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Thesis

Contemporary Education Policy

New Professionals in the Classroom?

Higher Level Teaching Assistants in Primary Schools: from Policy to Practice

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Declaration and Word Count

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

I have received permission to submit up to 48,000 words. Word count (exclusive of appendices and references but including footnotes, glossary and tables) is: 47,977.

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This thesis is dedicated to Ann, whose work in school inspired me, and for whom the HLTA role could have been invented.

Abstract

The introduction of Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) in 2005 is arguably one of the most controversial, and significant, changes to school staffing since teaching became an all-graduate profession in the 1970s. This study focuses on the first two years of the HLTA policy in four primary schools which adopted the HLTA role from its outset. Data from semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and a study of documents are used to build case studies which demonstrate how the HLTA role has evolved somewhat differently in the four schools, raising the question of the effects of practitioners upon policy at the local level.

Using the policy cycle (Bowe et al 1992) as a theoretical framework, the study draws upon the literature on professionalism (Whitty 2008) and professional learning communities (Bolam et al 2007), on leadership (Fullan 2001, 2007) and micropolitics (Ball 1987), and on Stephen Ball's (1997, 2008) more recent work on policy analysis, to consider the power of primary practitioners to influence and reinterpret policy, thus adding to our understanding of the policy process.

The study suggests that although there remains considerable ambiguity around perceptions of the HLTA role in schools nationally (Pye Tait 2006), in the case study schools, there has been evidence of strong and committed leadership for the HLTA project from the headteachers, and a well defined and widely accepted professional HLTA role has emerged in each site. It concludes that an understanding of, and commitment to, policy intentions within the 'context of practice' (Bowe et al 1992) can be crucial to the realisation of policy-makers' goals.

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Reflective Statement

1. Introduction - the Starting Point

Since embarking on the EdD in October 2002, I have been challenged both academically and professionally. I have experienced a range of emotions from frustration when the right words would not come, to delight at successfully completed projects. I have established new contacts and made new friends. Whilst the path has not always been smooth, the learning journey as a whole has undoubtedly been enjoyable and affirming.

I trace my development as a 'reflective practitioner' back to 1979, when, after six years of teaching, I studied for an Advanced Diploma in Music Education at the Institute of Education (IoE), thus experiencing the joys and benefits of 'Continuing Professional Development' long before the phrase 'CPD' entered common parlance. The experience of standing back from life in the classroom and reflecting upon my work in the company of colleagues from a range of schools was life-changing; underpinning my professional practice with professional knowledge deepened through research and study, has remained a personal commitment ever since. I completed my Open University MA in Education Management in 1992, and found this invaluable as a preparation for headship.

My decision to undertake a part time professional doctorate alongside a demanding professional role was not taken lightly, but reflected my belief that as a headteacher I should be the 'lead learner' in the school, supporting the learning of adults as well as

children, and leading by example. In this statement I consider my experiences of the past seven years, reflecting on the way in which the elements of the EdD programme have linked together and have contributed to my professional development and knowledge.

2. The Birth of the Enquiry

My intended research focus when I applied for the EdD was the role of teaching assistants (TAs) in primary schools, a topic which was of significance for me professionally, and which I perceived to be of growing importance in terms of national education policy.

I first became interested in the work of TAs in 1992 when, as a primary school deputy headteacher, I had two TAs in my classroom supporting a statemented child. I found their contribution to be invaluable, and I became intrigued by the possibilities of the TA role. My appointment as a headteacher in January 1994 afforded me the opportunity to develop the TA role in my own school. Our TA numbers increased rapidly, and the role progressed from hearing children read in corridors to working alongside teachers in the classrooms, leaving us well placed to implement the broader pedagogical role envisaged for TAs in New Labour's Literacy (DfEE 1998) and Numeracy (DfEE 1999) strategies.

Between 1997 and 2002 TA numbers doubled nationally, although the role continued to provoke debate and its development remained uneven (Lee 2002). Meanwhile my school became recognised as a training centre for TAs, and I found myself

increasingly called upon by colleague headteachers to offer a history of the TA role and an overview of developing practice. I became aware that there was little published research in the area, yet I felt that there was a story to tell. I decided to apply for the EdD because I hoped that as a practitioner researcher I might be able to offer a unique insight (Murray and Lawrence 2000) into the TA role, and its effects on the work of schools.

3. Developing the Learning

I found the EdD taught programme thought-provoking and challenging. It was interesting and stimulating working with a group of professionals from the wider academic world, and the relationships formed during that period were to become an important source of mutual support. I was able to link my four assignments so that each offered a different perspective on the TA role, and I found that the pre-set submission deadlines provided a useful discipline while I became accustomed to integrating study at doctoral level within my busy working life.

My first assignment considered the changing role of the TA and its consequences for primary teachers' conceptions of their own professional identity. Such concepts as managerial professionalism (Sachs 2001) and performativity (Ball 2003a) were new to me, and certainly extended my thinking. It is interesting to me that as my research has progressed, the professionalism both of teachers and TAs has proved to be of central importance, and I have returned to this literature with renewed understanding. Through the Methods of Enquiry (MOE) modules, I gained a much clearer understanding of how and why each of the research methods might be used. For

MOE 1, I planned a small scale research project to compare the national picture of the development and range of the TA role between 1993 and 2003, with the situation in my own school. This brought sharply into focus some of the difficulties associated with practitioner research; not only issues of validity and reliability but also the political and ethical dilemmas presented by researching in my own institution, and in particular the potential tension between my roles as headteacher and practitioner-researcher. A major challenge of MOE 2, undertaking the research project, was to synthesise a large amount of data within 5,000 words; a discipline which subsequently proved useful in both the Institution Focused Study (IFS) and the thesis. I also came to recognise that enquiry cannot be value free; the very act of selecting from the data introduces the researcher's own perspective on the problem. Clearly I would have to address this issue by being more explicit about my own role in future studies.

For my specialist module I chose Contemporary Education Policy. I welcomed the opportunity to study this area in greater depth because making sense of policy had become an increasingly important aspect of my role as a headteacher. I found Ball's (2003b) model of the policy cycle both fascinating and convincing; in an age of 'policy hysteria' (Stronach and Morris 1994) it allowed for the 'messiness' of policy (Ozga 2000), which resonated with my experience in school. For the assignment I used the policy cycle as a tool to analyse the development of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Codes of Practice (DfE 1994, DES 2001), an exercise which confirmed my academic interest in policy making, and particularly in the factors which may influence or alter policy as it is enacted.

4. The IFS

I could not have foreseen when I applied for the EdD how the TA role would develop during the course of my studies, but the announcement in 2003 of proposals for a new 'Higher Level' TA status whereby TAs could become qualified to 'advance the learning' (TTA 2003 3.3.1) of whole classes without gaining Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) suddenly raised the profile of TAs, and provoked national controversy. It also took my research in a fresh direction.

The HLTA policy interested me both professionally, since my school was one of the first to appoint an HLTA, and academically, because of the radical nature of the policy. The first HLTAs took up post in April 2005 as I was preparing my IFS research proposal; thus I found myself uniquely placed to observe the HLTA policy at the very point of its implementation. I decided to analyse its early trajectory using documents to track the policy from its inception, and a case study of a local town to demonstrate the reality of the policy being enacted at the local level. Catching such a potentially controversial policy at its introductory stage afforded a unique view of the opportunities for practitioners to utilise the 'spaces' (Ozga 2000) within policy, and adapt it to local circumstances.

Through the IFS, I gained valuable insights into the Workforce Remodelling agenda (DfES 2002a) which was clearly shaping the future for schools. The contribution of the IFS was made more potent by the fortunate timing of the research, and I was intrigued to continue researching the HLTA story.

5. The Thesis

My thesis thus arose directly out of my IFS. As a professional doctorate the EdD must contribute to both academic and professional knowledge, and I realised that issues emerging from the IFS findings such as headteacher influence within the policy cycle, TA/teacher role boundaries, and the nature of professionalism, were bringing these two strands together naturally. I was interested in how policy works, and the HLTA policy offered a remarkable example of policy making as a dynamic process. The policy had been expected to meet with significant resistance from practitioners, yet HLTAs had, within a very short timescale, become a reality in schools.

The taught courses and IFS had alerted me to the dilemmas presented by my position as a practitioner researching a policy which I myself had chosen to adopt. I did not wish to stand accused of undertaking a piece of research for the thesis to justify my own position on HLTAs, yet I felt that the insights offered by my experiences as an 'early adopter' of the policy, might enable me to design a study which could make a unique contribution to the academy whilst also benefiting fellow practitioners.

I considered my research focus carefully before deciding to examine how the HLTA policy had developed in its first two years in four schools which had, like mine, adopted the policy from the outset. Throughout the thesis stage, I have found myself increasingly examining my own professional practice, and particularly reflecting upon my role as a deliverer, and thereby potentially an influencer, of policy. For example, I decided from the outset to appoint my HLTAs on full time rather than 'split' contracts and I have subsequently championed this approach across my LA.

6. A Learning Journey

My learning has progressed in many ways over the past seven years. I have become more analytical in my academic writing, which has also influenced my writing style at work, and my SEN reports are now used as examples of good practice on courses run by my LA. The EdD has undoubtedly improved my knowledge of ICT, greatly enhancing both my Internet research skills and my knowledge of 'Word'. Through EdD contacts, I have also been a member of the steering group for the 'Deployment and Impact of Support Staff' (DISS) project (Blatchford et al 2009), giving me valuable insights into the way in which a national research project is structured and undertaken. Participating in the presentation of the findings at the BERA conference in September 2009 was a new, if somewhat daunting, experience.

The EdD has impacted positively on my whole school community in ways which I had not expected. Participating in my research, and piloting research instruments in school for professional researchers from the IoE and NFER, has inspired TAs as well as teachers to develop their own learning through both internal research projects and externally validated courses. This culture of commitment to research and evaluation has led in turn to a significant amount of curriculum development, particularly in visual literacy. A number of staff (not only teachers, but also our leading HLTA and our site manager) have found the confidence to act as consultants to peers across our LA, whilst I have become a consultant headteacher for the National College of School Leadership (NCSL) and Chair of my LA's Local Social Partnership. I also undertake work on support staff development for the consortium of LAs to which we belong.

7. Conclusions – Looking to the Future

As a headteacher, I live the reality of the well-publicised way in which the work of schools has changed. My job can be all consuming, juggling a plethora of apparently contradictory policies on a daily basis, but the EdD has given me the tools to look for patterns and trends in policy and to make coherent connections, however tentative, between them.

Thus at a late stage in my career, the opportunity of standing back and considering my role within the supportive and guiding discipline of an academic environment has re-energised me. I feel privileged to have been part of the EdD, and encouraged to carry on and to share my learning with others.

Glossary

ATL	Association of Teachers and Lecturers
BERA	British Educational Research Association
BESD	Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CWDC	Children's Workforce Development Council
DCSF	Department for Children Schools and Families (replaced DfES June 2007)
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment (created July 1995)
DfES	Department for Education and Skills (replaced DfEE June 2001)
DISS	Deployment and Impact of Support Staff
ECM	Every Child Matters
EYPS	Early Years Professional Status
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GTC	General Teaching Council
GTP	Graduate Teacher Programme
HLTA	Higher Level Teaching Assistant
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFS	Institution Focused Study
LA	Local Authority
NA	National Agreement on Raising Standards and Tackling Workload
NAHT	National Association of Headteachers
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
NRT	National Remodelling Team
NUT	National Union of Teachers
PAT	Professional Association of Teachers (renamed 'VOICE' 28/02/08)
PBE	Practitioner Based Enquiry
PLC	Professional Learning Community
PMSU	Prime Minister's Strategy Unit
PPA	Planning, Preparation and Assessment time
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status

RTP	Registered Teacher Programme
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator
SSSNB	School Support Staff Negotiating Body
STAC	Specialist Teacher Assistant Certificate
TA	Teaching Assistant
TDA	Training and Development Agency for Schools (replaced TTA 17/10/05)
TTA	Teacher Training Agency (established 1994)
WAMG	Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group

Chapter 1 HLTAs – New Professionals?

'HLTAs free up teachers so they can focus on teaching and learning. Teachers' roles will be enhanced – leading a team of staff. '

HLTA tools for Local Authority Press Officers (TDA 2006a)

'I think part of the problem is that no one really knows what an HLTA is'

Claire – HLTA – posted on HLTA messageboard (Claire 2006)

1.1 Introduction

Arising directly from my Institution Focused Study (IFS) (Sendorek 2006), which considered the genesis and early development of the HLTA policy in primary schools in terms of the 'policy cycle' (Bowe et al 1992, Ball 1994), this thesis explores the evolution of the HLTA role, and the effect of practitioners' 'power' to influence and reinterpret policy. The IFS concluded that individual headteachers appeared to have exerted a strong influence over the early development of the policy within schools, but that a lack of clarity about the HLTA role, and about its possible future development and its long term consequences for the professionalism of both teachers and teaching assistants (TAs) remained. These conclusions formed the starting point for the present study, which focuses on the first two years of the HLTA policy in four primary schools where the HLTA policy was adopted from the outset.

The thesis has three sections. Chapters 1 to 3 introduce the concepts of policy, power, professionalism and gender, and explain the methodology. The findings are analysed in Chapters 4 to 6, and the broader implications discussed in Chapters 7 and 8.

This chapter introduces the HLTA policy, a central plank of the government's 'Workforce Remodelling' agenda (DfES 2002a, 2002b), as an important professional issue. It explains my interest in the policy as a practitioner researcher, not only because of the emerging possibilities and implications for schools of the rapidly developing HLTA role, but also as an example of policy from which conclusions might be drawn about policy development in general.

Having introduced the Policy Cycle (Bowe et al 1992), the chapter considers the 'context of influence' around the HLTA policy including the discourse of remodelling, the 'social partnership' and the wider policy agenda. It tracks the HLTA through the 'context of policy text production', and then explains my own professional context. Lastly, it sets out the research questions central to this thesis and offers the rationale for focusing upon four major issues: the HLTA as a developing role, the question of professionalism, the influence of headteachers in the policy process, and the link between policy and practice.

1.2 The Context – Starting Point

The IFS research (Sendorek 2006) was conducted between January and October 2005 when the HLTA role was very new, with the first HLTAs formally taking up post in April 2005. In analysing the data, it became clear to me as a practitioner that the government was firmly committed to the establishment of the HLTA role despite ministers' resolute refusal to offer schools additional money to fund or part-fund HLTA posts.

A government-funded evaluation of HLTA training and assessment (Pye Tait 2006) demonstrated that headteachers were highly influential in promoting the programme, but that considerable ambiguity remained around perceptions of the HLTA role in schools. Further government-funded research (Wilson et al 2007) revealed significant inconsistencies in the deployment and impact of HLTAs. Whilst 74% of the HLTAs surveyed believed that achieving the status had led to increased confidence and self esteem, and 'both HLTAs and senior leaders felt that the role was having a positive impact' (ibid p iii), many HLTAs felt that their roles had remained unchanged since achieving the status. Only 36% were working exclusively as HLTAs (the rest being employed at other lower levels in their schools in addition to their HLTA hours), and fewer than 20% were being paid for a full working year (the rest being paid term-time only, spread across the year in equal payments). Increased workload and stress due to lack of time for planning and preparation were reported, and not all HLTAs who had achieved the status had been able to find employment in the role.

Having tracked the HLTA policy from its outset, I had already become intrigued both by the possibilities of the role, and by the fact that such a major policy development appeared to have been launched nationally with so little guidance as to its future shape, and received and acted upon in schools with so little recognition of its potential long-term consequences for teaching as a profession (Sendorek 2006). The mixed picture emerging from the government's own funded research, and the fact that few studies had yet attempted to theorise the HLTA policy, further encouraged me to continue the HLTA story for my thesis, taking up at the point where HLTAs had newly entered into school staffing structures.

Murray and Lawrence (2000) remind us that in practitioner based enquiry (PBE) 'teachers and practitioners are asked to recurrently hold as problematic the routine conditions of their occupational lives'. They suggest that:

> ' ... PBE should offer the opportunity for teachers and practitioners to gain coherent understanding of their own professional practices. Similarly, it should offer a means by which practitioners may aspire to transform, remodel and recast such practices.....'
>
> (Murray and Lawrence 2000 p11)

As a practitioner researcher, I am naturally interested to know how other schools have developed their HLTA roles and what may be learned from that for future practice. However, it is the 'policy cycle' (Bowe et al 1992) which has most come to fascinate me because it views policymaking not as a linear process but as an arena in which many competing intentions 'struggle for influence' (ibid p19), and suggests that practitioners may play an active role in policymaking through 'the work of policy recontextualisation that goes on in schools' (ibid).

My study therefore considers interactions within the 'context of practice' (the lives and histories of the actors from TAs to headteachers, their relative power bases and micro-political manoeuvrings, and their views on professionalism in the context of the new wider workforce in schools), and how these appear to have played out in the four research schools as the HLTA role has developed in its first two years. However, the principal purpose of this thesis is not research '*for*' policy but '*of*' policy (Ball 1997 p269) in that it questions what these variations might tell us about policy development in general, and specifically about the power of practitioners to influence and reinterpret policy.

1.3 The Policy Cycle

Ball argues, after Alford and Friedland (1988), that by studying the generation and implementation of policy as separate events, an artificial separation is generated which tends to reinforce the 'managerial' top-down view of policy-making. Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992 p7) critique the notion that:

> 'Policy then 'gets done' to people by a chain of implementers whose roles are clearly defined in legislation.'

For example Elmore (1989), in his discussion of research into policy implementation, contrasted 'forward mapping', which tracked policy from the policymaker's intent through to measurable outcomes in school, with 'backward mapping', which described the behaviours required in school in order to implement the policy and tracked backwards to identify points at which the policy might be derailed by the failure of practitioners to demonstrate the desired behaviours. Although 'backward mapping' recognised the success of a policy as being dependent upon practitioners at the point of delivery, this framework presented policy as remaining 'owned' by the policy maker, with the contribution of the practitioner being valued largely as a mechanism of delivery.

By characterising the policy process as a cycle, Ball and colleagues have instead provided a conceptual framework which recognises the power of different actors including the state within the policy process, yet accepts that these players may be differentially empowered at different points in the cycle, and offers the opportunity to explore these differences and their implications as any policy moves through time. Such theorising of policy is not grounded in the 'policy science' approach of the

1960s which was designed to assist governments in the task of policy development and espoused a positivist view of knowledge (Taylor et al 1997). Rather, it owes its genesis to 'policy scholarship' (Fay 1975), which takes account of such issues as the power of the state and 'the cultural and ideological struggles in which schooling is located' (Grace 1995 p3), by allowing for the examination of policy issues within their social setting. The 'policy cycle' has now been used as a framework in several published studies (Ball 2003b), and is central to this thesis.

Three main contexts are described in the 'policy cycle' (Bowe et al 1992 p20). Policy is initiated in the 'context of influence', where competing groups, political and social, struggle to influence the dominant discourse. In due course a policy text emerges, but Ball's 'context of policy text production' includes not only the official text and guidance materials, but also other writings concerning the policy, since through these the policy is already being mediated. Within the 'context of practice', practitioners further interpret these texts as they make them their own to varying degrees (see Chapter 2). In developing the 'policy cycle' model, Ball (1994) later incorporated two further contexts. The 'context of outcomes' explores the relationship between first and second order effects of policy, with analysis centring on the implication of the policy for issues of equity within society, while the political and social activities through which inequality might be tackled are identified in the 'context of political strategy' (see Chapter 8).

Thus the 'policy cycle' model is not predictive; it is not designed to tell us exactly what will happen in a specific case, because it operates at a level of generality. However, it can productively be used as a tool with which to analyse policy and

explore the complex interrelationships of the players within it, since an understanding of the policy context enables practitioners to strategise a response more effectively (Taylor et al 1997). Furthermore, by viewing the policy process as a cycle, the model also recognises the possibility of developments within the 'context of practice' influencing developments within the 'context of influence'.

Ball describes each context as involving 'struggle and compromise and ad hocery' (ibid p26), a notion reflected in Ozga's (2000 p2) description of policy as 'a process rather than a product'. Practitioners, she suggests, can

> '...modify policy intentions, taking advantage of the spaces between planning and outcomes, as well as the contradictions or competition between purposes.'
> (Ozga 2000 p10)

A principal arena in which these struggles play out is the 'context of practice' where much of my research into HLTAs lies. But first, an examination of the HLTA role and consideration of the contexts of 'influence' and 'policy text production' will set the scene.

1.4 HLTA Status and the Discourse of Workforce Remodelling

HLTA is not a 'qualification' but a 'status', a difference which initially caused some confusion (Sharpe 2005), but aligns HLTA status linguistically with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). There is no set course of study for HLTA status; instead, candidates must successfully undertake a nationally moderated assessment process against thirty three 'professional standards' (see Appendix 1). TAs who are put forward by their schools, and accepted as ready by their Local Authorities (LAs), undertake three days of 'Preparation for Assessment' with a nationally approved

provider. Here, they learn to present their evidence of competence in the set format: three long and five short written tasks cross-referenced to the standards, supported by a short portfolio (TDA 2007a).

HLTAs are formally qualified to 'advance the learning' of whole classes 'under the direction and supervision of an assigned teacher' but without the teacher present (TDA 2007b). Since TAs must be able to demonstrate this competence before they can apply for HLTA assessment, this has effectively opened the way for any TA to take whole classes, and has been the basis of opposition to HLTAs from the National Union of Teachers (NUT 2002, 2003b).

The term 'high [sic] level teaching assistant' first appeared in a consultation paper (DfES 2002b) on reducing teacher workload by developing the role of support staff. Set at the heart of 'Workforce Remodelling' (DfES 2003b), the proposed new role would 'push back the boundaries' (ibid p3) of what could be done in classrooms, but the success of the vision would depend on teachers being prepared to 'drive forward new, more flexible models of teaching and learning' (ibid p11) within 'a system confident enough to sweep away old demarcations and assumptions' (ibid p12). The rhetoric of the 'New Public Management' (Newman 2000) can be clearly seen here, with its emphasis on stakeholding, trust, risk sharing and collaborative advantage between government and professionals.

Ball (1993) draws a distinction between policy as 'text' and as 'discourse'. 'Policy as text' incorporates 'the documents and speeches that 'articulate' policies and policy ideas' (Ball 2008 p6) and the practitioners who enact them (ie addressing 'agency'),

whereas 'policy as discourse' represents 'policy as part of the dominant system of social relations' (Ozga 2000 p94) (ie addressing 'structure'). Drawing on the work of Foucault, 'discourse' refers to the way in which language, images and other forms of communication can be carefully constructed by policy-makers to 'create' a context for a policy (Trowler 1998), limiting and shaping people's response towards it through, for example, presentation of ideas in a favourable light via the media (Gewirtz et al 2004). In Ball's words, policy discourses:

> ' .... organise their own specific rationalities, making particular sets of ideas obvious, common sense and 'true'. Discourses mobilise truth claims and *constitute rather than simply reflect social reality.*'
>
> (Ball 2008 p5 my italics)

This is interesting in terms of the HLTA policy, because, as Bedford and colleagues comment (2006 p9), the changes proposed under workforce remodelling, particularly the HLTA role, were 'revolutionary when viewed against the last hundred years of compulsory education delivery through the sole agency of the professional teacher'. In tracking the rapid development of the role using the 'policy cycle' model, its successful establishment (Wilson et al 2007) can arguably be viewed as a logical development in the context of New Labour's discourse of public service modernisation (Blair 1998). This was a 'fundamentally political project' which called for innovative organisations prepared to 'challenge old and 'outdated' assumptions .... breaking the traditional pattern of who should deliver services' (Newman 2000 p49).

1.5 The 'Context of Influence'

1.5.1 The 'Social Partnership'

The HLTA role arises directly out of the 'National Agreement on Raising Standards and Tackling Workload' (NA) (DfES 2003a) which was signed on 15th January 2003 by a 'social partnership' of government, employers and all but one of the school workforce unions (see Appendix 2). The NUT refused to sign in protest at the perceived threat to teachers posed by the enhanced role envisaged for TAs (McAvoy 2003), describing the NA as 'the most hostile attack ever on the professional status of teaching' (NUT 2003a). However, its opposition was largely overcome by the government taking the stance that in choosing to exclude itself from the 'social partnership', the NUT had voluntarily silenced its own legitimate voice within the 'context of influence' (Sendorek 2006).

Thus, despite pursuing an active campaign against HLTAs in the press (NUT 2002) and on staffroom notice-boards (NUT 2003b, 2004), the most radical of the teaching unions was effectively disempowered by being excluded from all further national negotiations, and the 'Professional Standards for Higher Level Teaching Assistants' were launched as planned in September 2003 (TTA 2003). 'The Education (Specified Work and Registration) Regulations' (DfES 2003d) provide the legislative basis for the NA, detailing 'specified work' that can be undertaken in schools by people without QTS provided that the headteacher is 'satisfied' that they have 'the skills, expertise and experience to carry out work specified in Regulation 6' (ibid p7).

The breadth of the work covered in 'Regulation 6' initially shocked many in the profession, since it included activities such as planning, preparing and delivering lessons, and pupil assessment, which had hitherto been considered the sole preserve of qualified teachers. The Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) warned of the 'potential de-professionalisation' (ATL 2003 p3) of primary school teachers, but the government had already secured ATL support for the remodelling agenda through the 'social partnership', so again, this resistance was quickly overcome.

The contractual changes associated with workforce remodelling (NRT 2004) were introduced under the twin auspices of the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG) formed of signatories to the agreement, and the National Remodelling Team (NRT). Phase One, in September 2003, removed twenty five clerical and administrative tasks from teachers. Phase Two, in September 2004, imposed limits on covering for absent colleagues. However, it was Phase Three in September 2005 which caused most anxiety for primary schools in introducing 'a contractual entitlement to guaranteed planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time within the timetabled teaching day' (DfES 2004f para 85) for all teachers, equal to a minimum of 10% of their timetabled teaching time (see Chapter 6), with the costs to be found from within a small budgetary increase, the 'minimum funding guarantee' (Phipson 2007).

Interestingly, although the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) withdrew from WAMG in 2005 in protest at the inadequacy of the funding package (Stewart 2005), they voted to return in February 2008 to ensure that 'our voices are heard on the current and emerging agendas' (NAHT 2008). This indicates a growing

recognition of the importance of WAMG within the 'context of influence' as a mechanism by which the government was determinedly pushing forward its reforms.

1.5.2 The Wider Policy Agenda

Ball (2008 p3) comments that increasingly in policy analysis 'we have to attend to the 'joining up' of education policy within a broader framework of social care initiatives'. The 'Every Child Matters' (ECM) agenda, whilst not mentioning HLTAs directly, has significantly impacted on the children's workforce in that it 'requires new ways of working and significant culture change for staff' (DfES 2004b p17), breaking down the divide between education, health and social services professionals, and encouraging them to embrace a new era of mutual trust and joint activity.

Arising from Lord Laming's report (HMG 2003) into the death of Victoria Climbié[1], the legislative framework for ECM is provided by the Children Act (HMG 2004), a suite of policies designed to secure five positive outcomes for children and young people: 'be healthy', 'stay safe', 'enjoy and achieve', 'make a positive contribution', and 'achieve economic wellbeing' (DfES 2004b). The government approached this structurally through the creation in June 2007 of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), bringing together all children's services (education, health, social care and youth justice) as a coherent whole within one department (see Appendix 3). The ECM agenda implies the blurring of boundaries between roles in order to achieve the best outcomes for children. Arguably, this was a logical extension

[1] Victoria died on 25/02/00 aged 8, murdered by her great aunt and her boyfriend, having suffered 10 months of abuse and neglect. Although well known to social services and to local hospitals, she had never been enrolled for school. Lord Laming concluded that had professionals shared information about her case, her death would have been prevented. He recommended close multi-agency working for the future, with integrated services supporting children and their families, and outcomes based upon the needs of children rather than on 'bureaucratic activity'.

of developments already underway in the public services, for example Assistant Social Workers (Down and Smith 2008) and Nurse Practitioners[2] (Bandolier 1999).

In 2005 the government consulted on the Children's Workforce Strategy (DfES 2005c p1) setting out its vision for a 'world class workforce for children and young people' to carry through the ECM agenda. A common qualifications structure from Entry Level (recognising basic skills) through to Level 8 (leading experts/PhD level study) would apply to every member of the children's workforce (see Appendix 4), with teaching qualifications (Honours Degree) placed at Level 6 and HLTA ('working in a para-professional capacity supporting more senior professionals and managing support staff') (ibid p90) at Level 4. The newly created 'Children's Workforce Development Council' (CWDC) would oversee these developments, particularly concentrating upon the early years.

There are marked similarities between the training and assessment for HLTA status, and for the recently created 'Early Years Professional Status' (EYPS), introduced in 2007 to 'raise the quality of early years provision' (CWDC 2007 p4), and designed to 'improve practice' by 'improving workforce skills, knowledge and competencies' (ibid p5) for those working with children aged 0-5. Although EYPS is designed to have parity with teachers and is thus a Level 6 qualification, compared with a Level 4, both require English and Maths GCSE at Grade C or above, a good command of English and sufficient 'recent and relevant experience to match a range of standards' (CWDC 2007 p18). Potential Early Years Professionals can take a one year course, but those with degrees can follow a shortened validation pathway, training whilst

[2] The development of the Nurse Practitioner (NP) role, designed to relieve doctors of routine areas of their work, preceded that of HLTAs. Research (Tye 2000, Horrocks et al 2002) indicates that NPs may have improved patient services, but issues around role boundaries and professional identity remain.

working, like HLTAs, with assessment being based upon demonstrating competency against the given standards. Whilst the Children's Workforce Strategy espouses the rhetoric of mutual trust and respect between government and professionals, it is the government which issues the standards, thereby exercising control over what 'professional' behaviour might be. The issue of 'governmental professionalism' (Beck 2008) is returned to in Chapter 5.

1.6 The 'Context of Policy Text Production'

Ball (2008 p101) comments that due to the

> '...additive nature of the reform process, ideas and tactics that once seemed radical or even unthinkable as policies have become established as possibilities or have even been made to appear obvious or necessary over time.'

As a practitioner, this appears to me to epitomise the trajectory of the HLTA policy. Despite persistent tensions around the developing TA role (Butt and Gunter 2005), and particularly the continuing 'controversy and debate' (Burgess 2008 p6) concerning 'untrained staff' teaching whole classes, the agenda has moved incrementally forward. By March 2007, 15,000 HLTAs had been accredited (TDA 2007a), and Blatchford and colleagues (2009) reported a 446% increase in the number of HLTA posts in schools between 2004 and 2008.

The emerging HLTA agenda has been presented to schools through a series of 'writerly' texts (Bowe et al 1992 p11), which invite the reader to engage with and co-author the project, punctuated by periodic 'readerly' (instructive) texts, mainly in the form of WAMG 'joint guidance notes' (WAMG 2003 p1) reminding schools of their statutory obligations. For example whilst the NRT exhorted schools to work

imaginatively to implement the new contractual changes on cover by 'involving the whole workforce and the wider community to bring together a shared, clear vision and an agreed way forward' (NRT 2004 p3), WAMG Note 10 (2004b p1) said simply: 'The change is statutory so it is neither optional nor voluntary'. Likewise, the problem of funding the impending introduction of PPA was presented as one which schools could solve with simple forethought:

> 'Early planning is essential [.....]. WAMG has produced a Resource Pack containing advice and a toolkit to support schools in selecting effective and sustainable strategies to implement this change'
>
> (ibid)

WAMG Notes (2005a,b, 2006b,c) have continually reiterated the advantages of using HLTAs, whilst simultaneously warning both of legal consequences for non-compliance with PPA (WAMG 2005c), and of the dangers of adopting 'expensive sticking plaster approaches' (ie using qualified teachers) for PPA cover, which will be financially unsustainable in the long term (WAMG 2006a p2). WAMG (2008b) has also regularly voiced concerns about the appropriate deployment of TAs, for example schools employing qualified HLTAs on split HLTA/TA contracts (see Chapter 4).

Meanwhile other policy actors have adopted a positive stance. The reforms, according to Ofsted (2007 p5), had resulted in 'a revolutionary shift in workforce culture, with clear benefits for many schools', and WAMG (2008a p1), marking the fifth anniversary of the National Agreement in January 2008, declared that 'the deployment of support staff in new and enhanced roles has brought about positive changes and fresh perspectives for schools and their pupils.' Throughout, WAMG's underlying message has been that if professionals choose to co-operate, remodelling will work. For example its guidance to headteachers states that 'there is clearly a

distinct difference between compliance with contractual change, and enthusiasm for the remodelling agenda' (NRT 2005a p10). Praising the outcomes in schools which have 'desired, organised and planned for' (ibid) change, it makes clear that compliance is insufficient; only enthusiastic participation will ensure success. By implication, this places the responsibility on schools, and by WAMG's own admission (2003 p1) 'schools start from very different starting points on this agenda and will progress at different rates'. This may account for the concerns expressed by one HLTA on the TDA messageboard that '....the way one HLTA is used in one school can differ from the next' (Claire 2006). Likewise, as late as September 2007, a teacher was still asking on the TES messageboard, 'What exactly *is* an HLTA allowed to do?'(Daisy Daisy 2007).

Bedford and colleagues (2006 p10) observed a 'climate of resistance' to the HLTA in some schools due predominantly to 'rapid and continuous change imposed by Government', while in others they found a 'genuine enthusiasm' for HLTA, particularly as a staff development tool. This mixed picture forms the backdrop to my research, although my own experience of the HLTA policy has been positive.

1.7 Professional Context

As a headteacher, I have been personally involved in expanding and developing the TA/HLTA roles within my own primary school of seven classes. Since my appointment in January 1994, the school has moved incrementally from the position of having two 'welfare assistants' working individually with two statemented children, to the current situation in which a highly trained team of two HLTAs,

fourteen TAs and four administrative assistants uses a mix of skills and specialisms to support both teachers and children in a wide variety of ways, including leading the learning of classes.

In my wider role within my LA, I chair our 'Local Social Partnership' (local WAMG). I was involved with the development of local HLTA policy from the outset, including the process of setting up selection criteria and selecting HLTA candidates. I have also represented my LA at several government conferences on the developing role of school support staff, and I sit as headteacher representative on the national steering group of the Deployment and Impact of Support Staff ('DISS') project (Blatchford et al 2006, 2008, 2009), a longitudinal study designed to assess the longer term impact of Workforce Remodelling on teacher workload and educational standards.

Meanwhile, at school level, I have personal experience of the dilemma of balancing budgets whilst embedding the ECM agenda, delivering PPA for teachers, and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as well as 'a reasonable work/life balance' (DfES 2003a) for all staff. Robson remarks that a practitioner's insight into a problem offers a unique view which can help in the design of 'useful and appropriate studies' (2002 p535). My professional context has given me a unique breadth of experience of the HLTA policy, and the issues surrounding it, which have framed the terms of this thesis.

1.8 Research Questions

My research addresses five principal questions which cover a number of issues of professional and academic concern. Although this may appear to be a relatively large number of questions for a thesis of this size, the first two contain an element of description and set the scene for the main body of the work, which is to respond analytically to Questions 3, 4 and 5.

Q1. What was the rationale in each of the case study schools for adopting the HLTA role at the outset?

Q2. What are the similarities and differences between the ways in which the role has developed in each school since its introduction in April 2005?

Q3. What are the HLTAs' perceptions of their role? How do these compare with the views of the teachers in their schools, and to what extent do teachers regard HLTAs as fellow professionals?

Q4. How have the attitudes of individual headteachers towards the HLTA policy impacted upon its development in their schools, and what can be deduced concerning the role of headteachers in the policy process?

Q5. What does this case study demonstrate with regard to how developments in the 'context of practice' (Bowe et al 1992) can affect the realisation of policy makers' goals?

1.9 Key Themes

1.9.1 HLTA – a developing role

In exploring and comparing the processes by which the four case study schools took the decision to appoint HLTAs, my response to Question 1 introduces the principal players within the 'context of practice' (Bowe et al 1992) and sets the scene for later consideration of the power relationships between them (Lowe and Pugh 2007), and the micro-political struggles which may surround the working out of policy in individual sites (Ball 1987).

Schools were not compelled to adopt the HLTA role. However, it was presented to primary schools by the government as a viable mechanism for funding PPA time (WAMG 2004a, 2005a), with limited alternatives available. The creation of HLTA posts within their staffing structures might thus have been viewed by schools as part of the wider and more fundamental long-term structural changes associated with the Workforce Remodelling agenda (DfES 2002a, WAMG 2003), or simply as a new CPD opportunity for specific individual TAs.

Although scant as yet, research suggests that HLTAs are currently being used differently in different schools (Pye Tait 2006). My response to Question 2 is found in Chapter 4, which offers an insight into the development of the HLTA role by considering how the four case study schools have adapted it to suit their situations, and the extent to which a commonality of approach is evident between them. In the light of the IFS findings (Sendorek 2006) which indicated that in schools which had chosen to appoint HLTAs, the role had developed around the personal strengths of the

individuals concerned, rather than starting from the needs of the schools and designing an HLTA role to fit these requirements, the initial rationale for adopting the HLTA in the present research schools is also debated.

1.9.2. Professionalism

The changing discourse of teacher professionalism and the search for a 'post professional identity' (Breslin 2002 p195) in this post modern world is another major issue currently occupying both the academic and the professional communities. Using recently published work on professional learning communities (PLCs), which are described as being 'characterized by the commitment and involvement of *all* staff in the community, not just the teachers' (Bolam et al 2007 p17), Question 3 (see Chapter 5) explores the changing nature of teacher professionalism in the wake of the NA (WAMG 2003). The TA role is one which is traditionally associated with mothering and caring, and therefore undervalued in terms of pay and professional recognition (Barkham 2008). Question 3 considers the issue of gendered inequality embedded in the TA workforce, and questions the extent to which the participants in the case study recognise this issue as relevant.

Wilson's research (2007) confirms the message from postings on the HLTA message-board (Claire 2006) that clarity of role, and role boundaries, remain live issues. Responses to Question 3 therefore also consider the exact work which HLTAs are undertaking, and how that differs from the work of other TAs in their schools, and compares this with the teachers' views of the TA and HLTA roles. I conclude that the majority of teachers in the study, rather than regarding HLTAs as a threat to their own professionalism, are accepting them as fellow professionals, albeit not always

enthusiastically. This may directly impact upon the long-term success of the HLTA project; the teacher/HLTA relationship is therefore of particular interest to policy makers.

1.9.3. Headteachers' Influence in the Policy Process

Chapter 6 considers the role of headteachers in the policy process. The school leadership study (PwC 2007) shows that, while 71% of school leaders cited developing staff as an aspect of their role which gave them most satisfaction, only 29% enjoyed introducing new ideas into their schools. My study seeks to clarify how headteachers' viewpoints on change impacted upon the way in which they planned for the introduction of HLTAs within their schools, and the impact of their support (or lack of) on the development of the role. It explores the power of headteachers as both gatekeepers and interpreters of policy within their schools, and the resultant micro-political tensions.

Evidence to date (Pye Tait 2006, Sendorek 2006) suggests that in schools which successfully adopted the HLTA policy, the support of the headteacher was a crucial factor, and the question of headteacher power and influence within the policy process is therefore considered in some detail. The extent to which headteachers are empowered as professional leaders, or constrained by the context of markets and managerialism in which they must operate, is an issue of current debate in both academic and professional circles (Gibton 2004). Whilst recognising the power of headteachers to champion the HLTA policy within their schools, the IFS findings raised questions about the constraints placed on headteachers by budgets and by the power of parents as consumers in a market-driven economy (Ozga 2000 p60). This

present study also considers the mechanisms by which the government has exerted pressure upon headteachers to include HLTAs in their staffing structures.

Gibton (2004 p60) suggests that in 'strong' schools, entrepreneur headteachers will 'seize the day' and take advantage of opportunities offered to them by the 'quasi-market situation that characterises law-based reform under the Labour government'. The study also considers the headteachers in relation to the entrepreneurial characteristics of 'good' headteachers as defined in the New Labour era and concludes that within the 'context of practice' headteachers are key to the process of implementing policy.

