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ENHANCING PRACTICE BY RETHINKING PRACTICE

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Introduction

As interested practitioner/researchers, we often ask primary school-aged children, “What did you learn in physical education today?” Their response usually begins with, “We did . . .” and is finished as they describe the activities, games, or sports they did, such as high jump, cross-country, football, gymnastics, or fitness. When we endeavour to probe a little more about what they learnt about, “You did. . . and what did you learn?” they stare blankly at us, with a look that suggests we are so stupid because they have already told us and we clearly did not understand them the first time. At the same time, we are equally disturbed by the lessons we frequently observe that have a very explicit learning focus on skills that seem to have little relevance to the present or future needs of children. For example, we recently watched 5- and 6-year-olds spend 40 minutes learning the key techniques associated with galloping, and in a similar way we have observed lines of 11-year-olds waiting their turn to high jump. While we recognise that galloping is a functional locomotor skill and high jumping is a core athletic event, we are left pondering if these are the most important skills all children need to be learning? If they are not, then what should we be spending time on in our physical education programmes? How often will these children gallop or use their high jumping skills as they transition through school and into adulthood?

Our interactions with teachers (generalist and specialist) do not always help alleviate concerns about the focus of lessons or lack of explicit learning embedded in primary school physical education, and more frequently highlight how focused teachers are on the sports, games, or fitness-based activities that appear to dominate planning for physical education in primary schools. These frequent interactions make us ask: Why is it that students can articulate their learning in maths, reading, and writing, but predominantly only describe their doings when discussing physical education; are we focused on planning for activity as opposed to planning for learning; what is the focus of the learning in our programme, and is this learning important for them now and in their futures; and what do we need to do as teachers of physical education to remedy this situation and change the responses of students? This chapter goes some way to exploring these questions.

Traditions

Part I of this handbook explored the discourses that have informed the nature, purpose, and practices of physical education in primary schools internationally, and in doing so demonstrate how the discourse of sport, health, and education (and to a lesser extent military) shape what learning is planned for in primary school physical education. As is evidenced in Part IV of the handbook, physical education in primary schools internationally continues to be dominated by sport, games, and fitness which privilege participation, abstracted skill development, and traditional sports/games-based programmes over broader education endeavours (see Chapter 8). In a similar way, a review of literature and resources relating to planning physical education in primary school reveals a focus on (a) curriculum content primarily focused on movement skills, or a ‘mandated’ sports/fitness programme of learning, and (b) pedagogical strategies to enhance the learning environment. Models for teaching and learning reflected in primary school physical education resources do little to encourage teachers to move beyond traditional teacher-directed motor skill-based lessons to more inquiry-based approaches to student learning advocated for by a number of authors (Dumont, Istance & Benavides, 2012). Instead, such materials act as pragmatic resources designed to support generalist and specialist teachers to deliver physical lessons in primary school settings without the need for many teachers to have to reconsider the nature or purpose of physical education. As a result, we continue to see programmes and practices in primary school physical education where the uniqueness of varied contexts is hardly evident and the changing needs of learners does not appear to be prioritised.

What children are learning in physical education and what they need to learn are directly related to how schools and teachers think about and plan for learning. Our sense drawn from reading across primary physical research for a number of years, and having read across the global context section of this handbook, is that many primary school physical education programmes are underpinned by traditions, alongside narrowly framed physical health agendas, that result in physical education programmes that do not commonly reflect the explicit needs of learners in each specific context. Instead, we commonly see programmes that could be seen as a ‘one-size fits all’ curriculum, which is in sharp contrast to the learning experiences primary-aged children may experience in literacy (oral, written language learning) or mathematics education, where primary school teachers work extensively to provide differentiated, scaffolded, and student-centred learning experiences for the children in their classes.

