Perceptions on the effectiveness of teacher appraisal: A case study of two state-funded academies

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Declaration of original authorship

Declaration:

I confirm that this is my own work and the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged.

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Abstract

The aim of this investigation was to explore the effectiveness of appraisal within two state-funded secondary schools by comparing the perceptions of appraisal leads to that of teachers. The reason for a study of this nature arises from the researcher's own experience of appraisal within a diverse range of school contexts, which has subsequently led to a feeling that schools are not benefitting from appraisal as they should. The researcher also believes that this study is uniquely placed amongst other studies on appraisal because of its ability to capture and systematically compare the perceptions of appraisal from the vantage point of teachers and those who have responsibility for its implementation.

The literature review describes why and when appraisal was introduced in schools and identifies its presumed two-fold purpose: teacher accountability and teacher development. This investigation illustrates the prevalent nature of accountability within appraisal, a description of the sources of information used to assess teacher performance and its reliability. What follows is a discussion around the impact of appraisal and suggestions about adding value to the process. The conceptual framework in Chapter 3 explores appraisal, and particularly accountability, within a neoliberal perspective, and investigates issues of trust and identity.

Nine teachers were interviewed alongside two who lead on appraisal. In addition, 16 teachers across both schools completed a questionnaire which provided important supplementary information despite the low return rate. The main findings from the data highlighted a disparity between how those with responsibility for appraisal perceived the overall effectiveness of appraisal compared to how teachers viewed it. Appraisal was presented in a positive light by appraisal leads, with a significant emphasis placed upon teacher development. The teachers appeared to agree that it was about development, but neither could evidence this. On the contrary, actual evidence was for accountability.

The reliability of the methods and strategies that were used to evaluate teachers proved contentious with a general feeling amongst teachers that the system of appraisal was insufficient in capturing an accurate account of their performance.

The lack of appraiser training and an understanding of what it should comprise of did not help. Finally, the shortage of evidence to suggest appraisal was having a positive impact calls into question how effective appraisal is in its current format.

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Contents

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the main topic of this investigation, its importance together with the problems and issues that surround it. The research aims and questions, and an overview of the main theoretical concepts alongside the methods that will be used will also be explained.

Any organisation is likely to develop some means for ascertaining whether its staff and systems are effectively doing what they are intended to do. In English schools, this task is termed 'appraisal' and is summarised by McKenzie (2014) as a way of '…evaluating teachers against a set of standards, ensuring their competence to teach' (p.1). This investigation explores the effectiveness of appraisal by comparing the perspectives of teachers with those who have responsibility for its delivery.

Appraisal in schools is not a recent phenomenon. Rather, it can be traced back as early as 1659 (Hoole, 1868). For the purpose of this study, appraisal will be looked at since the 1980s because of the significant changes that were happening across education at that time, which saw a shift from a decentralised to a centralised system and occurred because of growing concerns over educational standards and the inadequacies of school accountability. Since this time, neoliberal policies have been adopted by the government and public sector organisations such as schools, who have been subsequently affected. The notion of 'quality' (Codd, 2005) has become paramount and the language of 'efficiency', 'quality', 'audits' and 'outputs' (Pring, 2012) are now the norm, monitored closely by government agencies (e.g. National and Regional School Commissioner), measurement systems (e.g. school league tables) and independent bodies (e.g. Her Majesty's Inspectorate). The fact that information about a school's performance is available to everyone has intensified the level of scrutiny and accountability that they are now subjected to. Parents now have a wealth of information at their disposal which they can use when deciding upon a school that is right for them. Schools thus

operate within a market and are needing to adopt private sector practices to attract and retain customers, namely in the form of students.

School leaders recognise that there is a strong case for the positive correlation between teacher effectiveness and student outcomes (Sutton Trust, 2011). As such, they use the mechanism of school appraisal to hold teachers accountable and for developmental purposes (Isoré, 2009). They do this to ensure the range of performance indicators by which teachers and schools are judged, are achieved.

This investigation explores the effectiveness of appraisal and whether the perspectives of teachers and appraisal leads are the same. It takes place in two schools, both academies, one being a selective and the other a comprehensive school. Conducting a study in two contrasting settings may highlight similarities in how appraisal is run and be indicative of what happens more widely across other schools in England. It is anticipated that differences in approach will also be identified and provide an understanding of best practice or, indeed, practices that prove to be ineffective.

1.2 Why this topic?

My interest and motivation to explore this topic is based on four distinguishable experiences during my time in the teaching profession. The first experience was when I came into teaching. As a newly qualified teacher the concept of appraisal was new to me, but I quickly realised that all it comprised of was target setting and a lesson observation. Confusion and disillusionment over its intended purpose and benefits set in when I realised that procedures of appraisal were not being followed (e.g. lesson observation feedback was fabricated because it had not been carried out as it should have been). This led me to ask why my appraiser was so intent on rushing my appraisal through the system. Gratton (2004) provides an explanation for this and suggests it is based on a perception that appraisal is a tedious process, a tick box exercise. Hargreaves (1994) gives further insight that appraisal is seen as a management system, another aspect of intensification of

teacher workload, which enhances management control while giving the impression it is developing teachers.

The second experience came in a different school whilst I was in the role as an assistant headteacher. Impressions of the appraisal experience led me to question the reliability of lesson observations (Byrne, 1983) and the highly subjective and value-laden processes that were involved in appraisal more generally (McKenzie, 2014). I was also concerned with the stress and threat such circumstances brought to teachers (Gratton, 2004) with little evidence of positive impact.

My third experience came when I was deputy headteacher in another school with responsibility for appraisal. It quickly emerged that staff had not been appraised for many years prior to my arrival. The novelty for some teachers of being appraised led to a positive response particularly because it provided an opportunity to discuss current practice and future development opportunities. For some though, they discerned appraisal as something more useful to the management than themselves. The mixed response corresponds to a large-scale research project conducted by Wragg, Wikeley, Wragg and Haynes (1996) in which just under half of teachers found appraisal was useful. I also soon realised that my own experiences of appraisal up to that point were subtly shaping and forming the basis on which I was leading appraisal; I was establishing a culture of managerialism where the surveillance of teachers would become the norm (Smyth, 2001).

My fourth and current experience as headteacher necessitated that I ask questions about appraisal based on my experiences up to that point. I was keen that appraisal, with all the time and financial investment that was required, would prove worthwhile for teachers and value for money for the school. My line of questioning included:

- What is the purpose of appraisal and do appraisal practices support and reflect this?
- Are the financial and time investments worth it?

- Are teachers developing into more effective practitioners as a result?
- What needs to change to make sure this happens?
- How is appraisal perceived by teachers and is that perception shared by appraisal leads?
- How can appraisal be used to hold teachers accountable whilst being developmental at the same time? Is it possible?

The above questions are indicators of the issues and problems that I perceive school leaders such as myself need to contend with regards school appraisal. Most of these issues will be explored in this study. It is my intention to use this investigation in my role as a researcher to inform and implement changes to current practices in my own setting that will hopefully challenge and change the potential negative perceptions that surround appraisal, eventually leading to a more effective appraisal system being administered.

1.3 Why is this a problem?

Appraisal in schools is the principal process by which teachers are helped and supported to improve as educational practitioners. Schools have a vested interest to ensure it is as effective as possible because, based on findings from the Sutton Trust (2011), teacher effectiveness has a close correlation with how students perform academically. However, despite the time, money and expertise that is dedicated to making sure this happens as well as possible, clearly something is not working. According to a study carried out by Wragg et al. (1996), there are still large numbers of teachers, just over 50%, who are of the view that they have not benefitted from appraisal. This is concerning for two reasons; a lack of value for money and time, and the negative impact on students of under-developed staff. Furthermore, the schools that are not meeting expected standards are far-reaching and potentially include, amongst other things, academisation, being required to join a Multi-Academy Trust, which encompasses a loss of control and autonomy, negative press coverage, falling student roll and job losses. At teacher level, not performing to the required level can affect remuneration (McKenzie, 2014) and can, in some cases, lead to redundancy.

The practice of appraisal is, on the surface, one that might appear uncontroversial due to its aims of wanting to improve teachers and the meeting of targets. However, appraisal is more nuanced by the political climate, the effects of which are clear and indisputable. The dominant political discourse of neoliberalism has now extended its influence beyond the private sector to welfare institutions such as schools who have to adapt to market forces and customer demand. This has encouraged a performativity culture, which can prove pervasive. New strategies for managing teachers have emerged, which beckon an era of surveillance, monitoring and evaluation. Greater emphasis is placed on aspects of teaching that are both visible and measurable, but are potentially to the detriment of other important aspects of education: those of an emotional and social nature which is harder to capture.

It is not known to what degree appraisal leaders contribute to or alleviate the pressures that teachers face through appraisal practices. Understanding how teachers are managed through appraisal and knowing the intentions behind this will provide a unique basis from which to discover whether appraisal is, in reality, providing teachers with the desired positive effect.

1.4 Aims and Research Questions

The research aims will explore and compare the perceptions of the effectiveness of teacher appraisal from the viewpoint of teachers and those who have responsibility for leading it. In doing so, the purposes of appraisal will become apparent from the two different positions. Insights into the strengths and weaknesses of appraisal will emerge and will include opinions on the training appraisers receive in support of teachers that are appraised. The evaluation of teachers and the methods used will also be discussed, in addition to recommendations on how to improve appraisal.

Four sub-questions, which arise from the literature review, provide the basis of this study and are as follows:

1. What is the purpose of appraisal and are all purposes overt?

2. How reliable is appraisal, and to what extent do appraisal leads and teachers agree on its reliability?
3. What is the impact of appraisal?
4. How can the appraisal process be improved?

1.5 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is provided in Chapter 3 which sets out the researcher's beliefs and theories that support and inform this piece of research (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Robson, 2011). The conceptual framework brings to focus the main things to be studied, the key factors and concepts and the presumed relationships between them (Miles & Huberman, 1994). For the purposes of this study, four main ideas emerge which help explain and give an understanding behind organisational behaviour within the broader context of appraisal. These are as follows:

- New Managerialism
- Performativity
- Teacher Identity
- Professionalism

1.5.1 New Managerialism

New managerialism is an approach to management which has close associations with neoliberalism (Lynch, 2013). It is a non-neutral management strategy (Clark, Gewritz & McLaughlin (2000) which directly and indirectly imposes an agenda of improving standards and efficiencies. To ensure this happens, teachers are managed by leaders who are seen as technicians of transformation (May, 1994), achieved through new invisible pedagogies of management which are characterised by sophisticated and comprehensive forms of surveillance, often seen in a school's appraisal system (Bernstein, 1977).

1.5.2 Performativity

New managerialism has encouraged a culture of performativity, described by Ball (1999) as information, indicators and other institutional performances as mechanisms designed to evaluate and compare teachers. The key message here lies in the way the measures used, intended to measure quality, become the criteria in themselves. Kirkpatrick and Martinez-Lucio (1995) explain how schools are subsumed within a quality revolution where the language of 'standards' and 'quality' is all that matters. The performance culture, whilst aiming to improve educational outcomes, also encourages strong cynicism and mistrust amongst teachers particularly towards appraisal (Down, Chadbourne & Hogan, 2000). Furthermore, performativity has encouraged teachers to be less authentic in both practice and in relationships with those in management.

1.5.3 Teacher Identity

The two main competing discourses of managerialism and democratic professionalism are discussed, providing insight into what shapes the professional identity of teachers. Managerialism professionalism encourages the formation of what Ball (1999) describes as the 'reformed teacher' and sees them increasingly having to respond to managerial requirements and expectations. Accountability of this nature has redefined what it means to be a teacher (Lynch, 2012). In contrast, democratic professionalism is characterised by greater autonomy. This is seen in the way teachers collaborate and cooperate with other educational stakeholders, making valuable contributions beyond their own immediate areas of responsibility (Sachs, 2010).

1.5.4 Professionalism

Whilst there is no universally accepted definition of professionalism, there is broad agreement regarding the skills and knowledge a professional would be expected to exhibit (Creasy, 2015). Examples include showing discretion and assuming responsibility for their own development (Helbling & Lubeck, 2008). In addition, autonomy is claimed and practiced (Grace, 1995). Alexiadou (2001) adds that an

integral part of being a professional is about being 'trusted', and the expectation that they can be relied upon (Groundwater & Sachs, 2015). However, Giroux (2002) claims aspects of professionalism are being eroded through the coded language of accountability, progress and efficiency. Furthermore, the element of trust is being subtly misplaced by performativity (Alexiadou, 2001) and the increasing use of audits (Elliot, 2001).

1.6 Methodology

This piece of research is based on an ontological position of constructivism, an assumption that there is neither an objective or singular reality (Waring, 2013). A researcher with a constructivist ontology has a corresponding epistemological position known as interpretivism. The belief here is that truth changes dependent upon an individual's own experience or as Waring (2013) describes, multiple realities exist. To understand how appraisal leads and teachers perceived their appraisal experience was integral to this study. The study was based on an embedded mixed methods approach within an overall interpretative framework. A case study was used as it supported the idea of enabling the researcher to capture a thick description of participants' lived experiences, thoughts and feelings within their context (Geertz, 1973). Nine teachers and appraisal leads were interviewed from both schools using a semi-structured approach. To supplement information and provide additional insights a questionnaire was sent to all teachers in both schools, of which 16 were returned. The researcher used grounded theory as the primary tool for data analysis. Data was also collected from school documentation which provided information about how each school organises and carries out appraisal.

1.7 Significance

This study has contributed to professional knowledge by providing an extensive insight into the effectiveness of appraisal within two secondary school settings by comparing the views and experiences of teachers with those who lead on its delivery. The main findings reveal there is conflict between teachers' interpretations and those of appraisal leads. Furthermore, whilst the findings from

this investigation show the impact of appraisal as limited, appraisal leads are adamant about what it achieves and are intent in following the same processes and routines without the need for further evidence. It is the researcher's hope that this piece of research will inform school leaders and appraisal leads about how best to approach appraisal in their own settings. More specifically, that this study will support schools in understanding the importance of engaging in a process of evaluation and reflection about existing practices of appraisal and take appropriate action that is in the best interests of teachers rather than for compliance and accountability purposes. Failure to be intentional, rigorous and honest in this process will result in appraisal being delivered in a way that purports to be teacher-centred when, in reality, a more covert system of monitoring takes precedence, intentionally or not, which yields little in return.

1.8 Overview of thesis

In this section, the reader will gain a broad understanding of each chapter and the reasons and decisions behind its contents.

The literature review in Chapter 2 helps the reader to appreciate the context in which teacher appraisal evolved during the late 20th to early 21st century alongside political influences at the time. Formative and summative approaches used for appraisal are discussed and an overview of their strengths and weaknesses included. In addition, the researcher examines whether both approaches are compatible with each other given that schools tend to use both within their appraisal programmes. Insights into the delivery and implementation of appraisal follow, which highlights numerous issues as they pertain to who should be appraising and whether or not they possess the relevant expertise and knowledge to do it effectively. An in-depth examination of the sources of information appraisers use when they assess teachers and whether or not these are accurate and reliable will also discussed. This is important because decisions made on the basis of this information have potentially far-reaching consequences for teachers. The last section of the chapter looks at the impact of appraisal. Because of the financial investment and time that schools are willing to set aside for appraisal, it is logical to question the differences it makes to teachers and their practice.

Chapter 3 outlines the conceptual framework of this study and provides a detailed overview of each of the four concepts that collectively form the framework, and how and to what extent they relate to each. ‘New managerialism’ is the first concept introduced because of the direct and indirect effects it has had on the other concepts of ‘Performativity’, ‘Teacher Identity’ and ‘Professionalism’. New managerialism is closely associated with neoliberalism, which encourages public sector organisations to run more like private sector businesses, with its emphasis on market share, efficiencies and profitability. Performativity relates to how teachers respond to the pressures of new managerialism. There are a number of performance indicators teachers are expected to demonstrate which potentially affects the outcome of their appraisal. Performativity has forced many teachers to alter their classroom practice for fear of the consequences of not adhering to appraisal expectations. The third concept is teacher identity, which has subtly changed in response to external and internal pressures on teachers, the likes of which are connected to appraisal. The final concept is professionalism. Frequently agreed characteristics of teacher professionalism include the element of trust and autonomy, which this piece of research explains is potentially being undermined by appraisal programmes with their emphasis on accountability. The discussion addresses the influence of two main types of discourse which are democratic and managerialist professionalism.

Chapter 4 looks at the methodology that was used in the investigation, an embedded mixed methods approach within an overall interpretative framework, where quantitative data played a secondary but supportive role to qualitative data. A case study approach was used based upon the rationale that it would provide rich, meaningful and descriptive information that would allow the researcher to understand the effectiveness of appraisal from different viewpoints. A multiple as opposed to a single case study was carried out to allow comparisons to be made as well to provide a basis for asking whether findings transcend the contexts of the two schools that took part. A local grammar and comprehensive school were chosen for this study. It was felt that having two contrasting schools would provide additional richness and depth to the study by highlighting similarities and differences that go beyond school type, and which are applicable to a wider audience educational practitioner. The sample included from each school

consisted of the appraisal lead and a small group of teachers who were all interviewed. In addition, a questionnaire was sent out to all teachers across both schools which provided important supplementary information.

Chapter 5 presents the findings of the study where 12 main themes emerged from all data sets and are as follows:

- Purpose
- Process
- Responsibility of appraising
- Important characteristics of an appraiser
- Weaknesses of an appraiser
- Strengths of an appraiser
- Appraiser training
- Methods of assessment
- CPD
- Recommendations
- Other

The discussion of the above results takes place in Chapter 6. It was evident that the purpose of appraisal was unclear due to the range of responses that emerged. Furthermore, the rhetoric surrounding the purpose of appraisal did not always align itself with what happened in practice. To illustrate this point, appraisal leads and even some teachers talked frequently about appraisal in terms of staff development. It was rarely mentioned as a tool for accountability. However, evidence from the data, some of which alludes to a lack of transparency and trust, suggests something of a more sinister nature is happening, likely in a more covert form which might explain why it was talked about less. The findings also highlight the inadequacies of appraiser training and the challenges of being able to combine the responsibilities of judging teacher performance whilst trying to establish and maintain a developmental and trusting relationship at the same time. The impact of appraisal was also investigated and this revealed a range of potential benefits but, in the majority of instances, these were of a hypothetical nature as opposed

to realised. The final part of the discussion focusses on how appraisal could improve. The failure of both schools to evaluate their own appraisal system is cited as a problem due to not being able to ascertain whether it was working or not. In its current form, appraisal appears to be more about fulfilling system requirements as opposed to it running in the best interests of teachers.

1.9 Conclusion

The findings from this investigation reveal confusion over the purpose of appraisal from both appraisal leads and teachers alike. The development of teachers emerged as the most talked about reason for appraisal although its impact was difficult to prove. A less conspicuous aim of appraisal was accountability and its effects were more evident in the way it pressurised teachers to behave differently when they were being assessed.

The next chapter is the Review of Literature which provides some context to appraisal, the reason for its introduction and the way it is implemented in schools. The final section talks about its impact.

2.0 Review of Literature

The following section provides a historical commentary of appraisal and its role within education since the 1970s. Defining appraisal, a discussion on its purposes and who is responsible for its delivery will follow before moving on to examining the sources of evidence that are used when evaluating teachers. The second part of the literature review will report on the perceptions of teachers and leaders on appraisal before drawing on the literature to determine what makes appraisal more or less effective.

2.1 Historical perspective of appraisal

2.1.1 Centralisation of control – national curriculum and staff performance

The appraising of teachers in schools is not a recent phenomenon. Indeed, Humphreys (1992) explains that early accounts of it being used in school can be traced back as early as 1659.

It is particularly pertinent to draw attention to the development of appraisal since the 1980s, which in many respects was a time that saw unprecedented change across the educational landscape. Prior to the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988, the educational system in England was decentralised, wherein responsibility for education was largely that of Local Education Authorities (LEA). The involvement of LEAs in education goes back to the 1944 Education Act: a significant milestone, which saw education being publicly funded at both primary and secondary school level. The aim of LEAs, set out by Butler, the architect behind the Act, specified that they should support and contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community (The Children's, Schools and Families Committee, 2009). From a curriculum perspective, apart from Religious Education, teachers had a large degree of autonomy in what they taught and how they delivered it. At the time, teachers were not directed by a mandated curriculum but rather by commercially available

textbooks and, for the older students, exam syllabuses. However, there were exceptions where some LEAs had their own curriculum schemes.

By the very nature of having a decentralised approach to education, there was an argument to be had over the vulnerabilities of such a system, in as much as the potential inconsistencies in the quality of education which students across the country would have been subjected to. It was not long before these concerns intensified as, in the early 1960's, David Eccles, a Conservative Minister of Education, oversaw a curriculum study group which was later replaced by the School's Council, led by Sir Edward Boyle. The purpose of this group was to stop the alleged drop in standards by seeking to develop new ways of teaching, assessing subjects more rigorously and the sharing of good practice (The Children, Schools and Families Committee, 2009). Understandably, such moves created tension at both LEA and teacher level, which was perceived as being undermining and an erosion of their autonomy.

Momentum towards more centralised control gathered pace in the decade that followed. The grave economic situation at the time only added further pressure that educational reform was needed. High inflation, high unemployment, the imposition of a three-day working week and the doubling of oil prices were but a few challenges that made the 1970s a decade of austerity on a scale not seen for more than a generation. Not only did the recession during this time drastically reduce economic investment in education (Galton, Simon & Croll, 1980) but also called into question whether pupils were being educated in a way that best served the economic interests of the country, which was the basis of James Callaghan's well-known Ruskin College speech in 1976 (Blair, 1996).

Callaghan responded to the growing concerns about the state of the education system and how it was out of touch in preparing pupils with the necessary skills and attitudes for Britain to survive economically in the competitive global arena of industry and commerce (The Children, Schools and Families Committee, 2009). This landmark speech was the springboard by which change would eventually come. Lacklustre school performance was subject to higher standards, the curriculum was to be moved towards central government control, which needed

to reflect the changing needs of society. Furthermore, teacher accountability was a central agenda item, which received cross-party support.

There was now an appetite from both politicians and parents alike to see change in the way schools were held to account. The Ruskin College speech played an influential part in this but it should be noted that other views, even prior to 1976, were also responsible for sowing the seeds of disenchantment about the state of education across England, none more so than the publication of a series of five Black Papers, written by right-wing educationalists and politicians (Gillard, 2011). These papers attacked and undermined the comprehensive school system at the time, specifically exposing issues surrounding the behavioural problems that were inherent across schools and the subsequent impact this had on academic students achieving good examination grades (Gillard, 2011).

By the end of the 1970s, the dominant force in British politics was Neoliberalism and government policy set out to accelerate "…the closing down of unprofitable industries and promoted a profound social and economic restructuring" (Jones, 2003, p.107). Education was no exception to this and Margaret Thatcher's administration (1980s) was determined that the school system should convert from a public service into a market and that more power should transfer from the LEAs to central government (Gillard, 2011). The requirement for schools to align their operations and practices to that of other workplace models was not without its problems. Blase (1991) provides insight into why this may be so:

> Schools are complex, unpredictable social organisations that are extremely vulnerable to a host of powerful external and internal forces. They exist in a vortex of government mandates, social and economic pressures…(p.1)

The reality of a national curriculum edged ever closer in 1985 with the publication of a government White Paper, 'Better Schools'. In it, a series of measures were outlined which aimed at raising standards at all ability levels and securing the best possible return from the resources that were being invested into education (Department for Education and Science, 1985). In the same year, Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI, 1985) published 'Quality in Schools: Evaluation and Appraisal',

a document that provided in-depth insights into the scope of school evaluation. A call for greater teacher accountability had already been mooted, no more so than by Callaghan, followed in 1983 by the White Paper 'Teaching Quality' (DES, 1983). However, it was clear in the HMI (1985) report that the mood of stakeholders, such as parents, was changing at an accelerated rate. Concern was being aired about the standards of teaching, which led to the view that teachers should be regularly and formally evaluated (Kelly, 2001). Such evaluations could also be used to gauge teacher competence and dismiss staff that fell short of meeting the required standards (DES, 1983).

Until this point, the practice of teacher appraisal was not a statutory requirement. A two-year study by HMI (1985) revealed that the appraising of teachers was practised across both the primary and secondary levels but is also highlighted that some schools were further ahead in enacting teacher appraisal than others. The system of appraisal at the time was not consistently applied across schools and in many cases was at the early stages of development, a view shared by survey findings of HMI (1985);

> A great deal of experiment is already going on in the field of teacher appraisal and school self-evaluation and interest is growing (DES, 1985, p.47)

Mortimore and Mortimore (1991) advocated a similar point of view on teacher appraisal by commenting that whilst the process of reviewing teacher progress and target setting had been around for quite some time, it was not always implemented in a systematic way in reality. It therefore seemed only a matter of time before appraisal became a legal requirement, which came a year later in 1986.

The timing of these sweeping changes of accountability coincided with Parliament passing the 1988 Education Act and the launch of the National Curriculum. The gradual regaining of control by the government was epitomised in this important document, which outlined clearly the 'Knowledge, Skills and Understanding' students would be expected to have acquired by different stages in their education, referred to as Key Stages (1-4). Teachers were directed in what to

teach by the ‘Programmes of Study’ and ‘Attainment Targets’ were used for assessment purposes, to determine the progress of students.

The National Curriculum provided a clear framework for teachers in how they were meant to carry out their classroom duties. The evaluation of whether these duties were being fulfilled was the role of appraisal, although at the time of its introduction in 1986 it lacked detail, namely what good practice was meant to look like. This information was not available until 1991 when the Regulations (DES, 1991a) and a Circular (DES, 1991b) were published (Gunter, 2002).

In the 1991a Regulations, the following aims were set out:

4.-

1) Appraising bodies shall secure that appraisal assists:

a) school teachers in their professional development and career planning; and
b) those responsible for taking decisions about the management of school teachers.

2) …appraising bodies shall aim to improve the quality of education for pupils, through assisting school teachers to realise their potential and to carry out their duties more effectively.

3) Appraisal procedures shall in particular aim to —

a) recognise the achievements of school teachers and help them to identify ways of improving their skills and performance;

b) help school teachers, governing bodies and local education authorities (as the case may be) to determine whether a change of duties would help the professional development of school teachers and improve their career prospects;

c) identify the potential of teachers for career development, with the aim of helping them, where possible, through appropriate in-service training;

d) help school teachers having difficulties with their performance, through appropriate guidance, counselling and training;

e) inform those responsible for providing references for school teachers in relation to

appointments;

f) improve the management of schools.

4) Appraisal procedures shall not form part of any disciplinary or dismissal procedures, but appraisal statements may be used for the purposes specified in Regulation 14

McMahon, 1995, p.163

The government Circular 'School Teacher Appraisal' (DES, 1991b) laid out the specific guidance that schools were recommended to follow to ensure they were compliant with the Regulations (1991a) referred to above. It is worth pointing out that teacher appraisal was to consist of meeting individualised needs alongside the broader aims of the school set out in the school development plan.

11. Appraisal should be set in the context of the objectives of the school, which will generally be expressed in a school development plan. Appraisal should support development planning and vice versa. The school's objectives in a particular year should be linked with appraisal, so that, for example, professional development targets arising from appraisal may be related to agreed targets and tasks in the development plan. Similarly, appraisal targets, when taken together, should provide an important agenda for action for the school as a whole. Targets set during appraisal should therefore meet the needs of a school as well as those of individual appraisees. Setting appraisal within the framework of school development should also ensure that targets are realistic and make best use of the available resources.

Circular 12/1991 School Teacher Appraisal, p.3

In the same document, it was also made clear how schools were to deliver on teacher appraisal, designed to support them in carrying out a statutory duty in a systematic manner and, in doing so, ensuring a more consistent system of appraisal across schools in the country.

32. The components of appraisal for school teachers should be as follows:

- classroom observation;
- an appraisal interview, in which targets for action are established;

- the preparation of an appraisal statement;
- follow up, including a review meeting between the appraiser and appraisee.

Circular 12/1991 School Teacher Appraisal, p.5

There is little doubt that the 1991 guidelines for appraisal were heavily descriptive and perceived by some as overly dictatorial. However, in many respects it was necessary and served its purpose at a time when accountability in schools was under immense scrutiny. Twenty years on, the government revised its guidance on appraisal. The 2012 version (Teacher appraisal and capability: A model policy for schools) was more streamlined than before and the onus of how appraisal should be run was largely given back to school leaders as it was deemed that they were best placed to tailor it to the needs of the school. The distinguishing feature of the new guidance lay in its dual purpose. Firstly, Section A provides a model example for schools to use or adapt and, in essence, states the supportive and developmental processes that would be typically found in an appraisal cycle. In contrast to this, Section B provides guidance on capability procedures designed to deal with teacher under-performance.

The clear message in all this points to a government that is serious about educational outcomes. Of equal importance is the school's role in preparing the next generation for the workplace by equipping them with the right skills and attitudes, not least because of the recognised relationship this has with the country's economic growth. Wolf (2002) explains that the pursuit of such objectives is central to a neoliberalism doctrine, which is seen in education.

Codd (2005) explains how some western governments, particularly since the early 80s, adopted neoliberal policies. New Zealand, a country that has many similarities to the UK as it pertains to policies on education, is one such example, which saw expenditure on education as an investment in human capital because of the causal relationship education has with economic growth (Codd, 2005). When the main focus in education shifts in this direction, there is an associated pejorative with the notion of 'quality' (Codd, 2005); it becomes an overriding factor, which subsequently leads to a focus on 'outputs' and the establishment of what

Ball (1994) describes as a dominant management culture. Pring (2012) adds that there has been a deep cultural change in the way education is managed, which is more akin to the world of business. Evidence of this is made quite clear in the government White Paper '21st century schools: your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system' (2008) where, upon closer examination of the text, we see that the term 'performance' and 'performing' were referred to 121 times, 'outcomes' 55 times, 'delivery' 57 times and 'book' only once (Pring, 2012). The language of 'targets', 'performance indicators', 'inputs and outputs' and 'audits' are now commonplace in schools today (Pring, 2012). The adoption and/or overuse of such terminology is not necessarily an issue in and of itself but rather could be perceived as an outward manifestation of a culture that is now seen in schools.

Whilst the pursuit of raising educational excellence is a morally worthwhile and a necessary endeavour, regardless of who is driving the agenda, the means by which this is achieved needs consideration, particularly on whether using a business model approach is always the best option. It is understandable why comparisons are made and, in many instances, schools can learn and adopt principles and practices from organisations in the private sector. However, it should be remembered that a school's core operation revolves around working with people (students) not products. Cuban (2005) draws on this distinction by making the case that many schools are expected to take in a mixed cohort of students (rich, poor, abused, frightened, talented etc.) but unlike businesses, schools cannot just return them if the product is faulty. It is therefore imperative that the human element of education is not forgotten and the 'conveyor belt' mentality of 'outputs' does not become the pre-eminent focus.

2.2 Definition of appraisal

Within education, the term 'appraisal' is often used interchangeably with other related terms such as 'teacher evaluation' and 'performance management' (Grote, 2002). Whilst McKenzie (2014) points out that performance management is the

umbrella under which these other terms sit, the researcher has decided to adopt a similar position to one of the UK's largest teaching unions (NAWUST, 2012) and use the term 'appraisal' in the majority of cases unless there is good reason otherwise.

Firstly, it would be a useful starting point to draw upon the literature and define appraisal.

> Teacher appraisal refers to the evaluation of individual teachers to judge their performance and/or provide feedback to improve their practice
>
> OECD, 2013, p.11

> …a continuous and systematic process intended to help individual teachers with their professional development and career planning, and to help ensure that the in-service training and deployment of teachers matches the complementary needs of individual teachers and the schools.
>
> Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service, 1986, p.2

These descriptions reveal two core purposes of appraisal. Firstly, to support and develop teachers, often referred to as formative appraisal and secondly, to hold teachers to account, otherwise known as summative appraisal.

2.2.1 Formative approaches to appraisal

Formative appraisal refers to improving the teachers' practice through 'professional development' opportunities (Isoré, 2009). During formative appraisal teachers have more of an input, such as determining content, pace and the delivery method of how to be appraised (Poskitt, 2005). The experience is usually more positive as it recognises what has gone well but also addresses weaknesses within a supportive framework.

Formative appraisal facilitates greater degrees of teacher reflection and dialogue with the appraiser and is likely to be more transparent because the teacher being appraised knows the repercussions are less likely to have an affect on remuneration and career progression. It therefore comes as no surprise that this

method of appraisal has a strong correlation with staff motivation. Formative appraisal improves the climate and culture within a school and secures greater commitment from staff. The hierarchical relationship between teacher and line manager is stronger and more trusting, which sees teachers being empowered to negotiate their own journey of development (Beveridge, 1975).

The downside to formative appraisal is the way in which the element of 'trust' might be exploited and therefore undermines the robustness and rigour that is required in appraisal. For example, it is more difficult to quantify a teacher's level of performance when external accountability measures are less prominent and give way to more subjective measures (e.g. dialogue and personal reflection) which might be less effective. Furthermore, when external accountability is less pronounced there runs the risk that institutional performance is compromised (e.g. exam results).

2.2.2 Summative approaches to appraisal

When the purpose of appraisal is about holding teachers to account, then a summative approach is used, which according to Isoré (2009) is the most recognisable way of appraising someone. The focus in this situation is about evaluating teacher capabilities, very often through the channel of lesson observations, and the end of year examination results are used as the measuring tool by which aptitude, knowledge and other related competences are judged. Where schools have concern in this area, teachers may ultimately find competence proceedings will follow (Bennett, 1999). This approach does raise all sorts of contentious issues, in that there are likely to be a number of factors that can play a part in determining student achievement, not just teacher performance. Bennett (1999) makes the point that teachers should not be made the scapegoat in this situation, reinforcing the fact that complex interconnections and diverse factors beyond the control of the teacher could have also contributed to the eventual outcome. It is vital for schools to consider all contextual factors before making final judgments otherwise the subsequent repercussions, as depicted by Bennett (1999), might see unnecessary time being spent where teachers are contesting the outcomes made against them. The aftermath of such events will

likely encourage a culture of mistrust, defensiveness, risk aversion and undermine the collegiate climate within a school. With the introduction of performance-related pay, the chances of such conditions abating seem more remote than ever.

2.3 Purpose of appraisal

In the most recently revised government publication on appraisal (DfE, 2012), the first section (A) makes it clear that the main objectives of teacher appraisal are the assessment of performance which run concurrently with teacher development. The second part (Section B) of the same document covers competence procedures.

Based on the assumption that good teaching plays a key role in promoting student learning, findings from the Sutton Trust (2011) present a strong case about the correlation between teacher effectiveness and student outcomes. Key findings indicate the following:

- Students who are taught by an effective teacher will make 40% more progress in maths compared to being taught by a poorly performing teacher.
- The effects of high-quality teaching are particularly significant with students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Students who are taught by effective teachers will gain more than a year's worth of learning compared to those students taught by a poorly performing teacher.
- Bringing the lowest 10% of teachers in the UK up to the average would boost the country's attainment levels and improve its international ranking significantly.

It is important to mention that other factors outside a teacher's control can play a part in determining how a student performs academically. Examples include family income, a parent's education, teacher-student ratio and gender of the student (Raychaudhury, Debnath, Sen & Majumder, 2010). Additional factors may include social problems such as substance misuse, violence and absence from school

whereas for other students issues may stem from risk factors such as mental health issues, discrimination etc. The significance of these influences cannot be underestimated and will have varying degrees of impact dependent upon the individual's circumstances and their ability to withstand such adversities. So, whilst this study will in the main focus on a teacher's ability to facilitate pupil learning and the quality assurance mechanism of appraisal (Danielson & McGreal, 2000), it is necessary to acknowledge that other external factors may have a bearing on student outcomes as well.

2.3.1 Accountability vs professional development

The 1991a Regulations highlight a broad range of aims that teacher appraisal was intended to achieve and can be summarised into two main categories: teacher 'accountability' and teacher 'professional development'. Both initially appear to complement each other in ensuring that teachers are being supported to perform at their best, which in turn should positively affect student learning (Isoré, 2009).

In a small-scale study by Gratton (2004), teachers perceived that appraisal was weighted more towards accountability. One teacher felt uneasy about the hierarchical nature of appraisal and thought that being appraised by a superior prevented a consultative collegial process. It was seen that appraisal was just another means of control and had little to do with supporting teacher improvement. Other teachers were unclear from the beginning about the purpose of appraisal although there was consensus that it should be more focused on professional development.

From a school leader's perspective, Timperley (1998) carried out research to discover how New Zealand principals felt about appraisal. The findings that emerged identified a conflict surrounding the focus of appraisal and whether it should be on development, accountability or both. A third of principals (34%) were in support of appraisal if it had a developmental (formative) focus rather than accountability (summative). One principal, an advocate of this view, made the following comment:

> Yes. A positive one developed with the cooperation of the staff; not a negative accountability one imposed by the Minister/Ministry (p.3)

Others, however, were more in favour of accountability, with one principal saying:

> We are accountable. As principal, I am accountable for what my staff do. I need to know that staff are 'on track...' (p.3)

In a study by Upsall (2001), one principal thought that the mixing of the two approaches was a recipe for disaster although they did not elaborate further on this point. Whilst opinion was divided on this matter, Timperley (1998) identified a common agreement that appraisal should not be used for competency proceedings as described by one principal:

> …care must be taken not to confuse the professional development aspect of appraisal (i.e. supportive and formative) with actual competence issues (p.3)

Whatever approach a school decides to adopt, it is important that teachers are aware of it. Confusion over the purposes of appraisal are inevitable unless they are communicated clearly and so that subsequent actions are reinforcing what teachers have been told. Sometimes schools neglect this and profess one approach whilst in practice another is at work. For example, appraisal is dressed up as a developmental process when in reality it is mainly about accountability. However, Gunter (2002) makes the point that teachers are often aware of the hidden agenda of appraisal, namely its 'policing' purpose.

Exam results are the primary accountability measure (Gratton, 2004) which is not surprising considering the rhetoric surrounding PISA league table standings and the scale of changes that education in England has gone through over the last few years. The emphasis on Ebacc subjects (e.g. Maths, English, Science, Humanities) and the re-modelling of the GCSE grading system (numerical system replacing grading by letters) serve to illustrate this point. The apparent fixation with results has, in the opinion of one teacher, influenced the focus of evaluation:

> ‘I think this is a poor system, it turns assessment into a measurable process…it is all about quantifiable indicators’
>
> Flores, 2012, p.363

Gunter (2002) goes on to explain that the direction in which the education system is travelling has led to the establishment of a climate of mistrust between teachers and management, creating an ‘us and them’ situation. It would seem that increasing pressures on school leaders have forced them to intensify efforts and put in place increased measures of accountability, which has ushered in an era whereby the roles and responsibilities of teachers are increasingly prescribed. The effect has contributed to the erosion of professional autonomy and thus compromised the level of commitment that teachers may otherwise have shown to the organisation in which they find themselves (Buswell, 1988).

Isoré (2009) who evaluated the appraisal systems across a range of countries as part of a study by the Organisation for Economic, Co-operation and Development, found there was a conflict between the two approaches of accountability and professional development, but did acknowledge they are not necessarily incompatible. Others, though, are more resolute in their belief that a collaborative model is much harder to achieve. Powney (1991) for example states appraisal must be either about the development of teachers or about the judgement of them. Aiken (1994) is of the view that these two approaches are opposed to each other and cannot be combined successfully. Smith (1989) sheds light on why this is the case through an examination of the philosophical position of each (see Table 2.0) and the potential clashes that arise when they are combined.

Accountability	Professional Development
Incompetence	Competence
Hierarchical	Professional Partnership
Looking at the past	Looking to the future
Hearsay	Shared experience
Suspicion	Trust

Table 2.0 Philosophical position (Smith, 1989, p.164)

Historically, problems of trying to merge these two approaches did not exist because teacher appraisal was more concerned with teacher development. New Zealand, a country that shared similarities with the educational system in the UK, was a case in point and found that prioritising a professional partnership with its teachers ensured they were part of the process that led to improvements in practice (Thompson, 1996; Timberley & Robinson, 1996). Over time, there was a shift in focus towards 'accountability', which is thought to be down to the neoliberalism influence (Piggot-Irvine, 2003).

The impact of neoliberal policies in education has, according to Smyth (2001), changed the way teachers work; it has fostered a culture of managerialism and performativity which has culminated in a situation where surveillance of teachers is now the norm. Furthermore, the same author is of the opinion that this relentless focus is inadvertently encouraging the deskilling of the workforce where teachers are working within environments that are regulated by rigid parameters of compliance. A teacher's desire to be creative, to try something different even at the risk of failure, is less conducive within a system where teachers are encouraged to teach in a way that aligns itself with what the school sees as a priority. Codd (1994) recognises this emergence of a performativity culture and raises concerns that this can lead to teachers ultimately being valued for what they can produce, which again questions the diminishing human aspects that are seen in education. According to Ball (2000) management practices in schools are now

more akin to that of industry, supported by government policy, which presents education as a commodity.