1.9.4. Linking Policy and Practice

Through allowing the learning of whole classes to be led by staff without QTS, the HLTA policy has offered new opportunities for schools, but grasping them implies a radical new approach to school structures; a culture shift which many schools initially appeared unable or unwilling to embrace (Sendorek 2006). Research indicates that while the practitioner community is still largely preoccupied with operational questions of HLTA deployment (Bedford et al 2006), the academic community is beginning to consider the long-term implications of the status for the future operation of schools:

> 'It is clear that the HLTA role *has the potential to change the way in which education is delivered* and to make a positive difference to school life.'
> (Wilson et al 2007 p92 my italics)

In addressing Question 5, Chapter 7 brings together these two strands (practitioner experience and policy theory), suggesting six factors which appear to have contributed to the success of the HLTA policy across the four schools. It raises

questions about the extent to which practitioners can, in reality, interpret and reinterpret policy on the ground, but suggests that policy makers' goals are more easily realised when practitioners view their policies as meaningful and relevant to their particular situations. Finally, Chapter 8 relates the findings to the structure/agency debate (Whitty 2008) and considers the implications of the study for practitioners and policy makers.

1.10 Summary

This chapter explains the background to the study and introduces the structure of the thesis: Chapters 1 to 3 concern literature and methodology, Chapters 4 to 6 analyse the findings, and the broader implications of these are discussed in Chapters 7 and 8. The chapter then introduces the HLTA policy, placing it firmly within the 'Workforce Remodelling' (DfES 2002a) and 'ECM' (DfES 2004b) agendas, and demonstrating its importance as a current educational issue. Linking the current thesis to recent research, it explains that the principal purpose of the thesis is research not *for* but *of* policy (Ball 1997).

The chapter demonstrates how the government overcame concerns from within the 'context of practice,' pressing ahead with the HLTA agenda despite opposition from the NUT from the outset, and subsequently also the NAHT, and consistently offering the role, via the mechanism of WAMG, as a solution to the problem of funding workforce reform. It suggests that the new culture of flexibility in staffing demanded by the ECM agenda may provide a suitable environment for the HLTA role to flourish. In tracking the policy through the 'context of policy text production', the

point is made that seemingly 'writerly' materials encouraging practitioner participation in the HLTA project have been interspersed with 'readerly' texts. These exhort practitioners to adopt the spirit, not just the letter, of the NA, while reminding them that compliance with workforce reform is statutory. Thus the HLTA role has developed incrementally and in a variety of forms across the country's primary schools.

The chapter then introduces my own professional context and sets out the research questions. It concludes by detailing the key themes of the study, and linking each question with the relevant findings or analysis chapter.

Chapter 2 Policy, Power, Professionalism and Women

'.....drawing attention to the how of policy production challenges not just the premise of rationality in policy making but also how particular individuals and groups are involved in various contexts as policy makers.'

(Gale 2003 p52)

2.1 Introduction

Since I have chosen a narrative structure for my thesis, enabling me to consider issues as they have emerged from the data, I have threaded literature related to participants' concerns throughout the analysis and discussion sections. However, this chapter contains a brief discussion of the theoretical frameworks which underpin the thesis.

Firstly it returns to the Policy Cycle (Bowe et al 1992) and briefly defines the 'context of practice' where the research is firmly located. The thesis contends that headteachers have played an important role in the development of the HLTA policy within their schools. This is theorised through a discussion of micropolitics and the nature of power, exploring the differences between relationships of 'power' and 'influence' (Lowe and Pugh 2007) within the 'context of practice'. Since HLTA is deemed a 'professional' status, the meaning of professionalism is discussed, and the status of teaching itself within that debate. The chapter then considers the changing nature of leadership in the 21st Century. It suggests that despite the pressure placed upon headteachers by the national standards (DfES 2004a) to deliver centrally imposed policy messages, both headteachers and teachers can influence policy at school level. However, it concludes by questioning how the gendered nature of 'caring' within primary schools may impact upon the women's roles.

2.2 The 'Context of Practice'

The 'context of practice' brings together a range of factors which may influence the practitioner at the macro or micro level. All the players at the local level have their own histories, values and purposes, and Ball and his colleagues suggest that during the implementation process, sections of policy texts may be 'rejected, selected out, ignored or deliberately misunderstood' (Bowe et al 1992 p22). Rizvi and Kemmis (1987) agree that policy texts however carefully structured, are subject to reinterpretation by those to whom they are addressed. Through detailed analysis of the 'context of practice', this research seeks to study that reinterpretation in action, as practitioners describe their attempts to make sense of the fledgling HLTA policy by bringing their own expertise and experience to bear on the policy texts (Ball 1994).

Trevor Gale deepened our understanding of Ball's original concept of the 'policy cycle' by demonstrating through his study of Higher Education selection procedures in Queensland, Australia, that 'what can be done by policymakers is related to where they are positioned within that [policymaking] context' (Gale 2003 p53). He differentiates between the 'who' of policy production which 'enables the naming of values in things that are seemingly technical' (ibid p52) and the 'how' which 'challenges not just the premise of rationality in policy making but also how particular individuals and groups are involved in various contexts as policymakers' (ibid).

Gale (ibid p55) draws on Bourdieu's notions of capital and field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), to describe how players within a policy context ('field') may be differentially advantaged in terms of 'cultural, social, economic and symbolic

resources' ('capital') in relation to a policy as it moves through time. He observes that different 'fields' privilege different forms of 'capital' and that the social positioning of any individual in relation to the other players within a 'field' can privilege them or otherwise. Thus politicians may be advantaged within the 'context of policy text production', whereas within the 'context of practice', in which the principal kinds of productive activity are policy implementation and policy delivery (Yeatman 1998), professionals will be privileged as an interest group (Lawton 1986), and school staff as direct service deliverers.

As Gale (ibid) explains, 'it is not just the volume but also the structure of one's capital that determines a policy actor's positioning'. For example, within the 'context of practice' teachers are likely to be powerful in relation to support staff by reason of their professional status, whilst the status of their role accords headteachers a relatively powerful position in relation to all other staff. However, Lingard and colleagues (2003) draw a helpful distinction between *headship* as a structural position which carries responsibilities and accountabilities, and *leadership* where the authority of the individual is accorded by the relevant community. Thus, while headteachers may also be leaders, 'leadership is not necessarily tied to position power and its influence is not mandated' (Lingard et al p52). In terms of power relationships then, if power is equated to position within the hierarchical structure, teachers remain subordinate to headteachers, but if power is equated to influence, certain teachers may be almost as powerful as, or indeed more powerful than, the headteacher.

However, headteachers are also subject to external constraints. Whilst Ball (1993) speaks of the space within policy for human agency, Hatcher and Troyna (1994 p167)

suggest that he has underplayed the coercive dimension of the state in relation to policy, reminding us that 'struggles over power take place on a terrain already structured by power, and above all, the power of the state'. For example whilst headteachers could be perceived as having had relative freedom to decide whether or not to introduce the new HLTA post into their staffing structures, they had to address the state's demand that they should, without additional resources, provide all teachers with 10% PPA time from September 2005. Being powerfully constrained by the limitations of set budgets, even had headteachers preferred philosophically to use only qualified teachers for PPA cover, it is unlikely that they would have been able to afford to maintain this financially in the long term. Thus they had to seek alternative means to provide the cover, and simultaneously the HLTA option was being heavily marketed to schools by the government (DfES 2003a, 2003b, 2004g) as not only a viable, but also a desirable, solution.

In terms of power relationships, this appears to accord with the Hillcole Group's judgement of New Right politics, that 'Force, much more than consent, has been the basis of its influence' (Hillcole Group 1993 p4). In the words of the adage, 'He who pays the piper calls the tune', and the government can exercise considerable power in the macro-political sphere through the judicious use of funding streams, an issue which is explored in Chapter 6.

2.3 Power and Micro-politics

The Oxford English Dictionary contains several definitions of the word 'power' including 'the ability to do or act', 'influence, authority', 'authorization; delegated

authority' and 'influential body or thing'. Etzioni (1961 p4) defines power as 'an actor's ability to induce or influence another actor to carry out his directives or any other norms he supports', thus stressing the interpersonal nature of power relationships, and according with the view that power operates both relationally and reciprocally (Lowe and Pugh 2007). 'Power' is a complex and contested concept in sociological, political and philosophical thought, and there is insufficient space within this thesis to do justice to the breadth of this debate. I have therefore selected from the literature some key observations concerning power, which are relevant to the focus of the study.

Clearly, headteachers exercise legal authority over all school staff by virtue of their role (Gibton 2004), but within Etzioni's definition is implied a much broader and more subtle exercise of power which resonates with this research. Likewise, Pfeffer (1992) views power as a property of relationships within an organisation, a definition in which 'power' closely resembles 'influence', although Lowe and Pugh (2007 p27) make a distinction between 'influence as a more general concept and power as intended influence'. I therefore use two definitions of power in my research:

> 'Power is the ability (real or perceived) or potential to bring about significant change, usually in people's lives, through the actions of oneself or others.'
>
> (Lowe and Pugh 2007 p 26)

> 'Power is the capacity of individuals to overcome resistance on the part of others, to exert their will and to produce results consistent with their interest and objectives.'
>
> (Buchanan and Hucynski 2004 p 828)

Power applies to all levels of policy-making including the contexts of 'influence' and 'text production'. However, the focus of this thesis is the 'context of practice' and the exercise of power at an institutional (micro-political) level. The micro-political

activity of the headteachers, including their use of position and influence, is considered in depth in Chapter 6, and is also related to the micro-politics of their individual schools.

2.3.1 TAs and Power

In Lowe and Pugh's (2007 p30) work on teaching assistants' perceptions of power, it is notable that TAs' working conception of power was 'embedded in the structure of the school' so that they viewed the headteacher as powerful but saw themselves as having little power because of the lack of status associated with the TA role. Whilst the power of the headteacher was a common feature of TA perceptions, different notions of this power were noted by the researchers. Power was variously associated with the authority of the headteacher's position, the ability to command respect and the inspiration to share the vision. Although they noted that some TAs felt themselves to be powerful while others did not, the notion of TAs as leaders themselves was not explored in Lowe and Pugh's research. Instead they hypothesised that TAs' feelings of personal power may be associated with experience (length of time in post).

It is notable that the TAs strongly equated their lack of power with lack of qualifications. In this respect, Carol Vincent's (1996) work on teachers' power in relationship to parents has resonance. She describes the socialisation of teachers into the profession:

> 'Teachers also have recourse to their professional identity which may enable them to remain dominant in a relationship with parents with whom they share a social class position. New teachers are introduced to particular values, attitudes and language, as part of their socialization into the profession. Values and attitudes are also refined locally, through staffroom conversation.....'
>
> (Vincent 1996 p76)

This implies that in relation to TAs, teachers have the authority of formal qualification and a shared set of professional values. However, TAs are being increasingly socialised into the professional values and traditions of their schools through the development of 'professional learning communities' (PLCs), (Bolam et al 2002). Nevertheless, there remains a structural divide between teachers and TAs because of the pay differential between them which strongly favours teachers, reflecting the fact that teachers bear the legal responsibility for the learning of the children in their class.

HLTAs sit somewhat uneasily between TAs and teachers in terms of power relations. A government expectation (WAMG 2008b) is that HLTAs will adopt leadership roles within schools, for example as TA team leaders, giving them 'position power' (Lingard et al 2003). They are likely to be long serving and senior TAs, and may therefore command the respect of other staff members, giving them considerable influence. They hold a professional status (although this is not a qualification) which may again afford them 'position power'. Of the HLTAs surveyed by Goddard and colleagues (2007), 86% stated that they would recommend other TAs to apply for the status, a major reason being increased credibility amongst teachers. However, Goddard detected 'an echo of resentment and disenchantment' (ibid p18) amongst the remaining participants who felt that their new status was not recognised as having currency in their schools.

One particularly problematic area is contracts. Despite WAMG's (2005a, 2008b) consistent message that this is not good practice, many HLTAs are currently working on split contracts, being paid at HLTA rate only for certain areas of their work (generally PPA cover), and at TA rates for their remaining hours (Wilson et al 2007).

In terms of power, while headteachers may be able to control HLTAs' contracts and hours of work, the HLTAs hold a reciprocal power in that they may choose to resign (particularly if no HLTA post is offered) or to alter their productivity in terms of the type of work which they are prepared to undertake. However, few appear to be taking this option (Goddard et al 2007), and the question of why this might be is considered in Chapter 4.

2.3.2 Teachers and Power

Vincent (1996 p6) suggests that where policies advocate fundamental changes which may challenge powerful, established interests, they may be 'vulnerable to reformulation or marginalization'. It could be argued that the HLTA policy challenges teachers' professionalism as an 'established interest', but the question arises of the extent to which teachers are themselves 'powerful'.

Nationally, the power of teachers as vested in their unions has been diminished since the strikes of the 1980s, and attempts made by the NUT (2002, 2003b, 2004, 2005) to orchestrate resistance to the HLTA policy have been largely unsuccessful (Sendorek 2006). However, Troman (1996) contends that in response to the restructuring of their work, teachers whom he studied had developed a new 'composite professional' discourse whereby they chose to comply with some educational reforms and resist others, allowing them to retain 'a sense of control over their work and derive satisfaction from engaging in work which is an expression of their values' (ibid p485). Likewise, Riseborough (1993 p171) suggests that both individually and collectively, teachers can exercise significant micro-political power at the school level, thereby creating 'an empirically rich unofficial underlife to official policy intention'. This is

interesting in terms of policy makers achieving their goals within the context of practice, as it suggests that unless teachers are committed to the policy it may founder, or take on a new direction.

The currently fashionable concept of 'distributed leadership' 'has rapidly entered the discourse of national-level trainers, inspectors and academics' (Hoyle and Wallace 2005 p138). The notion that power could be shared between a wide variety of stakeholders including teachers, TAs and parents may initially be regarded as naive, since these players occupy very different positions in terms of the hierarchical structure of schools. However, within schools as PLCs, 'individuals from all stakeholder groups seek out opportunities both to learn and to lead' (Mitchell and Sackney 2007) and it becomes potentially possible for any player to take on a leadership role, exercising authority which may be based more upon the power of influence than hierarchical position.

Nevertheless, the legal position of headteachers carries unique responsibilities and therefore position power, and teachers in the Roehampton University study certainly viewed headteacher's attitudes as critical to successful workforce reform:

> 'There is a clear perception by teachers that much depended on the leadership skills and the interest in workforce remodelling shown by the Headteacher, and their commitment to embracing change and challenging resistance.'
> (Jackson and Wilson 2005 p13)

The introduction of HLTAs has created a staff group in schools, placed, as yet it appears somewhat uneasily (Wilson et al 2007), at a new level somewhere between teachers and support staff. Despite holding a 'professional status', (TDA 2007a) in the majority of cases they are still undertaking much of the same work as other

Teaching Assistants, although with an enhanced element to their work (Bedford et al 2006, Wilson et al 2007). This calls into question the nature and status of professionalism.

2.4 Professionalism

As Helsby comments, 'there is nothing simple or static about the concept of teacher professionalism in England' (2002 p93), and the constant redefinition of professionalism is a key feature of the literature in this area. Etzioni (1969), for example, identified teaching as one of the 'quasi or semi-professions' (groups of occupations which displayed some, but not all, of the characteristics of professionals), partly because at that time it lacked a professional body for self regulation, whilst Jones (1985) concluded that teaching was largely 'self recognised' as a profession since teachers did not share the position of doctors or lawyers in pay, institutional authority or curricular influence.

2.4.1 'Professionalization' or 'Deprofessionalization'?

For Englund (1996 p77), the authority of teachers as professionals rested upon 'societal legitimacy' but Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) speak of the project of 'professionalization' by which teaching has incrementally but deliberately worked towards fulfilling the full set of 'traditional' professional criteria. Having moved forward significantly in the 1980s when teaching became an all-graduate profession, this was finally achieved in 2000 with the founding of the General Teaching Council (GTC) as an independent self-regulating body (Whitty 2002).

The GTC was not enthusiastically welcomed by teachers (Sendorek 2004), suggesting that teachers themselves draw their professional legitimacy less from these traditional criteria than from the maintenance of professional freedom, and the exercise of discretion, within their sphere of work. Therefore, the clawing back of control over the curriculum by the state in the 1980s and 1990s after a period of considerable professional autonomy in the 1960s and 1970s 'reduced the status of the profession'(Woods et al 1997 p49) because teachers' work became externally prescribed rather than professionally guided. Nevertheless, Woods (op cit) suggests that the majority of teachers can and do accept change, albeit for pragmatic rather than ideological reasons. This may accord with the view that teaching is becoming 'reprofessionalized' (McCulloch et al 2000 p110) as teachers develop new skills to cope with changing educational structures, a question which is explored in this research in relation to the teachers' acceptance of HLTAs within their schools.

In contrast to McCulloch, Beck (2008 p133) speaks of 'governmental professionalism' which stems from 'a systematic effort by government and its agencies to marginalise competing models of professional organisation and the conceptions of professionalism they might promote and protect'. He suggests that New Labour's project to 're-professionalise' teaching has in effect led to its 'de-professionalisation' because the state effectively prescribes the form that 'legitimate' professionalisation is allowed to take.

Likewise, Macdonald and Hursh (2006 p168) paint a picture of a disenfranchised teaching force which has lost the right to be called a profession. They point out that through such mechanisms as the HLTA initiative, the National Curriculum and the

National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies the government has adopted the power to 'determine who teaches, what they teach and how they teach'. Thus 'teachers now fail the criteria of professionalism'. They suggest that for effective change to take place in schools, teachers should be treated as partners in formulating and implementing change rather than as passive receivers of orders, and to move towards this, they urge schools to 'be in closer touch with the social, economic and technical changes happening around them' (ibid p169).

Bottery and Wright (1996 p96) have also criticised teachers for 'cooperating in their own deprofessionalisation' by failing both to recognise their professional position in relation to the public context of their work and to understand the 'historical, political and sociological reasons for the current nature of their practice' (ibid p83). They argue for a definition of professionalism which is rooted not in considerations of autonomy, self regulation and public trust, but in the membership of a group which is recognised and respected within society for its expertise such that it can 'participate influentially in debates about its role within that society' (ibid p85).

This implies the development of a more acute understanding by teachers of the political, social and ethical implications of their work, and is particularly apposite to this research, which is focused on an educational policy that fundamentally challenges 'old' notions of teacher professionalism rooted in professional independence and autonomy by introducing into school a new form of staff member with the authority to lead classes but without QTS. In his paper 'The Mosaic of Learning' (1994), David Hargreaves sets out a radical vision for the future shape of schooling:

> 'Schools, then, will become in some respects more like hospitals, especially in the way they are managed and in the distribution of labour within them.[....] The

> boundaries between schools and other kinds of institution will weaken, as will the boundaries between those we call teachers and those who wholly or partly work in other occupations. No other profession or institution serves as a future model for schools and for teachers. This is as it should be. Schools, teachers and teaching should take their own shape and follow their own evolutionary path.'
> (Hargreaves 1994 p30)

If schools are to respond to such a challenge, a new professional identity is needed for teachers, which recognises more fully their role in relation to other stakeholders, both internal and external to the school.

2.4.2 'Post Modern' Professionalism

Hargreaves and Goodson (1996 p21), in their work on teachers' professional lives, have suggested that teacher professionalism in a complex post-modern age should embrace 'occupational heteronomy rather than self-protective autonomy' including working openly and collaboratively with external partners. This accords with Judyth Sachs' (2001) notion of 'democratic professionalism' which again emphasises collaboration and co-operative action between teachers and other educational stakeholders. Sachs suggests that whilst teachers' work has been intensified and they have felt deskilled by the welter of reforms and demands for increased accountability at every level, the nature of teaching as a profession has come under scrutiny, and there have been calls for a new teacher professionalism 'related to the revisioning of occupational identity' (ibid p150). Crucial to the debate, then, is the question of who controls the definition of 'teacher professionalism'. Should it be the teachers or the government?

After a decade of shaming and blaming teachers for perpetuating poor standards in school and failing to respond to mandated reforms, commentators such as Stoll and Lewis (2007) have noted the government's adoption of a more conciliatory tone,

particularly in the light of predicted teacher (and especially headteacher) shortages as the post war 'Baby Boomer generation' chooses to retire early from stress, burnout or disillusionment (ibid). Certainly there is evidence that in the publication of the Professional Standards for Teachers (TDA 2007f) the government has chosen to adopt a new language of respect for professionalism in terms of occupational identity:

> '*Professional standards* are statements of a teacher's *professional attributes, professional knowledge and understanding*, and *professional skills*. They provide clarity of expectations at each career stage. The standards are not to be confused with and do not replace the ***professional duties*** contained in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, which sets out the roles and responsibilities of teachers.'
>
> (TDA 2007f p2 para3 - *my italics and bold print*)

The government distances itself from its former use of the word 'professional' in 'professional duties', which was in reality a simple list of work expected of teachers in order to get paid. Instead, 'professional' (a word which appears no less than seventeen times on the first page of the document) is linked with skills, attributes, knowledge and understanding.

The 'Professional Standards for HLTAs' (TDA 2007c) are laid out under the same headings, representing the recognition of HLTA as a professional status, but in interesting contrast to TAs whose 'national occupational standards' are not described as 'professional'. This distinction is made manifest in the strapline of the Teaching Standards document: 'Bringing coherence to the professional and occupational standards for the whole school workforce' (TDA 2007f p2). The notion of creating a coherent children's workforce emanates from the 'ECM' agenda (see Chapter 1 p19) which emphasises 'personalisation' of provision. This represents a policy shift which can only be delivered at the local level, and the language is focused on collaboration and partnership:

> 'The central characteristic of such a new system will be personalisation – so that the system fits to the individual rather than the individual having to fit the system.....In order to manage this increasingly diverse and personalised system, we need good leadership and *high professional standards at all levels.* We also need collaboration and partnership, so that diverse provision isn't incoherent or bitty and so that people can get a seamless service.'
>
> (DfES 2004b p4 - *my italics*)

These new working relationships are also reflected in the Professional Standards for Teachers, in which a new wider definition of the word 'colleague' encompassing not only teaching colleagues but also '....the wider workforce within an educational establishment, and also those from outside with whom teachers are expected to have professional working relationships' (TDA 2007f p5) is laid out .

Breslin (2002 p195) draws attention to 'the emergence of casualisation as a major employment form' in schools and suggests that new more flexible ways of working, including placing an increasing reliance on non-qualified staff having a teaching role, have afforded the opportunity for a new 'post modern' professionalism. He argues that if teachers can become involved in the development of the new processes and structures (one of which, he notes, is the increased role played by para-professional staff such as TAs) the foundations for a 'post professional identity' with teachers as 'lead educators but not sole educators' (ibid p212) will have been laid. Whitty (2002), meanwhile, suggests that in the twenty first century it may be more appropriate to speak of 'competing versions' of teacher professionalism rather than attempting to create a single definition, although he warns that:

> '... the particular version different people support in practice will, of course, depend on their values and their broader political perspectives, as well as the way in which they are positioned by the reforms.' (Whitty 2002 p66)

Clearly this will not be straightforward in terms of developing shared understandings as it recognises that even an individual's own definition of professionalism may shift and change according to circumstances.

2.4.3 Professional Learning Communities

Linda Evans (2008 p20) uses the terms 'demanded, prescribed and enacted professionalism' to underline the fact that whilst the New Labour government has attempted to take control of the professional agenda through the demands and prescription of its public sector reforms, unless the 'new professionalism' is 'enacted' by the professional group, it remains a meaningless concept. 'Enacted' professionalism requires attitudinal (intellectual and motivational) change and, by implication, 'a commitment [on the part of the professional] to the specific required or imposed change' (ibid p34). It could be argued that 'enacted professionalism' offers the opportunity for teachers to recognise the changing conditions in which they work, and to take a broader view of their own professionalism.

This new discourse of teacher professionalism as outward looking and accepting of a variety of different contributors to the project of education is fundamental to the development of PLCs (Stoll and Lewis 2007). Bolam and colleagues (2007 p17) describe PLCs as 'characterized by the commitment and involvement of all staff in the community, not just the teaching staff'. They are clear that support staff play a key role in the school's learning community and thus that proper recognition of their contribution, and attention to their CPD, are both essential. Again, the language is of collaboration, inclusivity and mutual trust, respect and support.

In their research Bolam and colleagues noted that without exception, TAs were included as members of their PLCs, and that they viewed themselves, and were viewed by others, as equal members of the team, playing a significant classroom role. They also concluded that 'headteachers and other school leaders were crucial in promoting a learning-focused collaborative culture, characterized by mutual trust, respect and support' (ibid p25). In this thesis the case study schools are examined as PLCs, and the role of the headteachers and other senior staff in the development of the HLTA policy considered in relation to the literature on leadership.

2.5 Leadership

Ball (2008 p140) comments that, 'in effect leadership has become a generic mechanism for change as well as a new subject position in policy'. This resonates with his earlier contention that the headteacher is 'the major focus of micro-political activity within the school' (Ball 1987 p81). He suggests, however, that whilst headteachers' legal responsibilities place them in a position of 'legalised autocracy' (ibid p80), they are in fact constrained by the historical and contextual factors of the setting in which they work, an issue which is highlighted in this thesis.

According to Michael Fullan (2003 p16) 'leadership is to the current decade what standards were to the 1990s for those interested in large scale reform'. Leaders face the dilemma of imposing meaning on an increasingly chaotic world in order to deliver on a plethora of frequently contradictory government policies, balancing potentially high-risk innovation with the necessity to satisfy government targets. Day (2003) also highlights the dilemma created for headteachers in balancing the frequently

conflicting agendas of accountability and innovation. There is a significant and growing literature on leadership which considers the qualities needed to fulfil these expectations.

Fullan (2001) in his book 'Leading in a Culture of Change' suggests five components of effective leadership, which are considered in this thesis (see Chapter 6). The first, moral purpose, he describes as 'acting with the intention of making a positive difference to the lives of employees, customers, and society as a whole' (ibid p3). Next, he suggests, is the necessity to understand the change process. Third is the ability to build and foster relationships, and fourth to create and share knowledge. Finally he suggests that effective leaders must have the ability to tolerate ambiguity as they seek to make coherence out of disequilibrium. Fullan also describes effective leaders as possessing a set of personal characteristics which he labels the 'energy-enthusiasm-hopefulness constellation' (ibid p7), and he sees a 'dynamic reciprocal relationship' between these two sets of leadership components.

2.5.1 Headteachers and Leadership – the Government's Perspective

Fullan's attributes can be compared with the government's view of the headteacher as a leader, as exemplified in the 'National Standards for Headteachers' (DfES 2004a). Six key areas are identified: shaping the future, leading learning and teaching, developing self and working with others, managing the organisation, securing accountability and strengthening community. The document states that:

> 'Within each of these key areas, the knowledge requirements, professional qualities (skills, dispositions and personal capabilities headteachers bring to the role) and actions needed to achieve the core purpose are identified.'
>
> (DfES 2004a p4)

Examination of the areas reveals a strong thread of government rhetoric. For example under 'leading learning and teaching', headteachers must have knowledge of 'strategies for raising achievement and achieving excellence' and 'tools for data collection and analysis', and the professional qualities of commitment to 'the raising of standards for all in the pursuit of excellence' and the ability to 'access, analyse and interpret information' (ibid p7). This managerial view pervades the standards. Thus a professional quality required under 'Shaping the Future' (ibid p6) is a commitment to 'the setting of ambitious, challenging goals and targets', and under 'Developing Self and Working with Others' (ibid p8), performance management is the vehicle through which 'the headteacher supports all staff to achieve high standards'.

The development of the HLTA role in schools would be seen as part of the headteacher's responsibilities under 'managing the organisation', which includes organising the school, and the people and resources within it, so as to provide an 'efficient, effective and safe' learning environment. This, the standards state, implies 'the re-examination of the roles and responsibilities of those adults working in school to build capacity across the workforce and ensure resources are deployed to achieve value for money' (ibid p9), and again exemplifies how the government's agenda shapes the standards. In this way, as Hoyle and Wallace (2005 p111) comment: 'leadership is actually perceived as a conduit for implementing government-driven reform policies', an area which is considered in some detail in Chapter 6 (p139).

2.5.2 The Exercise of Professional Judgement

Hoyle and Wallace challenge 'the rhetoric of transformation that has come to dominate the discourse of educational leadership and management' (ibid p111).

In examining the notion of headteachers being required to 'shape the future' as exemplified in the National Standards (DfES 2004a p6), they note that the transformational tone of the language of 'shared vision', 'core educational values' and 'moral purpose' is set within a framework of plans, aims and targets imposed by the government. This, they contend, alters the headteacher's role to one of 'transmissional' leadership which 'emphasizes those transformational leadership factors connected with promoting a vision aligned with the central government goal for transforming public services' (Hoyle and Wallace 2005 p136), and includes elements of 'transactional leadership' in that headteachers are required to root out those who fail to perform satisfactorily.

However, Hoyle and Wallace remain optimistic about the future because they point to a growing body of literature which demonstrates how headteachers (and teachers) mediate policy such that school-level response:

> '...does not take the form of outright rejection but constitutes a principled effort to make unrealistic forms viable in contingent conditions: to make plans that shouldn't work, work.'
>
> (ibid p154)

They view this application of professional judgement to the required work as a positive force which has enabled headteachers and teachers to maintain a degree of satisfaction and optimism throughout the reform process, and which has been able to achieve 'limited, local but nevertheless satisfying changes' (ibid p197).

Rather than attempting radical transformation, this suggests a more pragmatic and incremental approach, which accords with Gibton's view that 'headteachers' proximity to pedagogical situations can correct the flaws and defects that are the

natural by-product of large scale law-based reform' (2004 p164). Gibton reminds us that within educational policy, headteachers are the main conduits through which law-based reform attempts to achieve its goals, but he notes that the basically respectful attitude towards the law which the headteachers in his study demonstrated at the outset was being replaced by 'a shrewd sense of politics and survival tactics' by the end (ibid).

MacBeath and his colleagues also attribute a similar sense of survival to teachers:

> 'Good teachers have always known how to be educationally subversive. They have refused to underestimate their own sense of agency and have been able to perceive the scope for radical change within their own classrooms and within their own schools. [...] They are encouraged and supported by a senior leadership team which understands that schools learn and change from the bottom up.'
>
> (MacBeath et al 2007 p44)

This thesis will demonstrate how the space afforded by a lack of coherent guidance from central government in the initial stages effectively enabled the staff in the four research schools to exercise their professional judgement and adapt the HLTA policy for their own situations. It will also suggest that there is significance in the fact that in primary schools the majority of the players are women.

2.6 Women's Work?

There is no doubt that HLTA status rapidly emerged as a female role; 98% of HLTAs who achieved the status in the first two years were women (Wilson et al 2007). Arguably this is unsurprising since HLTA grew out of the already female dominated TA role (Barkham 2008), but it calls into question the nature and status of women within the school workforce. Frank Bonner (2002 p26) concludes that 'low pay, no

career structure, being at or near the bottom of the perceived hierarchy, and having little overt power' have led to a situation where most TAs are female. However, he also comments that 'the absence of male support staff is as much a function of the dominant discourse, ***hegemonic masculinity***, as is the presence of female staff' (ibid p25, my italics).

Feminist researchers draw our attention to the history of male dominance in social relations which pervades society and currently plays out in primary schools in the dichotomy between the 'rational' teacher (behaving competently and meeting pre-specified standards) and the 'teacher as mother' (focused on the well-being of the children) (Dillabough 1999). Forrester (2005 p271), for example, suggests that primary teaching is 'traditionally conjoined with service, teaching and caring, and linked with women teachers 'looking after' young children'. Similarly, Steedman (1988) observes that if the principal duties and attributes of the primary teacher are perceived as being those of the good mother, teachers will require little formal training, because these qualities are commonly understood as being innate or 'natural' in women. By implication then, teachers' work could be shared with, or undertaken by, other women, particularly those who are mothers. It is notable that 67% of HLTAs are employed in primary schools, a far higher number than in the traditionally male dominated secondary sector, and a picture which has remained consistent from the outset (see Appendix 5).

This is interesting in terms of New Labour's view of the 'modern teacher' as a 'pivotal agent of educational reform' (Dillabough 1999 p373). Acker (1999) suggests that there is now a distinction between teachers' 'work' (understood as paid labour

and associated with meeting performance objectives) and 'non-work' (the quasi-maternal 'caring' role, not easily subjected to monitoring and measurement). Thus, in primary schools, the dominant discourse of 'nurturing' is frequently at odds with the performance-driven educational climate, and the headteachers in my research can be seen balancing their nurturing instincts (for staff as well as children) against a range of externally imposed demands.

Arnot (1993 p 202) suggests that post-war social policies have not 'liberated women from their domestic destinies', but have instead imposed new forms of patriarchal control. In Canella's words:

> 'A sexual division of labour has placed women in positions with lower pay, less autonomy, and increased control. As women have become the majority employed in a field, outside control over content and practice has emerged.'
> (Canella 1997 p140)

Female headteachers, teachers and HLTAs are subject to the same discourse, albeit from different positions within the power structure. The gendered nature of the workforce thus provides a fundamental aspect of the backdrop to my research.

2.7 Summary

This chapter considers how players within the 'Context of Practice' are differentially empowered according to the volume and structure of their 'capital' (Gale 2003). A distinction is drawn between 'headship' (positional power) and 'leadership' (influence) (Lingard et al 2003), and two definitions are given which recognise power as both relational and reciprocal (Lowe and Pugh 2007). I suggest that despite the

diminution of formal Union power, teachers still exercise significant micro-political power within schools.

Having considered the contested notion of teaching as a professional status, and New Labour's project of 'professionalization', I conclude that there is a need to consider a new 'post modern' (Breslin 2002) definition of teacher professionalism for the 21st Century which takes account of the wider agenda in which schools now operate. This is exemplified in the development of 'PLCs' (Stoll and Lewis 2007), encompassing both teaching and support staff. However, the current position of HLTAs as holders of a 'professional status' yet without QTS remains ambiguous.

The chapter next explores the role of the headteacher in relation to policy, and suggests that the language of 'transformational' leadership in the national standards for headteachers disguises a reality of 'transmissional' leadership (Hoyle and Wallace 2005) since headteachers remain constrained by government targets. However, it is recognised that practitioners can influence policy because of their proximity to the situation, and thus may exercise a benign influence (Hoyle and Wallace 2005). Finally, the chapter draws attention to the historical positioning of women in society and explains that the dichotomy between women's 'caring' role and the demands of the performative culture will form a backdrop to the research.

Chapter 3 Developing a Case Study

'Case studies can provide unique examples of people in real situations. Such studies can penetrate situations and offer insights not easily gained by other approaches.'

(Burgess et al 2006 p59)

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the rationale for selecting case study as my method of enquiry. Having considered the notion of Practitioner Based Enquiry with particular reference to the ethical dilemmas raised by my dual role as headteacher researcher, it details the research design, describing the benefits of the case study approach, and answering potential criticism that case studies are limited in generalizability, validity and reliability. Next, it sets out my research position and my theoretical perspectives of policy sociology and feminism. My chosen research methods are then explained and justified. Finally, a detailed explanation of the sampling strategy is used to introduce the four research schools.

3.2 Practitioner Based Enquiry

Brown and Dowling (1998 p4) describe research as 'a particular coherent and systematic and reflexive mode of interrogation'. This appears to me to sum up the project of the practitioner undertaking a relatively small scale study which may have limited generalizability to other situations. How do we make doing such research into a worthwhile exercise?

Murray and Lawrence (2000 p7) suggest that there is a common sense rationality for PBE, since professionals should continually be thinking about what they are doing, and researching into one's own practice can be 'democratizing and empowering'. Practitioners are knowledgeable about policy initiatives which affect them. They have accumulated 'significant professional experience' (ibid), and knowledge which is unique to their situation. Thus my experience of the HLTA policy may contribute to both policy studies and the wider debate concerning workforce remodelling.

3.2.1 What Counts as Knowledge?

Murray and Lawrence argue that whilst historically universities have determined the knowledge content of advanced courses, in PBE 'the possibility for negotiating the constituent elements of knowledge, especially as these are vested in practitioners' claims of relevance, are kept open' (op cit p130). This resonates with my research because, as Ozga (2000 p76) comments, in the prevailing economic climate, policy research has become 'driven by the policy-makers and thus preoccupied with implementation studies'. Certainly this applies to most professional HLTA research to date (Bedford et al 2006, Goddard et al 2007, Wilson et al 2007), and little attempt has yet been made to theorise the position of HLTAs. Ozga (2000 p37) suggests that 'without free-ranging research there is no alternative to priorities set by the government', and herein lies my advantage as a self-funded researcher. With no sponsor to satisfy (Halpin 1994) or external agenda to meet (Marginson 1993, Pettigrew 1994), I could pursue a line of enquiry which has personal resonance for me – the effects of primary headteachers on policy and the effects in other schools of a policy which I myself have chosen to implement.

Ozga (2000 p7) argues for a view of policy research which understands practitioners not just as 'passive receptacles of policy' but as 'policy makers or potential makers of policy'. She would like practitioners at all levels to feel informed and able to scrutinize education policy, making their own judgements, and developing their own policy making skills. I believe this to be especially important for headteachers since we are not only affected by educational law (Gibton 2004), but central to its implementation (Ball 2008).

Throughout my research, I have been aware of the potential for bias, since my own experience of the HLTA policy has been largely positive. My school adopted the policy from the outset and it is working successfully in our situation. However, I am clear that my research was, and is, designed to be an exploration of policy and not a defence of my own implementation. As Ozga (2000 p36) comments: 'We are all partisans but only some of us acknowledge it.' The key is to recognise the potential for bias and remain true to the content of the research data, allowing it to 'speak'.

Hammersley (2002 p42) draws our attention to 'the fallibility of research-based knowledge' reminding us that our knowledge of the world is never certain, conclusive or beyond dispute. All researchers bring their own perspective to a problem, and my knowledge of the development of the HLTA role has, I hope, enabled me to frame a unique study, illuminated by personal experience of the issues which arose during the policy process. There are, however, specific ethical issues which may be particularly problematic for practitioner researchers.

3.2.2 Ethical Considerations

Murray and Lawrence (2000 p19) describe an ethical posture as a 'mental template that translates the intellectual and moral obligations of PBE into steps for action'. Thus, for example, I was always aware that the participants' interests and welfare were paramount. I tried to ensure that arrangements for the conduct and dissemination of the research protected the rights and reputations of both participants and their schools, by respecting their privacy and by being as honest and objective as possible.

I used the BERA Ethical Guidelines (1992) as guidance to determine a code of conduct for the research, and conducted the project with Bryman's (2001) four ethical areas in mind, ensuring that there was no harm to the participants, invasion of privacy, deception, or any lack of informed consent. Interestingly, Downsfield Primary achieved a 100% response rate to my teacher questionnaire, and I did question whether the teachers had individually given 'informed consent' or whether pressure had been exerted on them. The headteacher explained that when she told her teachers that I was trying to achieve an EdD, 'everyone immediately volunteered to participate either out of respect or sympathy!' (Field Notes 11/02/2007) This was an unexpected advantage of being a fellow practitioner.

By contrast, Lowe and Pugh (2007) encountered senior staff blocking TAs' participation in their research. I do acknowledge that in setting up the research, my position as headteacher enabled me to gain privileged access to other headteachers. Also, whilst no staff were obliged to participate, the four headteachers supported me by encouraging their HLTAs to take part, and actively facilitating their participation through the provision of time and space within working hours for the interviews.

3.3 Research Design

3.3.1 Qualitative Research

Rejecting the functionalism of the engineering and medical models of research which underpin recent pressure from politicians (eg Blunkett 2000) for educational research to be more 'directly useful' to practitioners and policy-makers, Martin Hammersley (2002 p98) argues instead for qualitative research. Qualitative research, he notes, stresses 'the way in which causal factors operate at different points in time, generating contingent courses of events, which can lead to a variety of outcomes.' This description fits my research project, which seeks to provide an accurate picture of the HLTA policy in its second year of implementation in four different schools, and from this to draw tentative conclusions about the processes by which policy becomes practice in primary schools in the current educational climate.