Resistance against the dominant discourses of sport and health over broader educational agendas is a challenge for teachers of physical education (specialist and generalist). As evidenced in Part II, education/sport/health initiatives and policies are often thrust upon us by curriculum designers or other voices (politicians, economists, ‘celebrities’) who are detached from our unique learning contexts or the lives of the young people we work with. This can result in our individual and collective agency not always being recognised and in there being limited opportunity for teachers to design learning programmes and opportunities that are focused on what is important for all our learners, both in their lives now and in the future.

In this chapter, you will have the opportunity to explore physical education planning that moves beyond the functional and directed (mandated) to examine a process that supports teachers to extend the possibilities for learning in physical education. In doing so, it is hoped that your imagination, your curiosity, and the activist educator in you will be ignited in ways that support you to question notions of a ‘uniform’ or one-size-fits-all model of teaching and learning in primary school physical education and provide you with a strategy to potentially change physical education practice in your specific context.

A process to support development

In this section we draw extensively on the work of Halbert and Kaser (2013) and Timperley, Kaser, and Halbert (2014) in order to evidence how the Spiral of Inquiry (SoI) framework, alongside other educational frameworks, could be used to enhance learning in physical education and potentially shift the focus of learning and teaching to better meet the needs of all learners. This is a brief overview of the SoI framework as it relates to thinking about physical education in primary schools. It is important to acknowledge that the SoI, is a process closely aligned the broad body of research and practice commonly referred to as practitioner action research (see Carr and Kemmis, 1986; Noffke and Somekh, 2009; Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon, 2014).

The SoI framework is “a process of systematic and disciplined inquiry that results in real changes to practice” (sic, p. 4) as teachers, learners, and the school community work collaboratively to address the complex and challenging educational issues/concerns in their context. This process is about more than tinkering with programmes and pedagogy and instead requires educators to engage their inquiring and curious minds to consider what is going on for learners, how do we know, how are we contributing to this, and what can we do differently and with what effect (Halbert & Kaser, 2013; Timperley et al., 2014).

It [the Spiral of Inquiry] asks you to engage in a process that will be full of surprises and also deeply satisfying, because you will make tangible progress in addressing real learner-related challenges. It also asks you to suspend judgment on how to ‘fix’ things that are not going well, because we cannot work out more effective ways to do things until we have a clear understanding of what is currently happening and why.

(Timperley et al., 2014: 6)

The SoI is a process of developing collective professional agency for moving educational praxis, practices, curriculum, programmes, and pedagogies on in ways that reflect the unique needs of the learners in different contexts and is underpinned by notions that there is no one physical education programme that is right for all learners or all communities/countries.

Although primarily positioned as a professional learning approach, the process of working through such a framework simultaneously works to generate and challenge teachers to think about the focus of their programmes and subsequently planning for learning. Hence, it can play a valuable role in supporting teachers of physical education by asking them to consider their own practice and what this means for learners and learning; as such it raises the stacks on professionalism. The SoI approach supports teachers, school leaders, and school communities to develop a clearer sense of what learning matters most in their unique educational contexts and therefore becomes a useful platform for questioning the status quo and advocating for relevant and meaningful educational programming, pedagogies, and practices.

The following sub-sections provide a brief overview of how the use of an SoI approach might support teachers, and their school communities, in the development of a more contextually relevant and student-centred physical education programme. The examples used are drawn from our own observations and experiences, research as part of a collaborative project (Petrie et al., 2013), discussions with colleagues, and research in primary school settings mainly in Aotearoa New Zealand, but also from the United States, Australia, Singapore, and the United Kingdom.

