Sequence documents for each subject
- Clarifying what remains to be done in terms of detailed unit planning for each subject
- Identifying when time can be allocated to complete these tasks

(pseudonyms have been inserted to identify Ryan, Kate & Ann who were members of the Teaching & Learning Committee. Yellow highlights – my notations)

Appendix K Planning & Teaching Learning Requirement, Semester 2, 2011: Letter to Staff from Ryan

Dear
Colleague

Re: Planning, Teaching and Learning Requirements Semester 2 2011

Year level specific and specialist subject planning should be done so on *the research site* 'Common Planning Template' provided to teachers and accessible on the shared computer network. The purpose of this document is to enable teachers the opportunity to interpret school-based curriculum into meaningful, sequential and developmental teaching and learning. Specifically, in the case of the **Humanities and Science KLA's**, units of work have been identified and planned across the scope of **Preparatory to Year 6** such that a fair and reasonable spread of learning opportunities occurs throughout a child's academic development within the Junior School. Considerable collegial conversations and planning have taken place with members of the Junior School and Secondary School so as to ensure a quality level of consistency, transparency and progression within and across JS and SS curriculum areas. ***It is imperative that specific units of work in Science and Humanities reflect unit progression as indicated in school planning documentation.***

The school bases its curriculum documents on the Queensland Studies Authority Essential Learning and Standards curriculum framework (currently). During 2011, additional planning and revising of school based curriculum will occur in order to maintain currency with the Australian Curriculum framework (ACARA).

Term planning in the Junior School needs to consist of the following:

1. An overview of the teaching and learning objectives of the topics that will be covered throughout the term within each KLA;
 - **Christian Studies**
 - **English** (Spelling Mastery, Handwriting, Guided Reading, Comprehension, Writing and Oral Language)
 - **Mathematics**
 - **Science**
 - **Humanities**
 - **Information Communication Technology**
 - **The Arts**
 - **Human Relationship Education** (You Can Do It)

Specialist teachers will provide curriculum planning information in the following areas:

- **Health and Physical Education**
- **Music, Visual Art**
- **German**

COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

Planning should take place **collaboratively within year level teams/cohorts**. All members of the team should have equal opportunity to consult, discuss and plan relevant sequences of learning. Usually the most appropriate time for this is during your non-contact time each week.

Storage of planning documents:

- a. All planning must be loaded onto the server in the appropriate folder.

'I' Drive

Remember to do a "Save as" once you open the planning templates so the original template is left intact.

- b. All planning needs to be printed and filed in the appropriate sections of your Curriculum planning folder. This folder must remain in your classroom in an easily accessible location (on/ near teacher's desk) with your most up to date planning inside.

A **printed hard copy** of the common planning template should be directed to the Deputy Head and Head of Junior School for perusal and filing. Common planning documents serve as part the **school's** commitment to accountability. These documents, along with all school-based curriculum, are filed and can be made accessible to members of the community or accreditation personnel upon formal request.

A **daily planner** which outlines details of each day's teaching and learning activities is to be available for perusal by either the Deputy Head of Junior School or Head of Junior School, or local/national curriculum authority, upon request.

A **class timetable** outlining specific times when each subject is scheduled to be taught. **Indicative times afforded each KLA is enclosed, below.** This timetable should be written to reflect a normal/standard week – Monday to Friday. Please note that specialist subjects – HPE, Music and LOTE have been scheduled by the Head of Junior School. ***Spelling Mastery is now scheduled to occur Monday – Thursday between 8.30am and 9.00am. Devotion is to follow directly after this time, please.***

UNIT PLANS

1. English

- English unit plan using school's template
 - Spelling (Spelling Mastery)
 - Writing (Genre)/Handwriting
 - Listening and Speaking
 - Conventions - Grammar and Punctuation
 - Reading and Viewing

☐ Assessment items, including task sheets, criteria sheets and/or observation checklists.

- You may supplement your Unit Plan with Reading Rotations plans, Literacy Block structures etc if they are not already covered.
- In your unit, demonstrate how you are explicitly teaching sight words and reading decoding skills through your class reading experiences (see front of diary for list of decoding strategies). Also, consider the use of dictation within your English program.