Jennifer Mason describes qualitative research as being:

> '..... *strategically conducted, yet flexible and contextual.* Essentially this means that qualitative researchers should make decisions on the basis not only of a sound research strategy, but also of a sensitivity to the changing contexts and situations in which the research takes place.
>
> (Mason 2002 p7 *her italics*)

Bearing this in mind, the case study, which offers the opportunity for 'empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context' (Robson 2002 p178), appeared to me to be a research strategy ideally suited to this project.

3.3.2 A Case Study Approach

Yin defines a case study as an empirical enquiry that:

> '...investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.'
>
> (Yin1989 p23)

Case studies refer to the uniqueness of the community or organisation being researched, and the case study researcher adopts a 'holistic approach' (Burgess et al 2006 p59) utilising a variety of data sources. Case studies allow researchers to 'deal with subtleties and intricacies of complex social situations' (Denscombe 1998 p39). Since they are concerned with researching phenomena as they occur, there is no pressure on the researcher to impose controls or change circumstances.

However, case studies are frequently accused of being overly descriptive and lacking in rigour, the boundaries can be difficult to define (Denscombe 1998), and case study method has therefore been vulnerable to criticism about the credibility of generalizations.

3.3.3 Case Studies and Generalization

The issue of generalization is currently much debated in academic circles (Gomm et al 2000, Mason 2002). Stake (2000 p20) challenges the criticism that case studies are not a suitable basis for generalization, reminding us that 'methods of studying human affairs need to capitalise upon the natural powers of people to experience and understand'. He suggests that whilst the case study may be at a disadvantage where the aim of the inquiry is to gain propositional knowledge, it is well suited to studies such as my own, where the aims are understanding and the extension of experience.

This knowledge, which he terms 'naturalistic generalization', Stake describes as 'a full and thorough knowledge of the particular, recognising it also in new contexts' (ibid p22).

> 'Naturalistic generalizations develop within a person as a product of experience. They derive from tacit knowledge of how things are, why they are, how people feel about them, and how these things are likely to be later or in other places with which this person is familiar.'
>
> (Stake 2000 p22)

Likewise, Burgess and colleagues (2006 p60) argue that rather than being concerned with the generalizability of the findings 'perhaps a point to be borne in mind is the relevance of the findings to professional practice and how useful they are to others in similar situations'. Again, this implies that case study is a very apposite method for my research because I hope to offer new insights based upon my interpretation of the findings, using my unique perspective as a practitioner.

Schofield (2000) describes generalizability as being a matter of the 'fit' between the situation studied and others to which the conclusions of the study might be applied. She argues for three targets for generalization: 'what is', 'what may be' and 'what could be'. In terms of the present study 'what is' has been addressed by choosing to conduct a multi-site study. Although the study makes no pretensions to be generalizable, I have also tried, through constructing the sample around the 'exceptional' (see section 3.7) to address Schofield's notion of 'what could be' which she describes as:

> '.....locating situations that we know or expect to be ideal or exceptional generalizations on some *a priori* basis and studying them to see what is actually going on there.
>
> (Schofield 2000 p93)

Gomm and colleagues (2000 p113) warn that selecting cases from the 'cutting edge' may lead to the validity of generalizations being eroded over time. However, since the purpose of this case study was to examine why the schools chose to adopt the HLTA policy at its earliest stages, its validity as a story of how one specific policy became practice, and what this might mean for policy-makers, will remain.

Whilst the schools in my study could be deemed 'a-typical' (see 3.7 p86), they remain valid as a case study group in that together they create a distinct picture of the very early implementation of a potentially controversial policy in primary schools. Thus, although outside the scope of the present study, one way in which my research could have 'demonstrable wider resonance' (Mason 2002 p8) might be to compare my findings with those of other studies concerning early voicings of other policies within the 'context of practice'.

3.3.4 Validity and Reliability

The concepts of validity and reliability are also contested in case study research since a study can rarely, if ever, be replicated. Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed that 'trustworthiness' might be more applicable to case studies than validity and reliability, and Bassey (1999) builds upon this work by suggesting a number of questions related to the collection and analysis of raw data, the interpretation of analytical statements and the reporting of the research which might be used to test a piece of work for 'trustworthiness'. He asks for example, whether there has been 'prolonged engagement with the data sources' and 'persistent observation of emerging issues' (Bassey 1999 p76). Here, I can answer that through my personal involvement in implementing the HLTA policy in my own school, whilst simultaneously analysing it

for my studies, I have been immersed in the policy and have watched issues emerging which I thought might be interesting and worthwhile perspectives to follow up. These have formed the nucleus of my research questions.

Bassey also asks whether raw data have been checked with their sources, and sufficiently triangulated through using a variety of methods of enquiry, both of which I have endeavoured to do. I have also benefited from the opinions of three colleagues who have, as 'critical friends', read and discussed my research, challenging me to justify the outcomes. This, Bassey suggests, strengthens the research. Finally, I have tried to write a clear, true account of the project. Thus I believe that my research meets the criteria for 'trustworthiness'.

3.4 A Research Position

Valerie Janesick (1998 p37) likens the design of qualitative research to a dance because it is 'an expressively dynamic form that connects the cultural meanings of dancers, choreographer and the community.' I find this analogy both helpful and relevant to my study because it stresses the, at least partially, shared experiences of the researcher with the participants.

> 'I would like to point out that qualitative researchers accept the fact that research is ideologically driven. There is no value-free or bias-free design.'
> (Janesick 1998 p41)

Murray and Lawrence (2000 p43) likewise advocate the acceptance of elements of personal 'baggage' which practitioners may bring to their research and recommend including them in consideration of the topic to help in minimizing contamination or 'bias' of the data. This, they suggest, is a primary component of 'reflection'.

For me this is important because my own school was an 'early adopter' of the HLTA policy. I know, or at least I have a perception of, why, and I recognise that I personally played a major role in that decision making process. However, I had no sense of whether what occurred in my school was typical of what was happening in other 'early adopter' schools at that time. I am neither suggesting nor implying that 'early adopter' schools were right while other schools were wrong. My interest lies in *why* the decision was taken, and the prevailing conditions and considerations surrounding that decision. Through this research I hoped to better understand the process of policy, and my own role within that process, and to introduce the reader to some possible factors which may have influenced the policy process in this case.

3.5 Research Perspectives

3.5.1 Policy Sociology

My study sits within the field of policy sociology, which Ozga (1987 p144) characterises as 'rooted in the social science tradition, historically informed and drawing on qualitative and illuminative techniques'. Ozga (2000 p37) suggests that researching education policy 'contributes to a reflexive project of professional identity' offering alternatives to the 'official knowledge' of government rhetoric.

> 'Current policy seeks to define education as a social institution that produces the capacity to work, 'smartly' if possible, 'flexibly' if not. This one-dimensional view of education refuses to recognize its vital role in the production of social capacity and political practice.'
>
> (Ozga 2000 p9)

The perspective which Ozga outlines ignores the tension between policy-makers' intentions and the way in which policy works itself out on the ground, and particularly

the way in which practitioners can take advantage of the 'spaces' between planning and outcomes, and the 'contradictions or competition between purposes' of policy (op cit).

I would argue that it was my personal experience of utilising 'spaces' within the HLTA policy that aroused my curiosity about how this may have been played out in other schools, and initially set the structure of this research. Raab (1994) also suggests that policy can be seen as a field of struggle in which policy-makers' intentions are powerfully shaped by practice, and may even be deflected from the original legislated intentions.

> '...This means that 'human agency' must be taken seriously in explanations of policy. But so, too, must the context of action within structures and processes located at other sites, or enveloping all of them, and providing the constraints and opportunities for action.'
>
> (Raab 1994 p25)

Case study provides a useful way in which to approach such concerns since it deals with the effects of policy on the ground. However, as Stake (1998 p104) cautions: 'The purpose of case study is not to represent the world but to represent the case'. My research is small scale, but it does provide examples of 'human agency' in action.

3.5.2 A Feminist Perspective

The purpose of feminist research in education is to challenge the gendered inequality experienced by women (Skeggs 1994). Thus feminist research in education 'not only speaks from a marginalised position but declares itself as situated knowledge'. Skeggs argues that:

> 'Because feminist research takes power as a central organizing principle of social relations, it is able to make apparent the underlying interests that inform educational reform.'
>
> (Skeggs 1994 p76)

In terms of the HLTA policy, this draws attention to such matters as the fact that HLTAs are a largely female workforce, taking on significant responsibilities in relation to their position in the hierarchy, yet very poorly remunerated (see Chapter 5). Crotty's description of feminist research also strikes a chord with me:

> 'When feminists come to research, they bring with them an abiding sense of oppression in a man-made world. For some, this may be little more than an awareness that the playing field they are on is far from level and they need to even things up. For others, the injustice is more profound ....'
>
> (Crotty 1998 p182)

In relation to my own perspective as a primary headteacher, clearly, the government's demand that primary schools should provide PPA without additional resources also represents structural inequality, since secondary schools (traditionally male dominated) are funded such that non-contact time is covered by other teachers.

Feminist research, in Diana Leonard's (2001 p192) words 'argues that what you see depends on where you stand, and for passionate scholarship'. Likewise Skeggs (1994) urges against any pretence of neutrality since the woman researcher herself has a position. Few researchers have yet addressed the issue of workforce remodelling; none, to my knowledge, from my own position as an 'insider' actively engaged in the project, yet still questioning some of its long term implications. Should the HLTA policy, for example, marketed to primary schools in terms of 'opportunity' (DfES 2002a), be viewed instead as 'exploitation' or will HLTAs and their schools gain more through it than they lose?

If feminist research is to challenge the 'experts' as Leonard (op cit) suggests, it is arguable that the practitioner's voice should be heard. Leonard argues for research

findings to be accessible both within and beyond the university, 'expressed in simple language and available orally'. These principles chime with my own ideals, and have guided the research process throughout.

3.6 Research Methods

Bassey (1999 p69) reminds us that: 'Case study research has no specific methods of data collection or of analysis which is unique to it as a method of enquiry. It is eclectic and in preparing a case study, researchers use whatever methods seem to them to be appropriate and practical'. Similarly, Mason (2002 p25) suggests that in designing qualitative research the starting point should be, 'What is the fullest and most creative range of methods of data generation and data sources I can think of?' In selecting the research methods I was also mindful of the limitations of being a single-handed practitioner researcher (Mason 2002), and of the challenge of integrating the research process with a demanding professional life.

The case study used data from four schools [see Appendix 6]. Between September and December 2007, I conducted semi-structured interviews with the four headteachers and ten HLTAs, and with two senior staff who had been instrumental in the development of the HLTA policy in their schools. I also undertook a document analysis to provide background information on the development of the policy. Data from the sixteen interviews and the documentary study were then drawn upon to structure a questionnaire to be answered by the teachers in all four schools. I deliberately chose to reverse the more usual questionnaire/interview order because I wanted first to elicit from the interviews the views of HLTAs and senior staff on a

range of issues, and then to use the questionnaires to establish whether teachers shared these perceptions. The questionnaires were completed in February 2008.

3.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

Qualitative interviewing enables the researcher to gain an understanding of the depth and complexity in people's situated or contextual accounts and is 'more likely to generate a fairer and fuller representation of the interviewees' perspectives' (Mason 2002 p67). Due to the constraints of time and resources in a small scale study, I decided to use a standardized open ended interview approach (Cohen et al 2000). This facilitated the organisation and analysis of the data, since the respondents were answering the same basic questions in the same order, whilst affording me the opportunity to explore issues with each participant as appropriate. I devised two matching frameworks – one for the headteachers and senior staff, and the other for the HLTAs [see Appendix 7]. These were piloted with colleagues from a neighbouring LA, modified and re-piloted prior to the research.

Whilst feminist research seeks to 'minimize the hierarchy between the researcher and the researched and to maximise reciprocity' (Leonard 2001 p192), I was aware that my own position as headteacher was very different both in terms of power and pay from that of the participating HLTAs, and thereby potentially intimidating in terms of researcher-respondent relationships. I tried to ensure that the HLTAs were put at their ease by seeking to establish an informal and non-threatening atmosphere. This involved explaining the interview structure clearly, providing an outline of questions for participants to follow and allowing them sufficient time to think about their answers.

The power differential was not an issue with the participating headteachers; here the challenge was to avoid the research interview becoming a general conversation about HLTAs between interested peers, some of whom were long-standing colleagues. At the start of the interview I therefore requested one hour of their time, I provided a question outline as an agenda, and we mutually agreed to maintain the formal interview structure. I allowed less latitude for the interview to move 'off track' than I had for the HLTAs, and as a result the interviews were all well focused, and completed within the agreed frame.

I found the semi-structured interview very successful as a structure within which to ask similar questions to two very different groups of people, because it allowed the flexibility to re-word questions for clarification when necessary (Burgess et al 2006), and gave latitude to pursue respondents' ideas in greater depth. The interviews produced rich data, and many of the participants commented that they had enjoyed the experience, and found it useful to clarify their own thinking. Respondents were anonymized through self-chosen pseudonyms, and schools and LAs through names selected by me.

Having previously worked from notes of interviews and occasionally found them frustrating in their lack of detail, this time I decided to digitally record and transcribe the interviews. Although making my own transcripts would have allowed for additional immersion in the data, I judged this not to be a productive use of my time, and the use of an internet-based academic transcription service proved an excellent resource. As part of the pilot phase I transcribed one interview and from this devised a

table format allowing for coding categories to be inserted, which the transcription service then used as a format. As I listened again to the interviews whilst reading, amending and annotating the transcripts, I became aware of certain words and phrases recurring repeatedly. These ideas began to frame the analysis.

3.6.2 Document Analysis

A range of documents from official sources was analysed to track the development of the HLTA policy in its first two years of practice, and particularly its links with such related policy frameworks as the ECM and wider Children's Workforce agendas. Implementation studies commissioned by both government and unions were also considered, as well as policy studies undertaken for the Cambridge Primary Review (eg Burgess 2008, Jones et al 2008).

Bassey (1999) recommends transferring significant quotations from the document to the research computer, and this proved very worthwhile as during the process, key themes began to emerge which were also reflected in the interview data. These themes were used to structure the teachers' questionnaires.

3.6.3 Questionnaires

Although the use of a questionnaire may be conceived of as generating quantitative data, for the purposes of the research they were used qualitatively. 'Self completion questionnaires' (Bryman 2001, cited in Burgess et al 2006 p75) can provide a quick way of collecting data from a large number of people, and have the advantage of minimising researcher effect on the data as they are not biased by the manner in which an interviewer asks questions (Burgess et al 2006). There are, however,

disadvantages to using questionnaires (Robson 2002). Whilst they reduce variability in terms of the questions being asked, they may not be understood in the same way by all respondents. Interesting answers cannot be further probed, particularly if the questionnaires are anonymous. The return rate may not be good and if too many or overly complex questions are asked people might tire and give up.

In this case I wanted to canvass the views of 76 teachers. Interviewing that number would have been impractical and interviewing a selection would not necessarily have been representative. The questionnaire enabled a larger number of opinions to be gathered. Mindful of Robson's (ibid) advice on structure and content, I designed the questionnaire with clear sections and straightforward questions [see Appendix 8]. It was piloted by two teachers at my school, amended, and re-piloted before distribution.

To ensure teachers' anonymity, questionnaires were handed out and collected back by school secretaries, and where teachers chose not to return research questionnaires, I did not follow this up. 64 of the 76 teachers completed and returned their questionnaires, an 84% response rate.

3.6.4 Data Analysis

Mason (2002 p151) advises that 'the job of slicing your data set ... is much facilitated by the use of computer aided qualitative data analysis', and initially I did consider utilising a data analysis tool such as NVivo to code data and thereby assist with indexing and retrieving the text. However, I rejected this because although I wished to look at some areas in a cross-sectional manner, and to slice the whole data set for one theme (for example the views of participants on professionalism), the telling of

'whole life' stories was an important part of my analysis and this appeared to be best analysed manually since much of the data was unique to each case and therefore not part of multiple codes. Using coloured highlighting and fonts in Word as a coding device enabled sufficient detail for the purpose of my analysis.

Multi-strategy research can be valuable both as a means of triangulation, in which results from an investigation employing one strategy are checked against results using a method associated with another strategy, and where the methods generally associated with one type of research are usefully used for another type (Hammersley 1996). Cohen and colleagues (2000) recommend methodological triangulation to eliminate bias or distortion in the researcher's view of a particular phenomenon. This was particularly relevant for me since I was aware that I must not let my own perception of the HLTA policy close my mind to other interpretations of the data. So, for example, whilst the headteachers reported in their interviews that teachers in their schools did not regard HLTAs as a threat to their professionalism, I used the questionnaire as a mechanism to test this assumption.

Burgess and colleagues (2006 p87) define data analysis as 'concerned with identifying patterns, implications, consistencies and inconsistencies in the data', while Deem and Brehony (1994) suggest that through immersion in the data, theories can emerge inductively. Reading through the data with the research questions in mind as broad categories, themes began to emerge concerning both the effects of policy on the participants and the effects of the participants on policy. Some of these have subsequently become the headings and sub-headings of the chapters.

3.7 Identifying the Case – Introducing the Research Schools

Stake (1998 p90) suggests that case study researchers 'seek out both what is common and what is particular about the case'. Since knowledge is socially constructed, case study researchers assist the reader in the construction of knowledge. The important thing here is that the researcher's narrative shapes the case as told, through making selections of material and choices about interpretation, and these choices will themselves be shaped by the researcher's own experience. Thus it is essential that the researcher makes clear how the exemplars of the case have been selected. I therefore explain in some detail my reasons for selecting the four schools.

I wished to study those schools in my own LA (Riverside), and a neighbouring one for comparison (Stoneham), which had put forward candidates for HLTA assessment from the outset, and, where two years into the policy, HLTAs were now successfully in post. Conversations with LA advisers indicated that eight schools met these criteria.

I had tentatively planned to build my sample around the range of primary school types in the locality but the eligible schools included no Infant examples. However, Denscombe (1998 p35) comments that 'there are times when events occur which provide the researcher with unique opportunities' and it was during my conversations with the LA advisers that a different strategy for selection began to emerge. My notes of these conversations took on a new significance and became an essential part of the data (Mason 2002), as I realised that the sampling was much more important in this project than I had initially recognised.

The schools were variously described by their LAs as being 'at the forefront of practice' and 'willing to try new things' (Sendorek 2007), and were successful in Ofsted terms. However, I recognised that it would not be possible within my limited time and resources to fully investigate all eight. Mindful of Denscombe's (1998 p35) advice that researchers should 'regard any intrinsic interest of the case as a criterion to be used when deciding between instances that in all other crucial respects are equally suitable', I returned to my notes and to my personal knowledge of the schools, and chose four of them for specific characteristics which, I felt, would demonstrate the widest range of perspectives.

3.7.1 Albany First School

Albany is a small (180 place) over-subscribed First School in Riverside LA, situated in a mainly white middle class area of a town on the outskirts of London. Albany had already participated in my IFS research (Sendorek 2006), but my initial reservations about asking them to take part in a second research project were overcome after an exploratory conversation with Beverley, the headteacher. Not only was she happy to participate, but she expressed the view that being left out of the sample would deny her an opportunity to share her experiences with others.

In fact, the situation at Albany had significantly altered in the two years since the IFS research. Jackie (HLTA), who was amongst the first tranche of HLTAs nationally to be assessed for HLTA, gaining the status in April 2005, had been accepted for the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) (TDA 2008a) and was about to commence her school-based teacher training at Albany. Meanwhile Maria, a TA since 2006 who was

also planning to enter teacher training via the HLTA/GTP route, had been accepted for HLTA assessment. She successfully gained the status during the research period.

Schofield (2000) suggests that the careful selection of cases is crucial and Stake (2000) advises the researcher to declare their own reasons and strategies for choices made in order to preserve the audit trail of the research. In terms of selecting schools for qualities which may have generalizability to other situations, I chose Albany as a school where HLTA status was apparently being used as a stepping stone to teacher training.

I was aware that I already knew much more about this school than any others in the eligible group and that therefore my relationship with the research participants would be on different, and perhaps more familiar, terms. I also recognised that my prior knowledge of the school may alter some of the initial interview questions but as the focus of the research project was different from the IFS, I concluded that this would not present difficulties. In the event, during the course of the research, Beverley was asked to temporarily take the headship of a neighbouring school which was in difficulties. Her deputy (Sarah) assumed responsibility for Albany as acting headteacher, and agreed to be interviewed, which offered a different perspective.

3.7.2 Banford Primary School

Banford Primary is a small (203 on roll) currently undersubscribed school which is unique within Riverside LA, being situated in a small area with a high concentration of Asian families within an otherwise largely white middle class town on the outskirts of London. The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds (Ofsted

2007) with 88% having English as an Additional Language (EAL). The most commonly spoken first languages are Punjabi, Urdu and Polish.

I selected Banford for three reasons. Firstly Nosheen, the headteacher, had an unusual path into headship, having left school before completing 'A' Levels and subsequently entered teaching via a parent helper/TA/part time study route. Secondly, at the start of the research, Banford was the only school in Riverside LA to have three HLTAs. Nicola, the first of these to gain the status, was also a Nursery Nurse, so had a different perspective on the role, while Jane and Anna had gained HLTA status only recently. Thirdly, Banford has consistently experienced significant and ongoing difficulties in the recruitment and retention of teachers, obliging Nosheen to develop a particular interest and expertise in alternative staffing strategies.

My hypothesis was that Nosheen's experiences may have made her more open-minded towards the HLTA both because of the flexibility of staffing which HLTAs had offered, and because she herself had taken an alternative route into teaching.

3.7.3 Colnbury Junior School

Colnbury is an over-subscribed medium sized (350 place) Junior School situated in a mainly white middle class residential area in the same town as Banford, and is one of the few primary schools in Riverside LA to have a male headteacher. The two HLTAs at Colnbury come from very different academic backgrounds, although both ultimately aim to be teachers. As a graduate, Jenny intends to train via the GTP route, whilst Daisy, who has qualifications to BTEC level, would like to apply for the Registered Teacher Programme (RTP).

I selected Colnbury principally because the initial impetus for the HLTA policy at Colnbury came not from James (the headteacher) but from Anne (the SENCO), making it unique within the eligible schools. Indeed, James, as a member of the NUT, was initially opposed to the idea of HLTAs. My hypothesis was that the story of how resistance was tackled and overcome at Colnbury allowing the HLTA role to become successfully established might provide important data which could have relevance to other situations. Colnbury was also the only one of the eligible schools to have a strong NUT presence, the others demonstrating little union activity of any sort.

3.7.4 Downsfield Primary School

Downsfield is a large urban primary school in a predominantly light industrial town on the outskirts of London. It is the largest primary school in Stoneham LA, with 750 children on roll and separate specialist units for children with Behavioural, Social and Emotional Difficulties (BESD), and those with profound physical difficulties. Lucy, who was formerly the deputy head of the school, has been in post as Headteacher for six years. Downsfield has three HLTAs (Katie, Stacey and Kirsty) who play a very active role in leading learning, particularly of lower ability sets.

Downsfield was selected from three eligible schools in Stoneham LA because of its unusual size and diversity of provision, and because of its locally recognised commitment to school-based training for teachers (via both GTP and RTP routes) (TDA 2008b) and support staff. The LA consultant also regarded Lucy as the headteacher who had most actively encouraged the HLTA role from the outset. My hypothesis in selecting Downsfield was that the school would make an interesting

comparison with the schools in Riverside LA, both in terms of size and in its well established commitment to CPD at all levels.

Together all four schools appeared to me to make an 'intrinsically interesting' case (Denscombe 1998) in which both their similarities and their differences would be important to the analysis.

3.8 Summary

This chapter suggests that PBE can make a valuable contribution to knowledge through offering a unique and independent perspective, despite the ethical dilemmas presented by insider research. It argues that case study is ideally suited to PBE since it offers the opportunity for investigation of phenomena in their real life contexts (Yin 1989), and suggests that the notion of 'trustworthiness' (Bassey 1999) may be more applicable to such research than issues of generalizability, validity and reliability of the investigation.

The chapter explains my position as a qualitative researcher (Janesick 1998) and discusses how my theoretical perspectives of policy sociology and feminism can contribute to our understanding of the policy position of HLTAs. In discussing the chosen research methods, the chapter explains the benefits of a multi-strategy approach (Hammersley 1996) which enables data from the interviews, documents and questionnaires to be triangulated. It concludes by introducing, through detailed explanation of the sampling procedures, the characteristics for which the four schools have been included in the case study.

Chapter 4 HLTA - A Developing Role

> 'It is clear that the HLTA role has the potential to change the way in which education is delivered and to make a positive difference to school life. It offers greater flexibility to school leaders as well as greater job satisfaction for staff. However, as with any new educational development of this magnitude, some initial difficulties and challenges are to be expected. (Wilson et al 2007 p92)

4.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the first two research questions: 'What was the rationale in each of the case study schools for adopting the role at the outset?' and 'How has the role developed in each school since its introduction in April 2005?' Drawing on data from the interviews with the HLTAs, headteachers and senior teachers, and from the questionnaires to teachers, it introduces the key players in the context of practice as it locates the impetus for adopting the HLTA policy, and describes how the role emerged, in each school. In addressing the question 'What do HLTAs actually *do*?' (Daisy Daisy 2007), it sets the scene for the consideration in later chapters of such issues as power and gendered patterns of work which may be associated with the introduction of a role that threatened from the outset to be contentious (McAvoy 2003), yet has apparently become quickly and successfully established in the case study schools.

4.2 Locating the Impetus

4.2.1 Headteachers and Innovation

The HLTA initiative was introduced to schools as a mechanism for creating 'time for teachers and headteachers and therefore time for standards *(sic)*' (DfES 2003a p2). It

was not statutory, and only eight of the seventy primary schools in Riverside and Stoneham LAs, including the research schools, appointed HLTAs from the outset[3]. The data demonstrate that the policy was enthusiastically embraced by three of the headteachers in the research schools (Beverley at Albany, Nosheen at Banford and Lucy at Downsfield), but that the fourth (James at Colnbury) was initially reluctant.

Headteachers are constantly managing multiple innovations (Fullan and Hargreaves 1992), and Trider and Leithwood (1988) suggest that headteachers select how much active attention they will give to specific policies on the basis of their own personal experiences and priorities. For example Nosheen, an Asian woman whose path to the headship was unique within the research group, commented:

> 'The very first HLTA, I was very, very keen to support because we had similar personal experiences'.
>
> (Nosheen Headteacher Banford)

Nosheen had not completed her sixth form education because of marriage. When her children reached school age, she became a parent helper, and the headteacher soon encouraged her to become a TA. Meanwhile, she completed 'A' levels at evening classes, and subsequently qualified first as a nursery nurse, then as a teacher. After promotion to deputy headship, she became headteacher of Banford in January 2001.

Beverley and Lucy also had personal reasons for supporting the HLTA policy. Lucy had assumed the headship of Downsfield having previously been the deputy head, and had wanted to break a link with the previous regime which had not, in her opinion, sufficiently recognised and valued TAs. Adopting the HLTA role, she explained, gave her 'a good opportunity to raise the profile of what TAs were doing' (Lucy).

[3] Since only 1,734 TAs had been awarded HLTA status by April 2005 (TDA 2009) against a total of 18,500 primary schools in England, (an average of less than one HLTA to every 10 schools), this situation was not unusual.

Meanwhile Beverley, also a new headteacher, was strongly focused on formalising the enhanced role which she recognised that Sue was already playing in the school, but which Beverley felt was undervalued. Ball and colleagues comment that those within the context of practice who receive policy texts may 'have an eye to personal or localised advantage, material or otherwise, which may stem from particular readings of policy texts' (Bowe at al 1992 p23). For both Beverley and Lucy, part of the rationale for the promotion of the HLTA role had been as an opportunity to stamp their own authority on their schools. Thus the innovation had been personally advantageous as well as, in their opinions, benefiting their schools.

4.2.2 Headteachers as Supporters of Change

Fullan suggests that the headteacher is 'a key figure for leading *and supporting* change' (Fullan and Hargreaves 1992 p12 – *my italics*). Thus, provided that headteachers are creating conditions in which a specific change can happen successfully, they need not be leading it personally[4]. Colnbury provides a good example. Here, the impetus for the HLTA policy came from Anne (SENCO), whilst as a member of the NUT, the headteacher, James, faced a personal dilemma as he balanced staff development priorities with his union's strong opposition to the use of HLTAs to cover classes (McAvoy 2003).

Anne clearly enjoyed a level of autonomy which gave her the confidence to suggest putting TAs forward as HLTA candidates. She appeared to be taking a long term strategic view of the HLTA role, linking it with workforce remodelling, although she

[4] For example NCSL's 'Leading From The Middle' programme is specifically designed to 'develop leadership capacity at all levels in schools' (Naylor et al 2006 p1).

presented this in apologetic tones, recognising that for James, her headteacher, it remained problematic:

> 'I think that in the future, there'll be quite a lot of people helping with the [children's] learning, but I don't..... I haven't got quite the same vision [as James].'
>
> (Anne SENCO Colnbury)

However, Anne was confident that James would see the advantage of HLTAs in terms of professional development, so she had presented it to him in that way:

> '..... James, despite his reservations about HLTAs taking classes, is very supportive about people developing themselves. I think that's sometimes a bit of a problem for him [re HLTAs taking classes]. But yes, he thinks it's good that people are developed and supports that fully, but leaving me to lead it.'
>
> (Anne SENCO Colnbury)

For his part, James had reacted as Anne had expected. He openly admitted that his initial response had been pragmatic rather than enthusiastic:

> '.....I didn't initiate it, but as soon as Anne spoke to them [the two potential HLTAs] about it and suggested it, I could see the benefits and wholeheartedly supported it. [.....] So it's evolved, I think, and very much I think Anne has to take the credit for being the prime mover.'
>
> (James Headteacher Colnbury)

Writing about building social capital in PLCs, Bill Mulford (2007 p168) suggests that teachers who are 'empowered rather than controlled by what is going on around them' will be more effective, and at Colnbury it appears that the level of autonomy accorded to the SENCO had encouraged her to explore the wider policy context, and, recognising the place of the HLTAs within this, to champion the policy as a result. Whilst '...the degree of implementation of any innovation is different in different schools because of the actions and concerns of the head' (Hall et al in Fullan 1980 p26), James' initial reluctance did not prevent the HLTA initiative becoming as successfully embedded at Colnbury as in the other research schools. Although the initial pattern of implementation was somewhat different at Colnbury, and it was the

only one of the four schools in which a small pocket of resistance from teachers remained (see Chapter 6), there was little difference between the schools in the speed with which HLTAs had become accepted.

4.3 The Decision-Making Process

4.3.1 An Initial Consultation?

Using the snappy strap-line, 'If you involve people in decisions about change they are not afraid of it' (NRT 2004 p4), the NRT's key remodelling document 'Touching Tomorrow', exhorted various groups to embrace the possibilities of a remodelled workforce. In turn these were headteachers (responsible to governors for the day-to-day management of schools), teachers (frequently key deliverers of policy), support staff (assuming an ever more important role in the current policy arena), students (whose 'voice' must be heard under ECM principles) and parents (customers in a market-driven policy arena). Remarkable by their absence from this list of key stakeholders were governors, despite the fact that they are 'formally in charge of supervising the running of schools' (Gibton 2004 p28), and LAs.

The research clearly demonstrates that the views of only a limited range of stakeholders were considered in any of the schools during the decision making process. Beverley gave a typical explanation of the process:

> 'Who was involved in the decision making process really was just me and the HLTA, you know the *proposed* [heavy emphasis] HLTA. Teaching staff? Basically just the ones that were on the senior management team. Governors, yes, were consulted, but parents weren't consulted.'
>
> (Beverley Headteacher Albany)

Whilst it was her 'usual practice' to give staff the opportunity to participate in any decision making process, Beverley explained that since one member of the senior staff team was a member of the NUT and therefore strongly opposed in principle to the HLTA policy, she did not wish to offer a forum for opposition at that stage. The fact that Beverley could decide who would be consulted demonstrates the power of headteachers in the policy process, which I return to in Chapters 6 and 7. Although it affected the development of the policy at Colnbury (see Chapter 5), Union activism was not mentioned by the headteachers of either Banford or Downsfield.

4.3.2 Possible Participants

Interview data (see Table 1 p97) indicate that both senior staff and HLTAs in all four schools perceived that it was the headteacher, senior teachers and the relevant (hand-picked) TAs who took the decision to move the policy forward but there is little evidence of wide consultation either with teachers or the rest of the TA group. Within the ECM (DfES 2004c) and extended schools (DfES 2005a) agendas, the notion of players in the 'context of practice' has broadened recently to include schools' partner agencies, partner schools and other partner organisations within the school's community, but there was no evidence of such partners being consulted.

None of the schools had consulted parents. Interestingly, the IFS research (Sendorek 2006) indicated that one reason why schools had not implemented the HLTA policy had been fear of negative feedback from parents, resulting in unpopularity for the school. This marginalisation of parents in the decision-making process may accord with the view that in a climate of marketisation schools will avoid innovation under

pressure to conform to 'conservative, traditional modes associated with success' (Ozga 2002 p62).

Table 1: Responses to 'Who was involved in the decision re adopting HLTA?'

School/ Respon-dents	Possible participants in decision-making process:						
	HT	Senior staff	Other teachers	Potential HLTAs	Other TAs	Governors	Parents
Albany HT/DH	I	C	Inf	C	-	Inf	N
Albany HLTAs	I	C	C	C	Inf	Inf	N
Banford HT	I	C	C	C	-	C	N
Banford HLTAs	I	C	-	C	Inf	-	N
Colnbury HT/SENCO	C	I	Inf	C	Inf	C/Inf	N
Colnbury HLTAs	C	I	Inf	C	Inf	Inf	N
Downsfield HT	I	C	Inf	C	Inf	Inf	N
Downsfield HLTAs	I	C	Inf	C	Inf	C?	N

Key:

I	=	initiated HLTA
C	=	consulted
-	=	not mentioned

Inf	=	informed (ie told, but not asked)
N	=	neither consulted nor informed
?	=	unsure

As can be seen, governors had more commonly been 'informed' than 'consulted'. This marginalisation may seem surprising since governors are charged with 'establishing a strategic framework for the school' (DfEE 2000 para 4), but headteachers are responsible for 'internal organisation, management and control' (ibid para 5), and arguably, the introduction of HLTAs could be viewed as a matter of internal organisation; a further incremental development in the rapidly growing role of the TA. However, in the one case where the headteacher had actually consulted with governors, she had received their practical support:

> 'The governors were very, very supportive and they finally gave release time, finding a little bit of money to actually support the training through providing non-contact time [for Nicola] to actually get the evidence, and do the background work for it.'
>
> (Nosheen Headteacher Banford)

4.4 HLTA Status as Continuing Professional Development

4.4.1 The Needs of TAs

In its publication 'Time For Standards: Transforming the School Workforce', the DfES (2004d p5) offered the HLTA as a set of standards against which all adults undertaking 'specified work' (DfES 2003d) to release teachers for PPA could be judged, and WAMG has continued via its regular 'Notes' (eg WAMG 2006a,b,c, 2008b) to recommend the use of HLTAs as a sustainable solution to the problem of providing PPA time.

The present research initially appeared to indicate that all four school leaders had based their rationale for adopting the HLTA policy on considerations of CPD for already high achieving TAs, rather than the desirability of workforce remodelling. When asked why they had chosen to appoint HLTAs from the outset, only one headteacher referred to PPA, and none mentioned finance or workforce reform. The common theme was the opportunity offered by HLTA status to formally recognise and validate the enhanced role which certain support staff were already playing in their schools. For example at Colnbury, the SENCO had been seeking CPD for TAs who had successfully completed the Open University's 'Specialist Teacher Assistant Certificate' (STAC), a one year training course with a broad theoretical basis:

> 'I recognised that I had at least two teaching assistants. I mean they had both done the STAC. And, you know, what was the next stage for them? They were

> *currently working at a higher level than a lot of my other teaching assistants* [...]. When this came along, I said 'Let's go for it' and Jenny went for hers first and Daisy quickly followed.'
>
> (Anne SENCO Colnbury – *my italics*)

James, the headteacher of Colnbury, attributed his decision to overcome his reservations about HLTAs to the quality of the staff involved:

> '...two people stood out straight away as potential HLTAs and it was the fact that they were there, and we knew that they had the potential to do a lot more, that persuaded us to go down that route.'
>
> (James Headteacher Colnbury)

At Albany, the headteacher also chose to adopt the role because of the abilities of a specific TA:

> 'I've heard headteachers say 'Oh, we want to wait and see if it's sort of ironed out', where we weren't. *We were quite clear and the reason for being that clear, I think, also was to do with the fact that we knew she* [Sue] *could do it.* She was appropriate for that, and it was a means to an end for her development .....'
>
> (Beverley Headteacher Albany – *my italics*)

Likewise, at Banford the headteacher explained that the nursery nurse had been targeted as likely to benefit from the opportunities offered by gaining HLTA status:

> 'It was actually my nursery teacher [...] who was looking for professional development for our existing TAs. ... it was actually finding a route that would enable them to develop their skills and to actually give them a piece of paper..... So it was myself, my Nursery Teacher and Nicola [potential HLTA] who talked about routes that were available and that would fit into Nicola's time.
>
> (Nosheen Headteacher Banford)

Recognition of existing capabilities was also key to the decision making process at Downsfield:

> '..for me it really was rewarding and recognising something that was already happening in schools for Teaching Assistants.'
>
> (Lucy Headteacher Downsfield)

Thus in all four schools, offering both recognition and CPD opportunities for specific TAs already identified by senior staff as working at a 'higher level' appeared to be key features of the rationale in adopting the HLTA policy from the outset, and this was widely recognised by both senior staff and the HLTAs themselves.

In research conducted by Wilson and colleagues (2007), 74% of HLTAs said that achieving the status had led to increased confidence and self esteem. In my own research, every HLTA and almost all senior staff alluded to this unprompted during their interviews. Nosheen, for example, hoped that gaining HLTA status would persuade Nicola, whom she regarded as having good potential to become a teacher, to undertake further training. Although Nicola continued as a nursery nurse after completing her HLTA in 2005, she applied and was accepted for teacher training in 2007. Both Nicola and Nosheen independently attributed this to the confidence which she had gained through achieving HLTA status. Whilst none of the participants mentioned increasing individuals' self esteem in relation to the rationale for adopting the HLTA policy, this is clearly associated with recognising the enhanced role which TAs were already undertaking in their schools.

The data clearly demonstrated that the HLTAs felt that they had been specifically 'chosen' for the role by people who had noted their potential. They frequently mentioned colleague TAs in whom they recognised similar qualities, and whom they expected to be encouraged to apply for HLTA status in the future. Carol Vincent (1996) draws our attention to the possible imbalance in power relationships between teachers as a predominantly white middle class graduate group with a shared professional identity, and TAs, many of whom may be working class women whose

education did not include university. The notion of potential HLTAs being 'chosen' raises the question of equality of opportunity in terms of access, and the issue of headteachers as 'gatekeepers' to the status is explored in Chapter 6.

4.4.2 The Needs of the Schools

Pat Foulkes (2005) suggests from her study of the first cohort of 36 HLTAs going through the status via the University of Luton, that the majority of the impetus for the candidates to seek HLTA status came from within their schools, and that the resulting CPD, whilst recognised and appreciated by the HLTAs, appeared to be 'planned to meet school needs rather than for individual career development' (Foulkes 2005 p18).

