Continuous Professional Development Among Primary Teachers in Ireland

AN CHOMHAIRLE MHÚINTEOIREACHTA
The Teaching Council

A Report Compiled by the ESRI on behalf of The Teaching Council

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Table of Contents

List of Figures and Tables

Executive Summary

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) has become a major policy priority within education systems worldwide. In Ireland there has been a proliferation of policy documents in recent decades aimed at improving the professional development of teachers throughout their careers. During the last 20 years, education policy has begun to specifically address the issue of CPD. Although much attention has been given to the restructuring of and investment in CPD provision, its impact on classroom practices and methodologies and student performance and attainment, less attention, however, has been given to the reasons teachers participate in CPD and, in particular, the factors which encourage or motivate take-up of this type of in-career training. This report seeks to address this gap in the literature by using teacher and principal-level data from the Growing Up in Ireland survey. This unique data source allows, for the first time, for a greater understanding of the factors influencing teacher participation in CPD. We examine teachers' personal characteristics, the school-level factors which may influence CPD participation in addition to broader school-level influences such as school climate and leadership within the school. Using data from school principal questionnaires it is possible to explore the extent to which CPD participation is influenced by school leadership.

Findings in this study show female teachers have a higher level of take-up of CPD than male teachers. In line with international studies, teachers' career stages are an important factor in CPD participation. CPD take-up increases with level of teaching experience, being highest for those who are more than 20 years teaching.

Focussing on school and classroom level characteristics, findings also show that teachers with Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) working with them are somewhat more likely to engage in CPD. CPD take-up is also found to relate to the type of students in the class. Teachers with one or more pupils with a learning disability are somewhat more likely to participate in CPD. Moreover, those working in multi-grade classes have a higher take-up of CPD than those teaching single grade classes, all things being equal.

Interestingly, school size, class size or school location do not appear to be associated with CPD take-up. CPD take-up is higher, however, where there is a positive school climate and where teachers work with children who enjoy school. Having a teaching or administrative principal has no significant impact on CPD

participation. However, principal tenure has a significant impact even when taking into account teachers' own career duration.

Principals were also asked about the extent to which they felt the teachers at the school were 'eager to participate in in-service training'. Findings show that a high proportion felt this was the case; however, this appears to vary by individual and school level factors. For example, the number of years working as principal influences their perceptions of teacher openness to in-service. Principals working between 6 and 10 years are more likely to think that nearly all their staff are open to CPD compared to principals who have been in the post for just one year. School size also appears to impact on principals' views with 88 per cent of principals working in smaller schools reporting that nearly all their staff are open to CPD compared to 56 per cent of those in medium to large schools.

Chapter 1

Introduction and Overview

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The take-up of formal and informal learning opportunities for teachers has been the subject of much debate in education research internationally. Moreover, attracting, retaining and developing teachers across the professional life-cycle have become policy priorities in many countries (OECD, 2005). Studies show that formal and informal professional development are essential for improved instructional practices, pedagogy and student outcomes (Day et al., 2007). Much of the focus has been on the outcomes of Continuous Professional Development (CPD)[1], such as teacher skills and instructional practices; the effectiveness of various processes for adult learning; and whether professional development has an impact on children (Garet et al., 2001; Desimone et al., 2002). Although some of this research recognises that teachers have powerful effects on student outcomes, there has been relatively little attention given to the role played by CPD in overall teacher effectiveness and, more specifically, the factors influencing CPD take-up by teachers (with the exception of Choy et al., 2006; Richter et al., 2010).

In Ireland, education policy increasingly emphasises the role of CPD for teacher effectiveness which has resulted in the expansion of CPD programmes in recent years (Coolahan, 2003). A number of small-scale research studies in Ireland have pointed to the value of CPD for teacher practice and curriculum implementation (see, for example, Murchan et al., 2005; Mooney-Simmie, 2007). Although support services have been introduced which place emphasis on the concept of lifelong learning and provide professional development programmes for teachers, little is known about the extent of participation in CPD and how take-up varies by teacher or school characteristics. Coolahan (2003) indicates, "there is an absence of authoritative data on the extent of teacher participation in continuing professional development courses". Given the scale of investment in CPD and the dependence of education reform on providing effective CPD, the knowledge base on which teachers take CPD regularly and why needs to be strengthened. Using data from a large sample of primary teachers and school principals drawn from the Growing Up in Ireland study, this study aims to address this gap in knowledge.

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[1] 'Continuous Professional Development' and 'Professional Development' are used interchangeably in this report.

This report provides a unique insight into the factors influencing teacher participation in CPD in Ireland by analysing teacher- and school-level influences. Commissioned by the Teaching Council, it investigates the level of teacher participation by focussing on individual teacher characteristics (including age, gender, years teaching experience and qualifications) and school context (e.g. age and gender of principal, experience, level of cooperation and openness to CPD within the school). The main objectives of this study are:

1. to examine the extent to which teacher participation in CPD is related to individual teacher characteristics, such as prior qualifications, gender, age, and years of teaching experience;

2. to examine the extent to which teacher participation in CPD is related to the kind of school they work in, including school size, the profile of the pupils in the school, staff involvement in decision-making and eagerness to participate in CPD.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

This study is based on the findings of the Growing Up in Ireland survey which is a national study of 9 year old children. As well as focusing on children and their parents, the study has collected very detailed information on their teachers and school context over the school year 2007/2008. For each of the over 8,000 children in the study, questionnaires were completed by their classroom teacher and school principal. The teacher questionnaire, completed by 1,916 primary teachers in 898 schools, recorded how much professional training the teacher had completed in the last 12 months. Individual-level characteristics were gathered such as gender, age, years teaching at primary school level, and years teaching in the current school.

Class-level details, such as class size and whether the teacher has any SNAs working with them, are explored. In addition, teachers' feelings about the level of control they have at school were explored in relation to:

- selecting subjects to be taught;

- deciding about the content of subjects to be taught;

- deciding about teaching techniques;

- choosing textbooks and other learning materials;

- disciplining children;

- selecting the year group you teach.

Teachers were also asked about their perceptions of students' behaviour and enjoyment at school. A scale of class climate was created based on questions related to whether students:

- enjoy being at school;

- are well-behaved in class;

- show respect for their teachers;

- are rewarding to work with;

- are well behaved in the playground/schoolyard.

For details on school-level characteristics, the Growing Up in Ireland Principal-On-Self questionnaires recorded school-level details including:

- school size;

- gender mix;

- number of full-time and part-time teachers;

- profile of student intake and specifically the number of students with literacy, numeracy or emotional behavioural difficulties;

- a scale of problems or challenges at the school;

- teacher cooperation and general school culture.

Some personal details about the principal are also available such as age, gender, experience and some data on leadership and openness to CPD within the school.

A major advantage of the Growing Up in Ireland database is that it collects information on whether teachers took part in professional development in the previous year and, for those who did, the number of days involved. This information can be used to construct four groups of teachers: those with no or low participation in CPD (<=1 day), those with moderate levels of involvement (2-5 days), those with high levels of participation (6-10 days) and those with very high levels (11+ days).

1.3 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

For the first time, this study allows us to examine and understand what influences teacher participation in an Irish context. The unique data available in the Growing Up in Ireland survey allows us to examine how both individual teacher and broader school level factors influence teacher CPD participation. Moreover, the data allows for the exploration of more subtle aspects influencing CPD uptake such as school climate and leadership.

The authors acknowledge, however, that there are some limitations to the data stemming from the fact that the survey was not purposely designed to gather information on CPD in Irish schools. The findings highlight the need for future survey-based research to further examine CPD uptake by focussing on aspects such as the time allocated to teachers or principals to participate in CPD or the type of CPD most and least taken by teachers. Moreover, a qualitative study of teacher attitudes towards CPD generally would provide greater insight into the factors influencing their participation, their opinion of CPD provision and whether they feel supported at school level by the principal. Such an evidence base could improve participation overall and allow for more appropriate CPD courses to be provided. Similarly, gaining insight into principals' attitudes toward CPD would provide greater context to the findings relating to school climate and leadership in this report. Further suggestions for future research are outlined in Chapter 3.

1.4 INTERNATIONAL EMPIRICAL AND THEORETICAL RESEARCH ON CPD

Modern views of professional development characterise professional learning not as short-term intervention, but as a long-term process extending from teacher education at tertiary level to in-service training at the workplace (Ball and Cohen, 1999; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Putnam and Borko, 2000). CPD is said to build on existing knowledge and understandings and aims to ensure that teachers have access to the up to date knowledge needed to be effective (Starkey et al., 2009). The term 'professional development', however, can refer to either the actual learning opportunities that teachers engage in, or, the actual learning that occurs when teachers participate (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). For example, the OECD (2009) defines professional development as 'activities that develop an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher', while Winkler (2001) views professional development as a process that transforms teachers' experience into expertise and this takes place when they develop their own theory from their experiences. Taking an international perspective, it is clear that research on the professional life-cycle and work lives of teachers emanates from very different traditions and national contexts, and increasingly this research is paying attention to the historical, cultural and political contexts in which teachers are embedded.

During the 1980s, CPD was generally based on the deficit mastery model which used 'one-shot' professional development approaches and the view that teacher learning is something that is done to teachers (Richardson and Placier, 2001). Recognizing the limitations of traditional approaches to professional development, educators, researchers, and policymakers began to look at professional development differently. Their goal was to restructure teachers' work so that they could learn together and work collaboratively to effect changes in teaching practice and student learning (Corcoran, 1995; Gilford, 1996; Little,

1993). Since then, CPD has been reconceptualised from a professional growth or learning perspective to professional development. Inspired by adult learning theories and in line with situated cognitive perspectives on learning (Clarke and Hollingsworth, 2002; Putnam and Borko, 2000; Smylie, 1995), teacher learning is seen as an active and constructive process that is problem-oriented, grounded in social settings and circumstances and takes place throughout teachers' lives.

One method employed globally is the 'workshop' which in recent years has been broadened to include 'reflective action' and 'learning networks' so that teachers themselves become more effective learners (Murchan et al., 2009). However, effective learning by teachers is increasingly influenced by the extent to which CPD can optimally and meaningfully draw on adult learning theory, teachers' own experiences as learners, their perception of the need for learning, existing demands on their time and the rewards for such involvement (Claxton, 1996; Daines, Daines and Graham, 1993). Based on this notion of ongoing and lifelong learning embedded in schools, research has stressed the need for this to be a natural and expected component of teachers' professional activities and a key component of school improvement (Putnam and Borko, 2000; Smylie and Hart, 1999, cited in OECD, 2010, p. 32).

Although researchers differ in their understanding of CPD, a broad consensus (Hawley and Valli, 2001) has been established on some key elements including:

- school-based learning that is integrated with day-to-day school processes;
- teachers defining their needs and developing opportunities for professional development;
- meeting individual teachers' needs but being primarily collaborative;
- providing opportunities for teachers to develop a theoretical understanding of the knowledge and skills learned;
- being continuous and ongoing, with follow-up and support for further learning.