Scanning

The initial starting point of the SoI is the scanning phase, focused on *what is going on for our learners?* In the scanning phase teachers, both individually and collectively, reflect on what they are seeing, hearing, and feeling about learners and learning. It is not simply about examining

learning from an academic perspective or in relation to learning that can be easily measured, but instead considering learning in its broadest sense, across the widest range of contexts. Teachers may already have data from physical ‘fitness’ testing or from observations of students’ physical skills and sports-specific game knowledge gathered during lessons; however, a school-wide scan involves more than looking at data gathered from student assessment or administrative data. It should include evidence gathered from observations of children across the school day, including at play during break times, when working independently during class, and in their interactions beyond the school day as part of sport teams, on field trips, or during interactions with other members of the community (when, for example, they are on road patrol). Equally important is evidence gathered by listening to the voices (or pictorial accounts) of children, parents, caregivers, school support staff (grounds staff, receptionist, counsellors, etc.), and the local community. At this stage of the inquiry phase the onus is on teaching teams and school leaders to adopt an evidence seeking and inquiry mind-set, as opposed to simply looking for evidence to reinforce the status quo. As an example, a teacher or group of teachers may gather evidence that is reflective of the following examples:

During break time, students play on the jungle gym. Teachers on duty, supervising the playground, ensure that students are safe and avoid injuries. Throughout break time teachers deal with issues about turn-taking, students using the equipment in ways it wasn’t designed for, and the occasional disagreement or instance of bullying. Equally as they observe, they notice ‘clique groups’ and the leftover others, and also spend time trying to cajole those who don’t seem confident to engage in games to join in and play with their peers.

Mr B’s class, along with all other students in the school, have been preparing for the school’s annual cross-country. On the day of the event, five children from Mr B’s class are absent from school (there are lots of students absent across the school), and two others have notes that they are injured. Some parents arrive to cheer their children on, while the two students who are in wheelchairs sit at the end of the race holding the finish tape, as the course is not suitable for them to participate.

Across the middle years of school students are exposed to a multi-activity framed physical education programme. Although they have been exposed to a myriad of sports it becomes evident in movement-based tests, in game play and in the school sports programme that other than the motor elite students, most students have limited skills (technical and tactical) across a range of sports.

At parent/teacher conferences (interviews) Ms C asks caregivers about what activities their child is involved in out of school. Many are involved in some sort of sports team, but an equal number participate in other forms of physical activity that is unstructured, such as skateboarding, basketball games at the park, community dance, games in the street with the neighbours, time on a trampoline, bush walking, etc. Ms C starts to wonder how the physical education programme that she delivers supports her students to participate in a wide range of the activities they appear to enjoy.

Students, caregivers, and colleagues regularly express worryingly narrow conceptions of what it is to be healthy and what being active constitutes and make moralistic judgements about others (and themselves) based primarily on the shape of an individual’s body or levels of engagement in formalised physical activity.

These provide different insights into what is going on for the learners in their school communities. In completing a scan and gathering evidence from in-class activities, staff meetings, break

times, and interviews with students and observing similar scenarios to those detailed earlier, teachers are better able to respond to the question: What are students learning both from our HPE programmes and from the wider HPE context?

Some triggers that may help teachers or programme/school leaders begin the scanning process are the common themes or frustrations with student/teacher practices, such as the constant bullying or telling of tales. However, at the same time this phase requires teachers to be open to thinking broadly about what they are seeing and hearing in relation to student needs and learning and to do so without judgement. This in itself is challenging, as the automatic response is to try and explain why things are like they are. For example, in the cross-country example, it is easier for teachers or sports leaders to argue that the cross-country experience teaches children to preserve or that this is the only event where children in wheelchairs are not accommodated, but the Sol process asks us to park these explanations and be open to seeing all inequities, inadequate pedagogies, or poor learning opportunities that are occurring.