2.4 Appraisal responsibility

It becomes apparent that the challenges of designing and implementing an appraisal system that seeks to raise standards whilst simultaneously preserving the professional identity and autonomous practices of teachers is no easy feat. There is common agreement between all stakeholders (e.g. politicians, parents, school leaders and teachers) that student achievement (e.g. fulfilling their academic potential) is important. The problems lie with how to manage teachers in support of this objective and, as yet, no prevailing solution has emerged.

School leaders are second only to teachers in their influence on student learning (Radinger, 2014). Therefore, it makes sense that in the majority of cases teacher appraisal is the responsibility of the school's head teacher (Peterson, Wahlquist & Bone, 2000).

The size of the school largely dictates how many people are involved in the delivery of appraisal but it would not be uncommon, besides the school's leadership team, for a range of other people to be involved. For example, middle leaders such as Heads of Department (Dean, 1991), colleagues (Isoré, 2009) and teachers (Day, 1989) are all well placed to play a part in the evaluation process. In some instances, students contribute towards the teacher evaluation process although this is used less frequently (Peterson et al, 2000) for reasons that will be explained later. Because judgements made during appraisal can have significant consequence on teachers' pay and career progression, not to mention the emotional toil that is often inherent within appraisal, it is crucial that judgements made are accurate and objective. Using multiple appraisers is one way in which schools counter this problem. Typically, a senior member of staff will be the official 'performance manager appraiser', which will involve conversations around target setting and the reviewing of these targets. Additionally, it is not uncommon for

teachers to have three formal lesson observations within the one-year performance management cycle, possibly conducted by different members of staff.

In Smith's (2011) review of the secrets of successful schools, he was surprised to learn how some head teachers in the schools he visited were not actively engaged in matters pertaining to 'teaching and learning' but rather delegated the responsibility to another member of the leadership team. Added to this, the increasing complexity of the role (Radinger, 2014) makes it inevitable that head teachers teach very little if at all because of the increasing administrative burdens. With other distractions that divert their attention away from the classroom, one could argue whether they are actually best placed to fulfil their appraisal responsibilities. However, Jacob and Lars (2005), contested such a view by stating that they are particularly effective in identifying the very best and very worst teachers in addition to being good at summative assessment and driving performance improvement as a strategic imperative. Head teachers possess the authority to support the formative aspects of appraisal from a resourcing perspective and they also play a pivotal role in competency proceedings, if and when required.

The use of peers in appraisal is an interesting proposition, popular in schools and generally involving a middle leader or teacher who holds a credible record of expert teaching and is in general a well-respected member of staff. The advantages of using such staff that do not sit on the senior leadership team are plentiful. For example, they can empathise with those who they appraise as they themselves are working within the same context and are likely to have experienced many of the same challenges (e.g. behavioural issues, class sizes, available resources) (Isoré, 2009). The dialogue in these circumstances encourages greater levels of openness because the teacher being appraised holds less fear about what knock-on effects may follow in doing so (Isoré, 2009). The main drawback to using teacher colleagues as appraisers is the time commitment that performance managing involves. Whilst time is normally allotted to carry out such duties, it generally does not factor in the informal support that is often necessary, which can inhibit to some degree the appraiser from getting on

with their own work (Gunter, 2002). Another issue that may arise is when tough conversations have to be had around the issues of underperformance, leading to an awkward situation whereby the boundaries of a formal hierarchal relationship and the collegial peer relationship become blurred.

Using students in the appraisal process is not as common in schools, although student feedback does have a place in improving teacher practice. For example, if students are given anonymity, they are often very good at articulating the good and bad aspects of teaching. There are obvious risks attached to using such an approach, one being that it can cause a teacher to feel quite uncomfortable in addition to creating an opportunity for students to write down some retaliatory comments that are based on perhaps a conflict of personalities as opposed to the quality of teaching.

2.5 Sources of information for appraisal

To gain a fairer and more comprehensive understanding of a teacher's performance, a process of triangulation can be used involving different instruments and sources of information. The next session looks at the main ones used in schools.

2.5.1 Lesson observations

The use of lesson observations as a way of evaluating teachers as part of the appraisal process is widespread (Isoré, 2009). Schools will have their own way of conducting such evaluations but generally, appraisers will do this by typically using a lesson observation proforma that is sub-divided into sections based on the stage of the lesson or/and a particular focus. These focuses are often influenced by the Teacher Standards (2011) and/or Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) criteria and the meeting of these criteria, or not as the case may be, will result in an overall judgement being cast, which comprises of 'Outstanding, Good, Satisfactory (now changed to 'Requires Improvement') or

Inadequate. More recently, Ofsted when carrying out inspections, no longer make judgements on individual lessons they observe but rather make an aggregated assessment on the school's 'Quality of Teaching' provision by what they see in lessons they visit (Coates, 2015). Despite this move, many schools still tend to inform staff of the outcome of a lesson observation using these judgements.

In theory, conducting lesson observations seems to be the most logical way of capturing the realities of what happens in the classroom. This was certainly the case according to one appraiser in a study by Bartlett (1998) who thought lesson observations was a positive thing as they were able to observe somebody doing their normal job. However, when so much rides on the outcome of these observations, it is almost inevitable that the teacher concerned makes a concerted effort to secure a positive judgement. Coates (2015) states that because formal lesson observations only occur three times a year in a lot of schools, there is an increasing pressure placed on teachers to put on a 'show' and 'perform to the observers' (p.117) which raises the question of authenticity. Collins (1997) describes this as 'window dressing' (p.12) and implies that evaluations are more focused on areas that are observable, which is of concern, considering that the primary focus of a lesson observation should be on the learning taking place. According to Codd (2010), this increasingly prevalent practice, which emphasises the demonstration of a set of pre-defined skills and competencies, may lead down a path that ultimately deskills the workforce. Furthermore, assessing performance in this way could result in less competent teachers actually receiving inflated evaluations (Frase & Streshly, 1994). Furthermore, incompetent teachers may even go unidentified if lesson observations are the sole tool used for measuring teacher performance (Lavely, Berger & Follman, 1992).

2.5.2 Portfolios

The use of portfolios goes some way to addressing some of the shortcomings associated with lesson observations. Portfolios are designed to store a collection of artefacts (McKenzie, 2014) that can be used in both formative and summative appraisal. Portfolios are used extensively in other professions such as medicine, nursing and architecture (Davies, Khera & Stroobant, 2005) and all hold to a

common purpose in raising standards. Within education, the content of a portfolio will inevitably vary due to the individuals' work context and the scope of evidence that can be included. To counter this, the Teacher's Standards (2011) can be applied as a useful framework by which teachers can use and make it 'fit' for them (Cameron & Gunn, 1999). Examples of pieces of evidence that may be used include: exemplar lesson plans, questionnaire feedback, copy of performance management reviews, lesson observation feedback, exam results data, copies of emails from parents/students/staff, evidence of CPD training, qualifications, curriculum vitae etc.

There are several advantages to using portfolios. Firstly, it provides a strong basis by which teachers can reflect on their practice (Suddaby, 1998), which is essential for self-improvement. Secondly, the teacher is seen less as an object of assessment and more of a participant (Paulson, Paulson & Meyer, 1991) based on the premise that they influence the content of the portfolio which also informs professional development requirements (Attinello, Lare & Waters, 2006). Thirdly, portfolios are more likely to be more authentic than other means (Gelfer, Xu & Perkins, 2004) because they reflect what happens over time unlike lessons observations, where judgements are made during small discrete windows of time.

It is very likely that even the most competent teachers teach an occasional average lesson, which can influence the quality of the evaluation if it happens to coincide with a performance management observation. With so many variables that contribute towards a successful lesson, it is important to realise those that are within the teacher's control (e.g. subject knowledge, lesson planning, class seating arrangement etc). However, it is worth noting that external factors that sit outside the teacher's influence can sometimes work against and undermine what they are trying to achieve in a lesson. For example, an isolated event at home may be the trigger for a student to disengage and misbehave in class, or some students struggling with sleep deprivation results in greater levels of lethargy and normal progress is not observable. In this instance, the use of a portfolio will be useful as it could provide the evidence that suggests the learning environment is overall good (e.g. via student questionnaire) and that students are making good progress (via teaching tracking data). It would seem that portfolios provide a good base by

which teacher performance can be measured. Not only can the contents of a portfolio show that a teacher is helping students make good progress using relevant sources of data but also offers greater scope by which they can demonstrate a wide range of competencies and so provide a broader and more diverse profile.

For all of its strengths though, the use of portfolios does have some inherent weaknesses, one such being the time it takes a teacher to compile evidence. Information gathering can easily be perceived as a monotonous and pointless exercise if it becomes an end in itself. The ideal scenario is where teachers engage in a process of reflection (Suddaby, 1998), which is enhanced further if this can be done in collaboration with a colleague where advice and support are easily accessible (Zepeda, 2002). However, the practicalities of finding a time when teachers are simultaneously free is often difficult. Other weaknesses include the way that portfolios only contain evidence that is of a highly selective nature, which may give an impression that a teacher is better than they actually are. In extreme cases, evidence is tampered with. Such a situation undermines the portfolio process because it then fails to capture a true impression of a teacher's level of competence.

2.5.3 Examination results

According to Isoré (2009), holding teachers to account based on assessment data is an appealing method not least because it supports the notion that teaching is about improving learning (Isoré, 2009). Furthermore, the same author also comments that this method of evaluation is of a quantitative nature, which can provide greater degrees of objectivity and fairness when deciding upon the effectiveness of teacher performance. To improve these judgments further, value-added models are widely used, which identify the progress made by students relative to their starting point. Using such data as opposed to just raw scores can ascertain the level of impact a teacher has made with any given class.

Using value-added data as a basis for evaluating a teacher is not without its drawbacks. Despite the sophistication of these models they do not integrate all of

the factors that affect a student's achievements; for example, family background and support, attendance at school, peer and classroom climate, school policies and their implementation, and level of resource provision (Ingvarson, Kleinhenz & Wilkinson, 2007; Goe, 2007; Weingarten, 2007) to name a few.

Other specific variables that may adversely affect a student's ability to perform well during an assessment should also be mentioned. For example, a dog barking in a playground might prevent some students from concentrating, a flu virus compromising a student's ability to prepare adequately for their exam, and a student who becomes disruptive affecting others in the process (Kane & Staiger, 2002) are all factors among many that can affect how a student performs over which the teacher has no control.

A further drawback of placing increasing onus on exam data as a key feature in evaluation has encouraged teachers to embrace a method of teaching, better known as 'teaching to the test', a process in which children are trained to take tests (Gerver, 2014). In principle, this sounds justified although this method of teaching can often be over emphasised, which results in students spending considerable amounts of time working on improving test technique during certain points of the year (e.g. in March/April, all Year 6 students will spend every timetabled lesson preparing for their Standard Assessment Tests) (Gerver, 2014). Teachers have learnt to 'play the game' (Gerver, 2014) which has seen a shift in the methodology of teaching towards memorisation and recall to the detriment of students developing deeper levels of understanding and application. The latter is more holistic in nature and seeks to nurture and develop an array of supplementary skills such as problem solving, creativity, and communication, all of which are essential in building a solid foundation for future work. With the overarching importance the government places on international league tables such as PISA (Gerver, 2014), it is unlikely the fixation with assessment outcomes will abate any time soon.

The intense pressure on teachers to deliver results has not just altered their practices but in extreme cases has given rise to behaviour that is wholly unprofessional, such as cheating (Levin, 2003) and, to a lesser degree, focussing

disproportionately on students who sit on the borderline of passing or failing their exams whilst paying less attention to the progress of others such as the more able (Isoré, 2009). However, the government has sought to address the latter issue by introducing new school measures such as Progress 8, which looks at the progress of all students between Key Stage 2 and 4.

Despite these shortcomings, the use of exam data does hold a lot of merit and is a useful indicator of teacher performance so long as other measures and contextual factors are considered alongside them.

2.5.4 Performance Management Review meeting

The timing and structure of the performance management review meeting will vary dependent upon the school. However, it would be normal for the final review meeting to take place at the beginning of the next academic year following the release of A-level and GCSE results in August. As mentioned already, exam results are important and generally form the starting point of discussion within performance management review meetings. Through such dialogue, teachers are able to provide an important narrative, which allows the appraiser to understand key insights about the results. Once the review of the previous year's targets is complete, the conversation moves on to the setting of new targets for the year ahead.

Besides the initial start-of-year meeting, it would not be uncommon for schools to have additional performance management meetings during the mid-point of the year and in some circumstances at the end. An opportunity to clarify expectations and clear up any ambiguities is also an important element of these meetings. Furthermore, teachers will meet with those responsible for carrying out formal lesson observations, the frequency ranging from one to three a year.

Whilst the above sets out some common practices that would likely be seen in most schools, the experience for a teacher could be quite variable. Bartlett (1998) states the reason for this as being that the "…thoroughness with which each stage

of the appraisal cycle is carried out may be very much at the initiative of the appraisers and the importance that they attach to the process" (p.484).

2.6 Appraisal accuracy and fairness

A study conducted by the OECD (2013) Teaching and Learning International Survey found that a significant number of teachers (82.2%) considered the appraisal process as a fair assessment. In contrast, a study by Gratton (2004) found teachers were careful how they answered questions for fear that it could lead to criticism, particularly on areas where they had no control. Such circumstances raise the question about how transparent a teacher can be when being appraised.

Hopkins (2001), who sought the opinions from a cross section of principals in the US, found that 61.7% judged appraisal as being effective. In contrast, several were left feeling exasperated with the system of teacher evaluation. One principal explained her discontentment with a process that failed to capture an authentic picture of teacher performance, almost implying the grounds for spending time on it are not justified.

> We conduct a 30-minute classroom observation prior to writing a formal evaluation on tenured teachers…
>
> We all know that a snapshot photo conducted that way does not reflect what a teacher truly knows or does (p.4)

2.7 Appraisal suitability and competence

A study led by OECD (2013) found amongst teachers a sense of unfairness around appraisal, concern over the limited professional expertise of evaluators, which unsurprisingly led to a reluctance amongst teachers to accept the legitimacy

of its outcomes. Two experienced teachers from a study by Flores (2011) share this view:

> The most controversial aspect for me is the recruitment of the appraisers…they are peers, but to be honest with you, I have doubts about the training they've gone through to do this kind of job!' (p.361)

> I think the appraisers do not have the required training to do their job. This is a big problem. (p.361)

Even the appraisers themselves, based on a study by Kyriacou (1997) revealed the inadequacies of training, where the carrying out of lesson observations and the writing of appraisal statements was given specific mention by half of the appraisers. On another occasion, it was implied that the gap in time between training and appraising was detrimental and that some kind of refresher training was required.

2.8 Impact of appraisal

The results from a study carried out by Wragg et al. (1996) involving 1100 teachers reported that 49% of them felt appraisal affected their classroom practice. This indicates that many teachers are not benefiting from the appraisal process. Even those teachers who did report a change might be referring only to surface level change and because of externally applied pressures (Wragg et al, 1996). One teacher in a study by Down, Chadbourne and Hogan (2000) encapsulates how some teachers felt about the process by saying it was about '…performing for the management' (p.219). Given such circumstances, it is hardly surprising that many of the teachers surveyed found appraisal added little value to them improving as a teacher. In contrast, it was found that authentic learning was occurring in environments that were "…non-structured and informal, spontaneous, and child focused" (Down et al, 2000). The only caveat to this was it was dependent upon a trusting and honest relationship with other like-minded professionals.

In a smaller scale study led by Gratton (2004) the consensus of appraisal was largely of a negative nature and summarised in the following points:

- Some teachers indicated that they felt insecure and threatened by the perceived levels of accountability, which in some instances led to teachers being defensive.
- Those nearing the end of their teaching career were reluctant to engage in the appraisal process any more than was necessary.
- It was perceived that the appraisal process was tedious, going through the motions, a tick box exercise that was an impersonal process that nobody cared about.
- Some teachers were of the view that appraisal did not justify the time spent on it.

Flores (2011) found teachers were opposed to appraisal in its current form because it took them away from their primary function of helping and supporting children. There was also a consensus in the same study that appraisal led to greater workload.

In a study by Fisher (1995), teachers shared their feelings on appraisal by saying they saw it as a stick that the management used to beat people with. Fisher (1995) concluded that such thinking, justified or not, will ultimately doom appraisal to failure. Interestingly, Hopkins (2001) discovered that principals in the US shared similar feelings to those teachers, several of whom were exasperated with the current system of teacher evaluation. One principal no longer saw it as a priority:

> It's at the bottom of my list…I have yet to work with an evaluation instrument that truly works to improve teaching learning. Too often, the evaluation process is a ritual that has minimal impact on student achievement and teacher growth (p.4).

2.9 Adding value to appraisal

The following points discuss a range of approaches and strategies that potentially improves the effectiveness of appraisal.

2.9.1 Commitment from senior leaders

There is a strong correlation between a school having an effective appraisal system and the priority it is given by the leaders of the school (Piggot-Irvine, 2007). Despite the many pressing demands placed on such individuals, they are able to model positive attitudes, expectations and emotions towards appraisal (McLellan & Ramsey, 2007) and are convinced themselves that the time and cost commitments are a worthy investment. Such an approach helps dismantle teacher hostilities towards appraisal which are partly based on the assumption that it is an externally-imposed directive that involves significant investment (e.g. a teacher's time) but the outcomes are more about school compliance than school and teacher improvement.

2.9.2 Time

A clear way in which school leaders can demonstrate their support for appraisal is to ensure sufficient time is devoted to it (Piggot & Irvine, 2007). Unless this occurs, it is less likely that appraisal will have much of a positive impact. In a study by Kyriacou (1997), teachers involved in appraisal activities expressed concern about being away from their classes and the time pressures resulted in a feeling that things were being rushed and they had to dash away to teach another class rather than continue with appraisal. Time allotted to appraisal potentially signifies an element of importance otherwise teachers may perceive appraisal as a bolt-on initiative that only exists to satisfy compliance demands. In many settings time is already set aside for lesson observations, performance management interviews and CPD training. Whilst this time allocation goes some way towards addressing the need, more is potentially required to ensure the following are properly embedded. For example:

- Time for teachers to stop and reflect on practice because those that do are more likely to improve the quality of their teaching (Upsall, 2001). Often, this occurs through the interaction of individuals and the planned interventions through the feedback process (Kolb, 1976). School-based appraisal lends itself to this type of scenario via review meetings. However, for this to happen, school leaders need to be willing to forgo or be flexible about pre-conceived agendas, for example the setting of targets. Garratt (1987) provides a model on how reflective conversations can occur, which begins with the teacher learning by doing and then reflecting on an experience. A process of thinking, conceptualising the meaning of it follows, then deciding, and making choices about a way forward. Kolb (1976) endorses such an approach, convinced that having knowledge from experience does not necessarily lead to learning. The important thing is what the teacher actually does with the experience. The practice of teacher reflection provides an ideal opportunity for such dialogue to occur and improve teacher performance in the process.

- The training of evaluators, which is comprehensive and aims to develop a range of competencies to allow them to accurately assess the performance of teachers.

- Time must be allocated so teachers are fully aware of what is expected of them. Consulting teachers and involving them in the designing of evaluation criteria not only facilitates greater levels of transparency but recognises their professional status and will increase the probability of them accepting the methods of evaluation used (Isoré, 2009).

The challenge school leaders face is trying to create time when there are so many other competing demands, which compromises the effective implementation of appraisal. In some cases, leaders may need to use existing time such as that set aside for staff INSET. Because it is a statutory requirement for staff to attend INSET days throughout the year, it is more likely that they will engage in the process knowing the time made available to them is not their own. It is also likely

that putting appraisal on the INSET agenda inadvertently raises its profile amongst teachers. Simple solutions such as this may end up yielding benefits for both the school and its teachers.

2.9.3 Training and investment of appraisers

The role of the appraiser is of prime importance in the whole appraisal process according to Kyriacou (1997). It makes sense that those schools who have effective appraisal systems invest in the training of their appraisers. They avoid apathy (McLellan & Ramsey, 2007) by recognising that a teacher's experience, expertise and credentials do not necessarily result in being a good appraiser. It is important that appraisers be trained to step outside their own paradigm of teaching, to be open to alternative methods and styles that are different to their own.

It is also imperative that school leaders demonstrate how serious they are about appraisal by investing the necessary time and money to ensure appraisers are equipped for the tasks at hand. Teachers themselves want assurances that those who appraise them are suitably trained, that they are able to observe and evaluate their performance in a fair, objective and consistent manner. The ability to judge performance against pre-set criteria goes some way in making this happen.

An important component of appraisal training that is often overlooked is the area of developing quality relationships. A prerequisite of this is when the appraiser is prepared for the role, which will encompass being equipped with a repertoire of skills that fall into the interpersonal and coaching category. In a study by Down et al. (2000), they discovered that teachers held a view that successful appraisal is only possible when there is a focus on developing strong relationships between appraiser and teacher. Fullan (1997) reinforces this point by arguing there should be less importance placed on systems that evaluate teachers and more emphasis on improving relationships. There is evidence to suggest that current relationships between appraiser and teacher are threatened by what Hargreaves (1997) describes as 'contrived collegiality' (p.60). Coens and Jenkins (2000) suggests that performance appraisals should be abolished and reinforces the importance

of a person-centred alternative, with specific mention of a coaching and feedback approach and how it can make a difference.

2.9.4 Multiple evaluation methods are used

Those who lead effective appraisal systems within schools recognise that valid and reliable judgements about teacher performance are much better when using various sources of information (OECD, 2013). Cardno (1999) and Piggot-Irvine (2003) support this idea by stating teacher evaluation should be based on holistic or multiple perspectives. The process of triangulation is the method by which these perspectives are arrived at and aims to capture authentic teacher behaviour, which is sometimes difficult to achieve by just formal lesson observations. It only takes a teacher to have a bad lesson for the judgements to be skewed. The same could also be said about the observer who will bring to the classroom-preconceived notions about a teacher which only adds to the degree of subjectivity. The utilisation of a multi-method approach will limit many of these effects and improve the reliability of judgements made. In addition, it will help ascertain more accurately a teacher's strengths and weaknesses which could then lead to more targeted CPD if necessary.

2.9.5 Collaborative working

McLellan and Ramsey (2007) recommend the use of peers in the appraisal process, not least because it has been shown to encourage teacher development (Holly & Southworth, 1989; Rudduck, 1991; Smythe, 1991). For example, working with peers provides a source of security whereby they feel they can take risks (Biott, 1988). Taking such risks can be explained in two ways. Firstly, a teacher is more likely to be open and transparent about his or her weaknesses to a colleague as opposed to a member of the school's leadership team because of the perceived implications it may have on things like pay or career progression. Secondly, the teacher is more likely to have the confidence to be more innovative and try new things during a lesson observation as opposed to sticking with familiar practices or potentially school endorsed approaches. A teacher who experiences collegial support like this will feel less obliged to plan and deliver a lesson for the purpose

of the observer and instead focuses upon what matters most to the learner. Post-lesson feedback, regardless of how difficult it may be, is not seen as a threat because the foundation of such discussions stem from the informality of the whole experience and friendship (Everhart, 1988). The conditions for dialogue are ideal whereby one professional can hold another professional to account (Bennett, 1999) which in turn can facilitate purposeful reflection. The involvement of colleagues in the appraisal process can help create an experience that is both enjoyable and meaningful for the teacher (Gunter, 2002). This is not surprising considering that improving schools are those that invest in their staff, not least by creating opportunities for them to collaborate and share best practice with each other (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001). Down et al (2000) found that teachers "…stressed the value of 'tuning in' to the knowledge of their colleagues" (p.220). The benefits that derive from this type of peer-to-peer support is evident and can operate within a formal or informal capacity. Effective appraisal systems ensure that collaborative working is given the time it deserves because, as Down et al (2000) discovered, committed teachers will continue to reflect, share and improve their work regardless of the elaborate systems that are in place.

The potential drawback when using teachers in this capacity only normally surfaces when their role changes from an informal supportive colleague to that of a formal appraiser. The requirements of the latter will sometimes involve having difficult conversations, which has the potential to change the dynamic of a relationship.

2.9.6 Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is an essential component of successful school development as well as teacher growth, well-being and success (Hargreaves, 1994; Day, 1999). The level of financial investment that schools have at their disposal for CPD varies considerably although commonalities can be seen in the way available funding is spent, frequently applied in an ad-hoc fashion (McKenzie, 2014) driven by either ineffective planning or in response to an immediate unforeseeable need. With many schools' budgets hitting breaking point (Bloom & Busby, 2016), leaders must make the tough decision in how much they

can afford to set aside for CPD. However, effective appraisal systems are underpinned by an ability to provide high quality CPD and leaders who support this understand the cost effectiveness of such provision for both individual teachers and the school at large (Madden & Mitchell, 1993).

To ensure schools are making shrewd investments this way it is recommended that an inventory of current professional development training be carried out which provides information on all training and how it has been used (Goe, Biggers & Croft, 2012). The point of carrying out such an exercise is to ensure money spent on training is not re-invested the same way if there is little tangible evidence of impact. For example, a common type of CPD training in schools is the provision of external one-day training courses, which are expensive, have additional costs such as travel and the likelihood of having to provide cover for a teacher's lessons whilst they are absent. This training might be considered good value if the result of attending leads to a tangible improvement at school such as improving student outcomes. However, the evaluation of CPD training is rarely conducted in a way that provides sufficient evidence of impact. Furthermore, McKenzie's (2014) view on external CPD provision is less than convincing by stating this type of training generally proves ineffective because of the difficulty that delegates have in transferring the learning from a course into the classroom.

Goe et al. (2012) recommend schools explore and integrate alternative types of training, which are often more cost effective. One example is job embedded professional development, which takes place in the workplace and involves evaluating and developing practice (Hawley & Valli, 1999). Whilst it is not uncommon to use external providers to meet this need there is widespread recognition that schools have at their disposal a rich source of talented individuals who are capable of delivering CPD. The benefits of providing in-house training are many, including being more economically viable and using expert practitioners who understand the school context, which means the training can be tailored towards the needs of the school. An additional benefit of adopting this approach means a greater number of staff can access on-going CPD training, which becomes established and makes long-term impact more likely.

2.9.7 Standards of reference

In section 2.5.2, it was mentioned how time should be made available to ensure teachers understand the standards by which they are to be evaluated. The act of doing so works towards establishing a fair and reliable teacher-appraisal model (OECD, 2013). The standards of reference that a school in England may use includes the Teaching Standards by the Department for Education, which outlines baseline expectations of practice and conduct; a teacher's job description which includes a set of general duties and requirements and/or the school's development plan (OECD, 2013). In many cases, schools will adapt and simplify this information to make it more accessible and user-friendly. Additional criteria, which can be used objectively to measure a teacher's competency includes national assessments, Ofsted inspection judgements and/or criteria, baseline and benchmarks assessment data and, more generically, school league tables (Bennett, 1999).

2.9.8 Ownership and trust

A key component for successful appraisal is the element of trust. However, the high stakes accountability that has become the prevalent focus of appraisal has led to the erosion of trust seen in the relationship between teachers and management, and also between schools and government. Bartlett (1998) found a number of teachers fearful of the appraisal process and its possible consequences, such as concerns over their future employment. In another instance, a teacher confessed they could list their weaknesses but would rather the headteacher did not read them because that would not be of any help. Codd (1999) explains that a culture of distrust only leads to more distrust. Hazeldine (1998) makes a similar point by stating teachers who are systematically not trusted will eventually become untrustworthy. Brien (1998) talks about trust as being at the core of the development of a professional culture and goes on to say how this relational concept affects peoples' attitudes and dispositions towards each other. The following section gives some practical examples as to how schools may cultivate a climate of trust.

Fundamentally, there needs to be agreement between the school's intentions and purposes of appraisal and its subsequent application. Whether the purposes are for professional development, accountability or a combination of both, there needs to be transparency from the outset as to what the emphasis will be so teachers have a clear understanding of the evaluation and support process, which will also help eradicate suspicions of a hidden agenda by the management. Clearly, there is a debate to be had as to which approach should be used, which this thesis is intended to provide some insight on. Whichever approach is used, the only way to promote teacher trust is to ensure the system is administered in a fair and supportive way.

Gaining trust is further enhanced by consulting teachers on the evaluation process. By doing so, schools demonstrate that effective appraisal is more likely achieved when its stakeholders are given some measure of control and say in how it runs. Such an approach challenges any commonly held perceptions by teachers that appraisal is exclusively a meaningless and compliance-imposed exercise. In fact, it could lead to a situation as described by Schell (1975) where teachers become increasingly more self-directed, resulting in them becoming more acquainted and proficient at monitoring and evaluating their own work. When this happens, schools are sending a clear message to their staff that they can contribute to the accountability process. Not only does this create greater trust between a school's management and teachers but also can also lead to indirect benefits such as cost savings gained through a reduced need to conduct surveillance as robustly as before.

2.9.9 Rewarding teachers

Interest in performance-related-pay (PRP) within the school context has been around since the 1980s although nothing was formalised until the year 2000 when teachers could apply to move from the teachers' main salary scale to the upper pay scale, which was performance-based and agreed upon by the school's management. In 2014, a new PRP framework was introduced. Huge changes were afoot, which saw the end of automatic progressions from one pay scale to another based on length of service. Pay enhancements were to become criterion-

based and schools were no longer obliged to follow the pay scales although most continued to do so. However, they were now at liberty to pay high performing teachers more than the incremental amounts that were previously in place. In one sense, schools have benefitted from the flexibility that came since they were given the directive by government (Department for Education, 2013) to revise their pay and appraisal policies, which meant they could use pay incentives to recruit and retain high-calibre teachers. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest rewarding teachers this way is an effective way of developing teacher quality (Goldhaber, 2009). In addition, the same author also claims teachers have positive attitudes towards financial incentives. Despite this, there are elements of PRP which are highly divisive.

Free school founder, Katherine Birbalsingh, was convinced that PRP would be a 'cut throat' approach that would end up damaging the ethos of schools (Barker, 2014). She argues that such practices work well in certain sectors such as industry (e.g. factories), but to assume they will have the same impact in schools has the potential to undermine the humanistic elements such as team spirit, shared practice and creative thinking. The eroding of collegiality in school settings is a real threat if some staff are rewarded and others are not. According to Bennett (1999), operating such a scheme will not only have a demotivating effect for the majority of staff, but will also undermine self-worth, create friction between head teacher and teacher, create a perception of inequity and thus lead to an atmosphere of frustration. To compound matters further, it could result in less effective learning.

It is inconclusive whether PRP provides sufficient benefits to overcome the negatives. However, the growing trend of academy status schools in the UK and the accompanying autonomy this brings as it pertains to PRP would suggest it will remain as a motivating tool that school leaders have at their disposal to improve teacher performance.

Whilst PRP might seem the most obvious way of rewarding teachers, a study carried out by Goksoy and Argon (2015) highlighted the importance of 'recognition'. They discovered that when teachers felt their performance was

recognised, a number of benefits emerged such as improvements in productivity, morale, motivation and job contentment. A similar finding was discovered in appraisal within the corporate sector where the recognition of a job well done was found to be top motivator of employee performance (Nelson, 1994).

2.0 Summary

This chapter has described the journey of appraisal since the mid-70s and provided a narrative and rationale behind the changes seen in that time. It was not until the mid-80s that the government responded to mounting concerns about the state of the educational system by publishing guidance, which schools used as a way of holding teachers accountable alongside their development. Previously, schools were left to their own devices, which meant there were disparities between schools in how they fulfilled this function. In 2012, the government updated their guidance on school appraisal, which was less prescriptive than the 1991 version. Schools were given more freedom in how they chose to deliver appraisal.

This study contributes to the body of knowledge that exists around school appraisal by carrying out research that looks at the perceptions of appraisal effectiveness from the perspective of appraisal leads and teachers. It is the researcher's belief that an extensive and in-depth comparative study of this type has not occurred in the UK before. The significance of such a study is important because it will highlight similarities and disparities of opinion between teachers and a school's management within the same setting. This in turn will hopefully reveal what factors positively and negatively affect appraisal and its effectiveness.

3.0 Conceptual Framework

The literature review set out to initially provide some historical context in education just prior to and including the 1980's when the government took back more control over schools. This was due to concerns over perceptions of falling standards in behaviour and general performance including the quality of teaching, which was seen as a potential threat to the country's future economic output. Neoliberalism was the dominant force in British politics during this time and its influence spread to public sector providers including education. Changes in the way schools are now managed can be traced back to this period, reflecting close similarities to how private sector organisations function. Financial sustainability within schools is established based upon good performance, the indicators of which are many and paraded in the public domain for all to know. Schools operate within a market place where important stakeholders such as parents can exercise choice about which school they want to send their children to. If the school is not performing well, parents will typically try and avoid choosing it as an option.

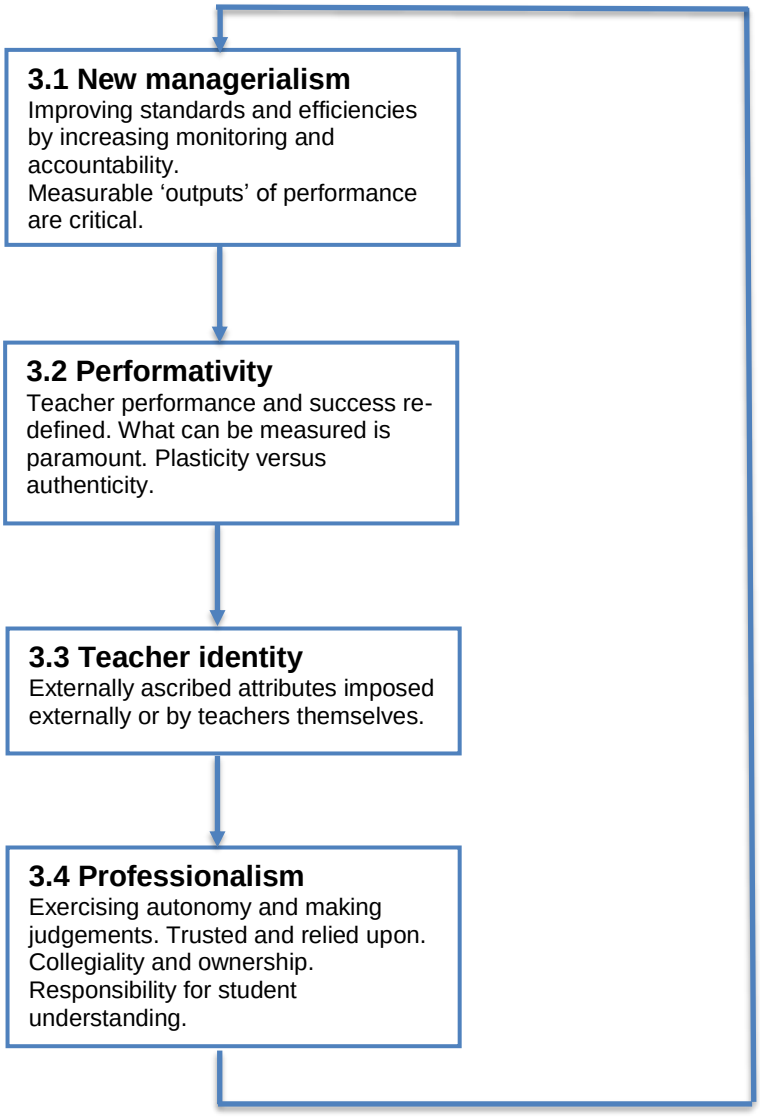
In 1991, government guidance on teacher appraisal was introduced. This ushered in an era of increased rigour and greater accountability across the educational system with the purpose of supporting teachers to improve as well as providing clear guidelines to deal with under-performance. However, the increasing use of performance metrics to judge schools, many of which are open to public scrutiny, has led to the emergence of a dominant management culture where the importance of 'outputs' such as exam results is the overarching priority. It now seems that appraisal is increasingly being used as a basis to monitor and carry our surveillance of its teachers.

A conceptual framework is needed in order to fully understand the situation described in the literature review. The framework looks at terms concerned with organisational behaviour. The first is new managerialism and the second is a related concept called performativity. New managerialism is an approach to management used extensively to raise standards, improve efficiencies and uses accountability strategies to achieve these ends. Such an approach places

pressure on employees to perform and, because of this, encourages a performance orientation response where satisfying compliance demands is prevalent. It can also end up leading to a lack of authenticity and trust between leaders and teachers. This type of behaviour is described by the concept of performativity, which naturally follows a new managerialist approach to leading.

The third concept explores teacher identity through the two discourses of managerialist and democratic professionalism. Teacher ‘professionalism’ is the fourth concept and forms an integral part of this study because of its contribution towards eroding teacher trust and autonomy, key components of being a professional.

The four concepts that make up this research's conceptual framework are shown below.



Increasing management control with focus on short term success (e.g. exam outcomes) but with longer term implications which affects how teachers perceive themselves and their role.

Conceptual framework

3.1 New Managerialism

New managerialism as described by Lynch (2013) is a particular management approach which is closely associated with neoliberalism. Historically known for its use in the private sector, practices associated with new managerialism are increasingly evident in the public sector, with education being no exception. In this

section the reasons and purposes of new managerialism will be explained followed by a discussion about its impact from an organisational and individual perspective.

Clark, Gewritz and McLaughlin (2000) refer to new managerialism as a non-neutral management strategy designed to institutionalise market principles in the governance of an organisation. Within the context of education, new managerialism imposes, directly and indirectly, an agenda of improving standards and efficiencies. Whilst on the surface these two areas are indisputably important and reasonable, problems arise when the conditions in which they operate are factored in. To understand the context of these changes it is necessary to go back to the 1980s, a time when a number of reforms such as the publication and promotion of league tables and the emphasis placed on school results led to the emergence of new language, typified by terms such as ‘output’, ‘added-value’ and ‘measurable’ (Grace, 1995). A fundamental shift occurred which changed the nature of education to something that is more closely associated with private sector practices. Mulcahy (2011) refers to the increasing demands on educational environments which are created by more economistic and managerial pressures. Ball (1994) describes how the prevailing approach in running schools is now centred upon the notion of enterprise and commercialism and has led to a culture of welfare giving way to a culture of profit and production. The priority of school leaders today is more divided than it ever has been which can be explained by the range of demands and expectations that derive from a number of external agencies and stakeholders. Parents are an obvious example; since the conception of comparable performance data alongside Ofsted inspection information, parents are well-informed customers who can now exercise choice as to where they send their children.

The majority of income a school receives is related to students themselves. A falling roll can lead to staff redundancies and, in extreme cases, school closures. Consequently, schools aim to be successful because success will avoid these kinds of scenarios from happening. However, ‘success’ has been narrowly defined, or at least appears to take precedence above other aspects of education. The criteria for success today can simply be drawn from two main sources: a

school's exam results and its Ofsted grading, with the former having a strong correlation with and bearing on the outcome of the latter. A recent document published by the Department for Education reinforces this point.

> Secondary accountability measures are used to inform parents and students about school performance; to prompt and promote self-improvement, to inform the public and stakeholders; and to provide credible information to enable action in cases of underperformance. Performance data is used as the starting point for a conversation about school performance by Ofsted for the purposes of inspection, and by Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) and local authorities when discussing with school leaders what school improvement support they may need.
>
> Department for Education (2018)

The government makes it explicitly clear that schools will be judged and held accountable to parents, students, the public, other stakeholders (e.g. governors) alongside other external agencies for their performance. Concerns over results or other related outcomes can potentially lead to changes in school leadership, forced academisation and in some cases, the need for a school to join a multi-academy trust. These are some examples of the direct consequences of underperformance alongside the indirect effects that were referred to earlier. With such high stakes accountability, schools are being subtly forced to create systems of their own to measure and track performance and implement whatever interventions are necessary in order, as Grace (1995) explains, to survive as a school and protect the jobs of those employed therein.

Many of today's schools exercise a significant degree of autonomy, ranging from curriculum design and content, methods of assessment to managing school budgets. Such freedoms do not necessarily mean that government influence and control has declined but rather evidence a change in strategy of how schools are managed. Du Gay (1996) describes this new form of management as less visible, a much more hands-off self-regulating regulation, and a devolved environment with less micro-managing. Ball (2003) addresses any misconceptions that such reforms are simply strategies of de-regulation, rather, the state is reasserting a new form of control through processes of re-regulation. The way of managing teachers has changed which now sees managers (e.g. school leaders and

appraisers) as technicians of transformation (May, 1994). They go about achieving this through new invisible pedagogies of management through more sophisticated and comprehensive forms of surveillance, largely seen through appraisal processes (Bernstein, 1977). With changes in the style of management being used, it is important to evaluate the impact. To do so, this section will now cover the more generic consequences, after which the discussion will look at three specific areas that require a more in-depth discussion of their own.