In line with changing perspectives of CPD, there have been changes too in what society demands or expects of its teachers. Education reform movements internationally reflect high expectations for student achievement which require changes in classroom practice by teachers. If teachers are to meet these expectations, they require supports and guidelines (Borko, 2004). Four dimensions of a teacher's role have been identified (below); these provide an insight into the multi-faceted and complex nature of teaching and by implication,

of learning to teach, and the demands of designing quality teacher education. They include viewing the teacher as:

- an instructional manager;

- a caring and moral person;

- a generous expert learner;

- a cultural and civic being (Conway et al., 2009).

The heightened expectations of teachers have led to an unprecedented policy, professional and research interest in the theory and practice of teacher education worldwide. There is a general recognition of the centrality of a quality teaching force to achieving the aims of the knowledge society, and of the strategy for lifelong learning (Coolahan, 2007, p.23).

1.5 FACTORS INFLUENCING CPD TAKE-UP

The continuum of teacher education has become a key policy focus for national governments, trans-national agencies and inter-governmental bodies (Conway et al., 2009). There is a wide variation, however, in participation rates among teachers which can be attributed to both the availability of learning opportunities and the take-up of CPD by teachers. Much of the emphasis on CPD has stemmed from teacher or school effectiveness literature which Good (1989) argued should be integrated within the one field of study – 'educational effectiveness'. In combining these two traditionally distant research fields, researchers have begun to examine the processes operating at both teacher (classroom) and school level (system level) to further explain aspects of the schooling process and emphasise school improvement measures (Teddlie and Reynolds, 2000). A recent OECD (2010) report suggests that this research on participation in professional development can be examined using four key perspectives:

- Teacher effectiveness - teacher characteristics, formal qualifications and experience, teacher beliefs and competencies;

- Teaching effectiveness – the teaching process, pedagogy and approaches used;

- School effectiveness – climates of schooling which support and promote professional development among teachers;

- National education systems influencing CPD arrangements such as the degree of autonomy given to schools and teachers.

Empirical studies investigating teacher participation in professional development have identified age-related differences (Desimone, Smith and Ueno, 2006). US

research on teachers' take-up of learning opportunities (in the previous twelve month period) found that while the majority (98%) had participated in some type of formal learning opportunity such as workshops, conferences and training courses, fewer had engaged in informal activities such as collaborative research (46%). This study found that teachers were engaged in formal learning opportunities across all age groups (Choy, Chen and Bugarin, 2006). In Germany, Richter et al. (2010) also examined patterns of formal and informal learning opportunities and, in particular, explicitly examined the relationship between teacher's age and participation in professional development. In contrast to the US study, this research found that formal learning opportunities (such as in-service training) were most frequently used by mid-career teachers (around age 42), whereas informal learning opportunities show distinct patterns across the teaching career (Richter et al., 2010). These differences in findings can be explained, however, by the requirement for US teachers to renew their teaching licence and therefore attend CPD throughout their careers, whereas in Germany, participation in CPD is voluntary. Richter et al. (2010) also found that contrary to expectations, older teachers approaching retirement spend more time engaged in informal professional development, such as reading professional literature, than their younger counterparts. Much of this more recent literature stems from Huberman's (1989) theoretical framework which suggests that teachers make use of different types of learning opportunities across their careers. His career stage model provides a life-span perspective based on five consecutive stages which represent major phases in a teacher's development but they do not apply to every teacher in the same way. The phases include:

Beginning

1. Survival and discovery (first three years – teachers struggle for survival typically reporting a sense of exhaustion, feeling overwhelmed).

2. Stabilisation (years 4-6, more established in their profession – more affiliated with the teaching community – induction programmes during this period).

Middle Career

3. Experimentation / activism and stock-taking – teachers who wish to increase their instruction impact may experiment with new materials and instructional strategies.

4. Serenity and conservatism (19-30 years) – serene teachers experience a loss of engagement, a decline in career ambitions, greater sense of self acceptance. Conservative teachers are sceptical of innovations and critical of education policy.

End of Career – Fifth Phase

5. Disengagement (30 years teaching experience – characterised by a withdrawal from the profession. Teachers tend to reduce their commitment and career ambition, instead focussing more on personal goals).

Choy et al. (2006) and Richter et al. (2010) also examined the impact of a teacher's level or years of experience on their participation in CPD. The US study again contrasted with the German study which found that highly experienced teachers with more than twenty years experience were more likely to participate in certain types of CPD, such as computers, whereas younger teachers with between one and three years experience were more likely to attend courses on classroom management.

In addition to individual-level factors, research shows that creating a climate within a school that is conducive to both individual and whole-staff development is considered essential for teacher effectiveness (Sparkes and Loucks-Horsley, 1990; Guskey, 2000). Where school context is incorporated into professional development, the focus has been on how to enhance 'knowledge and develop new instructional practices' in recognition that ultimately school improvement and increased student achievement rely on teachers (Starkey et al., 2009). In an Irish context, Loxley et al.'s (2010) research considers the interaction between school size, type and disadvantaged status, collegiate ethos and leadership influence and in-service training. This study highlights the importance of encouraging teachers as individuals, and as a whole staff, to feel ownership of their professional development.

Among the organisational conditions that influence learning among staff, the role of the school leader is a key factor, 'especially when inspired by the concept of transformational leadership' (OECD, 2009, p.33). Within schools, the principal is in a unique position to influence and affect the overall quality of teacher professional development. One of the primary tasks of school principals is to create and maintain positive, healthy teaching and learning environments for everyone in the school (Bredeson and Johanson, 2000). This position is influential in creating a school culture that can foster or restrict change per se (Loxley et al., 2007). Studies show that implementation of CPD is most effective when school leaders:

- believe professional development for teachers is essential for implementing change;

- are focused on the overall purpose of professional development programmes;

- ensure that school policies do not conflict with new teaching strategies;

- create an atmosphere that encourages teachers to experiment with new ideas without fear of criticism;

- provide time and opportunity for teachers to meet and share ideas about new knowledge, skills, strategies, and so on;

- do not overload teachers with classroom assignments;

- provide assistance with classroom management skills;

- provide, or act as, a mentor; and

- ensure that sufficient financial and material resources that promote teacher learning are available to teachers (Loxley et al., 2007).

From this list, international research on CPD consistently highlights the allocation of sufficient time as a key issue affecting change at an individual and school level. Studies have emphasised that policy-makers must consider the amount of time required for teachers to adopt new practices into their knowledge bases, taking into account their existing responsibilities. Issues around lack of time can stem from curriculum overload, with a resultant negative effect on teacher receptiveness to and enthusiasm for change (Collinson & Cook, 2001). Where time is such a factor, research has highlighted the importance of quality professional development. Research shows that where teachers' needs are understood and the content of CPD is aligned with their work contexts, the take-up of CPD is increased (Ofsted, 2001). Desimone et al. (2002) examine six key features of CPD in order to measure the quality of training and assess the extent to which it is an effective learning experience for teachers. These features examined are: how the activity is organised; its duration; the level of collective participation; the extent to which it is an active learning experience; the extent to which the activity promotes coherence in teachers' professional development and the extent to which the activity is focussed on the specific, predetermined content.

Research by Collinson et al. (2009) examines the concept of shared leadership within schools which they argue requires a change in behaviour for both teachers and principals so that new social relationships can be formed and roles blurred. Furthermore, research has shown that a teacher's participation in decision-making which supports an organic form of school organisation has positive effects on a teacher's motivation and commitment to change (OECD, 2010, p. 33). Moreover, providing teachers with opportunities for professional dialogue, the sharing of ideas and allowing for shared reflection and feedback are highlighted in the research as predictors of successful CPD programmes (Ofsted, 2001).

Moreover, CPD is increasingly characterised by collegial rather than autonomous professionalism, which has significant implications for how best to prepare teachers (Hargreaves, 2003). Research shows how cooperative, friendly, collegial relationships, open communication and the free exchange of ideas may be sources of emotional and psychological support for teachers' work and promote their professional development. However, the intensity of this cooperation and learning among staff also depends on leadership within the school and the degree to which opportunities are created for teachers' professional learning. An emphasis on greater collegiality and teacher involvement is also evident in international reports by the OECD, UN and EU, who highlight the 'need for and emergence of a new extended teacher professionalism characterised by greater collegiality than typical in the past, by increasing the complexity of professional practice, by the challenges of teaching a more diverse student body to higher levels of academic attainment and by challenges of equality and inclusion' (see, for example, OECD, 2005; Barber and Mourshed, 2007; World Bank, 2005; UNESCO, 2005).

1.6 AN OVERVIEW OF CPD IN IRELAND

During the past decade the continuous professional development of teachers in Ireland has received sustained attention (Hyland and Hanafin, 1997; Sugrue 2002; Loxley et al. 2007). Much of the research has sought to evaluate teacher education policy over time and track its evolution through a series of policy documents and reports over the past twenty years. One study by Coolahan (2007) highlights how key developments in teacher professional development took place in two stages - in the late 1960s and early 1970s and during the 1990s. The first phase involved the restructuring of teacher education by changing aspects of the physical structures and programme content of Ireland's teacher training colleges. This period was also responsible for the expansion of education research within Irish universities through course restructuring, postgraduate programmes and an overall expansion of the discipline. In relation to CPD in Ireland, there was, during this period, a growing awareness of the importance of in-service training throughout the teaching career. A second period of appraisal, analysis and formulation of education policy took place in the 1990s where policy began to emphasise the importance of teacher education (Coolahan, 2003). In many ways, this was against the backdrop of social and economic development where education reform was on the agenda. This may explain the proliferation of reports relating to teacher initial training, induction and in-service (the '3 I's). A number of key national and international reports shaped policy during this time beginning with the OECD's Review of Education (1991) which made particular reference to teacher training throughout the teaching career: 'the concept of in-service education was seen as addressing the total teaching career in all its variety and extending for up to four decades' (Coolahan, 2007). Similar to the OECD report, the Green Paper on Education (1992), *Education for a Changing*

World, emphasised in-career development stating 'teacher education should be seen as a continuum' with 'well devised in-career programmes'. Some years later, the idea of the 3 I's was outlined officially in the government White Paper, *Charting Our Educational Future* (1995), which discussed teaching as a career continuum involving 'initial teacher education, induction, in-career development'. This report, however, stressed the need to establish a more comprehensive policy approach to teacher education, one which addresses and utilises teacher attitudes around retention, qualifications, duties and in-career development (Coolahan, 2003).

Another landmark event in relation to teacher professional development was the establishment of the Teaching Council. The Teaching Council Act 2001 makes explicit the role of the Council to:

- Promote the continuing education and training and professional development of teachers;

- Conduct research into the continuing education and training and professional development of teachers;

- Promote awareness among the teaching profession and the public of the benefits of continuing education and training and professional development;

- Review and accredit programmes relating to the continuing education and training of teachers;

- Perform such other functions in relation to the continuing education and training and continuing professional development of teachers as may be assigned to the Council by the Minister (Teaching Council, 2010).

More recently, research has reflected on the change and pace of development in CPD in Ireland. Of particular note, is the country background report carried out by Coolahan (2003) for the OECD *Teachers Matter* report (2005), which provided a detailed overview of teacher education and in-career development situated within the rapidly changing policy context of the last decade.