Often the scanning phase reveals a wide range of themes that are worthy of addressing. In previous research (Petrie et al., 2013), where we ‘observed’ similar scenarios to those described previously, three areas really stood out as relevant to teaching and learning in HPE:

- Notions of healthy and unhealthy were very black and white. Children focused only on the physical aspects of wellbeing, were learning to judge themselves and others based primarily on body shape, were more inclined to be moralistic and lay blame on others (particularly parents), and had adopted individualistic notions about who was responsible for their health status.
- From their experiences of sport, games, and fitness, both in and beyond the school gates, they were learning who is able, that they (or others) were ‘hopeless’, that they don’t like some bits of physical education and physical activity is not very fun, and games weren’t fun as people cheated, others weren’t included for a range of physical and social reasons, and the games required skills some did not have. Additionally, students were unclear about what they were learning during physical education time. Although they could describe the activities and games they were playing, they were not able to describe any explicit learning associated with skills (physical and/or interpersonal skills).
- Interpersonal skill learning had limited effect. Even though teachers had class ‘rules’ treaties and had had some explicit team-building activities in physical education – students spoke of behaving nicely to others as a way of keeping their teacher happy – teachers saw evidence of a lack of these interpersonal skills exhibited in the playground.

Focusing

Once the scanning phase is complete and teachers, alongside colleagues, have had an opportunity to make sense of their ‘data’ and what it means for student learning, the challenge is to avoid ‘quick-fix’ solutions.

It is also important to avoid the temptation at this stage to rush into ‘doing something’. The ‘let’s just get going’ spirit needs to be resisted – not forever but for long enough to increase the odds that our actions will have the impact we desire. We need to have the courage and patience to slow down and develop a deeper understanding of what is worth spending time on before moving to hasty action. Focusing well will lead to informed action.

(Timperley et al., 2014: 10)

Our attention needs to be on where are we going to focus our energies so we can best enhance the experiences and outcomes for our learners. Whereas the temptation for some of us (Petrie et al., 2013) was to rush in and start teaching HPE differently and fix students' current 'misunderstandings', we collectively recognised that the issues were broader than changing the content or pedagogical approaches that we had used previously. Changing the content of individual lessons or units of work was not going to be adequate, and spending time on one of the themes our scan had revealed without considering the bigger picture would potentially mean that in solving one issue we would not address others. We needed to determine **what was most important and therefore worth spending time on** and focusing our own energies on. For us this meant we prioritised a focus on what the needs of the learners we were working with were and therefore what this meant for how we thought about and focused on learning. This phase of our thinking is best articulated by a reframed ethos that we collectively determined captured a reimagined framework for HPE in the schools we were working in. The key tenets of this philosophy were that children:

- know when, why, and how to use knowledge in different contexts (classroom, school, and beyond the school gates);
- understand notions of wellbeing that are holistic, multi-dimensional, and inter-related;
- articulate, question, and share multiple perspectives about being well, active, and what it means to be engaged in a wide range of movement experiences;
- celebrate diversity, i.e. bodies, abilities, dispositions, activities, and cultures;
- think critically about their world and accepted 'norms'.

An expanded version of this ethos can be found at www.tlri.org.nz/tlri-research/research-progress/school-sector/every-body-counts-understanding-health-and-physical. During the focusing phase of the SoI, we had to ask ourselves the following: How do our current physical education programme and practices contribute to student learning? And what learning focuses are of most/less relevance for our learners? These questions are equally relevant for everyone involved in primary school PE, especially if we are interested in ensuring that physical education has meaning and relevance in the lives of young people now and in the future.

Although in this example we had a range of foci, it is essential in the focusing phase that a clear decision is made about what the focus is and for the teachers/school leaders to avoid having a wide or disparate range of foci that could lend itself to a scattergun approach where nothing specific is ever addressed.

Developing a hunch

It is always easy to look to others in order to explain issues associated with student learning (or lack of learning), but as professionals the onus is on us as teachers to interrogate *what we are doing* that may contribute to student 'knowing' about the world, themselves, and others in particular ways. Timperley et al. (2014) challenge us to "consciously surface individual hunches, about what we are doing that is leading to the specific situation for our learners" (p. 12). For example, as we watch a specialist or expert running the football, lessons we may (or may not) be conscious of are the lack of progress made by some learners, disengagement by others, and then a few who appear to be loving the challenge of the experience. Equally we may be aware of the less-than-enthusiastic engagement of particular learners when games get overly competitive. Our hunch may be that these experiences are not positive for some of our students, but equally we may be challenged to recognise that our choice of activity and pedagogies used (including management) accentuate the issues. We need to be comfortable

asking ourselves and others how our actions and decisions are contributing to the learning and/or mislearning of our students.