From a leadership and school-wide perspective, an obvious drawback is the amount of time required to carry out the continuous surveillance and monitoring that is an inherent feature of new managerialism. For example, the emphasis placed on data and its continuous scrutiny; report writing; appraisal meetings, annual reviews; promotion applications; inspections and peer reviews (Ball, 2000); budget control; forecasting; staffing and quality controls (Grace, 1995).

The outcome according to Walker and Scott (2000) is that school leaders become distracted from the core purpose of education, namely the elements of learning and the students themselves. Bottery (2000) elaborates further on the human aspect by saying the role of education in promoting a caring, cohesive and democratic society is undermined when the focus is on short-term objectives that derive from managerial demands. The impact in managing this way are far reaching, influencing operational practices as well as the culture and ethical systems that exist and thereby diminishing those things that make public sector organisations distinct (Ball, 2003). Schools are increasingly operating in a climate of competition which has seen the re-institution of hierarchical management, the diminishing of co-operation and the fostering of individualism between schools (Smyth, 2001). Smyth reinforces the point already made that schools are being diverted from their educative agenda because they are needing to be more entrepreneurial and run more like businesses. With the introduction of new accountability measures such as Attainment 8 (A8) and Progress 8 (P8), where student performance is calculated using comparative data (e.g. students are categorised based on Key Stage 2 assessments), this potentially increases the likelihood of unhealthy competition where schools work in isolation as opposed to collaborating with each other. Whilst exceptions do exist, such as schools who

work in Multi-Academy Trusts, the new and current system of how school league tables are now calculated may cause many schools to become more inward looking than before. It would be difficult to measure the level of impact this would have on students although one would assume that educational outcomes are more likely to improve when a culture of collaboration extends beyond the organisation itself, which facilitates a sharing of best practice. The pressure for schools to be successful can also encourage practices that are morally unacceptable. For example, the practice of 'off-rolling' students, which sees many Year 10 students who are likely to damage a school's performance figures, disappearing from a school's register, which is reinforced by Tomlinson (2008) who claims students who do not enhance a school's rankings are devalued. Other strategies used to improve school performance include entering cohorts of students for specific exams that are reputable for high achievement rates, entering students for exams a year earlier than normal, a practice that has recently stopped due to government intervention, a narrowing of the curriculum with increasingly more time being devoted to core subjects, especially English and maths due to the double counting methodology that is now used, and less time and emphasis spent on creative and practical subjects. A further strategy of this nature is to decrease Key Stage 3 from three to two years meaning more time is spent on examination subjects, a practice that has come under scrutiny by Ofsted. All of the above points are short-term measures that many schools, to varying degrees, implement. Whilst some of these practices might lead to short term successes, it does call into question the long-term implications. Bottery (2000) sheds some light on what may later transpire if rigid curriculums and systems of assessment are imposed on schools by predicting it will close off the kinds of investigative avenues that are so central for economic creativity, which a flexible and productive high technology labour market might need.

From the discussion so far, it is clear that the purpose of new managerialism is to raise standards. However, this management approach has a dual purpose, which also involves holding schools to account for the revenue and resources they receive. From the outset, cutting down on wastage seems justifiable and sensible, and Beckman and Cooper (2004) claim the drive to improve economic efficiency is a reason why new managerialism has advocates However, Rouse (1999)

explains that new managerialism encourages a narrow view of efficiency based on the notion of cost savings when, actually, the focus needs to be on providing a quality service. The narrow view that new managerialism brings is exacerbated when only measurable performance (e.g. exam results) is the thing of value.

New managerialism has affected operational practices in schools alongside the individuals within it. For the purposes of this study, the impact of the changes upon teachers was explored. An important question that needs asking is whether such reforms in management make a positive difference. Pollitt (2014) explains how new managerialism is an ideology which positions better management as transformative. He talks about how this transformative approach works by delivering more with less, stimulating greater innovation, channelling professional skills that will focus on the highest priority goals and will turn broaden political aspirations into measurable outcomes. Elsewhere, Mortimore and Mortimore (1991) suggests that new managerialism can lead to school improvement. In contrast, Scott and Dinham (2002) are of the opinion that the current format of auditing and policing have negative connotations. For example, the emergence of new managerialism has led to the empowerment of school managers who demonstrate the powers of surveillance and control to ensure teachers are being compliant and meeting productivity demands (O'Brien & Down, 2002). The impact of such practices will be discussed more in the following sections. Glesson and Husbands (2001) indicate that current policy and practice and its emphasis on the performing school has had profound consequences on its performers, namely its students, teachers and leaders. An important question that needs to be asked is whether the means by which successful performance is achieved is done ethically and in the best interests of those involved. Furthermore, if schools are more concerned with or if practices lead to only short-term success without factoring in or understanding the longer-term consequences, then problems will emerge. Walker and Scott (2000) draw parallels between the performance enhancing initiatives in education and performance enhancing drugs in sport. They describe how schools have been offered and prescribed performance stimulants, which promise short-term gains but rarely have produced lasting positive change.

3.2 Performativity

Today's schools are operating within a market place that is fiercely competitive, the consumers in the form of parents and students are increasingly exercising their right as to who they want as an educational provider, which is largely dictated by how successful that institution is. Whilst elements such as pastoral care or co-curricular provision are often cited as important benefits a school offers, fundamentally, schools are increasingly required to demonstrate they can deliver on quantifiable measures such as being an Outstanding or Good school based on an Ofsted inspection, strong exam results and how many students they send to university, with particular reference to Russell Group institutions and in particular, Oxbridge. The pressures on school leaders to be successful and to ensure they are delivering on these outcomes, amongst others, has forced many to adopt the reforms and practices of new managerialism and in doing so has encouraged a culture of performativity. Performativity is defined by Ball (1999) as the use of information, indicators and other institutional performances as mechanisms to judge and compare professionals in respect to outcomes, which according to Kirkpatrick and Martinez-Lucio (1995) has meant schools are subsumed within the quality revolution where the language games of 'standards' and 'quality' are very much at work. The changes and impact that such management practices have brought will now be explored although it is worth pointing out that some of these have been gradual over time, occasionally subtle in nature and quite possibly not always with the intent that some might suppose. It is clear though that a system of management together with its procedures and expectations has gathered momentum and is now accepted as the norm particularly by those who are new to the profession.

Performativity has reduced the meaning of success to those things that can be measured and counted and, as Ball (1999) makes clear, this information provides the basis for accountability and disciplinary measures to take place. Exam performance is of paramount importance, the outcomes of which help define whether a teacher has done their job or not in the classroom. However, data such as exam results can only be scrutinised at the end points of an academic year and make it impossible to evaluate teachers who do not teach exam classes.

Therefore, schools use additional information to inform them whether teachers are meeting the required expectations. Besides interim assessment data, schools commonly use lesson observations to make judgements. But teaching is a complex activity owing to the extent of human interaction that occurs, which poses a question as to whether its quality can be reduced to some form of output measure. This is now commonplace in many schools, fuelled by political enthusiasm for accountability and competition which poses a threat to the meaning of the holistic nature of authentic teaching and profoundly changes what it means to teach and be a teacher (Ball, 1999).

In a similar way to the discussion on new managerialism, it would be pertinent to explore the impact of performativity. To start with, leaders and managers within schools are not exempt which is a positive thing from the point of view that they can empathise with teachers and the pressures they are under. That said, they are responsible for practices that cause performativity to exist arguably through no fault of their own but rather as an outcome of a bigger agenda and system at work. Elliott (1996) describes how time consuming it is to acquire the performance information necessary for perfect control which drastically reduces any remaining energy for making improvement. Interestingly, the latter is ultimately what schools want to achieve but the methods by which they are trying to get there actually undermine improvement, as opposed to facilitating it.

The next group of people who are affected by the onset of a performativity culture are students. Ball (2010) is clear that the reforms that promote performativity have affected teachers' relationship with students seen by the way things are done 'at them' as opposed to 'with them'. Ball (2010) also claims that the primacy of a caring relationship at work with students has no place in the hard world of performativity, which sees the reformed teacher as someone who simply is responsive to external requirements and demands. Such a highly-pressurised and competitive environment has even caused some teachers to give in to gamesmanship-like behaviours from creative accountancy to the extremes of cheating. Such instances could undermine the merit students should be entitled to, lead to confusion as to what they are capable of achieving independently, alongside raising ethical issues and the messages this sends out.

The last group to be looked at are teachers themselves. A significant challenge they face is the pressure to perform a certain way in order to meet management expectations. This prompts the question as to how performance would be different if such conditions did not exist. There is an argument that disparities in practice would be seen based on Lyotard's (1984) description of the environment teachers are operating in which employs judgements, comparisons and displays, and all for the purpose of control, attrition and change. It is not surprising why Ball (2000) likens performativity as a system of terror. A possible reason for this is explained by Ball (2010) who refers to the tension between belief and representation where teachers are concerned that what they do is not captured or does not have any value within the metrics of accountability. He also adds how these metrics distort practice which sees teachers giving up claims to authenticity and commitment for performances that must be constructed or fabricated with artifice. Ball (2010) unveils the deeply paradoxical nature of the fabrications found within teaching which portrays teachers as actors, who elude and deflect surveillance through a façade whilst at the same time requiring them to submit to the rigours of performativity. The prevailing focus for teachers becomes on measurable outcomes. The performance culture is the most threatening aspect of the reform agenda according to Gleeson and Husbands (2001). Down et al. (2000) refers to the strong cynicism and mistrust towards performance management; Ball (2000) tells us how the incipient madness of performativity has led to an alienation of self which, as briefly alluded to earlier, encourages inauthentic practice and relationships also. On the former point, Blackmore and Sachs (2007) elaborate by mentioning the overriding importance on what was seen to be done rather than substantively what was done or, as Slater (1997) puts it, the phantasmagoria of signs becomes more substantial as the reality. Regarding relationships, Lynch (2013) talks about how social, emotional and moral development carry no immediate measurable performance value in a climate of performativity and so becomes seriously diminished (Elton, 2000). Ball (2010) goes further by stating that when performance becomes all-encompassing, there is no room for caring for each other and the outputs are all that matters.

The discussion above describes the changes that have become more evident across the public sector which has seen performance information used as one of

the main disciplinary tactics of accountability (Ball, 1999). Ball continues by saying more and more information about public sector organisations is required, recorded and published, all in the name of public interest; the outcome of which is a threat to a great many tasks and activities which cannot be measured or recorded, and increasingly being resigned as valueless. This is the transformation that education and schools have gone and continue to go through. Kirkpatrick and Martinez-Lucio (1995) observe that many education systems around the world are now subsumed with the quality revolution. The effects of such reforms, according to Ball (1999), are not being analysed adequately and understood fully, resulting in a new kind or remade and reformed teacher. Ball continues to explain how teachers who are new to the profession are being reconstructed as a technician as opposed to a professional who is capable of critical judgement and reflection. With the onset of new forms of de-intellectualised, competence-based training, it makes sense that changes in education will naturally follow in a way that was neither intended nor anticipated but rather because of political enthusiasm.

3.3 Professionalism

Professionalism is a challenging concept to define due to it being multifaceted according to Brehm, Breen, Brown, Long, Smith, Wall and Warren (2006). Therefore, there is no universally accepted definition but rather a broader understanding of the skills and knowledge a professional is expected to exhibit (Creasy, 2015). Furthermore, Lynch (2013) mentions an important characteristic of being a professional is the element of trust, particularly in relation to integrity and peer regulation. Grace (1995) emphasises the importance of autonomy, which is claimed and practised, and Grady, Helbling and Lubeck (2008) continue along this theme by saying a teacher should be able to exercise discretion and assume authority of their own professional development. These aspects of professionalism are gradually and subtly being eroded by a silent colonisation of the hearts and minds of teachers through the coded language of accountability, progress and efficiency (Giroux, 2002). This section intends to explore some of these areas in more detail, particularly as they pertain to the impact of new managerialism and the performativity culture which is seen in today's educational system.

An important aspect of being a professional is the element of trust which Alexiadou (2001) explains has been totally displaced by performativity. Trust is essentially a quality which demonstrates a confidence in the behaviour of another person, group or institution and an expectation that the behaviour can be relied upon (Groundwater & Sachs, 2015). Elliott (2001) refers to this erosion of trust as the audit society, and according to Groundwater and Sachs (2015), the more intense the gaze of the audit, the less trust ends up being invested in the moral competence of the teacher to respond to the needs of the students they serve. Bottery (2000) highlights these changes began to surface in the mid-80s, which saw educational professionals being '…faced with a plethora of centrally prescribed directives designed to classify, monitor, inspect and judge activities' (p.58). Chitty and Dunford (1999) and Bottery (2000) mention that school leaders are losing sight of how to improve the quality of teaching and learning and the lives of their students, which reflects the de-professionalism of a vocation which has lost its autonomy and collegiality, burned by the fear of failure.

The matter of trust is such an integral part of being a professional and according to Ball (2000), whom is trusted is up for grabs. Smyth (2001) indicates that trust in teachers is fundamentally 'leaching away' (p.30). The issue has been antagonised by schools yielding to the temptation of creating criteria (e.g. Teacher Standards) intended to adequately account for a teacher's performance when actually this is a difficult thing to do due to teaching being known for its complexities and nuances (Doecke & Gill, 2000). Doecke and Gill claim that teaching is being reduced to sets of sub-sets of discrete competencies or skills, which subsequently encourages teachers to think and teach in a certain way. This description of teaching is very different to the one Ingvarson (2002) talks about in which a teacher's authority derives from their knowledge and practice which they are allowed to exercise with a degree of autonomy and time for reflection in an atmosphere that encourages collegial relationships and where the effects of externally regulated activity are negligible. However, a situation has arisen where the core aspects of knowledge and practice, which are so pivotal in teaching, has become threatened and replaced by mechanisms of projection (Bernstein, 2000). Harre (1999) provides an alternative view that the maintenance of trust is based upon the adherence to certain rules, which includes the checking of facts and

actions. In such instances, the effort to regulate will often breed distrust (Cvetkovich & Lofstedt, 1999).

Some of the important characteristics that help define what a professional is and does have been covered. To consolidate this understanding, it is useful to appreciate those things that are within the locus of control of a teacher which can undermine the concept of professionalism they hold. Scobie (2001) remarks that teachers will end up losing their professionalism if they do not have the commitment to continually develop their skills, knowledge and expertise for the purpose of wanting to improve. This is important because teachers are the key to educational change (Hargreaves, 1994). On a positive note, there is an increasing emphasis being placed on pedagogy and an awareness of the importance of being a research-informed profession. It would be fair to assume that some schools are further along the journey in this regard, with some schools still relying upon the framework of performance management and appraisal as the basis by which a teacher's personal development is met. Mulcahy (2002) is of the opinion there is nothing professional about such procedures and according to Sachs (2000), the support schools provide their teachers through their appraisal programmes can encourage a redefining of professionalism as the focus tends to revolve around efficiencies and standards, which reinforces the notion that CPD is about equipping teachers to deliver on those aspects that are only measurable. It is important to clarify that the objectives set out above are unlikely to be intentional insofar as their impact on teacher professionalism is concerned but rather an outcome of a system that requires constant surveillance, regulation, enforcement and sanctions (Groundwater & Sachs, 2015).

The relationship between teacher professionalism and CPD, the latter of which plays an integral aspect of appraisal, is an important one. The government's Green Paper, *Teachers: meeting the challenge of change* (1998) states clearly that the modern teaching profession are defined by their ability to engage in personal and collective activities that improve their skills and subject knowledge. Elsewhere, Tichenor and Tichenor (2005) examine aspects of teacher professionalism, which reveal the extent to which it is underpinned by a teacher's engagement in those things that support improvement. It is for these reasons and

those discussed earlier, that teacher professionalism within the context of CPD will be explored further.

Sachs (2007) refers to the litmus test for CPD which asks the following questions: 'Is it useful?, Does it improve practice?, Does it improve student learning?, Does it extend teachers intellectually, personally or professionally?, Does it question orthodoxies, generate new knowledge or transform practice?' (p.9). Sachs explains that in general the first three questions are taken for granted and are deeply embedded within the belief and value systems of teachers, but that this is not necessarily the case with the last two questions. Sachs goes on to explain how traditional forms of CPD are very much linked to the first two questions whilst the other questions concentrate on teacher learning. Sachs explains that CPD programmes must recognise the importance of all these questions, which when combined can have a transformational effect on the teacher, their thinking and in turn their practice. The consequences when this does not happen will result in teachers remaining as mere technicians serving the interests of the government. CPD plays such an important role in enforcing or undermining the professionalism of teachers, which Grundy and Robison's (2004) model of CPD helps us to understand more fully. They propose three purposes of CPD: retooling, remodelling and revitalising. The first, retooling, is the most recognisable which is unsurprising considering the government's accountability agenda that is so prevalent within education. Kennedy (2005) provides a useful description of retooling as a skill-based and technocratic view of teaching where CPD is used to provide teachers with an opportunity to update their skills with a view to demonstrating competence. This type of CPD is often delivered by an expert and the recipient of this training (e.g. the teacher) takes on a passive role. Retooling is based on a practical view of teaching where relevance and immediate application within the classroom is the objective (Kennedy, 2005). Furthermore, it reinforces the view that the teacher is the manager of student learning rather than a reflective practitioner who should be considering how appropriate the pedagogy is alongside social and cultural factors which may also influence the design and delivery of teaching and learning. As Day (1999) points out, this type of approach will support a limited conception of what it means to be a teacher. Dadds (1997) adds that such a model of CPD on its own is an empty vessel '…because they have little, if

anything, to say about the crucial role of teachers' understandings about, and experiences of children, in the development of their work. Nor do they have anything, to say about the variety and complexity of processes which teachers undergo as they continue to learn about their professional craft…' (p.32). Mockler (2001) describes such happenings as 'spray-on' professional development whilst Sachs (2007) refers to retooling as something that is done to teachers which leads to a type of 'controlled professionalism'.

The second approach to CPD is remodelling and, similar to retooling, focusses upon the behaviours of teachers but fails to address or challenge the orthodoxies or beliefs they hold. An inherent aspect of remodelling is about performing and Sachs (2007) claims it is more concerned with modifying current practices whilst ensuring teachers are compliant with government agendas. Guskey (2003) provides further insight into remodelling by saying it supports teachers' understanding of the subject they teach to a greater depth as well as learning how students learn. External expert instruction is commonly used to achieve this through various types of delivery, but often lacks a collaborative approach which inspires and engages teachers.

The revitalising approach distinguishes itself from the other two approaches in that its emphasis is upon the idea of conceptual as opposed to procedural learning of teachers and as such facilitates professional renewal through a process of rethinking and reviewing current practice, and in doing so teachers become reflective practitioners (Sachs, 2007). Day (1999) explains how teachers focus upon the identification and rapid solution of immediately pressing issues. This type of approach to CPD fosters greater teacher motivation and serves as a reminder of the central aims and values of teaching.

Sachs (2007) provides an additional approach to CPD to the three models proposed by Grundy and Robison (2004), as a re-imagining. The basis here is a coaching/mentoring relationship between two teachers for the purpose of professional development. Unlike other commonly held views and existing practices, the existence of an expert instructor imparting knowledge to others is replaced by an equitable relationship which provides opportunities for teachers to

discuss possibilities, beliefs and hopes (Kennedy, 2005). An integral part of this approach is confidentiality, which encourages trust and transparency. Another important feature of this approach is the way that teachers are able to assert a certain level of control over the agenda (Kennedy, 2005).

The discussion surrounding teacher professionalism has revolved around CPD for two reasons. Firstly, CPD forms an integral aspect of appraisal, which this piece of research focuses upon. Secondly, an essential part of being a professional involves continuous development and upskilling. Programmes of professional development are commonplace in schools today although a misconception exists as to what constitutes effective professional development. The reason for this is partly associated with the political agendas at work and issues of accountability which can often influence and drive the approaches that are taken in the delivery of CPD. This can often resemble something that is 'done' to teachers which retooling and remodelling approaches to CPD reflect. Day and Sachs (2004) recognise that beliefs, attitudes, practices and opportunities are paramount in reinforcing the construct that teachers are autonomous professionals. They explain how the shift from external agendas to teacher-led agendas are crucial to learning and change. They argue that teacher learning needs should be inquiry based, personal and sustained, individual and collaborative and where a range of developmental opportunities are used that are appropriate to the needs and purposes of those concerned. In addition, teachers in their professional capacity should be supported by school cultures of inquiry and be evidence based where a process of gathering and interrogation of the evidence takes place which in and of itself supports the realisation that teaching is a complex endeavour and for it to be effective, direct and indirect results need to be evaluated fully and systematically. Sugrue (2004) argues that it is essential that teachers take control over their own learning and are empowered in their line of work. Similarly, and in conclusion, Sachs (2003) says that a strong teaching profession is one that is self-regulating, characterised by teachers being committed to investing time and energy in their own development. For this to happen external influences and agendas must submit to what is actually in the best interests of the teachers and, indirectly, the students whom they support.

3.4 Professional identity

When the focus within a school shifts towards assessing and judging teachers, a culture of uncertainty and insecurity pervades everything else. The 'reformed teacher', as referred to by Ball (1999), becomes the dominant discourse, which sees teachers responding to external requirements and targets. The paradox here lies in the way that the teaching profession is ostensibly being encouraged to be more autonomous (e.g. academies have much more freedom in decision making) whilst at the same time is under increasing pressure from politicians and other stakeholders to be more accountable and to maintain standards (Sachs, 2001). As such, teachers alter not just what they do but who they are, and they begin to doubt themselves and question whether they are doing enough and doing the right thing (Ball, 2003). The pressures to perform sees plasticity replace authenticity (Ball, 2000), which produces a spectacle, described by Butler (1990) as enacted fantasy. Rose (1992) argues that the teaching profession is seeing 'a general change in categories of self-understanding and techniques of self-improvement' (p.161) which has been exacerbated by schools being forced to become market as opposed to education led, which has had profound implications on defining what it means to be an educator (Lynch, 2012).

In this section, the professional identity of teachers and how it has changed in response to educational reforms will be discussed. The idea of professional identity according to Sachs (2010) is that of a '…set of externally ascribed attributes which are used to differentiate one group from another' which '…are imposed upon the teaching profession either by outsiders or members of the teaching fraternity itself' (p.153). Kondo (1990) refers to identity as something that is never fixed but '…is negotiated, open, shifting, ambiguous, the result of culturally available meanings and the open-ended power-laden enactment of those meanings in everyday situations' (p.24). To help broaden our understanding of professional identity, Wenger (1998) identities five dimensions:

1. Identity as *negotiated experiences* where we define who we are by the ways we experience ourselves through participation as well as the way we and other reify ourselves.

2. Identity as *community membership* where we define who we are by the familiar and the unfamiliar.
3. Identity as a *learning trajectory* where we define who we are by where we have been and where we are going.
4. Identity as a nexus of *multi membership* where we define who we are by the ways we reconcile our various forms of identity into one identity.
5. Identity as a *relation between the local and the global* where we define who we are by negotiating local ways of belonging to broader constellations and manifesting broader styles and discourses.

(p.149)

The relevance of these five dimensions is in their '…application in developing a revised view of professional identity for teachers as they address the social, cultural and political (macro and micro, individual and group) aspects of identity formation' (Sachs, 2010, p.154). As Sachs goes on to explain, any reconceptualised notion of professional identity will need to incorporate these characterisitcs. Added to this, Wenger (1998) claims there is a connection between identity and practice, in that to develop practice it requires the '…formation of a community whose members can engage with one another and thus acknowledge each other as participants' (p.149). The challenge is in the way professional identity must be be continually re-established and negogiated, which is not helped by the context of uncertainty and the bureacratic nature of education teachers find themselves in (Sachs, 2010).

To deepen our understanding of what shapes the professional identity of teachers it is necessary to look through the lens of two competing discourses. Sachs (2010) refers to them as democratic professionalism, which emerges from the profession itself, and managerial professionalism, which is reinforced by a higher level of authority through the medium of policies on teacher development and their emphasis upon accountability and effectiveness. Out of the two discourses, managerial professionalism is the most dominant '…given its impact on the work of teachers through factors such as organisational change, imperatives for teachers in schools to be more accountable and for systems to be more efficient and economic in their activities' (p.151). As we explore the emergence of

managerial professionalism further we discover two distinct claims. The first is that efficient management can solve any problem and secondly that practices commonly associated with the private sector can be equally applied to the public (Rees, 1995). Pollitt (1990) adds that not only has this approach and its values been promoted on a universal scale but in such a way that suggests it is a good thing, that managers are the instigators of positive change and efficiencies and as such should be given the autonomy to manage whilst everyone else needs to be subservient to their authority. Such approaches are now prevalent in schools today and seen in the way that management practices are carried out.

The second discourse to be discussed is democratic professionalism. Sachs (2010) says at its core, there is a focus on collaborative, cooperative action between teachers and other educational stakeholders. Elsewhere, Preston (1996) describes how this approach is a strategy for industry and skill development as well as work organisation. Brennan (1996) also adds that democratic professionalism encourages teachers to have a wider remit than just a single classroom, one which takes on a broader responsibility that includes contributing to the school, the educational system, other students, the wider community not to mention a collective responsibility to teachers themselves as a group.

The two discourses of managerial and democratic professionalism play a significant role in influencing the professional identity of teachers. Furthermore, Sachs (2010) suggests that two models of identity emerge from the two discourses mentioned above, known as an entrepreneurial and activist identity.

The first model to be discussed, which is heavily influenced by the discourse of managerial professionalism, is that of the entrepreneurial identity. Here teachers identify with what Menter, Muschamp, Nicollas, Ozga and Pollard (1997) describe as efficient, responsible and accountable version of service that is currently being promulgated. Casey (1995) refers to the increasing emergence of ‘designer employees’: those who respond to the general crisis in industrial production, work organisation and culture. The ‘designer employee’ is also a result of the bureacracy that exists in education with its emphasis on compliance to policy imperatives and a focus upon performance characterised by efficiency and

effectiveness (Sachs, 2010). Similarly, Alexiadou (2001) recogises how teachers are increasingly being used and seen as production workers, a raw material and part of the machinery of that institution who are evaluated along these terms.

The collective and individual identity of teachers is being gradually eroded and the association between a teacher seen as an expert is under threat. Menter et al (1997) reinforces this point by stating that 'judgement about priorities, appropriateness and efficacy, once the preserve of the expert, guided by rules and precedent, is ignored or excluded' (p.57). The matter is exacerbated with professional Teacher Standards in which the quality of teaching plays an inferior role to that of the standarisation of teacher practice. Rose (1992) talks about the effects of what is happening from another vantage point by stating teachers work on themselves and each other through micro-practices of representation and fabrication, judgement and comparison, and goes on to say how this has led to a change in categories of self-understanding and techniques of self-improvement. Unsurprisingly, the entrepreneurial identity encourges isolation not collobaration. The effect of this is mentioned by Hargreaves (1994) who states, '…individualism is primarily a shortcoming, not a strength, not a possibility; something to be removed rather than something to be respected' (p.171). Lash and Urry (1994) deepen our understanding of the effect of this by explaining that when the emphasis is upon performance rather than authentic and purposeful relationships, it contributes to an emptying out of social relationships, leaving teachers flat and deficient. In summary, the entrepreneurial identity has the following features: individualistic, competitive, controlling, regulative and externally defined (Sachs, 2010). This leads to a situation, described by Sayers (1992), wherein teachers are not simply changed or improved but rather re-made.

In contrast to entrepreneurial identity there is the activist identity which derives from the democratic discourse. Beane and Apple (1995) highlight the opportunities that emerge under these conditions.

- An open flow of ideas which enables people to be as fully informed as possible.

- Faith in the individual and the collective capacity of people to come up with solutions in order to solve problems.
- The use of critical reflection and analysis to evaluate ideas and problems.
- Concern for the welfare of others and the common good.
- Concern for the dignity and right of others.
- An understanding that democracy is seen as an idealised set of values which acts as a guide by which people live by.

An important part of the activist identity sees communities of teachers collaborating and supporting each other which results in them being nourished and revitalised (Sachs, 2010).

The discussion of teacher identity has to a large extent been explored through the work of Sachs (2010) via the two discourses of managerialism and democratic professionalism. Ball (1999) also talks about teacher identity through two different discourses known as the dominant and subordinate discourse athough it is worth pointing out the similarities between both sets of discourses which suggest a teacher's identity is forged through a common set of variables and factors.

As we conclude this section, it is worth reminding ourselves of the concepts discussed and how they are connected. New managerialism with its standards, efficiencies and accountability orientated approach gives rise to a culture of performativity. Performativity refers to the promotion of measurable outputs at the cost of harder to define values based on the high stakes nature of appraisal and the lack of trust it engenders. These two concepts are closely interconnected. The concepts of professionalism and teacher identity are also related. Arigably both are being gradually redefined due to the high-pressure culture teachers work in where outcomes are prioritised and managed through a rigorous system of monitoring and judgements. These concepts alongside the four research questions form the basis of this study.

4.0 Methodology

The main issues that emerge from the literature review come from the approach that schools use when appraising their teachers, which is based mainly on a dual approach that incorporates a focus on holding teachers accountable whilst trying to meet their professional development needs. The conflict between these two approaches is evident and results in behaviours and practices that compromise the value and effectiveness of appraisal. This study explores and compares the effectiveness of appraisal from the vantage point of teachers and appraisal leads and asks the following questions:

1. What is the purpose of appraisal and are all purposes overt?
2. How reliable is appraisal, and to what extent do appraisal leads and teachers agree on its reliability?
3. What is the impact of appraisal?
4. How can the appraisal process be improved?

An important prerequisite of any research is to be clear on fundamental philosophical issues such as ontology and epistemology, which determines the types of questions that will be asked and the methods that will be adopted (Coe, 2012). The views and approaches to research differ between one researcher and another and is due to a collection of related views, which collectively form a paradigm. Cohen et al. (2011) describe a paradigm as a way of 'looking at or researching phenomena, a world view, a shared belief system, a way of pursuing knowledge' (p.5). Kuhn's (1970) definition of a paradigm is not too dissimilar, described as a particular way of seeing the world deriving from the work of the researcher. Such work is underpinned by a series of related assumptions, which can be framed around four questions (Waring, 2013), seen in Table 3.0.

1	**Ontology**	What is the form and nature of the social world?
2	**Epistemology**	How can what is assumed to exist be known?
3	**Methodology**	What procedure or logic should be followed?
4	**Methods**	What techniques of data collection should be used?

Table 3.0 (Waring, 2013).

Ontology, as the above table makes clear, refers to the form and nature of the social world. The ontological position of a researcher ranges between two extremes. At one end there is realism, which assumes there exists a singular reality that sits independently of a person's perceptions. At the other end there is constructivism, an assumption in which there is neither an objective or singular reality, but multiple realities which are constructed by individuals (Waring, 2013). In more general terms, the differences between these contrasting paradigms lie in their conceptions of 'truth', 'reality' and 'objectivity' (Pring, 2000). With this in mind, it is generally accepted that paradigms are incommensurable, which implies a philosophical commitment to a particular way of seeing the world that involves the application of certain approaches and the rejection of others (Arthur et al., 2013).

A researcher with a realist ontological view holds a corresponding epistemological position known as positivism. In contrast to this, interpretivism sits at the other end of the spectrum sitting within a constructivist ontology. The positivist researcher aims to remain objective and neutral and thereby avoiding imposing personal values and biases within the 'context free' realities they affirm. Guba and Lincoln (1994) refer to an epistemological position in which the researcher and participants are independent entities where they have no influence over each other. The aim is to discover natural laws and explain phenomena using generalisations, which mean findings are transferable from one setting to another. An etic approach is used and holds value because it seeks to identify and understand the objective meaning of a situation (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) and involves the researcher taking on an outsider perspective. The implications of this approach mean the researcher will be gathering data from each school from a

neutral position having no prior knowledge of how appraisal is administrated. Also, there is less likelihood that the researcher will conduct interviews that are shaped and guided by personal beliefs and experiences (Dywer & Buckle, 2009). It could also be said that the findings are more authentic because the researcher is less attached, compared to the insider who may know too much or is too close to the action, which potentially clouds their perceptions (Kanuha, 2000).

From a methodological standpoint, the researcher intends to discover knowledge through a 'systematic, controlled, empirical and critical investigation of hypothetical propositions about the presumed relations among natural phenomena' (Kerlinger, 1970, p.4). To achieve this, questions or a hypothesis are stated and subjected to an empirical test for the purpose of verification. According to Punch (2009), it is a quantitative approach, typically associated with positivism, which is used to carry out empirical research.

The benefits of approaching research this way means different types of phenomena can be understood and universally applied (Wakefield, 1995). Also, this scientific approach has built in mechanisms that can protect the researcher from errors and becoming emotionally attached in the process (Cohen et al., 2011). For example, Smith (1983) identifies the use of neutral scientific language instead of value laden language that is typically used in everyday conversation. Eisner (1993) adds practical application to this by recommending the researcher depersonalises their language to create the illusion that they have no part in their own work.

Whilst the positivist paradigm has some inherent advantages, it needs to be considered whether such an approach is going to prove useful in an educational context. According to Cohen et al. (2011) the shortcomings of the realist paradigm lies '…in its application to study human behaviour where the immense complexity of human nature and the elusive and intangible quality of social phenomena contrast strikingly with the order and regularity of the natural world' (p.7). The positivist rejects the importance of what Eisner (1993) describes as multiple voices, perspectives and world views that provides the cornerstone of research of the social world. This way of approaching research was spearheaded by

revolutionary thinkers such as Kuhn who challenged the hegemony of quantitative research, a challenge, which drew on established qualitative traditions and ultimately led to the formation of new approaches often presented as new paradigms (Arthur et al., 2012). This paradigm shift begins to emerge when sufficient knowledge has been gathered and is used to challenge an existing paradigm, typically because of a growing acceptance that it is unable to explain a given phenomenon sufficiently (Cohen et al., 2011). Where weaknesses in the positivist paradigm began to emerge, the interpretivist paradigm is seen as an appropriate alternative.

As an important reminder, the positivist is set on discovering a universal and static truth which is context free. In contrast, the ontological position of the interpretivist believes that truth changes dependent upon an individual's own experience and social context they find themselves. To put it another way, there "…are multiple realities with the mind playing a central role in determining categories and shaping or constructing realities" (Waring, 2013, p.18). In addition, it is worth mentioning that to understand 'truth' one has to take into account the context by which it was constructed, which precludes generalisations, a characteristic of positivist research (Pring, 2000).

The epistemological position for undertaking a study of this kind of research is characterised by an emic approach in which the researcher seeks to embed themselves within a given culture. The close interaction between researcher and participant allows a rich source of data to be collected in which realities that emerge are co-constructed, which means 'truth' is not necessarily discovered but rather created. Furthermore, because each individual brings with them their own ideas and meanings to a given phenomenon, the process of understanding it is achieved through a process of negotiation and then consensus. Care should be taken not to assume that an emic approach is exclusively the only way of carrying out this research. An etic approach is worthy of consideration also, details of which were discussed earlier.

Waring (2013) suggests that individual constructions of what constitutes 'truth' can only be elicited and refined through interactions between and among investigator/s

and respondent/s. Punch (2009) draws attention to the association between interpretivism and qualitative methods which are well placed in providing an understanding of phenomena from an individual's perspective, investigating interactions among individuals in addition to the historical and cultural contexts which people inhabit (Creswell, 2009).

Qualitative methods can involve observations and continuous dialogue with participants, often through the process of interviews. Once sufficient data has been gathered a hypothesis often begins to emerge and even then it does not remain static but evolves if new data warrants it. This process is likened to what Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe as a 'working hypothesis', developed through an ideographic approach, which is specific to the context and the researcher. It is through this process that the inquirer aims to interpret research participants' meanings which are themselves interpretations; because of this, any theorising done is dependent upon the researcher's views and cannot stand outside of them (Charmaz, 2006). As Edge and Richards (1998) point out, there is a general acceptance within the interpretivist community that value-free knowledge is not possible because researchers assert their beliefs when they choose the topic of research, how to research and how to interpret their data (Edge & Richards, 1998).

Interpretivist research is not without its critics according to Pring (2000), particularly within the field of education in which the government and policy makers want answers that can be universally applied. The interpretivist often carries out small-scale research projects in unique contexts, using qualitative means of data abstraction which explains the unfeasibility of being able to make far-reaching generalisations.

Having discussed the positivist and interpretivist paradigm, it is clear that each holds very different versions of what constitutes 'reality'. Being committed to one can result in a researcher generally adopting a certain way of carrying out their research (Arthur et al., 2012). However, to embark upon research in a manner that exclusively opts for one approach does have its drawbacks in that it inhibits the researcher from capturing a richness and depth of data that accurately reflects the world of others and self. Despite the differences between each paradigm, it does

not necessarily have to resort to paradigm conflict according to Gage (1989). Gage argues that a researcher may have a realist ontology but still utilise an interpretative approach. Arthur et al. (2012) put it another way in that a researcher may have a positivist perspective but adopt qualitative methods and the inevitable subjectivity they imply. Clearly there are overlapping aspects to each paradigm, which should be embraced in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of different phenomena. Ungar and Liebenberg (2005) support this collaboration between these two research methods, claiming that qualitative research alone is inadequate and incomplete. They argue that quantitative methods provide different strengths, which can enhance what qualitative research can only do. For example, a quantitative approach can be utilised to trace trends and relationships and formalise comparisons (Punch, 2009) between appraisal leads and teachers from both schools. When this is combined with a qualitative approach, it is only then that we are likely to weave a rich tapestry of detail (Ungar & Liebenberg, 2005) that will illuminate the condition of appraisal in schools. It is for this reason that this piece of research will use an embedded mixed methods approach within an overall interpretative framework. Furthermore, one data set, namely quantitative, will provide a supportive, secondary role to data of a qualitative nature (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann & Hanson, 2003).

4.1 Research Design

The researcher's own ontological position is that of constructivism, which assumes reality is neither objective nor singular but, instead, multiple realities are constructed by individuals (Waring, 2013). Naturally, the epistemology stance sits under interpretivism whereby the accounts and observations of the world only provide indirect knowledge of phenomenon and is developed through a process of interpretation (Waring).

The purpose of this research is to understand the effectiveness of appraisal within two state-funded schools by conducting a comparable analysis of the perceptions of those who are responsible for its implementation and the teachers for whom

appraisal is targeted. Jones (1985) points out that in "…order to understand other persons' constructions of reality, we would do well to ask them…". Choosing to interview participants alongside questionnaires seemed a logical choice and a good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and a powerful way of understanding others (Punch, 2009). Furthermore, these methods will be useful to ascertain what works and what does not when it comes down to the delivery and outcomes of appraisal.

This study was guided by the research questions inspired by Maharaj (2014) who conducted a study on appraisal in Ontario, Canada, which involved investigating the views of teacher evaluation from the perspective of school leaders. These questions were foundational when devising the interview and questionnaire schedule (Appendix 1.0) and proved instrumental when answering the main questions of this research, as outlined below:

1. What is the purpose of appraisal and are all purposes overt?
2. How reliable is appraisal, and to what extent do appraisal leads and teachers agree on its reliability?
3. What is the impact of appraisal?
4. How can the appraisal process be improved?

A case study research design was chosen as the preferred method for this study. Commonly used in the social sciences, Robson (2002, p.178) defines it as:

> …a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context using multiple sources of evidence.

The rationale behind using a case study approach is based on its ability to report real life events within unique and dynamic contexts (Cohen et al, 2011). In addition, Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) highlight the value in using this approach when the researcher has little control over events (e.g. behaviours of participants cannot be controlled or manipulated). In this study, the researcher will be gathering data in schools other than his own, meaning the relationship with participants will largely be of an unknown outsider.

4.1.1 Advantages and disadvantages of using a case study

The advantages of using case studies besides those already mentioned are plentiful. Case studies lend themselves to capturing and then telling how a situation really is, made possible by getting close-up to reality. Using this approach enables the researcher to provide a thick description of participants' lived experiences, thoughts and feelings in the context they find themselves (Geertz, 1973).

Nisbet and Watt (1984) refer to a case study's ability to discover information that would otherwise get lost if using larger sets of data such as when using surveys. Conducting a case study allows the researcher to look more intensively into a given situation, to probe and interrogate in more depth, to establish and drill down into what is happening so that a fuller understanding of the social complexities that exist are known (Ashley, 2012). Punch (2009) adds that case studies provide the basis for understanding something in its entirety, a holistic focus aimed at preserving the wholeness and unity of a case. Case studies are perfectly placed to achieve this because they focus on answering the important questions such as 'why?' and 'how?' as opposed to just 'what?' and so providing the framework by which a given phenomenon can be explained and evaluated (Yin, 2009). Cohen et al. (2011) expand further by saying an integral strength of case studies is their ability to look into and explain the relationship between events and actions of participants and their effects.