2. Mathematics

- ☐ Mathematics Unit Plan (*using school's template*)
 - You may choose to plan in unit blocks. This is often a good way to enable deeper construction of meaning and understanding around a concept.
 - Please ensure that there is an element of number study/mental arithmetic/ times tables each day.
- ☐ Assessment items, including task sheets, criteria sheets, investigations, observation checklists.
 - You may supplement your Unit plan with Mental strategies overview, Rote learning (times tables and basic facts) overview, Number sense overview (e.g. place value and basic processes), Numeracy block structure etc

3. Devotion/Christian Studies

- ☐ Devotion must be included on your weekly timetable/ teacher diary daily notes.
- ☐ Christian Studies Unit Plan (*school's template*).
 - Please refer to the Scope and Sequence document from

4. Science

- ☐ Science Unit Plan, (*school's template*)
 - Science focus – Energy and Change
- ☐ Assessment items, including task sheets, criteria sheets, investigations, observation checklists.

5. Humanities

- ☐ Humanities Unit Plan, (*school's Template*)
- ☐ Assessment items, including task sheets, criteria sheets, investigations, observation checklists.

6. The Arts

- ☐ Arts Unit Plan, (*school's Template*)
 - Years 1-3 Term 3 ()

7. Information Communication Technologies

- ☐ Technology Unit Plan,
 - Connections to other curriculum areas may be identified with this and other KLA's

8. HPE

- ☐ HPE Unit Plan, (*school's Template*)
 -

9. LOTE

- ☐ Languages (German) Unit Plan (*school's Template*)

OTHER:

-
- ☐ Use of teacher diary, including mark book with student assessment results and weekly/daily planning
 - ☐ Evidence of work completed
 - ☐ Relief folder – needs to include weekly timetable, class profile, - including any medical conditions of students, learning styles/needs, classroom behaviour management strategies/ systems
 - ☐ IEP documentation for Students with Additional Needs (confer with Learning Support Teacher)
 - ☐ HRE- Indicate the types of activities completed in tasks, You Can Do It, Social/Emotional, Responsible Internet/ Technology usage)

ASSESSMENT - General

Assessment strategies (formative and summative) that will be applied to determine the level of student understanding should be planned well in advance of the due date. Staff have access to sample assessment tasks, criteria and rubric templates as well as the standard percentage cut-offs used for determining level of achievement. Assessment tasks are to be disseminated to students on the **Common Assessment Task Sheet** and **should be uploaded on the e-learning portal**.

Assessment results outlining records of student progress and achievement should be documented and stored in the your Markbook. The **school's Central Markbook** (will soon be accessible on shared drive - link TBA). Teachers are encouraged to maintain additional anecdotal data and evidence of achievement. Any additional records should be well secured and made available upon request.

HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS

Homework needs to be set each week. Whether you choose to set homework at the beginning of each week or every night is your decision. Homework tasks must be uploaded onto the e-learning portal each week. Please observe the following **minimum inclusions** regarding homework:

- Reading
- Spelling/Vocabulary
- Mathematics (including timetables and number facts)
- Homework should serve the following purposes
 - For students to consolidate understandings/learning
 - To provide students with the opportunity to develop sound work habits
 - For students to engage in rounded and contextual activities with links to learning outcomes.

Should you have any additional queries regarding planning requirements, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely

Ryan

Deputy Head of Junior School

2011 **DRAFT** Time Allocation **QSA/LEQ (Specific)**

Timetabling Guidelines

When teachers are devising their timetable they need to ensure that it reflects the timetabling guidelines as indicated below.

	Year P-2	Years 3-6
English	7 hours	6 hours
Mathematics	5 hours	5 hours
Science	1 hour	2 hours
Humanities (History/Geography)	1 hour	2 hours
Christian Studies	1.5 hours	1.5 hours
German	45 minutes	45 minutes
Music	45 minutes	45 minutes
The Arts	1h 45minutes	1h 45minutes
H.P.E. (including YCDI)	1 hour	45 minutes
ICT	30 minutes	45 minutes
Sub Total	20.25 hours	22 hours
System designated time		
Chapel Assemblies House Meetings SCISSA Junior Primary Sport	5.75 hours	4 hours
TOTAL	26 hours	26 hours

**Identifying names, such as the name of the school or member of staff, have been removed and replaced with generic titles e.g. the school, the research site. The pseudonym Ryan has been included since he was the author of this document.*

Appendix L Teaching & Learning Committee Minutes, February 2012

Minutes

TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Monday, 20 February 2012 K5

ATTENDEES:

[REDACTED]

APOLOGIES:

[REDACTED] (Medical appointment)

Meeting opened with afternoon tea at 3:30pm

Implementation of National Curriculum in Phase 1 Subjects

4. Curriculum development, documentation and implementation (hopefully all done!)

a. English

- a. Junior School - Yr 1-6 complete
- b. Secondary School ([REDACTED]) - Yr 7-10 complete

b. Mathematics

- a. Junior School - Yr 1-6 complete
- b. Secondary School ([REDACTED]) – Yr 7,8 in 2012

c. Science

- a. Junior School - Yr 1-6 complete
- b. Secondary School ([REDACTED]) - Yr 7-10 complete except for 2 term units which are almost complete

5. Implementation of assessment incorporating National Standards –

During 2012, each subject area needs to develop and trial an assessment rubric system incorporating the Australian curriculum A-E standards as outlined by the QSA. The assessment system may use marks (eg 7/10) or grades (eg A+) but the link between the qualities evident in the student's work and the A-E standards must be evident.