If you think back to the initial scenarios detailed earlier in the chapter, a hunch about the lack of participation of some students in break time activities may be that those students are too lazy to engage (as is similarly claimed when students ‘opt’ out of physical education lessons). In contrast, it may be that the nature of activities that are made available in the school during these times do not accommodate a wide range of physical abilities, or that when we have used similar games in our physical education classes the focus has been on movement abilities (elitist perspectives) and not on using games to develop inclusive dispositions amongst students. Although it is easy to blame the individual, as is more common in a neoliberal society, the challenge is to look beyond the ‘simple’ answer and interrogate our hunches in a more transparent and systematic manner. Beyond looking at the students, a hunch that arose for us (Petrie et al., 2013) was associated with the use of the term *physical education* in the class programme. As detailed, the use of physical education when shared with students, other teachers, and parents brings with it preconceived ideas about what learning would entail and the nature of lessons. In one group meeting Shane Keown, one of the classroom teachers in the project, shared his hunch.

The names “PE” and “Health” conjured up particular ways of thinking and doing for himself and also, he argued, for his students, parents, other staff and the school’s senior leaders. In short, ‘everybody’ knew Physical Education was running, doing fundamental motor skills, or a quick game and ‘everybody’ knew Health Education was talking about eating vegetables, keeping clean, brushing one’s teeth and balancing energy in and out. For him therefore, endeavouring to ‘do’ HPE in line with the sentiments captured in the ethos while still calling it HPE, presented a real conundrum. As he noted, “I can’t do this, and call it HPE”. “So . . .” [Long pause] a voice piped up, “What would you call it?”

(Cosgriff, Petrie & Burrows, 2013: 11)

Such open sharing by Shane demonstrates how our hunches, when shared, can reveal ways of thinking about our teaching that challenge us to consider how our practice traditions may shape student learning.

It is essential that we test our hunches before we move on to act. In a similar way to the quick-fix desires that become evident as we complete the scanning and focusing phases, moving ahead to change practices based on unsubstantiated hunches may derail the success of a new learning focus or change plan, as decisions may not be grounded in evidence. Instead we need to ensure we are testing our hunches. This requires:

- the courage to interrogate how our own beliefs, practices, and the practice traditions in our school community might be contributing to the issues associated with student learning;
- a willingness to be honest and open enough to share our hunches, our beliefs, and values with other colleagues so we can collectively unpack them;
- a readiness to seek evidence that allows us to check our assumptions in ways that are genuinely about uncovering the accuracy of our hunches.

New learning

Often the focus on student learning distracts from the focus on teacher learning. As Timperley et al. (2014) highlight, “better outcomes for learners are a result of teachers and leaders acquiring new knowledge and developing new skills that lead to new actions” (p. 15). Tinkering with

content or delivery approaches will not be sufficient to create sustainable change or praxis that is morally informed in a way that has the potential for history-making education change (Grootenboer, Edwards-Groves & Choy, 2017; Kemmis et al., 2014). Addressing the issues that the scan, focus, and hunch-checking phases have illuminated requires that teachers, and in many instances school leaders, undertake their own professional learning in order to be able to take action that enhances the educational outcomes for their students. This may take the form of learning new content, pedagogical approaches, planning, or understanding of broader contextual matters, but it is not professional learning abstract from student learning. For our research team (Petrie et al., 2013), the learning looked different for different people, depending on the year level they were teaching and their own strengths and identified areas that needed development in order to progress our shared ethos. Although we all spend significant amounts of time in dialogue learning about what being active would mean in a range of contexts and exploring student-centred pedagogies, over the two-year period we worked together, teacher learning was continuous. For example, Joel invested time learning about biomechanical principles and social emotional learning, Deidre and Jo explored pedagogical approaches associated with integrated curriculum and student leadership, and Shane focused on strategies that would help him support students' critical thinking about healthy bodies and interpersonal relationships. So although we had a broad collective agenda different teachers recognised their own strengths and weaknesses and what they individually needed to work on to ensure that their own students' needs were addressed and learning was most deeply enhanced.