In addition to national studies, insight into the development of CPD in Ireland can also be derived from comparative studies where Ireland is a case study. One of the most significant studies addressing CPD policy in an international context was recently published by the Teaching Council (Conway et al., 2009). The study, *Learning to Teach and Its Implications for the Continuum of Teacher Education: A Nine Country Cross National Study*, provides a comprehensive overview of all stages of teacher professional development and considers the professional life cycle of teachers. Emphasising the role of teacher education for the knowledge

economy, this study considers the importance of a teacher's professional profile, their aspirations and the level of support in contributing to their own professional education (Conway et al., 2009). Changing expectations about teaching, learning and assessment have meant that teachers are expected to adopt a more interactive relationship with students, teachers, parents, and other professionals/agencies involved in schooling (such as Special Needs Assistants and learning support/resource teachers). This study stresses the importance of increasing interactions between teachers and their students, colleagues, parents and other professionals. Importantly, the study provides an in-depth discussion about the meaning of professional development in terms of the phases of development over the teaching career. For teachers in Ireland this first period of Initial Teacher Education can take between one and four years. This is then followed by an induction period which normally takes one year. On entering a teaching position, teachers begin a period of early professional development often lasting between two and three years. It is at this stage that the period of continuous professional development (previously known as in-career development or in-service) begins and should last for the remainder of the teaching career.

Much of the more recent research has identified the key challenges in the area of CPD in Ireland. One of the key challenges identified in Ireland (and internationally) is the provision of a once-off workshop model which is mainly short-term in nature (Conway et al., 2009). Moreover, recent CPD and teacher in-service evaluation studies emphasise the fragmented nature of CPD provision and the lack of learner-centred structures (Sugrue 2002; Coolahan, 2003; Granville, 2005; Loxley et al., 2007). This challenge may relate to the different forms of CPD available at primary and post-primary level in addition to the fragmented nature of provision within school sectors. Over time, professional development has become decentralised and, some studies argue, lacks a strategic coherence at the system level (Loxley et al., 2007). Two Department of Education reviews were carried out in 1998 and, more recently, Coolahan (2003) completed a report on Ireland as part of a consultative process for the OECD publication, *Teachers Matter* (2005). These reports identified the need for greater coherence and integration in relation to the continuum of teacher education as a key feature of developing higher quality primary and post-primary education in Ireland (Conway et al., 2009). Similarly, among the recommendations of a report of the Advisory Group on Post-Primary Teacher Education (2002) was the need for the introduction of school-based, collaborative research, carried out by teachers. Teachers should thus be encouraged to be active participants in their own continuous professional development. Conway et al. (2009) emphasise the need to have mentoring or assisted practice as a core design feature of teacher education not just at the induction phase but during CPD. Internationally this is evident in the mentoring and coaching initiatives across a teacher's career continuum (West and Staub, 2003). Conway et al. (2009) also identified the need

for a greater system of programme coherence; mentoring and assisted practice; vibrant university and college partnerships, and promoting research and enquiry. Evaluations of the impact of previous providers of CPD, such as the Second Level Support Service (SLSS) by Granville (2005) and of the Primary Professional Development Service (PPDS) by Loxley et al. (2007), point to similar problems in the quality of professional development experiences. Sugrue (2002) concurs on the general problems associated with CPD and identifies the need for 'moving beyond current proliferation of courses and competition between an increasing number of providers, to a more coherent and coordinated approach' (Sugrue, 2002, p.335). A review of teacher education in Ireland by Burke (2004) echoes these issues around the lack of teacher involvement in CPD design and the implementation and fragmentation of programmes. This report also highlights challenges in relation to the timing of 'in-career' development during school hours and the potential difficulties for individual teachers and schools in providing cover for teachers wishing to participate in CPD programmes (Burke, 2004, p.16).

The Teacher Education Section of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) is primarily responsible for CPD provision in Ireland, although courses are also provided by teachers' unions throughout the school year and during the summer.[2] In recent years, efforts have been made by the DES to address this fragmentation within CPD provision and as of September 1st 2010 curriculum support is now provided by the umbrella organisation, the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), set up as part of the consolidation and re-structuring of the support service system. This new organisation has subsumed the PPDS and the SLSS and its function is to provide continuous professional development through 'personnel working in multi-disciplinary teams on a regional basis' (PDST, 2010). As the PDST is new, many of the functions of the PPDS and SLSS remain. Some of the programmes offered by the PPDS have included the Child Abuse Prevention Programme aimed at reducing vulnerability to child abuse and bullying; the Substance Misuse Prevention Programme which is a social personal and health education programme; the Summer Courses Programme, which focuses on the advancement of teachers' pedagogic and management skills; and the Reading Recovery Programme which is designed to reduce literacy problems. At post-primary level, the SLSS has previously had a dual remit, providing programmes and subject-specific curricular support, and support for teaching and learning generally in post-primary schools. Programmes and specific supports have been available for teachers in: Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE); Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP); Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE); Junior Cycle Physical Education (JCPE) and

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[2] For example the Irish National Teachers Organisation provides online professional development for teachers through its website www.intolearning.ie. Workshops and discussion groups are also organised for specific curricular topics in addition to management and leadership guidance.

the Project Maths Development Team (PMDT). Other supports are available to schools within the Dublin region, such as the Dublin Cool Schools Pilot Project, or at national level to address specific issues such as bullying, such as the National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS). Moreover, to improve collaboration between teachers, funding is available for increasing professional communication through the Teacher Professional Network Scheme (TPN scheme).

The infrastructure, through which continuing professional development programmes are managed at regional and local levels, is provided by the 21 full-time and 9 part-time Education Centres, now organised into six regions. While the core role of an Education Centre is to meet locally identified school and teacher needs, they are centrally involved in the organisation and delivery of most national programmes (Egan, 2004).

Chapter 2

## Factors Influencing CPD Take-up in Ireland

Using teacher- and principal-level data from the Growing Up in Ireland study, this chapter examines individual teacher, classroom and school level characteristics to explore the determinants of teacher participation in continuous professional development. For the purpose of this study, we define continuous professional development as the take-up of formal opportunities intended to deepen and extend teachers' professional competence, including knowledge, beliefs, motivation and self-regulatory skills. The authors acknowledge that informal learning is also a crucial part of teacher development (see Chapter 1); however, this is more difficult to capture in large-scale surveys. Using descriptive statistics, we firstly examine individual teacher and school level characteristics. Principal-level data is also used to examine school-level factors influencing the take-up of CPD but also the extent to which teachers are open to participating in CPD. The second part of this analysis uses a multi-level regression model which explores the probability of CPD participation among teachers, controlling for individual, classroom and school-level factors.

2.1 TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS

This section examines the impact of teachers' own characteristics on the take-up of CPD. The 'Teacher-On-Self Questionnaire' of the Growing Up in Ireland survey provides detailed information about teacher gender, age and experience teaching at the school they are working in, and other primary schools in which they have worked. Moreover, the survey provides information about the prior qualifications of teachers which allows us to examine how different types of qualifications can impact on participation in CPD.

In line with international literature which identifies age as a determinant of CPD take-up (Richter et al., 2010; Desimone, Smith and Ueno, 2006), findings in this study show some differences in the take-up of CPD by age group. Participation is most common amongst mid-career teachers aged between 40 and 49 years (Figure 1). Take-up of CPD slowly decreases from this point onwards throughout the teaching career. Moreover, teachers in the early part of their career are most likely to participate in no or very low amounts (1 day) of CPD. Twenty-five per cent of 20-29 year olds participate in 'none or low' amounts of CPD compared to 17 per cent of teachers aged 40-49.

Figure 1: Take-up of CPD by Age Group
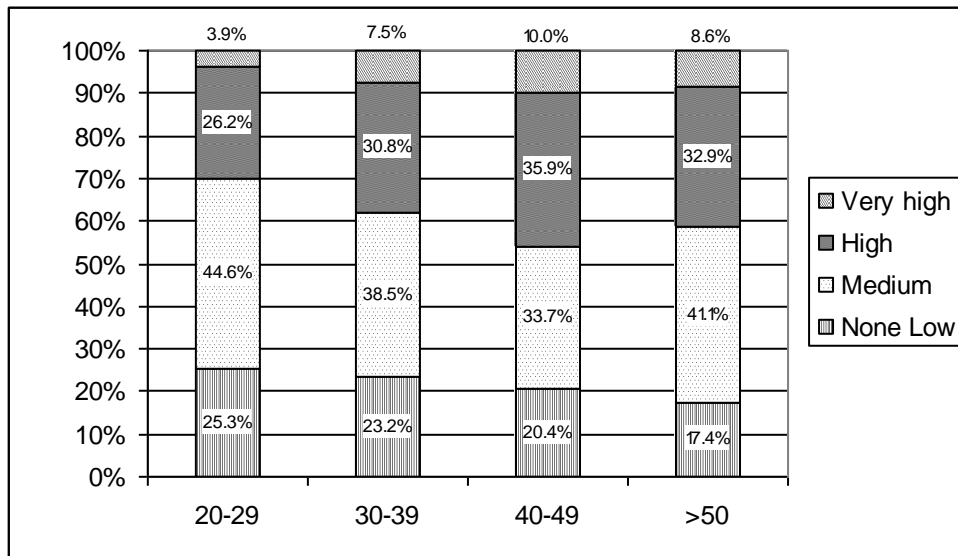
Note: Differences are significant at the p<.001 level.[3]

No major pattern emerges when we examine the take-up of CPD by gender (Figure 2). Males are slightly more likely (29% compared to 22%) to have participated in very little ('none or low') CPD. Moreover, females are slightly more likely (31% compared to 26%) to have participated in a 'high' (between 6 and 10 days) amount of CPD days.

Figure 2: Take-up of CPD by Gender
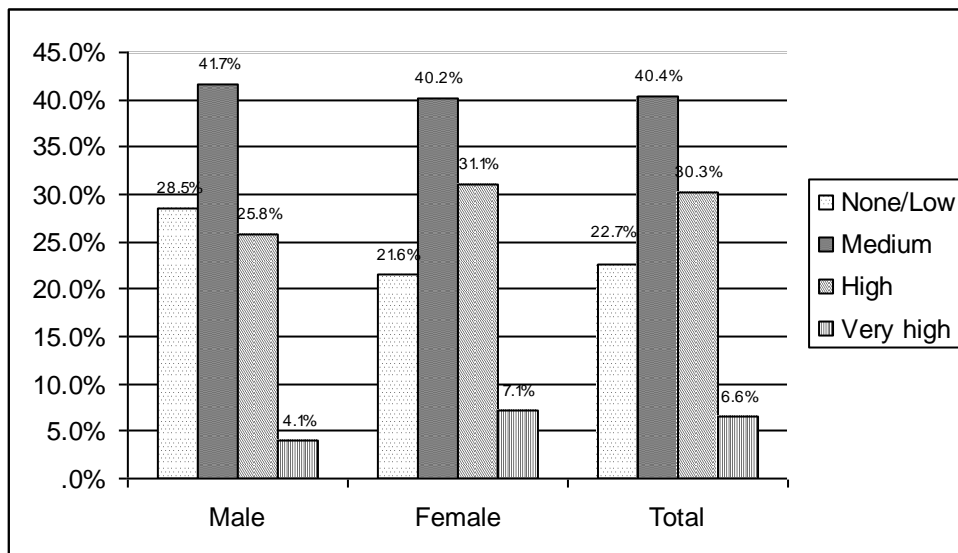
Note: Differences are significant at the p<.01 level.