Another distinct advantage of case studies is the quality of the data generated. Whilst identifying typical representative occurrences in research is useful, Cohen et al. (2011) stress that the significance and intensity of information, less so than the frequency, is what makes case studies so unique and offers the researcher an opportunity to understand the real dynamics that are being outplayed. Adelman et al. (1980) support this view by saying how case studies are well placed to recognise the complexity of social truths despite having to work with discrepancies of information and multiple viewpoints. An interpretative approach is at the core of a case study design because it seeks to "…get inside the person and to understand from within" (Cohen et al., 2011, p.17). It is then important to

communicate these findings in a way that is easily accessible to others, which case studies are particularly good at doing.

Nisbet and Watt (1984) mention how they have widespread appeal due to the everyday, non-professional language that is used to describe a natural phenomenon making it more accessible to a wider audience. Adelman, Kemmis and Jenkins (1980) hold a similar view stating that case studies are more likely to capture people's attention because they are down-to-earth and in harmony with people's own experiences. Findings from case studies can be constructively used to shed insight and assist in interpreting what is happening in other similar situations elsewhere (Nisbet & Watt, 1984). Furthermore, case studies encourage a call to action. As Cohen et al. (2011) explain, case studies begin in a world of action where emergent insights are interpreted and applied that can in turn lead to consequential improvement whether that may be on an individual or institutional level.

Despite the benefits of using case studies, it is important to acknowledge the criticisms that exist when using this type of approach. To begin with, Yin (2009) argues how case studies have the potential to simply be an embodiment or fulfilment of the researcher's initial prejudices or suspicions, which can lead to selective data being used to reinforce these. However, to counter this view, Yin (2009) recommends a process of reflexivity in which external agents or participants themselves engage in checking the data to ensure inferences made are accurate. Another similar challenge that researchers might encounter is when participants reconstruct their own interpretation of a given situation which can lead them to being economical with the truth (Punch, 2009).

Cohen et al. (2011) describe how case studies' respectability and legitimacy is sometimes called into question and Smith (1991) states that they are the weakest method for investigating individual cases and communities. Smith (1991) argues that case studies are limited in their ability to reliably identify and report patterns and laws when individuals or communities are studied. This is not surprising when the central endeavour of the interpretative paradigm is to "…understand the subjective world of human experience" (Cohen et al., 2011, p.17).

4.1.2 Types of case studies

Researchers who use case studies must ensure events and situations speak for themselves (Cohen et al., 2011). However, as Cohen et al. explain, this does not mean case studies are merely illustrative but rather the data collected must be systematically and rigorously analysed. It is only then that authentic meaning and in-depth understanding begins to emerge. When such information does come to the fore it is important to question whether it can be generalised to the point of being representative of what is happening in the broader context. According to Punch (2009), case studies are often criticised due to issues of generalisability and suggests that studying unique cases (single case studies) offers little value due to the limitations of being able to transfer the learning to other situations. The risk attached to doing a single case study is highlighted by Cohen et al. (2011) who likens it to putting all your "'eggs into one basket' – it is an 'all or nothing' risk" (p.292). Ashley (2012) goes further and explains how it is more difficult to separate the phenomenon (e.g. effective appraisal) from the potential idiosyncrasies that exist when only studying a single case. Some (Punch, 2009; Denzin, 1983) do not see these concerns as major problems because they understand there is no intention to generalise but to understand a single case in its complexity, entirety and individual context. According to Stake (1994), single case studies have the potential to contribute to existing theories of knowledge because a person can learn about a typical case by studying one that is atypical.

For the purpose of this research study, a multiple case study design was chosen. Whilst accepting Stake's (1994) support for a single case study, Campbell (1975) argues it would be better to undertake two cases studies for comparable purposes than it would be to have more data but only from a single case study. Secondly, a multiple case study would transcend 'the radical particularism' (Firestone & Herriott, 1983) compared to a single case study and lead the researcher to ask whether the, "…findings make sense beyond a specific case?" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.173).

4.1.3 Sample

Two case studies were carried out, both of which took place in secondary schools. See Table 3.1 for more details. Whilst it was preferable for the researcher to use his own work setting for one of the studies from a convenience perspective, it was deemed inappropriate on the basis of the following: the school was relatively new with lots of staff joining, a new appraisal system was just being introduced and ethical considerations pertaining to the researcher having access to information that he would not normally.

School roll	No. of teachers interviewed	No of teachers who completed questionnaire	Appraisal leads
1200	5 (3xM, 2xF)	16	1 (F)
1100	4 (2xM, 2xF)		1 (F) + head teacher (F)

Table 3.1 Information about sample *Female: F* *Male: M*

Four secondary schools in the local vicinity to the researcher's workplace were considered although this choice was subsequently narrowed to three when one school indicted that their staff would not be available due to teaching commitments. As it pertained to another school, the researcher was less keen to carry out research in a school where the head teacher was in the unusual position of leading appraisal and CPD. It was considered a risk too great considering that teacher opinions may not reflect the absolute truth if it meant undermining their head teacher. This left two remaining schools, both of which have been running teacher appraisal and CPD programmes for a significant period of time.

School A is a Church of England non-selective Academy situated in one of London Boroughs. It is part of a multi-academy trust (MAT), which means it potentially benefits from sharing best practice with other partner schools in the federation, can take advantage of sharing centralised services (e.g. contract services) which can bring with it economic benefits and on a related point means funds across the

MAT can be directed to where it is most needed (National College for Teaching and Leadership, 2015). The school has just over 1200 students on roll between the ages of 11-19. School A has been judged ‘Good’ by Ofsted.

School B is a selective and academy converter school based in Kent. The school has just over 1100 students on roll, all of whom had to pass the 11-plus admissions test to be offered a place. The school achieves outstanding academic outcomes both at GCSE and A-level, which is a contributing factor as to why the school is judged ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted. More recently, the school became a Teaching school with the remit of raising standards, recruiting and training new staff who are entering the profession, developing leadership potential and supporting other partner schools who are part of the same teaching alliance.

The choosing of a sample and the processes that are generally followed is largely dependent on two opposing philosophies according to Kumar (2014). Kumar explains in quantitative research the researcher attempts to select a sample in an unbiased way and tries to use a sample of a considerable size based on the principle that the larger the sample, the more representative of the population it will be. In contrast, choosing a sample from a qualitative perspective is less methodical and considers more the practical implications. For example, because the interviews for this research will involve interviewing teachers and senior leaders, there was an appreciation that participant availability might pose a challenge, making a convenience sample more appropriate. However, there was concern that taking this approach might lead to a lack of staff representation. Therefore, whilst the researcher was dependent upon teacher availability together with the willingness of the school to release teachers for interview, it was important for the researcher to have input into this process as well. The rationale behind this was to reduce the element of bias and ensure a cross-section of staff were being interviewed. This was achieved largely by a process of random sampling within the following category types, as shown in Table 3.2.

Teacher with leadership responsibility	Teacher with no leadership responsibility
3	6

Table 3.2 Teachers with and without leadership responsibility.

Cohen et al. (2011) recommends keeping the process of categorisation as simple as possible, which does rely on researchers using their best judgement as well. Therefore, it was decided to divide the teacher population and leadership responsibility. Whilst it might have been preferable to categorise by teaching experience as well, it was felt that in the majority of cases those in leadership roles would in most cases have accrued some level of experience already. Leadership responsibility refers to any member of staff who was receiving a pay enhancement for carrying out a whole-school role, which may include a curriculum or pastoral responsibility or, in some cases, a more specific role such as careers etc.

In addition to categorising staff by leadership responsibility, the researcher also included a second tier of categorisation which was by gender (see Table 3.1). The purpose for doing this was to ensure there was a balanced cross-section of staff, which would help generate a more accurate and broader picture.

4.2 Data Analysis: Grounded theory

Undertaking qualitative research does present challenges. The richness of qualitative data is indisputable, though the volume and complexity of the data that emerges and knowing what to do with it can seem daunting (Punch, 2009). Marshall (2002) adds that is not uncommon for a researcher to feel confused and even miserable when faced with the arduous task of data analysis. Another challenge is deciding which approach to use. It is worth stating from the outset there is no single right way to doing qualitative analysis (Punch, 2009). There are a range of methods, which can be used, and all are concerned with transforming and interpreting data in a rigorous and scholarly way (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).

The choosing of an appropriate approach for analysis should be determined by what is most appropriate in fulfilling the objectives of the research. Punch (2009) recommends this decision should be pre-planned and not an afterthought. Therefore, it was decided that 'grounded theory' would be used, a revolutionary approach that dates back to the mid-60s and can be defined as a way of discovering theory from the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). A further reason for choosing this approach is described by Glaser (1996) who talks about grounded theory being appealing because it gets to the core of what is going on. In addition, Flick (1998) refers to grounded theory as an approach that aims to overcome the challenge of complex data that is inherent within qualitative research because it stems from a more localised and context specific perspective. To expand on this last point, Thornberg and Charmaz (2011) explain how the purpose behind grounded theory is to construct middle-range theories which consist of abstract conceptualisations of substantive problems that people experience, as opposed to explaining the structure of an entire society. To put it another way, grounded theory is used in order to understand what is happening in a local context (e.g. a school) and less emphasis is placed on trying to make broader generalisations.

Bryant and Charmaz (2007) describe how grounded theory is "currently the most widely used and popular qualitative research method across a wide range of disciplines and subject areas" (p.1). This is unsurprising when one considers the merits in using such an approach when conducting data analysis. It is worth stating that such benefits, namely the approach and methods used in grounded theory, were the reason for its choice in this study. However, it is important to qualify that it is not possible to carry out pure grounded theory analysis because, as the name implies, 'grounded' means that theory will be generated based on the data collected (Punch, 2009). Within the context of this study the researcher will be utilising grounded theory primarily as a tool for data analysis. Whilst new theories may emerge, the researcher cannot un-know what is already known due to the literature review and theories that have been studied. However, the researcher will be following a broadly grounded theory approach but with the alternation between inductive and deductive reasoning. Kelle, Prein and Bird (1995) expands on this by explaining that qualitative analysis involves alternating between inductive and deductive steps, whereby data-driven inductive hypothesis

generation is followed by deductive hypothesis examination, for the purpose of theory verification. The next section discusses the advantages of using a broadly grounded theory approach.

4.2.1 Advantages to grounded theory

The considerable amounts of data that is commonly associated with doing qualitative research does present a challenge to the researcher. With few guidelines for protection against self-delusion, in addition to the presentation of unreliable and invalid conclusions, how can the researcher know that their findings are not, in fact, wrong? (Miles, 1979, p.591). It comes as no surprise that feelings of bewilderment can set in when having to contend with such dilemmas (Feldman, 1995). However, the systematic approach often linked with grounded theory does counter many of these issues. A central feature of grounded theory is 'coding' whereby the data (e.g. interview transcripts) is carefully scrutinised and codes or labels are assigned accordingly. Coding helps the researcher make sense of the information that has been collected. To aid in this process, grounded theory provides some guiding principles that can be followed. Open coding takes place initially and, as the name suggests, the researcher approaches the data in an open-minded way: observing carefully and seeing what emerges without imposing any preconceived ideas. Axial coding follows open coding which sees broader more general categories being established around which several codes revolve (Cohen et al., 2011). The advantage here is the way in which this process connects related codes and subcategories into a larger category of common meaning (Cohen, et al., 2011). This process allows the researcher to work within a framework by which lots of data is transformed into smaller more manageable chunks.

Successful coding is characterised by meticulous and methodical examination of the data which allows the researcher to compare and to conceptualise the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.61). Grounded theory requires reading and re-reading of the data which often means the researcher has to assign and reassign codes, place and replace codes, refine codes and coded data. This is referred to as an iterative process that involves going back and forth to the data (Cohen et al.,

2011). In typical circumstances, the researcher is working with raw field notes and verbatim transcripts that reflect 'the undigested complexity of reality' (Patton, 2002, p.463). As the researcher seeks to discover regularities in the social world, grounded theory offers the researcher confidence that ideas are inductively generated and come via a process of flexible and continued re-examination of the data until saturation point is reached. The uniqueness of grounded theory lies in its uncharacteristic non-linear handling of the data (Arthur et al., 2013), which sees data collection and analysis working simultaneously (Charmaz, 2000; Glaser, 1978).

Despite the rigour and robust processes that are required in grounded theory, it cannot be assumed that qualitative analysis alone is completely adequate. It is important to consider whether the strengths of quantitative methods can also be utilised in order to validate the findings further (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Ezzy (2002) makes clear how once the researcher has coded and placed the text into appropriate categories, they are then able to count and log the occurrences of words, codes and categories. It is here that '…statistical analysis and quantitative methods are applied, leading to an interpretation of the results' (p.83). At its most basic level, Anderson and Arsenault (1998) describe the quantitative nature of analysis as the process of counting concepts, words or occurrences and reporting them in tabular form.

4.2.2 Disadvantages to grounded theory

For all the benefits of undertaking grounded theory, it is important to discuss the drawbacks as well. Whilst doing so may go some way in undermining the validity of findings that come through this approach, it is hoped that the identification of potential pitfalls may actually be used in a constructive way by ensuring greater researcher awareness, the avoidance of complacency and therefore the generation of invalid, unreliable conclusions.

To begin with, there is a danger that the researcher begins the analysis process with preconceived ideas about appraisal which are imposed onto the data in the form of coding. In such circumstances, the data is not allowed to speak for itself

and is compromised by researcher bias. Similarly, if the researcher starts coding too early, it could influence coding later down the line and lead to less refined codes being generated which results in the data being assigned to categories that are too broad. Consequently, this could lead to a loss of meaning as participant views are lost in a greater mass of information that has some vague association. On a related point, it is worth stating that there is no set way of coding and therefore the researcher is largely left to their own devices to try and ensure there is a best fit of codes to the data.

The last point does raise the dilemma as to whether all the data should be coded. According to Newby (2010), not all the data is relevant to the research aims which makes it acceptable to leave it redundant. However, doing so could put the researcher in a compromising position as it opens the way for them to select which data to use and omit (Newby, 2010). Cohen et al. (2011) also refers to a situation arising where the researcher might be over-selective, under-representative and unfair to the situation in the choice of data usage.

The issue of subjectivity is an overarching concern not only seen above but in other areas also. To begin with, how does the researcher know and have confidence that the codes are named correctly and, furthermore, applied to the data accurately? (Newby, 2010). It could be argued that one's own interpretation drives this process and to another person could generate quite different results. Another question worth mentioning is, how many codes are considered enough? With too few codes, there is lots of data which makes it more difficult to carry out analysis. On the other hand, the outcome of having too many codes ends up with too little data to work with and so the challenge of generating any theory becomes more elusive. Cohen et al. (2011) draws attention to another challenge that the researcher must contend with and relates to the interpretation of what participants have said, who in turn are sharing views based upon their own interpretation of their own world. Giddens (1976) describes this as a double hermeneutic process. The complexity of such an undertaking is a sobering thought reinforced by Scotland (2012) who says that the study of human behaviour is always accompanied by accusations of subjectivity.

Other criticisms of grounded theory reside in the way the researcher is accused of being too positivist and decontextualising in orientation; this is particularly relevant if an enumerative approach is used which involves the presentation of numerical data (Grbich, 2013). A final but obvious drawback of grounded theory is the time demands it places upon the researcher. To undertake a thorough analysis requires a continuing interaction with the data as opposed to being a one-off exercise.

Despite many of the inherent drawbacks of using grounded theory, it is worth considering that it does represent a coordinated, systematic and disciplined approach to the analysis of qualitative data, where ordinarily qualitative research, is often characterised by being ad-hoc, uncoordinated and lacking in a well formulated approach (Punch, 2009). Furthermore, whilst a key feature and strength of grounded theory lies in its organisation of considerable amounts of data, it is important to stress the flexibility it offers as it pertains to allowing ideas to emerge from the data naturally.

4.3 Data collection

A mixed method approach was chosen and included interviews and questionnaires as well as the use of relevant documentation that pertains to teacher appraisal and professional development. The analysis of the data collected involved a quantitative and qualitative investigation with the former being useful in identifying patterns and trends (Mears, 2013) and so enabling a more statistical analysis. The benefit that arises from qualitative research lies in its ability to '…understand, explain, explore, discover and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a group of people' (Kumar, 2014, p.133). The researcher believes a combined approach is best and will reinforce eventual findings.

4.3.1 Interviews

Carrying out interviews will play an important role in this study and is defined by Cohen et al. (2011) as the transaction between two people, one of whom is seeking information and the other supplying it. To be more specific, the aim is to discover what each participant knows, likes and dislikes and what they think (Tuckman, 1972), which will serve a key role in answering the research questions. An important strategy for interviewing is to ensure there is a greater focus on depth as opposed to breadth (Mears, 2013), which consequently necessitates working with fewer participants. Mears (2013) suggests six to eight people although, essentially, how many is determined at the point where data saturation point is reached, which refers to the time at which no new information emerges from the data.

There are two main types of interview which sit at two ends of a spectrum: structured and unstructured. Structured interviews involves rigidly keeping to a set format, which sees the interviewer asking predetermined questions, using the same wording and keeping to the same schedule (Kumar, 2014). In contrast, unstructured interviews have "…almost complete freedom in terms of its structure, content, question wording and order" (Kumar, 2014, p.177). It is worth mentioning that structured interviews, whilst appearing inflexible and quite rigid, are beneficial in allowing comparisons to be made between different sets of data. Unstructured interviews on the other hand allow the researcher to delve much deeper into a given phenomenon but the potential downside is lack of comparable data, in that two people might talk about completely different things which prevents a build-up of a many-sided picture of a particular thing the researcher wants to focus on. Given the pros and cons of each, the researcher in this study has decided to use a semi-structured approach which means following a framework of questioning to ensure greater continuity but with scope to deviate from the script as and when required.

4.3.2 Advantages to interviewing

Conducting interviews is beneficial for a number of reasons. To begin with, it allows the researcher to delve much deeper into complex issues and to understand the experiences of participants and the meaning they make of that experience (Seidman, 2006). On a related matter, interviews can provide greater flexibility and spontaneity. For example, the content of participant responses may prompt the researcher to ask follow-up questions that lead to greater levels of understanding around a given phenomenon.

The advantage of face-to-face dialogue also means any ambiguities can be resolved there and then and give the researcher greater confidence that they have interpreted what the participant is saying more accurately. Furthermore, it acts as a safeguard in reducing researcher bias. Another inherent strength of interviewing resides in its ability to capture and combine verbal data with that of non-verbal. Examples of the latter include body language, the tone of the participant, pauses and hesitancies that emerge in conversation, all of which enrich the quality of the information being gathered.

Whilst achieving neutrality is the desired goal for any researcher, it is important to recognise that subjectivity has its virtues also (Peshkin, 1988). Interviews are notoriously subjective but the insights and learning that are gained, not to mention the implications that findings may have for other settings (Mears, 2013), are what makes interviews such an attractive proposition for a study like this.

4.3.3 Disadvantages to interviewing

The time and cost implications of carrying out interviews is an obvious drawback which does limit the number of participants that can take part. A further challenge lies in the difficulty of organising an appropriate time when two busy professionals can meet.

The level of commitment when carrying interviews is high which can result in participants cancelling and, in some cases, dropping out altogether, which

demands flexibility from the researcher and possibly more time in recruiting other participants.

Establishing mutual trust and helping participants understand the benefits of taking part are essential and could counteract any reservations about engaging in the process fully. However, there is an argument that the outside researcher who is unknown to participants is at a disadvantage compared to the inside researcher. The process of building a rapport and helping the interviewee to feel at ease is vital but made even more challenging for a researcher who is previously unknown. In such cases, the researcher has only a short period of time to make a good and credible impression which often requires experience or at least the possession and application of a reasonable level of emotional intelligence. Failure to connect with participants may lead to the creation of an uneasy atmosphere and a reluctance to divulge too much information, which will ultimately compromise the depth and quality of the data.

Other drawbacks of interviewing relate to the false assumption that it is the same as having a normal conversation. The planning and design of questions is essential and requires piloting and often, subsequent refinement. The purpose of this exercise is to ensure that questions are relevant and conducive in meeting the aims of the investigation.

4.3.4 Interviewing participants

Before the interview began, the researcher sought permission from each participant on whether an audio recorder could be used. A sample transcription piece of an interview is shown in Appendix 2.0.

All interviews will be audio recorded and then transcribed. The advantages of doing so means the researcher will have an accurate account of all dialogue with those interviewed. It will provide an assurance that vital information will not be inadvertently missed or forgotten. On a related point, the researcher can enjoy greater freedom and give more attention to allowing the conversation to flow more naturally and as and when necessary, spontaneously guide the conversation in a

different direction. However, this may prove more difficult to achieve if a participant perceives the audio device as a potential obstacle and more intrusive which may inhibit transparency for fear of potential ramifications if what was said was made known to others beyond that of the researcher, despite guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity. Note taking on the other hand may come across as more natural and encourage participants to be more relaxed and open. A further benefit of note taking is in its ability to capture non-verbal communication such as body language, tone of voice and body posture which can provide valuable sources of information which can reinforce or perhaps question the authenticity of what is being said. A cautionary pre-curser to using note taking is the element of human error that it entails. In reality, and as the name suggests, note taking only captures an abbreviated version of a conversation. The selectivity of what a researcher captures on paper is by its very nature subjective. As such, the biases that this implies may serve the purposes of the researcher but may ultimately jeopardise the credibility of the findings. However, despite this evident drawback, note taking can play an invaluable role when combined with other approaches such as audio recording.

During the post-interview stage when all the data has been collected in, countless hours must then be spent transcribing and analysing the data (Mears, 2009). The challenge at this stage is the element of researcher bias which is hard to completely eradicate and described is by Plummer (2005, p.357) as a “messy affair”.

4.3.5 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are widely used in research and are a useful instrument for collecting survey information as they generate structured, often numerical data, can be administered without the presence of the researcher and are generally straightforward to analyse (Wilson & McLean, 1994). Questionnaires share similar characteristics with interviews in so far as participants are expected to answer a series of questions. The defining difference lies in the way this information is captured. During interviews, the interviewer records this information whereas in questionnaires the participants are responsible for recording their own responses.

Because of this, questionnaires possess a lot of merit as being an effective means by which authentic information is gathered. Equally, there are some drawbacks which warrant further consideration.

A common feature of all questionnaires in research is the way they draw upon different categories of questioning. These include more structured and closed questions, which can be used with a larger sample of participants, which increases the reliability and representative nature of the results. In contrast, there are questionnaires that are more open and word based which are conducive for smaller samples (Cohen et al., 2011). The researcher will consider combining both types of questions, which will be sent to teachers from both schools.

4.3.6 Advantages of questionnaires

There are a number of reasons why a questionnaire was chosen for this piece of research. To begin with, a questionnaire can be administered to a wider audience at a relatively low cost when compared to other data method techniques such as interviews. This cost was reduced further because the method by which the questionnaires were sent to participants was done electronically using an online survey platform called ‘Survey Monkey’. On a practical level, conducting a questionnaire online is more advantageous than its paper-based counterpart because of the ease by which it can be sent to each individual and upon completion results are automatically uploaded and sent to the researcher as opposed to having to rely upon other more time-consuming methods of return (e.g. post).

Due to the nature of this piece of research involving teachers, utilising questionnaires provides greater flexibility and allows teachers to complete and return them at a time that is convenient for them which may result in better quality data being returned. Furthermore, the collection of responses, most notably from closed questions, is an easy and straightforward task and allows the researcher to get on with the job of processing and analysing information (Newby, 2010). A second strength of questionnaires is the way they can be completed

autonomously, encouraging participants to be more open and honest which in turn correlates to greater data reliability.

4.3.7 Disadvantages of questionnaires

A common drawback associated with questionnaires is their low return rate which has the potential to make drawing comprehensive findings more challenging. This is partly related to what Kumar (2014) describes as self-selecting bias which sees a higher proportion of returns by those who have particular attitudes, attributes or motivations which are different to those who do not return their questionnaire. In such cases, the response rate will be low and findings will not be representative of the wider body of staff.

Other problems that may arise when using questionnaires relate to those participants who experience difficulties in literacy which might prevent them from articulating what they are really thinking and feeling, although it is recognised that those working in schools are less likely to experience this problem. Issues of interpretation can also be problematic. For example, two people reading the same question may approach it from opposing perspectives resulting in very different responses. To clarify any misunderstandings was not possible because the researcher was not immediately accessible, unlike during interviews.

Questionnaires do not allow for spontaneity because participants can review all the questions before answering. On a related point, how participants answer some questions may be influenced by knowledge of other questions (Kumar, 2014).

Designing a questionnaire that is fit for purpose can also present a challenge and in the initial stages can be quite a labour-intensive exercise. Cohen et al. (2011), supports this point by stating it takes time to develop, pilot and refine the questionnaire otherwise the data generated may be unsophisticated and limited in scope due to a lack of flexibility in the responses. One way of counteracting this is to draw upon other related research and the questionnaires used which have already been subjected to rigorous testing.

4.3.8 Documentation

School documentation, which will comprise of the school's appraisal and professional development policy, will also play an important role as it will be used as a benchmark in determining whether what happens in practice is reflected in what is written down in policy. Furthermore, feedback from teachers and those who lead appraisal will also shed light on whether the school's policy is conducive to achieving the aims it sets out to achieve.

4.4 Triangulation

Triangulation can be described as the combined use of multiple methods of data collection for the intended purpose of meeting the aims of the investigation. The purpose of drawing upon different sorts of data is to counteract various possible threats to the validity of the analysis (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). Punch (2009) provides an additional perspective on the meaning of triangulation by making an important point that it may involve the use of both quantitative and qualitative data which can be regarded a good thing as it can draw upon the strengths from each.

4.5 Validity and reliability

Newby (2010) states that validity and reliability are the cornerstones of any research. Before looking at how these concepts were applied to this study, it is important to have a clear understanding of each.

> Validity is defined as the degree to which the researcher has measured what he has set out to measure
>
> Smith, 1991, p.106

> The commonest definition of validity is epitomised by the question: Are we measuring what we think we are measuring?
>
> Kerlinger, 1973, p.457

In light of the previous descriptions, it was important as a researcher to ensure the data that was collected, both qualitative and quantitative, was achieved using questions that had a close association with the main aims of the study. Kumar (2014) describes the differences between the two types. For example, quantitative research normally relates to tangible matters (e.g. finding out someone's age, height or weight) whereas qualitative research uses sets of questions that aim to measure the effectiveness and the attitudes that people have towards something (Kumar, 2014). As it pertains to this research, a question asking who leads on appraisal was easier to assess in terms of validity in comparison to a question that asked how appraisal had contributed towards improving someone's teaching. The validity of the latter question was more challenging to establish due to the level of subjectivity involved. To improve validity, it was sometimes necessary to ask follow-up questions around the same theme in order to cover different angles of a given concept (Kumar, 2014). Furthermore, it was important to be mindful of several areas, identified by Cohen et al, (2011) where invalidity or bias may creep in.

Subsequently, the researcher put the following measures in place. To begin with, the researcher wanted to ensure dropout rates amongst those interviewed did not fall beneath a certain number. As a precautionary measure the researcher factored in replacement participants if this occurred. Secondly, steps were taken to minimise a low-return rate of questionnaires, which materialised in a pilot questionnaire being run initially which allowed an opportunity to make adjustments and remove any ambiguities. The pilot also meant the researcher could obtain feedback about overall length, how long it would take to complete and whether the balance between open and closed questions was appropriate. With regard to those teachers being interviewed, the researcher considered situational factors such as peripheral noise and potential interruptions so that interviews could be conducted in an environment where the likelihood of these things happening was reduced. Finally, there was the matter of reducing the halo effect. Due to the

research taking place outside of the researcher's normal place of work, any pre-existing opinions about a person or place were minimised.

The second and interrelated concept that needs to be discussed is 'reliability', defined as:

> …essentially a synonym for dependability, consistency and replicability over time, over instruments and over groups of respondents. It is concerned with precision and accuracy…
>
> Cohen et al, 2011, p.199

> …means consistency. There are two main aspects to this consistency – consistency over time (or stability) and internal consistency
>
> Punch, 2009, p.244

The concept of consistency over time refers to an instrument's ability to generate the same scores of a group of people if there was a time lag between the first test and a subsequent one. If the scores are similar then one could surmise the instrument being used is more reliable compared to if the results were different. Before discussing how reliability was seen in this study, it is necessary to initially consider whether reliability can actually be achieved in qualitative research. LeCompte and Preissle (1993) are of the opinion that it is simply unworkable whilst others prefer to replace 'reliability' with terms such as 'credibility', 'trustworthiness' and 'dependability' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Reliability in quantitative research seems to cause less of an issue as there is an assumption that replication is possible if the same methods and sample are used (Cohen et al., 2011). However, there is typically a degree of control and manipulation of phenomena that occurs which can distort the data and compromise the actual naturalness, uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of a given situation (Cohen et al., 2011). To capture the richness and complexities of a studied phenomenon, a qualitative approach is most often used in which replicability is not the fundamental end goal. However, this is not to say that replication should not be strived for because it can indeed be useful when '…generating, refining, comparing and validating constructs' (Cohen et al., p.202).

Within the context of this study, reliability was achieved by being transparent in the way procedures were followed which included how participants were selected, interviewing protocol and clarity on how analysis was carried out (Mears, 2013). Reliability was further enhanced by obtaining participant verification in what they said during the interview. This was important because, whilst the interview was semi-structured, the researcher did at times deviate from set questions. On occasion, questions originated from the researcher's own experience of appraisal as well as related literature. It was recognised that the researcher could potentially influence the direction of conversation and even manipulate the participants into giving responses that possibly did not reflect their own experiences. Whilst it was the aim to remain neutral it could not be ruled out completely that the researcher's personal opinions did not tarnish the legitimacy of the research (Mears, 2013). Therefore, in accordance with the recommendations given by Thompson (2000), the researcher disclosed sources of bias as and when necessary rather than pretend these can be nullified.

4.6 Ethics

Cohen et al., (2011) draw attention to the cost to benefits ratio as a concept which expresses itself as a fundamental ethical dilemma in social research. In practice, the researcher has to balance the benefits that may derive from their research whilst considering the implications it may have on the participants. For example, regarding the latter, the way in which the research is conducted could result in participants experiencing embarrassment, a loss of trust or autonomy or even harm to their self-esteem (Cohen et al., 2011). However, they shed light on an argument that suggests these costs may be worth it considering the advancements in theoretical and applied knowledge that can be otherwise gained and the way that human conditions can be improved as a result. Whilst the decision on where these cost/benefits parameters are set is a subjective one, which in some instances may lead the research into controversial territory, there are clearly established procedures for those who conduct social research which emphasises doing 'good over bad' and 'right over wrong' (Cohen et al., 2011).

To begin with, permission must be sought from the person in charge of the organisation in which the researcher wants to carry out the study. Within the context of this research, it involved initially talking to two head teachers to explain its purpose, what the study would consist of and how they could benefit from taking part. Following a tentative conversation, a formal letter requesting permission to carry out an investigation in both settings was sent which outlined in more detail the need to interview teachers alongside a request to complete questionnaires. Obtaining participant consent is the cornerstone of ethical behaviour (Howe & Moses, 1999) which necessitated making clear what procedures would be followed with the hope it would encourage greater levels of openness and transparency. However, the downside to explaining what is going on could lead to the capturing of a narrower range of data whereby participant authenticity is compromised and consequently the richness of data is diluted. Cohen et al. (2011) explain that when participants give consent they are giving permission for the researcher to potentially intrude and invade their private life and be faced with questions that are potentially threatening and sensitive in nature. In such circumstances it is within the realms of possibility that participants are less inclined to divulge too much.

To maintain participant confidentiality was a priority, taking into account the opinions on school appraisal from a teacher's perspective might clash with those who are responsible for its implementation. Furthermore, to protect the identity of those taking part in interviews, the data would be reported anonymously. In addition, if there were any reference made in the transcript that would in any way insinuate who the participant may be, it would be blanked out. This is more challenging to do with the appraisal leads due to the fact there is only one person in each school who carries this responsibility. The important thing in this situation is to ensure the connection between these participants and their responses remains confidential to those outside of the study, which should be possible because both schools will be reported anonymously.

4.0 Summary

To conclude this section, the main points covered above will be summarised. Firstly, the researcher's philosophical position from which this study was carried out was that of an interpretivist. However, the researcher recognised the benefits of combining both qualitative and quantitative methods. For example, the advantages of the former assists in capturing the complexities and richness of human behaviour whilst the latter holds merit in its overarching concern with researcher bias and the importance and value of generalisable findings.

A case study approach was chosen because of its suitability in being able to meet the aims of the study. This involved going into a setting and interviewing a sample of participants to try to discover individual truths regarding teacher appraisal. A multiple case study was chosen over a single case study design on the basis that multiple case studies provide more scope in which generalisations can be made. On a related point, the identification of any patterns and trends presented a stronger argument that findings may be more widely representative beyond the context in which the data was collected. Under single case study conditions this cannot be assumed.

The sample of participants in this study were randomly selected, ensuring there was representation of both genders and also leadership responsibility. Ethical considerations have been referenced which can be summarised in ensuring the well-being and protection of all those involved were not compromised. Data collection was achieved via interviews, questionnaires and school documentation. The use of questionnaires provided greater capacity for collecting more data without placing excessive time demands on the researcher whilst interviewing teachers allowed an opportunity to probe and explore issues in much more depth, in addition to providing the flexibility of spontaneity where unexpected insights emerged.

Data analysis was achieved using a non-purist form of grounded theory, an approach that the researcher felt was appropriate for meeting the aims of the

study. The process of analysis involved alternating between inductive and deductive reasoning which meant new theories and pre-existing knowledge could be used for verification purposes. It was also felt that grounded theory's rigorous and meticulous approach in data analysis would provide further reassurances that nothing in the data would be inadvertently missed.

5.0 Presentation of findings

This study seeks to explore the perspectives of appraisal leads and teachers to establish the effectiveness of appraisal. In order to do this, the following research questions will be asked:

1. What is the purpose of appraisal and are all purposes overt?
2. How reliable is appraisal, and to what extent do appraisal leads and teachers agree on its reliability?
3. What is the impact of appraisal?
4. How can the appraisal process be improved?

5.0a Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will present the findings that emerged from the interviews and questionnaire data, which will be used to the answer the research questions outlined above. To begin with, the researcher will identify and describe the 12 themes from the data. Each theme is colour coded and corresponds to each interview manuscript and to the questionnaire survey.

An overview of each school's documentation, which outlines the official line in which they state how they approach appraisal, follows and sets out the broader context by which the perspectives of appraisal leads and teachers can be compared against. These perspectives, which will be pivotal in establishing the effectiveness of appraisal, are organised by 12 main themes, which also incorporates a number of sub-themes (known as major and minor categories). These themes are looked at individually and starts by looking at what the teachers said followed by appraisal leads. A brief summary concludes each theme. In the following chapter, the findings will be discussed more extensively.

Overall, the interview data yielded a depth of information that the questionnaires did less effectively. However, the latter did produce some pertinent insights into

appraisal and as such, the researcher refers to both sets of data in broadly equal terms.

The following findings reveal a mixed picture of appraisal. From an appraisal leads' perspective, they reveal a generally optimistic view of appraisal and its effectiveness. Both App.1 (appraisal lead from school 1) and App.2 (appraisal lead from school 2) identified significantly more strengths than they did weaknesses. In contrast, the teachers who were interviewed or responded to the questionnaire portrayed a more moderate view of appraisal. There were some positives to draw upon from both schools with a significant proportion of teachers professing that the focus of appraisal was developmental. This implies that teachers to some extent are central to the appraisal process. Despite some encouraging remarks about appraisal, teachers were forthcoming about its shortcomings and were able to suggest ways for improvement. During the data analysis and coding of interviews, 12 central themes were established which are shown in Table 4.0 below.

Purpose	Process
Responsibility for appraising	Important characteristics of an appraiser
Weaknesses of an appraiser	Strengths of the appraisal system
Appraiser training	Weaknesses of the appraisal system
Methods of assessment	CPD
Recommendations	[Other]

Table 4.0. Main themes that emerged from the data

A summary of the above themes follows before a more detailed presentation of the findings.

Purpose

This theme and its related categories, indicated by the colour green (Appendix 3.0), represents the rationale and reasons for why the two schools who took part in this study run systems of appraisal. The data revealed improving teachers' ability to perform was at the heart of appraisal with a realisation that school outcomes will benefit as a consequence.

The frequency of how often a teacher referenced the purpose of appraisal via either a major or minor category code were as follows:

Teachers who were interviewed: 19 times
Teachers who completed a questionnaire: 34

Process

The process of appraisal, shown in orange, refers to the systems and procedures that a school puts in place to achieve its intended purpose. Both schools followed a similar approach at a macro level (e.g. carrying out lesson observations, target setting) but differences were more evident at the micro level (e.g. types of target).

The frequency of how often a teacher referred to the process of appraisal via either a major or minor category code was as follows:

Teachers who were interviewed: 34
Teachers who completed a questionnaire: NA (not asked)

Responsible for appraising

Shown in light blue, this theme identifies who is responsible for carrying out appraisal in schools. Typically, the two schools in this study decided to mainly utilise teachers who had at least middle leadership experience although there are

exceptions to this rule. There were commonalities also in the way that both schools use the senior leadership team for quality assurance purposes.

The frequency of how often a teacher referenced who was responsible for appraising via either a major or minor category code were as follows:

Teachers who were interviewed: 18 *Teachers who completed a questionnaire: NA (not asked)*

Important characteristics of an appraiser

Some teachers who were interviewed or completed a questionnaire articulated how their appraisal experience was more positive when they had an appraiser who demonstrated a range of personable qualities. Yet other teachers emphasised the importance of appraisers possessing things such as good subject knowledge in the area they teach. Such codes are shown in light green.

The frequency of how often a teacher referred to the important characteristics of appraisal via either a major or minor category code were as follows:

Teachers who were interviewed: 19 *Teachers who completed a questionnaire: 11*

Weaknesses of an appraiser

A number of areas were highlighted by teachers concerning things that undermined the role of the appraiser. Examples include, lack of subject knowledge, inconsistent approach between appraisers, lack of credibility and, finally, underdeveloped inter-personal skills. Associated codes are in grey.

The frequency of how often a teacher referred to the weaknesses of an appraiser via either a major or minor category code were as follows:

Teachers who were interviewed: 12 *Teachers who completed a questionnaire: 3*

Appraiser training

This section focuses on the type of preparation that appraisers had undergone in preparation for them to fulfil the requirements of the role. The range of codes, shown in light grey, indicate that there are disparities in training between one appraiser and another.

The frequency of how often a teacher referenced appraiser training via either a major or minor category code were as follows:

Teachers who were interviewed: 11 *Teachers who completed a questionnaire: 2*

Strengths of the appraisal system

Teachers and appraisal leads were able to identify a range of benefits that resulted from school appraisal. Examples include the range of CPD on offer and the mode of CPD delivery. Some teachers also made reference to the accountability aspects of appraisal and were complimentary in the way this was handled. Strengths of appraisal are coded in light orange.

The frequency of how often a teacher referred to the strengths of appraisal via either a major or minor category code were as follows:

Teachers who were interviewed: 56 *Teachers who completed a questionnaire: 42*

Weaknesses in the appraisal system

Teachers were also able to identify the problems that emerged from the appraisal process, citing the reliability and subjective nature of what happens as a major shortcoming. These factors, amongst others, are highlighted in yellow.

The frequency of how often a teacher referred to the weaknesses of appraisal via either a major or minor category code were as follows:

Teachers who were interviewed: 55
Teachers who completed a questionnaire: 42

Methods of assessment

The way teachers are assessed during the appraisal cycle process is shown in red. A range of assessment methods were identified with some, such as the use of data (e.g. examination results) and lesson observations, being used more prominently than others.

The frequency of how often a teacher referenced the methods of assessment within appraisal via either a major or minor category code were as follows:

Teachers who were interviewed: 18
Teachers who completed a questionnaire: 33

Recommendations

This section highlights a number of suggestions made by the teachers and appraisal leads that could be used to improve the appraisal process. Some of those mentioned come as a result of a negative experience which has prompted a particular remedial solution. In other instances, recommendations came from previous experiences such as previous employment prior to entering the teaching profession. All recommendation codes are identifiable by the colour green.

The frequency of how often a teacher referred to recommendations that would improve the appraisal process via either a major or minor category code were as follows:

Teachers who were interviewed: 19 *Teachers who completed a questionnaire: 19*

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Recognised by the colour blue, this section focuses on ways in which teachers undertake professional development for the purpose of carrying out their roles and responsibilities more effectively. Two main categories of training emerged from the data. The first referred to external training which includes, amongst other things, exam board training. The second type of training occurs in-house and is delivered by staff at school (e.g. leaders and teachers). In some cases, an external organisation is used.