Regardless of the context, all new teacher learning should be aligned with the focus of the inquiry and clearly developed in a way that will make a significant contribution to changing the learning experience of students. This new learning may be challenging for teachers as it supports them to find new ways of practicing, and, of course, it may take time. However, if individual teachers and the wider school community is committed to making physical education better for all students, then it is essential that teachers, as professionals, commit to learning as much as they would expect their students to. This phase of the So I needs to be supported with adequate funding and time for teachers to truly engage in prioritising their own learning. Superficial engagement will not suffice if the intention is to bring about real change in practices and therefore in student learning.

Taking action

Having taken the time to determine what the focus for learning should be and preparing ourselves as teachers “now [is] the time to put new ideas that we have learned into informed, focused and team-led action” (Timperley et al., 2014: 17). This may take the form of a new curriculum programme or a change in pedagogical decisions about the nature of activities or the pedagogical approaches utilised. Introducing new approaches, ideas, and curriculum is not without risk, a sense of apprehension, and uncertainty, but if you do not try, then you will not know if we are deepening student (and our own) learning. However, a note of caution: taking action does not mean rushing and trying to make all the changes you have determined are important all at once. In much the same way teachers scaffold learning in lessons, we need in this phase to take things slowly and work methodically through a series of actions as we apply our own new learning. A useful analogy is to consider changing educational practices as a process, much the same as learning a motor skill. For more complex serial motor skills we often tackle parts of the skill before working on the whole. Taking action that will deepen student learning needs to happen in much the same way. Each stage of the action phase (or motor skill learning) requires a process of action, reflection, and refinement. As it relates to student learning this process will require an objective reflection on the impact on learning as well as acknowledgement of individual teachers' own

sense of what worked, what didn't, and what they would change or need to learn more about to enhance their own practice. Taking action provides an opportunity to learn about new ways of doing things, but it should not be viewed as a one-off trial, and instead as a learning opportunity that will allow for future review and refinement.

Taking action in the EveryBody Counts project (Petrie et al., 2013) looked different in each class and across the two contexts. New focuses were worked on; for example, Joel prioritised student learning about managing their own emotions and understanding what being active meant, Shane worked with his students on building relationship learning, how to resolve their own conflicts, and balance, flight, and landing. Although taking action looked different across the sites, there were some common approaches that everyone focused on. In particular, we had all agreed that planning for learning as opposed to planning for activity was core to making sure learning was at the centre of everything we did in health and physical education time. By identifying the learning first, teachers were then better positioned to determine what sorts of activities would best support students to make progress toward the desired outcome. This form of action in itself 'forced' a change in practice and allowed teachers, students, school leaders, and parents to see connectedness and relevance in what was delivered in physical education time. Such an approach is equally important in supporting the teachers and school community to be transparent and possibly more comfortable with the changes that are occurring, and in doing so dispel some feelings of risk and apprehension.

This is also why it is important to remember that SoI is an iterative, cyclical process and teachers and/or school leaders may need to go back and gather more evidence to help inform their thinking.

Checking

It is only through careful checking that we can decide if we have made enough of a difference – and this will start to inform where we go next. What is most important in this question is the word 'enough'. Most of what we do as educators makes a difference, but collectively we still have much more to do before every learner crosses the stage with dignity, purpose and options.