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[3]   A significance level of p<.001 means that the likelihood is less than one in a thousand that this relationship would occur by chance.

Findings also show that teaching experience at primary school level impacts on teacher take-up of CPD. Not surprisingly, those with less than one year's teaching experience are least likely to participate in CPD (Figure 3). Take-up in CPD increases gradually with teaching experience with just under half of those with twenty or more years' teaching experience participating in over six days' CPD in the previous year. This ties in with the previous findings relating to age where teachers in the 40-49 age bracket were most likely to participate in CPD. It can be assumed that many of those with over twenty years' experience fall within this group.

Figure 3: Take-up of CPD by Years of Primary Teaching (All)
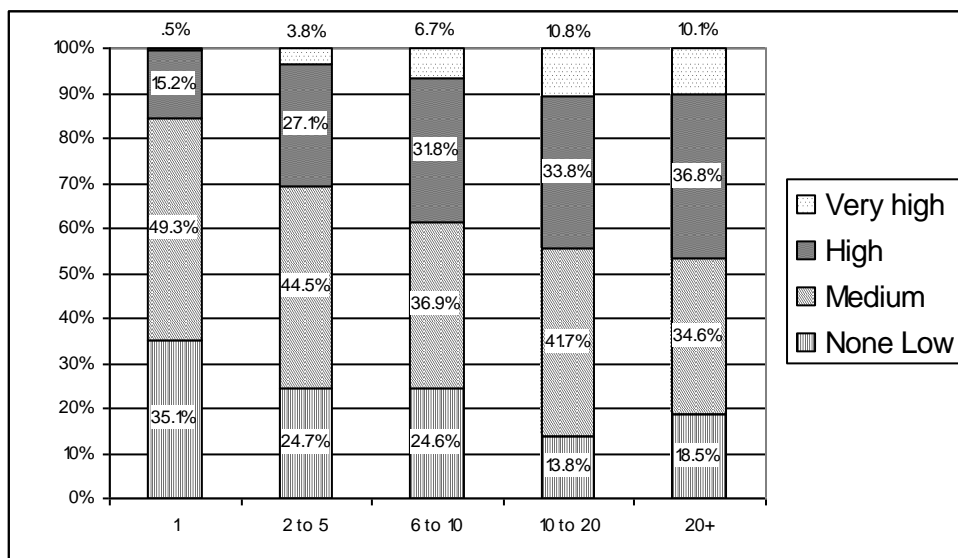
Note: Differences are significant at the p<.001 level.

Similarly, when we focus on years' teaching in the current school, participation in CPD increases somewhat with experience. Figure 4 shows, however, that where teachers remain at the same school, they are marginally more likely to participate in CPD than those with experience in other schools at primary school level (as above). Teachers with between 10 and 20 years' experience in their current school participate in the highest number of days CPD (45% of teachers participating in 'high' or 'very high' amounts compared to just 20% of those with less than one year's service).

**Figure 4: Take-up of CPD by Years of Teaching at Current School**
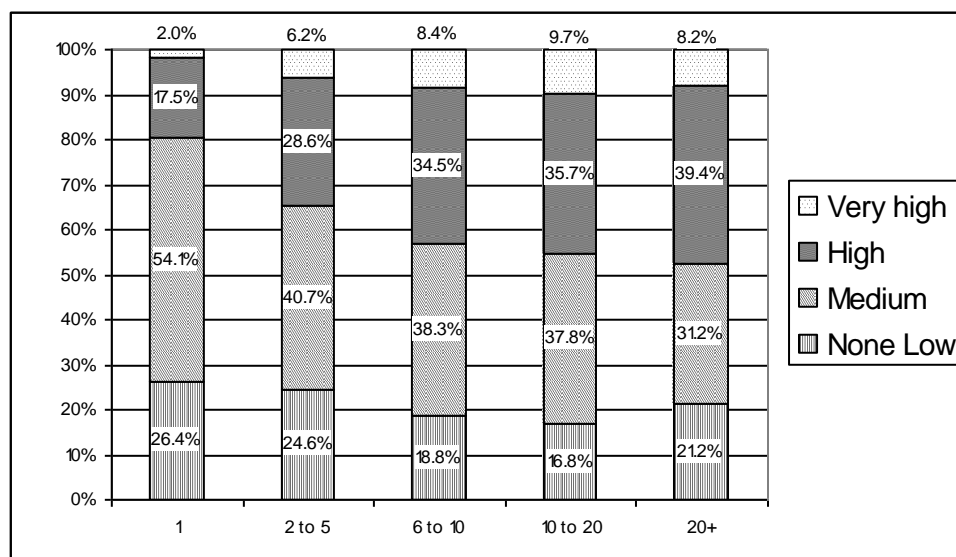
Note: Differences are significant at the p<.001 level.

2.2 SCHOOL-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS

Loxley et al. (2007) argue that research on improving teacher effectiveness through CPD cannot solely focus on transforming individual teachers in the classroom. Although this type of change is critical, it is not, in itself, sufficient. What is also required is sensitivity to the interconnections between the individual practitioner, the school and the education system in which both teacher and school are located. In addition to the individual-level characteristics of teachers, this report examines school-level factors which may influence participation in CPD. We firstly focussed on school processes and characteristics such as whether the teacher had a Special Needs Assistant (SNA) working with them. Using principal-level data we also examined the size of the school and the number of full-time and part-time staff working at the school to establish if these factors impacted on CPD participation.

In relation to supports available, teachers were asked about whether they had a SNA working with them. Figure 5 shows that having an SNA impacts somewhat on teacher participation in CPD with marginally more teachers with an SNA participating in 'high' or 'very high' levels of CPD in the previous 12 months (41% of teachers with an SNA compared to 31% without). This suggests that perhaps where teachers are dealing with greater demands or levels of need from children with special educational needs, they are more likely to seek out CPD to overcome any challenges.

Figure 5: Take-up of CPD by Special Needs Assistant (SNA)
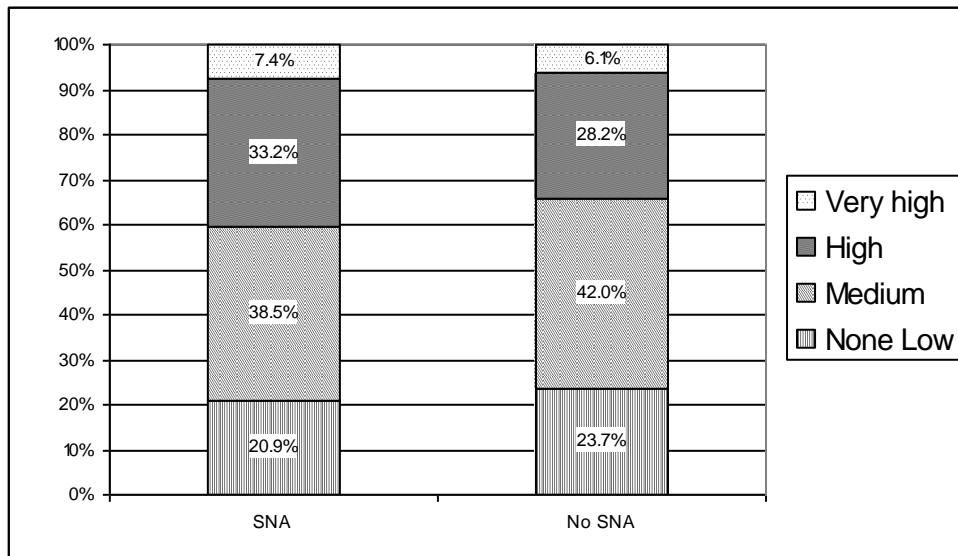
Note: Differences are significant at the p<.047 level.

School size appears to play some role in CPD take-up with teachers working in large schools appearing to have the highest number of teachers with 'none or low' (one day) CPD participation (32% compared to 11% in small schools)(Figure 6). The reasons for this are not clear since the pattern is evident even when we take into account the age profile of teaching staff in the school. It is worth noting, however, that there is little variation by school size in the proportion of teachers who have very high levels of involvement in CPD.

Figure 6: CPD take-up by School Size
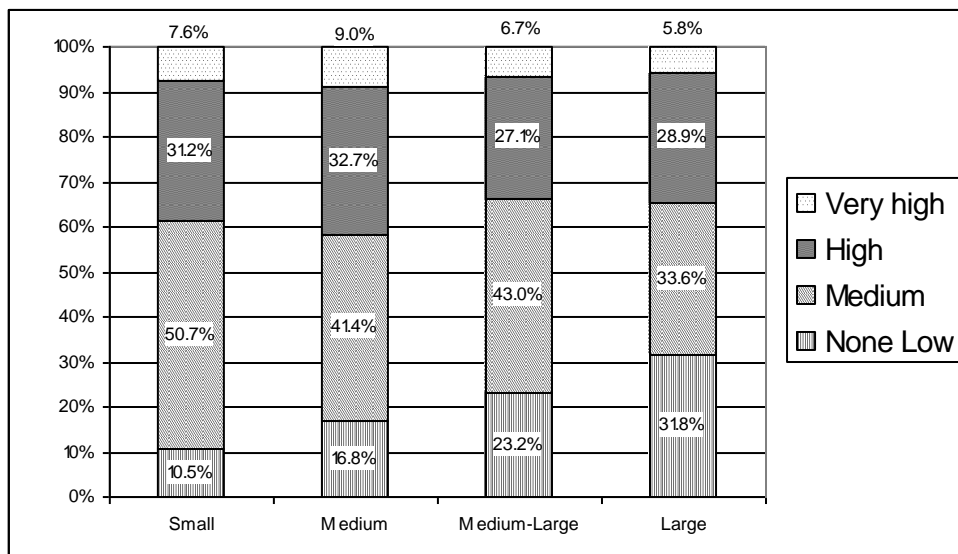
Note: Differences are significant at the p<.001 level.

Reflecting the pattern for school size, the number of staff working at the school also appears to influence the level of participation in CPD amongst staff, with

schools with smaller numbers of full-time staff more likely to have higher levels of CPD take-up. Figure 7 shows that schools with fewer than five full-time staff members are marginally more likely to have high levels of CPD take-up compared to schools with more than 16 staff (9% compared to 6%). Similarly, 13 per centof the schools with small staff numbers (<=5) have teachers participating in 'none or low' levels of CPD compared with 27 per cent of the larger (>16 staff) schools.