The frequency of how often a teacher referenced CPD via either a major or minor category code were as follows:

Teachers who were interviewed: 25 *Teachers who completed a questionnaire: 3*

Other

For text that was difficult to assign to a category, the code of 'other' was used, shown in brown.

5.0b Main findings from policy documentation on appraisal

School 1 (S1)

Appraisal is known as professional development (PD) in S1's policy and described as a supportive and developmental process for the purpose of ensuring teachers have the skills and support that will enable them to be effective in the role. Teachers are required to agree upon targets with their appraiser and in the case that they cannot be agreed upon the appraiser will make the final decision.

Appraisal targets have to contribute towards the school's overarching objectives in improving its educational provision and performance. Teachers are required to set three targets which revolve around teaching, a development objective and leadership.

Lesson observations were cited as the way in which they assess teacher performance in the classroom and was stated as an important way of identifying particular strengths alongside areas that need developing. Data from lesson observations is also used to inform school improvement more generally. Lesson observations take place within a supportive framework and feedback is provided.

Formal meetings with an appraiser take place at the beginning, mid-point and end of the academic year. During the latter two meetings, teachers carry out a self-review assessment which are subsequently discussed.

A decision about whether a teacher has passed his or her appraisal are only made once the appraiser has received input from the relevant member of the senior leadership team. After such time conversations between appraiser and teacher take place which help to ascertain whether a teacher is on track to achieve their targets and consequently receive a recommendation for a performance-related bonus. The policy also points out that pay recommendations can only be achieved when a teacher's overall performance level reaches that of 'MET'.

School 2 (S2)

S2 sets out clearly the framework by which they deliver appraisal, which is based on a "…clear assessment of the overall performance of teachers" (p.1). A secondary purpose lies in teacher development, which operates within the context of serving the broader aims of the academy's plan for "…improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of all teachers" (p.1). As a potent reminder to teachers who do not perform to the required level, competency procedures follow in the same policy.

Despite the emphasis placed by S2 about teachers being held to account for their teaching, they point out that the process is designed to be supportive and developmental in order that teachers are equipped to carry out their role effectively.

In line with comments by App.2, the policy also includes a section on the Teachers' Standards and how they will be used as a minimum benchmark, which all teachers will be evaluated against. The policy also describes how teachers need to set three targets which must be agreed upon by the teacher and appraiser. Similar to S1, where this is not possible the appraiser has the authority to decide what the target should be. It is pertinent to mention that the policy makes a link between the criteria used to evaluate teacher performance (e.g. target setting) and the school's pay policy.

Lesson observations are used by S2 to assess teacher performance based on a belief that this method of evaluation is adequately placed to identify a teacher's strengths plus areas that needs development. The policy states that teachers will be observed three times over the year and that observations will be carried out in a supportive fashion against Ofsted descriptors. In addition to formal lesson observations, certain members of the senior leadership and those with a designated responsibility may 'drop-in' to lessons on an informal basis. According to the policy, teachers will receive constructive feedback throughout the year in addition to written feedback following lesson observations. If concerns are raised, then teachers have an opportunity to respond. The school will offer appropriate

support to address issues that have been highlighted and a review will follow to see if teachers have addressed concerns that were initially raised.

The next section will expand more fully on each theme and their related codes. The teachers' perspective will be talked about initially. Those teachers who were interviewed will be referred to as 'interviewee X' and those who returned a questionnaire will be known as 'questionnaire X'. If the appraisal lead made related comments these will follow straight after to make comparisons between what a teacher and appraisal lead said on a given issue easier. On some occasions there is no appraisal lead comment which indicates they had nothing to say on the matter.

5.1 Purpose of appraisal

The bar chart below (Figure 4.1) highlights the frequency of times a teacher, from both interviews and questionnaires, described a main area of focus found within appraisal, and will be discussed in turn.

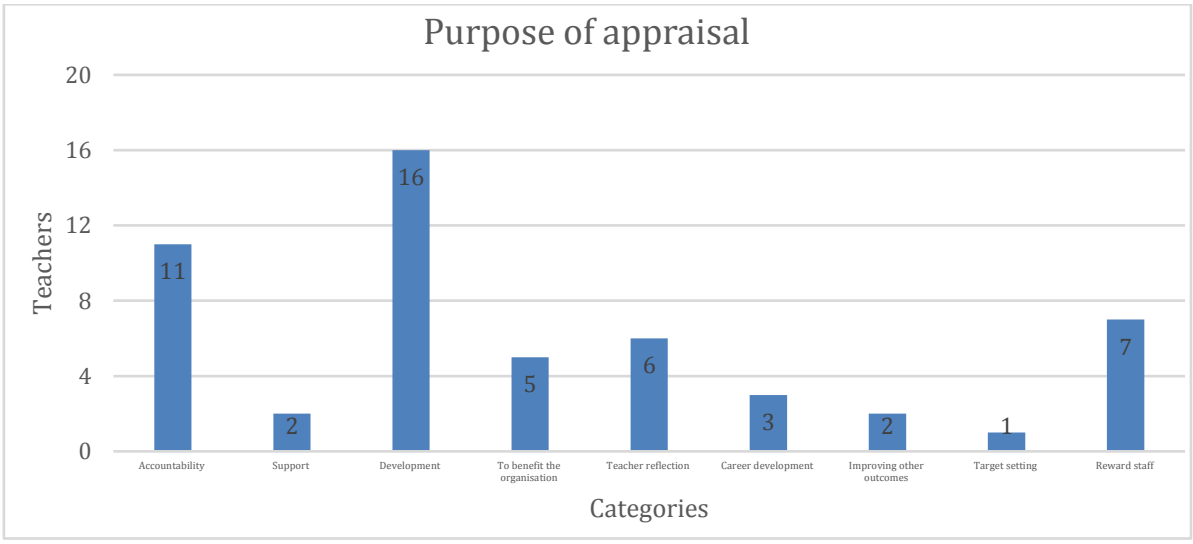


Figure 4.1 Purpose of appraisal as perceived by teachers

5.1.1 Accountability

Of 25 teachers, 11 (44%) said that appraisal was used for accountability purposes. More specifically, teachers described how they are held to account in two main areas: exam results and how they perform in the classroom. Two teachers (interviewee 2 and 3), who represent S1 and S2, talked about the use of accountability as a mechanism to identify underperforming teachers. The terminology used does not portray a very optimistic outcome for those teachers it involves. For example, interviewee 2 describes a situation where someone is not good enough and if they are not delivering it becomes a competence issue. The same teacher goes on to talk about the importance of accountability in such circumstances. Interviewee 3's view on accountability comes from a position of whether a teacher is good enough for the school and doing the right thing. If a teacher fails to meet expectations, these teachers are going to be held to account. It is unclear what happens next although the wording from interviewee 3 implies a teacher has to be the right fit for the school in the first place if their employment is going to be over the long-term. Questionnaire 13 refers to a framework of accountability so that ineffective teachers can be identified and challenged.

Interviewee 2, also a senior leader, explains the broader purposes of accountability at work. He said that fundamentally, the people at the top of the organisation (e.g. the Trust, governing body and head teacher) are held to account for the school or multi-academy trust's performance and so, naturally, teachers are held to account for what happens in the classroom.

A final point to make on accountability is from questionnaire 9 who talks about a recent shift in focus away from support and teacher development towards a more performance-orientated focus.

Appraisal lead's perspective on accountability:

For all the many comments made about accountability from teachers, it is surprising that it is barely mentioned by those who lead appraisal. The only occasion something was said in this regard was from S1. App.1 acknowledged

that success at whole-school level could only be achieved through having a rigorous system in place, which evaluates whether teachers are meeting organisational expectations.

> *"But on the other hand we know that our organisation can only be successful if we have outstanding practitioners, and therefore there has to be some rigour in it, it can't just be about growing without expectations. So, I think it's about knowing the expectations, knowing the organisation"*

On a related point, S1 also talks about the changing of their appraisal policy, which is described as robust and means teachers have to tick a number of boxes such as four years' successful attainment in the classroom, evidence of outstanding teaching etc., before they can be considered for future pay increases that go beyond the teacher's main scale. The head teacher justifies why they take such robust measures, which relates to affordability.

5.1.2 Support

Of 25 teachers, 2 (interviewee 1 and 5) mentioned that support was an important purpose of appraisal although how this comes about will become clear later.

Appraisal lead's perspective on staff support:

The head teacher from S1 mentioned how her school is strategic with the training they provide their staff. She made reference to two programmes they run, called 'embedding good and embedding outstanding'. Staff are identified through lesson observations as to whether they would benefit from such training. This is an overt example of S1 supporting its staff. They also talk about employing new teachers to the profession who are making a career switch, which requires investment from the school for it to work.

5.1.3 Development

According to teachers who were interviewed or completed a questionnaire, the foremost reason for appraisal was for purposes related to teacher development (16 of 25). The following teacher comments are representative of others:

> *"I think the purpose of appraisal is to, I think first and foremost it's about improving the teachers, improving a teacher basically, in all aspects of their work"*
>
> Interviewee 9

> *"It is to identify strengths and areas for development"*
>
> Questionnaire 16

Other insights shared by teachers give an indication as to how teacher development occurs. For example, interviewee 1 and questionnaire 12 highlight the importance of self-reflection, which is used to first identify practice that needs improving and then assists in *how* they go about achieving this. Two teachers (interviewee 1 and questionnaire 4) mention teacher development within the context of a supportive framework. Interviewee 7 expands on this point by saying teacher development should be based on open conversations where the appraisee feels able to say they need to work on a particular area. Questionnaire 10 concludes this section by saying teaching and learning should be at the heart of what happens. It is unclear if it does or whether this is a merely a recommendation.

Appraisal lead's perspective on staff development:

The appraisal lead from S1 make the point that teacher development is a key part of their appraisal programme.

> *"…we're all about not just growing our students but growing our staff as well…"*
>
> App.1

The emphasis that both the head teacher and deputy head place on the development of teachers is seen in the frequency of times they refer to it, a total

of eight times between them. The following comment provides explanation as to why they do this:

> *"…when it's done properly, it's really powerful and very supportive, very developmental"*
>
> App.1

S2 is less explicit about teacher development but does make the link between staff improvement and the meeting of Teacher Standards (2011), which is an expectation of teachers at the school in order to pass their appraisal. App.2 justifies using the Teacher Standards as a benchmark for all teachers, regardless of whether they are newly qualified or experienced, by stating:

> *"Now I've been teaching 21 years, it doesn't hurt me to go back in and check the teaching standards and say 'you know what, I haven't done that in a while"*

App.2 does highlight the importance of teacher development although with less conviction in comparison to S1.

> *"…it's about trying to improve people's progress* ***I suppose****, and the way in which they function"* (emphasis added)

Despite the above, teacher development is incorporated into the overall appraisal programme through twilight CPD sessions. These run throughout the year and are tailored to the needs and requirements of teachers.

> *"So, we try and put on what people need…so people can get their diaries out and work out what they're going to and it's bespoke for them"*
>
> App.2

5.1.4 Target setting

Only one teacher identified target setting as a purpose of appraisal. This teacher (interviewee 6) drew attention to the negative aspects of target setting by explaining how s/he had to set targets that were unattainable and because of this, made him/her feel bad about his/her career.

In addition, there was a significant degree of unity (78% of teachers interviewed) around the acknowledgement that target setting was a feature of the appraisal process which usually consisted of between three and four targets and was set at the beginning of the academic year. Fig. 4.2 shows the types of targets and the frequency with which they were mentioned. It is clear that data targets that pertain to examination results were more prominent than any other, with personal targets following close behind.

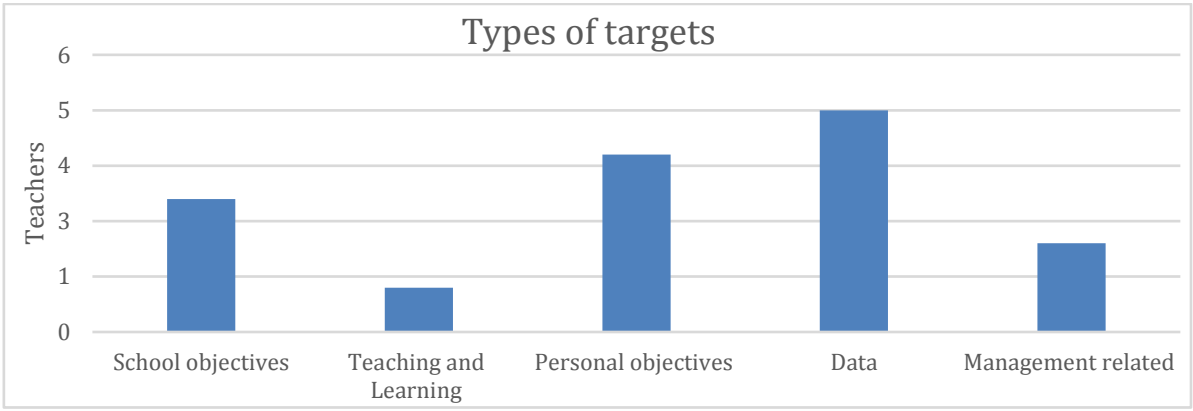


Figure 4.2 Target types identified by teachers

A number of factors influence the choosing of teacher targets. To begin with, overall school objectives are set by those who govern/lead the school and are subsequently disseminated down the organisation through the various tiers of leadership and then to teachers. One teacher, who also sits at senior leadership level, describes the process they follow at his school.

> *"…filtered out* (referring to targets) *to the deputy head teachers, which is then filtered out to assistant head teachers, which is then filtered out to the subject leaders, then classroom teachers out, and so on. Happens as a natural process"*
>
> Interviewee 2

Other teachers were less explicit as to which stakeholders were the driving force behind the target setting process, choosing instead to say that targets were influenced by the school's improvement plan. For example, interviewee 7 says:

"…I'd say a lot of it comes from the school improvement plan"

The last comment is a poignant remark to make as it implies that teacher target setting is predominately about serving the interests of the school. The appraisal leads from S1 affirm this view:

> *"so there'll be some guidance as to what works for the school and possibly what they are needing to work on in their Department areas"*
>
> App.1

Five of nine teachers mention that at least one appraisal target is data-based. An advantage of this type of target is their objectivity. There is no ambiguity on whether a target has been reached which interviewee 2 pointed out:

> *"…so that's black and white in every single person's appraisal that comes through the targets being set, and comes through analysis of data"*

Personal targets are also a frequent feature within appraisal. Such targets provide a teacher most freedom in deciding what it will be although the level of choice may be variable dependent on the school. For example, personal targets may have restrictions placed on them because they have to fit in with wider school priorities. In some cases, teachers may be able to choose targets that tie in with career aspirations. What is also clear is that an individual CPD request is typically only approved if it corresponds with the target written down on the requester's appraisal form.

Appraisal lead's perspective on target setting:

Teachers who work at S1 have to set personal targets that align themselves with whole-school priorities, which the below comments demonstrate:

> *"…match objectives to help them with their career, you can match CPD to help them with their career* ***as long as it's clearly in line with the school's priorities****"*
>
> *"…why they need to do the CPD and they have to* ***match it to a whole school priority****"* (emphasis added)
>
> App.1

Target setting in S2 is an important part of appraisal, mentioned by App.2 on three occasions. The types of targets are diverse and intended to reflect the role and responsibility of each individual at school.

> *"So, what we have is a number of targets. We have TLR held targets, we have teaching and learning targets, we have a training target as well. And what we focus on - and we have a SIP target as well - every single member of teaching staff and all our TAs have the same. And they have very clear, and probably too aspirational if I'm honest, targets"*
>
> App.2

5.1.5 To benefit the organisation

Appraisal was seen by 20% of teachers as a way of meeting whole school objectives. Questionnaire 4 made the point that the purpose of teacher development, whilst resulting in improvements for the teacher, was equally about school success.

Appraisal lead's perspective on how appraisal benefits their school:

S1 made a direct connection between appraisal and how successful their school will be. They see the investment in people as a means of achieving this.

> *"we are an Investors in People school, so I think we believe that if we grow our people and we invest in them, then they will provide a better service for the students"*
>
> App.1

5.1.6 Teacher reflection

Just under a quarter of teachers (24%) said that their experience of appraisal helped them to become more reflective. Therefore, we feel that this should be recognised as an important purpose of appraisal.

5.1.7 Career development

Some teachers (12%) made the link between career development and appraisal. Interviewee 8 describes how appraisal can help teachers to think about career aspirations and what needs to be done to achieve them. Conversely, frank and open conversations between appraiser and teacher can provide feedback that challenges their "…warped perception of where things lie…" (interviewee 8).

5.1.8 Improving other outcomes

Two of eight teachers saw teacher development as important for ensuring students achieve positive outcomes, namely in the form of examination results.

5.1.9 Rewarding staff

Seven teachers (28%) talked about appraisal being used as a means to reward staff although only one teacher referred to financial reward (e.g. pay). Three teachers referred to reward coming in the form of recognition and praise. The below comment implies that teachers appreciate being rewarded this way considering the challenging nature of the job:

> *"To give staff a chance to be praised where hard work has taken place"*
>
> Interviewee 12

Interestingly, it was only teachers who completed the questionnaire that made the connection between appraisal and reward. It is unclear as to why this was the case although we can speculate given that nearly half of those who were interviewed held the joint role of appraiser and teacher. As such, we might assume questionnaire people or interview people are experienced practitioners who have been in teaching for a while and they understand the challenges that ordinary teachers face and the importance of showing appreciation. Furthermore, these appraisers are likely to be at the top of their pay threshold which may explain why financial recognition was not mentioned. This theory cannot be substantiated and

does not necessarily mean those teachers who completed the questionnaire were not appraisers also.

Appraisal lead's perspective on reward:

S1 does mention how appraisal can be used to reward staff. In one instance, the head teacher talks about how she is able to access records of appraisal, which makes her aware of what each teacher has achieved in a year. She talks about the importance of being able to do this because it can often go unnoticed in an environment where staff are doing "101 things". On the other hand, the head teacher talks about making pay recommendations in August when exam result data has been processed and analysed.

5.1 Summary

Teachers were able to say clearly what they thought the purpose of appraisal was. Of the nine areas that were mentioned, it is worth noting that seven were talked about in a constructive and positive way (e.g. career development).

Teacher development was the most frequently mentioned reason for appraisal (16 of 25). However, merging these findings with other areas that relate closely to teacher development (e.g. career development, teacher reflection), we find that 19 of 25 teachers were of the view that teacher development has a prominent part in their appraisal.

From an appraiser's perspective, the purpose of appraisal was more concerned with how it could be used to benefit the organisation. As such, accountability was mentioned alongside staff development. The latter was emphasised more by S1 who believed in growing their own staff although it was clear the ulterior motive was about improving student outcomes. S2 talked mainly about target setting which, as mentioned earlier, does link with teacher development.

5.2 Appraisal responsibility

The overarching responsibility of appraisal resides with the deputy head and/or head teacher according to three out nine teachers. Seven of 10 teachers said that the school's senior leadership team play a key role in the organisation and delivery of appraisal. Heads of Department were also cited as having responsibility for appraisal based on the experiences of five of nine teachers. Other findings that emerged from this section are related to the appraiser's subject specialism and whether they are the same as the teacher being appraised. Only 11% (one of nine) of teachers highlighted that their appraiser was either a subject or non-subject specialist. Whilst the number of participants who raised this issue was small, it bears no relation to its significance which will become more apparent later.

Appraisal lead's perspective on who is responsible for appraisal:

App.1 said ultimate responsibility for appraisal lies with the head teacher. The actual wording used to describe this arrangement is as follows:

> *"obviously X's the boss, so she leads on it properly, she delegates the policy to me"*

App.1 then delegates the appraisal of teachers via their line management system which includes senior, middle and department leaders. The person who leads appraisal in S2 (App.2) follows a similar approach to S1 but extends the appraisal responsibility to teachers who have other leadership responsibilities (TLR) outside of those already mentioned.

5.2 Summary

Assuming that S2 approaches appraisal in a similar fashion to S1 we can resolve that overarching responsibility of appraisal at both schools lies with the head teacher. How they fulfil this role is less clear although in the case of S1 there is a strong suggestion that the head teacher controls the overall purpose of appraisal.

It is also worth noting that financial matters are also reserved for the head teacher, which includes how much money is allocated to appraisal and CPD and, importantly, what pay decisions are made for teachers at the end of the annual cycle. Thereafter, the practical delivery of appraisal is the delegated responsibility of the deputy head who in turn uses line managers to appraise their teachers. Added to this, the deputy heads also have responsibility for the successful delivery of their school's CPD provision.

The only discrepancies between how both schools oversee and deliver appraisal is in the way that S2 appears to show more flexibility as to who they use to appraise. On a related point, it is important to stress that App.2 is also willing to use appraisers who do not teach the same subjects as those they appraise. S1 avoids such an approach.

5.3 Sources of information for appraisal

The chart below (Fig.4.3) shows the types of assessment methods that S1 and S2, according to their teachers, use to evaluate their performance. This section will discuss each in turn.

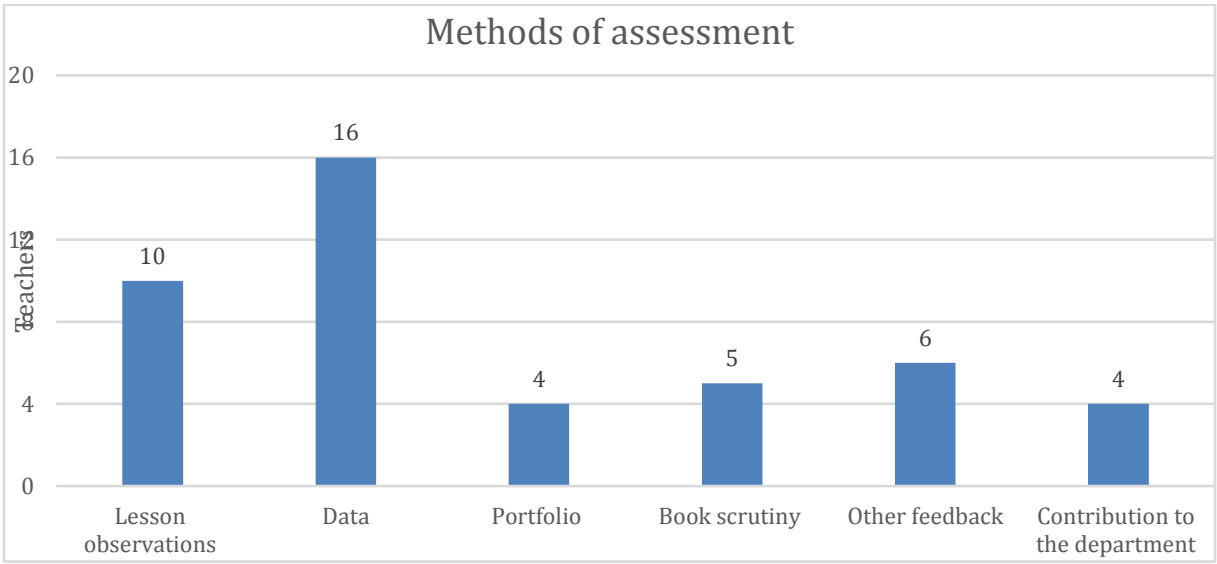


Figure 4.3 The different methods used to assess teacher performance

5.3.1 Lesson observations

The interview data suggests that lesson observations play an important role within the appraisal cycle. However, the approach each school uses when conducting lesson observations does differ. For example, S1 carries out up to one-hour of lesson observations each year which can be divided into two observations of 30 minutes. In contrast, S2 has up to three lesson observations per year (one hour each). The outcome of a teacher's lesson observation is recorded centrally (e.g., S2 uploads them onto the teacher's e-portfolio for evidence). The format of how this is recorded is unclear as 8% of teachers said that their lessons were graded whilst 12% said they were not. It is likely that a commentary of the lesson was fed back to the teacher and lesson grades were for senior management purposes only.

Appraisal lead's perspective on lesson observations:

S1 cited lesson observation evidence on four occasions. They believe in the idea of high-quality teaching as prerequisite for achieving good exam results and therefore in the importance of lesson observations to quality assure this is happening. Furthermore, the information collected from lesson observations is used as an indicator to determine whether S1 are on track to reach their academic targets at the end of the year. As App.1 comments:

> *"…the only way that you know…is if you routinely observe"*

Whilst S1 openly admit that carrying out lesson observations is an intelligence gathering exercise, they also use this information to inform training programmes and put interventions in place for teachers who do not meet the grade.

5.3.2 Exam results data

The majority of teachers (73%) referred to data (e.g. exam results) as playing a fundamental role in the assessment of their performance. The comment below is typical of what teachers were saying:

"they might see my results, my student results, they do look at that. At the end of, at the beginning of the year they come to me and talk to me about results, student results…"

Interviewee 1

One teacher seemingly wanted to make the point that there is great deal of emphasis given to this type of information

"Data, data, data"

Questionnaire 6

Interview 2, from S2, reaffirms the view held by the above teacher who works in S1, that data is integral to appraisal. The terminology used describes this as such:

"…it's rooted in outcomes for students"
"…it's all data driven"
"…so ours is very much data driven"

The legitimacy of the above comments is strengthened by the fact that the teacher who makes these claims is also a senior leader at the school. Interviewee 5 provides insight into how the school s/he works in uses the data by comparing results with target grades, looking at in-house variations and finally comparing school results with those nationally.

Appraisal lead's perspective about data:

The below comment from App.1 signals that data is a key determinant in whether a teacher is eligible for a pay increase.

"pay recommendations aren't made until the exam results come in in August"

The head teacher from S1 talks about the importance of combining quantitative and qualitative information in order to make reliable judgements. The use of exam data plays a key role in this regard.

From S2's perspective, despite earlier comments made by interviewee 2, App.2 makes no mention of the use of data in the evaluation of its teachers.

5.3.3 Book scrutiny

A small number of teachers (3 of 25) referred to a book scrutiny taking place as part of the appraisal process with questionnaire 13 making reference to the breadth of information that can arise using this source of evidence:

> *"…e.g. progress over time, range of teaching approaches, daily practice"*

Appraisal lead's perspective on book scrutiny:

App.1 refers to a scrutiny taking place although it is difficult to decipher whether this occurs in combination with a lesson observation or carried out as a separate exercise.

5.3.4 Portfolio

The use of e-portfolio was cited by four of 25 teachers as a tool for storing evidence that would be used for appraisal. Examples include teacher targets, exam data, commentary around lesson observations, information on courses (e.g. CPD) attended and anything else that the teacher deemed appropriate could be uploaded and used in support of decisions made at the end of the annual cycle.

5.3.5 Other feedback

Five teachers referred to comments from colleagues. This information came in the form of emails or oral communication. Whether this was then stored (e.g. on the e-portfolio) as additional evidence which would inform and support appraisal decisions is unclear.

Appraisal lead's perspective on other feedback:

App.1 does refer to the use of colleague feedback, specifically those in leadership positions. In addition, App.1 talks about the use of 360-degree appraisals although this is not widely available other than to those in managerial positions.

> *"…we'll get information from different line managers, so their Head of Year as form tutoring is part of the expectation as well as their Subject Leader. If they have a responsibility for something that sits outside of those two areas, we may get some feedback from that, we do offer some staff the option to have a 360, so they can get feedback from peers and so forth, but that's not something we encourage everybody to do, we couldn't manage all the input"*

5.3.6 Contribution to the department

Interviewee 6 was the only teacher who referred to this area. It is likely that his/her head of department is the person who carries out their appraisal and therefore is able to comment on other things this teacher has brought to the department that go beyond the formal measures of evaluation.

Appraisal lead's perspective on using multiple sources of evidence:

App.1 mentions how they consider information that pertains to a teacher's level of contribution to the wider department, faculty and school. To factor in such evidence supports the claim they make about having a "…really robust system in place".

5.3.7 Consideration of multiple factors

This section is more general in nature and highlights the feeling from teachers about the importance of using multiple sources of data in appraisal. Three of twenty-five teachers said their school approached appraisal this way with interviewee 3 emphasising how it enabled triangulation to take place. Interviewee 6 argues that appraisal outcomes do not rely solely on a single lesson observation. S/he makes the point that evidence is accumulated over an entire year.

Interviewee 9 commends the way his/her school approaches appraisal by stating the emphasis is not just on the data. S/he expands on this by saying the school's leaders will consider the context and narrative if an individual student or group of students do not meet expected grades.

> *"…what is really good about this school particularly, compared to other schools I've taught in, they do take that on board and they listen"*

Interviewee 9 goes on to talk about his/her appraisal meetings being an open conversation which analyses what has gone well and what has not and seeks to understand the reasons for this. S/he recognises and appreciates the "well-rounded sort of approach" his school uses and mentions how s/he had received a pay rise one year even though his/her appraisal targets were not fully met.

Appraisal lead's perspective on using multiple sources of evidence:

App.1 describes how their school embraces a tool called Blue Sky, a piece of software that records and centralises everything related to appraisal and CPD. In doing so, they can obtain a broad picture of each teacher in terms of what they have done in a given year.

> *"Blue Sky is a fantastic tool because you can print off everything to do with their development in that year in one report, so it'll say what CPD they've had, what their observations were, what their objectives were and if they've met them, they have an opportunity to go into each objective and say what the impact on students has been as a result of them achieving their objectives, so as a line manager you have all this data, and then everything is held pending, so everything is looking brilliant"*

S1 mentioned on six separate occasions that they take into account a number of factors when measuring teacher performance. They make the point that "…it's not all down just to appraisals, it's part of a number of things that are working in line with each other". App.1 makes the analogy between their approach to appraisal and a jigsaw:

"I think it's part of the jigsaw, I can remember when appraisal first came in, and more evidence is fed into it now, so we've got the quantitative and the qualitative all going on…"

5.3 Summary

It would appear that both schools use multiple sources of evidence in order to make appraisal decisions although lesson observations and exam data are the most dominant. The responsibility for determining pay now resides with schools and as such they have to ensure appraisal is fair, rigorous and transparent in order that it can stand up to scrutiny.

5.4 Appraisal accuracy and fairness

When teachers were asked to explain the strengths of appraisal, only one reference (interviewee 7) was made about the accuracy of judgements (4%). This teacher referred to lesson observations and book scrutiny as the main methods of assessment and thought the combination worked well in producing a fair outcome. In contrast, when teachers were asked to share their opinions and experiences about the weaknesses of appraisal, a number of related areas became known. The areas, which follow, concern how teacher assessment is compromised.

5.4.1 Inconsistencies in the appraisal process

Four of 9 teachers who were interviewed alluded to inconsistencies in the appraisal process specifically mentioning the following issues in their meetings with their appraisers.

5.4.2 Mid-term reviews

From a procedural perspective, comments were made about the lack of consistency as it pertained to mid-term reviews. These reviews are a formal

meeting between the appraiser and teacher which takes place mid-way through the academic year. A discussion takes place around the meeting of the targets that were set at the beginning of the year. The conversation will include whether a teacher is on track to meet these and if any support is required. S2 expects appraisers to ensure these meetings happen although interviewee 2 (who is also a senior leader) casts doubt on whether this actually occurs across the school as it should.

> *"I think it's something that we use at the beginning really well, and we review it in the middle, and whether it's robust enough for checking if everyone does review.* ***I don't know. We presume people do it****" [emphasis added]*

Mid-term review meetings are important because it allows the teacher to discuss factors that may impede the achieving of the targets. Sometimes contextual factors need consideration. For example, a student who is having personal issues may affect the exam results of a class which in turn can cast doubt on whether a teacher's target is achieved.

Appraisal lead's perspective on mid-term interim meetings:

App.2 believes that interim review meetings are happening as they should.

> *"and we know it's working because if it isn't, they're very quick to come and tell me 'I haven't met my appraiser for a while'"*

However, this level of assurance is called into question later when App.2 talks about interim meetings "hopefully" taking place. It is therefore foreseeable that there may be a disparity in the regularity of meetings when comparing what appraisal leads think and what takes place in reality. The below comment reinforces this point:

> *"The frequency is dependent on how often they see them, if their position is either end of the school, then we recommend a fortnightly meeting takes place, if they're in offices next door then once a term is fine"*

Both appraisal leads place value on the review meetings as they provide an opportunity to discuss targets, share concerns and help toward ensuring a teacher is not adversely affected if something is out of their control and they are not going to reach a target. App.1 supports this view and highlights the importance of taking into account various case studies about students. The richness of information that can derive from interim meetings can lead to a more accurate assessment of a teacher's performance.

5.4.3 Lessons chosen for observation

The second inconsistency that was raised involved whether or not the teacher had any decision-making power as to the lesson that was chosen for observation. Interviewee 1 mentions that the outcome of an observation can be heavily influenced by the behaviour of students.

> *"And then this year my experience again, not as good as last year. Because it also depends on the classes you have in front of you, I think. This year my lesson observation was a very chatty class, not as well behaved as other classes I've been observed with. Of course, it's not only the class you have in front of you, it also depends on the teacher but also the students may help or not"*

The above comments suggest that some teachers may have an unfair advantage over others if they are given the freedom to choose classes that are more subservient which can help the teacher appear better than if it was a more challenging class. Questionnaire 13 expands on this point by describing how some teachers can hide their worst classes and pick the best. Such organisational inconsistencies could also give rise to division or resentment amongst teachers if situations like those that interviewee 3 and 7 mention are more widespread:

> *"apparently you can choose, I didn't choose mine this time, I was told that's the time, that's the class, but I know other people have chosen"*

> *"This does not always fit well with an individual as each individual does not always experience the same challenges"*

5.4.4 Trustworthiness

The number of teachers who raised issues of the trustworthiness of appraisal was over half (14 of 25) and the number of teachers who made direct or indirect reference to the subjective nature of appraisal was 12 of 25 (48%). These areas will be discussed under a range of headings that emerged from the data.

5.4.4.1 Lesson observations

One of the contentious issues that emerged from the data was the feeling that lesson observations did not portray an accurate picture of normal everyday practice. Interviewee 1 spoke of her frustration by saying that an overall lesson judgement can hang in the balance as a result of something minor that happens during the observation. Interviewee 3 is of the same view but argues how it can work in favour of underperforming teachers.

> *"so it's just a screenshot, that's one lesson, doesn't necessarily mean much. You can do amazing in a lesson, that doesn't mean you're amazing as a teacher"*

Interviewee 4 illustrates how the system of lesson observations can be manipulated, in that a teacher can mark a set of books of a class that is being observed and create a false impression that all class books are marked in a similar way.

Lesson observation feedback was also cited as a concern by interviewee 9 where he taught two identical lessons but received different feedback for both.

> *"so one said I shouldn't do something and the other said I should"*

Interviewee 1 raises a similar point but resigned herself to the fact that there will be disparities between judgements due to the nature of human error. The above comments do not just highlight problems with feedback but may signify a more fundamental problem of the differing understandings of what makes a good lesson.

Despite the negative view of some teachers surrounding the issue of inauthenticity, there were some (three of 25) who said that lesson observations have no impact on their teaching. Interviewee 4 refers to a structure she uses in the majority of lessons which she believes benefits the students. She adds, to deviate from this for the sake of an observation would also be picked up by the students ("oh we never do this"). The potential embarrassment that comes after a teacher does something outside of the norm whilst being observed was also identified by interviewee 8 who said the following:

> *"I don't because the worst thing is a kid sort of saying 'we don't normally do this' which is my biggest fear, so I try and keep them as much to a certain pattern as I can"*

5.4.4.2 Use of data

It was mentioned earlier how important data is when making judgements about teacher performance. Interviewee 6 raises concern about how legitimate it is to do so:

> *"…young people are not data. They cannot be controlled on a spreadsheet"*

Questionnaire 14 reveals how sometimes exam results can be misleading if the appraiser is not aware of the cohort of students, which may not reflect necessarily the students' ability or that of the teacher. For example, other external factors identified in sections 2.5.2 and 2.5.3 could undermine the eventual outcomes. Such situations might explain why questionnaire 13 talks about the necessity of looking at data within context and that students are seen through the lens of being individuals.

5.4.4.3 Meeting targets

Target setting also emerged as a contentious issue based on comments by interviewee 8 who insinuates that targets are too challenging.

"…everyone I've spoken to about it has just said, we're going to give you these targets, you're not going to make them because they're just, they're put in high and they're almost too high but then it seems to be the culture that everyone does but no one makes them, and it's a bit of a joke"

The above does raise an important question of the degree of margin that is permissible in deciding whether a teacher has done enough to meet a target. Based on comments made by interviewee 2, it would seem this is an area that lacks clarity.

"If it's done as aspirational - when it comes round to pay review, if they're giving back to the school and they've got close, you're not going to say 'no you're not close enough', 'no you didn't hit it, moving you up anyway"

Another point to consider is how the meeting of targets potentially carries financial implications with the introduction of performance-related pay. Under such circumstances, teachers may set less challenging targets, intentionally or not. In S2, App.2 is the person who quality assures everyone's targets, which entails looking through the targets of seventy staff. Whilst there is evidence of targets being returned (interviewee 2) due to the apparent lack of challenge, it is important to contemplate that with only one person doing the checking, some targets are not scrutinised to the same level of consistency.

5.4.5 Quality assurance

In total, two of 25 teachers talk about a link between appraisal and quality assurance. As mentioned earlier, interviewee 3 referred to triangulating data. Interviewee 2 talks about quality assurance from the perspective of a senior leader. He suggests the importance of modelling expectations to other appraisers so they understand how to carry out the role.

"…this is what I expect to see - the quality assurance that the leadership team or the head team undertake, to make sure that it is robust, and if it's not right it gets sent back"

Appraisal lead's perspective on quality assurance:

The data suggests that both schools place a lot of importance on quality assurance with it being mentioned on four separate occasions by each school.

S1 altered the process quite recently which now sees greater senior leadership involvement, particularly in helping those they line manage in compiling appraisal statements. These senior leaders also have a remit to quality assure the three objectives that teachers set and ensure they are in line with whole-school priorities. The final point worth mentioning is the feeling from App.1 that the process of appraisal is at a point where it is "…routine and rigorous…" and able to stand "…up to scrutiny".

The appraisal lead in S2 talks about what she does as part of the quality assurance process. To begin with, she accesses the online system they use two to three times a year to check everything is as it should be. For example, to ensure there is some activity taking place since the setting of targets in October. App.2 will also spend a day looking through the e-portfolios of 70 teachers to analyse the appraisal targets. This process allows her to see the robustness of targets and initiates conversations with teachers if there is a feeling that targets are too easy.

S2 also places emphasis upon using middle leaders to carry out appraisal. The school has made a significant shift during the last four to five years, which now sees these leaders take more ownership of their department's grades and the quality of both teaching and learning that goes on within their department.

The last point to make on quality assurance is from App.1 and how it pertains to CPD. All teachers are expected to complete an evaluation on their e-portfolio after attending a CPD course or training. Feedback is then used to inform and improve future CPD.

5.4 Summary

Disparities in perception between teachers and appraisal leads become known in this section. To begin with, procedural issues were cited as a concern. For example, inconsistencies that exist in both schools regarding review meetings and the degree of contact a teacher has with their appraiser. These meetings are important because it provides an opportunity to review targets, explore any contextual factors that may inhibit these from being met and, if warranted, support put in place.

The choice of class for lesson observation purposes was also a contentious matter with some teachers being able to choose their class whilst others were not. It was felt that teachers were at an advantage if they could choose because they would select classes that were more amenable, which would increase the likelihood of the lesson running smoothly and create a better outward impression. Many areas were talked about in regard to the trustworthiness of appraisal. Again, the issue of lesson observations was raised but this time relating to the issue of whether one-off observations could actually provide an authentic picture of a teacher's ability to teach. Variations in appraiser feedback was also highlighted as a concern.

To ensure greater levels of fairness in the system, App. 2 talked about the checking process that existed to ensure teacher targets were robust enough. However, confusion sets in when it was discovered that some teachers can miss their targets and yet still be eligible for pay progression. This raises the question of subjectivity when deciding whether teachers have done enough to pass their appraisal. However, both schools provide assurance that their appraisal systems are fit for purpose and can provide accurate judgements about their teachers. App.1 confidently asserts that they know their school and staff and the information they gather is 'routine and rigorous' and allows for strategic planning to take place, which includes training and support. App.2's provides a less convincing statement about the accuracy of appraisal by stating:

*"I would say **most of the time** it does, it's a true reflection" (emphasis added)*

5.5 Appraiser suitability and competence

The following section highlights the responses from teachers when asked about the preparation and training appraisers had received to carry out their role.

5.5.1 Consideration of school-based training

Interviewee 2, besides being a teacher and senior leader, also carries out the role of appraiser for which he confirmed he had received training. However, interviewee 2 does describe that this training was limited to those at the top only, likely referring to the senior leadership team at his school. They in turn are tasked with the responsibility of disseminating good practice to others who act as appraisers. They do this, in part, by modelling expectations. Alongside this role model approach, interviewee 2 talks about the importance of the leadership team being accessible to those teachers who appraise in case of any issues that may arise which they need help with.