Whilst the emphasis placed on CPD by schools in the current study initially appeared to contradict these findings, it soon became apparent that school-based reasons had indeed formed part of the rationale for early adoption of the policy. At Banford, for example, recruitment and retention of staff had been a problem and was central to Nosheen's plans for HLTAs:

> 'It was to find a way forward of engaging and also retaining quality staff within the school by giving them an opportunity to develop themselves further, but also looking at ways of actually using that newly acquired skill within the school so it stops them actually looking elsewhere.'
>
> (Nosheen Headteacher Banford)

Likewise, at Albany a class teacher was due to retire in July 2007. She had also been responsible for music, but none of the applicants for her teaching post was a musician. When I interviewed the headteacher, she had recently appointed Maria, a TA with musical skills, whom she was confident could quickly attain HLTA status:

> 'We have got a possible person in mind. She's quite new to being a teaching assistant, but she's of the calibre that is needed for HLTA, so...'
>
> (Beverley Headteacher Albany)

For her part, Maria clearly felt that she had been 'earmarked' for development from early on in her association with the school first as a parent helper, then as a TA:

> '..the longer I have been here, the more opportunities and challenges they've given me. The teacher in charge of music retired last summer and somehow they knew I could play the piano and do a bit of music so they asked me to take more responsibility with the singing and...and the whole of the music curriculum. So I think that doing the HLTA..., I just saw it almost as a recognition of the level of work that I was actually doing for the school, and a good stepping stone if I did want to become a teacher in the next few years.'
>
> (Maria HLTA candidate Albany)

Maria had been given an opportunity which she clearly valued, and Beverley had been able to appoint the (non-musical) class teacher of her choice, whilst still providing music with a trained musician for all classes, which benefited the school. Thus it could be argued that whilst rationalising the HLTA in terms of CPD, the headteachers had skilfully used the opportunity to the mutual advantage of TA and school. The achievement of HLTA status, whilst bringing increased confidence and self-esteem to the HLTAs, had directly benefited each of the schools, and closer analysis revealed that these pragmatic considerations had played a significant part in the decision making process.

Interestingly, when the HLTAs themselves were asked their opinions on the rationale for their schools adopting the HLTA, a heavier emphasis on PPA cover and financial considerations was evident, with four of the ten mentioning PPA cover and four referring to finance. Only at Downsfield did two of the three HLTAs mention Workforce Reform. However, all of the HLTAs referred to having their abilities or existing work recognised, to CPD, or to both.

4.5 The HLTA Role

Pat Drake and colleagues (2004 p 127) suggest that all TA activity can be placed on a continuum between 'ancillary-like' and 'teacher-like' work. When asked to describe their roles, all ten HLTAs focused on 'teacher like' tasks, placing themselves firmly at the 'teaching' end of this continuum. This accords with findings by Wilson and colleagues (2006) that 73% of primary HLTAs reported being given greater responsibility for teaching and learning since gaining the status. In all four schools both TAs and HLTAs were treated like teachers in terms of being addressed by children as Mrs/Miss/Ms X. All four were using HLTAs to cover PPA, although this development had only been introduced at Colnbury in September 2007. However, there were noticeable differences between the schools in the activities which the HLTAs undertook whilst covering PPA, and in their deployment at other times.

At Albany, Sue's ICT expertise was being fully used (indeed, this was why she had originally been employed as a TA) and she was teaching ICT to all year groups as part of the PPA rotation. Being based in the deputy head's class, Sue also covered the deputy's leadership time. Sue had intended from the outset to use the HLTA as a step towards a teaching career, and she had just been accepted to train via the GTP route. She explained that she was teaching classes on her own for 2.5 days each week, and that doing her own planning and preparation marked her out from other TAs. She was clear that her extended role was preparing her for her teacher training.

Maria, who had just completed her HLTA assessment, had also been employed at Albany with a specific skill in mind and a clear career path into teaching. As a

musician, she was now delivering class music to all classes as part of the PPA rotation, and was also intending to apply for the GTP. At Albany, consistency in the use of the role across the school was demonstrable, and all the teachers and TAs knew that support staff taught whole classes and covered PPA time.

At Downsfield, consistency in the deployment of the three HLTAs was also evident. Each was part of a Year Group team, and worked with small groups for the majority of the time, always taking the lower ability sets. This is interesting in terms of Blatchford's (2003) contention that the presence of support staff prevents children directly interacting with the teacher. It can also be viewed as part of a long history of 'less good' teachers teaching the 'bottom set', a question which is returned to in Chapter 7.

HLTAs at Downsfield also covered for PPA time and for unplanned teacher absence within their Year Group teams. The HLTAs felt that they were given freedom and flexibility to plan, and they clearly understood how the TA and HLTA roles differed in their school:

> 'I take sets in the morning, Maths, Science and English sets, which I plan myself. So the HLTAs in the school do the same thing, and the TAs usually are there for supporting the special needs children and for admin work and the general role really, where I do a lot of PPA cover as well. Covering when the teachers are absent and basically I am seen more as part of the teaching staff now rather than a TA.'
>
> (Katie HLTA Downsfield)

> 'I teach and plan my own English and Maths set. So it's a lot of planning and the teaching of sets and marking and assessing....And I also do PPA cover.'
>
> (Stacey HLTA Downsfield)

The clarity of role described by the HLTAs, exactly matched their headteacher's description and was reflected in their job descriptions.

Despite the fact that at Colnbury the introduction of the HLTA role had been led by the SENCO, there was also a consistent picture in HLTA deployment. In addition to whole class teaching and PPA cover, both HLTAs mentioned their wider role in relation to other support staff and to the SENCO:

> '[HLTA is different] in terms of responsibility really, and I think we're looked towards to give training and support to other teaching assistants, as well as other teaching assistants will often come and ask for advice on various things.'
>
> (Jenny HLTA Colnbury)

> '[Our HLTA role] has changed, it's changed considerably....it's really moved up quite a few notches. ....Anne [SENCO] is an extremely good delegator...And she's trusting and I think that is the key thing. Jenny and I, she makes us feel valued, the way she is and she trusts us and she knows that if she leaves us copious lists *[indicates one and laughs]* ...which believe me that's probably a short list! She would have it all written down and she knows that we will do it.'
>
> (Daisy HLTA Colnbury)

The HLTA role at Banford presented the least consistent picture amongst the four schools. This may be related to the fact that initially Nosheen had the least clear idea of the four headteachers about how she wished to develop the HLTA role. However role consistency was also complicated by the fact that Nicola had retained her nursery nurse job title after achieving HLTA status, Jane had very specific duties linked to her work in the Speech and Language Resource, and Anna had only just obtained her status. Only Anna was timetabled to cover PPA although Nicola frequently undertook cover for teachers in the nursery, and Jane covered for absent teachers in the Resource. Nevertheless, there was clear recognition from the teachers' questionnaires that PPA and teacher absence were covered by support staff, mainly HLTAs.

The TA induction standards (TDA 2006b) described TAs' work as supporting children, teachers, the school and the curriculum, with an emphasis on individual

pupil support. By contrast, analysis of the work undertaken by the HLTAs in the study [see Appendix 9] shows them to be focused on large groups and whole classes, raising the question of whether their pay and status reflect these increased responsibilities.

4.6 HLTA Pay and Conditions

At Colnbury Anne line manages the team of 15 TAs and 2 HLTAs, and explained that the HLTAs both supported her in her SENCO role by undertaking SEN administration, and also had their own special projects:

> 'They both have a project. Daisy also is responsible for the 'Huff and Puff' *[playground activities scheme]*, the friendship groups, so peer mediation. And Jenny is responsible for the medical[5] children and provision and liaising with the health authority and organising training.'
>
> (Anne SENCO Colnbury)

This wider development of the HLTA role was less evident in the other three schools, despite the government recommending such deployment (ATL 2003). However, at Downsfield, Katie supervised the lunchtime controllers and at Banford, Anna was responsible for the organisation of the reading scheme. It is clear that, although HLTAs are paid far less than teachers, they are taking on weighty responsibilities.

Teachers' pay is nationally determined (DCSF 2008). By contrast support staff pay is locally determined, guided by recommendations from a National Joint Committee, although this is changing and the bill to create a national School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) is scheduled to become statute during 2009 (DCSF 2009a). HLTA pay is generally quoted as a per annum figure. In April 2008, this was £20,884 in Riverside and Stoneham both being 'London fringe' LAs, against a Newly

[5] Refers to children with acute medical conditions (eg needing tube feeding) included in the school.

Qualified Teacher (NQT) salary of £21,619[6]. At first sight the two salaries look similar. However, this is misleading because support staff are hourly paid, generally to a maximum of 30 hours for a 'full time' working week (ie full opening hours of the school) and for a maximum of 44.1 weeks per annum (39 school weeks plus statutory holidays), spread across twelve equal monthly payments. This effectively reduces the HLTA's salary to £14,314 [see Appendix 10], well below teachers' salaries. In addition, 33% of HLTAs in Wilson's (2007) study reported having 'split contracts', (ie being paid as HLTAs only for the hours in which they undertook PPA cover, and the rest of the time as TAs).

Whilst the government is clear that it is 'good practice' for HLTAs to be fully employed in an HLTA role (WAMG 2008b), schools determine their own contractual arrangements. All the HLTAs at Downsfield and Colnbury were fully employed as HLTAs, with no split contracts. However, at Banford, Jane was undertaking some HLTA work and being paid as a TA Level 3 for those hours while waiting for an HLTA post to be created for her. At Albany, Sue worked a 'split contract' of 2.5 days per week as an HLTA and 2.5 days as a TA during which she provided ICT technical support across the school and worked with small groups. Beverley expressed concern that Sue was being exploited, but explained that they had discussed the financial situation and agreed that this was 'the best solution for the school' (Beverley, Headteacher, Albany). Interestingly, two of the Albany teachers agreed, and the other two strongly agreed, with the phrase 'the government is using HLTAs as cheap teachers', again raising the question of women in the 'caring professions' as an exploited occupational group (Moyles 2001).

[6] This figure includes the 'London Fringe' allowance of £992 pa

4.7 Summary

This chapter locates the initial impetus for adopting the HLTA policy as coming from the headteachers of Albany, Banford and Downsfield schools but from the SENCO at Colnbury, and suggests that headteachers are often motivated to sponsor policy innovation for personal reasons. It lists the possible principal players in the 'context of practice' as headteachers, teachers, support staff, students, parents, governors, LAs and schools' partner agencies. However, it demonstrates how, in all four schools, the decision to put forward HLTA candidates appears to have been largely restricted to headteachers, relevant TAs and senior managers, with little evidence of participation from other internal stakeholders and no attempt to inform or consult parents.

In all cases the rationale for adopting the policy at the outset was expressed in terms of offering CPD to specific TAs regarded by senior staff as already working at a 'higher level', an emphasis which appeared to contradict national research (Wilson et al 2007) that schools had selected HLTA candidates on the basis of school need rather than CPD. However, the achievement of the status, whilst bringing increased confidence and self-esteem to the HLTAs, has actually directly benefited each school, and the chapter demonstrates that whole school considerations did in fact play a significant part in the decision making process in all cases.

Lastly, the chapter describes the HLTA role in all four schools, noting that PPA cover and large group work are common features, and that HLTAs' personal strengths, for example in ICT, are often utilised in their work. It concludes by raising HLTAs' pay and conditions in comparison to their increasing responsibilities, as a major issue.

Chapter 5 HLTAs, Teachers and Professionalism

> 'Professional Learning Communities can cross boundaries, both the fuzzy social differentiations that develop between groups within the school, and the clearer borders that separate the school's members from those in the community and in other schools. As with any boundary crossing, expanding our ideas about 'who belongs' presents challenges to the existing culture.'
>
> (Stoll & Seashore Lewis 2007 p 4)

5.1 Introduction

Drawing principally on data from the HLTA interviews and teachers' questionnaires, this chapter addresses Question 3: 'What are the HLTAs' perceptions of their role? How do these compare with the views of the teachers in their schools, and to what extent do teachers regard HLTAs as fellow professionals?' It first considers the experiences which HLTAs bring to the role, and their developing sense of identity within the PLC. It then explores the work undertaken by HLTAs and relates this to the current project of 'professionalizing' the childcare workforce. An analysis is undertaken of teachers' present level of understanding of the HLTA role and the chapter concludes with a discussion of the dilemma presented as professionals attempt to reconcile the government's demands for a remodelled workforce with the needs of the workers within it.

5.2 Experience and Expertise – Does it Count?

In order to deploy HLTAs most effectively, WAMG (2005a) advised schools to 'take note of the wide range of experience and expertise that has enabled them to gain the status'. This raises the question of the skills and experience that the research participants may be bringing to their role, and whether they perceive these as being

both used and valued. To date no published work has examined HLTAs' initial progress into the role, but Moyles and Suschitzky (1997b p25) noted that almost all the participants in their study of the employment and deployment of TAs had already had 'some form of unpaid contact with the school, often as parent helpers'. Of the HLTAs in this present study, only Nicola (the youngest and only unmarried member of the group) had continued straight from school into the career which had led her to HLTA status, qualifying as a Nursery Nurse in 2002, and completing her HLTA in 2005.

The other nine were all mothers who had come to HLTA via the role of 'parent helper' in their children's schools, and their qualifications and experiences spanned a wide range. Jenny and Maria were graduates, with degrees in microbiology and English respectively. Anna had been a paediatric psychiatric nurse, Sue was an HND qualified electronics engineer, Daisy had a BTEC in hotel management and had 'worked her way up to front office manager' (Daisy HLTA), while Jane and Kirsty were both qualified secretaries. Katie had left school with CSEs and worked as a carer for the elderly. The research suggests that expediency rather than life planning had brought this diverse group of women to volunteer in their children's schools, and from this to move into a TA, and subsequently HLTA, role.

Only Stacey had no formal qualifications, but had married straight from school, had children immediately and not worked prior to becoming a parent volunteer. Fenton and colleagues (2003 p4) describe young people who have 'missed out' first time round on education taking advantage of a 'second chance' in the current labour

market, often through a 'lucky break' guided by a supportive mentor (in this case a teacher). Stacey's description typified such a transition:

> 'It was when my son was in Year 3 here, that I came in as a volunteer helper. And then one of the teachers here actually said to me, you know, 'Why don't you get an application form to become a teaching assistant?' [.....] So that's how I started! So I started on a couple of hours each day, working up to full time....'
>
> (Stacey HLTA Downsfield)

5.3 Developing Identities

Madeline Arnot (1993 p 196) writes of liberal feminist attempts in the 1970s to 'degender' the public sphere, so that equality of opportunity between the sexes would transform the world of politics, industry, culture and education. However, she comments that 'little was done to tackle the dilemmas faced by women in their dual roles' as workers and mothers, since social and family policy was not included in the Sex Discrimination Act (1975)[7]. Despite changes in the nature of employment due to globalisation and flexible capitalism, the dominant model in the UK remains father working full time and mother having primary responsibility for the children (Fenton et al 2003).

This resonates with the HLTAs' experiences. Only two had stopped work when they had children; the rest had returned to work after maternity leave but, for a variety of reasons, had subsequently found the reality of balancing children and career to be impractical. Sue had abandoned her career as an electronics engineer and become a fitness instructor 'to fit around the children', Jane had relinquished her job as a

[7] Policy commitment to work/ family balance remains an issue. For example Labour's proposals to extend flexible working for parents announced in the Queen's Speech 2007 (Number10.gov.uk 2007) were subsequently 'delayed to ease the impact of recession' in October 2008 (Wintour 2008).

secretary and taken up child minding, and Katie had returned to her work as a carer but found that the hours did not fit with family life. Both Jenny and Kirsty described the difficulty of maintaining careers once their children were beyond nursery age:

> 'I managed to keep going until my children were about five years old and started school and then it just became increasingly difficult because my job involved lots of travelling overseas and it was just very difficult to manage the family. ..It was just too stressful so I, I just resigned without any real plan of what to do next..... '
>
> (Jenny HLTA Colnbury)

> 'I had a very good job before as a PA to the Director of Housing [...] but I found in the summer especially, all my salary was just going on childcare fees.'
>
> (Kirsty HLTA Downsfield)

5.4 HLTAs' Perceptions of their Role

Although the HLTAs' new careers in education had been largely unplanned, their enthusiasm and commitment for their role was a notable feature throughout the interviews. Emerging themes were the variety of the school day compared with the predictability of office routines, the pleasure of seeing the children achieve, and the trust and acceptance shown towards them by teachers and headteachers. The most frequently used word was 'loved'. For example:

> '...then my children came to school and I just applied for a job as a TA here.... And so I've just...you know, really loved it. It doesn't feel like coming to work at all really. It's absolutely no bother and I just love coming here!'
>
> (Katie HLTA Downsfield)

> 'So I started here as a TA and I absolutely loved it to the point where I said I'd never ever go back to working in an office again'.
>
> (Kirsty HLTA Downsfield)

> 'Became a TA in the year 2000. Loved it, loved it, getting more involved, so went naturally into the HLTA because I wanted to do more.'
>
> (Sue HLTA Albany)

This strong personal identification with their role resonates with Jennifer Nias' (1989) work on the development of teacher identities. Nias demonstrated how for many teachers, although not all, there was a marked investment of the personal in their work, with interpersonal relationships and situational influences shaping identity by impinging on the 'personal self'. However, this work was undertaken prior to the tight prescription of the National Curriculum, and at a time when the concept of teaching as a vocation (and therefore low in pay but high in job satisfaction) was still prevalent.

It could be argued that in both these respects the present position of HLTAs is very similar to that of the teachers in Nias' study. Interestingly, the theme of 'loving the work' also emerges strongly in recent research concerning TAs. Jo Barkham's (2008) study on the role of 'other adults' in the classroom demonstrates the link between TAs' job satisfaction and their close professional and personal relationships with their class teachers, also a feature of my own study. However, Janet Moyles (2001) writing on Early Years Professionals suggests that their 'love' of the job is used to position early years practitioners as overly emotional and therefore somehow unprofessional.

The TA/teacher pay differential is significant, and Barkham (2008 p 850) notes the comments of one TA in her research that 'to feel valued you have to be paid for what you are doing'. She suggests that TAs' low pay levels

> '....may represent a continuation of an undervaluing of 'women's work' by women whose perceived primary role is that of 'housewife and mother', who subordinate their needs to those of the children and class.'
>
> (Barkham 2008 p851)

Whilst recognising that they were poorly paid, only two of the HLTAs in my study suggested that they were being exploited. As in Bonner's research (2002) addressing the question 'why are almost all support staff female?' they dismissed pay as a minor

issue compared with the convenience of working school hours and being available to their own children during school holidays. They accepted the situation and derived genuine satisfaction from their work. This issue is further explored in Chapter 7.

The HLTAs were also confident that their skills were recognised and used. A strong perception was evident that the teachers respected them as a group of fellow professionals engaged in a common enterprise:

> '....we are a very good team. Everybody works well together, and I think that's because people respect each other and treat each other well..... '
>
> (Maria HLTA Albany)

> '...the teachers will ask our opinions. They'll just discuss their plans and talk through plans with us.....'
>
> (Jane HLTA Banford)

Although mention was made by three HLTAs of being at a 'different level' from the teachers, they were clear that all contributions were valued equally:

> '....it's a team, and although we're on different levels and we've got different experiences and qualifications, there's not a great demarcation, you know, it's not like 'Oh you're TAs so you can't.....' Socially TAs are included, so you don't feel as though there's a sort of barrier... '
>
> (Anna HLTA Banford)

> '...I mean obviously we aren't working on the same sort of level [as teachers] but we're included in everything.....plans for trips and the general running of the day, so yeah they do [see us as fellow professionals].'
>
> (Katie HLTA Downsfield)

Maria's perception was that the teachers respected her musical skills:

> '....Most of them are terrified at the prospect of having to teach singing and are just delighted that anybody else wants to do it! '
>
> (Maria HLTA Albany)

Meanwhile, Daisy drew parallels between schools and hospitals:

> '....that's exactly where we are ...Your doctors are your doctors; the nurses are good because they can do all those other things. And actually TAs can

> sometimes handle children better than the class teacher because of the fact of the numbers. We're often in a small group, so yeah! We're in it together. '
>
> (Daisy HLTA Colnbury)

When asked whether the teachers in their schools might feel that their professionalism was being threatened by the HLTA role, the HLTAs presented a similarly optimistic picture [see Appendix 11]. Just three HLTAs (one at each of Albany, Colnbury and Downsfield schools) had reservations, for example:

> '....I think some of them do. How do I know? Well, some teachers are very open. I mean, they, they don't ... in this school they don't mince their words [laughs] so you know, there are a couple of teachers who actually don't agree with it.... and they do, they do say things to you.'
>
> (Jenny HLTA Colnbury)

The rest confidently asserted that there was no perceived threat. Only Katie cautioned that this might have been a pragmatic response on the part of the teachers:

> '....Basically they know that actually without us, their lives would be so much more difficult! [...] I think they've just had to accept it! '
>
> (Katie HLTA Dowsfield)

5.5 The Teachers' Perspectives

From the initial launch of the HLTA Standards (TTA 2003), the government included the word 'Professional' in the title, clearly aiming to secure the HLTA as a 'professional' role in its own right. However, as Jayne Osgood (2006) comments, there is currently much debate in the media, the academy and government about what a 'professional' role might mean. In relation to the current project to 'professionalize' the early childhood education and care workforce, for example, Osgood raises the issue of whether the government's 'new professionals' benefit from 'a strengthened position and increased respect' (ibid p5), or whether in reality the professionalism

discourse acts as a mechanism for centralised control via targets, accountability and performativity, an issue which is debated in Chapter 7.

By contrast, Judyth Sachs (2001 p152) speaks of 'democratic professionalism' which seeks to 'demystify professional work and build alliances between teachers and excluded constituencies'. The majority of teachers clearly demonstrated that HLTAs were not regarded as a threat, as 23% strongly disagreed and 47% disagreed with the statement 'HLTAs are a threat to the professionalism of teachers', whilst only 5% strongly agreed and 6% agreed [see Appendix 12 Q18 (2)].

Carol Vincent's (1996 p76) comment that teachers' values and attitudes are 'refined locally through staffroom conversation' may also apply to the research HLTAs, who all enjoyed equal access to their staffrooms. Here, they had experienced at first hand teachers' behaviours, their concerns, their informal professional discussions, their 'off duty' moments of fun, but also their workloads. Thus it is possible to hypothesise that during their period as parent volunteers and then TAs, the HLTAs were being gradually socialised into the edge of the teaching profession such that they would more readily be accepted as fellow professionals. Arguably, then, it is unsurprising that 70% of teachers did not consider their professional status to be threatened by HLTAs.

Despite the optimistic perception of the HLTAs, the teachers were more reserved in their reaction to the statement 'HLTAs are a professional group in their own right' with one third remaining neutral. Nevertheless, only 6 were actively negative towards the concept [see Appendix 12 Q18(5)].

Bolam and colleagues (2007 p17) comment that both their decision to include support staff within the scope of their study of PLCs, and their findings, serve to demonstrate how 'thinking and practice have been shifting about the key players in promoting pupils' learning'. Support staff, they concluded, were seen as key members of the learning community, and where teacher and TA planned together, enabling a clear understanding of objectives through developing a shared vision, it was notable that TAs were able to take the initiative and devise their own strategies. This is borne out in the present research, although Katie, a recent HLTA, was still struggling to define her position in the school structure:

> 'I don't have a TA hat now really, but I don't have a teacher hat. I call myself an 'in-betweenie'. So yes, I am seen more as teaching staff and I don't do any of the TA roles. I'm not on any of the rotas that they have, you know. So yeah – I'm classed more as a teacher – I think!'
>
> (Katie HLTA Downsfield)

Katie's dilemma suggests that although the HLTA role has diverged from the TA role, it has not yet 'settled' into a niche of its own. This may be a result of a lack of clarity nationally as the role has developed. Drake and colleagues offer a compromise solution by setting the TA role in the context of the 'para-professional':

> 'People working professionally do not necessarily *belong* to a 'profession' ....However, they do work in ways that demonstrate adherence to many of the professional characteristics.'
>
> (Drake et al 2004 p122)

HLTAs were therefore asked how their role differed from that of other TAs.

5.6 HLTA: TA or Teacher?

WAMG's initial advice that schools should 'feel confident' about using HLTAs to cover PPA time and short term teacher absence (WAMG 2005c p1) was later

followed by warnings that no HLTA should be exclusively covering PPA since they would then be 'effectively working as a teacher' (WAMG 2006b p1), particularly where the HLTA was working on a 'split contract', being paid as an HLTA only for certain hours and as a TA for the rest. Eight of the ten HLTAs in this present research regularly covered PPA and clearly regarded this as the main element of their work which marked them out from other TAs:

> '...the main thing I do is teaching, whole class teaching, and I do that for three afternoons a week.'
>
> (Jenny HLTA Colnbury)

> 'I teach and plan my own English and Maths set. So it's a lot of planning and the teaching of sets and marking ..... and I also do PPA cover'
>
> (Katie HLTA Downsfield)

These are major responsibilities covering duties formerly associated with teachers rather than TAs. Wilson et al (2007) similarly found that 77% of the HLTAs in their study covered PPA time.

Research tracking a pilot group of HLTAs who had achieved the status in April 2004, and questioning them one year on about their role, showed that the traditional TA role of supporting individual and small group teaching and learning had remained dominant in their HLTA work (Bedford et al 2006). However, the 2006 follow-up study (Goddard et al 2007), revealed that the introduction of PPA and staff absence cover had significantly altered the participating HLTAs' roles. Their workload had been increased by their additional responsibilities for lesson planning, assessment, recording and reporting.

No HLTAs in this present research were providing one-to-one pupil support; their roles were all focused on whole classes or large groups of children [see Appendix 9].

They perceived themselves as supporting teachers (via PPA and stand-in cover), and all but three also as offering significant support to the school via areas as diverse as providing ICT technical support and planning school productions. This may suggest that the role is more embedded, or further advanced, in these schools than those in Wilson and colleagues'study, (2007 p12) where HLTAs felt that 'teaching individual and small groups of pupils' was still their major contribution to pupils' performance, allowing additional planning time was their major contribution for teachers and 'providing cover at short notice' was their major contribution to the school.

The teachers were asked to consider who performed 48 specific tasks in their schools: 'TAs only', 'TAs mainly', 'HLTAs only', 'HLTAs mainly' or 'neither TAs nor HLTAs'. The ten tasks with the highest response rate for 'HLTAs only' were listed in rank order. This was compared with a list generated by adding together the responses for 'HLTAs only' and 'HLTAs mainly' and again listing the top ten responses:

Table 2: Responses to 'Who performs this activity in your school?'

Question:	**Responses:**				
Who performs this activity in your school?	**HLTAs only**		**HLTAs mainly**	**HLTAs only + HLTAs mainly**	
	% response	*Rank Order*	% response	% response	*Order*
Whole class teaching – whole lessons	45	*1*	25	70	*1*
Planning lessons independently	**44**	***2***	**0**	**44**	*7*
Covering teachers' PPA time	37	*3*	25	62	*3*
Whole class teaching – part of lesson	34	*4*	31	65	*2*
Covering for absent teachers	31	*5*	27	58	*5*
Planning lessons with the teacher	22	*6*	39	61	*4*
Writing own reports for SEN reviews	22	*6*	11	33	*9*
Attending SEN children's IEP reviews	17	*8*	14	31	*10*
Supporting other TAs in their role	16	*9*			
Differentiating materials for SEN	16	*10*		46	*6*
Assessing pupil achievement				39	*8*

Of the 48 tasks, the top nine were common to both lists, with the top six being demonstrably centred on teaching, planning and cover for PPA and teacher absence. Despite WAMG's (2006a) assertion that the HLTA role should extend beyond PPA cover, in the teachers' perception, it was the HLTAs' teaching and planning responsibilities which marked them out them from other TAs. This exactly matched the HLTAs' own perceptions (see above).

The high response rates for 'HLTAs mainly' could be accounted for by the fact that TAs aspiring to HLTA status must be able to demonstrate that they have fully met all the standards prior to applying for assessment. Thus for example, there may be TAs undertaking whole class teaching to cover short term teacher absence or PPA as part of this preparation. The only task considered by the teachers to be being performed by 'HLTAs only', with no responses under 'HLTAs mainly' was 'planning lessons independently'. This clearly indicates the teachers' perception that only recognised HLTAs are qualified to undertake actual preparation of lessons.

Although it is 'good practice' for headteachers to utilise only HLTAs for permanent PPA arrangements (WAMG 2005a), headteachers can legally permit any TA to assume such responsibilities on a long term or permanent basis without achieving HLTA status provided that they consider them 'capable' (DfES 2003d). This differentiation between the letter and the 'principles' of the agreement (WAMG 2008b) created confusion from the outset about the appropriate use of HLTAs (Sendorek 2006). A common theme in the present interviews with headteachers was the lack of clarity still surrounding the role:

> '...I still feel we need far more guidance....When my first HLTA was going through I really did not know how I was going to be using her. It's just that she needed professional development of some kind.'
>
> (Nosheen Headteacher Banford)

> ' ..it is very, very obvious that they [HLTAs] do have a high profile in the school. But I think that lack of clarity... well...it's still a national issue.'
>
> (Lucy Headteacher Downsfield)

Perhaps, then, it is unsurprising that Wilson et al (2007) noted that 22% of HLTAs in their study felt that 'teachers and/or senior leaders did not fully understand the role' (ibid p92), a question also investigated in the present research.

5.7 Do Teachers Understand the Role?

The teachers were asked to respond to a number of statements about the HLTA using the options 'definitely true', 'unsure probably true', 'definitely untrue', 'unsure probably untrue', or 'don't know'. Each of the statements does have a correct answer, and the results revealed a lack of knowledge about the HLTA status which was common to all the schools [see Appendix 12 Q17]. It was notable that frequently statements which teachers confidently believed to be true or untrue were in fact the opposite. For example, the statement 'Candidates can gain HLTA status by 3 day assessment only without following a formal training course' is actually true, but produced the following result:

Candidates do not need a formal training course	Definitely true	Unsure probably true	Definitely untrue	Unsure probably untrue	Don't know	No response
Total (max 64)	2	4	22	14	22	-
%	**3**	**6**	**34**	**22**	**34**	-

The fact that 97% of teachers answered incorrectly indicates that the route into HLTA status has not been widely publicised across schools, even though it may have been

explained by managers to potential candidates. Initial plans at national level to develop three different routes to HLTA status (three day assessment, and twenty day or ninety day training plus assessment) were altered following analysis by Pye Tait (2006) of the pilot study. Only the three day assessment route was retained, accompanied by a self analysis tool to be used by potential HLTAs to identify any gaps in their knowledge or understanding. They could then access suitable training to address these needs, prior to applying for three day assessment.

Many HLTAs in the IFS study (Sendorek 2006) commented on their surprise and disappointment at the three day 'Preparation for Assessment'. The majority were already STAC qualified, and had expected some underpinning knowledge to assist them with the HLTA role, rather than three days of training in how to present evidence against the HLTA standards. It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that the teachers likewise misunderstood the nature of the 'Preparation for Assessment' and assumed it to be a formal training course.

Similar confusion was evident with the statement 'To gain HLTA status, it is essential that the candidate teaches whole classes regularly as part of their day to day work', which over half of the teachers believed to be true:

Candidate must teach whole classes regularly?	Definitely true	Unsure probably true	Definitely untrue	Unsure probably untrue	Don't know	No response
Total (max 64)	10	23	5	13	12	1
%	**16**	**36**	**8**	**20**	**10**	**2**

In fact, the standards state that the candidate must have had 'experience' of advancing the learning of whole classes, and guidance for Providers of Preparation makes it clear that candidates may not be doing this on a regular basis:

> 'Whatever the context.....it is still a requirement for candidates to demonstrate that they have the skills to support learning with a whole class. If this has not been possible within the candidate's own setting, the candidate should be instructed to contact their LA to discuss possible options.'
>
> (TDA 2007b p14)

Most teachers correctly answered the statement 'When HLTAs are teaching without a class teacher present, responsibility for the children's progress lies with the teacher'.

Teacher has responsibility for children's progress	Definitely true	Unsure probably true	Definitely untrue	Unsure probably untrue	Don't know	No response
Total (max 64)	23	18	4	8	11	
%	**36**	**28**	**6**	**12**	**17**	

This is true, and it would be concerning if teachers whose PPA was being covered by HLTAs did not recognise this fact. However, 48% of teachers surveyed had no direct experience of HLTAs in their work, and it is possible that these teachers would include the 35% of teachers who answered incorrectly or did not know.

Interestingly, over 20% of teachers did not know who was legally allowed to cover their classes during their PPA time. The statement 'Only HLTAs or qualified teachers are permitted by law to cover teachers' PPA time' is untrue, but generated a variety of responses:

Only HLTAs or teachers can cover PPA	Definitely true	Unsure probably true	Definitely untrue	Unsure probably untrue	Don't know	No response
Total (64)	8	17	10	14	14	1
%	**12**	**27**	**16**	**22**	**22**	**2**

Since these teachers work in schools where PPA is largely covered by HLTAs, it is possible that they did not realise that under the legislation (DfES 2003d) anyone deemed fit by the headteacher can cover classes. However, had they better understood the principles behind HLTA assessment, they would have recognised that TAs must

cover classes prior to achieving the status in order to demonstrate that they have met the standards.

Most teachers were aware that achieving HLTA status would not guarantee the candidate an HLTA post:

HLTA status guarantees an HLTA post?	Definitely true	Unsure probably true	Definitely untrue	Unsure probably untrue	Don't know	No response
Total (max 64)	2	2	25	25	10	
%	**3**	**3**	**39**	**39**	**16**	

However, when asked to respond to the statement that 'people who have gained HLTA status must be paid on the HLTA pay scale' over 60% assumed this to be either probably or definitely true, and only 6% recognised it as being untrue. Clearly they did not understand that pay follows the post, not the qualification, so only HLTAs appointed to HLTA posts would be paid at HLTA level.

Those with HLTA must be paid as HLTAs	Definitely true	Unsure probably true	Definitely untrue	Unsure probably untrue	Don't know	No response
Total (64)	16	23	4	8	12	1
%	**25**	**36**	**6**	**12**	**19**	**2**

The lack of availability of HLTA roles has been recognised as a problem nationally, but again, the teachers showed little understanding of the true situation. In Wilson's research (Wilson et al 2007), the availability of suitable posts for those with the status was identified as a barrier by 29% of HLTAs, and the difficulty of funding posts was also reflected in the responses of headteachers in the present study.

Ofsted (2007) criticises schools for failing to evaluate the impact of workforce remodelling. The lack of knowledge across all four schools of a role which they have enthusiastically embraced from the outset perhaps raises the question of the extent to

which roles under the new workforce remodelling have been growing in schools without being widely discussed or evaluated. All four schools were recommended by their LAs as schools where the role was well advanced, HLTAs and senior managers have spoken enthusiastically about the successes and the teachers appear very supportive of the HLTA role, and yet little is known about it still. Indeed, one of the participating teachers annotated her completed questionnaire in the margin:

> 'Filling in this questionnaire has made me realise how little I know about HLTAs – perhaps finding out should be an activity for my next PPA time?'
> (Teacher Downsfield)

5.8 A New Professional Identity for Teachers?

The NUT has remained actively opposed to the notion of HLTAs taking classes, believing that this dilutes the graduate status of the profession. Although recent NUT commissioned research does recognise that teachers value the support of TAs as partners in the classroom, it remains very dismissive of 'the bartering of PPA time out in exchange for having pupils taught or supervised by unqualified staff' (MacBeath 2007 p38).

Very few teachers in this study belong to the NUT. This may be an important issue as all other teacher unions had given their tacit support to the HLTA via the mechanism of the Social Partnership. When teachers were asked whether they would be happy for their classes to be covered wholly or partly by an HLTA to provide their PPA time, the results at Colnbury, where there is a small but significant NUT presence, were slightly less positive than in the other schools. Also, at Albany, the only teacher who belonged to the NUT responded negatively while her colleagues' views were all

positive [see Appendix 12 Q 14/15]. However, whilst recognising that this may make the results less relevant to schools with a strong NUT presence, the purpose of the present research is to represent the case as it is (Stake 1998).

Under the NA teachers are legally bound to take PPA time. It is notable that whilst 86% were happy to allow a *part* of their class to be taken in conjunction with another adult and 6% were not, only 66% were happy for their whole class to be taken by the HLTA on a regular basis while 28% were not. This suggests that whilst the teachers are largely positive about HLTAs, they are differentiating between what they might expect of an HLTA compared with a teacher in terms of taking responsibility for whole classes. For some of them, taking their PPA may be requiring them to make a professional compromise.

Robin Smith (2007 p380) comments that: 'Professional identities are now more likely to be seen as multiple, fragmented and prone to change'. Undoubtedly, professional identities are no longer assumed to be stable or coherent, a move which the Cambridge Primary Review has linked with New Labour's policy framework:

> '...the professional ethos of primary schools in the recent past has been dominated by the government's project to reconstruct primary teachers in a form which is amenable to the need to demonstrate that an investment in education brings economic and social returns.'
>
> (Jones et al 2008 p6)

This reconstruction can be seen as allied to Beck's (2008) 'governmental professionalism', which requires teachers to meet externally imposed standards, including 'a commitment to collaborative working' (TDA 2007f). However, Jones and colleagues (op cit) suggest that whilst teachers may not have been comfortable with areas of the reprofessionalization project, they have never totally rejected it, and

have even welcomed some aspects of coerced change, and in particular the opportunities for professional diversity which have arisen. The HLTA could be regarded as one such opportunity, an area which will be returned to in Chapter 7.

5.9 A New Way of Working?

Breslin's (2002 p195) argument for a 'post professional identity' incorporating new more flexible ways of working (see Chapter 1 p38) has resonance in this research. At least the majority of teachers in all four research schools were becoming involved in the new structures and were perceived by the HLTAs as supportive and encouraging. Analysis of how teachers' opinions about HLTAs had changed during the two years since HLTA was introduced produced a positive picture [See Appendix 12 Q12(c)]. Only 2 teachers had started actively negative towards HLTAs and remained negative. All 17 teachers who had started positive had continued positive or become even more positive, 11 of the 20 initially neutral teachers had become positive and 10 of the 14 who had not been there at the outset were also positive. HLTAs were also seen by 80% of the teachers as offering additional opportunities for the children. Only one (strong NUT member) at Colnbury disagreed; this was visibly at odds with the rest of the respondents' views [see Appendix 12 Q18(8)].

Teachers strongly agreed that gaining HLTA status was good for TAs' self esteem as well as their CPD [see Appendix 12 Q18(11)]. This accords with the findings of Goddard and her colleagues that:

> '...the attainment of HLTA status appears to have awakened a powerful sense of self-worth which has resulted in raised aspirations, and expectations of reward and status.'
>
> (Goddard et al 2007 p26)

Whilst these expectations may not have been fulfilled to date, nearly 40% of the HLTAs in Wilson's study 'had become more involved in organising and managing learning environments and resources' (Wilson et al 2007 p12), implying an enhanced role within their schools, a finding which is reflected in the present study and again suggests that the teachers as well as HLTAs are adapting to new ways of working. As Goddard and colleagues conclude:

> '...The journey towards increased professionalisation has started, and although it may be a lengthy and thorny process, it will not be reversed.'
>
> (Goddard et al 2007 p26)

This journey not only incorporates the HLTAs themselves, but fellow members of the PLCs in which they work.

In their report for the NUT on the impact of recent government policies on teachers' working lives, John MacBeath and colleagues comment that:

> 'Schools and classrooms are no longer the sole preserve of teachers. The world is changing. The financing of schools is changing. Demands on teachers have increased beyond their capacity to meet them.'
>
> (MacBeath et al 2007 p30)

Whilst agreeing that the argument for a more differentiated profession is 'a compelling one' (ibid p31), they note, somewhat dismissively, that much of the 'core task' of teachers is now being undertaken by unqualified staff. This compares with the more optimistic tone adopted by Stoll and Seashore Lewis in their work on PLCs:

> 'We think it is time for an expanded approach to the concept of professional learning communities to include both a broader membership and involving divergent knowledge bases.'
>
> (Stoll and Lewis 2007 p3)

Here school leaders are seen as 'crucial in promoting a learning focused collaborative culture' (Bolam et al 2007 p25) which may create the conditions for the emergence of Breslin's (2002) 'post professional identity'.

Establishing the boundary between creating the 'modern' flexible and adaptable remodelled workforce demanded by New Labour (PMSU 2006) and taking advantage of a group of willing workers who have little bargaining power, is a dilemma currently being played out in schools, and particularly challenges headteachers, whose role is considered in the following chapter.

5.10 Summary

This chapter considers the HLTA as a professional role in relation to teachers' professionalism. Looking at the wide range of experience and expertise which the HLTAs have brought to their role, it demonstrates that although the majority had not planned a career in education, and they recognise HLTA as a low paid role, they have nevertheless welcomed their career change and brought with them an enthusiasm and commitment which appears to be forming the basis of their identity as a new professional group.