Figure 7: CPD Take-up by the Number of Full-time Staff
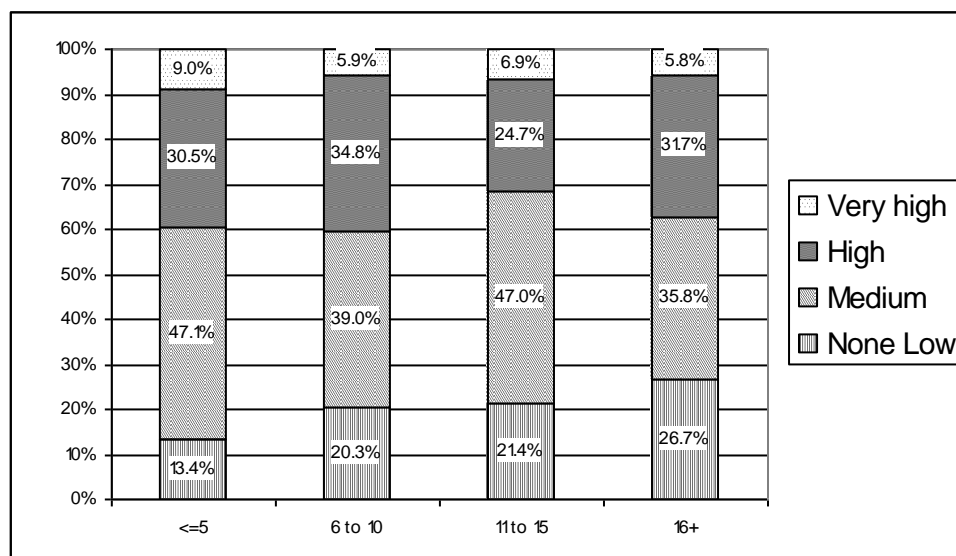
Note: Differences are significant at the p<.001 level.

Similarly, when we focus on the relationship between CPD take-up and the prevalence of part-time staff, it appears that schools with three or more part-time staff members have the highest rates of CPD take-up (16%). This may relate, however, to the availability of more cover or relief available at the school allowing teachers to attend CPD programmes.

Figure 8: CPD Take-up by the Number of Part-time Staff
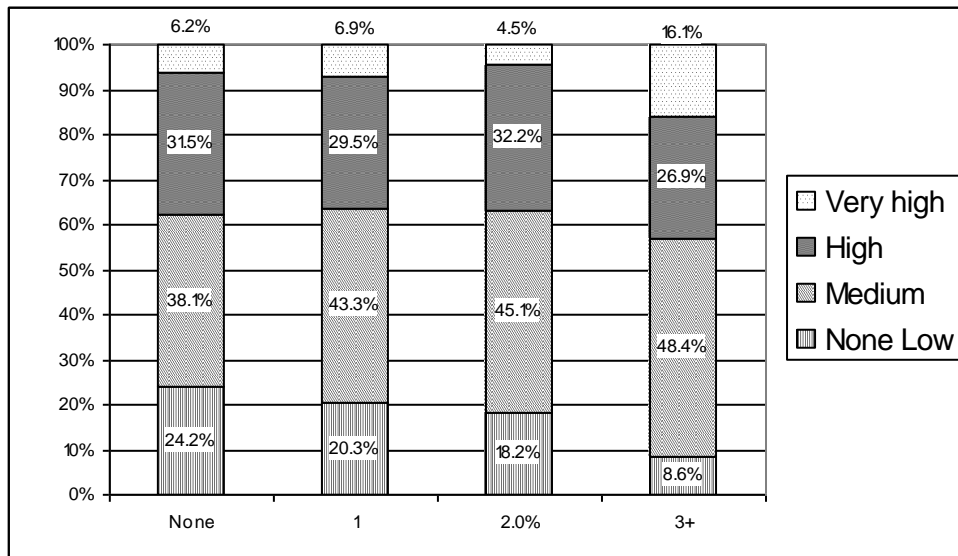
Note: Differences are significant at the p<.001 level.

Few differences emerge in the take-up of CPD by the location of the school. Teachers in urban schools are slightly less likely to participate in CPD overall. They are more likely to have higher numbers participating in 'none or low' levels of CPD compared to those working in rural schools (30% compared to 18%).

Figure 9: CPD Take-up by Region
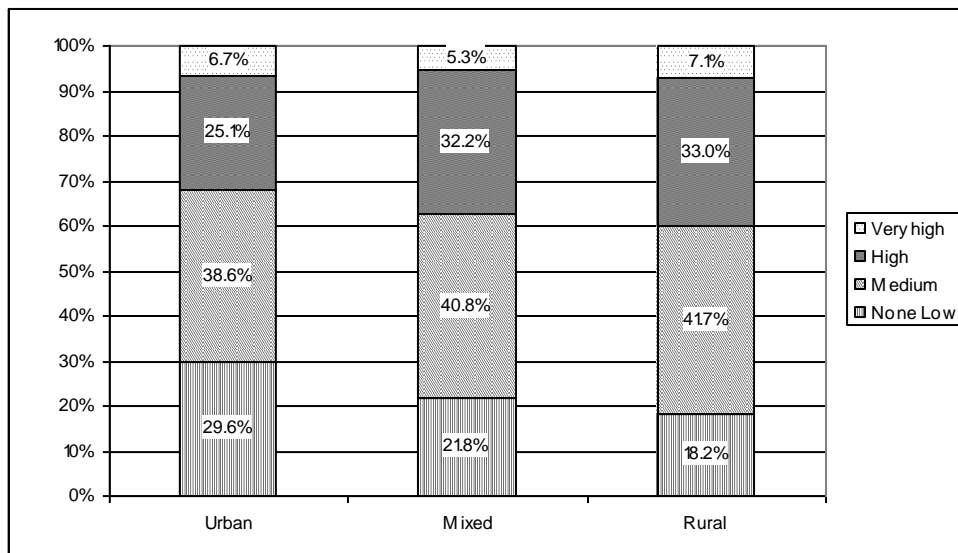
Note: Differences are significant at the p<.001 level.

Some patterns emerge with the age of the principal, with older principals slightly more likely to have teachers with 'high' levels of CPD take-up. Thirty-eight per cent of principals aged 60 or over had 'high' or 'very high' levels of CPD take-up among staff compared to 29 per cent of principals aged 30-39. Moreover,

principals aged 30-39 appear to have the greatest number of teachers with none or low levels of CPD participation in the previous year.

Figure 10: CPD Take-up by Age Group of Principal
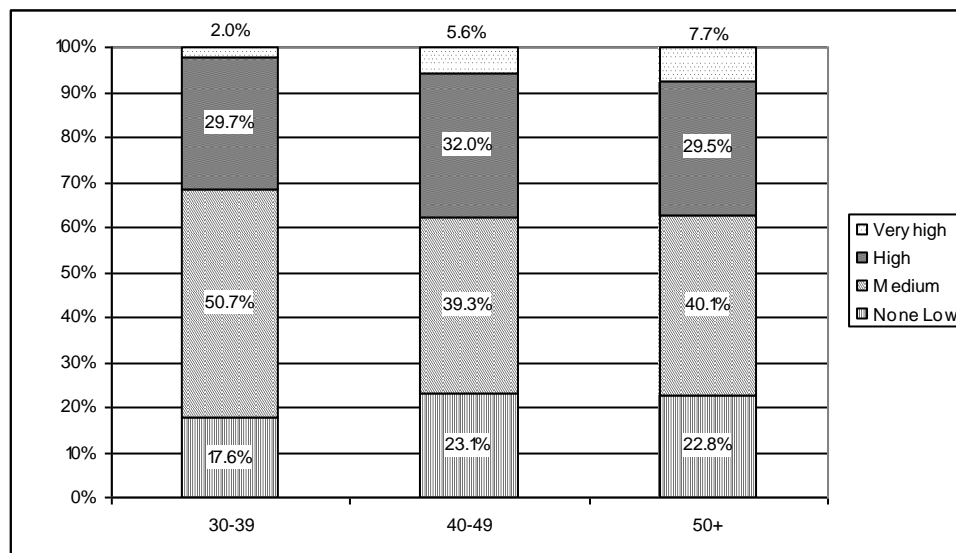
Note: Differences are significant at the p<.05 level.

2.3 TEACHERS' EAGERNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN IN-SERVICE TRAINING

The survey asked all principals the extent to which they felt that the teachers at their school were 'eager to take part in in-service training'. Findings show that a high proportion (just under 70%) felt that nearly all their teachers were eager to participate. We then looked at the extent to which this varied by individual and school level factors, such as the gender of principal, whether they are a teaching principal or not, the number of teachers working at the school, the size of the school and its location. Findings show that female principals are more likely than male principals to feel that 'nearly all' teachers are open to participating in CPD (74% and 66% respectively). Teaching principals are more likely than administrative principals to report higher numbers of teachers are open to participating in CPD. Seventy-nine per cent of teaching principals stated that nearly all the teachers in their school would be open to participating, compared to 62 per cent of non-teaching principals (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Teacher Eagerness to Participate in In-service by Teaching Principal
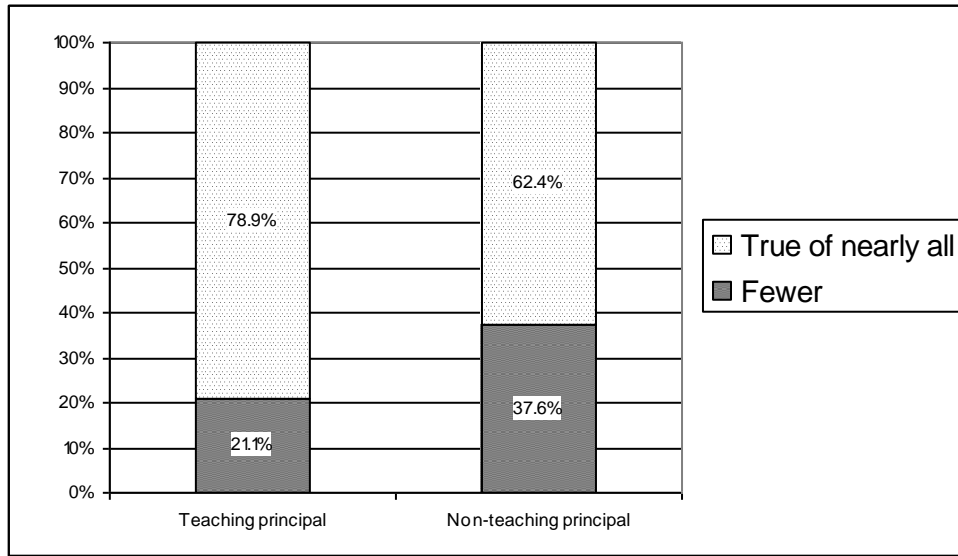
Note: Differences are significant at the p<.001 level.

School size also appears to play a role in principals' perceptions of teacher openness to CPD. Figure 12 shows that principals working in schools with five or fewer fulltime staff are more likely to report 'nearly all' of the teachers working in the school are eager to participate in CPD compared to principals in schools with between 11 and 15 fulltime staff (83% compared to 57%).

Figure 12: Teacher Eagerness to Participate in In-service by the No. of Fulltime Staff
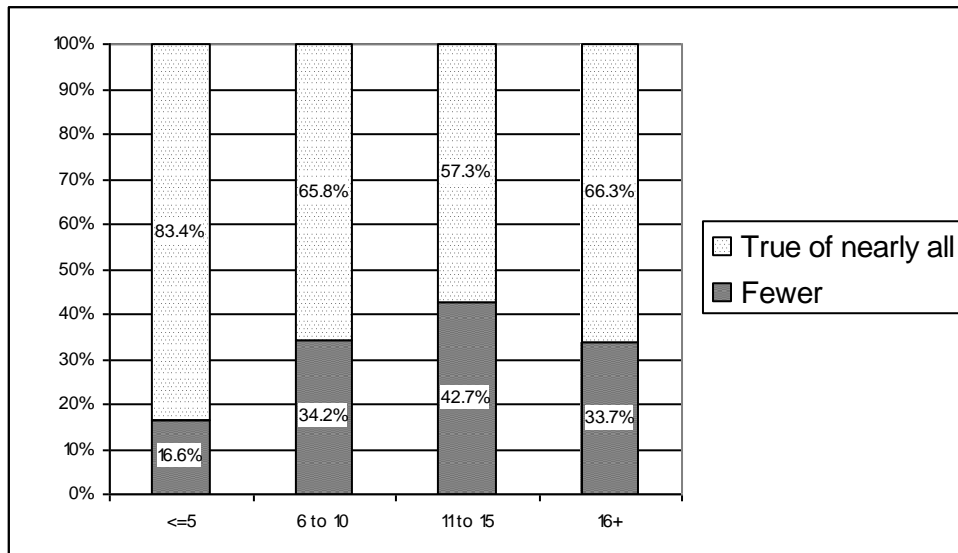
Note: Differences are significant at the p<.001 level.