> *"I think it's just um- the appraisal side - as long as there's someone on the leadership team who is the go to person, if someone is having issues or wants to talk about setting targets or mid-term reviews, "how do I word this", "how do I do this", "I've got an issue here", that can trigger tough conversations"*
>
> Interviewee 2

The above comments suggest that the training of appraisers in S2 is generally of an informal nature although, to counter this argument, interviewee 4 commented about a consultant who supports new subject leaders with regard to induction and training. However, it is difficult to judge how much of this support relates to appraisal training. Interviewee 4 claims new subject leaders are supported by the school in the way of coaching. They describe how this occurs in the form of paired lesson observations which is followed by the trainee appraiser observing feedback being given. Interviewee 4 likens the experience to phone call training where new recruits sit and watch. While these comments depict appraiser training in quite a positive light, interviewee 4 proceeds to explain how their appraiser who has undergone such training may concern a teacher.

> A teacher being aware that their appraiser is ***"…just being thrown in straight away, and they've never had to necessarily observe"*** (emphasis added)
>
> Interviewee 4

The above comments suggest the inadequacy of appraiser training, a view shared by a significant proportion of teachers (44%).

Appraisal lead's perspective on training:

App.1 organised two workshops as part of their rolling CPD programme that focused on training line managers to carry out appraisal. Despite this, they recognise more needs to be done in terms of the provision of support and guidance in order that appraisers can carry out their role more effectively, particularly how and whether to make pay recommendations on behalf of those they appraise.

Appraisal training in S2 does occur but is limited to those who are new to the role. The purpose is to ensure there is a common understanding of procedural expectations such as how the e-portfolio system works. In addition, learning how to carry out lesson observations and giving feedback is also included. It is evident that the training provided is primarily focused upon ensuring new appraisers are familiar with how the appraisal programme runs, as described by App.2:

> *"…it's the processes really, yeah"*

5.5.2 Other training that complements appraising

What transpires from the data is that some appraisers are indeed good at appraising and the reason for this might be related to other types of training they have received. One teacher (interviewee 4) referred to external training (Graduate Training Programme) which seemed to help in carrying out the role of appraiser more effectively. However, the training was designed to support newly qualified teachers although the content of the training contained many transferable elements that was subsequently used in the role of appraiser. Similarly, other

teachers and middle leaders who act as appraisers may be able to draw upon past and present managerial experience that will help them in role of appraiser (interviewee 9).

5.5.3 To what extent does subject expertise play a role in conducting accurate teacher appraisal?

Ten teachers (40%) said that possessing subject knowledge was an important characteristic of an appraiser. Interviewee 4 draws a comparison between an appraiser who has subject knowledge compared to someone who does not:

> *"…it's different, it's a massive difference from a maths person going into a maths lesson, they're going to know"*

Interviewee 8 who is an English teacher disclosed how much more comfortable she is when being observed by someone of the same subject discipline:

> *"I think that for me, when I'm observed by an English teacher, I feel much better getting that feedback than when I would if I wasn't"*

When teachers were asked about the negative characteristics of an appraiser, nine of 25 highlighted lack of subject knowledge as a concern. Interestingly, five of these teachers were not included within the 10 teachers who said that subject knowledge was important, which means overall 60% of teachers indicated that this is an important issue in appraisal. Questionnaire 8 explains why reservations exist amongst teachers on this matter and is based on an assumption that non-subject specialists may struggle to understand the content of a lesson and why things are done the way they are which in turn may lead to an inaccurate judgement being made. Questionnaire 3 provides an alternative perspective by highlighting the "nuances and challenges of each subject" and questionnaire 1 suggests it is important to have someone who is knowledgeable about the subject, particularly in A-level observations. Such comments strengthen the argument for subject-specific appraisers.

Interviewee 8 does acknowledge, however, there is potential for appraisers to carry out some aspects of the role effectively without being a subject specialist. This seems a reasonable view to take considering comments made by questionnaire 1 who said there are generic teaching skills and learning outcomes that are universal across a range of subject disciplines. Questionnaire 4 also supports the notion of using appraisers outside of their subject area claiming:

> *"…sometimes it's quite nice to have a different pair of eyes. Sometimes in your subject you can get stuck in a rut and do the same things, but if someone comes in and says 'well we've tried it like this in our subject' it sort of gives you a fresh perspective. So, for the development aspect it is nice, sometimes having a different pair of eyes"*

Appraisal lead's perspective on appraiser subject expertise:

Those responsible for appraisal in S1 and S2 hold contrasting views on this matter. App.1 emphasises the importance of having an appraiser who possesses strong subject knowledge in the same field as the teacher being appraised. This makes sense considering the school's position on teaching and learning which they have previously said is so pivotal in getting good outcomes.

> *"so their expertise in their given area is part and parcel of it, because for a teacher there's a teaching and learning element and assessment element, and actually our core business is teaching and learning, so linking it to the Ofsted criteria, their subject knowledge is fairly central to it, in the same way that X will have to have subject expertise for where she works in"*
>
> App.1

In contrast, App.2 holds the view that an appraiser's subject specialism is less important and draws upon her own experience of being able to conduct lesson observations across a range of subjects without any problems.

> *"You don't have to be a subject specialist in order to observe a lesson. I feel quite passionate about that. So, I will go and observe Maths and History, I will go and observe Science, I'll go and observe primary school, I have no issue with what stage or phase a child is in, a good lesson is a good lesson. So, it's not that important that it's within the subject"*

5.5.4 Appraiser's ability to appraise

An appraiser's competence and level of engagement was also cited as an issue.

> *"…some appraisers are more thorough and more interested than others"*
>
> Questionnaire 12

> *"Reliant on the quality of reviewer"*
>
> Questionnaire 15

The above comments suggest the appraisal experience between one teacher and another is variable. Questionnaire 4 voices concern of it not being a 'level playing field' and argues outcomes vary because standards by which teachers are being measured against are interpreted differently. Questionnaire 4 also calls into question whether appraisers can carry out the role fairly if they have to appraise colleagues who are also friends. Questionnaire 1 shares a more general view that the results of appraisal are skewed because appraisers are too subjective.

Appraisal lead's perspective on an appraiser ability to appraise:

The only suggestion of subjectivity within the appraisal process by those who lead on appraisal is by S1. They admit that, on occasion, new appraisers who are now responsible for making recommendations about whether a teacher is eligible for a pay rise are susceptible to being influenced by their relationship with those in their team.

> *"…sometimes those teams might be working very closely together, and they could be very friendly"*

5.5 Summary

The majority of teachers were of the opinion that subject knowledge is important when it comes to appraisal. This was highlighted as being of particular importance when it came to observations of A-level classes where the complexity and depth of knowledge required to teach the subject increases. Whilst accepting the importance of appraiser subject knowledge, there were some who believed the use of non-subject specialists was an advantage as it facilitated the sharing of best practice across subjects allowing teachers to see things from different perspectives. From the standpoint of those who lead on appraisal, it is clear that both schools hold opposing views. S1 values the importance of using appraisers who have subject expertise whereas S2 believes appraisers can do an effective job regardless of their subject discipline.

Elsewhere, S1 admits appraiser training needs to improve, something they are working to rectify. In S2, appraiser training seems to be very informal in nature for all but the senior leadership team. The general consensus is that appraisers learn how to carry out the role whilst doing the job with help from colleagues as and when needed. The exception to this is for new appraisers who receive some training, but this is primarily based on making them familiar with procedures (S2). What also emerges from the data is that the consistency of appraiser effectiveness is related to other factors, such as whether the appraiser had a previous responsibility which drew on a range of skills that are transferable and applicable to appraising. Other areas that were cited as contributing to effective appraisal included the personality traits of the appraiser and the personal experience of being appraised themselves. All these areas, to varying degrees, impact on the appraisal experience but, in doing so, make it harder to distinguish what contribution school-based training has made.

5.6 Impact of appraisal

A number of elements within appraisal have been looked at so far. For instance, its purpose, the range of people who appraise, strengths and weaknesses of the appraisal process, methods of assessment and CPD. To conclude this chapter, it is important to share findings from the data about its effectiveness.

5.6.1 Reflection

Teacher reflection is an important starting point. Just under a quarter of all teachers said they felt the purpose of appraisal was about teacher reflection and 40% of teachers mentioned teacher reflection as a strength of appraisal. The general perspective from many teachers is that appraisal has given them the opportunity to think about their current practice, often with the assistance of another person (e.g. feedback from others – interviewee 9). Interestingly, despite the emphasis on reflection, it is not mentioned by those who lead appraisal.

5.6.2 Wider benefits to the school

Twenty-four percent of teachers implied that appraisal benefitted the school in some way. For example, interviewee 2 mentions how it was used to up-skill individuals. A useful illustration here is provided by interviewee 4 who talks about her experience of re-writing the marking policy for her school as a result of undertaking a project.

It is not surprising that a school seeks to benefit from the process of teacher appraisal, which both schools makes explicitly clear. The setting of teacher targets, in the main, is based on wider school priorities. For example, teacher targets such as those that are data based are used to serve the wider purpose of a school achieving good exam results (interviewee 7 and questionnaire 16). There is also a checking of the targets which serves the purpose of quality assurance. S1 uses a wider team of senior leaders to do this whereas in S2 App.2 does it herself.

5.6.3 Appraisal and its impact on students

The data indicates there is a link between appraisal and the benefits it brings to students, whether this be directly or indirectly. Regarding the latter, interviewee 4 draws attention to how appraisal motivated her into action to complete some schemes of work. She said, "…it's actually making me do it and making me get off my bum and do it, instead of putting it off". Interviewee 8 makes the point that appraisal targets, which often include targets related to teaching and data (interviewee 2), are never really forgotten about. Rather they "…are always at the back of your mind so you do think 'oh yeah I need to remember about that"'. Further comments by teachers suggest that appraisal has facilitated the following emotions or practices:

> *"Ambition in terms of seeking high standard results"*
>
> *"Remaining motivated in the classroom"*
>
> Questionnaire 4

> *"I think carefully about each individual student and how I am going to help them achieve their best"*
>
> Questionnaire 9

Appraisal lead's perspective on the impact of appraisal:

App.2 holds the view that appraisal she oversees has been effective and qualifies this by drawing upon the evidence of positive student outcomes:

> *"I would say in the increase in our attainment and grades actually, I would say, we've, at GCSE and A-Level, there's been an increase year on year, and our sixth form is considered outstanding in its own right"*

App.2 goes on to make clear that the success described above was a result of focused target setting, which includes teaching and learning and student-based targets.

However, it is hard to substantiate that improvement in exam results was because of appraisal only. A number of other factors may have played a contributing factor such as the variables and contextual factors that exist between one year group/class to another, not mentioning the improvements in teacher expertise that comes through experience as opposed to specific training.

5.6.4 Support for teachers

Two teachers mentioned that they felt supported because of appraisal. Both described how appraisal was used to identify areas of strength and in need of improvement. Interviewee 5 added that appraisal also provided the necessary support in pursuing other interests although it was unclear what they meant by this.

5.6.5 Variety of CPD opportunities to meet identified needs

Out of 25 teachers, six said that the range of CPD on offer at their school was a strength of the appraisal/CPD programme.

> *"…there's a lot of training which is open to middle managers which is especially useful"*
>
> Interviewee 6

> *"CPD programme is strong - range of opportunities available"*
>
> Questionnaire 12

Interviewee 4 talks about how the training is tailored to individual needs. Teachers have a degree of choice as to what they attend which might be to do with the types of targets they have chosen as part of their appraisal. Interviewee 4 provides clarity on the practical arrangements of a teacher enrolling onto training.

> *"…you can literally just sign up on the e-portfolio, so it's published, a calendar. What's on each week, and then you literally sign up"*

Interviewee 9 speaks highly about the CPD provision for different reasons: its regularity, which will be discussed in the next section, and also because it is led by a range of professionals.

Despite the apparent range of CPD on offer at both schools, questionnaire 12 adds that the school they work in is willing to provide alternative training if it does not feature within the existing programme.

Appraisal lead's perspective on the range of CPD:

App.2's view to the range of CPD on offer is similar to that of the teachers above. There is a belief that to offer teachers more choice will likely prove more beneficial and not be seen as a waste of time. CPD of a compulsory nature is limited to areas such as safeguarding and Christian ethos of the school, in which all cases all staff are expected to attend.

5.6.6 CPD developmental

The following two sections are particularly relevant as they pertain to the effectiveness of CPD. Five teachers (20%) expressed how CPD had been useful in improving their own practice. It is evident from what has been mentioned already that both schools provide an extensive range of CPD so, regardless of what stage a teacher is at in their career, there is something for everyone. The following two illustrations show how this has happened.

Interviewee 1 said how helpful the CPD provision is at her school for anyone who is just starting out as a teacher. At the other end of the continuum is someone who has been in the profession a while and requires CPD that is going to challenge and provide support in reaching career aspirations such as becoming an assistant head teacher. Interviewee 4 describes what her school did in this regard:

> *"I wanted something to challenge, really challenge my thinking. So, my doing the NPQ was the sort of the different modules I got to focus on, the nice whole school project in*

school, which was obviously with me being Social Sciences you don't often get that whole school aspect"

It also becomes apparent that both schools are trying to strike the right balance between CPD that is designed to directly assist in improving student outcomes and other more generic forms of CPD that potentially brings indirect benefits. For example, questionnaire 1 said that there are:

"…many useful parts to the whole school CPD programme, especially thinking schools, mental health training and making cross curricular links"

Whilst only 20% of staff said CPD at their respective school had a developmental impact, interviewee 8 captures the general feeling amongst those teachers who did have something to say on this area by saying they are better off because of it.

Appraisal lead's perspective on CPD being developmental:

App.1 talks about how external CPD, particularly exam board training, is something they encourage for two reasons. Firstly, it supports teachers to be more effective in their teaching which in turn will improve student outcomes. Secondly, it creates time and space away from school to get their "…head above the parapet".

In addition to external CPD, S1 runs a rolling programme of in-house CPD which has evolved over time having started out as a training programme for new teachers. App.1 describes how what was previously known as an induction programme for new staff "…has now morphed into something that's really beneficial to all staff".

5.6.7 CPD application

Five teachers (20%) referred to the link between CPD and how it had impacted their practice. Questionnaire 4 referred to the development of educational writing and how s/he was able to apply this to his/her work. Two participants (interviewee

12 and 16) referred to CPD as being “effective”. The former spoke in reference to some emotional coaching training s/he organised whilst the latter described the overall interactive nature of CPD workshops. Similarly, questionnaire 14 talks about the effectiveness of CPD and twilight sessions and how they provide easily understood concepts that can be implemented into teaching quickly and successfully. Questionnaire 13 supports this view by claiming CPD provides opportunities to embed practice.

Appraisal lead’s comments on CPD application:

S1 are confident in the relevance and practical nature of the training and support they provide because they know their staff and school well. This allows them to plan strategically and tailor their programmes at individual, team and whole school level. App.1 also talks about CPD within the context of helping teachers with their career aspirations. They qualify how they achieve this by reiterating the importance of knowing their staff, which in turn enables them to set individualised objectives combined with supportive CPD.

App.1 also mentioned how they use lesson observations to identify staff who are in need of additional support. They go on to describe a programme they run which tracks teacher progress before and after the intervention. It was clear that a significant proportion of teachers who are asked to attend this training subsequently go on to receive outstanding feedback on their lesson observations.

S1 seem to place greater onus on staff development than S2; they make the link between the investment in staff and its impact on students. S2 is less descriptive about staff CPD and its value although it is clear that they provide a range of training opportunities via its CPD twilight programme.

5.6.8 Areas identified for development within the CPD programme

Twelve percent of teachers were of the opinion that CPD was more of a negative than positive experience. Questionnaire 2 described most CPD as “perfunctory and transitory” whereas questionnaire 6 said that nothing really stood out. The

view from interview 6 is that some CPD is a waste of time and would be better spent doing something more worthwhile such as marking. The same teacher provided an illustration of such CPD when they attended a session about 'vision', which resulted in staff having to watch a developmental talk from the internet.

One reason why a pessimistic view of CPD exists amongst a small contingent of staff is likely related to the issue of 'repetition'. Interview 6 explains how s/he sat through dyslexia training six years consecutively and calls into question whether such regularity is needed. Interview 7 suggests why this may be the case by saying the school runs out of options for new training to go into the programme, which is why some sessions are repeated. Interviewee 8 reaffirms what has been said about the repetitive nature of CPD and makes particular mention of the compulsory aspects of the programme that staff have to attend.

> *"There are certain training sessions that we're told we have to go to, and you just think - this is the fourth year in a row, and when you're training, you're saturated with the amount of training sessions you're supposed to be attending. You just turn up say your name and sit down and you do listen, but you just think your time could be spent so much better"*

Other negative points raised included the sporadic nature of CPD which included one-off events with no follow-up (interviewee 4) and by interviewee 1 who raises the issue of a disconnect between the training received and its application in the classroom. One strategy that may help prevent instances like this occurring is to provide opportunities for teachers to evaluate appropriate aspects of professional development needs.

Interviewee 2 said all teachers who attend CPD are expected to complete an evaluation form afterwards. This helps the school to develop a profile of CPD training that is cost effective and how beneficial it is to the school. It transpires that sometimes this happens and at other times not.

> *"In terms of the appraisal of it, if it was successful, there is a form to fill in and, unofficially, I've never filled one in. So that's something that could be…"*
>
> Interviewee 2

Another inconsistency was raised by the same interviewee (2) and relates to the sharing of best practice that comes after attending a CPD course. He makes the point that some staff attend external CPD training and upon their return to school share what they have learnt with other colleagues, so they too can benefit. Interviewee 2 is unsure whether this happens all the time.

> *"Whether that happens across the school I don't know, I'd hope it does, it's a good thing and should happen across the school" [sharing best practice after PIXL visit]*

> *"I think there's a loophole or a gap that could be closed there"*

Appraisal lead's perspective on areas for CPD development:

Two areas for CPD development were raised, both from S1. Firstly, it pertains to the use of external organisations who come into school to deliver CPD. App.1 says:

> *"Where we often find CPD falls flat is when you get somebody coming in, and no matter how well they've briefed they've not quite matched everybody's needs because it's not differentiated enough"*

The other point raised reinforces earlier comments made about the evaluation of CPD. Whilst S1 uses specifically designed software for centralising information about appraisal and CPD, very few teachers fill in the evaluation section after they have attended a CPD course. The justification given is that staff neglect this because when they get back to work, they are "super busy" (S1)

5.6.9 Compliance

Five of 25 teachers (20%) recognised the link between appraisal and compliance. By compliance, we refer to procedures that schools have to follow, partly to satisfy organisations such as the Department for Education and Ofsted. Whilst such organisations can be regarded as good for education because they hold schools to account against a range of measures, questionnaire 6 disagrees and particularly draws attention, without reason, to the idea that appraisal is adversely

affected because of their influence. Interviewee 9 does shed some light on the impact of schools having to follow statutory requirements in areas such as appraisal by saying it leads to teachers only paying lip service to those things that need doing. In turn, it raises the question of what value it adds to teachers if they are only engaging in practices to satisfy the requirements that are imposed on them.

The use of e-portfolios is an established tool that S2 uses to capture a range of information about a teacher. It is intended to provide a more accurate and holistic picture of their performance. According to interviewee 2, some teachers will not even look at their e-portfolio until it is necessary, normally just before a review meeting. One reason for this, as identified by the same teacher, is the perception that it is just a 'tick box' exercise. Interviewee 6 describes the impact this could have:

> *"I think when it can be an add-on and people can see it to be that or if it's rushed then* ***people won't see the value in it and they won't take notice of it"*** *(emphasis added)*

Appraisal lead's perspective on compliance:

App.1 does refer to notion of compliance found in appraisal when she talks about it in terms 'ticking boxes'.

> *"you've ticked all these boxes, we'll wait for the exam results, we need to get in September, yep exam results are exactly as you'd forecast, pay recommendation made"*

However, App.1 openly admits there is a case that the appraisal process has to contain some elements of compliance for the following reasons:

> *"I think, annoyingly, it ticks the Ofsted box, because we have to prove that we've got a robust procedure in place to evidence that teachers have met the right criteria to receive their rewards"*

5.6 Summary

The effectiveness of appraisal is evident across both schools but in varying degrees. It becomes clear that appraisal is being run to primarily fulfil wider school priorities. Staff development coincides with this agenda and is seen in the targets teachers set and the CPD that supports them in achieving these. A link between appraisal and the impact on student outcomes was made although the evidence to support this is lacking. What is evident is the degree of accountability that appraisal brings which makes teachers more motivated to get things done (e.g. schemes of work), which may have an indirect positive impact on student outcomes.

The data reveals a number of benefits to the CPD provision that both schools provide for their teachers. The bespoke nature of training, its regularity and the way in which its content is transferable to the classroom were all mentioned. Whilst comments were generally more positive than not, some teachers and indeed the appraisal leads themselves were critical about some aspects. There was consensus about the need to improve the way appraisal CPD was evaluated so it could inform future practices. From a purely teacher perspective, there was frustration about the tedious nature of CPD which saw the same sessions being delivered year after year. Some teachers cited issues of application as a problem due to disjointed elements of CPD and the lack of follow-up.

5.7 Adding value to appraisal

The final section draws upon the perspectives of teachers and appraisal leads about how appraisal can improve and be more effective. Whilst there are many points raised by individual teachers that potentially could contribute towards its improvement, the researcher decided to focus on areas of weakness that were identified by over 20% of teachers. Furthermore, future recommendations were also highlighted if more than three teachers raised similar issues.

5.7.1 Time

Forty-eight per cent of teachers (12 of 25) raised the issue of time which can be summarised into two categories, 'the need for more time' and 'using appraisal time more effectively'. Regarding the former, the high demands placed on teachers was cited as a problem that undermined the potential impact of appraisal. For example, interviewee 9 admitted that the distraction and pressing demands of other work prevented him and his appraiser from meeting and carrying out the formal requirements expected of them. Meetings only happened when they were pressurised to do so. Interviewee 9 said instances like this were common in his experience of appraisal. Appraisal effectiveness was also undermined according to questionnaire 2 when the appraiser-to-teacher ratio was too low which resulted in the level of support being compromised.

Questionnaire 3 cited the lack of quality time as a problem whilst questionnaire 9 states there is "often too little time to make it ongoing". This last comment implies that appraisal occurs during discrete periods of time in the year which may create a superficial situation as opposed to if it were run on a more formative basis. A move away from the former is worthy of consideration as questionnaire 4 suggests it is often too rushed anyway, which may prove to be an inhibiting factor in making appraisal as effective as it could. To overcome the challenge of the lack of time is no easy feat as teachers are very busy people (interviewee 9 and 2).

Whilst more time may be advantageous, it is likely that how this available time is used is more important. Issues in this section include the ineffective use of time which involves teachers uploading information to their e-portfolio. Interviewee 4 specifically draws attention to the collection of evidence around the Teacher's Standards, which in her opinion was a very time-consuming activity. Questionnaire 2 makes a pertinent remark on this point stating, "…too much time and emphasis on providing evidence rather than actually doing the things I'm trying to evidence". Interviewee 16 strikes a more general note on the issue:

> *"Time is a critical weakness in trying to deliver excellent appraisal outcomes"*

The previous comment suggests that teachers are given too little time to achieve appraisal targets, or targets are met but perhaps the quality is compromised and could be improved if there was more available time.

Interviewee 5 says that we "…need some serious investment in terms of time, for people to understand the process, and actually not just the appraiser but the appraisee as well". Interviewee 9 is convinced that to have an "amazing" appraisal system the people involved need to feel they have the time not just to appraise but to coach in order to form a strong enough relationship that allows transparent and honest dialogue to happen. On a separate point, questionnaire 4 suggests that more time should be allocated to allow teachers to reflect about their goals and how they are aligned to whole school priorities.

The final point for discussion in this area relates to the ineffective use of time as it pertains to CPD. Interviewee 3 feels some CPD sessions are not applicable to their subject area which fostered a feeling that time had been wasted. Twilight sessions were also mentioned as being problematic as they not only clashed with other priorities such as supporting other students in extra classes (interviewee 9) but it was also suggested that current timings are not appropriate as teachers are tired by the end of the school day. Furthermore, at the forefront of many teachers' minds is other work (e.g. marking and planning of lessons; interviewee 9) making CPD more of a hindrance than something worthwhile.

5.7.2 Cost

Limitations in funding, mainly regarding CPD, were referred to by some teachers. Interviewee 2 said that whilst his/her school had supported staff in attending new exam specification courses, s/he did mention there were restrictions in how many staff could be out of school at any one time. This was primarily because of the cost incurred in covering those staff not to mention the negative impact it would have on student learning.

Whilst spending restrictions by a school seem plausible, particularly in light of the financial challenges that many schools are facing at this time, interviewee 5 still

makes the comment that schools do not compare favourably with other employers outside of education. S/he was speaking from experience having worked in the corporate sector where staff development is high up the priority list and the recognition that this requires the necessary investment of time and money. The lack of resources was cited as a problem by interviewee 3 also although it is not clear whether s/he was referring to finance or something else.

Appraisal lead's perspective on cost:

The only mention of financial costs was by App.1 who talked about the potential problems that arise when paying for an external organisation to deliver something in school. Issues such as "buying into something relatively blind" was highlighted as well as not always getting "a return on your money". It was evident that frustrations revolved around the lack of control they had over external providers likely referring to the either the content, mode of delivery or both.

5.7.3 Teacher commitment to appraisal

Staff motivation is an important theme in this section which interviewee 5 draws attention to by saying in his/her experience of being in the profession (nine years), there is a feeling there is a lack of commitment when it comes to appraisal. Whilst it is unclear as to why this is the case, comments by other teachers provide some indication why this might be.

Interviewee 7 describes that when the focus on staff accountability and performance-related pay eclipses the developmental side of appraisal, teachers may be encouraged to coast, particularly those who are at the top of their pay spine. This can result in teacher performance plateauing or even declining and engagement in anything that seeks to improve practice is met with resistance or a superficial, minimalist response.

Evidence of teachers showing a lack of commitment to the appraisal process was also described by interviewee 7 who is of the opinion that there is less accountability towards attending CPD sessions. Whereas once there was a

required number of CPD hours that teachers were expected to achieve, it has more or less become optional. In turn, teachers now have to demonstrate greater levels of self-discipline to attend twilight sessions made even more challenging with other competing priorities such as marking, planning and reporting writing. On a related point, questionnaire 14 raises the point that the way in which the school communicates what CPD is happening has now moved to an electronic calendar system implying that this is a less personal approach compared to the previous system and does little in the way of marketing and selling the training that is available.

Other reasons given for a lack of teacher commitment is related to the non-grading of lesson observations. Ofsted has moved away from grading individual lessons and many schools have copied this approach within their internal lesson observation cycles, preferring to give staff a narrative of their lesson only. However, despite the previous high stakes accountability that accompanied the grading of lessons, many staff still prefer being graded. By removing this aspect of lesson observations or, more to the point, not disclosing the grade, there is the potential that teacher motivation levels are adversely affected. According to some, only providing a narrative does not meet the needs of teachers. Interviewee 8 admits that whilst it is nice to receive positive feedback it does not compare with the feeling you get when you achieve an outstanding grade for your lesson, it is the only thing that really matters. Interviewee 9, an experienced teacher, says he feels a lack of incentive to do his best during a lesson observation. Reasons for this attitude come down to the lessening of accountability as a result of the non-grading of lessons.

A final point to mention about factors affecting teacher commitment is from interviewee 7 who indicated that he always wants what is best for the students. However, the ownership for such a worthy cause is compromised when appraisal targets are driven and dictated by the school. Such an account reveals an absence of the personal element within appraisal and reinforces the notion that appraisal is something that is ‘done’ to teachers as opposed to them being central to the process.

5.7.4 Subjectivity and reliability

Teachers highlighted concerns over the unfair nature of appraisal. For example, questionnaire 2 said that appraisal would be more useful if more formative assessments were used as opposed to one-off judgements, which sometimes does not provide an accurate reflection of what really happens in the classroom. Questionnaire 8 was of the opinion that there is too much emphasis on numerical based outcomes (e.g. data) when there should be a wider consideration of other factors and evidence. Questionnaire 5 mentioned how 360-degree appraisals could be used although the logistics and expense in making this happen is unlikely according to App1.

The perception of appraiser bias was also raised as an issue by interviewee 1, recommending that a teacher's appraiser should be someone who is perhaps from a different department. Interviewee 4 is of the same opinion claiming the relationship can get too close otherwise which can compromise the level of objectivity. One benefit in using an appraiser who is more detached means the exchanging of new ideas and the appreciation of seeing things from a different perspective. Questionnaire 10 recognises the value of using subject-related specialists but agrees that using appraisers outside of the department will open the door for different experiences and knowledge to emerge.

5.7.5 Use a more informal approach

Approaching appraisal in a more informal and natural way was seen by three teachers as a positive step forward. Interviewee 2 describes how at leadership level, they regularly talk about teaching and learning, which may lead to subsequent action of some kind. The natural discourse in this situation is not always seen in the appraisal situation where conversations between appraiser and teacher are more restricted by the protocol of talking through individual targets. Questionnaire 11 indicates that the formalised setting of appraisal targets does not lend itself to talking about things like teacher pedagogy. From his/her perspective though, this should be the topic of conversation with line managers not limited to formalised appraisal meetings which occur so infrequently. A move

towards a more informal and continuous approach is preferential from questionnaire 1's perspective, as it is friendlier and more supportive.

5.7 Summary

A range of recommendations was made by teachers about how their experience of appraisal can improve. To start with, more time should be made available although the benefits of this can only be fully realised if this time is spent doing things that are much more constructive.

Improvements in financial investment was raised by some teachers which was made even more noticeable when comparisons were drawn with the approach of the corporate sector. However, it was acknowledged by some that their school did support them when it came to attending certain courses. From an appraisal lead's perspective, frustration was aired about using expensive external organisations who deliver school-based CPD and not knowing whether it will end up being good value for money.

Teacher commitment to appraisal was aired as an issue also. The non-grading of lesson observations proved to have a demotivating effect on some teachers, with one teacher saying that achieving an 'outstanding' grade is the only thing that matters. The intention of not grading lesson observations to make the focus more developmental seems to be counter-productive for some and has encouraged a plateauing effect in performance during these windows of evaluation.

The subjectivity and reliability of appraisal was raised numerous times as being an area of concern with some teachers providing strategies that would work towards rectifying the problems. For example, a more formative approach to evaluation which gives a more accurate and fairer assessment of teacher performance. Furthermore, the deployment of appraisers who work in a different department to those they appraise although it is accepted that this approach brings its own problems, such as issues around subject knowledge.

The final point to mention is about the formality of appraisal, which can be rigid, unnatural and confined to pre-determined moments in time during a year. Such an approach does little in the way of promoting teacher engagement and there needs to be greater consideration of a more seamless and authentic approach so that teachers do not see it as something detached from their daily practice.

Chapter summary

The depth and range of data that emerged from the teacher/appraiser interviews and teacher questionnaires was extensive which revealed some interesting discoveries about how appraisal was viewed by both teachers and appraisal leads alike, which will be discussed in the following summary.

The head teacher from each school is ultimately responsible for appraisal although this responsibility is delegated to another senior leader; in both schools, this was the deputy head. These deputy heads are in charge of the practical delivery of appraisal which includes the task of ensuring each teacher has an assigned appraiser. This is typically carried out, although not exclusively so, by the teacher's head of department. Those who lead on appraisal are also responsible for the delivery of the school's CPD programme.

The overall consensus amongst teachers was that the purpose of appraisal was about teacher development with accountability featuring highly as well. Regarding the latter, the main mechanisms for achieving this were via lesson observations and exam results. The appraisal leads from both schools fundamentally saw appraisal as a way of achieving whole-school objectives, which reinforces what their appraisal policies say. Interestingly, the rhetoric of S1 was about investing in and developing staff which they saw as fundamentally important if they were going to meet the wider school objectives. S2 was less explicit about teacher development although target setting was mentioned on countless occasions which could be viewed as providing a structural framework by which teacher

development occurs. Both schools utilise target setting with data based and personal targets proving most common.

The process of rewarding staff was also raised by teachers and is worth highlighting because it does not refer to financial reward as one might expect. Some teachers talk openly about appraisal being used as a way of recognising what teachers have done. App.1 acknowledges this fact as well. This is now much easier for both schools to do in light of the systems they have at their disposal for storing all appraisal and CPD information. However, appraisal policies from schools 1 and 2 only make reference to one type of reward, which is of the financial kind.

The training of appraisers was called into question by a number of teachers with a general feeling that it was insufficient and relied more on an appraiser's own experience of being appraised themselves. For some appraisers, they were able to draw upon skills from previous roles such as being involved in teacher training. It is clear such a situation only exacerbates the gap between good and poor appraisers unless training is formalised and made available to everyone. The view of the inadequacy of training is reinforced, perhaps unintentionally so, by one appraiser (also a senior leader) explaining the main body of training is of an informal nature; namely watching senior leaders model expectations in order that this can be replicated. Any problems thereafter are managed on a case-by-case basis. The adequacy of training is called further into question as it transpired that the little training that does occur is focused on procedural matters for the purpose of ensuring appraisal functions properly.

The sources of information that are used in determining whether a teacher passes his/her appraisal are varied although the two most mentioned includes the use of data (e.g. exam results) and lesson observations. S1 uses this information to inform decisions regarding whether a teacher is eligible for a pay increase, or, on the other hand, if a teacher is struggling in their teaching whether they need additional support. There is also an acknowledgement that final decisions on appraisal do need to factor in other sources of information which can be obtained through e-portfolios, book scrutiny and the like.

A significant proportion of teachers highlighted the importance of subject expertise of the appraiser. On other occasions, teachers expressed concern if their appraiser did not have the experience of teaching the same subject. The overall feeling was that without this, the appraiser would not be able to credibly carry out the function of appraiser when it came to conducting lesson observations. This was even more pertinent for A-level lessons. Despite this general view, there was recognition of the value that non-subject based appraisers could bring to the role because of their ability to provide new insights and perspectives. Furthermore, it was argued that understanding of the generic skills required in teaching, those that transcend any subject area, was the most important thing. From an appraisal lead's perspective, it was strikingly obvious where their allegiance lay in this matter. For S1, they were advocates of using appraisers who were subject specialists whereas S2 was of the opinion that this is less important.

Teacher perceptions on about the appraisal process was fair and gave an accurate account of their performance generated a substantial response which may be indicative of the strength of feeling there is towards this area. Interestingly, only one teacher commented on accurate judgements being made through the appraisal process; all other comments carried a negative connotation. To begin with, concern was voiced about the inconsistencies that existed within the mid-term reviews insofar as some were carried out with robustness and regularity while other review meetings may not have taken place at all. Even appraisal leads cannot be sure whether all meetings happened, relying instead on an 'assumption' and 'hope' that they had. The importance of these meetings cannot be underestimated as they can provide an opportunity for a teacher to explain any contextual factors that may inadvertently affect things such as student outcomes (e.g. exam results data); this information can in turn affect whether a teacher passes their appraisal.

Lesson observations was also cited as an issue. Firstly, that some teachers can choose which class they are observed in, whereas others are not given the choice. The trustworthiness of lesson observation judgments was also called into question. It was felt that it did not provide an accurate portrayal of every day teaching because some teachers are able to manipulate the system to ensure

they receive a favourable judgement. The ability of some appraisers to carry out lesson observations was also cited as a problem. Some teachers also raised concern about variations they felt existed between appraisers as it related to levels of engagement and capability.

The only concern mentioned by the appraisal leads on the matter of accuracy pertained to new appraisers and whether their recommendations for teachers to receive a pay rise was justified; on occasions this was questioned citing the close relationship with those in the department as a factor that may have hindered an objective decision being made.

The setting of targets was commented on by some teachers, with some complaining that they were unattainable. In talking to the appraisal leads, it is understandable why they do this, otherwise teachers may be more inclined to choose easier targets because pay decisions are based on the passing of targets. However, due to the aspirational nature of these targets, it would be fair to argue that some teachers will not meet them, which calls into question the degree of margin that exists when deciding whether a teacher has done enough so that it will not adversely affect this aspect of their appraisal.

The final two points to make on the topic of accuracy relate to compliance and quality assurance. Regarding the former, it was felt by some teachers that appraisal was carried out for compliance purposes which meant the potential benefits it had to offer were compromised. It was mentioned that appraisal was simply a ‘tick-box’ exercise which led to some not taking it seriously. For example, it was an afterthought for some teachers and only came to their attention just prior to their review meeting. On the point of quality assurance, only one teacher referred to it although it was raised by an appraiser and those who lead on appraisal. The appraiser, also a senior leader, seemed satisfied that a role model approach adequately served as the benchmark by which other appraisers would follow. The appraisal lead from S1 highlighted that more senior leaders are now involved in the appraisal process to ensure there is more rigour, which is reaffirmed in their policy. The only reference made to quality assurance at S2 was when App.2 reviewed teacher targets to ensure they were sufficiently challenging.

The CPD provision at both schools was reflected in a mostly positive light with particular mention to the range, regularity and personalised approach that was provided. Some of the teachers also commented on the worthwhileness of the training they had received and its practical application. The appraisal leads clearly support teacher CPD evidenced by their willingness to send a number of staff on expensive training courses. Despite this financial investment, it was noted that in comparison to corporate businesses, money set aside for staff CPD was still relatively low. Financial pressures, budget limitations and the uncertainty of whether using expensive outside companies to deliver training will yield the desired return, may explain why both schools resort to more innovative and cost-efficient ways of running CPD through running an extensive range of in-house twilight sessions led by their own staff. Some teachers were very complimentary about such training although it was emphasised on occasion how time could be better spent doing something else (e.g. marking). A small minority of teachers made mention of the shortcomings of the school CPD, highlighting its sporadic nature with no follow-up.

An important question to ask is whether or not running an appraisal programme has any tangible impact on teachers and students. By the accounts provided, there is a suggestion that this is the case. Teachers are provided greater opportunities to reflect on their practice, they are supported more, the school benefits because appraisal targets are intrinsically linked to wider school objectives. Lastly, appraisal was mentioned in the context of improving exam results although earlier comments recognise that a causal link is difficult to prove.

The final points to make relate to recommendations for improvement. More financial investment and time were mentioned. Regarding the latter, more time per se was not necessarily the only solution but rather greater consideration in how existing time was spent. Teacher commitment or lack thereof and growing teacher dissatisfaction was raised because of the broad assumption that appraisal was done to teachers as opposed to them feeling part of it and having some control over the process. One could also argue that teacher commitment was further compromised by a general feeling amongst many that the appraisal of their performance was not always accurate, but was shrouded in subjectivity and issues

of unreliability. In conclusion, there was mention that approaching appraisal more informally would be more advantageous than the existing rigid format that currently exists, which some viewed as a compliance-based approach which does little in the way of facilitating greater levels of teacher engagement and perhaps transparency.

6.0 Discussion of results

This section looks to explore and discuss more thoroughly the main aims of this research, namely, the effectiveness of appraisal from the perspective of appraisal leads and teachers. To achieve this, each of the four research questions will be looked separately which, as a reminder, are as follows:

1. What is the purpose of appraisal and are all purposes overt?
2. How reliable is appraisal, and to what extent do appraisal leads and teachers agree on its reliability?
3. What is the impact of appraisal?
4. How can the appraisal process be improved?

6.1 What is the purpose of appraisal and are all purposes overt*?*

Senior leaders who have responsibility for appraisal stated its purposes were about staff development (formative approach) and student progress, achieved through direct intervention (S1) or mediated through target setting (S2) and referencing accountability also. Teachers were aware of the purpose of accountability, but greater emphasis was placed on the area of staff development.

In the main, it would seem that accountability is largely used to benchmark performance rather than to improve on it. If a teacher meets or exceeds the required standard, they may feel less scrutinised. However, this would not be the case for underperforming teachers, which will lead to more medium to long-term implications (e.g. competency proceedings). Two teachers (interviewee 2 and 3) from S2 and S1 respectively give the impression this is the case when they describe how if a teacher is not good enough, then “it’s all about accountability” and ultimately a “competence issue” (interviewee 2). In another instance, there is talk of teachers being good enough for the school (interviewee 3), which suggests there is a potential risk for those teachers who are appointed for a post but do not meet performance expectations over a period of time.

Whilst S1 advocates the importance of teacher growth and development, there is a strong indication that accountability plays a key role underpinning their appraisal programme. According to the interview data, most teachers from S1 held the view that teacher development was the core purpose of appraisal. These findings differ from a small-scale study by Gratton (2004) where it was discovered that teachers perceived appraisal as more weighted towards accountability. The fact that teachers did not identify accountability more forcefully could have something to do with S1 outwardly promoting teacher development (e.g. twilight CPD, Investors in People) which is more tangible in nature and more easily seen and experienced by teachers. In contrast, accountability exists in more subtle forms, which may shed light as to why teachers do not perceive it as they do teacher development. Gunter (2002) describes a similar happening, explaining how appraisal can be dressed up as a developmental process. Gunter also mentions how teachers are aware of the hidden agenda regarding its 'policing' purpose whereas in this study teachers were more vocal about the developmental aspects.