The question is raised of whether, as Osgood (2006) suggests, the discourse of professionalism is in reality being used by the government as a mechanism by which to control HLTAs by offering them the sop of 'professional' work but for little pay. However, HLTAs are shown to feel confident in their status, and to believe that they do not pose a threat to the professionalism of the teachers in the PLCs (Stoll and

Lewis 2007) within which they work. The majority of teachers in the case study schools largely concur with this view, although there remains some reservation about whether HLTAs are a professional group in their own right.

Having explored the work of HLTAs, the chapter identifies the provision of PPA cover and other teaching and planning activities to be key features of the HLTA role. It demonstrates that the teachers in the study have scant knowledge of the background to the HLTA role despite working in schools where it is well embedded. However, they do recognise its value in terms of offering additional opportunities for children and promoting HLTAs' self-esteem. The chapter concludes with a discussion of professionalism, and suggests that the dilemma of creating a flexible workforce without taking advantage of the workers within it is an issue yet to be resolved.

Chapter 6 Headteachers, Leadership and Power

'An effective workforce needs good leadership. As we put more emphasis on those in the system leading reform, we will increasingly need leaders (and leadership teams) who can combine the ability to manage people and money with the creativity, imagination and inspiration to lead transformation.'
Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners (DfES 2004e p107)

6.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses Question 4: 'How have the attitudes of individual headteachers towards the HLTA policy impacted upon its development in their schools, and what can be deduced concerning the role of headteachers in the policy process?' It draws principally on data from the interviews with headteachers and HLTAs, but also on the questionnaires. First, the concept of 'leadership' under New Labour, and the headteachers' perspectives on the government's expectations of the HLTA policy, are explored. The process of change management is then considered with particular focus on the 're-culturing' of organisations (Fink and Stoll 2005) and the micro-political aspects of leadership (Ball 1987). The nature of power relationships in schools is analysed, and the extent to which headteachers have real power within the policy process is questioned, given the context of markets and managerialism within which schools operate. Nevertheless, the chapter concludes that headteachers play a key role in the championship of policy within the 'context of practice' (Bowe et al 1992).

6.2 Leadership and New Labour Policy

In June 2006 the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (PMSU) released a discussion paper (PMSU 2006) concerning 'The UK Government's Approach to Public Service

Reform'. The model [Appendix 13] describes a 'self improving system' of 'Better Public Services for All' (ibid p8) with top-down pressure for reform from government being counterbalanced by bottom-up pressure for improvement from service users, and horizontal pressure to increase efficiency and quality of service through the use of market incentives being matched by increased 'capability and capacity' (ibid) of the public sector workforce. 'Capability and capacity' is seen as being delivered through the mechanisms of 'organisational development and collaboration', 'workforce development, skills and reform' and, crucially, 'leadership'. Applying the model to schools, the responsibility for delivering the 'capability and capacity' element clearly lies with the headteacher. As Ball (2008 p140) comments:

> 'In effect, [since 1997 under New Labour] leadership has become a generic mechanism for change as well as a new kind of subject position within policy....In a sense the new school leader embodies policy within the institution and enacts the processes of reform.'
>
> (Ball 2008 p140)

The headteacher participants were not asked whether they viewed themselves as instruments for the delivery of government policy. However, their opinions were sought about the government's motivation for launching the HLTA policy, and whether it had developed as the government had expected. Almost immediately, the three women related this question to local leadership. Beverley accentuated the opportunity for headteachers to exercise their leadership and fill the vacuum left by the government in implementing the policy:

> 'I don't know if they....you know has it been something that's been sort of launched and left and they've ticked that box? But I think it's down to headteachers with a view of it, such as us, as in we are the people doing it straight away, that will be left to develop the role because we feel it's a good role.'
>
> (Beverley Headteacher Albany)

This view was echoed by Lucy:

> 'I don't really know what their agenda was when they introduced it.....maybe it was a way of making sure that people could get their PPA cover. And they also didn't think about the funding implications either [.....] in that there was no clear guidance about how these people should be funded at all, which is typical of central government, isn't it? ....So it was up to the school to put something in place'.
>
> (Lucy Headteacher Downsfield)

Whilst agreeing that the government lacked a clear idea of where the policy was leading when launching it, Nosheen raised the issue of local readiness to accept reform. In planning for the deployment of her HLTAs, she had been sensitive to local conditions, and had initially avoided using them for PPA cover:

> 'My school hasn't been quick off the mark in using HLTAs in that way. Other schools may, but my school is not in a position to do that and I think you've got to look carefully, and think whether that is the place for our HLTAs - to be put in that position of responsibility in the communities you're working with.'
>
> (Nosheen Headteacher Banford)

Interestingly, James was the only one of the four who set the HLTA initiative within the wider context of public service reform. Asked whether the government had a clear idea of how the policy would develop, he replied:

> 'I'm not sure about that in the sense that they didn't convey it very clearly to the rest of us if they did have. But if you look at what's happened in the health service, and the police force also, where they've introduced other people to supplement the work of police officers and doctors and nurses and so on, you can see that they obviously had a clear idea of how public services could be enhanced by creating these new roles.'
>
> (James Headteacher Colnbury)

As has been seen in Chapter 4, all the headteachers' decisions to adopt the HLTA had been pragmatic responses, seeing possibilities for their schools in the initiative, and acting upon these.

The headteachers fully recognised their own role in the policy development. Asked 'How far do you feel that you personally were responsible for getting the HLTA 'off the ground' in your school?' their answers were remarkably similar. Beverley, for example, was in no doubt of her role:

> 'It's totally me. It's totally my absolute conviction that she [Sue] was the right person to do it and that that fitted with what she needed to do, which has proved itself in that she's going into teaching, you know. So, yeah I mean it wasn't....it wasn't...I didn't have to convince anybody because *I [heavy emphasis]* was convinced of it. And it was therefore 'this is what we're going to do'.'
>
> (Beverley Headteacher Albany)

Likewise, Lucy, when asked whether she had influenced the development of the role in her school replied:

> 'Yes definitely, definitely, definitely, and it was actually quite timely because although I've been in the school eighteen years, [.....] with my predecessor the perception of teaching assistants was pretty down there, pretty low on the ground. And it was very much them and us, very much, you know, they weren't allowed in the staffroom, you know it was a divisive population and you know, I, I valued what teaching assistants do and this came quite soon after I was appointed Head. [.....] I'd already done a lot of work on improving relationships in making sure staff valued what teaching assistants were doing. [.....] So this was very much part of the process and very much my decision to bring it into the school and to offer this opportunity to people.'
>
> (Lucy Headteacher Downsfield)

Here the change which Lucy was hoping to effect was one of school culture.

6.3 Leadership, Culture and the Process of Change

Fink and Stoll (2005 p21) comment that 'schools must attend to both forces of change and continuity simultaneously', and note that the school reform movement has developed between these twin imperatives. Highlighting developments in the management of change, they explain how the 'school effectiveness' movement of the

1960s, which placed great emphasis on what change was needed, gave way in the 1980s to 'school improvement', with its focus on how to effect change, particularly by viewing schools as the centre of change. 'School improvement' offered a managerial solution, emphasising organisational planning and assuming change to be a linear process, but taking little account of the different contexts of schools and the fact that different change strategies and leadership styles may be needed according to the situation in which the school started.

In recent years, however, the notion of 'restructuring' schools in terms of the use of time, space, roles and relationships has gained credence. Education has been recast as a market place, with schools of different types competing for students, and parents given greater choice. The underlying principle of the market is the 'empowering of smaller units such as schools' (ibid p30), but this empowerment has altered the nature of school leadership, placing more responsibility on school leaders as mediators of policy.

The development of the HLTA role, for example, has clearly relied upon the headteachers recognising its value. Asked, 'How far do you think that your view of the role has influenced the way in which it has developed in your school?' Nosheen's personal commitment to TAs was clear:

> 'I think that TAs have got such a wealth of experience and knowledge to share and the HLTA route has given them that confidence to actually exercise it. It's given them that permission to actually use it legitimately so that's quite good.'
> (Nosheen Headteacher Banford)

James, although not the instigator, recognised that his influence had certainly been necessary to get the HLTA accepted at Colnbury.

> 'As I say, I didn't initiate it but as soon as Anne spoke to them about it and suggested it I could see the benefits and wholeheartedly supported it so I suppose it came about because I was totally in agreement with the idea.'
>
> (James Headteacher Colnbury)

Much has been made in the change management literature (Fullan 2001, 2003), as in government policy (for example DfES 2004e), of the need to 'transform' schools. However, Hoyle and Wallace's (2005) 'contingent leadership' advises incremental change rather than transformation. It stems from the Fabian notion of 'slow and steady wins the race' (ibid p189), the logical conclusion of which is a recognition that major changes in the framework of education are less likely to impact on the quality of teaching and learning than are improvements made to prevailing practices at school level. This relates to the notion of 're-culturing' schools, a process which cannot happen overnight.

Fink and Stoll (2005 p32) suggest that 're-culturing' is now the dominant mode of change management in schools. 'Re-culturing' occurs when 'beliefs, relationships and the like are made the focus of change efforts rather than programmes and procedures'. This certainly chimes with the present research in which the headteachers as leaders have been very conscious of the personal aspect of the HLTA (ie its benefit for certain members of staff, and from that, its possibilities) rather than viewing it as a procedural change which might in theory benefit the school.

'Re-culturing' implies that to secure the successful implementation of change, headteachers must be acutely aware of the situations in their schools. Beverley's bold assertions about the situation at Albany as Sue took up her HLTA post, contrast

completely with Nosheen's description of the first tentative steps towards the development of the HLTA role at Banford:

> 'The very first term there wasn't significant change within the role but as we got to know...and of course the HLTAs' confidence also grew and they wanted more responsibility, we developed those roles through the school gradually, and I think that is the way to do it.'
>
> (Nosheen Headteacher Banford)

This is very different from:

> 'We weren't afraid to do something that was new. [.....] We were quite clear, and the reason for being that clear, I think, was to do with the fact that we knew she could do it. She was appropriate for the role, and it was a means to an end for her development [into a teaching career] as much as for the school's needs.'
>
> (Beverley Headteacher Albany)

The culture of a school can be intangible because it is largely implicit (Fink and Stoll 2005), but it includes the organisation's dominant values and philosophy, and the feeling of 'climate'. It is 'the way we do things around here' (Deal and Kennedy 1983 p140). Nosheen and Beverley's individual recognition of the micro-political contexts in which they were operating had produced two totally contrasting, but equally successful, approaches to 're-culturing'. All four headteachers described in their interviews how appropriate cultural conditions had been secured in order to ensure that HLTAs would be successfully accepted.

6.4 The Micro-Politics of 'Re-Culturing'

Ball speaks of 'micro-political manoeuvrings' which occur in managing change in schools:

> 'Whatever the extent or limits of the power of heads, their organisational tasks can be expressed in terms of an essentially micro-political conundrum.'
>
> (Ball 1987 p82)

All three female headteachers described elements of micro-political activity which they had consciously used to 're-culture' their schools in readiness to accept HLTAs. Describing their concerns about introducing a new initiative which they recognised was not universally popular, each of them had prepared to overcome expected resistance. Beverley, for example, anticipated difficulties from the NUT:

> 'Well, you know, giving the opposite side, one of my senior management team was quite heavily ... er... NUT. There was no real opposition; there was just *discussion* based on the use of TAs to teach.'
>
> (Beverley Headteacher Albany)

She pushed forward her vision through allowing people to express their views, but with her own agenda firmly at the centre, which may, of course, account for the lack of 'opposition'.

Andy Hargreaves cautions that whilst traditional power structures are being replaced by a culture of collaboration and commitment to a shared vision, in practice this vision is often the headteacher's personal vision, 'around which the orchestration of consensus will follow later' (Hargreaves 1994 p250). Katie's comments regarding Lucy's championship of HLTAs at Downsfield provide a good example:

> 'I'd say Lucy was 100% to do with it. I mean, she's the one that instigated it, she's the one that has increased the respect for the TAs in the school as well. Before she came to headship there was a different view and we even had separate staffrooms and things like that, which she immediately changed.'
>
> (Katie HLTA Downsfield)

Lucy's actions were an immediate statement of her vision, which sent out a clear signal.

From a managerial perspective, this aligning of the school's culture to conform with the headteacher's vision can be a valid way to achieve change (eg Fullan 2003, 2007).

As Hargreaves comments, 'a world of 'voice' without 'vision' would be a 'chaotic babble' (1994 p251), so leadership is still needed to arbitrate and bring the voices together to achieve a consensus upon which the organisation can move forward.

Leadership of an initiative need not necessarily be confined to the headteacher. At Colnbury, it was Anne (SENCO) who saw possibilities in the HLTA role both for the individuals concerned and for the school, but she recognised that change could not happen without James' support, and the micro-political manoeuvrings which she used to persuade him were apparent in her interview. Anne knew that James was strongly committed to CPD (see Chapter 4 p 93), but was also aware that he faced problems of balancing the budget and needed to reduce his staffing costs:

> 'School budgets are difficult as it is [.....]It's a very, very tight thing [.....]'
>
> (Anne SENCO Colnbury)

Anne had also developed her own long-term strategy for managing change:

> '..I've found in the past sometimes that I just do it bit by bit, you know, just keep chipping away. It's probably sometimes better than going in with full throttle and getting people's backs up and so on.'
>
> (ibid)

She had gradually been giving increased responsibility to certain TAs and had observed the reactions of the teachers, noting which of them were sympathetic to the use of TAs. She also understood the characters of the TAs who were hoping to apply for HLTA status and correctly guessed that they would have sufficient confidence to approach James directly, as Daisy described in her interview:

> 'Anne said 'I think you ought to go for it', you see.[....] So Jenny and I went to see James and said 'We would both like to do this' and you know, hand on heart, James was not very enthusiastic because there's a whole political story about unskilled people working in classrooms, so we were up against it to a certain degree...'
>
> (Daisy – HLTA - Colnbury)

TAs cannot apply for HLTA assessment without the active consent of the headteacher, who must complete an assessment form and write a supporting statement (TDA 2007b). James could thus have stopped Daisy and Jenny proceeding but, as Anne had hoped, he was sufficiently motivated by financial considerations as well as recognising the CPD opportunity, to support their applications.

Nevertheless, the teachers at Colnbury were still some distance away from fully recognising HLTAs. As Anne commented, 'the culture of the school was not right for it'. Having previously promised his teachers that HLTAs would not cover lessons, James had changed course, and pragmatically 're-cultured' himself into accepting HLTAs. He recognised that he needed them in order to provide PPA within tight budgetary constraints, but he was able to justify this to himself as offering a CPD opportunity for two TAs whom he recognised as very able. However, he still had to persuade the rest of the staff to accept HLTAs. 'Re-culturing' takes time and patience, and further micro-political manoeuvrings were evident at Colnbury.

Anne described how James quietly sidestepped the opposition of two particular teachers by undertaking their PPA cover himself. Although this offered a short-term solution, it was evident from both the questionnaire and free prose responses that two teachers at Colnbury (possibly the two in question, although no names were used) remained strongly opposed to the idea of HLTAs covering classes. One described feeling let down by James:

> ' Most disappointed that HLTAs have been used for PPA cover after assurances from the Head that this would never happen.'
>
> (Teacher 5 Colnbury)

The other was vehement in her response, feeling that her concerns had been ignored:

> 'This was introduced in an underhand way. [...]. Parents not informed, pupils describe them as teachers – they are not. We were told to shut up when we raised concerns because they were here and they were here to stay and they *would* cover PPA whether we liked it or not.'
>
> (Teacher 4 Colnbury – her italics)

The skilful leader recognises the level of ambiguity which a school can tolerate. James and Anne had judged that the majority of the teachers at Colnbury were now ready to accept HLTAs, and the questionnaire data suggests that they were correct. James implied that whilst in the end, he had asserted his authority as headteacher, his own initial scepticism had been useful in bringing most teachers on board:

> 'I think the role has been influenced by myself and I think probably to start off with my concern about using HLTAs for the teaching role was a sort of major influence in making sure that other members of staff were confident about us using HLTAs.'
>
> (James Headteacher Colnbury)

Ultimately the two teachers who disagree have a choice; they can stay and 'eventually adjust to the situation as found and become absorbed into the established institutional culture' (Ball 1987 p62) or they can move schools. It is not clear from the data whether this choice was put to them.

Clearly James' attitude towards the HLTA role had a major impact on his school, firstly in his opposition and subsequently in his pragmatic adoption of the role. Anne's final comment shows her own perspective on a complex ongoing situation, including her recognition that James still has unresolved feelings of guilt:

> '..... it still is difficult at times, and that includes partly the headteacher because he feels in a similar sort of way. He recognises that he's using them and I've got to be perfectly honest to a certain extent that's finance driven.....'
>
> (Anne SENCO Colnbury)

As can be seen, one of the issues which arises in the 're-culturing' model is the conception of leadership (Fink and Stoll 2005) for considerable power is vested in the leader, and there is always danger that power can be mishandled. This raises the question of headteachers' power, and how they choose to exercise it.

6.5 Headteachers and Power

Two definitions of power are offered in Chapter 2 (p 47). As a result of the phraseology used, they appear at first sight to differ significantly. Buchanan and Hucynski (2004) emphasise the notion of individuals 'overcoming resistance' and 'exerting their will' over others in order to achieve their own interests and objectives, whereas Lowe and Pugh (2007) in speaking of 'bringing about significant change, usually in people's lives,' seem to offer a more benign picture. The distinction drawn by Lingard and colleagues (2003) between the power of 'headship' as a structural position and of 'leadership' where authority has been accorded to the individual by the community in which they work has resonance here. Certainly the headteacher holds positional power. In Ball's words:

> 'The legal responsibilities of the head place him or her in a unique position of licensed autocracy.'
>
> (Ball1987 p80)

As has been seen above, both Beverley and James were able to quote examples of using their positional power to overcome (or ignore) resistance and move the HLTA initiative forward, but the data indicate that in all cases, the headteachers preferred to

exercise their influence to bring about structural changes rather than seeking confrontation.

The School Leadership Study (PwC 2007) indicated that headteachers did not enjoy introducing new ideas into their schools but they did gain satisfaction from developing staff. Interestingly, Fink and Stoll (2005) comment that leaders who successfully foster coherence in their organisations are able to 'communicate 'invitational' messages to people to inform them that they are able, responsible and worthwhile'. The notion of 'invitational messages' was strongly evident in the responses from the HLTAs. All the HLTAs, including those at Colnbury, felt that they had been personally selected, and that their headteachers believed in them. For example:

> 'Well it's the confidence she [Lucy] has given us to actually go for it, and you know, it's nice to know that she's actually chosen us to actually go for HLTA. She's got a lot of positive feelings coming towards, sort of thing.'
>
> (Jo HLTA Downsfield)

At Banford, Anna clearly trusted Nosheen's judgement despite the fact that she was unsure where the HLTA initiative was leading, and, indeed whether Nosheen's plans for her were yet formed:

> 'Nosheen has been very supportive of me – that's really all I can say. She's supported me in applying for it and she's supported me in getting any of the standards that I needed to. I don't actually know what she's got up her sleeve; I think she's possibly got plans but I just don't know and she'll probably wait.'
>
> (Anna HLTA Banford)

Likewise at Colnbury, despite recognising James' reservations, Jenny was confident of his support:

> 'James has always given me the impression that he's very confident in our abilities to do what we're asked to do.' (Jenny HLTA Colnbury)

Fink and Stoll suggest that:

> 'Schools which re-culture successfully develop educational meaning. This is more than a commitment to specific goals. It is a shared sense that staff members know where they are going and is present throughout the school.'
>
> (Fink and Stoll 2005 p33)

This sense of shared values was evident in all four schools, suggesting that whilst the headteachers' vision for the use of HLTA had become hegemonic, it was through their exercise of influence rather than positional power. At Colnbury, evidence of Anne's influence as SENCO was also strong.

It could be argued that where both the powerful and those over whom they have power desire the same outcomes, albeit for different personal reasons, the exercise of power will be less confrontational than Buchanan and Hucynski (2004) insinuate. At Albany, for example, Sue described her vision as matching Beverley's

> 'We're very open with each other and we're an open kind of school and everything is out on the table, so to speak. We both had a vision of what we wanted and we were working towards the same goal.....'
>
> (Sue HLTA Albany)

However, the question still remains of where the vision originated, and in fact both the definitions of power above assume that one person will be dominant over another.

Lowe and Pugh (2007) suggest that TAs identify power as embedded in the organisational structure of a school and therefore closely associated with the role of the headteacher, rather than as influence within an organisation. It is interesting to note how although the SENCO and many of the teachers at Colnbury had

enthusiastically embraced the HLTA, Jenny assumed that the headteacher's personal reservations represented the school's view:

> 'If I'm totally honest, I think it was not what the school really wanted to do. Well – I know it wasn't. And I think it [the reason why HLTAs were used] was financial purely, really. That's not to say that I don't think that they believe that we're capable of doing it, or that we're doing a good job - you know the school's very, very supportive. But I just think, you know, in terms of I suppose looking at it more politically...that it wasn't the way the school really wanted to go.'
>
> (Jenny HLTA Colnbury)

Her perception is that despite his negativity towards the adoption of HLTA status, the headteacher's power had been over-ridden by the external priority of funding, and she appears not to have considered the possibility that the SENCO's influence may have in itself acted as a strong force for change.

6.6 Headteachers and the Sponsorship of HLTAs

Studies to date on the line management of HLTAs have indicated the importance which school leaders place on ensuring that they have firm oversight of the role. For example, Wilson et al (2007) reported that 56% of primary school HLTAs in their study were line managed directly by headteachers, 27% by deputy headteachers and 17% by SENCOs.

Results from the present study accord with this picture. All the HLTAs were line managed directly by the headteacher, including at Colnbury, where TAs were line managed by Anne (SENCO), and where it was Anne herself who had championed the HLTA role. However, Daisy described how, once she and Jenny began to take whole

classes for PPA (in their second year as HLTAs), line management for that area of their work was moved to James (Headteacher):

> '[Anne] works out the support and everything else; she's our line manager. So we were only working actually with James in regard to the fact that we were doing PPA. Because James was in charge of the PPA so that's when we liaise and have our meetings with James and work out what it is, and what his vision is, because that's the game you play. You find out exactly what your headteacher is looking for, how he wants it to pan out, and from there you've got a good foundation to build on.....'
>
> (Daisy HLTA Colnbury)

Daisy was in no doubt that the power lay with James, and she and Jenny were content to 'play the game' because it suited both the school and themselves.

The IFS research (Sendorek 2006) indicated that the adoption, or otherwise, of the HLTA policy in schools was heavily reliant on headteachers' personal responses to the policy. Headteachers' selection of TAs amongst the parent volunteers appears to have been a feature of the role from the outset (see for example Moyles and Suschitzky 1997a), and the HLTAs in this study had all had previous contact with their schools (see Chapter 4). Headteachers have thus been in a powerful position to make decisions about the suitability of potential HLTAs, and have maintained tight control as gatekeepers to the selection process, raising questions of equality of access.

In three of the four schools access to HLTA application was by invitation only, but Downsfield appeared to be an exception, as the opportunity to put themselves forward was technically available to the whole staff. However the headteacher admitted that TAs who had not been personally encouraged did not feel confident to apply:

> '. ...I mean I have a monthly staff meeting with the whole school so it was discussed and presented there as an opportunity. And as well as identifying people we did, you know, throw it open to the teaching assistants, but a lot of them were quite scared by it because, you know, it was quite a rigorous process to go through.' (Lucy Headteacher Downsfield)

Thus, senior staff still effectively operated as gatekeepers to the status. Kirsty perceived that she had chosen a fortunate time to apply:

> '..... it was a case of my own personal wanting [sic] to develop myself, and I did go to the head, who's really great and very supportive. It was the right time I think because, as I say, the HLTA was just the up and coming thing to do.'
> (Kirsty HLTA Downsfield)

The outcome for Kirsty might have been different had not Lucy already deemed her suitable for HLTA status, and it could be argued that offering the opportunity for all TAs to move towards the status would be more 'fair and equitable'. However, headteachers remain legally responsible for the quality of people undertaking 'specified work' (DfES 2003d) and must therefore be personally confident that any TA whose HLTA application they support is capable of taking classes.

Linda Evans (2001 p113) links teachers' self-motivation with 'challenging, respected leadership that gives high-quality teachers recognition for their efforts'. This form of leadership she describes as 'effective in motivating teachers, developing them intellectually and changing their ideologies' (ibid p114). The same may be said of the HLTAs in this present research, who almost without exception, attributed their success to their headteachers [see Appendix 14]. The power of the headteacher's position carries with it heavy responsibilities, but also the satisfaction of seeing people develop (PwC 2007).

In terms of policy development, having effectively passed the responsibility on to headteachers locally to develop the HLTA, the government has to trust them to operate the system equitably within the 'context of practice'.

6.7 Headteachers and the Policy Process

The research demonstrates that undoubtedly, headteachers are creatively developing the HLTA policy within their own schools in ways which suit their individual scenarios, but as Frank Coffield (2007) warns:

> 'Staff are being invited to buy into a model of reform which has already been decided upon centrally. The government appears to see its task as one of engaging public sector professionals in the local delivery of centrally formulated plans.'
>
> (Coffield 2007 p56)

Struggling to deliver PPA time within scarce resources, James was effectively forced into adopting the HLTA as a solution, an example of how the government is able to exercise control over schools.

Likewise, Nosheen was aware that despite the absence of available teachers she must maintain continuity of staffing to Banford because of the particular needs within the school:

> 'As you know, I've had a lot of recruitment and retention difficulties. Covering teachers with teachers is a very expensive route and with children with speech and language, EAL and behaviour difficulties, we like to keep teachers who are familiar with the children and their routines, the organisation. It just makes life easier. So an HLTA ...Well....The children are learning much better.'
>
> (Nosheen Headteacher Banford)

Whilst fundamental to the discourse of parental choice, market forces also place constraints on headteachers. Ball (2008) quotes examples of schools altering policies in response to the perceived preferences of potential consumers. Market forces were similarly cited by headteachers in the IFS research (Sendorek 2006) as a strong reason for not adopting the HLTA policy, in that parents might remove their children from

the school rather than permit them to be taught by staff without QTS, leading to loss of per pupil income, potential loss of reputation and therefore escalating problems for the school. It was noticeable in the present research that none of the headteachers had consulted, or informed, parents for the same reasons.

> 'Parents? No! I do consult with my parents a lot actually, but not about that. No!'
>
> (Lucy Headteacher Downsfield)

> 'Parents? I didn't. No! To really engage our parents in such conversations would be fairly difficult.'
>
> (Nosheen Headteacher Banford)

Ofsted announced its intention in July 2005 to inspect classes being covered by TAs (Patton and Slater 2005), and has twice reported on the development of workforce remodelling (Ofsted 2005, 2007). However, James was the only headteacher to show recognition of Ofsted as a government mechanism to ensure compliance with the government's performativity agenda, and even he was seemingly unaware of the Ofsted interventions in this area:

> 'I'm not sure if Ofsted has had any influence on HLTAs yet. I'm not sure if that's something which has been a feature of Ofsted reports.'
>
> (James Headteacher Colnbury)

So what can be deduced about headteachers and the policy process from this study of headteachers as leaders? Shirley Hord and colleagues suggest that in order to secure successful change 'the focus of facilitation should be on individuals, innovations and the context' (Hord et al 1987 p6) rather than on the program or package. All four schools appear to have successfully adopted this approach, with the headteacher as 'a key figure in the process of innovation' (Vincent 1996 p128). Hoyle and Wallace (2005 p187) advocate 'temperate policy-making for gradual improvement',

suggesting that in order to move forward in the current policy climate, schools need to trust their staff:

> 'We therefore argue that headteachers should adopt an initial presumption of trust on two grounds. First, behaviour is influenced by the expectations of others. People will generally be trustworthy to the degree that they are trusted. Second, there is no alternative to trusting teachers to behave responsibly.'
> (Hoyle and Wallace 2005 p193)

The research indicates that the headteachers as leaders have indeed placed trust in the HLTAs, who have accordingly risen to their expectations and beyond. The extent to which headteachers have been 'trusted' by the government to implement the HLTA policy is more contentious.

The impression is that to date, headteachers have taken advantage of the 'space' which has been allowed them to develop the policy at a local level, utilising their creativity, imagination and inspiration as the government urged (DfES 2004e). However, the HLTA initiative sits within the discourse of raising standards, and little attempt appears to have been made by the government to investigate whether the leadership of headteachers has successfully enabled the use of HLTAs as a mechanism for 'raising standards', a point which will be returned to in Chapter 7.

6.8 Summary

This chapter suggests that within the New Labour policy agenda, school leaders have become both the embodiment of policy and the principal actors in the process of reform at the local level. All four headteachers are shown to believe that when the HLTA policy was launched, the government had little clear idea of how it would

work in practice. However, all have adopted the policy and used it to their advantage, adapting it to their individual needs.

The recent history of change management from 'school effectiveness' through 'school improvement' and 'restructuring' to 're-culturing' is tracked, and the headteachers demonstrate how their understanding of their school culture has enabled them to successfully develop the policy in their schools, a process which has involved some 'micro-political manoeuvring' (Ball 1987). The case of Colnbury is considered in detail as an example of a school where the headteacher was initially reluctant to develop the HLTA, and impetus for change came from the SENCO. However, the headteacher finally supported the introduction of HLTA status in his school. The evidence shows that with all four headteachers, their attitude impacted on the development of the policy in their schools.

The question of power is then considered. I suggest that although their role carries positional power (Ball 2008), the headteachers have relied on influence rather than coercion to develop the HLTA policy within their schools. In considering headteachers' sponsorship of HLTAs I conclude that although they have significant power, research participants view their headteachers' leadership positively.

Finally, the chapter addresses the issue of constraints upon the power of headteachers, demonstrating that by such mechanisms as introducing PPA time without additional resources, the government has exerted considerable pressure on schools to include HLTAs in their staffing structures. Headteachers are also shown to have taken account of the importance, in a competitive climate, of maintaining their intakes by

excluding parents from consultations on introducing HLTAs into their schools to avoid alarming them. Within the 'context of practice', headteachers are seen as key to the process of policy, as each has taken advantage of the 'space' left them to develop a successful HLTA role at the local level. The chapter concludes that whilst the headteachers are confident that their sponsorship of the HLTA role has been justified by their HLTAs' performance, there is little evidence to link HLTAs with the government's declared intention of 'raising standards'.

Chapter 7 Policy Trajectories and the Case of the HLTA

> 'This is a huge programme of change on a scale which matches anything that happens in the private sector. It will require persistence, determination and a belief that change is possible.'
> *Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners* (DfES 2004e p109)

> '....policies have trajectories over time and the 'family relationships' they accumulate or evolve are presented and accounted for within evolving policy narratives.'
> *The Education Debate* (Ball 2008 p101)

7.1 Introduction

Fundamental to the HLTA policy is the contention that children's learning in the classroom can, albeit under the direction of qualified teachers and for short periods, be led effectively by adults without QTS. In addressing the final research question: 'What does this case study demonstrate with regard to how developments in the 'context of practice' can affect the realisation of policy makers' goals?', this chapter brings together the research findings and policy theory to explore the issue of how such a 'radical or even unthinkable' (Ball op cit) policy shift can have occurred, and so rapidly, in primary schools.

I first discuss the HLTA policy in relation to New Labour's agenda for public sector reform and consider how dissenting voices within the 'context of influence' were dealt with through the mechanism of the 'Social Partnership' as the HLTA policy germinated. The development of the discourse of remodelling is then traced using an example from the 'context of policy text production' to demonstrate how, through subtle alterations in language, theoretical possibilities can incrementally become

established as 'obvious and even necessary' (Ball 2008 p101). The subject position of the headteacher (Busher 2006) as both an embodiment of policy within the 'context of practice', and an actor in the process of reform, is analysed, considering particularly the way in which the headteacher's personal response may influence policy. The micro-political aspects of change (Goodson 2003) are then considered, leading to a discussion of the changing nature of professionalism in the 21st Century.

It is suggested that in the research schools the HLTA policy may have benefited from the freedom offered under New Labour for practitioners to 'experiment and innovate' (Blair 2006 p3) as 'partners' with the government. However, the chapter concludes with an examination of the effects of funding on the policy decisions made by schools, and questions the extent to which practitioners may truly be considered as 'partners' in policy making within a context where power is unevenly distributed.

7.2 New Labour and **Public Sector Reform**

The HLTA project sits firmly within New Labour's 'ambitious and transformative project' (Butt and Gunter 2005 p133) for public services, key features of which are 'a responsive, integrated management of policy' combined with 'active, engaged, informed and responsible citizens' (Ozga 2002 p332). A principal strategy of this project has been the development of 'capability and capacity' through 'workforce development, skills and reform' (PMSU 2006 p 78). Thus the public sector workforce has been expected to adopt new skills and cultural values in order to deliver on New Labour's declared aim of 'Better Public Services For All' (ibid).

7.2.1 The Discourse of Partnership

Whilst the discourse of 'partnership' runs strongly through New Labour ideology, it could be argued from my research that the increasing 'ministerialization' of policy, and the 'virtual exclusion of union and local authority representatives from arenas of influence' (Bowe et al 1992 p20) which Ball and colleagues noted in the Thatcher era, applies equally to New Labour. Government ambitions for a 'remodelled' education workforce, including the particularly contentious development of a curriculum delivery role for non-qualified staff, were clearly reliant upon the co-operation of New Labour's 'partners' in the education project. However, it has been demonstrated in Chapter 1 how the mechanism of the 'Social Partnership' was used to silence, rather than encourage, competing voices within the 'context of influence', enabling the government to move the HLTA policy forward without the NUT's support. My research demonstrates (Chapter 4) how at Colnbury, school-level resistance by NUT members, including initially the headteacher, quickly dissipated.

It should not be assumed, however, that all signatories to the NA initially welcomed or accepted the HLTA policy. For example, an ATL commissioned report released in 2005 declared that:

> 'The majority of teachers totally disagree with the notion that TAs might take whole classes on a regular basis to provide PPA time. In only 6 of the 50 schools [in the survey] were plans in place for TAs to provide PPA time.'
> (Webb and Vulliamy 2005 p15)

However, this report was based on research in 2004, prior to the introduction of PPA time. In the ATL's second publication of 2005, part of its 'Supporting Education' series entitled 'The Role of Higher Level Teaching Assistants', a different tone is evident in the foreword by Mary Bousted, General Secretary:

> 'We believe that a strong school workforce is essential [.....]. That workforce is changing: we are moving towards an understanding that teachers and teaching assistants are professionals with different but important roles to play in the education of children and young people. Teaching assistants, and higher level teaching assistants, are making an increasing and increasingly valued contribution to the school workforce.'
>
> (Woodward and Peart 2005 p1)

This is one example of a changing attitude in key arenas within the 'context of influence'.

7.2.2 Practitioner **Participation**

Evidence suggests that the government was working to secure the co-operation of practitioners using a direct approach. For example, a feature of the early days of the HLTA policy was a series of 'practitioner conferences', inviting responses to specific proposals concerning details of implementation (although never questioning the underlying philosophy). Interestingly, both Beverley and Lucy had sought, and been given, the opportunity to discuss the policy with a representative of central government. Although neither had been reassured by the experience, both felt that they were being listened to, which impressed them and made them feel more positive towards the policy.

As head of the TTA, the implementation of the HLTA policy was Ralph Tabberer's responsibility, and Lucy described her meeting with him:

> '...when I said to him about not including TAs that had a different specialism he was very interested in that.....'
>
> (Lucy Headteacher Downsfield)

Subsequently, subject specific roles for HLTAs in secondary mathematics and science were launched (TDA 2007d, 2007e), and Lucy considers that these may have been a

direct result of her chance comments to Tabberer. Arguably, if practitioners *perceive* that their contributions are valued, they may feel involved with the policy, and therefore more likely to support it.

The early establishment of an HLTA website (Jane 2004) couched in chatty, informal language, and inviting practitioners to contribute ideas and success stories, similarly exemplifies New Labour's declared strategy of 'partnership' with the workforce upon which the success of their modernisation agenda depends:

> 'Staff must be brought into the process, because as the deliverers of any change, their engagement is essential to successful implementation.'
>
> (PMSU 2006 p86)

However, several commentators (Falconer and McClaughlin 2000, Huxham and Vangen 2000, Ball 2008) have noted that the rhetoric of 'collaboration and partnership' conveniently ignores the imbalances of power and resources between partners, areas which are considered later in this chapter.

In terms of becoming quickly established, it can be seen how the HLTA policy benefited from being central to New Labour's public service reform agenda, and how the establishment of the 'Social Partnership' ensured support from key stakeholders within the 'context of influence', allowing the policy to move forward incrementally, and, since 2006, largely unchallenged, at national level.

7.3 Incremental Changes and Policy Texts

The HLTA policy exemplifies Ball's (2008 p97) contention that under New Labour's modernisation and transformation agenda, 'policies have to be looked at over time as

incremental, experimental and tactical'. Ten years ago, it could be argued, it would have been thought impossible that in 2009, classes would regularly be being taken by staff without QTS, yet the research demonstrates how the HLTA role has quickly and successfully become established in the case study schools. Ball (ibid) suggests that 'each [policy] move makes the next thinkable, feasible and acceptable'. Thus potentially contentious ideas are quietly introduced into the discourse, frequently in written form, and then repeated with increasing conviction until they become natural and seemingly inevitable. A brief analysis of three policy texts associated with workforce remodelling provides a clear example:

In 2002, the government set out a vision for the school workforce, in which:

> '...our support staff are recognised for their contribution to raising standards and have more opportunities to take on wider and deeper roles in support of teaching and learning.....'
>
> (DfES 2002a p4)

The following year, the Primary Strategy document, 'Excellence and Enjoyment', boldly stated that:

> 'Workforce reform goes hand in hand with curriculum enrichment.'
>
> (DfES 2003c para 7.5)

Having asserted this link without any preamble or offer of an evidence base, the next sentence introduced the HLTA role:

> 'Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs), working under a framework of supervision and direction from the teacher and headteacher, can not only free up teachers' time, but can also bring a wealth of expertise to help bring the curriculum alive. The Department has asked the TTA to develop a training programme for HLTAs. This training must be rigorous enough for the responsible role intended and be designed to support the teacher – who will remain responsible for the learning programme – in raising pupil achievement.'
>
> (DfES 2003c para 7.5)

Language such as 'bring the curriculum alive' carries connotations that teachers lack the creativity to do so themselves, although the document offers no indication of what the 'wealth of expertise' offered by HLTAs might be.

The 'rigorous' training which the potential HLTAs expected became, in fact, three days of 'preparation for assessment' against detailed standards (see Chapter 1 p25). However, a more careful study of the text reveals that it is not 'rigorous training' that is promised, but 'training *rigorous enough for the responsible role intended*' (ibid). Meanwhile the question of funding, of major concern to headteachers (see Ch 6 p148), is dismissed in one sentence on page 63 of the 80 page glossy document:

> 'In his statement on school funding on 15th May 2003,the Secretary of State made it clear that workforce remodelling would be a priority for future funding, and that the government would ensure that it could be sustained.'
>
> (DfES 2003c para 7.10)

'Excellence and Enjoyment' has framed the discourse of primary education since 2003, yet the document contains many confident assertions, and little evidence (Alexander 2004). The innate value of remodelling, and the benefits of HLTAs for teachers and children, are assumed, allowing the government to declare itself 'confident that primary schools will continue to lead the workforce reform agenda, and will embrace the promise of the agreement' (DfES 2003c para 7.6).

In the third document, the 'Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners' (DfES 2004e), the promise of funding for workforce reform has been replaced by 'advice' (a cheaper option). The benefits for children of introducing a wider range of adults into schools are presupposed, and adults without QTS are overtly mentioned:

> 'As we offer schools *advice* on how to move towards giving every teacher this time [PPA], we will build in a wide range of suggestions and models that look at ways of using this as an opportunity to bring more skilled adults into school to share their expertise and give children a broader and more rounded primary experience. Not all of these people will be qualified teachers.....'
>
> (DfES 2004e ch3 para 43 *my italics*)

In terms of Ball's 'policy as text' we are presented with a 'writerly' text (Bowe et al 1992 p11) inviting the reader to co-author and co-operate in the remodelling process. However, a noted feature of New Labour's policy tactics has been the use of 'spin' (Gewirtz et al 2004). Understanding 'policy as discourse' (Bowe et al ibid) encourages closer scrutiny of policy texts to determine how they talk about and conceptualise policy, and it thus becomes evident how the three documents contribute towards the government's incremental building of a 'discourse' of remodelling which claims to offer new opportunities for professionals to think creatively, and the promise of 'a broader and more rounded' (DfES ibid) education to the benefit of all.