Similarly, when we look at the impact of school size on teacher openness to CPD, findings show that principals of smaller schools are more likely to report greater levels of teacher openness to CPD (Figure 13). Eighty-seven per cent of principals working in small schools felt that nearly all teachers at the school were open to

participation. This is compared to 56 per cent of principals working in medium to large sized schools.

Figure 13: Teacher Eagerness to Participate in In-service by School Size
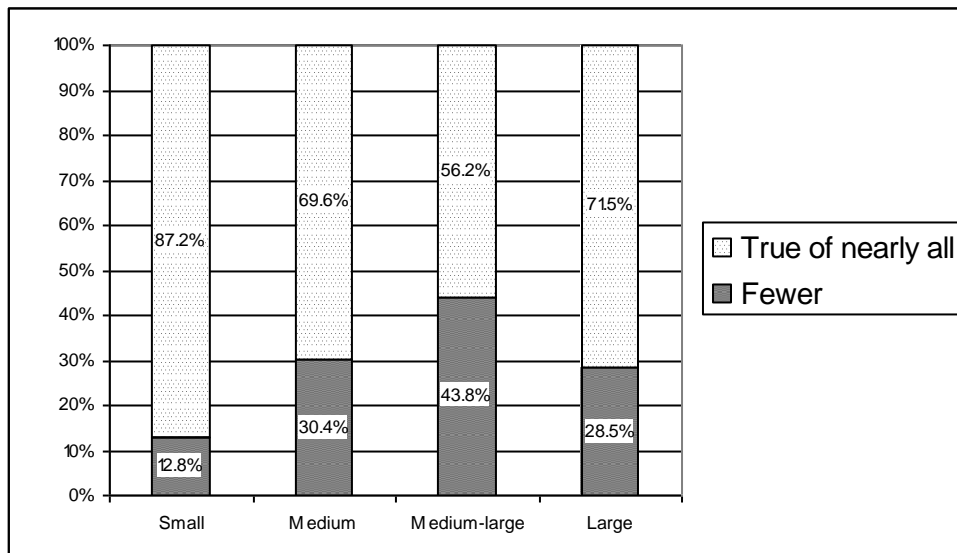
Note: Differences are significant at the p<.001 level.

The location of the school does not appear to impact on principals' perceptions of openness to CPD at the school. In both rural and urban schools just over 70 per cent of principals feel that nearly all teachers are open to CPD participation and this is only slightly less in schools with a mixed urban-rural intake (63%).

The number of years working as principal in the school appears to have some effect on the extent to which they feel teachers at the school are open to CPD participation. Principals working at the school between 6 and 10 years are more likely to state that nearly all teachers are open to CPD compared to principals working for one year or less at the school (76% compared to 68%).

Figure 14: Eagerness to Participate in In-service by Years Working as Principal
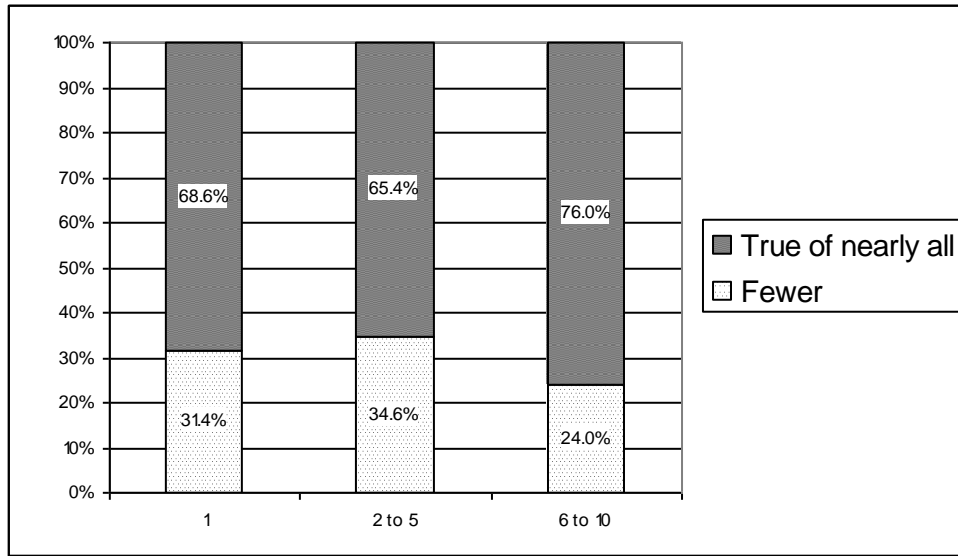
Note: Differences are significant at the p<.001 level.

2.4 FACTORS PREDICTING HIGH TAKE-UP OF CPD – A MULTILEVEL LOGISTIC REGRESSION MODEL

Using a multilevel logistic regression model, this section examines in more detail factors influencing the high take-up of CPD among teachers. The analysis so far has shown the relationship between a number of variables and CPD take-up. However, a number of school characteristics can occur simultaneously; for example, schools in rural areas are more likely to be smaller schools and have multi-grade classes. In order to understand the processes shaping CPD take-up, we therefore need to control for a number of factors simultaneously in a regression model; this allows us to estimate the extent to which the factors examined predict the outcome in question. Because the outcome is binary (high involvement contrasted against all others), a logistic regression model is used. Because teachers within the same school are likely to experience similar conditions and so resemble each other, we take account of such clustering by using a multilevel regression model. Table 1 shows the factors predicting high teacher involvement in CPD, that is, taking more than five days' in-service training over the past year. This group is contrasted against those with fewer than five days' training. Positive coefficients mean that a factor is associated with a greater chance of having high CPD involvement while negative coefficients mean that a factor is associated with a lower chance of having high involvement.

Model 1 shows the difference between schools before taking into account teacher, principal or school characteristics (see Table 1). The between-school variance is statistically significant, that is, some schools have greater levels of CPD involvement among their teachers than others. Model 2 explores the impact of teacher characteristics on CPD take-up. All else being equal, female teachers are found to have higher take-up, 1.4 times greater than male teachers of similar age

and experience. Controlling for years teaching, teacher age does not have a significant effect on CPD take-up.[4] However, the number of years teaching has a very significant impact. Figure 14 illustrates the scale of the difference revealed in Model 2, Table 1. Those who are 2-5 years teaching are 2.4 times more likely to take part in a lot of CPD than newly qualified teachers. This is hardly surprising given that the first year of teaching will be spent adjusting to new demands. Furthermore, it may be assumed by principals that newly qualified teachers have 'up to date' knowledge of specific areas so do not require CPD. However, a clear trajectory is evident for all teachers, with high take-up of CPD increasing over the teaching career, being particularly high for those who are more than twenty years in the job. It might be expected that CPD participation could supplement or substitute existing teacher qualifications. However, there is no clear difference between teachers with or without postgraduate qualifications in terms of their participation.

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[4]   As might be expected, teacher age and number of years teaching are highly correlated (r=0.6). We expect the main direction of influence to be from years of teaching. However, age was included in case of any possible age-effect over and above years of experience.

Table 1: Factors Predicting High Take-up of CPD – A Multilevel Logistic Regression Model

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Fixed part			
Constant	-0.663	-1.998	-3.009
Personal characteristics			
Female		0.362*	0.350*
Age-group:			
30-39		-0.119	-0.148
40-49		-0.176	-0.233
>50		-0.385	-0.421
(Contrast: <30)			
No. of years teaching:			
2-5		0.863***	0.837***
6-10		1.241***	1.220***
11-20		1.589***	1.533***
>20		1.840***	1.878***
(Contrast: 1 year)			
Has postgraduate qualification		-0.006	0.008
Classroom and school characteristics			
Teaching multi-grade class			0.268‡
One or more of class has learning disability			0.213‡
Works with SNA			0.400***
Control over teaching (content)			-0.148***
Positive pupil climate			0.302*
Location:			
Urban			-0.192
Mixed			-0.028
Principal tenure (years):			
3-6			0.369**
6-10			0.341*
>10			0.182
(Contrast: <3)			
Teaching principal			-0.168
Nearly all teachers eager to take part in CPD (principal report)			0.141
Random part			
Between-school variance	0.237*	0.303**	0.291***
1,916 teachers within 898 schools			

*** p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05

Figure 15: Effect of years teaching on high CPD take-up, controlling for other factors
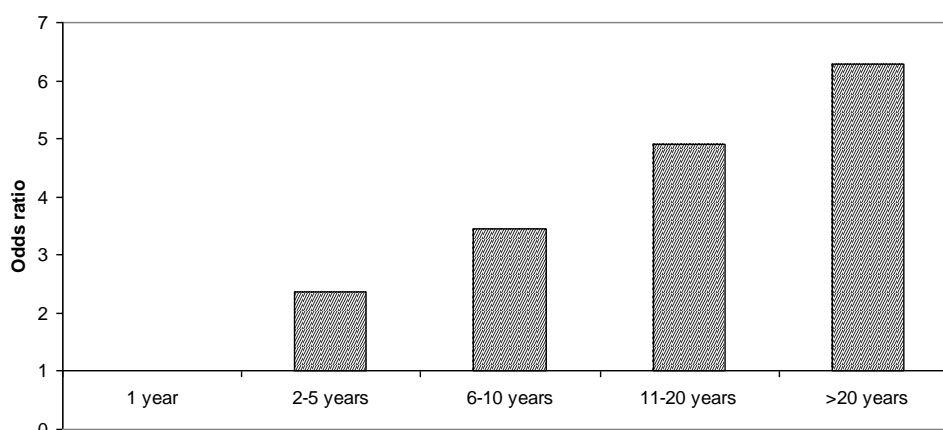
Note: Derived from Model 2, Table 1.

Model 3 takes into account a range of classroom and school characteristics. Findings show that teachers teaching multi-grade classes have a higher take-up of CPD than those teaching single-grade classes, all else being equal.[5] This is likely to reflect their need for support given the more complex demands of teaching several year groups in the same class.[6] It may also be that working in a larger school means that teachers in single-grade classes may not have to take all of the available CPD regarding new methods or curriculum since one of their colleagues might attend. However, school size itself is not significantly associated with CPD take-up nor is class size. Teachers who report higher levels of control over their day-to-day teaching, especially in relation to teaching content, have lower levels of CPD take-up. This is somewhat puzzling but may reflect the fact that in those schools where teachers have less control, all policy decisions (including those regarding CPD participation) are driven by management rather than classroom teachers.