It will become clear later in this discussion that accountability plays a fundamental part of appraisal within both schools which poses the question of why teachers made less direct mention of it compared to the area of staff development. A possible explanation is provided by Du Gay (1996) who suggests that new forms of management seen in schools is of a less visible nature. Schools have increasingly been given more freedom, autonomy and self-regulating activity in recent times although government influence has not declined, just the strategy for how schools are managed. Bernstein (1977) describes how these new invisible pedagogies of management are made possible through more sophisticated and comprehensive forms of surveillance, as seen in teacher appraisal.

On a surface level, the appraisal lead/s and teachers saw 'development' as the main purpose of appraisal, reinforced by visible and symbolic gestures. However, it transpired that the less discernible agenda of accountability was at work, albeit less pronounced. Its influence was significant which raises the question as to why the rhetoric around teacher development (S1) was so prevalent. Upon closer examination of what was said by App.1 and her head teacher, ulterior motives exist, and teacher accountability drives the appraisal process.

App.1 talks about not just growing their students but staff as well. The motive behind teacher development eventually emerges when App.1 states that organisational success can only be achieved when a school has outstanding practitioners. This study reveals two ways this can be achieved; either through teacher development via CPD or accountability.

When teachers were asked about the purpose of appraisal, a range of responses were given. Some teachers expressed views that correlated closely with accountability. For example, teachers said accountability was used for the evaluation of exams results (interviewee 2); to ensure teachers are good enough for the school (interviewee 3 and questionnaire 15), hitting targets (interviewee 4) and to measure the quality of teaching (questionnaire 9 and 13). A concern here relates to the mixed views teachers hold about appraisal and what its purpose is. It is worth saying that when clarity of purpose is absent, confusion about mission and methods sets in which will lead to ineffective appraisal and makes it more difficult to improve teachers (Popham cited in Peel & Inkson, 1993).

To reiterate a point made earlier, school leaders have a hugely influential role in schools and what they prioritise and deem important which often permeates through the organisation, affecting everyone in it. The lack of impact that appraisal is having on improving teachers is arguably linked to school leaders being distracted from the core purpose of education which should be about placing the students and their learning at the forefront of everything else (Walker & Scott, 2000). Whilst the rhetoric from S1 and S2 would advocate they do place teacher development at the centre of their appraisal approach, which in turn benefits students, the evidence suggests to the contrary. The reason for this is inconclusive although Smyth (2001) mentions when schools use a new managerialist approach, they become distracted from the core purpose of education and adopt practices that are typically used in business, where a climate of competition and individualism is common.

This study shows that the purpose of appraisal was clearer in S1 than S2 and may be linked to the fact that the head teacher from S1 was present during the

appraisal lead's interview, who was described by App.1 as the boss who leads on appraisal properly. Such comments reinforce what was said earlier about the influence of school leaders.

Based on the findings of this study and the lack of substantive evidence, it does not appear that CPD had the desired effect that appraisal leads suppose. This will be discussed in more length in section 6.3. The discussion therefore turns to the role of accountability. Interestingly, unlike teacher development, the topic of accountability was not given the same level of exposure and was mentioned only once by S1. This is an interesting discovery because clearly the role of accountability from an appraisal lead's perspective serves a number of functions. To begin with, the head teacher from S1 describes how teachers must tick a number of boxes over four years to be considered for a pay rise. They take this approach because they are now responsible, as an academy, for setting their own pay structure and, importantly, they need to ensure salary levels are financially sustainable long-term. S1 also mentions how they check that teachers are meeting the criteria of their job description. The achievement of targets was something raised by both schools. S2 also talked about the use of their e-portfolio system and how appraisal review meetings were utilised to check up on teachers. These are but a few examples of accountability at work but strangely there was no utterance of them being used for accountability purposes. The reason for this could be down to the negative connotations that are associated with a summative approach to appraisal, which is commonly characterised by holding teachers accountable. The literature review makes it clear that teacher evaluation within the summative context takes place using the medium of lesson observations and exam data. Despite the range of external and uncontrollable factors that can affect these outcomes, teachers are nevertheless held responsible and in some cases made the scapegoat (Bennett, 1999) for underperformance. The summative approach to appraisal is the most recognisable form of appraisal, which schools were obliged to deliver nearly three decades ago. Today, schools have much more autonomy in how they run their appraisal programme but in the early nineties guidelines from government were very prescriptive and overtly accountability based (DES, 1991b). Whilst such an approach may have been fitting for its time, it is interesting that many features originating then are still seen today, and evident

in S1 and S2. Examples include the inclusion of formal but infrequent lesson observations, the setting of targets, the production of appraisal statements plus review meetings. Despite the new government guidance that came out in 2012, why do schools such as S1 and S2 still retain many of the original features of a previous era, which were underpinned by a summative approach? One possible explanation is that appraisal leads find this approach more time and cost effective compared to other alternatives although this is debatable, as will become clearer shortly. However, there is clearly a negative side to this approach which, as pointed out in the literature review, creates a climate of mistrust, defensiveness and risk aversion. Another reason why head teachers place a strong emphasis upon holding teachers to account is due to changing priorities. Amongst these is new managerialism which involves a number of control measures being used ranging, from the budget and forecasting, public relations and, more pertinent to this study, performance indicators and quality control (Grace, 1995). In light of this, there is little wonder that appraisal leads actively promote the positive aspects of appraisal (e.g. teacher development) and draw as little attention as possible to those elements of appraisal that could be seen as more negative.

According to comments made by those teachers who said accountability was a main purpose of appraisal, there was little indication that it impacted and developed practice. There were occasions where accountability acted as a prompt to get things done (e.g. interviewee 4: writing a scheme of work) and according, to 8% of teachers, it helped with the improvement of exam results. However, one can speculate that the pressure of being held accountable may have been a contributing factor to this.

It is clear from what has been discussed that two agendas are at work within both schools which influences how they run appraisal. A summative approach is much more pronounced despite being given little emphasis by those who lead on appraisal. The model S1 and S2 have adopted for appraisal can be traced back nearly three decades to an era of intense educational scrutiny which saw the introduction of the national curriculum followed by publication of the Regulations (DES, 1991a) and a Circular (DES, 1991b), which was intended to evaluate whether teachers were fulfilling their duties in the classroom. Whilst schools today

remain accountable also, the pendulum of control in a lot of cases has swung towards schools, as seen by academisation which includes financial, curriculum and assessment autonomy. However, such changes have not alleviated the pressures of accountability on school leaders. They still exist, some in the same form as before and in other instances a new form of accountability has emerged (e.g. Progress 8, EBACC measure).

The findings from this study reveal a conflict that exists between the summative and formative approaches to appraisal. Whilst the literature review made reference to the possibility of them co-existing (Isoré, 2009), it is clear from these findings that such an approach is not having the desired effect that appraisal leads suppose and is being undermined by a culture in which a deficiency of transparency and trust is evident. Why this has happened is likely associated to the newly formed priorities of school leaders where new managerialism is now dominant. Such an approach is increasingly common in schools (Grace, 1995) which sees school effectiveness being ultimately measured and decided by only those things that can be measured. This is because the culture of enterprise and commercialism, with its emphasis upon profit and production (Ball, 1994), sits at add odds with a culture of welfare, where relationships and collaboration are paramount. It might be assumed that school leaders do value the latter and do their best to cultivate such conditions in their schools. However, with the pressure they are under to be successful and the short time frames they have to demonstrate this within, systems of accountability with their intended or unintended consequences will likely be more prevalent.

The importance of a leader having a clear understanding themselves of the purpose of appraisal cannot be underestimated. School leaders are able to exert a significant amount of influence in their schools and when they are able to clearly define and communicate a narrative of appraisal, it is more likely that teachers will be able to articulate with a similar level of clarity and confidence what appraisal is for. If leaders fail to do this, it will increase the likelihood of confusion amongst teachers. The findings from this study demonstrate this point on a macro level and micro level. Regards the former, these are the main category types for appraisal as expressed by teachers (e.g. accountability purposes). On the latter, these are

the different views held by teachers which are sub-themes under a main category (e.g. exam results would come under accountability). Overall, there were wide ranging responses about what the purpose of appraisal was for. Responses ranged from a developmental and accountability driven agenda to the less frequently mentioned areas of career development and support. This demonstrates senior leaders are either unsure themselves or they are clear but fail to communicate it with teachers.

In reference to a comment S1 made about the accountability of its teachers, there is little doubt how much of an important role it plays to them. It also explains why they claim they have a rigorous system in place which monitors whether teachers are meeting expectations. The level of investment this requires is significant when considering the vast amounts of information that is collected. Student performance data, lesson observation feedback, appraisal meeting minutes and targets are some examples. Such an approach is an inherent feature of new managerialism with its quality controls (Grace, 1995). An important question in all this is whether such scrutiny makes any difference?

The sense amongst some teachers was that appraisal was carried out in a supportive fashion and gave rise to situations where teachers were recognised and rewarded, in addition to providing a forum by which reflection could happen. Whilst such experiences may prove genuine, it also raises the question about whether such instances mask a less obvious agenda at work, namely accountability. Rewarding teachers was cited as a purpose of appraisal by 28% of teachers although it was not recognised as such in the literature review, merely a by-product of appraisal. It is important to appreciate that some teachers see reward as a significant reason of appraisal. The most recognisable type of reward is performance related pay. Decisions on teacher pay are often made in conjunction with the meeting of appraisal targets, which in many cases involves a lesson observation target (S2). We have already discussed the unstable nature of using lesson observations to evaluate teachers, which is potentially exacerbated when financial rewards are at stake. The implications of measuring staff performance this way will be discussed more later. An alternative type of reward that became known was in the form of ‘recognition’. It is often forgotten that

teaching can be quite a lonely and isolating job (questionnaire 13) and, therefore, the work teachers do can sometimes go unnoticed. Questionnaire 11 and 12 refer to the importance of receiving 'praise' for the hard work that goes into what they do and the motivational effect it can serve. Such a practice is worth mentioning and particularly pertinent to S2 where two interviewees (1 and 9) insinuated a lack of incentive during aspects of appraisal (e.g. lesson observation). Both teachers could be described as 'dependable or superstar' performers according to McLellan and Ramsey (2007), possessing characteristics such as professional competence and reliability. McLellan and Ramsey argue there is nothing in it (referring to appraisal) for teachers like this although they might thrive on being recognised for their outstanding contributions. The findings above serve as a sober reminder to school leaders about how teachers need to be valued for what they do and a stark warning that if ignored, it can lead to a situation which impacts teachers negatively. To some degree, both schools have a system in place that captures what teachers do throughout the year, which may act as the catalyst for recognising what teachers have done. The head teacher from S1 for instance reads two formal statements from each teacher, which helps her to understand what they have achieved in the year. It is unclear whether she uses this information to praise staff though.

The final but significant finding to mention in this section pertains to the view from a quarter of the teachers that their experience of appraisal has encouraged them to be more reflective. Humphreys (1992) acknowledges the challenges that teachers face when they have barely enough time to take a step back to reflect on their practice. However, it would seem despite the apparent lack of time for appraisal, some teachers have managed to utilise review meetings or lesson observation feedback time to do this. Just how much reflection took place is not known although one can be sure that the full extent of reflective dialogue as described by Garratt (1987), outlined in the literature review, would have been hard to achieve in light of the brevity of some of the review meetings, as described and endorsed by App.2. Such circumstances raise questions about whether App.2 understands the potential benefits that can derive from facilitating such conversations.

The following examples provide a compelling case for its inclusion:

- teachers will know how to improve and change (interviewee 1);
- it will promote greater ownership of one's own teaching by encouraging teachers to think about their own practice (interviewee 4);
- teaching blind spots will be more identifiable (interviewee 8);
- clearer understanding of why certain things have happened will unfold (interviewee 9);
- broader thinking will be encouraged in respect of reflecting on the previous year whilst looking ahead to the following (questionnaire 6);
- teachers will be afforded the opportunity to think and plan about their own career aspirations (questionnaire 15)
- teacher confidence will be improved as they reflect on their successes (questionnaire 16).

These examples serve to illustrate the powerful effect that intentional reflective practices can offer, which according to interviewee 6 is often overlooked because of the busy role of teachers. Whilst this may be the case, a more probable explanation why it does not play a more prominent role is because of the summative approach that is prevalent in both schools. Such an approach does not lend itself easily to fostering conditions that are necessary for reflective conversations to occur which, amongst other things, needs to include honesty and trust between teacher and appraiser. Interestingly, neither appraisal lead talks directly about teacher reflection and the benefits it could bring.

From a teacher development perspective, there were few instances where a teacher could recount specifically how their practice had improved as a result of the school's CPD programme. This is applicable for teachers from both S1 and S2. What we do discover are hypothetical assumptions of what benefits could derive from certain CPD activities. The only exception is from interviewee 1, who struggled to adjust to teaching in the UK, was supported by S1 and eventually improved. This is discussed more in section 6.3.

6.1 Summary

Confusion over the purpose of appraisal was clear in both S1 and S2 and evidenced by the varied responses from its teachers. Appraisal leads understandably want to promote the developmental aspects of agenda and to a certain extent have succeeded in shaping the perceptions of their teachers who viewed their appraisal experience that way. The less obvious agenda of accountability was talked about less by appraisal leads but signs of its prominent existence was identified through the measures each school uses to assess teacher performance. Furthermore, it was clear from what some teachers were saying that they knew why it was used for and in other instances, the description of how teachers responded when being appraised was an indication that accountability was at work, albeit in a more subtle way. Appraisal for development purposes was talked about a lot but evidence of impact which will be explored more extensively in section 6.3 was less distinct. What we can draw from this section is the conflict that emerges when the emphasis is placed on the support and development of teachers when concurrently a new managerialist approach is being used which places greater worth upon measurable outputs such as exam results and observable features of lesson observations.

6.2 How reliable is appraisal, and to what extent do appraisal leads and teachers agree on its reliability?

This section looks at the importance of fair and accurate judgements being made about teachers as part of the appraisal process. The meaning of appraisal reliability will be explored before taking a closer look as to why it is important and the sources of information that are used to assess teachers. Because of the evidence of a performativity culture being found in both S1 and S2, the discussion will turn to the challenges and complexities this brings when appraising. The importance of appraiser training and how it can be used to improve appraisal reliability is also explained.

The view on whether appraisal in schools is reliable and accurate is contentious. A study by OECD (2013) reported that a significant number of teachers were of the opinion that appraisal provided a fair assessment. In contrast, principals in a study by Hopkins (2001) found it less so with one citing it as a failed process that does not capture an authentic picture of teacher performance. Despite this mixed picture, we can be confident that all parties agree that the reliability of teacher assessment within appraisal is important to get right, not least because of the implications it can have, for example, affecting remuneration, career prospects and possibly job security. On another level, uncertainty over the accuracy of judgements made during appraisal may lead to added stress and worry amongst teachers, which can affect morale and job satisfaction. In addition, and pertinent to this study, it may encourage teachers to teach lessons that are based on management expectations and not necessarily those that are in the best interests of the students.

This section will explore the reliability of appraisal through the lens of how teachers are evaluated. Section 2.2.1 of the literature review provides the context for why these measures were initially introduced and in the main were largely in response to concerns around student behaviour (Gillard, 2011), better use of public money (DfES, 1985), standards of teaching (Kelly, 2001) and the disparity in school evaluation systems that existed (Mortimore & Mortimore, 1991). Government guidance was published (DES, 1991a & 1991b) which prescribed precisely how

schools should be conducting appraisal. Two decades later, schools were still obliged to carry out appraisal but the guidance (DfE, 2012) was and still is less prescriptive. Schools have more freedom to carry out appraisal in ways that are fitting for their setting. On the surface, it would seem that both schools have embraced new innovative ways of evaluating their teachers (e.g. introduction of e-portfolio). Furthermore, that S1 and S2, particularly S1, use an approach talked about by Cardno (1999) and Piggot-Irvine (2003) where teacher evaluation is based on holistic and multiple perspectives. In practice, this refers to schools using a wide source of evidence by which to judge their teachers. However, the value in gathering lots of information about teacher performance is questionable if there is a bias towards some pieces of data over others, and also if the element of 'reliability' is compromised or indeed absent altogether.

Cohen et al. (2011) gives insight into the meaning of reliability by stating it is '…concerned with precision and accuracy…' (p.199). Punch (2009) expands on this definition by talking about 'reliability' being consistent over time. Within the context of appraisal, this study explores whether the information that is gathered about teachers during the appraisal process is representative, whether it is accurate and, finally, whether there is consistency between appraisers. In the same way that the researcher in this study is collecting data to form a conclusion, appraisers are also responsible for collecting data to make decisions. Both need to take care in collecting representative and relevant data, evaluating it skilfully, and ensuring that others would make the same evaluation given the same data.

Lyotard's (1984) depiction of appraisal as being highly pressurised where teachers are operating within a performance-led culture was seen to be true in this study based on evidence that some teachers felt compelled to perform differently under observation conditions to how they would at other times. The tension between belief and representation (Ball, 2010) was clear. Some teachers had to adapt their teaching accordingly whilst it could be presumed that more experienced teachers had fine-tuned the art of gaming the system during times of being observed. Blackmore and Sachs (2007) succinctly explain how these tendencies support the idea that what is seen to be done rather than substantively what is done is the important thing. The effects of performativity have made the role of appraiser more

difficult because they have to decipher what is real and what is a façade due to the high stakes of accountability.

The main methods of evaluation that were used in the early 90s remain equally if not more important in today's appraisal. The following statistics provide compelling evidence that teacher performance is based on limited pieces of information. For example, 40% of teachers claim lesson observations as playing a critical role in assessment. Of greater significance is the use of exam data, with 73% of teachers citing its use during the evaluation process. The consensus amongst teachers is that exam data and lesson observations are the main methods of evaluation.

More than half of teachers (56%) cited the 'reliability' of appraisal as a major weakness, with at least six specific references made to lesson observations alone. Teachers expressed how unfair they were, both from a personal perspective (interviewee 3) but also how less-able teachers were able to manipulate the system and make themselves appear better than they were (interviewee 4). Lavely, Berger and Follman (1992) add that these teachers can even go undetected. A vulnerability found with formal lesson observations is the way they encourage uncharacteristic behaviours amongst teachers, which can often lead to a spike in teacher performance, after which time there is a relapse and normal practice resumes. A number of teachers (interviewee 1, 4 and questionnaire 6 and 9), of which some are experienced, talk about how they make modifications to their teaching during such moments of intensified scrutiny. Interviewee 4 shares how some colleagues resort to pulling out their 'outstanding' lesson, which will be graded so. Whilst such outcomes will meet appraisers' specifications this may not necessarily be in the best interests of the students, particularly in the context of what interviewee 6 describes where an element of jumping through hoops exists. What has been described reinforces and supports a culture of performativity. Whilst we cannot be sure how widespread this issue is, it does exist. Due to the disparity that exists between lesson observation performance and what happens at other times, it needs to be considered that appraisal leads are basing appraisal decisions on information that is not altogether accurate.

From an appraisal lead perspective, what transpires from S1 are a number of inconsistencies and contradictions. Firstly, the head teacher alleges that more evidence is used in assessing teachers now compared to what happened previously. The head teacher used the analogy of a jigsaw, implying that many parts come together (a range of information) and these parts are used to create an accurate picture of each teacher. The sources of information that the head teacher alludes to includes scrutiny of work, feedback from subject leaders and reference is made to the reading of appraisal statements. However, based on what teachers said, there was little indication that these methods of evaluation are used. At best they appear to carry less weighting compared to other sources of information such as lesson observations. The head teacher even made reference to a 'no-brainer' formula, singling out lesson observations as the main method in determining teaching quality.

It is difficult to ascertain why S1 invests the time in obtaining additional evidence if it is not going to be used properly to inform judgements. Possible explanations behind their inclusion might be to create an impression to teachers that appraisal is underpinned by a rigorous, fair and holistic process. An alternate view is that appraisal leads possess a conviction that taking a broad assessment approach is morally the right thing to do and improves overall accuracy.

S2's approach to the evaluation of its teachers is predominately built upon target setting. The overemphasis App.2 places on this type of assessment bears strong resemblance to the guidance found in the 1991b circular (DES, 1991), where the use of exam data and teaching and learning targets featured strongly. Both schools are similar in the way they carry out lesson observations but there are variations in how it is implemented: three hours in S2 and one hour in S1. Interestingly, the head teacher from S1 makes the claim they routinely observe, which seems to disagree with what happens in practice and calls into question an earlier comment about how well they know their teachers when lesson observations occur so infrequently. According to a school principal in a study by Hopkins (2001), they believe that snapshot lesson observations do not reflect what teachers know and can do and calls into question how reliable this information is. Tidd (2017) echoes similar sentiments in an article written for the Times

Educational Supplement, titled ‘Appraisal snapshots do not show the whole picture’. Tidd describes an appraisal system where the skills and knowledge level of an individual are not being judged over the duration of the year as they should be. Coates (2015) acknowledges the lack of authenticity found amongst teachers during lesson observations, where there is a tendency for them to put on a show. Similarly, Ball (2000) argues how authenticity within practice has been sacrificed for impression and performance.

S1 is confident that the procedures they have in place to ensure this process gives an accurate picture are adequate, which in some ways was demonstrated in the example of interviewee 3 who was identified as someone who needed additional support. However, it should be noted that she was an NQT at the time, which brings with it additional observations and mentoring, which would have likely made it easier to identify areas of concern. The risk that a school runs when they place an overarching reliance on lesson observations is that they are open to being exploited, particularly if teachers are given the choice of class they want to be observed in (interviewee 3). It is also worth mentioning that successful performance in an observation lesson is typically down to a teacher’s ability to demonstrate a range of observable skills and competencies. The eventual implications according to Codd (2010) leads to the deskilling of the workforce.

What exacerbates the issue that Codd describes is the emphasis that both schools place on exam data. Schools are fully aware that good/outstanding judgements made by Ofsted are currently dependent on exam results and progress students make and how this compares nationally. Codd (2005) reinforces their importance by explaining the notion of quality is intrinsically linked to this type of ‘output’. Such a statement seems to resonate with what teachers (73%) are saying in this study about the status of exam data, captured succinctly by interviewee 1 who says appraisal is very much about results. Such a perspective will encourage teachers to believe that the concept of ‘quality’ is predominately associated with the achievement of good exam results. But as mentioned in the literature review, when the onus on exam data becomes overly prevalent, teachers deviate towards a teaching approach otherwise referred to as ‘teaching to the test’. This further strengthens the argument by Codd that appraisal, whilst intended to be a vehicle

for developing teachers, can actually inadvertently have quite the opposite effect. Another important point to make is by Gerver (2014) who holds the view that teachers who adopt this approach to teaching are in fact playing the game, which potentially leads to taking short cuts and doing the bare minimum to ensure appraisal expectations are met. Understandably, little value is to be gained through such an approach. Any admission of this occurring was unlikely to happen due to the negative connotations it holds. However, it is realistic to assume that teachers in this study do engage in such practices to some degree or another, based upon what the literature is saying. On this basis, it is quite possible that the two main methods that schools use to assess their teachers are inherently weak, motivates teachers to act in atypical ways and raises questions about the legitimacy of decisions made about teachers within appraisal.

To be clear, there is no suggesting that lesson observations and exam results have no place in the evaluation of teachers. Rather, the problem lies more in the climate in which they operate, one where trust between teacher and school is called into question. This lack of trust is fundamentally caused by the unhealthy relationship between the high stakes nature of appraisal (e.g. determines pay:- questionnaire 6) and the less than perfect nature of the evaluation system, namely that it does not provide a true reflection of its teachers (questionnaire 4 and 14). Whilst both schools hold the view that their appraisal systems are rigorous and fair, the emergence of subtle contradictions suggests otherwise. It is clear there is a hierarchy of importance as it pertains to the sources of evidence used to assess teacher performance. For instance, only 3/25 and 4/25 of teachers make reference to book scrutiny and portfolios, significantly lower than lesson observation and exam data. To highlight the importance of the exam data, S1 waits until August when exam results are released before making decisions about teachers' pay. It is likely these actions unconsciously inform teachers about the value that is placed on such a measure.

The findings from this study provide examples of the various appraisal responsibilities appraisers hold. They include the following: appraisers being required to support teachers through the process of setting targets, which impacts on future CPD training and potential career development opportunities and

appraisers reviewing and evaluating the meeting of targets, which includes a target on teaching and learning. This encompasses carrying out lesson observations which in turn generates feedback and judgements. This information is forwarded onto the appraisal lead/head teacher where decisions are made about whether a teacher will pass their appraisal. In some cases, this can affect future earning potential and in extreme cases, can initiate competency proceedings. Amongst all of this, the appraiser also needs to demonstrate a high level of interpersonal competency because sometimes the appraiser will be required to have a challenging conversation with those they appraise regarding issues in their teaching and may prove contentious. At the same time, they need to try to maintain a positive relationship. The irony here is the need for the appraiser to build a trusting relationship with those they appraise, which encourages openness and transparency. However, the system of appraisal with its emphasis upon performativity can limit and suppress these relational elements and, more broadly, the aspect of teacher welfare which is core to effective appraisal (Down et al, 2000).

In the same way some teachers are reluctant to be open about their weaknesses during appraisal for fear of giving the wrong impression and subsequent repercussions that may follow (Bartlett, 1998), appraisers may feel as such if they need support. Interviewee 2 provides some examples as to what this support might be:

> *"How do I word this?", "How do I do this?" and "I've got an issue here?"*

It would seem that even those who appraise are not exempt from the effects of performativity. The prevalent agenda of performativity does little in the way of creating conditions that encourage a secure and risk-taking environment (Biott, 1988) where open and honest dialogue can occur. This is antagonised further by App.2 who presumes that experienced appraisers have no need of additional training to support them in the role. The potential consequences if appraisers feel they are unable to access support to do the role could prove detrimental to those teachers they are appraising. The other issue that needs mentioning is the modelling of undesirable behaviours by the appraiser if they are unwilling to seek

support themselves. For example, if appraisers struggle to demonstrate vulnerability, transparency and trust, which is integral to effective appraisal, teachers might perceive this and model similar traits. What could follow is teachers 'performing' to the management when under the spotlight of evaluation. Natural behaviours and dialogue are replaced by something less real and authentic.

The discussion on reliability within appraisal moves on to the widely disputed topic of whether appraisers need to have subject knowledge to appraise effectively and accurately. It was unequivocally clear that the majority of teachers believed appraisers needed to teach the same subject of those they appraise. Of those who were interviewed 78% of teachers said a lack of subject knowledge was a weakness of appraisal and subsequently its reliability. Appraisal leads from both schools hold a different opinion to each other on the matter of whether an appraiser can appraise someone of another subject discipline. S1 believes that an appraiser needs to appraise those who teach the same subject area because of the strong correlation between subject knowledge and effective teaching. This approach is unsurprising taking into account the perceived importance of high-quality teaching and the role it plays in helping the school to achieve good exam results. App.2 (S2) on the other hand was adamant that appraisers should be able to carry out their role regardless of their own subject specialism. This conviction stems from personal experience in appraising teachers across different subject disciplines and age ranges (e.g. primary and secondary). The logic behind this approach is based on a personal belief that there is a common set of characteristics (e.g. all students making progress, behaviour expectations) and a range of generic teaching skills that should be seen across all lessons regardless of the subject being taught. App.2's opinion on this is backed up by Stanier (2017) who argues classroom observers do not have to be subject specialists, but they do need to be teaching specialists. McLellan and Ramsey (2007) share a different perspective on being a successful appraiser and comprises of them being able demonstrate interpersonal skills. As mentioned earlier, both schools fail to mention this aspect of appraising, for reasons likely associated to the climate of performativity that discourages such practices.

A picture that emerges from this study is that some appraisers are committed to the role, which makes for a better experience for those teachers (interviewee 2, 4 and 7), but this is not widespread practice. The variation in appraisal experience between teachers is very much at the initiative of the appraiser and the importance they place on the process (Bartlett, 1998). To address this situation, appraiser training and investment is paramount regardless of experience as a teacher, expertise and credentials (McLellan & Ramsey, 2007). The view from McLellan and Ramsey clearly implies that the role of appraiser is distinct from that of a teacher and fundamentally involves supporting teachers in their development, to help them improve as practitioners.

Before discussing the training of appraisers that happens in S1 and S2, it is a worthwhile reminder that effective appraisal only occurs when school leaders give it the priority it deserves (Piggot-Irvine, 2007) which includes the training of its appraisers. Equipping appraisers for the role is essential, and will go some way in eradicating the variable experiences that some teachers encounter, as described earlier. Whilst different personality types of appraisers along with their biases will always prove to be a challenging issue, the priority and aims of appraiser training should be to ensure appraisers are carrying out their role with as much consistency as possible. Procedural consistency is one area of concern, for example, interviewee 2 (a senior leader) almost admitting that mid-term reviews are delivered in an ad-hoc fashion. The execution in delivering judgements is another important area. Consistency here needs to be based on a commonly agreed standards, which teachers know of (OECD, 2013), and are applied by appraisers with precision and accuracy (Cohen et al, 2011) and not based on their personal opinion or intuition which will undermine the consistency over time that was mentioned by Punch (2009). Addressing these issues within appraiser training will facilitate greater levels of reliability.

The findings from this study reveal appraisal reliability is potentially compromised because of the lack of appraiser training, which is compounded by the magnitude of the role. It is clear there is a disproportionate relationship between the training appraisers receive and the responsibilities they hold. It is necessary to point out

that we are only referring to the frequency of training not the content, which also poses an issue.

The approach S2 uses for its appraiser training seems to contain a number of suppositions leading to inconsistencies in practice. For example, the senior leadership team (SLT) from S2 were the recipients of in-house training although it is unclear what this consisted of. Supposedly, SLT received additional training in order to provide effective support to appraisers as and when needed. However, this support is only activated when an appraiser wants help, which potentially creates a problem. S1 has adopted a different approach to appraisal training and is of a centralised nature. Training was introduced recently and consisted of one to two sessions. It was put in place because of concerns over unsubstantiated pay recommendations given by some appraisers as a result of a conflict of interest (e.g. line manager has a close relationship with a teacher they are appraising, which compromised judgements made).

The way in which each school approaches the training of its appraisers might be indicative of how much they value appraisal. Kyriacou (1997) explains that the appraiser is key to successful appraisal. As such, investment in training appraisers is called for. However, based on the accounts of both schools, it is clear that the rhetoric around training does not support what happens in practice. Whether intentional or not, it is apparent that appraisal leads are portraying appraisal as something important when, in reality, the inadequacy of training suggests it is less so. It is plausible that appraisal leads believe in the value of appraisal but possibly apathy (McLellan & Ramsey, 2007) has set in, which means it is not receiving the attention and investment it needs. Alternatively, the issue might be more to do with 'ignorance' about how much and what type of training is required, which explains why appraisal training only exists in a tokenistic form. When examining what an appraiser does, the 'type' of training an appraiser receives is paramount. Fullan (1997) recommends less focus on the systems that evaluate teachers and more emphasis upon improving relationships. Evidence of such training was absent from conversations with both appraisal leads and the reasons for this are likely attributed to the new managerialist approach to managing teachers which is more concerned with things that can be measured (Grace, 1995).

This final section looks more broadly at how appraisal is making teachers submissive to a system for the sole purpose of meeting managerial expectations. Teachers are required to perform in what Codd (1994) recognises as the emergence of a performativity culture. Ball (2003) refers to the pressures teachers are under to perform which sees plasticity replace authenticity. Examples are plentiful in this study and include the way teachers modify their normal teaching during an observation (interviewee 1, 4, 6 and 9), teachers accepting appraisal targets set by the school (questionnaire 7) which are unattainable from the beginning (interviewee 8) but recognise that ambitious targets are the way things should be done (interviewee 7 and App.2) and compulsory attendance to CPD that is repetitive and adds little value, a situation described by interviewee 8:

> *"You just turn up, say your name and sit down and you do listen, but you just think your time could be spent so much better"*

Interviewee 4 refers to engaging in the tedious nature of uploading evidence that relates to meeting the Teacher Standards. All these examples indicate that teachers are subjected to appraisal and valued for what they do and can produce, which entails creating a spectacle and consequently leads to the emergence of designer employees (Sachs, 2010), which is something that will be looked at later. On a similar point, the nature of appraisal and how it is being delivered poses a great threat to the professional identity and autonomy of teachers. This is the challenge educational leaders must contend with in deciding whether summative, formative or a combination of both approaches are best to enable accurate and reliable judgments to be made about teachers.

6.2 Summary

In summary, this section initially highlighted the contentious views from teachers and principals about the reliability and accuracy around appraisal and the judgements made about teacher performance. The background context as to why teachers should be evaluated in the first place was discussed before taking a closer look at the reliability of appraisal. The challenges that appraisers face when evaluating teachers they appraise is to decipher between what is authentic

everyday practice and what elements are an ‘act’, carried out to impress. Appraisers have to contend with such situations because of the influences of performativity and the impact this has on teacher behaviours when being evaluated.

On the topic of how teachers are evaluated, both schools but particularly S1 stated that they drew upon a wide range of information that helped them make more accurate judgements about their teachers. What transpires in reality is that they place more emphasis upon exam data and lesson observations than other areas such as book scrutiny. There is an indication that teachers across both schools know this and might explain why they pay less attention and time on areas they feel are not important, for example, uploading evidence onto their e-portfolio. Such attitudes also stem from a belief, certainly by some teachers, that appraisal practices are done for compliance reasons. The narrow focus on how teachers are evaluated showed it had a negative effect on teacher practices and behaviours. For example, teachers are more inclined to demonstrate unnatural behaviours during small windows of assessment in order to secure a positive outcome. The onus placed upon exam results also means that some teachers are modifying their teaching practices and adopting styles of teaching, commonly known as ‘teaching to the test’. Teachers are gradually doing things mainly to meet management expectations which will inadvertently lead to the deskilling of teachers because the motivation to impress is largely limited to the demonstration of observable skills.

Inadequate appraiser training was also a significant issue affecting reliability and comes as a result of apathy, ignorance or lack of understanding. S1 acknowledges its approach to appraiser training needed to change whereas S2 indicated that the content of its training is fit for purpose. The little training that S2 offers its appraisers is mainly for those new to the role and is mainly procedural in nature. Other forms of training rely upon appraisers being proactive and seeking out help as and when needed. However, due to the high stakes nature of appraisal, it is possible that the same reluctance of teachers to be open and transparent for fear of giving the wrong impression might equally apply to appraisers also. An additional challenge faced by appraisers, particularly those who appraise those in

their own department, is maintaining a balance between being supportive and holding others to account. The challenge that appraisers face is how to facilitate the relational aspects of appraisal, which involves teacher trust and authenticity, when the system of appraisal is designed and managed in a way that encourages the opposite. Based on Ball's (2000) work, relations between teacher and appraiser are more judgmental in nature where value is placed on productivity alone.

The topic area of subject knowledge was also discussed with a high number of teachers signifying its importance. However, the literature review and App.2's opinion reveal a different perspective that challenges the tightly held view on this matter. It was mentioned that appraisal can be effectively delivered by non-subject specialists on the condition that they are trained in areas such as interpersonal relationships alongside a clear understanding of what constitutes strong teaching.

6.3 What is the impact of appraisal?

This section discusses the impact of appraisal. For clarity purposes, references to CPD will be made frequently due to it being an integral element of appraisal, whose aims are to specifically develop teachers. The discussion unfolds by firstly highlighting the benefits of CPD/appraisal after which, the researcher will explain areas of CPD/appraisal that have yielded little in return and possible reasons why.

From an appraiser perspective, App.1 is confident that their CPD provision is bespoke and tailored to meet the individual needs of teachers. This show of confidence is likely attributed to the way they feel they know their school and staff, which allows them to strategically plan and deliver training and support at individual, team and whole school level. There is also a strong sense of rigour and thought that goes into their CPD programme which is underpinned by a belief that when done properly, it can be powerful, supportive and developmental (App.1). From S2's viewpoint, App.2 said their CPD programme was a factor that contributed to improvements in their GCSE and A-level results. She also talked about their sixth form being outstanding (Ofsted rated) and the reason for this was because they put a lot of time and energy into the sixth form and its teachers. What App.2 could not do was make the connection between the CPD they offered their teachers and the outcomes of appraisal. A shortcoming identified in both schools was how they often struggled to gather evaluative feedback from teachers about aspects of CPD.

It is clear that there is a lack of tangible evidence as to the impact of school appraisal and CPD across both S1 and S2. Conversations with teachers during the interviews and data collected from the questionnaires indicate frequent references to impact but the researcher concludes this is merely based on indirect benefits and hypothetical assumptions. An example of the former is where interviewee 4 undertook a project that involved re-writing the marking policy, the outcomes of which may have benefited teachers and students. The same teacher also describes how appraisal made her get 'off her bum' and write some schemes of work, which she admitted would have needed to have been done anyway. In this case, the impact of appraisal was primarily that of an accountability tool, rather

than developmental. Other examples include the sharing of good practice (interviewee 3) and the “buzz” amongst teachers that emerged when an external training provider visited (interviewee 6). Neither teacher could explain the impact of these experiences, which is representative of the majority of teachers in this study. Despite 64% of them stating the aims of appraisal are for developmental reasons, there is a dearth of evidence as to what noticeable gains resulted as a consequence. What teachers did quite effectively was provide a hypothetical assumption about what benefits could derive from certain appraisal related activities. For example, interviewee 4 said in-house training is a good thing when delivered by staff who work at the school because it means if there are any follow-up questions, all she has to do is find that member of staff. It should be noted that interviewee 4 did not refer to a time when she did have a follow-up question she needed to ask of a member of staff. However, she draws comparisons with someone external visiting and how much more difficult it would be to ask subsequent questions post training session, making the point that it would not be face-to-face.

From a positive standpoint, the most notable impact of appraisal was from interviewee 3. She arrived in the UK to teach and struggled to adapt to her new surroundings (S1). Lesson observations confirmed this was the case and consequently the school supported interviewee 3 by enrolling her on their ‘embedding good, embedding outstanding’ programme. S1 carried out an evaluation of this programme and discovered that many who completed the training went on to achieve good or outstanding grades in subsequent lesson observations. Whilst interviewee 3 confirmed that support offered by her school was helpful, it is hard to measure just how much difference it actually made in isolation when other factors would have played a part as well. For example, the transition for all teachers can be quite difficult when joining a new school, particularly in forging a positive relationship with the students and setting expectations, for example, of a behavioural nature. This can be exacerbated for a teacher whose sole experience has been teaching abroad and the inherent challenges that comes when teaching in a different cultural context. It is not clear where S1’s programme of ‘embedding good and embedding outstanding’ sits in relation to appraisal although it is likely that lesson observations provide the trigger

by which teachers who are causing concern are asked to attend. The above provides the clearest example of how a school's appraisal programme works to improve a teacher's performance in the classroom. S1 explained the historical context of this type of support, in that it derived from an induction programme and over time morphed into something that is proving beneficial to their staff. Because the origins of the 'embedding good, embedding outstanding' programme evolved from training that was specifically designed for new teachers, it is conceivable that the new programme still bears similarities with its predecessor training programme and why the only teacher who talked about it was someone new to the profession. The point here is that there is every chance that this type of training and support is not actually tailored towards the majority of staff, those who are competent in their role as teacher and for some with many years of teaching experience.

On a more negative note, the natural evolution of the training and support just described suggests a lack of planning on behalf of the school to really understand and meet the needs of all its teachers. Mackopoulou and Armours (2006) are of the view that schools really need to know their teachers' prior knowledge and experience if they are to meet their needs more effectively. However, the problem lies in the performance culture of appraisal where the value placed on people and the importance of relationship building is replaced by something much hollower and more ineffective. Conditions like this encourage what Ball (2000) describes as the re-construction of professionals to mere technicians. Whilst teachers at both schools did not necessarily describe their experience of CPD in these terms, it is important to stress the lack of in-house training that was tailored towards the needs of individuals. The only exception was when teachers organised their own development, which took place outside of school. It is difficult to make any definitive assumptions here, but it seems plausible that the pressures of performativity renders the collective view of teachers more important than as individuals, reaffirmed by Deleuze (1992) who says individuals have become dividuals and masses. When this happens, which may be unintentional, the impact of CPD is adversely affected because of the lack of thought and attention to an individual's needs. The outcome means teachers are not improving based on training they receive and are looking elsewhere, outside of the organisation for development training.