Trevor Gale suggests that policies:

> '.....are produced discursively within particular contexts whose parameters and particulars have been temporarily (and strategically) settled by discourse(s) in dominance.'
>
> (Gale 1999 p405)

Building upon Ball's (1994) conceptualisation of policy as text and as discourse, Gale emphasises the importance of identifying a policy's underlying ideology, and speaks (ibid p393) of 'pulling apart' policy discourses to determine whose interests the policy might serve. The HLTA policy offers an interesting example for such analysis.

An alternative reading of the discourse of workforce remodelling might be that of the government offering schools some additional staffing at minimal cost to the exchequer, to assist with the burden of paperwork created by the government's own 'performativity' (Ball 2003a) agenda. This more cynical appraisal was certainly acknowledged by the research participants, although they themselves had recognised possibilities in the HLTA role and had therefore chosen to view the development positively. It could thus be argued that the incremental way in which the role was launched, with increasingly insistent messages that workforce reform was a 'good thing' and that primary schools would 'embrace the promise of the agreement' (DfES 2003a para 7.6), contributed to its acceptance. The headteachers had all consciously placed a positive 'spin' on the policy within their schools, raising the question of the extent to which their power also contributed to the success of the HLTA project.

7.4 Headteachers' Power in the 'Context of Practice'

Ball's (1994 p19) contention that 'the enactment of policy texts relies on things like commitment, understanding, capability, resources [and] practical limitations', would suggest that policy makers are more likely to realise their goals if these coincide with both beliefs and operational practicalities at the local level. Whilst the 'context of practice' (Bowe et al 1992) embraces the wide range of stakeholders who may be affected, whether directly or indirectly, by the decision to adopt a policy, the research indicates that the influence of the headteachers far outweighed that of any other stakeholders. As Ball comments (2008 p140): 'leaders [.....] are the key agents in the re-culturing and re-engineering of the school', and it is clear from the research that in

all four schools the headteacher's personal commitment was a crucial factor in the success of the HLTA role.

7.4.1 Factors Influencing Headteachers' Behaviour

Of 71 factors which influenced the behaviour of principals (headteachers), Trider and Leithwood (1988 p299) found personal context factors ('what principals valued for students, actions that past experiences suggested would be successful, and what principals knew how to do') to be the most influential.

Personal context factors do seem from the present research to have been an important influence on the headteachers (Chapter 4 p92). However, their emphasis appeared to be on what they valued for their staff; children were mentioned only infrequently during the interviews, and a frequency analysis of the word 'children' demonstrated that these references were largely to explain the HLTAs' work (eg 'we've divided the children into smaller groups'). On only 7 occasions was the possible impact of the policy on the children mentioned:

> 'I've been able to see how an HLTA can work with a class of children.'
> (James Headteacher Colnbury)

Beverley did not mention children at all [see Appendix 15].

Trider and Leithwood's conclusion that principals favoured policies which they 'knew how to do' is consistent with the notion that headteachers generally disliked introducing new initiatives into their schools (PwC 2007). This could be due to a lack of confidence because they had no past experience upon which to build their implementation strategies, or it could reflect headteachers' sensitivity to

'.....relationships with and among school staff and the likelihood of their co-operation in policy implementation factors' (Trider and Leithwood 1988 p299). These 'organizational and contextual' factors link with the notion of 'school culture' discussed in Chapter 6. The present research demonstrates that in planning for the implementation of the HLTA role in their schools, the headteachers' expectations of staff reactions had indeed played an important part in their decisions and actions.

Evidence from my research supports the conclusion that a core set of factors appear to influence the practices of most principals:

> 'Among such factors, those internal to the principal predominate; professional experiences, beliefs and values regarding schooling in general, and in the policy to be implemented in particular. '
>
> (Trider and Leithwood 1988 p304)

The headteachers had enthusiastically embraced a policy which they saw as relevant to their own situations, suggesting that in terms of the policymakers realising their goals, allowing 'space' within policy for local interpretation (Ozga 2000) has been successful in encouraging these schools to move forward with the HLTA.

7.4.2 Calculating Risks

Hoyle and Wallace (2005 p194) comment that, within a context of service accountability, 'greater success is likely to come through doing the traditional things better than through attempting high-risk innovation'. This is interesting in terms of the HLTA role, arguably the most contentious and 'high risk' of all the elements of workforce reform. However, the research suggests that an enhanced role for certain TAs had, in fact, been developing incrementally in all four research schools for some time prior to the announcement of the HLTA policy (see Chapter 6). In deciding to

adopt the HLTA role it appears that the headteachers had, whether consciously or subconsciously, assessed the 'risk'; they had read their individual school contexts, judged the HLTA policy to be both appropriate and workable, and used the HLTA post to their own advantage. This can be seen as an exemplar of headship in the New Labour era, where, as Dan Gibton (2004 p60) suggests, entrepreneurial headteachers will 'seize the day' and take advantage of the opportunities offered to them.

With the headteachers as the embodiment of policy within their schools (Ball 2008), and committed to the development of HLTAs, it is arguable that the research schools were ready to grasp the opportunity offered by the new role, which would account for its rapid acceptance within their institutions. However, it appears to have been their own understanding of the possibilities of HLTA for their own schools, rather than a theoretical commitment to the principles of workforce remodelling, which encouraged the headteachers to move the policy forward. This micro- rather than macro-political response to the HLTA policy was also evident in the teachers' responses.

7.5 Micro-Politics, Change Management and the HLTA

Meryl Thompson (2006) questions why five unions representing teachers and headteachers should have signed a Workload Agreement the most significant consequence of which, she argues, is 'the de-professionalisation of the teaching profession' (ibid p199). It is arguable, however, that these unions have regarded the inclusion of support staff as 're-professionalisation' rather than 'de-professionalisation' for teachers . PAT (2007), for example, has stressed the benefits

of including para-professionals in the team, and created a 'Professionals Allied to Teaching (Wider Workforce)' section within its union structure.

The majority of the respondents in the present research clearly did not personally feel professionally threatened by the HLTA policy (see Chapter 5). However, not feeling threatened by the presence of a particular individual with whom you may be friendly and whose status within the organisation is clearly lower than your own by virtue of both responsibility and remuneration, is a response to the micro-political, rather than the macro-political, context. Interestingly Jenny, as an HLTA, alluded to this difference:

> '.....I do understand why some teachers are not very happy about the Higher Level Teaching Assistant role and I mean, there are some teachers in this school who.....who are very open about the fact that they don't agree with it, but they're professional enough not to allow that to interfere with the day to day ... and people's relationships with me personally are very good and very supportive, and in fact, *some of the teachers who are most against it politically, are the most supportive and helpful to me personally.'*
>
> (Jenny HLTA Colnbury – *my italics*)

7.5.1 Teachers and Change

In his analysis of educational change, Goodson (2003 p90) describes how the externally mandated changes of the1980s and 1990s led teachers to become 'conservative respondents to, and often opponents of, externally initiated change' because their personal ideals were not in harmony with the changes demanded of them and they therefore lacked personal commitment to them.

Goodson concludes that the policy makers of this period (spanning both Conservative and early New Labour governments) misjudged the extent to which, despite the diminution of union power, large scale legislated reform would be 'refracted through

each school context, through the varied micro-climates and micro-politics of schools and through teachers' varying and sometimes resistant personal beliefs and missions' (op cit). He suggests that change will only be successfully managed in our new 'post modern' society, if the macro-political imperatives of policy makers take account of the micro-political contexts in which specific changes are to be implemented. Fink and Stoll (2005 p37) likewise remind us that schools are micro-political organisations and suggest that successful change agents will work to promote change 'with teachers' rather than applying change 'to' them:

> 'Teachers are also strategic. [....]. Some teachers are ambitious, some want to influence school decisions. Others just want to be left alone.'

7.5.2 The Principle of 'Empowerment'

It could be argued that the tenor of the government's rhetoric regarding teachers changed with the NA (DfES 2003a), which spoke of having 'the best generation ever of teachers and headteachers' whose active support was now needed 'to find new ways, for the 21st Century, of helping schools realise the potential of all our children and to ensure that our nation is competitive in a rapidly changing world' (op cit p1). This was to be achieved by 'empowering' schools to seek their own creative solutions at the micro-political level. In terms of this research it might be suggested that the approach was successful in that the schools did indeed respond positively to the challenge, enabling the HLTA policy to rapidly embed.

However, Vincent (1996) draws our attention to the notion of 'empowerment' as a 'solution to the problem of unequal power relations between groups'. The suggestion that people can be 'permitted' to take greater control over their own lives implies the dominance of the group which is offering that permission:

> '...dominant groups often invite people to deskill themselves, by promoting what might be called regimes of common sense; in this case people are presented with narratives about their lives, society and the larger world that naturalize events in order to make it appear as if particular forms of inequality and other social injustices are natural, given or endemic to questions of individual character.'
>
> (Giroux 1994 p157 quoted in Vincent ibid)

This raises the question of whether teachers have been invited to 'deskill themselves' (ibid) through the promotion of the HLTA policy within a context where the government, as the dominant group, is addressing its own need (that of reforming public services without additional long-term expenditure) whilst attempting to secure the 'active consent' of schools through 'empowering' them to develop creative and relevant local solutions to the problem of workforce remodelling.

7.5.3 Teachers – 'De-skilled' or 'Re-skilled'?

In asserting that teachers have surrendered their professionalism to the remodelling agenda, Thompson (2006) suggests that teachers have 'de-skilled' themselves through their complicity in a project that allows for other people without their qualifications to undertake their work. The teachers in the research, however, disagree, and have been largely positive about the work of HLTAs and its effect upon their own professionalism (see Chapter 5). Rather than feeling de-skilled, they have in many cases become re-skilled taking on additional responsibilities as team leaders and line managers (Blatchford et al 2008).

As the role of the HLTA has developed in the research schools, the differences between the HLTA and the teacher's role, whilst still somewhat blurred, have become clearer:

> 'It was a gradual thing. I started out doing a little bit, then I did the HLTA and was given more responsibility.'
>
> (Sue HLTA Albany)

> 'I think when PPA time came, and it was going to be covered by TAs we [the teachers] thought that the children were going to be losing half a day of their education. But actually it's worked out exceptionally well. We've got ICT with Sue [HLTA], a TA who does music, another TA for craft and a teacher for PE. And actually the children are getting a lot from those sessions.'
>
> (Sarah Deputy Head Albany)

This increasing confidence may be another factor contributing to the success of the HLTA policy in these schools. The message for policy-makers may thus be that allowing change to embed at the micro-political level within the 'context of practice' is a worthwhile investment of time and therefore an effective model of policy implementation, although with the multiplicity of policies in the present age of 'policy hysteria' (Stronach and Morris 1994), it is difficult to envisage how this might be achieved in practice.

Tony Blair, then Prime Minister, stated that the process of change in public services should be both 'continual' and 'self-sustaining'(Blair 2006 p4), but that this goal could not be achieved without significant changes to the public sector workforce:

> '....the traditional patterns of working and demarcations between professions need to be broken down [.....] Nurses are capable of prescribing [.....] GPs can take on functions like minor surgery [.....] Teachers now have the help of 152,000 Teaching Assistants [.....] Learn from those at the frontline actually doing it. Question the system as well as just work it.'
>
> (Blair 2006 p3)

As Ball (2008 p143 *my italics*) comments, a major dimension of the remodelling project has been 'the reconstitution of teachers from an obstacle *to* reform to an instrument *of* reform as 'new professionals''. But what might this mean in practice, and how has it impacted upon the HLTA?

7.6 Teachers as 'New Professionals'

Hanlon (1998 p45) describes professionalism as 'a shifting rather than a concrete phenomenon', and it is arguable that whilst the emergence of the HLTA role could in theory represent a threat to teachers' professionalism (Thompson 2006), a new and more inclusive concept of professionalism has been developing, which has enabled the HLTA to be absorbed within particular sites. Whitty suggests that:

> '....if altruism and public service remain high on our professional agenda, the next re-formation of teacher professionalism will surely need to be one in which we harness teachers' professional expertise to a new democratic project for the twenty-first century.'
>
> (Whitty 2002 p77)

The acceptance of HLTAs as fellow classroom educators could be viewed as part of this 'democratic project'. For example, 55% of teachers in the research schools agreed or strongly agreed that 'the addition of HLTAs to school staffing is just part of the changes occurring generally in the public sector at this time,' whilst only 4% disagreed.

Whitty (op cit) speaks of the emergence of a 'democratic professionalism' which 'seeks to demystify professional work' and build alliances with other groups. At a practical level in school this might be evidenced by teachers demonstrating trust in HLTAs, whilst maintaining confidence in their own professional status. The responses of the majority of teachers in the research schools appear to reflect this position (see Appendix 12 Q16, Q18(8)). For example, 84% regarded the HLTA role as a positive development, and 80% believed that HLTAs' additional skills in the staff team enabled extra opportunities to be provided for the children. Meanwhile, the use of HLTAs was not apparently regarded as a threat to teachers' livelihoods, since only

15% agreed that 'using HLTAs prevents qualified teachers from getting jobs', whilst 64% disagreed or strongly disagreed (Appendix 12 Q18(6)).

Arguably, the open and inclusive view of professionalism espoused by the majority of the teachers in the research schools has acted to overcome potential resistance, enabling the HLTA to rapidly embed. As discussed in Chapter 6, the teachers' attitudes will, at least partly, have been shaped by the 're-culturing' of their schools; an approach to change which allows for 'human creativity, intuition and sensitivity' (Fink and Stoll 2005 p38).

March (1999 p55 & p57) distinguishes between the 'logic of consequence', oriented towards effects, targets and outcomes, and the 'logic of appropriateness', where action is taken on the basis of what is appropriate to the 'roles, routines, standard operating procedures and practices' of the institution. The research indicates that whilst the government has presented the HLTA role as one of 'consequence' (ie raising standards), in adopting the policy, the schools have acted in accordance with the 'logic of appropriateness', regarding it as useful and relevant to their individual situations, and not primarily about raising standards. This is interesting in terms of how professionalism is viewed within the research schools.

7.6.1 A 'Sense' of Professionalism

Despite the fundamental changes to their training, and the challenges to their practice offered by the plethora of developments from the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988 (Bowe et al 1992), through the shift from 'bureau-professionalism' to 'managerialism' (Trowler 1998), the rise of the 'performativity'

regime (Ball 2003a), and the advent of the 'para-professional' in the classroom (Drake et al 2004), I would argue as a practitioner that 'professionalism' in the sense that teachers *feel* that they are professionals, has not altered. Indeed, it is my perception that whilst government policy 'has played an active role in blurring the distinction between teachers and teaching assistants' (Whitty 2008 p40), within the 'context of practice', teachers' *sense* of their own professionalism, rather than being weakened, has arguably become stronger as schools have sought to define these distinctions at the micro-political level.

This argument is reflected by Lucy:

> 'I'm just thinking about the two HLTAs that I have [....] They're part of the team, they're part of the planning process, they are regarded as not *equal* players,.... that's not the right, the right term, but.... There is still that dividing line that 'I have a qualification and I'm a qualified teacher, you're supporting me and you're doing a fantastic job' but there is still that recognition of, you know, of what teachers have actually *been through* and I do think it's really important to keep that ... you know, and the teaching assistants are aware of that as well.'
>
> (Lucy Headteacher Downsfield – *italics indicate her own emphases*)

Here, Lucy is suggesting that there is a sense of professional boundary which, whilst unspoken, is nevertheless recognised and respected by both teachers and HLTAs, and that this has allowed the HLTA project to move forward in a sense of mutual trust that will be maintained. Hargreaves and Goodson similarly describe one of the features of professionalism in 'a complex post-modern age' as being:

> '.....occupational *heteronomy* rather than self-protective *autonomy*, where teachers work authoritatively yet openly and collaboratively with other partners.....'
>
> (Hargreaves and Goodson 1996 p21)

Likewise, Whitty (2008) speaks of 'collaborative professionalism', which

> '.....potentially offers teachers new professional opportunities to support children's learning by achieving a balance between defining the teacher's proper role and staking out the territory too rigidly .....'
>
> (Whitty 2008 p43)

However, the implication that teachers themselves have simply redefined their professional boundaries in relation to the HLTA policy, seriously under-estimates the extent to which New Labour has legislated to legitimise its own view of a '21st Century teaching profession' (DfES 2003a).

7.6.2 'Governmental Professionalism'

Through the incremental imposition on schools of a competency model based on 'standards' of performance for all staff from headteachers (DfES 2004a) through to teachers (TDA 2007f) and HLTAs (TDA 2007c), the government's expectations of appropriate 'professional' behaviour have been made manifest. Standards C40 and C41 of the core standards for teachers, for example, clearly demonstrate that teaching is no longer to be seen as the work of one adult, but of a team, including TAs (and, presumably, HLTAs), led by a teacher:

> 'C40: Work as a team member and identify opportunities for working with colleagues, managing their work where appropriate and sharing development of effective practice with them.
> C41: Ensure that colleagues working with them are appropriately involved in supporting learning and understand the roles they are expected to fulfil.'
>
> (TDA 2007f)

These expectations are matched by Standard 6 in the HLTA standards (TDA 2007c) in which HLTAs will 'demonstrate a commitment to collaborative and cooperative working with colleagues'. Meanwhile, the 'professional leadership and management' (DfES 2004a p3) responsibilities of headteachers, include '...engaging in the

development and delivery of government policy' (ibid p2) and '...leading change, creativity and innovation' (ibid p6).

Beck (2008 p 127) uses the term 'governmental professionalism' to describe the way in which the professional responsibilities of both headteachers and teachers appear to have moved incrementally until 'professional accountability' to the government for 'achieving standards, targets and other performance criteria imposed by government agencies' has become 'increasingly accepted as a sort of common sense'. In this way the 'evolving policy narrative' (Ball 2008 p101) of professionalism has arguably become one in which the professional has discretion to innovate within particular areas but the government remains firmly in control of the agenda.

James, for example, decided that opposition to the HLTA project would be futile in the long term because it was clearly part of the government's plans:

> '..... one of the things which does seem to be a strong feature of the present government is that they have a very strong commitment to making these things work and you know they're not giving up on them, so to speak....'
>
> (James Headteacher Colnbury)

James' perception of the situation undoubtedly contributed to the successful implementation of the HLTA role at Colnbury because having decided to move forward with the project, he gave it his active support. This appears to exemplify Beck's contention that the government has, whilst ostensibly offering professional freedom to teachers, been consciously moulding the profession to its own ends:

> 'Part of what is at stake here does seem to be an endeavour to create a compliant profession that nevertheless, in some ways, increasingly 'governs itself' in the desired ways, through acceptance of and involvement in the newly created institutional frameworks[8] that have been brought into being.'
>
> (Beck 2008 p136)

[8] One such 'institutional framework' is the requirement for all teachers to have 10% PPA time.

7.7 Funding as a Mechanism of Control

In considering why the HLTA policy has successfully embedded in the research schools, the question of funding cannot be ignored, since from the outset it was clear that PPA must be provided within existing resources.

A notable difference between the interviews with headteachers in the IFS (Sendorek 2006) and the present research was the relatively rare mention of funding (or lack of) in the latter. Beverley, Nosheen and Lucy appeared to have accepted that no additional resources would be forthcoming, turning their professional energies instead to creating solutions which would enable them to engender a new, and more inclusive, form of 'professionalism' in their schools, within this constraint. Their responses to the question 'Why did your school adopt the HLTA policy?' were focused on professional development for staff with only one mentioning PPA cover, and none mentioning finance. Only twice during the three interviews, was money referred to. For James, however, finance had been an important consideration:

> '.....encountered extreme difficulties with covering for PPA. Umm....severely under-funded initiative there. I think everybody realised that you have to, you know, put principles to one side and think about what are the practical, the pragmatic ways of dealing with the situation .'
>
> (James Headteacher Colnbury)

James freely admitted that lack of resources had obliged him to cover PPA with non-QTS staff (see Chapter 6). However, he had quickly recognised the potential of the situation as a staff development opportunity:

> '..one of the best things to come out of Workforce Reform, I think, is the fact that these people [TAs and HLTAs] are now professionals in their own right, and we're starting to see, as I say, a bit of a career structure.'
>
> (James Headteacher Colnbury)

Interestingly, whilst the headteachers had focused on professional development as a reason for adopting the HLTA role, the HLTAs' own perceptions were quite different. Most mentioned the lack of resources to provide PPA, with only one response being entirely focused on professional development.

> 'I think it was financial, purely, really.[.....] And, well, in fact they tried to cover PPA with supply for a while you know, and that's why we weren't used straight away.'
>
> (Jenny HLTA Colnbury)

> 'I suppose when the PPA came in, they'd got to find something and someone to cover the PPA. [.....] And using supply teachers to cover is very expensive, and that was another issue as well.
>
> (Sue HLTA Albany)

This could indicate that government had been more successful in using funding as a mechanism for exerting pressure on schools to adopt the HLTA policy than the headteachers either recognised or were prepared to admit. It certainly draws attention to the extent to which schools and the government are differentially empowered in the policy process. However, it is noticeable that neither headteachers nor HLTAs made any reference to the 'standards' agenda, suggesting that that area of the government's declared purpose for HLTAs may have become lost within the 'context of practice'.

Ball (2008 p3) comments that, for educational practitioners under New Labour, 'policy is currently experienced as a constant flood of new requirements, changes, exhortations, responsibilities and expectations', and politicians can draw upon a range of strategies, from the 'carrot' of resources to the 'stick' of Ofsted, to try to ensure the successful implementation of each new initiative. However, 'deep, cultural and sustained change' takes 'years of patient hard work to implement' (Coffield 2007 p70). This research, although based on a small sample, demonstrates that it is possible for a policy shift as radical as the HLTA to rapidly and successfully become

established within the 'context of practice', even overcoming initial opposition, if it can readily be absorbed into the culture of individual schools. This implies that it is meaningful to the school community both in terms of its content and of its perceived long-term relevance to their situation.

The research thus suggests that whilst policy-makers work at the macro-political level, an understanding and appreciation of the micro-political climate within the 'context of practice' may help them realise their goals more effectively.

7.8 Summary

This chapter offers six possible factors which may have contributed to its success of the HLTA policy in the research schools. The first is New Labour's push for public sector workforce reform. It is suggested that through the mechanism of the 'Social Partnership', the government and its partners within the 'context of influence' (see Chapter 2) were able to build alliances which effectively sidelined the NUT's resistance enabling the policy to move forward largely unchallenged at national level. The second factor concerns the incremental building of the government's discourse of remodelling within the 'context of policy text production'. Through analysing the language of three policy texts, I demonstrate how the innate value of remodelling has rapidly come to be assumed.

The third factor is concerned with the exercise of headteachers' power as the embodiment of policy (Ball 2008) within the 'context of practice'. I suggest that the research headteachers adopted the HLTA policy because they viewed it as appropriate

and relevant to their own situations, and to the school cultures which they were consciously promoting. Thus, micro-politics is the fourth factor. My research suggests that the HLTA has successfully embedded because the micro-political concerns of practitioners have coincided with the macro-political imperatives of policy-makers (Goodson 2003), and the teachers have felt 'empowered' (Vincent 1996). However, the government's deliberate attempt at the macro-political level to reconstitute teachers as an instrument of reform through redefining 'professionalism' via the Teaching Standards (TDA 2007f) is noted.

Professionalism is the fifth factor. The chapter suggests that the research teachers are working within inclusive school cultures in which HLTAs are regarded as partners in a 'collaborative professionalism' (Whitty 2008), enabling the project to move forward. Finally, it is suggested that a sixth factor, funding, may have acted as a powerful influence on professionals, whether consciously or sub-consciously, in their decisions to adopt the HLTA policy. The policy has also worked because HLTAs have been prepared to work for low pay.

The chapter concludes by observing that although a constant stream of new policies has emanated from central government under New Labour, it takes time and patience for change to be absorbed into practice, and the research carries the message for policy-makers that practitioners are more likely to devote their energies to those policies which are viewed as meaningful and relevant to their individual situations.

Chapter 8 Looking to the Future

> 'I want to remove 'policy' from its pedestal, and make it accessible to the wider community [...]. In doing this I am arguing – implicitly and explicitly – that policy is to be found everywhere in education, not just at the level of central government, and that there is virtue in engaging with policy in this way, because it contributes to a democratic project in education.....' (Ozga 2000 p2)

8.1 Introduction

This chapter suggests that the structure/agency debate (Whitty 2008) lies at the heart of my research. In briefly summarising the research questions and responses so far, I demonstrate that although professionals work within state-imposed structures, they do have a degree of agency, the extent of which depends upon the specific macro and micro political contexts in which they are implementing a particular policy. I then use Ball's (1994) contexts of 'outcomes' and 'political strategy' as a theoretical framework for discussion of the research findings, and consider the implications of the study for HLTAs, teachers, headteachers and policy-makers. Next, I explain how the research will be disseminated, and offer suggestions for future research on HLTAs. Finally, I offer some conclusions about the research as a whole.

8.2 The Structure /Agency Debate

Whilst agreeing with Ball that practitioners can exercise some influence on policy as it becomes practice, Hatcher and Troyna (1994 p167) suggest that Ball's policy cycle underestimates the power of the state. Power, they agree, is not absolutely fixed. However, they argue that the state has the upper hand, since the terrain upon which

any contestations between practitioners and the state play out is already 'structured by power, and above all, the power of the state'. In Whitty's words:

> 'Whilst acknowledging the scope for individual and collective agency [for actors within the policy process] there is also a need to recognise that policy responses are also shaped by wider structural factors and these powerfully circumscribe the capacity of individual actors to shape policy.'
>
> (Whitty 2008 p18)

Since practitioners are both 'receivers' and 'agents' of policy, their interaction with policy will reflect their priorities, pressures and interests (Trowler 1998). The responses to Question 1 (schools' rationale for adopting the HLTA policy) and Question 2 (development of the HLTA role) in my research both indicate that the way in which a policy is received and interpreted within the 'context of practice' (Bowe et al 1992) impacts crucially on its implementation. All four research schools chose to adopt the HLTA policy because they recognised in it areas which would benefit them directly. Areas such as offering recognition and CPD to TAs already performing at a higher level, were common to all four schools. Other areas, for example addressing staffing difficulties by 'growing' a pool of staff able to cover for teacher absence, were specific to particular schools. In all four schools, practitioners' attitudes towards the policy influenced the process and speed of implementation, and leaders were aware of, and acted upon, the likely responses of staff towards the new HLTA role, arguably demonstrating the 'creative pragmatism' noted by MacBeath and colleagues (2007).

This micro-political reaction was also evident in the responses to Question 3 (HLTAs' and teachers' perceptions of the HLTA role and its effect upon professionalism). As discussed in Chapter 5, the concept of 'professionalism' can arguably be seen as

either positive or negative in its effects on those to whom it is applied. However, the research suggests that through the development of their PLCs (Stoll and Lewis 2007) staff in the four case study schools felt in control of the HLTA agenda, and professionally confident in their use of the new role, enabling them to move forward positively, 'seizing the day' (Gibton 2004) and taking advantage of the agenda offered.

Nevertheless, Hatcher and Troyna (1994 p164) remind us that practitioners operate within particular parameters, including the 'quasi-market mechanism of per capita formula funding' which enables the state 'to impose its policies regardless'. Responses to Question 4 (headteachers' attitudes towards HLTAs, and their role in the policy process) demonstrate how every headteacher was aware of, and partly driven by, the requirement to provide PPA for teachers within limited financial resources. Thus, whilst headteachers technically had the freedom to reject the HLTA policy, as James initially did, their 'space' (Ozga 2000) for negotiation was limited by budgetary constraints.

It is arguable that 'structure' may be allied to coercion and 'agency' to practitioners taking the initiative. In response to Question 5 (how developments in the 'context of practice' can affect the realisation of policy-makers' goals), the research findings suggest that the 'Social Partnership', whilst couched in terms of partner working, was used by the government to push forward its own agenda unopposed by unions and employer organisations which had signed the NA. The priority of the teaching unions in signing the agreement was reducing teacher workload, but through the government's careful building of the discourse of 'remodelling' (Chapter 7 p149), the

link between a reduced workload and a remodelled workforce rapidly became accepted and hegemonic.

The language of the NA could be regarded as coercive in that it presupposed practitioners' endorsement of a policy whose values had been declared yet remained largely unchallenged and unproven:

> 'Schools are changing. Headteachers and teachers *know* that the school workforce needs to be able to take its part in leading this change.'
> (DfES 2003a p3 – *my italics*)

Practitioners have not been given the opportunity to disagree with this philosophy, and further coercion has been evident in the use of financial constraints (see above). This paints a gloomy picture of practitioners obliged to adopt a policy to which they may be fundamentally opposed.

However, the strong message of the research is that teachers, headteachers and HLTAs feel extremely positive about the HLTA policy. This same optimism is evident in Alborz and colleagues' (2009) review of 232 studies on the impact of support staff, which concluded that TAs have been successful both in providing support for teachers and in delivering benefits to pupils. Bell and Stevenson (2006 p9) remind us that 'policy is about the power to determine what gets done, or not done,' and my research demonstrates how practitioners, whilst working within the 'structure' imposed by the power of the state, can and do exercise 'agency' at the local level (Ozga 2000). Thus whilst schools can subvert policy, they can also be allies for policy-makers where they see purpose and relevance in a policy.

8.3 The Policy Cycle - Two Further Contexts

Throughout this thesis I have used the three original contexts of the policy cycle (Bowe et al 1992) as a theoretical framework, but in later work Ball (1994 p26) suggested that this model required 'two further contexts to make it complete'. The first of these, variously referred to by Ball as the 'context of outcomes' (ibid) and the 'context of social justice' (Ball 2003b) relates first and second order effects of policy, and is concerned with measuring the policy against a concern with issues of justice, equality and freedom. This leads to the second, the 'context of political strategy', in which the context of social justice can lead to political action designed to reduce inequalities in our society. In reflecting upon my findings in relation to the HLTA policy, I shall use these to guide the analysis.

8.3.1 The 'Context of Outcomes'

The imaginative restructuring of the work of teachers and TAs is central to the discourse of modernisation, and this research has demonstrated how the case study schools have grasped the agenda and successfully moulded a variety of HLTA roles to suit their individual circumstances. However, as Bell and Stevenson (2006 p22) remind us: 'change is seldom neutral – there are winners and losers, those who benefit from proposed policy changes and those who pay.' Ball (1994), in speaking of the 'context of outcomes' urges us to look more closely, and consider the unseen or unintended consequences of policy as it works itself out in practice. From the research it is clear that there are issues of both justice and equality associated with the HLTA role which remain unresolved.

For primary teachers, already an occupational group struggling to define themselves as professionals (Stronach et al 2002), the blurring of the boundaries between their own role and that of HLTAs raises the question of whether their professional training is recognised and valued by government and society. The primary school workforce is highly gendered, and Gaile Canella (1997 pp146 - 149) describes the identities of women teachers as being positioned 'as good mothers' (female and caring), 'as gendered workers' (managed by an imposed curriculum, objectives and testing), 'as agents of the state' (working within government regulation which dictates teachers' goals and behaviours), and 'as good daughters' (yielding to patriarchal control). This view of occupational identity leads to a professionalism constructed around the altruistic desires of being useful and productive, of contributing to the community, and of being both needed by, and helpful to, others (Canella op cit). Arguably, it thus allows space for the government to manoeuvre primary school teachers since their focus is on what they perceive as best for the children in their care and for the adults with whom they interact on a daily basis.

Only two of the fifty seven teachers in the research, both at Colnbury, actively refused to accept HLTAs. Whilst many more expressed a sense of unease that the new role exploited the willingness of a group of highly competent women to undertake significant responsibilities for minimal pay, other considerations, principally the benefits to the children, increased self-esteem for the HLTAs and the positive benefits of team working, had overridden these concerns. However it could be argued that in co-operating with the policy, headteachers and teachers have been complicit in perpetuating both a long-running injustice to the professional status of primary teachers (whose better funded secondary colleagues have all, for many years, enjoyed

PPA fully covered by qualified teachers) and an equal injustice to TAs, whose opportunity to be recognised and validated through a properly funded and appropriately remunerated career structure appears to have been lost as their work and responsibilities have continued to increase without commensurate pay.

The project of public sector modernisation demands the creation of 'more 'flexible' and 'efficient' and 'enterprising' forms of organisation' (Ball 2008 p147). The HLTA policy arguably matches these criteria, but the question remains of who has benefited and who has paid (Bell and Stevenson 2006). Certainly the government has benefited by utilising the HLTA role to introduce PPA, a policy which potentially increased the teaching budget of every primary school in England by 10% in September 2005, with only minimal cost to the exchequer. Whilst there is no doubt that both HLTAs and teachers in the research schools feel that they have benefited from the flexibility offered by the HLTA policy in terms of offering new opportunities to work creatively to maximise the schools' resources, it is arguably the HLTAs themselves who have borne the financial burden. All four headteachers expressed the view that in terms of equality, the level and responsibility of HLTA work is not appropriately remunerated under the current system. However they remain bound by local pay arrangements, and therefore unable to address this issue even should they wish to do so[9].

A further issue of equality within the 'context of outcomes' is that the offer of HLTA status, whilst providing a small number of TAs with an opportunity for personal advancement, may be depriving others of that chance because they have not been

[9] The bill creating a new national pay and conditions negotiating body for School Support Staff is due to receive Royal Assent in October 2009 (SSWG/SSSNB 2009). Although this will address the issue of ensuring nationally agreed pay for nationally defined support staff roles, the government rejected the idea of one common negotiating body for all school staff including teachers (WAMG 2007) indicating that it does not intend to link support staff pay to teachers' salaries.

invited to apply. Chapter 6 demonstrates the power of leaders to 'select' HLTA candidates. Whilst both teachers and HLTAs in the study regarded this power as well managed, the views of other TAs were not sought, and their perceptions might have been different. This is a possible area for future research.

8.3.2 The Context of Political Strategy

Ball (2008 pp6-7) differentiates between 'big-P policy', formally legislated by national government and 'little-p policies formed and enacted within localities and institutions'. Evidence from the research suggests that all four schools have applied themselves to creating 'little-p policies' designed to ensure that HLTAs' working conditions are maximised, and that they receive appropriate recognition for the contribution which they make to their schools. Clearly all the HLTAs felt personally valued, and their work was admired and respected by the majority of the teachers.

In terms of opening up new opportunities within the 'context of political strategy', gaining HLTA status has enabled half of the research participants to consider, or to be accepted for, teacher training, a chance which may not formerly have been available to them. However, only 'big-P policy' could ameliorate the inequalities between teachers and HLTAs in terms of remuneration, because practitioners still operate within externally set boundaries. As MacBeath and colleagues comment:

> 'We have visited schools in which headteachers and senior management teams worked inventively in the spaces, redeploying staff so as to manage tasks and meet targets, efficiently, economically and within the parameters of government policy. One cannot help but be impressed by the creative pragmatism of school leaders.....'
>
> (MacBeath et al 2007 p42)

Whether viewed as exploitation or opportunity, or both, it is clear that in both macro- and micro-political terms, the story of the HLTA policy is still unfolding.

8.4 Implications of the Study

8.4.1 Implications for HLTA s

The future for HLTAs can be viewed either negatively, as members of an exploited workforce with little power to change their position in the hierarchy and therefore minimal hope of improvement in their conditions of service, or positively as part of a new era of opportunity in which HLTAs might broaden their roles within their PLCs, and develop new skills. In a complex picture, one perhaps needs both understandings. The potential impact of the SSSNB on HLTAs' contractual status is still unclear, but as clarity develops around the role nationally, I would concur with the conclusion offered by Wilson and colleagues (2007 p92) that 'the HLTA role has the potential to change the way in which education is delivered and to make a positive difference to school life'.

The research demonstrates that the HLTA role is growing and becoming better understood. It suggests that HLTAs are regarded by the majority of teachers as being 'new professionals in the classroom', signalling a major shift in the work of schools in the 21st Century and a willingness in the research schools to embrace new structures. The research schools are regarded by their LAs as models of good practice and are being encouraged to share this more widely. This research forms part of that dissemination.

8.4.2 Implications for Teachers

Reflecting upon the new mode of working associated with the ECM agenda, Whitty (2008 p43) suggests that teachers will need to embrace a new form of 'collaborative professionalism' which involves close and active collaboration with a range of other professionals and para-professionals, or, beyond this, a 'democratic professionalism' (ibid p44) in which teachers 'work in tandem with *all* relevant stakeholders'. Many of the teachers in my research appear to be open to such arrangements, and indeed to be welcoming HLTAs as fellow professionals in the classroom.

Nevertheless, the blurring of the boundaries between the HLTA and teacher roles remains an issue, and teachers may find themselves playing an important practical part in defining and maintaining role requirements and responsibilities, thus helping to establish clarity around role boundaries (Wilson et al 2007). Teachers' new responsibilities may include direct line management, and the provision of support and development for HLTAs. My research indicates that whilst teachers who had experience of working with HLTAs felt positive towards them, they also frequently lacked knowledge about the role. I would therefore suggest that it is important for schools to provide teachers with information about the HLTA policy, and would recommend that schools discuss the subject openly, giving all staff the opportunity to air their views and concerns.

8.4.3 Implications for Headteachers

Working at the interface between the school and the external policy environment, headteachers are 'caught in the crossfire of prescriptive national policies on one hand and local expectations and demands on the other' (MacBeath et al 2007 p43) and

therefore face particular challenges. As an experienced headteacher myself, I agree with Bell and Stevenson (2006 p8) that headteachers must know 'where policies come from, what they seek to achieve, how they impact on the learning experience and the consequences of implementation'. The understanding and anticipation of policy are key features of contemporary leadership (op cit) and therefore practitioners should actively engage with policy (Ozga 2000).

All headteachers are legally entitled to 'dedicated headship time'[10] in which to undertake 'activities associated with the strategic direction of the school' (TDA 2009b). I believe that such time could productively be used for reflection upon both the macro-political policy context, and its possible impact upon the individual micro-political context in which headteachers are working.

Ball (2008 p7) warns against overestimating the 'logical rationality of policy'. Whilst policy texts may have an illusion of coherence, 'policy strategies, Acts, guidelines and initiatives are often messy, contradictory, confused and unclear'. In the case of the HLTA, the research demonstrates how the headteachers took a policy which lacked coherence, and was delivered during a period of 'policy hysteria' (Stronach and Morris 1994) and hyperactivity. By engaging with it, they made it coherent for their particular schools. I would suggest that other headteachers could similarly benefit from developing the confidence and ability to anticipate the wider policy environment and to recognise policy opportunities as they arise.

[10] Introduced in September 2005, under Phase 3 of the NA (DfES 2005b), dedicated Headship Time provides specific time for headteachers to *lead*, not merely manage, their schools.

8.4.4 Implications for Policy-Makers

Neither the likely resistance to a policy offering staff without QTS the opportunity to lead the learning of whole classes, nor the possible long-term consequences, should be under-estimated, yet this research demonstrates how in each school, the newly established HLTA roles have developed rapidly, and in ways uniquely suited to their environments. So what can policy-makers learn from this experience?

Whilst there has been a strong motivation for schools to adopt the HLTA policy for financial reasons, it has not been backed with the force of legislative compliance as, for example, was the adoption of the National Curriculum. Gibton (2004) argues that headteachers are not fully recognised in the policy process, yet the research demonstrates that they have been key to the success of the HLTA policy in all four schools, and that they have championed it for reasons related to their particular settings. Whilst it would be impossible to design strategies for policy implementation based upon the individual responses of headteachers, this does carry the implication for policy-makers that headteachers are more likely to comply with a policy which they regard as both useful and relevant to their situation.