CPD take-up is found to be related to the characteristics of students in the school and class. Teachers with one or more pupils with a learning disability in their class are somewhat more likely to have had high CPD take-up as are those who work with a Special Needs Assistant in their class. As with multi-grade teaching, the complexity of dealing with a range of student needs appears to prompt teachers to upgrade their skills. On the other hand, take-up of CPD is higher where teachers report a more positive climate among pupils. The measure of climate reflects the extent to which pupils are seen as enjoying school, being well-behaved and being rewarding to work with. The direction of the influence here is

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[5] The final model presented here focuses on the factors found to significantly predict CPD take-up. Alternative models were explored but are not presented in the text.

[6] There are some differences in average class size between multi-grade and single-grade classes. However, both types of classes vary in average size and the (non-significant) effect of class size on CPD take-up does not change when multi-grade teaching is dropped from the model.

difficult to determine; it would appear that teachers who have positive relations with their students are likely to seek out ways of further improving their teaching and this may in turn foster an improved class climate.

There is no significant relationship between location and CPD take-up so there is no evidence that being in a rural school acts as a barrier to taking part in professional development.[7] All else being equal, having a teaching rather than an administrative principal has no significant bearing on CPD take-up. The principal reporting that 'nearly all teachers in the school are eager to take part in in-service training' is positively associated with actual take-up but the effect is not statistically significant. Principal tenure, that is, the number of years the principal has been in the school, is significantly related to CPD take-up, even taking into account teachers' own career duration. Figure 15 illustrates the variation in high take-up of CPD by principal tenure. Teachers in schools where principals have been in the job for 3 to 10 years have the highest participation in CPD, with lower levels in schools run by recently appointed principals and in those with long-serving principals. It may be the case that during the first three years principals are settling into their post and identifying training needs among staff following by a period where these needs are addressed. In Model 3, the between-school variance is still statistically significant. This means that schools differ in teacher take-up of CPD, even taking account of all of the factors considered here.

Figure 16: Effect of principal tenure on high CPD take-up, controlling for other factors
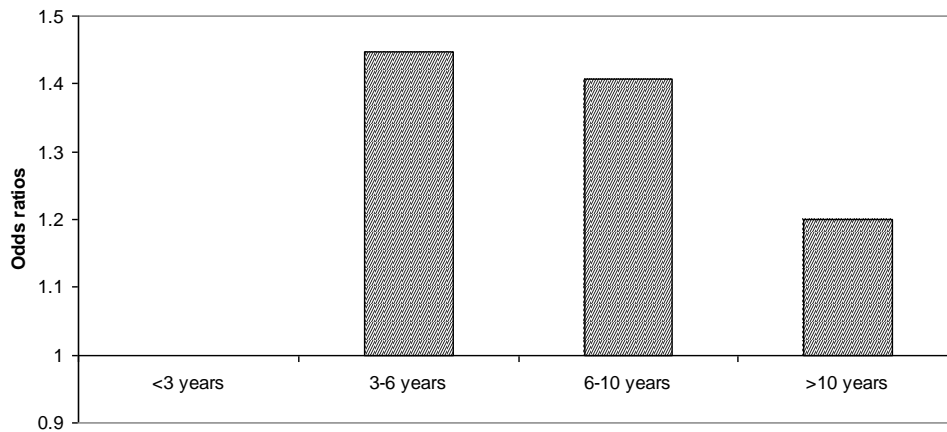
Note: Derived from Model 3, Table 1.

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[7] There is a strong relationship between multi-grade classes and location; 82 per cent of multi-grade classes are in rural areas compared to 29 per cent of single-grade classes. However, additional analyses indicate no change in the effect of multi-grade teaching when location is excluded (or vice versa). The direction of influence therefore seems to relate to the nature of classroom structure rather than location.

Chapter 3

Conclusions and Policy Implications

This study has sought to examine the extent to which teacher participation in CPD is related to individual, school and class level factors. We firstly focussed on the impact of individual teacher characteristics, such as prior qualifications, gender, age and years teaching experience. We then examined the extent to which teacher participation in CPD is related to the kind of school they work in, the size of the school, staff involvement in decision-making and eagerness to participate in CPD.

By using data from the Growing Up in Ireland survey, this report has provided unique information about the impact of individual teacher characteristics, classroom experiences and wider school contexts on CPD participation. Moreover, this data provides information about principals which allowed us to explore how leadership at the school influences teacher participation in CPD. Although the Growing Up in Ireland survey was not specifically designed to elicit information about factors influencing the take-up of CPD among teachers, the following findings yield some useful insights which could be used to address important issues around CPD participation among teachers in Ireland.

3.1 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

In many areas, the findings of this study complement wider international research in the area of CPD participation and take-up among teachers. As discussed in the last chapter, teacher career stage emerges as a key factor influencing take-up of CPD in a number of studies (Huberman, 1989; Choy et al., 2006; Richter et al., 2010). The number of years teaching has a significant effect with those teaching between two and five years two and half times more likely to take part in CPD than new teachers. Take-up of CPD appears to increase throughout the teaching career with those working over 20 years or more having the highest take-up. Furthermore, female teachers have higher take-up of CPD than males, all things being equal.

Findings for classroom level factors influencing CPD participation among teachers show that teachers who have an SNA working with them are somewhat more likely to participate in CPD compared to those with no SNA. Moreover, teachers with one or more pupils with a learning disability are somewhat more likely to

participate. Teachers working in multi-grade classes have a higher take-up of CPD than those teaching a single grade, all things being equal. However, class size does not appear to be associated with CPD take-up.

Interestingly, when other factors are taken into account, school size and school location do not influence CPD take-up. International studies also acknowledge the role of school climate in influencing CPD participation. Studies emphasise the importance of teachers feeling 'ownership over their professional development' (Loxley et al., 2010) within a positive and healthy learning environment (Bredeson and Johanson, 2000). The findings in this study show that CPD take-up is higher where there is a positive school climate and where teachers work with children who enjoy school.

In addition to school climate, this study examined how the characteristics of principals influence take-up of CPD among staff. Principal tenure has a significant impact on CPD participation, even when taking into account teachers' own career duration. Interestingly, having a teaching or administrative principal has no significant impact on CPD participation, all things being equal.

This study also sought to measure principals' perceptions of teachers' eagerness to participate in in-service training at their school. While the majority of principals surveyed felt this was true of almost all of their staff, this seemed to vary. For example, slightly more female than male principals reported that nearly all their teachers are eager to participate in in-service. Teaching principals and principals with small staff numbers and those working in small schools were also more likely to report higher levels interested in CPD.

3.2 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The study findings have implications for policy and practice regarding continuous professional development and so provide an important evidence base for future policy-making. The findings show that participation in CPD is greater at particular phases of the teaching career, indicating the importance of providing access to, and encouraging take-up of, CPD at all stages. The influence of principal tenure on teacher take-up of CPD is further evidence of the need to ensure greater encouragement of lifelong learning across different school settings. All else being equal, male teachers spend less time on CPD than their female counterparts. This pattern, coupled with evidence of lower job satisfaction levels among male teachers (Darmody and Smyth, 2011), is a matter for concern, especially in view of declining numbers of men in the teaching profession.

Engagement in CPD appears to be, at least in part, driven by the complexity of needs faced by teachers, with higher levels of involvement for those with multi-grade classes and among those who have pupils with learning disabilities. It is important that appropriate courses are provided to meet these needs, given the policy emphasis on mainstreaming children with special educational needs. The potential challenges of multi-grade teaching have received relatively little attention in educational policy discussion, which is surprising given the prevalence of multi-grade classes in Irish primary schools. Methodologies for teaching multi-grade classes and for addressing diverse pupil needs could usefully be incorporated into initial and continuing teacher education, irrespective of the specific topic addressed.

Teachers are more likely to take part in CPD when they work in school settings where pupils are more engaged in schoolwork and better behaved. Promoting a positive school climate through school development planning is likely therefore to have significant benefits not only for pupils themselves but for teacher professional development. However, it is a matter of concern that teachers who work with pupils who are disengaged from school life are less likely to take part in CPD. These teachers are the ones who are most likely to be in need of support in their day-to-day practice, especially given the consequences of a negative disciplinary climate for teacher job satisfaction and stress (Darmody and Smyth, 2011). There is a case therefore for professional development support to foster a whole-school approach in dealing with pupil behaviour.

The finding that teachers with less control over their day-to-day work practices are more likely to take part in CPD appears to indicate the persistence of 'top-down' rather than teacher-led models of provision, at least in some contexts. While this approach is likely to increase the amount of CPD taken, it is unlikely to enhance professional development if teachers are not in a position to take ownership of their own development needs.

This study has highlighted a number of implications for policy but has also raised questions about the kinds of information we need on teacher professional development; this issue is discussed in the following section.

3.3 FUTURE RESEARCH

Although this report provides new and significant findings regarding CPD participation among teachers in Ireland, the results highlight key areas where research could be carried out in the future. By expanding on these findings, research could evaluate and assess the quality and relevance of content of CPD

for teachers and in particular examine the extent to which training is aligned with their day-to-day work.

Moreover, future research is needed on the extent to which teachers in Ireland access and participate in informal learning opportunities, particularly given the increasing emphasis on this type of learning in the CPD literature (Richter et al., 2010). Studies also highlight how lack of time is a factor influencing teacher take-up of CPD. Future research could explore this issue in an Irish context in order to identify ways in which CPD participation could be incorporated into the school year and relief could be provided for teachers to attend.

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Appendix

GROWING UP IN IRELAND STUDY
QUESTIONNAIRES FOR TEACHERS
AND PRINCIPALS

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR

WAVE 1

OF THE NINE-YEAR COHORT OF

GROWING UP IN IRELAND

MAY 2010

Teacher-On-Self Questionnaire

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Growing Up in Ireland – the national longitudinal study
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TEACHER-ON-SELF QUESTIONNAIRE

School ID [ ][ ][ ][ ]   **School Roll No.** [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]

Study Child's ID within School [ ][ ]   **Roll Number of Study Child**_____

Teacher's ID within School [ ][ ]   *Date: _____day_____ mth*

Growing Up in Ireland is a major new government study on children. The purpose of the study is to improve our understanding of all aspects of children and their development. It will examine how children develop over time and identify which factors affect a child's development and make for a healthy and happy childhood or for a less happy one. The results of the study will be used by government to develop policies and interventions to support children and their families in the future. The Department of Health & Children is funding the study through the Office of the Minister for Children (OMC) in association with the Department of Social & Family Affairs and the Central Statistics Office. The Department of Education and Science is represented on the Steering Group which oversees the study. A group of researchers led by the Economic & Social Research Institute (ESRI) and The Children's Research Centre at Trinity College Dublin is carrying out the study.

All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence. No one, other than the Study Team, will see the information you complete about the child. This information will not be seen by the child or by his / her parents / guardians.

An information sheet outlining in more detail the objectives of the study accompanies this questionnaire.