A final point to make about both school's provision of CPD rests on the issue of 'trust'. Appraisal leads and school leads are very much in control of what happens in this area and in some ways it is unsurprising when there is so much riding on examination success. However, Cvetkovich and Lofstedt (1999) do point out that control can potentially breed distrust. In contrast to this approach is one that was referred to earlier in Chapter 3, mentioned by Ingvarson (2002), which sees more of a collegial approach where external regulation (e.g. appraisal processes) is negligible. Evidence of this happening in this study were not evident within the formal nature of appraisal.

For all of the positive rhetoric surrounding each school's appraisal, from teachers and appraisal leads alike, it is surprising to learn there is little evidence of impact, particularly as it pertains to changes in teacher practices and how it ultimately benefits students. This is concerning considering the time and financial investment that goes into appraisal. The review of literature draws attention to a study by Wragg (1996) in which 1100 teachers took part. Wragg reported that 49% of teachers found appraisal affected their classroom practice. Based on these findings and what has been discovered in S1 and S2, a significant proportion of teachers are not benefitting from the current approach to appraisal and CPD. One theory behind this is attributed to current practice being in danger of compounding a superficial notion of professionalism, which encourages teachers to demonstrate a series of competencies which in turn inhibits teachers from thinking critically about their own practice (Patrick et al, 2003). The emphasis placed on teacher performativity is leading to a situation whereby teachers are not simply changed or improved but 'remade'. The experience involving interviewee 4 serves to reinforce this; she was prompted to complete a task not based on the demands of her job, but through management controls. This example illustrates that some aspects of appraisal (e.g. target setting and associated CPD training) do little in the way of developing teachers but rather is evidence of performativity at work. The notion of professional identity also emerges here where a teacher's self-understanding and techniques of self-improvement are being shaped by the micro-practices of representation and fabrication, judgement and comparison (Rose, 1992).

The imbalance between inputs (what happens in appraisal) and outputs (impact from appraisal including CPD) may be influenced by what Down et al. (2000) describe in the literature section, namely teachers '…performing to the management' (p.219). When such a climate exists, the trust element, as described in section 6.2, between teacher and appraiser are severely compromised. According to Ball (2000), trust is an integral part of being a professional although this can be weakened when a climate of performativity exists, the likes of which encourages inauthenticity and meaninglessness in everyday experiences and activities (Ball, 2000). When such conditions are allowed to exist, appraisal procedures are more likely to be seen through a lens of 'compliance', which undermines the potential benefits that could derive from appraisal. Twenty per cent of teachers made the link between appraisal and compliance in this study. According to one principal who took part in a study by Hopkins (2001), appraisal was no longer a priority. This principal was honest in their assessment of the way they ran appraisal and admitted it was an evaluation process that was based on rituals that had minimal impact on student achievement and growth. Such a succinct description of appraisal bears similarities to what the findings in this study show. Unlike the principal just described, appraisal leads in this study were unable to identify any flaws with the current systems of appraising except the lack of time for training (S1). The culture of mistrust may have something to do with this, impacting even those who lead on appraisal. It is feasible to assume that they also need to impress their superiors (e.g. head teacher) and deliver outcomes themselves. An alternative line of thought is that appraisal leads actually believe the current system is working and proving effective, convinced that new technologies and approaches such as 'blue sky' and in-house carousels are effective enhancements to the 1991 model of appraisal. These innovated practices are explained in Chapter 3 where Pollitt (2014) refers to transformative management which sees leaders trying to deliver more with less. Whether such approaches actually produce the intended school improvement they set out to achieve is debatable according to teacher feedback. In more general terms, it is clear that appraisal leads from both schools, who assume their appraisal system do have a positive impact on their teachers, lack the evidence to support this assertion.

6.3 Summary

The findings from this study reveal no convincing proof that school appraisal/CPD is proving to contribute to teachers' development. There is a strong belief in the relationship between appraisal and teacher development from a teacher's perspective, although there is no evidence to warrant this assumption. Firstly, there seems to be confusion between how appraisal is used, whether it is for developmental purposes or that of accountability. Secondly, teachers have shown themselves adept at providing vivid descriptions in how their appraisal experiences could prove beneficial. However, what is lacking are personal accounts of where appraisal has actually improved some aspect of practice or outcome. From the perspective of appraisal leads, there is common agreement that their appraisal provision facilitates the development of teachers. S1 makes the connection between knowing their staff and having the ability to develop them. S2 is convinced its developmental strategy has improved A-level and GCSE results. On both counts, S1 and S2 cannot verify the level of impact their appraisal programmes have had with any degree of specificity and this is compounded further by a lack of self-reflection and evaluation.

6.4 How can the appraisal process be improved?

The aims of this last section are to draw upon the appraisal experiences of teachers in order to establish how it can be improved. In doing so, it will be useful to draw upon both the negative and positive aspects of the current appraisal programme from both schools, accepting that both can act as a catalyst for future improvement.

Reflection

Teacher reflection was cited by a quarter of teachers as providing an important and meaningful benefit which is reinforced by comments made by Upsall (2001) who is of a view that teachers who engage in such practices are more likely to improve the quality of their teaching. Ingvarson (2012) claims 'reflection' is an important characteristic of being a professional. Questionnaire 4 is clear that for appraisal to provide 'real development' and to build upon prior learning, time needs to be allocated for it to happen. Interestingly, appraisal in both schools is not predominately aimed at cultivating reflective practices but rather it happens coincidently if the opportunity presents itself. This however is sometimes difficult because meetings between appraisers and teachers are mainly for the purpose of setting and then reviewing targets. Whilst these moments may allow a teacher to engage in some level of reflection, it should be noted under what conditions these meetings take place. In S2, mid-year review meetings are intended to be short encounters, an approach advocated by App.2 for the reason of saving time. Such interactions are not entirely conducive for any productive reflections to take place. In S1, the sporadic nature of interim meetings is also an issue, with some teachers not able to meet their appraiser as regularly as others due to their appraisers working in a different part of the school. From an appraisal lead perspective, they gave no mention of 'teacher reflection' which further suggests it is not deliberately planned for despite it being talked about by several teachers.

Recommendation:

- To ensure all appraisal meetings allow time for teachers to reflect on their practice and that appraisers are trained to facilitate such conversations.

Trust

An explanation behind why teacher reflection does not feature more prominently within appraisal could well be linked to the conditions in which appraisal is undertaken. According to Down et al. (2000), a less formal, non-structured and more spontaneous environment encourages authentic learning, the likes of which feature strongly in reflective conversations. However, a common theme that emerges from this study is the way that appraisal is tightly regulated from which there is little room for teachers and indeed appraisers to deviate. The likely message that this conveys to teachers is one of 'mistrust', which erodes teacher professionalism as well as signalling a lack of faith the management have in their teachers to competently respond to the needs of students. Gunter (1996) asks an important question: is appraisal external or internal to the individual teacher? It is evident from this study that teachers from both schools are 'being appraised' (Gunter), involving a series of tasks and other formalised activities carried out in an audit like-fashion (Elliott, 2001). Ball (1999) describes how running appraisal this way is fundamentally driven by surveillance and comparison between teachers and departments, the effects of which lead to a breakdown of collegial relations and is replaced by internal competition and a new type of commitment based upon a corporate culture and survivalism. Ball (1999) goes on to say how this will eventually lead to a changing identity where teachers are being re-constructed as technicians rather than professionals who are capable of critical judgements and reflection. There is little evidence in this study to suggest teachers are central to the appraisal process where they are given the responsibility to self-manage and take control of their own journey of development. On the contrary, there is a clear sense that appraisal leads determine what happens, which only serves to illustrate the point Humphrey (1992) makes about how so many appraisal programmes are characterised by manager control. The reason why this matters is twofold. Firstly, according to Scobie (2001) teachers end up losing their professionalism if they do not have the commitment to continually develop. This commitment is critical for the purpose of self-improvement and comes under threat when a teacher's autonomy and ability to exercise discretion becomes increasingly controlled. The second reason relates to the important and already mentioned concept of 'trust'. Bisschoff and Mathye (2009) argue that when teachers do not feel in control of the process, a lack of trust becomes more

prevalent. Questionnaire 7, in the context of appraisal targets, refers to a lack of ownership which serves to illustrate Gunter's earlier comments about appraisal being 'done' to a teacher. During these circumstances it is less likely for a teacher to be transparent and open about areas that require development because of the element of vulnerability this brings and the real or at least perceived fears of what this might lead to. This in turn could be exploited and be used against them (e.g. the absence of a pay rise, the passing of appraisal, promotion etc). Isoré (2009) says that a teacher's propensity to reveal their weaknesses and fears is dependent on their confidence in their appraiser. Even within a small-scale study such as this, it was noticeable that this type of trusting relationship was sporadic at best.

Recommendation:

- Appraisal leads and senior leaders involve teachers in how they should be appraised. This may lead to aspects of appraisal sitting outside of the control of appraisal leads, which will encourage not just more spontaneity but also trust.

Evidence base

Teacher apprehension during moments of being evaluated are real and likely to generate a range of negative emotions, not to mention atypical responses. Interviewee 1 describes it as 'threatening', interviewee 5 talks about people being afraid of it and questionnaire 1 mentions how it worries teachers, whilst questionnaire 6 refers to the extra stress it causes. Such negative feelings are possibly justified taking into account the combination of the high stakes nature of appraisal together with the different perceptions and biases that appraisers bring to the role. Interviewee 1 expands on this point by explaining that the results of appraisal will also contain variances because of human error. In addition to the 'judgements' that appraisers make about teachers, there is also the issue of 'commitment'. Questionnaire 15 expresses concern that judgements are 'reliant upon the quality of the reviewer' and questionnaire 12 refers to some appraisers being more thorough and interested than others. Whilst appraiser training can address such issues, in its current form this may prove difficult (see section 6.2) and casts doubt over the reliability of judgements made about teachers (see

section 6.3). To reduce the effects of these issues, schools intentionally or unintentionally collect a range of data about its teachers (App.1). However, whilst this could be seen as a way to appease teacher concerns about appraisal accuracy, in reality both schools place a greater emphasis on evidence from lesson observations and examination results than other pieces of information despite claims to the contrary. Such a narrow view challenges the idea that teaching is a complex endeavour when judgements are consigned to observable elements of a lesson observation and data sets, with apparently little consideration given to other factors and sources of information. It is not surprising that such conditions encourage a situation where authenticity and commitment from teachers plays a more subservient role to plasticity and fabrication (Ball, 2000). Slater (1997) provides a succinct description of what is now happening in schools where the '…phantasmagoria of signs becomes more substantial as the reality it once represented evaporates' (p.194). An example of this happening in this study is provided by interviewee 4 who refers to some teachers putting on a show during observations and others marking a set of books because they know they have got an observation. Interviewee 3 provides an additional perspective by stating teachers can do 'amazing' when being evaluated but that does not necessarily mean they are 'amazing' generally.

The natural inclination for teachers to 'tweak' lessons and 'make them a bit more jazzy' (interviewee 6) is understandable but also possible because evaluations such as lesson observations only occur between one and three times a year. Small windows of assessment are likely to encourage unnatural behaviours, those designed to impress, whereas others forms of teacher assessment such as portfolios and gathering evidence against the Teacher Standards are designed to provide a more long-term and holistic view of teacher performance. Appraisal leads make reference to these sources of information although the value they hold is debatable, appearing to play a secondary role to that of lesson observations and exam data. It is plausible that teachers know this and explains why they perceive the collection of evidence as a time-consuming activity done mainly to satisfy the management. Interviewee 9 has an opinion on this practice by saying '…the problem is we pay lip service to some of the things that we could do really

well'. To put it another way, the collection of evidence (e.g. via portfolios) might hold more merit if teachers really believed it mattered.

Recommendation:

- School leaders to stop placing too much emphasis on exam results when assessing individual teachers. In most cases, teachers will have not taught a group all the way through their time at secondary school. Furthermore, there are various external factors that can affect how students may perform in exams, the likes of which a teacher has no control over.

Evidence collection

The impression the researcher received was that fundamentally the methods by which teachers are assessed are not inherently bad, rather it is the way they are organised and the conditions in which they function that requires improvement. The latter is more challenging to alter because it involves a cultural change (see Chapter 3). The organisational side of things is more open to change. For example, interviewee 3 recommends carrying out lesson observations but beyond the 'snapshot' format that currently exists. For example, having a more long-term approach which involves multiple observations. Whilst for some teachers this may prove even more stressful, for others it could alleviate the anxieties they hold because they know that everything does not hinge on one judgement. Multiple observations is an interesting proposition and certainly stands in contrast to what S1 does already where the current observation cycle in a year adds up to 60 minutes in all and conducted either over one or two periods of time. Interviewee 3's proposal of assessing teachers in the classroom over different academic years is likely to be too hard to implement under the current conditions of appraisal because appraisal is based on a yearly cycle due to it being closely linked with examination results. In essence, appraisal in its current form is driven by short-term goals, which are typically seen in teacher and whole school targets. If areas of concern emerge, as they did with interviewee 3, improvements in areas highlighted need to be attended to relatively quickly to prevent the school from taking further action (e.g. competency). This might prove problematic if teachers were trying to modify deeply embedded aspects of their practice, which may require the unlearning of bad habits and the establishing of new ones. An

important question is whether it is realistic and feasible, particularly in light of the lack of time available for teachers to make changes in their teaching within the short time frame of a year. In light of this, it is necessary to ask whether S1 and S2 are failing some teachers unnecessarily based on the short time frames they work to.

Recommendations:

- Lesson observations are replaced by frequent but short lesson drop-ins. This will mean teachers are unable to carry out extra planning like some do in preparation for a formal lesson observation. This approach will create a more accurate picture over time of how a teacher is performing. The feedback that is provided to teachers following these visits is based on criteria that both appraisal leads and teachers devised, which reduces any ambiguity. Train more teachers (peers) who conduct lesson drop-ins in addition to appraisers. This will encourage teachers to see that this form of assessment is not a top-down managerial approach.

- The assessment of teachers is also based on a more long-term approach such as portfolios. Teacher input is crucial to ensure it does not become a time consuming and compliance-based task, which provides little self-value. It should ideally aid reflection.

Coaching

A further recommendation was made by interviewee 9 and in many respects has close ties with teachers being more reflective as referred to earlier. Interviewee 9 suggests an approach where teachers are not just being appraised but coached. He believed appraisal would be ‘amazing’ as a consequence. Doing this potentially dismantles the current hierarchical nature of appraisal and provides a platform whereby two parties come together on equal terms, thus creating a sense of ownership and control for the teacher. In addition, coaching at its most effective is carried out when a purposeful and trusting relationship is first established which challenges the notion of individualism and isolation, which are common features of the entrepreneurial identity (Sachs, 2010). Hargreaves (1994) argues that such

conditions must be removed from the appraisal process and instead there needs to more genuine collaboration. Reeves, Forde, O'Brien, Smith and Tomlinson (2002), echoed by Stoll and Fink (1996), also hold the view that establishing a collaborative culture, in which collegiality and team working is the norm, is what matters when trying to facilitate teacher development.

To create this culture of collaboration, such as found in coaching, is not easy due to the practical challenges it poses but also due to the issue of reconciling it with a culture where the focus is on measurable outputs (Lynch, 2013). As Lynch goes on to suggest, these conditions ultimately redefine human relationships in transactional terms, as the means to an end, the end being that of high performance and productivity. Furthermore, Lynch discusses how trust, integrity, care and solidarity, factors that are considered integral to strong social dynamics, are being subordinated to regulation, control and competition. It is clear that the current systems of appraisal in S1 and S2 are not intentionally designed to foster trusting collaboration but rather isolation which, again, is an integral aspect of the entrepreneurial identify.

Recommendation:

- Appraisers are trained in the field of coaching in which they are taught to ask pertinent questions about a teacher's practice. Such an approach empowers teachers because it encourages them to think about what they are doing and supports them in taking necessary action.

Sharing practice and meeting individual needs

It is essential that appraisal leads have a greater knowledge of the quality of CPD which often comes via teacher feedback forms. However, according to interviewee 2 this is not happening in S2 and they are of the opinion there is a loophole or a gap that needs to be closed in this regard. As senior leader, interviewee 2 admitted he had never filled one in, so it is improbable that other teachers have done so. The appraisal lead in S1 also commented about how very few teachers complete their evaluation form following CPD and put it down to them being 'super busy'. As a consequence, appraisal leads will have an incomplete picture as to what

training teachers have been on that is worthwhile sharing. Goe, Biggers and Croft (2012) are of a view that to ensure schools are making shrewd investments, they recommend an inventory of current professional development training that has happened and how it has been used. Furthermore, if this issue could be resolved, the appraisal leads might be better positioned to match CPD with individual needs and avoiding duplication year on year. Currently, there is a feeling amongst some teachers that CPD is not proving as constructive as appraisal leads suppose. Interviewee 3 is of the opinion that it is very hard to do something in CPD that fits with all teachers. He goes on to explain how sometimes he just sits there and thinks, 'I can't apply this actually'. Questionnaire 5 admits CPD is sometimes more applicable to a small group of teachers as opposed to everyone. To overcome this issue just described, there should be more dissemination. Whilst there is some evidence of this taking place already (S2), clearly more needs to happen if teachers want more choice in deciding what exactly they want to do (interviewee 8).

Recommendation:

- Ensure teachers who attend CPD complete their evaluation which in turn informs how, if appropriate, it can be disseminated.

Time

The lack of time was also singled out as an issue that undermined appraisal effectiveness. Questionnaire 2 says that expectations have led to them teaching in a certain way which takes too much time. They also claim there is too much emphasis on providing evidence rather than doing the things they are trying to evidence. This comes as a consequence of performativity where the use of information, indicators and school performance measures are used as mechanisms to assess teachers (Ball, 1999).

Questionnaire 2 is an appraiser also and makes further remarks about how they are appraising too many teachers and, as such, is concerned about the reduced impact and support this will lead to. Questionnaire 4 talks about appraisal being too rushed. Creating more time for appraisal will only happen if time can be taken

from somewhere else. We have already established that holding teachers accountable can take a lot of time and is costly. To trust teachers more and to allow them to operate as professionals potentially frees up time from surveillance type activities. However, the reality of this happening is unlikely due to new managerialism being so deeply embedded within the fabric of how educational establishments are run and monitored today. If there was appetite for change, which was not seen in this study, appraisal leads would need to be resolute and mindful of the subtle ways in which the accountability of teachers can easily re-appear in other guises.

Recommendation:

- Appraisal leads need to create sufficient time for various appraisal activities to happen, which will likely reflect positively about the value it holds.

6.4 Summary

Exploring the effectiveness of appraisal from the perspectives of appraisal leads and teachers has been worthwhile because it has highlighted there is no simple resolution to improve it. A challenge presented in this study has been to question rigorously whether everything said about appraisal, which in many ways was positive, accurately portrays what teachers feel and whether personal experiences bear witness to the impact that many suppose. This is important because effective appraisal needs to be built upon honesty and transparency and the findings in this study suggest it actually promotes the opposite. Fundamentally, school leaders need to question whether the basis by which many appraisal systems run, namely accountability, is actually working. Even when schools, like the ones in this study, articulate a high emphasis on teacher development, the effect is still broadly the same. Whilst there is no easy answer, findings from this study reveal that the formal nature of appraisal is associated strongly with compliance, as perceived by the teachers and consequently teachers disengage from the process. The origins of why a compliance regime operates in schools has had profound implications in not just how teachers are managed but also how they carry out their work and, importantly, the motivations that undermine the reasons for these actions. It is

evident that teachers are more open to approaches that are of a spontaneous and informal nature. However, such preferences are not intentionally catered for by those who lead on appraisal.

The clear lack of appraiser training, together with the understanding as to what it should consist of, means teachers are not getting the type of support they ideally need. The importance of trust needs to be regained and a dismantling of the performance culture that is so prevalent needs to be tackled. Taking a long-term view of teacher performance is one option alongside a review of the methods by which teachers are evaluated. Some of the current forms of evaluation such as exam data and lesson observations promote unnatural behaviours amongst teachers which ends up undermining the legitimacy of appraisal.

Teachers in this study were respectful of their superiors and were complimentary about certain aspects of appraisal. However, it was made clear, but more indirectly, that they are not working in a safe environment, free from political, social and business pressures (Isoré, 2009). For this to happen, teachers and appraisal leads, and possibly head teachers as well, need to work together to create a trusting and cooperative relationship which will reform the current practices of appraisal and move it forward in a productive way (Odden & Kelly, 2002).

7.0 Conclusion

This piece of research compared the perceptions of appraisal leaders and teachers with respect to school-based appraisal and to attempt an understanding of how effective it is. A study of this nature was worth doing due to the researcher's own experience working in different schools where teacher appraisal was carried out mainly for compliance, resulting in little evident impact. The researcher wanted to delve deeper into this area with the hope of gaining insights as to whether effective appraisal exists and, if so, the form it takes.

Four questions provided the basis on which this was to be done. The first question asked what the purpose of appraisal was, and are all purposes overt? Research findings discovered clarity of purpose was lacking, more so in S2 than S1. Furthermore, there was a lot of rhetoric around staff development from both leaders and teachers alike. However, the role of accountability, whilst less pronounced, played a significant role within appraisal. The second question asked how reliable appraisal was and whether appraisal leaders and teachers agree on its reliability. It is clear from the interview and questionnaire data that a difference of opinion exists between appraisal leaders and teachers. Training or the lack thereof was cited as a major issue taking into account the level of responsibility an appraiser holds. In addition, the information used to evaluate teachers was mainly that of lesson observations and exam data according to teachers, when appraisal leaders, mainly from S1, claimed a broader view was taken. The third question looked at the impact of appraisal. Disparities of opinion between appraisal leads and teachers emerged here also with the former citing more benefits when the researcher was only able to determine one specific example of impact, described by a teacher during an interview. The last question looked at how appraisal could be improved. It was clear that procedural expectations were a priority which in turn had a suppressing effect and prevented teachers from engaging in potentially more effective practices such as having time to be reflective and collaborate with others.

Key findings reveal a commonly shared view that teacher development plays an important role in appraisal, evidenced by the breadth and regularity of CPD that is made available. When scrutinising the effect of CPD, there was little in the way of evidence that showed how it contributed towards improving teacher practices and student outcomes despite claims to the contrary (App.2). Teachers generally cited hypothetical benefits of appraisal as opposed to describing actual experiences. Such a discovery is disappointing and calls into question why this is the case. The most notable barrier was lack of time caused by the busy work schedules of teachers and school leaders alike. Resources, such as funding, were singled out as another reason but on fewer occasions. Whilst these areas in and of themselves are important, the researcher believes there is a more fundamental reason for the apparent shortcomings, which resides more with the model that each school uses as the basis by which they deliver appraisal. On close evaluation, it is clear that these programmes share very similar characteristics to the statutory framework that was released by the government in 1991 during an era when schools were under immense and possibly unprecedented pressure to account for their performance in a number of key areas. Whilst an element of teacher development was incorporated within the guidance provided, it was very much driven by an accountability agenda. Why S1 and S2 continue to deliver their appraisal this way despite more recent guidance by government released in 2012 providing much more autonomy for schools in how they appraise is unclear.

In essence, both schools pay lip service to teacher development when the model by which appraisal is delivered is based primarily on accountability. The reason why teacher perceptions on development agree with appraisal leads can likely be attributed to the overt emphasis that is placed on such provision (e.g. twilight, CPD training, inset days, appraisal targets supported by training etc.). It is worth remembering that each school's policy on appraisal makes reference to teacher development, with S1 even referring to their policy not as appraisal but rather professional development. What happens in reality is a more covert approach which focuses on holding teachers to account, underpinned by a new managerialist approach. A proportion of teachers recognise that appraisal holds such a function and subsequently leads to a culture of performativity which forces certain behaviours amongst some (e.g. lack of transparency and trust, temporary

alterations to teaching practice when being observed, teaching to the test, disengagement etc.). The reason for these behaviours stems from an unhealthy fear of what might happen if they do not pass their appraisal. Appraisal delivered this way eventually erodes teacher professionalism and identity, and inadvertently redefines what it means to be a teacher as merely a technician, whose responsibilities lie less in thinking critically and acting independently and more in ensuring externally imposed requirements are met; the latter of these is used to measure and evaluate teacher effectiveness.

Both schools say they use an approach to appraisal that is fair, backed up by the wide range of information and evidence they utilise in order to make judgements about their teachers. This is intended to capture a true representation of teacher performance and increase the accuracy of judgements made and perhaps alleviate concerns of teachers in the process. However, this study revealed that both schools place greater emphasis upon lesson observations and exam results, which some teachers perceive is the case and subsequently exacerbates the negativity surrounding appraisal.

A further and significant factor that also undermines the effectiveness of appraisal is the lack of training that appraisers receive. Added to this, there seems to be a lack of understanding as to what the content of this training should consist of. Whilst an appraiser's subject knowledge was highlighted as an integral aspect of appraisal, it came to light that priority should in fact be placed upon equipping appraisers to be better people managers who are effective in facilitating teacher reflection. It was also revealed that the context in which this approach would really flourish is when interactions between appraiser and teacher are regulated less and informal conversations are allowed to evolve naturally. At present, it is felt that appraisal is too rigid, prescriptive and driven by a new managerialist culture which has shown itself to have disengaging effect upon teachers.

Current practice which incorporates the setting and reviewing of a range of targets provided a clear indication that appraisal is designed primarily to serve the needs of the school and that performativity was an integral part of appraisal. Targets that are based on areas such as examination results and teaching serve to illustrate

this point. The main aim of CPD is to support teachers to reach their targets and, more broadly speaking, school-wide targets. However, the researcher speculates that CPD provision from both schools is simultaneously exploited in order that schools appear to cater for the professional needs of their teachers and create the impression that they themselves are at the centre of appraisal. Such motives, possibly unintentional, explain why so many teachers felt teacher development was so pivotal to appraisal. The survey data revealed little CPD impact, possibly because it was tailored primarily for school-based purposes as opposed to the teachers.

It is important to stress that teachers were in the main complimentary about those who lead on appraisal and felt supported. However, they were at the same time discerning about the hidden agendas of appraisal which proved counter-productive for everyone. A fundamental failing on behalf of the appraisal leads was the lack of self-reflection to see if what they were leading and delivering was indeed appropriate and relevant. Perhaps if they had, time spent on worthless endeavours could be more appropriately used and available funding could be channelled towards training decided upon by teachers and based upon areas of weakness that were identified through a transparent dialogue with appraisers. It is likely that only then will the disparities between inputs and outputs of appraisal be fully realised and teachers regain a sense of professional autonomy.

The value placed on this piece of research will only be realised if we can draw important lessons from it that translate into meaningful application.

Contribution to practice

- A body of staff are trained to coach with the intent of gradually establishing a coaching culture. Coaches are selected by the teacher so may not be their direct line manager. Teachers dictate the coaching conversation and are encouraged to reflect and discover solutions to issues. The teacher ultimately is empowered and in control.

- Appraiser training is delivered on an ongoing basis to ensure appraisers possess relevant and up-to-date skills.
- Lesson observations, which are typically carried out between one to three times per year, are replaced by more frequent unannounced lesson drop-ins. The teacher receives informal feedback covering what worked well and areas for development if applicable. Support is in place if and when concerns arise.
- Teachers have much more autonomy in deciding the CPD they need to improve their practice. Coaching forms part of this.
- Annual evaluations of appraisal are conducted by appraisal leads which allows teachers to comment anonymously. As part of this review, appraisal leads must evaluate and quantify the impact appraisal has had on teachers.

Contribution to Professional Knowledge

It is the researcher's belief that a contemporary and extensively explored study that looks at the effectiveness of appraisal by comparing the perceptions of appraisal leads and teachers makes a valuable contribution to knowledge. The comprehensive nature of this study within a UK academy-based context looks at the different facets of school appraisal which have been scrutinised and the views of appraisal leads and teachers compared. Such an approach has provided rich and unique insights into internal conflicts that exist within each school and revealed how it has limited the impact of appraisal. Both schools appear to be investing time and finance into an appraisal system that does not appear to benefit either teacher or student in a way that demonstrates credible proof. Furthermore, this drain on resources continues because neither school seems to be prepared to evaluate their current provision in a way that would highlight these shortcomings. On a more specific note, it is clear that both schools seek to evaluate the performance of its teachers but fail to evaluate the system and approaches which are used to carry out this function. The researcher is unaware of any other study that has highlighted this important issue.

Limitations

A case study approach was used in this piece of research in which two schools took part. Both schools are quite different to each other with one being selective and the other comprehensive. Despite these inherent differences, the findings did reveal some similarities. Despite these encouraging signs, the case studies carried out were too small to suggest the results could be generalised more widely. The low response rate amongst those teachers who completed the questionnaire made it more difficult to know whether the views given were merely just individual or representative of teachers outside of this study. We can likely assume there was a mixture of both. The final limitation to this study was not being able to interview the head teacher from each school separately, in addition to the appraisal leads. Whilst it was not possible to interview the head teacher from S2, the researcher was unaware that the head teacher from S1 was going to be present during the interview of App.1. Upon reflection, the head teacher provided rich insights into their school appraisal's programme but the downside to her being there was whether or not her presence hindered App.1 from being openly transparent.

Future research

As we bring this investigation to a close, it is important to consider what implications there are for future research in this area. The points above highlight some measures which can be acted upon immediately. Looking longer term, more work needs to be done to explore whether appraisal can exist and run solely based on a developmental model, in the absence of accountability. An important question that needs to be asked is whether the galvanising of trust within the teacher workforce proves more beneficial compared to a compliance-based accountability model which often breeds resentment amongst teachers. Finally, future research also needs to look at the types of CPD that are being offered to teachers, the impact it has on practice and how students are benefiting.

The researcher's comments about the studying a Doctorate in Education

Studying a Doctorate in Education with Reading has been instrumental in helping the researcher take a more reflective and pragmatic view about things. Within the context of this study, the breadth of insight that has been accrued through an extensive literature review, combined with the researcher's own empirical research, has encouraged a more contemplative approach and a desire to challenge and question how we approach aspects of education such as appraisal.

Interestingly, a study of this type coincides at a time when schools are increasingly making more use of research to inform and reinforce practices in the classroom. The introduction of the Chartered College of Teaching in 2017 serves to illustrate this point, and whose priorities partly lie in equipping teachers with access to high quality research, helping bridge the gap between research and practice. It is the researcher's view that such activities can only improve the professionalism and status of the teaching profession.

8.0 Reference List

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9.0 Appendix

Appendix 1.0

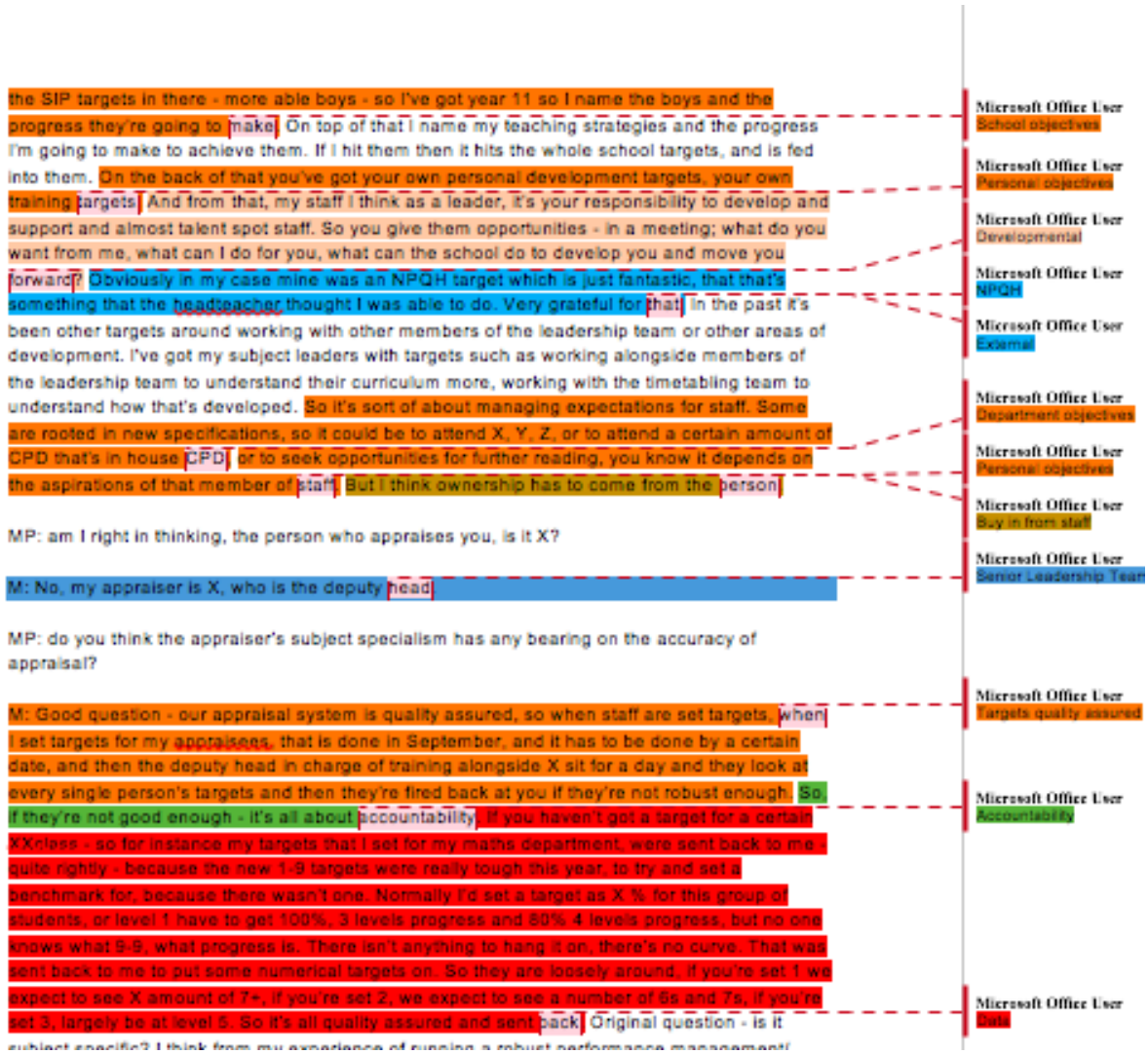
Interview questions

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. What do you see as the purpose of appraisal?
3. Who is responsible for appraisal at school?
4. Do you think appraiser subject specialism has any bearing on the accuracy of appraisal?
5. What sources of information do those responsible for appraisal consult when appraising you? In your opinion, does this information provide an accurate reflection of teacher ability/performance?
6. What are your opinions on appraisal in terms of strengths and weaknesses, benefits and disadvantages?
7. How would you describe the effectiveness of the CPD programme? Is there anything that stands out as being particularly beneficial?
8. Do you feel that your experiences of appraisal has been worthwhile for you? If so, in what way?
9. Has your experience of appraisal had an impact on the students you teach? If so, how? How do you know it was as a result of appraisal?
10. Would you say the appraisal process is cost and time effective?

Questionnaire questions

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. What do you see as the purpose of appraisal?
3. Do you feel your appraiser/s are suitabily prepared to carry out thir role?
4. Do you think appraiser subject specialism has any bearing on the accuracy of appraisal?
5. What sources of information do those responsible for appraisal consult when appraising you? In your opinion, does this information provide an accurate reflection of teacher ability/performance?
6. What are your opinions on appraisal in terms of strengths and weaknesses, benefits and disadvantages?
7. How would you describe the effectiveness of the CPD programme? Is there anything that stands out as being particularly beneficial?
8. Do you feel that your experiences of appraisal has been worthwhile for you? If so, in what way?
9. Has your experience of appraisal had an impact on the students you teach? If so, how? How do you know it was as a result of appraisal?
10. Would you say the appraisal process is cost and time effective?
11. How would you improve appraisal at your school?

Appendix 2.0
Example of a coded interview manuscript



Appendix 3.0
Example of themes, major and minor category types that emerged from the data

Theme	Major Category	Minor Category
Purpose	*Accountability*	
	Support	*Identify strengths & weaknesses*
	Development	*Career development* *Improving other outcomes* *Teacher reflection*
	Target setting	
	To benefit the organisation	
	Reward staff	
Process	*Set targets*	*Data* *Management* *School objectives* *Department objectives* *Teaching and Learning* *Personal objectives*
	Review targets	
	Update portfolio	
	Lesson observation	*Feedback*

Appendix 4.0a
Exemplar of how the frequency of items that were mentioned were recorded (teachers and appraisal leads interviewed)

Strengths of the appraisal system

Interviews

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	App1	App2
Teacher reflection			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		
Developmental	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓
Supportive	✓							✓		✓✓✓	
Sharing good practice		✓	✓								
CPD developmental	✓	✓		✓		✓				✓✓	
Range of CPD		✓		✓		✓					✓
Regularity of CPD			✓			✓	✓				
Knowledge of staff										✓✓✓	
CPD – application										✓	
Cost effectiveness	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓	✓
Time effectiveness		✓				✓					✓
Wider benefit for school		✓		✓			✓			✓	

Appendix 4.0b
Exemplar of how the frequency of items that were mentioned were recorded (teachers who completed questionnaire)

Questionnaires

	P1a	P2a	P3a	P4a	P5a	P6a	P7a	P8a	P9a	P10a	P11a	P12a	P13a	P14a	P15a	P16a
Teacher reflection	✓					✓				✓	✓				✓	
Developmental	✓				✓			✓	✓		✓			✓		
Supportive							✓									
CPD developmental	✓															
Range of CPD									✓		✓	✓				
Regularity of CPD									✓		✓					
CPD – application				✓								✓	✓	✓		✓
Wider benefit for school	✓		✓													✓
Bespoke												✓				
Buy in from staff		✓														
Impact on student outcomes				✓					✓							
One-size-fits-all										✓						
Quality assurance			✓													
Portfolio								✓		✓						

Appendix 4.0c
The table below summarises the totals based on 3.0a and 3.0b.

Summary of results

	Participants interviewed	Questionnaire participants	TOTAL
Teacher reflection	56% (5/9)	31% (5/16)	40% (10/25)
Developmental	78% (7/9)	38% (6/16)	52% (10/25)
Supportive	22% (2/9)	6% (1/16)	12% (3/25)
Sharing good practice	22% (2/9)	0% (0/16)	8% (2/25)
CPD developmental	44% (4/9)	6% (1/16)	20% (5/25)
Range of CPD	33% (3/9)	19% (3/16)	24% (6/25)
Regularity of CPD	33% (3/9)	13% (2/16)	20% (5/25)
CPD – application	0% (0/9)	31% (5/16)	20% (5/25)
Cost effectiveness	44% (4/9)	0% (0/16)	16% (4/25)
Time effectiveness	22% (2/9)	0% (0/16)	8% (2/25)
Wider benefit for school	33% (3/9)	19% (3/16)	24% (6/25)
Use of non-subject specialists	11% (1/9)	0% (0/16)	4% (1/25)
Facilitates authenticity	33% (3/9)	0% (0/16)	12% (3/25)
Bespoke	22% (2/9)	6% (1/16)	12% (3/25)
Buy in from staff	22% (2/9)	6% (1/16)	12% (3/25)
Impact on student outcomes	44% (4/9)	13% (2/16)	24% (6/25)
Accurate judgements	11% (1/9)	0% (0/16)	4% (1/25)
One-size-fits-all	22% (2/9)	6% (1/16)	12% (3/25)
Quality assurance	11% (1/9)	6% (1/16)	8% (2/25)
Portfolio	0% (0/9)	13% (2/16)	8% (2/25)
Cross-school collaboration	11% (1/9)	0% (0/16)	4% (1/25)
Consideration of other factors	22% (2/9)	6% (1/16)	12% (3/25)
Provides focus	11% (1/9)	19% (3/16)	16% (4/25)

Appendix 5.0
All coded text was categorised by themes, major and minor categories to make analysis easier

Strengths of the appraisal system
Teacher reflection
P1 ...where you can say how you felt about the lesson, where you can improve where you would change
P4 ...does get you sometimes thinking 'ok, what have I actually done?' whether it challenges and actually leads to extension activity or whether it's 'ok what did I put two years ago
P4 ...it's becoming to me a bit more reflective
P6 ...and also that reflection of what they've done well, and I think that that is so easily overlooked when you're really busy
P8 definitely, feedback from appraisals definitely more reflective, especially when they say things that you haven't even noticed, or even just things that you have
P9 We look at the data, we talk about it and even when you go for your targets on the appraisals the day you sign it all off there is a conversation and there is always wanting to look for a reason why things have happened, good or bad, so I think that's a strength
P9 I'm more reflective now that they're not graded. I listen more to the advice that's given to me. I also feel free to argue with the advice that's given to me a little bit more now as well. I feel like that's kind of. I do listen to it more and I'm also more self-critical as well. So I noticed this in the last couple of my observations I'm like, I don't need to argue for me being outstanding because I know it wasn't outstanding and I can say, this probably was why, so yeah I'm probably more self-critical which is actually a good thing.
P1a benefits; helps teachers reflect on their performance
P1a Reminds me to stay reflective and put into practise the comments I have had from appraisals
P6a