8.5 Looking to the Future

8.5.1 The spread of the HLTA policy

Since November 2004, when the first candidates achieved HLTA status (Sendorek 2006), numbers have increased rapidly [see Appendix 5]. 17,867 primary school HLTAs had been accredited by April 2009 (TDA 2009a), a number equivalent to one

per primary school in England [11]. However, the January 2009 Annual School Census recorded just 9,300 full time equivalent (FTE) HLTA posts in primary schools (DCSF 2009b). This difference may be partly accounted for by the fact that many HLTAs are employed part time or on split contracts (WAMG 2008b). Also, some HLTAs have been unable to find a suitable post, a barrier highlighted by Wilson and colleagues (2007), and one with significant implications for their remuneration, whilst others have continued into teacher training.

Clearly, the HLTA role is now successfully established and continuing to grow, yet, as highlighted throughout this research, a number of unresolved issues remain.

8.5.2 Dissemination of the findings

Some elements of my research findings have already been shared with the research community through my involvement in the DISS project (Blatchford et al 2009), and also with the professional community through my role as a consultant headteacher on the NCSL 'New Visions' programme for recently appointed headteachers (NCSL 2005).

A long-term practical outcome of the research has been the development of a partnership between my school and our LA to provide guidance and support to our schools on taking policy through to practice in issues related to workforce remodelling. Here the impact of the EdD, which has been valued as much by participating support staff and teachers as by my colleague headteachers, has been to empower schools by opening up the agenda beyond matters of day to day policy

[11] In January 2009 there were 17,041 primary and 3,211 secondary schools in England (DCSF 2009c). 13,900 FTE HLTAs in total across all school sectors were recorded in the January 2009 Annual School Census (DCSF 2009b), employed across 9,400 schools.

delivery. This has allowed for exploration of the wider long-term implications of workforce remodelling not only for schools, but also for joint working with our partners within the ECM agenda (DfES 2004b).

The full research findings will be disseminated to fellow practitioners locally via my contacts within the two participating LAs, and more widely through their involvement in the LA network within the South East of England. I also intend to disseminate the findings within the research community by offering a paper for publication in an appropriate journal in due course.

8.5.3 Future Research

The research demonstrates that even in schools which recognised change as inevitable and embraced the opportunities offered by the HLTA role from the outset, there remains diversity in both understanding and practice related to this policy.

Although Government documentation has consistently linked the HLTA policy with 'raising standards' (DfES 2004d), none of the research participants mentioned pupil standards in relation to HLTAs. This is perhaps unsurprising since even professional research (Blatchford et al 2009) has been unable to prove a positive link between the impact of support staff and raised pupil standards, and the government has remained vague about how this might be achieved. Nevertheless, the case study suggests that children have benefited from the HLTA policy by having adults whom they know, rather than unfamiliar supply teachers, covering PPA and short term teacher absence, and from the range of HLTAs' specialist skills, for example in ICT and music.

Whilst it is clear that the boundaries between the roles of teachers and TAs are now permanently blurred (Burgess 2008), it is arguable that the long term implications of this blurring are still not fully understood or appreciated either by practitioners or by policy-makers. It is also arguable that the HLTA role lies at the heart of this uncertainty. Specific fruitful questions for further research might therefore be:

- How are HLTAs being utilised across the country in relation to PPA time?
- Have schools developed the school-wide perspective of the role (for example as TA team leaders)?
- Where schools have decided not to include the HLTA role in their staffing structure, what alternative solutions have they developed to the challenge of workforce remodelling? Will these be sustainable in the long term?
- Can a direct link be established between HLTAs and the raising of standards?
- How do TAs view the HLTA role?
- To what extent do policy-makers who worked on the early development of the HLTA (for example politicians, civil servants from the DCSF and TDA, and members of WAMG) believe the role to have fulfilled its initial purpose? What future developments might they envisage?

8.6 Conclusions

8.6.1 What Has Been Discovered?

Through this study I aimed to explore how the HLTA role had evolved in four different schools, and from this to draw conclusions about how policy develops and

changes as it becomes practice, and specifically about the role of practitioners in this process. My curiosity about these issues had been aroused by my personal experience as a headteacher of utilising 'spaces' within the HLTA policy to develop an HLTA role which was both successful, and specific to the needs of my school.

I have concluded that whilst there remains ambiguity around the HLTA role both locally and nationally, the committed support from the headteachers in each of the case study schools has led to the emergence of a well defined and widely accepted professional role on each site.

This suggests that an understanding of, and commitment to policy intentions within the 'context of practice', can be crucial to the realisation of policy-makers' goals.

8.6.2 A Contribution to Knowledge

My study offers a contribution to knowledge for both practitioners and the academy. In tracking the HLTA policy through its first two years in schools, I have demonstrated a variety of ways in which the role has been developed, and is being used. This may enable practitioners to benefit from the experiences of other schools in shaping their own HLTA roles in the future.

The principal purpose of the research, however, was to examine the policy-making process, and I was fortunate to be able to study a potentially controversial policy at the very point of its becoming practice. Whilst my research is small-scale, it contributes to academic knowledge by offering an example of 'human agency' (Raab 1994) in action at this unique point in the 'policy cycle'.

8.7 Summary

This chapter locates my research within the structure/agency debate, demonstrating through reference to the research questions how the pessimism generated by the coercion of externally imposed structure is balanced, or even outweighed, by the professionals' sense of optimism and creativity as they exercise agency. It next considers unresolved questions of justice and equality within the 'context of outcomes' (Ball 1994), concluding that primary teachers may be unintentionally complicit in perpetuating their own disadvantage with respect to their secondary colleagues, and that of TAs with respect to teachers. I also conclude that HLTAs are effectively bearing the financial burden of teachers' PPA time, and may be disadvantaged by a system in which headteachers effectively 'select' HLTA candidates. These remain outstanding, unresolved issues.

The implications for different groups of professionals are then considered: for HLTAs the indications are that their role is growing and becoming better understood, while teachers may find themselves part of the process of defining the role boundaries between HLTAs and teachers. I suggest that headteachers need good understanding of policy processes, both micro- and macro-political, and that policies perceived as useful and relevant within the 'context of practice' will be more likely to be adopted.

Having demonstrated the rapid expansion of the HLTA role, I discuss the dissemination of the findings, and possible future research. Finally, I relate the outcomes of the research to my original intentions, and suggest ways in which my research may contribute to knowledge for both practitioners and the academy.

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Appendix 1

Revised Professional Standards for Higher Level Teaching Assistants

The revised standards are grouped in three sections: 'Professional values and practice', 'Professional knowledge and understanding', and 'Professional skills'. 'Professional Skills' is sub-divided into three sections: 'Planning and expectations', 'Monitoring and assessment', and 'Teaching and learning activities'

Professional values and practice

Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:

1. have high expectations of children and young people with a commitment to helping them fulfil their potential.
2. establish fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with children and young people.
3. demonstrate the positive values, attitudes and behaviour they expect from children and young people.
4. communicate effectively and sensitively with children, young people, colleagues, parents and carers.
5. recognise and respect the contribution that parents and carers can make to the development and well-being of children and young people.
6. demonstrate a commitment to collaborative and cooperative working with colleagues.
7. improve their own knowledge and practice including responding to advice and feedback.

Professional knowledge and understanding

Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:

8. understand the key factors that affect children and young people's learning and progress.
9. know how to contribute to effective personalised provision by taking practical account of diversity.
10. have sufficient understanding of their area(s) of expertise to support the development, learning and progress of children and young people.
11. have achieved a nationally recognised qualification at Level 2 or above in English/literacy and mathematics/numeracy.
12. know how to use ICT to support their professional activities.
13. know how statutory and non-statutory frameworks for the school curriculum relate to the age and ability ranges of the learners they support.
14. understand the objectives, content and intended outcomes for the learning activities in which they are involved.
15. know how to support learners in accessing the curriculum in accordance with the special educational needs (SEN) code of practice and disabilities legislation.
16. know how other frameworks, that support the development and well-being of children and young people, impact upon their practice.

Professional skills

Teaching and learning activities must take place under the direction and supervision of an assigned teacher and in accordance with arrangements made by the headteacher of the school.

Planning and expectations

Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:

17. use their area(s) of expertise to contribute to the planning and preparation of learning activities.
18. use their area(s) of expertise to plan their role in learning activities.
19. devise clearly structured activities that interest and motivate learners and advance their learning.
20. plan how they will support the inclusion of the children and young people in the learning activities.
21. contribute to the selection and preparation of resources suitable for children and young people's interests and abilities.

Monitoring and assessment

Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:

22. monitor learners' responses to activities and modify the approach accordingly.
23. monitor learners' progress in order to provide focused support and feedback.
24. support the evaluation of learners' progress using a range of assessment techniques.
25. contribute to maintaining and analysing records of learners' progress.

Teaching and learning activities

Those awarded HLTA status must demonstrate, through their practice, that they:

26. use effective strategies to promote positive behaviour.
27. recognise and respond appropriately to situations that challenge equality of opportunity.
28. use their ICT skills to advance learning.
29. advance learning when working with individuals.
30. advance learning when working with small groups.
31. advance learning when working with whole classes without the presence of the assigned teacher.
32. organise and manage learning activities in ways which keep learners safe.
33. direct the work, where relevant, of other adults in supporting learning.

Source: Higher Level Teaching Assistants Provider Handbook (TDA 2007b)

Appendix 2

'Raising Standards and Tackling Workload: A National Agreement'

signed on 15th January 2003

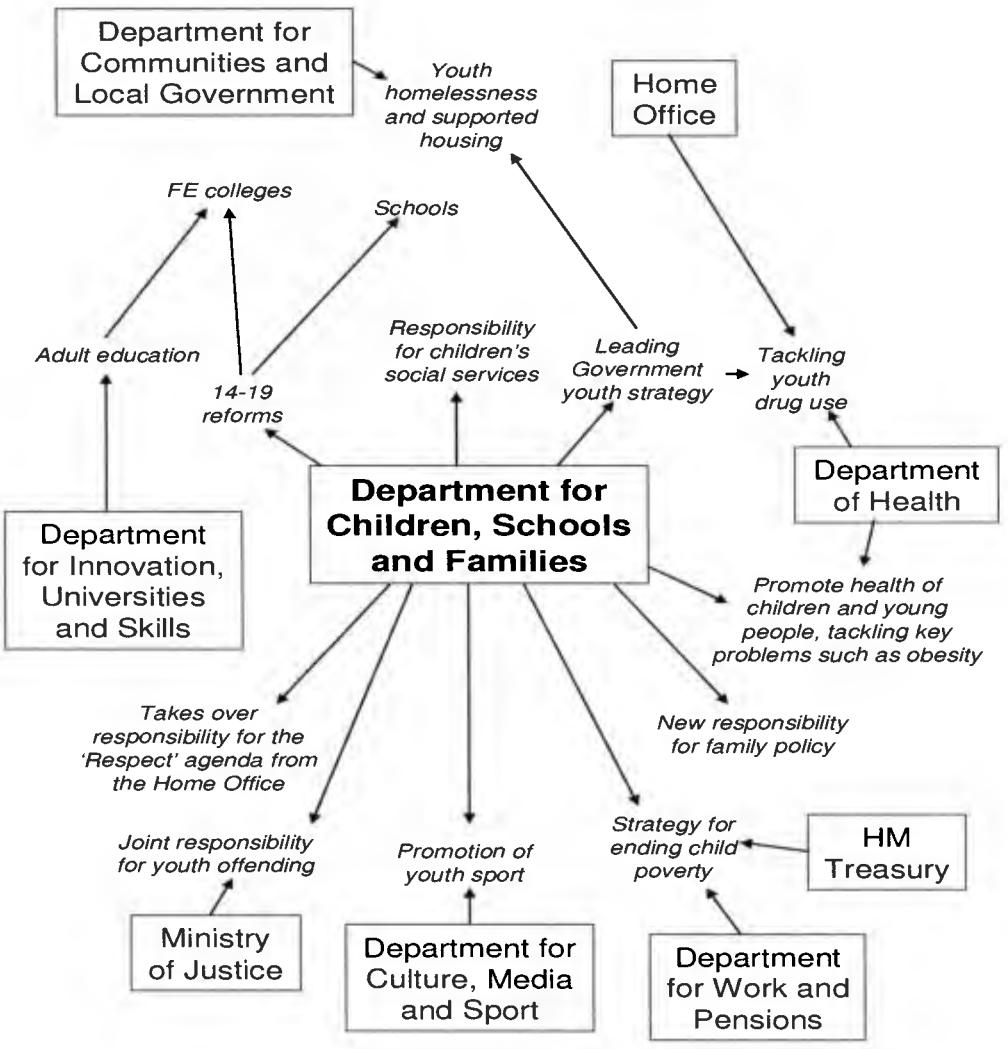
List of Signatories (the 'Social Partnership')

Abbreviation	Signatory	Representing
ATL	Association of Teachers and Lecturers	Teachers
DfES	Department of Education and Skills	Central government
GMB	GMB Union	Support staff
NAHT	National Association of Headteachers	Headteachers
NASUWT	National Association of Schoolmasters/ Union of Women Teachers	Teachers
NEOST	National Employers Organisation for Schoolteachers	Local Government in England and Wales
PAT	Professional Association of Teachers	Teachers
SHA	Secondary Heads Association	Secondary headteachers
TGWU	Transport and General Workers Union	Support staff
UNISON	UNISON Union	Support Staff
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government	Devolved Government for Wales

(DES 2003a)

Appendix 3

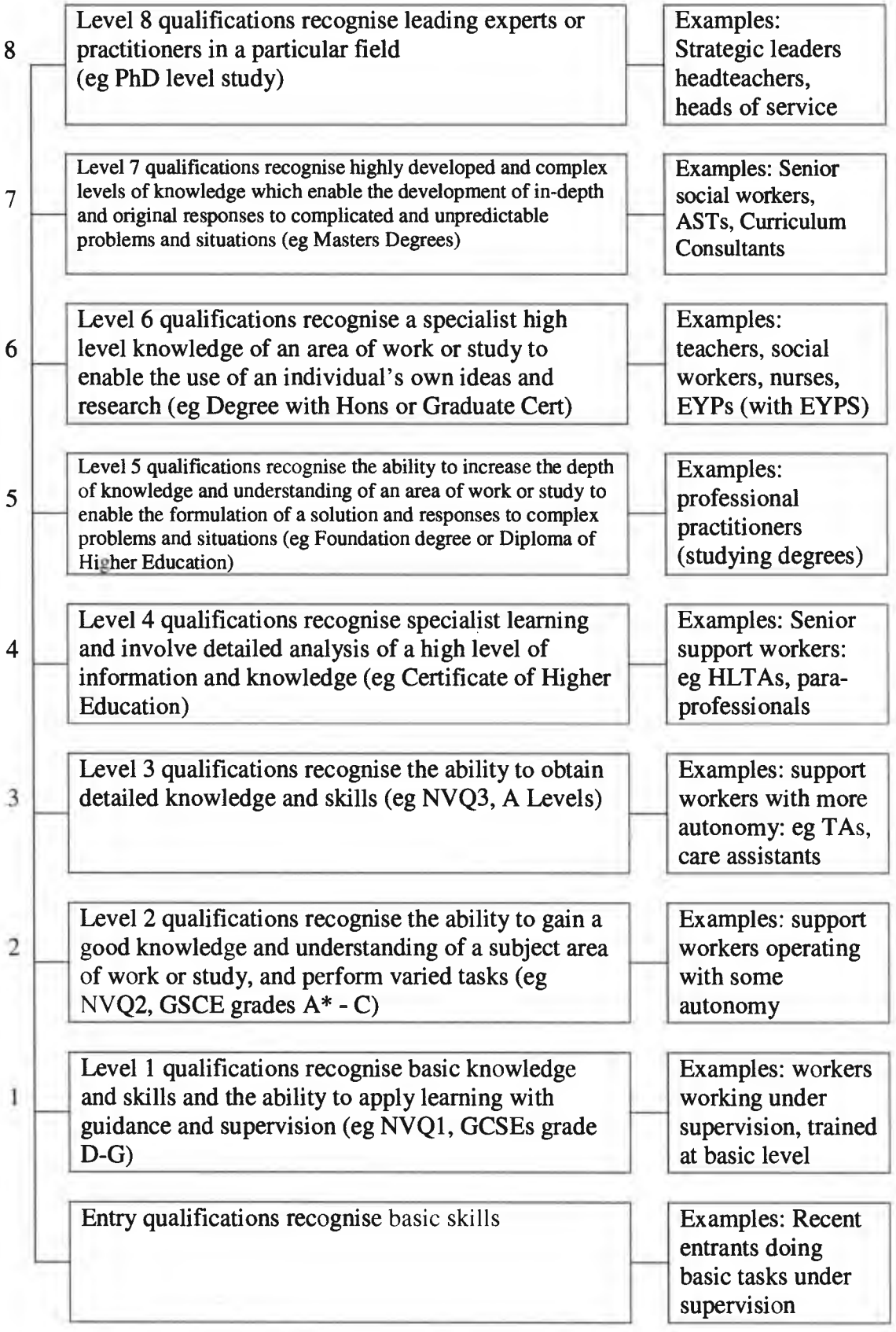
Structure of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (created June 2007) showing links to other Government Departments



Source: Stewart (2007)

Appendix 4

Qualifications Framework for the Children's Workforce (DCSF 2005c)



Appendix 5

Rise in HLTA Numbers and Employment 2006 - 2009

Table showing total numbers of HLTAs to date April 2005 – 2009 by school type:

	April 2005	April 2006	April 2007	April 2008	April 2009
Primary schools	**1734**	**7031**	**10,736**	**14,492**	**17,867**
Secondary schools	383	1,741	2,912	4,046	5,659
Special schools	109	405	836	1,177	1,495
'Other' schools (inc PRUs)	612	2,312	2,375	2,445	2,555
Total in all schools	2,838	11,489	16,859	22,160	27,576
% of primary HLTAs	**61%**	**61%**	**64%**	**65%**	**65%**
% of secondary HLTAs	13.4%	15%	17%	18%	21%

(Source: R. Atkins HLTA Project Manager TDA 28/05/09)

Table showing full time equivalent (FTE) HLTA employment reported in January schools census 2006 – 2009 by school type.
(nb: statistics for HLTA employment were not collected in January 2005)

	2006	2007	2008	2009*
Primary schools	**3,700**	**6,100**	**7,900**	**9,300**
Secondary schools	1,200	1,900	2,600	3,100
Special schools	500	800	1,000	1,200
Pupil referral units	100	200	200	300
Total all schools	5,500	9,000	11,700	13,900
% of HLTAs employed in primary schools	67%	68%	67%	67%
% of HLTAs employed in secondary schools	22%	21%	22%	22%

* provisional figures

(Source: DCSF 2009b Table 14)

These tables demonstrate a significant discrepancy between numbers of HLTAs who have achieved the status and numbers employed. As the employment statistics are in FTE, this may reflect the fact that the majority of support staff work part time (Blatchford et al 2009) as well as a shortage of HLTA posts available. Also, my research indicates that many HLTAs may be moving straight on into teacher training programmes.

It can be seen that primary school HLTAs consistently make up about 65% of HLTAs accredited and 67% of HLTAs employed.

Appendix 6

Research Schools and Participants

Selected Schools:	Albany	Banford	Colnbury	Downsfield
School Type	First	Primary	Junior	Primary
Local Authority	Riverside	Riverside	Riverside	Stoneham
Number on Roll (Jan 2007)	184	203	326	753
Number of Free School Meals	12	19	15	63
% Free School Meals	6.5%	9.3%	5%	8.4%
Number of children with EAL	7	179	47	173
% EAL	4%	88%	14%	23.1%
Age Range (inc Nursery)	5-9	3 - 11	7-11	3-11
Specialist Units	-	Speech& Language	-	BESD Physical
Number of Classes	7	8	11	25
Headteacher's name	**Beverley**	**Nosheen**	**James**	**Lucy**
Male/Female	F	F	M	F
Headteacher's ethnicity	White Br	Asian	White Br	White Br
Number of HLTAs (actual)*	2	3	2	3
No of HLTA posts in school*	1	2	2	3
HLTA names	**Sue**	**Nicola****	**Daisy**	**Katie**
	Maria***	**Jane**	**Jenny**	**Stacey**
		Anna		**Kirsty**
Other staff interviewed	**Sarah**		**Anne**	
Position	Deputy/ Acting HT		SENCO	
Number of TAs (actual)	8	17	16	36
Number of Teachers (FTE)	7 + HT	9 + HT	12 + HT	33.4 +HT
Number of Teachers (actual)	8	13	15	40
Questionnaires returned	**4**	**10**	**10**	**40**
% response rate	50%	77%	66%	100%

Notes:
* HLTA refers to the fact that the HLTA has gained the status. Schools are under no obligation to fund posts so there may not be a suitable post available in school.
** Nicola is a qualified Nursery Nurse and has retained this post title
*** Beverley plans that Maria will assume the HLTA post at Albany when Sue commences her GTP training

Appendix 7

Semi Structured Interview Frameworks

1. Headteacher Interview Schedule

1. What does/do your HLTA(s) do in your school?

2. Has this changed substantially from what she/they did when you first introduced the role? If so, how?

3. Why did you choose to go for the HLTA role in school?

4. Very few schools locally decided to adopt the HTLA in its initial stages, but your school did. Can you tell me about the process by which that decision was made?

Subsidiary prompts:

a. Who was involved in the decision?
b. Were teaching staff consulted?
c. Were TAs consulted?
d. Were governors consulted?
e. Were parents consulted?

5. One of the issues which arose from my pilot study and has now also come up in other national research work which has been undertaken recently is that nationally there is still a lack of clarity about the HLTA role. Would you say that within your school there is a clear understanding of your HLTA's role?

Subsidiary question (if Q5 answer is yes):

a. Could you explain how that clarity came about?
b. If I'd asked you the same question a year ago do you think your answer would have been different? If so, what has made the situation change?

Subsidiary question (if Q5 answer is no):

c. What would you say accounts for the lack of clarity?
d. How could this situation be improved, or does it not need improving?

6. Given that there appears to be/ appears NOT to be (from Q5) clarity about the role in your school, are you surprised at this description of the national picture? Why?

7. Another issue which came up in my pilot study and I'd like to ask your opinion about was the influence of the headteacher in getting the HLTA off the ground. How far do you feel that you personally were responsible for this in your school? How do you think that your view of the role has influenced the way in which it has developed in your school?

8. Do you have any regrets about using HLTAs from the start? Why?

9. With the wisdom of hindsight, is there anything that you would have done differently in terms of introducing the role into your school?

10. Some people suggested at the start that HLTAs would pose a threat to the professionalism of teachers. Can you recall what your opinion was about this issue at the time? Have you changed your mind since?

11. Are there any ways in which you have subsequently found the role to threaten teachers' professionalism in your own school? If not, why not?

12. Are there any situations in which you could imagine that HLTAs could threaten the professionalism of teachers in other schools?

Subsidiary prompts:

a. Influence of school culture?
b. Culture of CPD?
c. Acceptance of the teaching staff of TAs in general?
d. Acceptance by the TAs of the HLTA role?

13. Do you yourself regard HLTAs as a group of fellow professionals and why?

14. How do you view the long term future of the HLTA role, and why?

Subsidiary questions:

a. Is the role here to stay?
b. How might it change?
c. Will it become more generally accepted and widely used?

15. My last questions are about your impressions of central government and the HLTA role. To what extent to do think that central government had a clear idea of what the role might look like when they originally launched it?

Subsidiary questions:

a. What was their motivation for launching it?
b. Do you think it has turned out as they expected? (How have you formed that impression?)
c. How do you think that they view the future of the role?

16. Finally, is there anything else which you would like to say about the HLTA role?

2. HLTA Interview Schedule

1. Please tell me a bit about your story – what you did before you became a TA, what your ultimate goals are in having the job, how HLTA fits into all that....

2. Are you contracted to work fully or partly as an HLTA in your school?

3. What do you do in your HLTA role, and how does this differ from what other TAs do in your school?

4. Has your role changed substantially from when you first became an HLTA, and what do you think about the role so far? Could it be developed?

5. Why do you think your school chose to go for HLTAs?

6. How do you think that you came to be chosen to be put forward for HLTA?

7. Very few schools locally decided to adopt the HLTA in its early stages, but your school did. What do you understand to have been the process by which the decision was made to go for an HLTA?

Subsidiary prompts:

   a. As far as you know, who was involved in the decision?
   b. Were teaching staff consulted?
   c. Were TAs consulted?
   d. Were governors consulted?
   e. Were parents consulted?

8. Are there other TAs in your school whom you would expect to go forward for HLTA – if so, why haven't they so far?

9. What advice would you give to a colleague who might be considering going for HLTA status?

10. One of the issues which arose from my pilot study and has now also come up in other national research work which has been undertaken recently is that nationally there is still a lack of clarity about the HLTA role. Would you say that within your school there is a clear understanding of your role?

Subsidiary question (if Q10 answer is yes):

   a. Could you explain how that clarity came about?
   b. If I'd asked you the same question a year ago do you think your answer would have been different? If so, what has made the situation change?

Subsidiary question (if Q10 answer is no):

   c. What would you say accounts for the lack of clarity?
   d. How could this situation be improved, or does it not need improving?

11. Given that there appears to be/ appears NOT to be (from Q10) clarity about the role in your school, are you surprised at this description of the national picture? Why?

12. Another issue which came up in my pilot study and I'd like to ask your opinion about was the influence of the headteacher in getting the HLTA off the ground. How far do you feel that your headteacher was responsible for this in your school, or were there any other members of staff whom you feel were key to the decision? How do you think that your headteacher's view of the role has influenced the way in which it has developed in your school?

13. Do you have any regrets about becoming an HLTA from the start? With the wisdom of hindsight, is there anything that could/should have been done differently in terms of introducing the role into your school?

14. Some people suggested at the start that HLTAs would pose a threat to the professionalism of teachers. Do you think that the teachers in your school consider the HLTA role to be a threat to their professionalism? How do you know?

15. Can you recall what your opinion was about this issue when you started as an HLTA? Have you changed your mind since, and why?

16. Do you think that the teachers in your school regard TAs as a group of fellow professionals? What gives you that impression?

17. If not in yours, are there any situations in which you could imagine that HLTAs could threaten the professionalism of teachers in other schools?

Subsidiary prompts:

a. Influence of school culture?
b. Culture of CPD?
c. Acceptance of the teaching staff of TAs in general?
d. Acceptance by TAs of the HLTA role?

18. How do you view the long term future of the HLTA role, and why?

Subsidiary questions:

a. Is the role here to stay?
b. How might it change?
c. Will it become more generally accepted and widely used?

19. My last question is about any impressions you have of central government and the HLTA role. To what extent to do think that central government had a clear idea of what the role might look like when they originally launched it?

Subsidiary questions:

a. What was their motivation for launching it?
b. Do you think it has turned out as they expected? (How have you formed that impression?)
c. How do you think that they view the future of the role?

20. Finally, is there anything else which you would like to say about the HLTA role?

Appendix 8

Higher Level Teaching Assistants - Teachers' Questionnaire

The Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) role was introduced nationally two years ago. Your school is one of those which chose to use the HLTA role from the outset.
This questionnaire is for teachers in schools which have been using (or which used) HLTAs from the beginning. It is designed to find out your opinions of the role to date, and your view of its possibilities for the future. *All answers will be treated in strictest confidence.*
In line with government policy, the term TA (Teaching Assistant) is used throughout to refer to all those who assist in classrooms ***including TAs who support individual children.***
Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) are referred to separately.

Please tick the appropriate answers throughout this questionnaire unless asked to do otherwise.

Section 1: **Some facts about you**

1. Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Age group: 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐
   51-60 ☐ 61+ ☐

3. Do you work Full time? ☐ Go to Q 5 Part time? ☐ Go to Q 4

4. If part time, what % full time equivalent do you work? ☐

5. In which year did you complete your teacher training? ☐

6. How long have you worked in your present school? ☐ years ☐ months

7. Please tick any extra responsibilities which you have
   Deputy head ☐ SENCO ☐ Leadership Team ☐
   Assistant Head ☐ TLR post ☐ Subject Leader ☐
   Other (please specify) .....

8. Does/has the work of an HLTA in your school impact/ed on your class (eg by covering your PPA, teaching your pupils etc)? Yes ☐ Go to Q 9 No ☐ Go to Q 10

9. If yes to Q8, please explain very briefly what the HLTA does/has done for you and/or your pupils

.....

.....

Section 2: TA and HLTA roles within schools

10. Within your school, would you expect the following tasks to be undertaken only or mainly by **TAs,** only or mainly by **HLTAs,** by **both equally** or by **neither**?
Please tick **one box only** for each task.

	TAs **only**	TAs **mainly**	HLTAs **only**	HLTAs **mainly**	TAs /HLTAs **equally**	**Neither** TAs nor HLTAs
Planning lessons with the teacher	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Planning lessons independently	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Covering teachers' PPA time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Covering lessons during a teacher's absence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Whole class teaching for whole lessons	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Whole class teaching for a section of the lesson	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Supporting groups inside the classroom in literacy /numeracy lessons	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Running groups outside the classroom in literacy /numeracy lessons	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Supporting individual pupils during lessons	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hearing children read	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Moving children through the school's reading programme	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Supporting art activities in the classroom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Supporting children's behaviour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Running peer mediation schemes in school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Organising the 'Huff and Puff' scheme	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Providing pastoral support for individual pupils	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Liaising with parents and carers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Undertaking areas of admin (eg timetabling SEN groups)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Managing the TA team	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Organising cover for absent TAs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Organising induction for TAs new to the school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Training other TAs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Supporting other TAs in their role	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	TAs **only**	TAs **mainly**	HLTAs **only**	HLTAs **mainly**	TAs /HLTAs **equally**	**Neither** TAs nor HLTAs
Deputising for the SENCO (eg when SENCO is out of school)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Supporting the SENCO in his/her role	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Attending statemented children's Annual Reviews	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Writing own reports for statemented children's Annual Reviews	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Attending SEN children's IEP reviews	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Designing specific materials to differentiate lessons for SEN children	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sharing in the preparation / delivery of IEPs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Liaising with outside agencies (eg Social Workers, Educational Psychologists)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Preparing learning resources	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Assessing pupil achievement	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mounting work for displays	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Putting up displays	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Taking the register at the start of morning/afternoon school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Getting things out for / tidying away after activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sharpening pencils	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Playground duty	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personal care for children (eg changing wet pants)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cataloguing/ issuing/ maintaining equipment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ordering supplies and equipment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Following up children's absence or lateness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Analysing attendance figures	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Going on school trips	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Attending Inservice Training days	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Attending staff meetings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Minuting meetings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 3: Higher Level Teaching Assistants

11. As far as you can recall or are aware, who was consulted prior to the introduction of HLTAs into your school?

Please tick **ALL THAT APPLY**

Governors	
Teachers	
TAs	
Parents	
Not sure	
I was not there so I don't know	

12. Which of the following statements:

(a) most closely described your attitude when HLTAs were first introduced to your school?

(b) most closely describes your attitude to HLTAs now?

Please tick
ONE ONLY IN EACH COLUMN

	(a) Then	**(b)** Now
HLTAs are an excellent new resource		
HLTAs are a good new resource		
HLTAs might be a good thing, but only time will tell		
I will only work with an HLTA reluctantly		
The HLTA idea will die a natural death		
The HLTA project should be abandoned		
No opinion – I was not there at the time		

13. ***If there is a difference between your answers to Questions 12 (a) and (b)*** please explain briefly what has made you change your mind:

_____

_____

_____

14. Are you/would you be happy for your whole class to be taken by an HLTA regularly to provide your PPA time? Yes ☐ No ☐

15. Are you/would you be happy for *a part of* your class to be taken by an HLTA regularly either in conjunction with another teacher or TA to provide your PPA time? Yes ☐ No ☐

16. Do you regard the HLTA role as a positive development in primary education? Yes ☐ No ☐

Please give a reason for your answer:

_____

_____

_____

17. The following statements are designed to determine the current extent of teachers' knowledge about HLTA status. It is important for this research that you *do not* look up the correct answer, or discuss the possibilities with a colleague, but just give your own immediate response. Thank you. Please indicate whether you know, or believe, each of the following statements to be true or untrue, or if you don't know. Tick **one box only** for each statement.

	Definitely True	Unsure - Probably true	Definitely Untrue	Unsure - Probably untrue	Don't know
Candidates can gain HLTA status by 3 day assessment only without following a formal training course	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To gain HLTA status, it is essential that the candidate teaches whole classes regularly as part of their day to day work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A qualified teacher can be employed as an HLTA without undertaking HLTA assessment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Achieving HLTA status guarantees the candidate an HLTA post	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A TA can be employed as an HLTA without having achieved HLTA status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
HLTAs earn as much as unqualified teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When HLTAs are teaching without the class teacher present, responsibility for the children's progress still lies with the teacher	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All HLTAs must carry out some form of managerial function within their schools (eg team leadership)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Only HLTAs or qualified teachers are permitted by law to cover teachers' PPA time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
HLTAs are expected to undertake the planning of their own lessons as part of their role	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Most HLTAs are female	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People who have gained HLTA status must be paid on the HLTA pay scale	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To achieve HLTA status, candidates must have GCSE Grade C or above (or GCE 'O' level or CSE Grade 1) passes in both English and Maths	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To achieve HLTA status, candidates can have Level 2 literacy and numeracy qualifications as an alternative to GCSE Grade C (or equivalent) passes in English and Maths	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Candidates must produce their original certificates as evidence that they have achieved the necessary academic qualifications for HLTA status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. The following is a set of statements concerning the HLTA initiative.
For each statement please say whether you agree strongly, agree, are neutral, disagree or disagree strongly with it. Tick the appropriate box.

	Strongly disagre	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
It is better for a class to have an HLTA whom the children know than a supply teacher from outside	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
HLTAs are a threat to the professionalism of teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
HLTAs represent good value for money in the staffing structure of the school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The government is using HLTAs as 'cheap teachers'	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
HLTAs are a professional group in their own right	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Using HLTAs prevents qualified teachers from getting jobs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would be happy for a child *of my own* to be taught by a good HLTA	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
HLTAs' additional skills in the staff team enable extra opportunities to be provided for the children	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The HLTA initiative places too much responsibility on staff who are not teacher qualified	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
HLTAs have helped schools to deal with the problem of funding Workforce Reform	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Becoming an HLTA is be good for a TA's self esteem	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having HLTAs can create divisiveness amongst the TA group	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parents view the use of HLTAs positively	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Children's education is being threatened by being taught by people without QTS	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The HLTA initiative is good for TAs' career progression	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The addition of HLTAs to school staffing is just part of the changes occurring generally in the public sector at this time (eg nurse practitioners in the NHS)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

19. Please list any work that you know of which the HLTA in your school undertakes, or is planned to undertake, but the other TAs do not

20. Please add any comments which you may wish to make about the process by which the HLTA role has been introduced into schools to date

Thank you for taking the time to answer this questionnaire. Please return it to Roz in the envelope provided ***via your school office*** *for analysis by Tuesday 5th February. Many thanks.*

Appendix 9
HLTAs' Work in Supporting Children, Teachers and Schools

HLTA	School	Support for the curriculum		Support for the wider work of school	
		Supports children	Supports teachers	Supports the school	Other school roles/comments
Sue (now GTP)	Albany	ICT all year groups. In classroom on own 2.5 days a week	Does PPA cover for 2 Key Stages and Leadership Time cover for Deputy Head	ICT technical support	Doing own planning marks her out from other TAs
Maria	Albany	Music all year groups	Delivers the music curriculum across the school	Organises concerts (eg Christmas) and accompanies singing	
Nicola	Banford	Sees herself as a nursery teacher	Does a lot of the nursery planning while nursery teachers liaises with KS1	Manages nursery and team	HLTA gives more confidence to HT to let her do management role
Jane	Banford	S&L support. Specific support with KS2 groups teaching science vocab	Stands in for teachers who are away	Involved with technical support for science (preparing equipment)	Paid at TA level 3 (Pay is an issue at Banford)
Anna (jst qualified)	Banford	Small group work which the SENCO used to do	Covers PPA doing music and RE 1afternoon per week	Keeps the reading scheme organised	
Daisy	Colnbury	Whole class teaching	Teaches sustainability for PPA cover. Can also teach RE, ICT, computing. Covers for Annual reviews. Supports SENCO	Playground incentives. Huff and Puff Peer mediation. All TAs 'Multi assist' and support named pupils.	'The more the teachers get used to us being around the more comfortable they are'. (The need to develop a culture accepting of HLTAs is an issue)
Jenny	Colnbury	SATs revision Whole class teaching	Covers PPA 3 afternoons per week. Deputises for SENCO (organises timetabling etc)	Uses her computer skills for SEN admin. Organises children with medical needs	Provides training & support for TAs
Katie	Downsfield	Maths, English & science sets (own planning) Bottom sets (7 in each set) and left to own devices 1:1 with SEN children	PPA cover Covering teacher absence	Supervises lunchtime controllers	'seen more as teaching staff than as a TA' an 'inbetweenie'. School has a TA manager, but Katie approached the HT directly to ask to do more and was given more responsibilities
Jo (jst qualified)	Downsfield	Teaches and plans own English & maths sets	PPA cover in reception – free play and phonics		Was scared at first that she wouldn't be up to the standard
Kirsty	Downsfield	90% of time teaching – team teaching Year 2. Takes lower ability sets for maths, English, science	PPA cover for the year group Cover for absent teachers		Does 'own planning and marking and everything like that'. Plans RE, PHSE, just started planning the drama

Appendix 10

Comparison Between Pay (1st April 2008) of TAs, HLTAs and Teachers in Riverside and Stoneham LAs*

Job title and role	NJC Scale/ Spine point	Hourly rate	Full Annual Salary[12]	Likely Actual salary[13]
TA Level 1	Scale 2			
General, basic classroom support under teacher supervision	9	£7.47	£14,428	£9,882
	10	£7.63	£14,731	£10,094
	11	£8.12	£15,681	£10,742
TA Level 2	Scale 2			
TA Level 1 + running structured learning sessions	11	£8.12	£15,681	£10,742
	12	£8.29	£16,008	£10,967
	13	£8.52	£16,438	£11,271
TA Level 3	Scale 3			
As TA Level 2 with additional specialism (eg OU Specialist Teacher Assistant Certificate)	14	£8.67	£16,738	£11,470
	15	£8.85	£17,087	£11,708
	16	£9.07	£17,499	£11,999
	17	£9.28	£17,913	£12,277
Cover Supervisor	Scale 4			
Covers classes for absent teachers (supervisory role only) generally in secondary schools	18	£9.47	£18,265	£12,528
	19	£9.82	£18,948	£12,991
	20	£10.17	£19,640	£13,454
	21	£10.55	£20,357	£13,957
HLTA[14]	Scale 5			
As TA Level 3 plus leading learning of classes and additional leadership activities	22	£10.82	£20,884	£14,314
	23	£11.14	£21,498	£14,738
	24	£11.50	£22,201	£15,214
	25	£11.87	£22,904	£15,668

Job title	Teachers Scale/Scale Point	(Salary outside London)	(Salary inner London)	Salary London Fringe
Newly Qualified Teacher	Main			
	M1	£20,627	£25,000	**£21,619**

* Both LAs use the National Joint Committee salary scales plus London fringe allowance for support staff salaries (source: relevant LA websites).

* For direct comparison with teachers' salaries (DCSF 2008), use London Fringe

[12] Full annual salary calculated at 37 hours per week, 52 weeks per year (but school support staff cannot earn a full annual salary)

[13] Since support staff are paid on a 44.1 week year, and generally for school hours only, their salary is effectively considerably lower than the annual salary quoted. Figures here are based on a 30 hour week, 44.1 weeks per year.

[14] Despite the fact that schools are being encouraged to offer HLTAs the same performance. management arrangements as those for teachers, progression through these four points is automatic annually for the first four years as an HLTA, after which there is no further progression available.

Appendix 11

'Do Teachers Regard HLTAs as a Threat to Their Professionalism?