(Timperley et al., 2014: 19)

What difference we are making and for whom is a fundamental question for educators. If we reflect on the discourses that appear to shape physical education primary schools and what our scanning phase revealed, then we need to consider if our efforts as teachers are making a difference for all our students in a way that contributes to the students and the communities in which they live. At the same time, in working through the SoI process we have a responsibility to check that our new learning and the actions we have taken have had a genuine and positive impact for all our learners. The checking phase requires gathering evidence of the impact on learning and asks us to interrogate our practices and the quality of the impact, not simply judge the learners' progress. At the same time, as with any action-reflection process, the checking phase allows us to consider where to go next and what phases of the SoI we may need to revisit to continue the process of enhancing and deepening learning. This is a time when we check if the new programme we are offering or our pedagogical decisions are making an impact on learning. As Halbert and Kaser (2013) attest, this means checking all the teachers to take assessment information and using it to examine the effectiveness of teaching. As a result, checking is constant and should be embedded as regular practice so the teacher and/or school community can make adjustments as necessary and not simply wait until the following term or year.

As a checkpoint in the research that has been described throughout this chapter (Petrie et al., 2013), we interviewed students and teachers and drew on planning materials and documentation, as well as student work, to check on our impact. We were excited by evidence that physical education looked different in each class and for each unique group of learners and that students were able to articulate their learning, not just describe what activities they were doing. Each teacher was able to reflect on their own learning and the impact on students. For example, Shane was excited that all his students had a more holistic view of health, though he was concerned that his students did still not have the skills to negotiate ‘being healthy’ in the complexity of broader school messages and those in the media. At the same time Joel was conscious that although his teaching in physical education had significantly improved with lessons being learning focused and much more inclusive, he was very aware that he still had a significant amount to learn about including students with disabilities. These reflections helped provide clarity about what we still needed to work on and the next steps in the inquiry process. It was at this stage we (Petrie et al., 2013) developed a list of reflective questions that became tools to help us continue a process of inquiry as part of common practice throughout the school year and consistently challenged us to think about the relevance of our physical education lessons and programme. Some of these questions were: What teaching approaches help enhance my PE programme? How do I know that deep learning is occurring for my students? Am I planning for activity or for learning? How do my students feel about what they are doing/learning? Is everyone included in ways where they are engaged, challenged, motivated, safe, and successful? How do I respond to the changing needs of my class?

Physical education in your school community

The SoI approach can provide a clearer sense of what learning ‘matters most’ for the learners in your context, and therefore becomes a useful platform for questioning the status quo that is a current physical education programme. Many teachers and school leaders will find using an inquiry process both intimidating and challenging. In particular contexts, broader factors such as external assessment and accountability requirements, teacher professional standards and subsequent ‘monitoring’ will enhance the restricted feeling that teachers may operate under and curb teachers’ willingness to challenge the status quo. Regardless this should not prohibit innovation, especially for teachers and school communities that are invested in providing quality and relevant physical education learning opportunities for all learners. As detailed in *Collaborative Teacher Inquiry* (Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, 2010) establishing particular conditions will enhance the success of any inquiry process. This includes:

- valuing curiosity, wonder, and risk-taking
- honouring diversity of ideas, thoughts, and actions
- providing choice
- fostering rich opportunities to question and test ideas
- access to resources, including high-quality professional resources and literature
- utilising expert others

(p. 6)

We would add that a necessary part of the planning and inquiry process is that we learn to live with this discomfort and feel comfortable with taking the necessary time or the risks needed to create sustainable change that enhances what learning is.

Planning should not simply be a process of deciding what activities to cover, how students will meet national standards, or what sports students need to be ready for in upcoming events.

As professionals, we have a responsibility to ensure that the physical education programme we provide for our students reflects the unique and real learning needs of the young people in our communities now and in the future. The challenge is to be open and willing to think about the needs of your students and not be trapped by tradition or the demands of global discourses.

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