In addition, there should be some means of identifying 'easy' or 'hard' questions to ensure an adequate balance within the assessment program. This may take the form of a 'star rating' system as suggested by Mighty Minds or departments may develop their own system to achieve the same end. SS Maths and SS Science have incorporated this feature into their new systems. The assessment program should allow students to demonstrate higher order thinking skills and the teaching program should prepare students adequately for this type of assessment. SS Science has added problem-solving activities explicitly to their workbooks and are using the Mighty Minds generic Problem Solving Triangle to scaffold students'

thinking. SS Mathematics have adopted new textbooks that explicitly emphasise the development of such skills.

SS staff are familiar with assessment and reporting via QSA standards and criteria and so moving to a new system under National Curriculum requirements is not as difficult for them as it is for JS staff who have not assessed in this way before. Hence SS staff agreed to provide exemplars and offer professional advice wherever possible.

a. English
a. Junior School

JS staff have not yet come to terms with assessing via the standards for the Australian Curriculum

b. Secondary School (Ann)

Ann reported that the QSA has advised her that the 'draft standards' published by QSA for Phase 1 subjects will remain as drafts for 2012 and will be refined in 2013 based on feedback received in 2012. She had been holding off for the 'final standards' to be published before working to implement them but will now get on with it and will have a 'system' ready soon.

b. Mathematics
a. Junior School

JS staff have not yet come to terms with assessing via the standards for the Australian Curriculum

b. Secondary School (DE and RE)

Maths HOD brought examples of 2012 assessment items with rubrics/marketing guides etc.for Yr 7 and 8 Term 1. Yr 7 and 8 teachers have already trialled the new assessment rubric system and reported that it more accurately discriminated between A and B level students and is very promising.

c. Science
a. Junior School

JS staff have not yet come to terms with assessing via the standards for the Australian Curriculum

b. Secondary School (WC)

■■■■■ brought examples of 2012 assessment items with rubrics/marketing guides etc.as well as an overview of how the 4 assessable strands would be covered in the assessment program.

Penny has arranged with ■■■ and ■■■ to spend her release time to assist JS staff to plan their science programs. This may have to be reviewed if ■■■ cannot return to school.

ACTION: A series of workshops will be arranged to allow SS HODs (Ann, Penny & Maths HOD) to assist JS staff to develop assessment programs. The first will be in Yr 4-6 Maths. Dean of Teaching & Learning and Ryan will organise a date and investigate the possibility of some release time.

6. Reporting using National Standards

For SS staff, spreadsheets and reports will be modified during Semester 1 to reflect the Australian Curriculum criteria.

For JS, the intention is to begin recording grades electronically in 2012 and this will require the use of criteria and some standardisation of assessment across each year level. Neither is standard practice in the JS and so moving to the new system will involve considerable adjustment.

- a. English**
 - a. Junior School**

Nothing designed yet.

- b. Secondary School (■)**

Nothing designed yet.

- b. Mathematics**
 - a. Junior School**

Nothing designed yet.

- b. Secondary School (■)**

Maths HOD brought examples of student profile sheets for Yr 7 and Yr 8 for 2012.

- c. Science**
 - a. Junior School**

Nothing designed yet.

- b. Secondary School (WC)**

Penny brought examples of student profile sheets from 2011. No new spreadsheets have yet been designed.

ACTION: Dean of Teaching & Learning, and admin staff will continue to work on an electronic mark book for JS within Synergetic. Dean of Teaching and Learning will continue to plan the design of the mark book and the reports with JY administrators.

7. ACARA Phase 2 Subject Planning for 2013

Ann advised that PDs are available in Term 2 to assist with planning for Australian Curriculum History.

ACTION: Ann and TS will attend PDs

Penny advised that on Saturday 17 March there is a Primary Science PD.

ACTION: Penny will attend and invite MJ.

Meeting closed at 4:40pm

Next Meeting: Monday 21 May 2012 3:30-5:00pm

(Pseudonyms have been inserted to identify Ryan, Penny & Ann who were members of the Teaching & Learning Committee)