(HLTAs' Responses From Interviews)

Name	School	Response to Question	Extract from Interview
Sue	Albany	Yes	I do think some do see it as a threat, and a lot of them see it as basically getting cheap teachers, you know. And I think no-one saw that as me personally [...] but there was some of them that do have this kind of bit of an issue with the role.
Maria	Albany	No	I don't think so, nobody's ever talked about it, nobody's ever said anything and I get very positive feedback from them [the teachers].
Nicola	Banford	No	I don't think it poses a threat to her. I think if anything, we know the children already, in the class and it works well when she does have her PPA time because we know them, and the plans.
Jane	Banford	No	I think as staff we work very well together, we ... I just think we ... we're not too ... we don't force ourselves on the staff, we're not ...
Anna	Banford	No	I don't think they do here, but I've got friends who are teachers in other schools and they ... they think HLTAs [....] are slightly jumped up.
Daisy	Colnbury	No	I don't think in this school they feel we're a threat to their professionalism as such because the head teacher is so ... you know teachers are the most important commodity we've got.
Jenny	Colnbury	Yes	I think some of them do. How do I know? Well, some teachers are very open. I mean, they, they don't ... in this school they don't mince their words [laughs] so you know, there are a couple of teachers who actually don't agree with it.... and they do, they do say things to you.
Stacey	Downsfield	No	No I think it helps them.[..] The reason being, that little set that I take, they'd have to have them all...
Katie	Downsfield	Unsure	I don't know [...] I ... I think for teachers I think they've sort of, regardless of their views they've actually had to accept it because if they don't accept it they don't get their PPA.
Kirsty	Downsfield	No	I'd just say that there isn't any ... we don't feel any negativity towards us at all, people aren't put out.

Appendix 12

Higher Level Teaching Assistants – Teachers' Questionnaire Comparative Analysis of Responses From Four Schools

1. Sex

	Male	Female	Total teachers
Albany (max 4)	0	4	4
Banford (max 10)	1	9	10
Colnbury (max 10)	0	10	10
Downsfield(max 40)	2	38	40
Total (64)	**3**	**61**	**64**
%	**5**	**95**	

2. Age group

	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+
Albany (max 4)	1	1	2		
Banford (max 10)	4	1	2	3	
Colnbury (max 10)	3	2	1	3	1
Downsfield(max 40)	13	12	8	4	3
Total (64)	**21**	**16**	**13**	**10**	**4**
%	**33**	**25**	**20**	**16**	**6**

3. Numbers working full time and part time

	Full time	Part time
Albany (max 4)	4	
Banford (max 10)	5	5
Colnbury (max 10)	8	2
Downsfield(max 40)	35	5
Total (64)	**52**	**12**
%	**81**	**19**

5. Distribution of years in which teachers completed their training

	Not stated	1960 -'69	1970 - '79	1980 -'89	1990 - '94	1995 - '99	2000 - '04	2005 -'07	Not yet qualified (GTPs)
Albany	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	1
Banford	2	1	-	1	1	2	1	2	-
Colnbury	2	-	2	1	-	-	2	3	-
Downsfield	6	-	3	4	4	4	6	10	3
Total (64)	**10**	**1**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**6**	**10**	**15**	**4**
%	**16**	**2**	**8**	**9**	**11**	**16**	**16**	**23**	**6**

6. Number of years working present school

	Not stated	20+	15-19	10-14	5-9	3-4	1-2	Less than 1
Albany (max 4)	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-
Banford (max 10)	-	-	-	1	3	1	4	1
Colnbury (max 10)	1	1	2	-	2	-	3	1
Downsfield(max 40)	-	1	6	3	12	9	2	7
Total (64)	**1**	**2**	**8**	**4**	**20**	**10**	**9**	**9**
%	**2**	**3**	**12**	**6**	**31**	**16**	**14**	**14**

8. Does/has the work of an HLTA impact/ed upon your class?

	No response	N/A	Yes	No	% Yes	% No
Albany (max 4)			2	2	50	50
Banford (max 10)			3	7	30	70
Colnbury (max 10)			8	2	80	20
Downsfield(max 40)	1	1	18	20	45	55
Total (64)	**1**	**1**	**31**	**31**	**48**	**48**
%	**2**	**2**	**48**	**48**		

10. Within your school, who would you expect to do the following tasks?

1 . Planning lessons with the teacher	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)			1		2	1	
Banford (max 10)			1	5	3	1	
Colnbury(max 10)			3	2		5	
Downsfield (40)			9	18	5	7	1
Total (64)			**14**	**25**	**10**	**14**	**1**
%			**22**	**39**	**16**	**22**	**2**

2. Planning lessons independently	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)			1		1	2	
Banford (max 10)			5			4	
Colnbury (max 10)			5			5	
Downsfield(max 40)			17		1	11	
Total (64)			**28**		**2**	**22**	
%			**44**		**3**	**34**	

3. Covering teachers' PPA time	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)				1	3		
Banford (max 10)		1	7	2			
Colnbury (max 10)			7			3	
Downsfield(max 40)		1	10	13	10	4	2
Total (64)		**2**	**24**	**16**	**13**	**7**	**2**
%		**3**	**37**	**25**	**20**	**11**	**3**

4. Covering lessons during a teacher's absence	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)				2	2		
Banford (max 10)			6	3		1	
Colnbury (max 10)			4			6	
Downsfield(max 40)			10	12	9	9	
Total (64)			**20**	**17**	**11**	**16**	
%			**31**	**27**	**17**	**25**	

5. Whole class teaching for whole lessons	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)			2		2		
Banford (max 10)			6	2		2	
Colnbury (max 10)			6			4	
Downsfield(max 40)			15	14	1	10	
Total (64)			**29**	**16**	**3**	**16**	
%			**45**	**25**	**5**	**25**	

6. Whole class teaching for a section of the lesson	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					4		
Banford (max 10)			4	6			
Colnbury (max 10)			6	1	1	2	
Downsfield(max 40)			12	13	8	7	
Total (64)			**22**	**20**	**13**	**9**	
%			**34**	**31**	**20**	**14**	

7. Supporting literacy/ numeracy groups inside the classroom in lessons	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)		1			3		
Banford (max 10)		2			8		
Colnbury (max 10)					10		
Downsfield(max 40)	2	7		3	27	1	
Total (64)	**2**	**10**		**3**	**48**	**1**	
%	**3**	**16**		**5**	**75**	**2**	

8. Running literacy/ numeracy groups outside the classroom in lessons	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					4		
Banford (max 10)		2		2	6		
Colnbury (max 10)				1	8	1	
Downsfield(max 40)		1	9	8	18	4	
Total (64)		**3**	**9**	**11**	**36**	**5**	
%		**5**	**14**	**17**	**56**	**8**	

9. Supporting individual pupils during lessons	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					4		
Banford (max 10)		1			9		
Colnbury (max 10)		1			9		
Downsfield(max 40)	4	16			20		
Total (64)	**4**	**18**			**42**		
%	**6**	**28**			**66**		

10. Hearing children read	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)		1			3		
Banford (max 10)	1	3			6		
Colnbury (max 10)		2			8		
Downsfield(max 40)	1	12			26		1
Total (64)	**2**	**18**			**43**		**1**
%	**3**	**28**			**67**		**2**

11. Moving children through the school's reading programme	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)		1			2	1	
Banford (max 10)		1			9		
Colnbury (max 10)			1		8	1	
Downsfield(max 40)		3	4	6	19	7	1
Total (64)		**5**	**5**	**6**	**38**	**9**	**1**
%		**8**	**8**	**9**	**59**	**14**	**2**

12. Supporting art activities in the classroom	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)		2			2		
Banford (max 10)		4			6		
Colnbury (max 10)	1	2			7		
Downsfield(max 40)	3	13		1	21		1
Total (64)	**4**	**21**		**1**	**36**		**1**
%	**6**	**33**		**2**	**56**		**2**

13. Supporting children's behaviour	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					4		
Banford (max 10)					10		
Colnbury (max 10)					9	1	
Downsfield(max 40)	1	2	1	3	32		1
Total (64)	**1**	**2**	**1**	**3**	**55**	**1**	**1**
%	**2**	**3**	**2**	**5**	**86**	**2**	**2**

14. Running peer mediation schemes in school	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)			1		3		
Banford (max 10)			1	2	5	1	1
Colnbury (max 10)			3	3	3	1	
Downsfield(max 40)		1	1	13	10	12	3
Total (64)		**1**	**6**	**18**	**21**	**14**	**4**
%		**2**	**9**	**28**	**33**	**22**	**6**

15. Organising the 'Huff and Puff' (*playground activities*) scheme	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)		1	1		2		
Banford (max 10)					4	2	4
Colnbury (max 10)			4	3	3		
Downsfield(max 40)		1		3	4	5	27
Total (64)		**2**	**5**	**6**	**13**	**7**	**31**
%		**3**	**8**	**9**	**20**	**11**	**48**

16. Providing pastoral support for individual pupils	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					3	1	
Banford (max 10)				1	8		1
Colnbury (max 10)				2	5	3	
Downsfield(max 40)		1	2	5	22	8	2
Total (64)		**1**	**2**	**8**	**38**	**12**	**3**
%		**2**	**3**	**12**	**59**	**19**	**5**

17. Liaising with parents and carers	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)				1		2	1
Banford (max 10)				4	2	3	1
Colnbury (max 10)			2	2	1	5	
Downsfield(max 40)			3	9	9	18	1
Total (64)			**5**	**16**	**12**	**28**	**3**
%			**8**	**25**	**19**	**44**	**5**

18. Undertaking areas of admin (eg timetabling SEN groups)	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					1	3	
Banford (max 10)		1		2	3	3	1
Colnbury (max 10)			3	2	2	3	
Downsfield(max 40)		2	5	6	4	21	2
Total (64)		**3**	**8**	**10**	**10**	**30**	**3**
%		**5**	**12**	**16**	**16**	**47**	**5**

19. Managing the TA team	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)				2		2	
Banford (max 10)			2	2		6	
Colnbury (max 10)			1			9	
Downsfield(max 40)			3	6	1	29	1
Total (64)			**6**	**10**	**1**	**46**	**1**
%			**9**	**16**	**2**	**72**	**2**

20. Organising cover for absent TAs	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)						4	
Banford (max 10)			2	1		6	1
Colnbury (max 10)			1			9	
Downsfield(max 40)			3	5	1	30	1
Total (64)			**6**	**6**	**1**	**49**	**2**
%			**9**	**9**	**2**	**76**	**3**

21. Organising induction for TAs new to the school	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)				1		3	
Banford (max 10)			2	2		5	1
Colnbury (max 10)			1		1	8	
Downsfield(max 40)			3	2	3	31	1
Total (64)			**6**	**5**	**4**	**47**	**2**
%			**9**	**8**	**6**	**73**	**6**

22. Training other TAs	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)				1		3	
Banford (max 10)			2	1	3	3	1
Colnbury (max 10)			2		1	7	
Downsfield(max 40)			5	5	12	17	1
Total (64)			**9**	**7**	**16**	**30**	**2**
%			**14**	**11**	**25**	**47**	**3**

23. Supporting other TAs in their role	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)				1	3		
Banford (max 10)			1	2	7		
Colnbury (max 10)			4		2	4	
Downsfield(max 40)			5	8	18	8	1
Total (64)			**10**	**11**	**30**	**12**	**1**
%			**16**	**17**	**47**	**19**	**2**

24. Deputising for the SENCO (when SENCO is out of school)	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)				1		3	
Banford (max 10)			3	1		5	1
Colnbury (max 10)			4			6	
Downsfield(max 40)		1	2	2	1	33	1
Total (64)		**1**	**9**	**4**	**1**	**47**	**2**
%		**2**	**14**	**6**	**2**	**73**	**3**

25. Supporting the SENCO in her role	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					3		
Banford (max 10)			1		8		1
Colnbury (max 10)			3	2	5		
Downsfield(max 40)		1	2	7	11	18	1
Total (64)		**1**	**6**	**9**	**27**	**18**	**2**
%		**2**	**9**	**14**	**42**	**28**	**3**

26. Attending statemented children's annual reviews	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					4		
Banford (max 10)			1		6	3	
Colnbury (max 10)			4	1	3	2	
Downsfield(max 40)			2	5	8	23	2
Total (64)			**7**	**6**	**21**	**28**	**2**
%			**11**	**9**	**33**	**44**	**3**

27. Writing own reports for statemented children's annual reviews	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					2	2	
Banford (max 10)			1		3	5	1
Colnbury (max 10)			3		2	5	
Downsfield(max 40)			10	7	2	20	1
Total (64)			**14**	**7**	**9**	**32**	**2**
%			**22**	**11**	**14**	**50**	**3**

28. Attending SEN children's IEP reviews	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					2	2	
Banford (max 10)			1		7	2	
Colnbury (max 10)			2	1	4	3	
Downsfield(max 40)	1		8	8	10	12	1
Total (64)	**1**		**11**	**9**	**23**	**19**	**1**
%	**2**		**17**	**14**	**36**	**30**	**2**

29. Designing specific materials to differentiate lessons for SEN children	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)				1	3		
Banford (max 10)			1	2	5	2	
Colnbury (max 10)		1	2	4		3	
Downsfield(max 40)	1		7	12	6	13	1
Total (64)	**1**	**1**	**10**	**19**	**14**	**18**	**1**
%	**2**	**2**	**16**	**30**	**22**	**28**	**2**

30. Sharing in the preparation / delivery of IEPs	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					4		
Banford (max 10)			1	1	7	1	
Colnbury (max 10)			2	4	3	1	
Downsfield(max 40)			2	13	13	11	1
Total (64)			**5**	**18**	**27**	**13**	**1**
%			**8**	**28**	**42**	**20**	**2**

31. Liaising with outside agencies (eg social workers, educational psychologists)	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					2	2	
Banford (max 10)			1		2	6	1
Colnbury (max 10)			1	1	2	6	
Downsfield(max 40)			2	3	5	28	2
Total (64)			**4**	**4**	**11**	**42**	**3**
%			**6**	**6**	**17**	**66**	**5**

32. Preparing learning resources	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					4		
Banford (max 10)		1			9		
Colnbury (max 10)		1	1	2	4	2	
Downsfield(max 40)		5	6	7	18	3	1
Total (64)		**7**	**7**	**9**	**35**	**5**	**1**
%		**11**	**11**	**14**	**55**	**8**	**2**

33. Assessing pupil achievement	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)				1	3		
Banford (max 10)					10		
Colnbury (max 10)			1	1	2	6	
Downsfield(max 40)			8	14	10	7	1
Total (64)			**9**	**16**	**25**	**13**	**1**
%			**14**	**25**	**39**	**20**	**2**

34. Mounting work for displays	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)		2			2		
Banford (max 10)		4			6		
Colnbury (max 10)	1	3			3	2	1
Downsfield(max 40)	6	16			17		1
Total (64)	**7**	**25**			**28**	**2**	**2**
%	**11**	**39**			**44**	**3**	**3**

35. Putting up displays	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)		2			2		
Banford (max 10)	1	3			6		
Colnbury (max 10)	1	2			4	3	
Downsfield(max 40)	4	11			19	5	1
Total (64)	**6**	**18**			**31**	**8**	**1**
%	**9**	**28**			**48**	**12**	**2**

36. Taking the register at the start of morning/ afternoon school	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					4		
Banford (max 10)		1		1	3	4	1
Colnbury (max 10)			2		2	6	
Downsfield(max 40)		1	4	4	14	16	1
Total (64)		**2**	**6**	**5**	**23**	**26**	**2**
%		**3**	**9**	**8**	**36**	**41**	**3**

37. Getting things out/tidying away after activities	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)		2			2		
Banford (max 10)	2	3			5		
Colnbury (max 10)	3	2			5		
Downsfield(max 40)	3	13		1	19	2	2
Total (64)	**8**	**20**		**1**	**31**	**2**	**2**
%	**12**	**31**		**2**	**48**	**3**	**3**

38. Sharpening pencils	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)	1	1			1	1	
Banford (max 10)	2	3			5		
Colnbury (max 10)	2	1			3	4	
Downsfield(max 40)	5	7		1	9	17	1
Total (64)	**10**	**12**		**1**	**19**	**22**	**1**
%	**16**	**19**		**2**	**30**	**34**	**2**

39. Playground duty	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					4		
Banford (max 10)		1			6	3	
Colnbury (max 10)					9	1	
Downsfield(max 40)	1	3	1	2	32		1
Total (64)	**1**	**4**	**1**	**2**	**51**	**4**	**1**
%	**2**	**6**	**2**	**3**	**80**	**6**	**2**

40. Personal care for children (changing wet pants)	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)	1	1			2		
Banford (max 10)	1	2			7		
Colnbury (max 10)	1	1			7		1
Downsfield(max 40)	5	12			22		
Total (64)	**8**	**16**			**38**		**1**
%	**12**	**25**			**59**		**2**

41. Cataloguing/issuing/ maintaining equipment	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)		1			2	1	
Banford (max 10)		4			5	1	
Colnbury (max 10)		1			8	1	
Downsfield(max 40)	2	5			20	10	3
Total (64)	**2**	**11**			**35**	**13**	**3**
%	**3**	**17**			**55**	**20**	**5**

42. Ordering supplies and equipment	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					3	1	
Banford (max 10)		1	1		1	7	
Colnbury (max 10)		1			2	7	
Downsfield(max 40)	1	2	2		6	27	2
Total (64)	**1**	**4**	**3**		**12**	**42**	**2**
%	**2**	**6**	5		**19**	**66**	**3**

43. Following up children's absence or lateness	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					1	3	
Banford (max 10)		2			1	6	1
Colnbury (max 10)				1	1	8	
Downsfield(max 40)	4	4		1	10	19	2
Total (64)	**4**	**6**		**2**	**13**	**36**	**3**
%	**6**	**9**		**3**	**20**	**56**	**5**

44. Analysing attendance figures	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)						4	
Banford (max 10)			1		1	7	1
Colnbury (max 10)			1		1	8	
Downsfield(max 40)	1		1	1	1	34	2
Total (64)	**1**		**3**	**1**	**3**	**53**	**3**
%	**2**		**5**	**2**	**5**	**83**	**5**

45. Going on school trips	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					4		
Banford (max 10)					10		
Colnbury (max 10)					10		
Downsfield(max 40)	1				37	1	1
Total (64)	**1**				**61**	**1**	**1**
%	**2**				**95**	**2**	**2**

46. Attending Inservice Training days	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					3	1	
Banford (max 10)					10		
Colnbury (max 10)					8	2	
Downsfield(max 40)			1	1	36	1	1
Total (64)			**1**	**1**	**57**	**4**	**1**
%			**2**	**2**	**89**	**6**	**2**

47. Attending staff meetings	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)				1	1	2	
Banford (max 10)			3	2	1	3	
Colnbury (max 10)		1	3	1	3	2	
Downsfield(max 40)					39		
Total (64)		**1**	**6**	**4**	**44**	**7**	
%		**2**	**9**	**6**	**69**	**11**	

48. Minuting meetings	TAs only	TAs mainly	HLTAs only	HLTAs mainly	TAs/HLTAs equally	Neither	No resp.
Albany (max 4)					1	3	
Banford (max 10)			1		1	7	1
Colnbury (max 10)				1	2	7	
Downsfield(max 40)	1		1	1	7	28	2
Total (64)	**1**		**2**	**2**	**11**	**45**	**3**
%	**2**		**3**	**3**	**17**	**70**	**5**

11. Who was consulted prior to the introduction of HLTAs into your school?

	Governors	Teachers	TAs	Parents	Not sure	Don't know wasn't there
Albany	3	2	1		1	
Banford	2		2		1	7
Colnbury	4	3	1		3	3
Downsfield	6	4	2		16	21
Total	**15**	**9**	**6**		**21**	**31**
%	**23**	**14**	**9**		**33**	**48**

12. (a) The statement which most closely described teachers' attitudes to HLTAs when they were first introduced into their schools

	Sch A	Sch B	Sch C	Sch D	**Total**	%
HLTAs are an excellent new resource		1	2	5	**8**	**12**
HLTAs are a good new resource		3		6	**9**	**14**
HLTAs might be a good thing – time will tell	4	1	3	12	**20**	**31**
I will only work with an HLTA reluctantly						
The HLTA idea will die a natural death						
The HLTA project should be abandoned			2		**2**	**3**
No opinion – I was not there at the time		5	3	16	**24**	**37**
No response				1	**1**	**2**

12. (b) The statement which most closely describes teachers' attitudes to HLTAs now

	Sch A	Sch B	Sch C	Sch D	**Total**	%
HLTAs are an excellent new resource		2	3	18	**23**	**35**
HLTAs are a good new resource	2	5	2	6	**15**	**23**
HLTAs might be a good thing – time will tell	1		2	8	**11**	**17**
I will only work with an HLTA reluctantly				1	**1**	**2**
The HLTA idea will die a natural death	1				**1**	**2**
The HLTA project should be abandoned			2		**2**	**3**
No opinion – I was not there at the time						
No response		3	1	7	**11**	**17**

12. (c) Analysis of how opinion has changed over the two years in each school

	Alb	Banf	Coln	Downs	**Total**	%
Started positive, stayed positive		3	2	6	**11**	**17**
Started positive, became more positive		1		5	**6**	**9**
Started positive, now neutral						
Started positive, now negative						
Started neutral, now positive	2	1	1	7	**11**	**17**
Started neutral, still neutral	1		2	4	**7**	**11**
Started neutral, now negative	1			1	**2**	**3**
Started negative, now positive						
Started negative, now neutral						
Started negative, still negative			2		**2**	**3**
Wasn't there at start – now positive		2	2	6	**10**	**16**
Wasn't there at start – now neutral				4	**4**	**6**
Wasn't there at start – now negative						
No response		3	1	7	**11**	**17**
Total currently positive	**2**	**7**	**5**	**24**	**38**	**60**
Total currently neutral	**1**		**2**	**8**	**11**	**17**
Total currently negative	**1**		**2**	**1**	**4**	**6**

14. Are you/would you be happy for your whole class to be taken by an HLTA regularly and routinely to cover your PPA time?

	No response	Not Applicable	Possibly	Yes	No	% Yes	% No
Albany				3	1	75	25
Banford	1	1	1	7		70	
Colnbury				5	5	50	50
Downsfield		1		27	12	68	30
Total (64)		**3**	**1**	**42**	**18**		
%		**5**	**2**	**66**	**28**		

15. Are you/would you be happy for *a part of* your class to be taken by an HLTA regularly either in conjunction with another teacher or TA to provide your PPA time?

	No response	Not Appplicable	Yes	No	% Yes	% No
Albany			3	1	75	25
Banford	1	1	8		80	
Colnbury	1		6	3	60	30
Downsfield		2	38		95	
Total (64)	**2**	**3**	**55**	**4**		
%	**3**	**5**	**86**	**6**		

16. Do you regard the HLTA role as a positive development in primary education?

	Yes	No	No response	% Yes	% No	% No response
Albany	2	2				
Banford	8	1	1			
Colnbury	6	4				
Downsfield	38	1	1			
Total (64)	**54**	**8**	**2**			
%	**84**	**12**	**3**			

17 Teachers' knowledge about HLTA status – response to statements

17. (1) Candidates can gain HLTA status by 3 day assessment only without following a formal training course. **TRUE if all standards are in place**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany			3	1		
Banford		2	2	2	4	
Colnbury		1	3	3	3	
Downsfield	2	1	14	8	15	
Total (64)	**2**	**4**	**22**	**14**	**22**	
%	**3**	**6**	**34**	**22**	**34**	

17. (2) To gain HLTA status, it is essential that the candidate teaches whole classes regularly as part of their day to day work. **No, not necessarily regularly – but must have experience of whole class work**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany	-	2	-	2	-	-
Banford	1	5	-	3	1	-
Colnbury	3	3	-	2	2	-
Downsfield	6	13	5	6	9	1
Total (64)	**10**	**23**	**5**	**13**	**12**	**1**
%	**16**	**36**	**8**	**20**	**10**	**2**

17. (3) A qualified teacher can be employed as an HLTA without undertaking HLTA assessment. **TRUE**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany	-	2	-	1	1	-
Banford	2	2	1	2	3	-
Colnbury	2	3	2	-	3	-
Downsfield	5	12	2	10	11	-
Total (64)	**9**	**19**	**5**	**13**	**18**	
%	**14**	**30**	**8**	**20**	**28**	

17. (4) Achieving HLTA status guarantees the candidate an HLTA post. **NO**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany			1	3		
Banford		2	4	3	1	
Colnbury			4	4	2	
Downsfield	2		16	15	7	
Total (64)	**2**	**2**	**25**	**25**	**10**	
%	**3**	**3**	**39**	**39**	**16**	

17. (5) A TA can be employed as an HLTA without having achieved HLTA status. **NOT ADVISED – although it would depend on LA policy**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany			1	2	1	
Banford			3	5	2	
Colnbury			6	3	1	
Downsfield		3	19	12	6	
Total (64)		**3**	**29**	**22**	**10**	
%		**5**	**45**	**34**	**16**	

17. (6) HLTAs earn as much as unqualified teachers. **YES on paper – but they are paid hourly and not all holidays so pro rata it is less**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany		1	1	2		
Banford			2	4	4	
Colnbury			1	5	4	
Downsfield	3	6	6	12	13	
Total (64)	**3**	**7**	**10**	**23**	**21**	
%	**5**	**11**	**16**	**36**	**33**	

17. (7) When HLTAs are teaching without the class teacher present, responsibility for the children's progress still lies with the teacher. **TRUE**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany	1	2			1	
Banford	3	4		2	1	
Colnbury	5		1	2	2	
Downsfield	14	12	3	4	7	
Total (64)	**23**	**18**	**4**	**8**	**11**	
%	**36**	**28**	**6**	**12**	**17**	

17. (8) All HLTAs must carry out some form of managerial function within their schools (eg team leadership). **Not mandatory – but good practice**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany			3	1		
Banford		1	3	3	3	
Colnbury	2		2	4	2	
Downsfield	2	1	8	16	12	1
Total (64)	**4**	**2**	**16**	**24**	**17**	**1**
%	**6**	**3**	**25**	**37**	**27**	**2**

17. (9) Only HLTAs or qualified teachers are permitted by law to cover teachers' PPA time. **UNTRUE – Specified Work Act allows anyone approved by HT to cover**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany			2	2		
Banford	3	2	1	2	3	
Colnbury	2	2	2	1	3	
Downsfield	3	13	5	9	9	1
Total (64)	**8**	**17**	**10**	**14**	**14**	**1**
%	**12**	**27**	**16**	**22**	**22**	**2**

17. (10) HLTAs are expected to undertake the planning of their own lessons as part of their role. **TRUE**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany	1	2			1	
Banford	1	6		1	1	1
Colnbury	2	3		2	3	
Downsfield	15	10	1	6	8	
Total (64)	**19**	**21**	**1**	**9**	**13**	**1**
%	**30**	**33**	**2**	**14**	**20**	**2**

17. (11) Most HLTAs are female. **TRUE**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany		4				
Banford	1	2	1	1	5	
Colnbury	2	5	1	1	1	
Downsfield	11	23	3		3	
Total (64)	**14**	**34**	**5**	**2**	**9**	
%	**22**	**53**	**8**	**3**	**14**	

17. (12) People who have gained HLTA status must be paid on the HLTA pay scale. **UNTRUE – pay scale relates to the job, not the status**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany		1		3		
Banford		2	2	3	3	
Colnbury	2	4	1		2	1
Downsfield	14	16	1	2	7	
Total (64)	**16**	**23**	**4**	**8**	**12**	**1**
%	**25**	**36**	**6**	**12**	**19**	**2**

17. (13) To achieve HLTA status, candidates must have GCSE Grade C or above (or GCE 'O' level or CSE Grade 1) passes in both English and Maths. **TRUE**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany	1	2		1		
Banford		5		1	4	
Colnbury	4	1	3		2	
Downsfield	19	11	1	3	5	1
Total (64)	**24**	**19**	**4**	**5**	**11**	**1**
%	**37**	**30**	**6**	**8**	**17**	**2**

17. (14) To achieve HLTA status, candidates can have Level 2 literacy and numeracy qualifications as an alternative to GCSE Grade C (or equivalent) passes in English and Maths. **TRUE – but if they wish to progress to teacher training they will have to top up to full GCSE equivalent and have Science GCSE too**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany		2			2	
Banford		5			5	
Colnbury	4	3		1	2	
Downsfield	9	10		4	17	
Total (64)	**13**	**20**		**5**	**26**	
%	**20**	**31**		**8**	**41**	

17. (15) Candidates must produce their original certificates as evidence that they have achieved the necessary academic qualifications for HLTA status. **TRUE – regardless of level of later qualifications (eg English degree), the original certificates in English and Maths must be shown on Day 1 of the Preparation for Assessment**

	Definitely true	Unsure prob true	Definitely untrue	Unsure prob untrue	Don't know	No response
Albany	1	3				
Banford	2	7			1	
Colnbury	7	1			2	
Downsfield	15	15			10	
Total (64)	**25**	**26**			**13**	
%	**39**	**41**			**20**	

18 Teachers' opinions about HLTA status – response to statements

18. (1) It is better for a class to have an HLTA whom the children know than a supply teacher from outside.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany		2		2		
Banford			1	6	3	
Colnbury	3	1		3	3	
Downsfield		3	6	16	15	
Total (64)	**3**	**6**	**7**	**27**	**21**	
%	**5**	**9**	**11**	**42**	**33**	

18. (2) HLTAs are a threat to the professionalism of teachers.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany		2		2		
Banford	3	4	2		1	
Colnbury	3	2	3	1	1	
Downsfield	9	22	7	1	1	
Total (64)	**15**	**30**	**12**	**4**	**3**	
%	**23**	**47**	**19**	**6**	**5**	

18. (3) HLTAs represent good value for money in the staffing structure of the school.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany		1	1	2		
Banford			1	6	2	1
Colnbury	2	1	2	3	2	
Downsfield	2	1	7	21	9	
Total (64)	**4**	**4**	**11**	**32**	**13**	**1**
%	**6**	**6**	**17**	**50**	**20**	**2**

18. (4) The government is using HLTAs as 'cheap teachers'.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany				2	2	
Banford		2	3	2	2	1
Colnbury		2		3	5	
Downsfield		5	12	17	6	
Total (64)		**9**	**15**	**24**	**15**	**1**
%		**14**	**23**	**37**	**23**	**2**

18. (5) HLTAs are a professional group in their own right.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany			3	1		
Banford		1		8	1	
Colnbury	2		4	2	2	
Downsfield	1	2	14	15	7	1
Total (64)	**3**	**3**	**21**	**26**	**10**	**1**
%	**5**	**5**	**33**	**41**	**16**	**2**

18. (6) Using HLTAs prevents qualified teachers from getting jobs.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany		2			2	
Banford	3	4	2			1
Colnbury		5	3		2	
Downsfield	4	23	7	4	2	
Total (64)	**7**	**34**	**12**	**4**	**6**	**1**
%	**11**	**53**	**19**	**6**	**9**	**2**

18. (7) I would be happy for a child *of my own* to be taught by a good HLTA.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany			2	2		
Banford	1			7	2	
Colnbury	4	1	1	2	2	
Downsfield	1	8	6	20	5	
Total (64)	**6**	**9**	**9**	**31**	**9**	
%	**9**	**14**	**14**	**48**	**14**	

18. (8) HLTAs' additional skills in the staff team enable extra opportunities to be provided for the children.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany			1	3		
Banford			2	6	2	
Colnbury	1		3	3	3	
Downsfield			6	25	9	
Total (64)	**1**		**12**	**37**	**14**	
%	**2**		**19**	**58**	**22**	

18. (9) The HLTA initiative places too much responsibility on staff who are not teacher qualified.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany		1	1		2	
Banford		2	6	2		
Colnbury		1	3	3	3	
Downsfield	2	11	12	12	3	
Total (64)	**2**	**15**	**22**	**17**	**8**	
%	**3**	**23**	**34**	**27**	**12**	

18. (10) HLTAs have helped schools to deal with the problem of funding Workforce Reform.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany			2	2		
Banford			4	4		2
Colnbury	2		2	3	3	
Downsfield			24	14	2	
Total (64)	**2**		**32**	**23**	**5**	**2**
%	**3**		**50**	**36**	**8**	**3**

18. (11) Becoming an HLTA is be good for a TA's self esteem.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany			2	1	1	
Banford			1	7	2	
Colnbury		1	3		6	
Downsfield	1		2	24	13	
Total (64)	**1**	**1**	**8**	**32**	**22**	
%	**2**	**2**	**12**	**50**	**34**	

18. (12) Having HLTAs can create divisiveness amongst the TA group.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany				4		
Banford	1	4	2	1		2
Colnbury		2	3	3	2	
Downsfield	2	13	15	7	3	
Total (64)	**3**	**19**	**20**	**15**	**5**	**2**
%	**5**	**30**	**31**	**23**	**8**	**3**

18. (13) Parents view the use of HLTAs positively.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany			3	1		
Banford		1	7			2
Colnbury	2		6	2		
Downsfield		1	32	6	1	
Total (64)	**2**	**2**	**48**	**9**	**1**	**2**
%	**3**	**3**	**75**	**14**	**2**	**3**

18. (14) Children's education is being threatened by being taught by people without QTS.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany		2		2		
Banford	1	5	1	1	1	1
Colnbury		2	3	2	3	
Downsfield	2	19	9	5	5	
Total (64)	**3**	**28**	**13**	**10**	**9**	**1**
%	**5**	**44**	**20**	**16**	**14**	**2**

18. (15) The HLTA initiative is good for TAs' career progression.

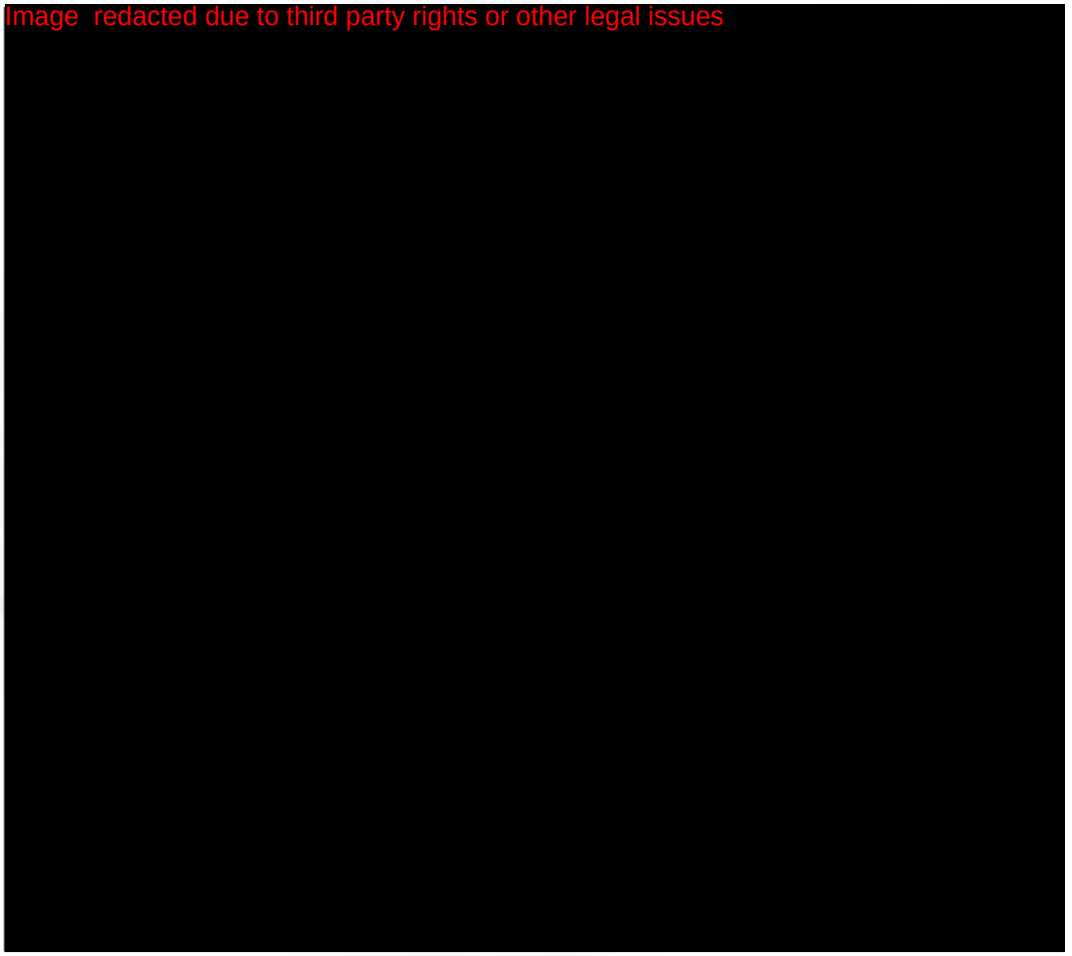
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany			1	1	2	
Banford				6	4	
Colnbury	1		2	6	1	
Downsfield			2	24	14	
Total (64)	**1**		**5**	**37**	**21**	**1**
%	**2**		**8**	**58**	**33**	**2**

18. (16) The addition of HLTAs to school staffing is just part of the changes occurring generally in the public sector at this time (eg nurse practitioners in the NHS).

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	No response
Albany			3	1		
Banford	1		6	2		1
Colnbury			2	4	4	
Downsfield		1	15	19	5	
Total (64)	**1**	**1**	**26**	**26**	**9**	**1**
%	**2**	**2**	**41**	**41**	**14**	**2**

Appendix 13

Government Model of Public Service Reform



(Source: PMSU 2006 p8)

Appendix 14

'How Far Did Your Headteacher Influence Your Development as an HLTA?'

(HLTAs' Responses From Interviews)

Name	School	Extract from Interview
Sue	Albany	Beverley was very keen for it to happen and she was very supportive and she saw it as a positive thing and a good thing. Beverley's opinion was that she was very keen to have it and she saw it as a progression, and so she was very supportive in that way.
Maria	Albany	Yes, I mean she's [Beverley's]been very encouraging about it, I think she was encouraging to Sue when she went through it too, and she has immediately encouraged me in to it, so I think she have been very ... she's always been positive about it.
Nicola	Banford	And I think she [Nosheen]felt it would be, for some of the TAs in the school, I think that it would be a good confidence boost and obviously recognition of what they do
Jane	Banford	As I've said before, Nosheen is really supportive. It wouldn't have happened if it hadn't been ... if Nosheen hadn't been supportive - put it that way.
Anna	Banford	Nosheen - she's been supportive of me. That's really ... that's all I can say.
Daisy	Colnbury	James let us do it for personal development. So you know it's a very powerful vision to have, and you get carried away. It's like going surfing really; a big wave comes and you've got to go with it, come what may. James, as I said, didn't hold us back, was supportive.
Jenny	Colnbury	With regard to us being used, I think it was the headteacher you can see that the role's moved on. And that must come from a confidence from him that we're capable of doing it.
Stacey	Downsfield	I think Lucy would have been the one to get it off the ground. Definitely it's nice to know that she's actually chosen us to actually go for the HLTA. She's got a lot of positive feelings coming towards us, sort of thing, you know.
Katie	Downsfield	I know that Lucy was key in getting myself and Kirsty onto the HLTA status. Lucy's absolutely paramount and you know her door is always open, you can go and talk to her and ... so she's absolutely keen on progress, you know staff progression and so yeah she's right behind everybody all the way.
Kirsty	Downsfield	I'd say she's [Lucy's] 100% in everything to do with it. I mean she's the one that instigated it; she's the one that has, you know, increased the respect for TAs in the school as well.

Appendix 15

Frequency Analysis of the Word 'Children'

(Headteachers' Responses From Interviews)

Name	School	Number of references	Interview contains:
Beverley	Albany	0	
Nosheen	Banford	9	***6 descriptive comments about children*** (eg we have *children* with speech and language difficulties, and *children* with EAL). ***3 comments re policy effects on children:*** ...and the children are learning much better. I think there is a big place for HLTAs in terms of managing resources, making sure that the children's records are being kept in far more exciting ways that we're doing now. We like to keep TAs who are familiar with the children and their routines in every classroom. That is the way forward.
James	Colnbury	4	***2 descriptive comments about children*** ***2 comments re policy effects on children:*** I've been able to see how an HLTA can work with a class of children. This has now given us the opportunity to see how many, many more people can contribute to the education of our children.
Lucy	Downsfield	6	***4 descriptive comments about children*** ***2 comments re policy effects on children, which are both focused on the staff:*** [re HLTAs covering PPA] For teachers, this is an opportunity for you to actually be out of the classroom and have somebody who's trained and responsible to you know look after your children. HLTAs know the children, they know what the school is about; ideal person to be doing that role.