1. Are you male or female?   Male .... $\square_1$ Female .... $\square_2$

2. To which age group do you belong?

   20 - 29 yrs ..... $\square_1$ 30 - 39 yrs .. $\square_2$ 40 - 49 yrs . $\square_3$ 50 - 59 yrs . $\square_4$ 60 yrs or older.. $\square_5$

3. How many years have you been teaching at primary school level? ...._____ years

4. How long have you been teaching in this school? .... _____ years

5. Which of the following qualifications do you hold?   [*Please tick all that apply*]

A primary school teaching diploma or certificate, or other primary school qualification .... $\square_1$
A primary degree in education (B.Ed).. $\square_2$
A primary degree in another subject.. $\square_3$
A postgraduate diploma in education .... $\square_4$
A qualification in learning support, special education or resource teaching........................ $\square_5$
A higher degree in education (PhD, Masters etc.)... $\square_6$
A higher degree in another subject (PhD, Masters etc.)... $\square_7$
No qualification .... $\square_8$
Other [please specify] _____ $\square_9$

6. Within your regular classroom, how many children are there in each year group? If you do not teach a particular year group, write 'none' in the total row.

Class	Junior Infants	Senior Infants	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	Fourth Class	Fifth Class	Sixth Class
	Number of pupils							
Boys								
Girls								
Total								

<u>OR</u> **I teach a particular subject(s) and do not have a regular classroom** .... $\square_{55}$

7a. Did you do any professional training, including in-service training, in the last 12 months?

Yes........ □₁   No .... □₂

7b. How many days training did you do?   _____ days

8. In your opinion, how many children in your classroom (including the Study Child if relevant) have any of the following long-term problems? (Some children may belong to more than one category)

a. A limited knowledge of the main language of instruction .... _____ children

b. An emotional or behavioural problem .... _____ children

c. A learning / intellectual disability .... _____ children

d. A physical / sensory disability .... _____ children

9. In a typical week, would you have any Special Needs Assistants working with you in the Study Child's classroom?

Yes........ □₁   No .... □₂

10. For approximately how many hours per week? _____ **hours per week**

11. Approximately how many hours <u>per week</u> does the Study Child's class spend on each of the following subjects, <u>within normal school hours</u>? Your best estimate is fine. If the class does not receive instruction in a subject, please write 'none'.

Subject	No. of hours per week	Subject	No. of hours per week
English	hrs/wk	Social Personal Health Education (SPHE)	hrs/wk
Gaeilge	hrs/wk	Physical Education	hrs/wk
Maths	hrs/wk	Drama	hrs/wk
History	hrs/wk	Visual Arts	hrs/wk
Geography	hrs/wk	Other 1 (specify)	hrs/wk
Science	hrs/wk	Other 2 (specify)	hrs/wk
Religion	hrs/wk	Other 3 (specify)	hrs/wk
Music	hrs/wk	Other 4 (specify)	hrs/wk

12. Below we have a number of statements about teaching. Please indicate how frequently the following things happen in the Study Child's class

	Never or almost never	Some days	Most days	Every day
Pupils copy notes from the board in class	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
Pupils work in pairs	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
Pupils work individually in class using their textbook or worksheets	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
Homework is checked in class	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
Homework is taken up for correction	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
Pupils work in groups in class	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
You ask pupils questions in class	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
Pupils ask you questions in class	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
Pupils ask each other questions in class	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
You read aloud to pupils	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
Pupils suggest subjects or topics to be covered in class	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
Pupils are encouraged to find things out for themselves	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
You use video / DVD or audiotapes / CDs in class	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
You use play to facilitate pupil learning	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
Pupils use computer facilities in class	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
You provide differentiated activities, as appropriate, to pupils	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
Pupils get the opportunity to engage in hands-on activities	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
The pupil's experience and their environment is the starting point for learning	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
You teach pupils as a whole class	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄

13a. How often do the children in the Study Child's class use a computer(s) in the school?

Never	Once a month or less	Two or three times a month	Once or twice a week	Three or four times a week	Daily
☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6

13b. Do the children in the Study Child's class have use of a computer in their classroom?

Yes .... ☐1   No .... ☐2

14. Do the children in the Study Child's class use a computer to access the Internet?

Yes .... ☐1   No .... ☐2

15. On average, how many nights per week do you set homework for the children in the Study Child's class?

_____nights

16. On a typical evening during the week, how much time do you expect children in the Study Child's class to spend on homework?

None...☐1   31-60mins ....☐4
15 mins or less…… ....☐2   1 – 1hr 30mins………....................................☐5
16-30 mins ....☐3   More than 1hr 30 min………….....................☐6

17a. How often would you assess your pupil's progress using:

	Weekly	Twice a month	Monthly	Every term	Never/Almost Never
Teacher observations	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
Teacher-designed tasks and tests	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
Work samples, portfolios or projects	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
Teacher's questions	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5

17b. Do you use the results of this assessment in the planning of your teaching?

Yes .... ☐1   No .... ☐2

18. How much control do you feel you have in your school over the following areas:

	No control	Slight control	Some control	Moderate control	A great deal of control
a. selecting subjects to be taught	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
b. deciding about the content of subjects to be taught	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
c. deciding about teaching techniques	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
d. choosing textbooks and other learning materials	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
e. disciplining children	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
f. selecting the year group you teach	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5

19. Below we have list of statements about pupils. Please indicate if you feel each is true of nearly all, more than half, less than half, or only a few pupils in the school.

Pupils, in general:	Nearly all	More than half	Less than half	Only a few
a. Enjoy being at school	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
b. Are well-behaved in class	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
c. Show respect for their teachers	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
d. Are rewarding to work with	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
e. Are well behaved in the playground/school yard	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4

20. In general, what proportion of parents attend
   a) parent teacher meetings and
   b) other meetings organised by the school?

	Nearly All	More than half	Less than half	Only a few	Not Applicable
a. Parent-teacher meetings	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5
b. Other meetings organised by the school	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5

21. What proportion of parents would approach you informally to discuss their child's progress?

Nearly All	More than half	Less than half	Only a few
□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄

22. Compared with other Primary Schools of your size would you say that, in general, the environment in your school is happier, as happy or less happy for (a) pupils and (b) teachers as in other Primary Schools?

	Happier	As happy	Less happy
a. Pupils	□₁	□₂	□₃
b. Teachers	□₁	□₂	□₃

23. In general terms (a) how stressed do you feel by your job and (b) how satisfied do you feel with your job?

	Very	Fairly	Not Very	Not At All
a. How **stressed** do you feel by your job	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄
b. How **satisfied** do you feel with your job	□₁	□₂	□₃	□₄

Thank you very much for having completed this part of *Growing Up In Ireland*

We would now like you to complete a questionnaire (one of the green ones) in respect of each Study Child who has been selected from your class(es) for inclusion in the project

Principal's Questionnaire

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Growing Up in Ireland – the national longitudinal study of children
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

PRINCIPAL'S QUESTIONNAIRE

School ID ☐☐☐☐   **School Roll No.** ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Study Child's ID within School ☐☐   **Roll Number of Study Child** _____

Teacher's ID within School ☐☐   *Date: _____day_____ mth*

Growing Up in Ireland is a major new government study on children. The purpose of the study is to improve our understanding of all aspects of children and their development. It will examine how children develop over time and identify which factors affect a child's development and make for a healthy and happy childhood or for a less happy one. The results of the study will be used by government to develop policies and interventions to support children and their families in the future.

The Department of Health & Children is funding the study through the Office of the Minister for Children (OMC) in association with the Department of Social & Family Affairs and the Central Statistics Office. The Department of Education and Science is represented on the Steering Group which oversees the study. A group of researchers led by the Economic & Social Research Institute (ESRI) and The Children's Research Centre at Trinity College Dublin is carrying out the study. Your school is one of those randomly selected to participate in the study. **All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence.**

An information sheet outlining in more detail the objectives of the study accompanies this questionnaire.

1. Are you male or female?   Male .... ☐₁   Female ..... ☐₂

2. To which age group do you belong?

    20 - 29 yrs ..... ☐₁   30 - 39 yrs .. ☐₂   40 - 49 yrs . ☐₃   50 - 59 yrs . ☐₄   60 yrs or older.. ☐₅

3. For how many years have you been Principal:

  (a) in this school? .... _____years   **(b) in other Primary Schools?** _____years

4. How many boys and how many girls are enrolled in the school?

        Boys _____   Girls _____   Total Pupils _____

5. In addition to your duties as Principal, do you have a teaching class assigned to you?

        Yes............. ☐₁   No .... ☐₂

6. How many *full-time* and *part-time* teachers work in this school? Please indicate how many are male and how many are female.

Teachers	Full-time	Part-time
Male		
Female		
Total		

7. Excluding yourself, how many *full-time* and *part-time* administrative staff work in your school?

  Full-time admin. staff _____   **Part-time admin. staff_____**
        [If none, please write none. Do not leave blank]

8. Approximately how many staff does your school currently have in the following capacities? Please indicate the number employed on a full-time and part-time basis.

	Full-time	Part-time
Learning support / resource teachers		
Language support teachers		
Special needs assistants		
Other teaching assistants		

9. How many rooms (including prefabs etc.) are used as classrooms in the school? _____ classrooms

10. Of these, how many portable classrooms (prefabs) are there in the school? _____ portable classrooms

11. How many classes (across all year-groups) are there in the school? _____ classes

12. Approximately how many pupils is the school designed for? .... _____ children

13. In which year was the school built? .... Year_____

14. Compared to other Primary Schools in the country how adequate to the needs of the school and the pupils are the school's resources in each of the following areas?

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
a. Number of teachers	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
b. Number of classrooms	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
c. Books and worksheets	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
d. Computing facilities	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
e. Arts and crafts facilities	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
f. Sports facilities	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
g. Music facilities	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
h. Playground	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
i. Mathematics resources / facilities	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
j. Library / media centre	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
k. Staff room	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
l. Toilet facilities	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
m. Learning support provision	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
n. After-school facilities (e.g. homework clubs)	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
o. Administrative support	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
p. Condition of the school building, classrooms etc.	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
q. Facilities for children with disabilities	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$

15. Does the school provide

a) a 'breakfast club'   Yes, every day..... $\square_1$ Yes, some days .... $\square_2$ No........... $\square_3$

b) <u>free</u> school meals at lunchtime   Yes, every day..... $\square_1$ Yes, some days .... $\square_2$ No........... $\square_3$

16. Approximately how many computers in total does the school have? _____ computers

17. Of these, how many can be used <u>*by the pupils*</u>, i.e excluding those used *solely* by administrative or teaching staff:

_____ used by the pupils

18. Does the school have a dedicated computer room for pupils?   Yes......... $\square_1$ No .... $\square_2$

19. In your opinion, how important is each of the following to <u>*the ethos*</u> of the school?

	Very important	Fairly important	Not important	Not sure
a. Sports	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
b. Religion	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
c. Music	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
d. Drama	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
e. Involvement with the community	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
f. Involvement with parents / guardians	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
g. Social justice / concern for disadvantaged	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
h. Environmental awareness	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$
i. Irish language and culture	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$

20. Are the school buildings and other facilities (playing fields etc. if relevant) open to the local community (a) in the evenings during the week; (b) at weekends; or (c) out of term time?

a) in the evenings during the week	Yes .... $\square_1$	No .... $\square_2$
b) at weekends	Yes .... $\square_1$	No .... $\square_2$
c) out of term time	Yes .... $\square_1$	No .... $\square_2$

21. Approximately how many of each of the following groups of pupils do you have in your school? If none, please write 'NONE' – do not leave blank. – the same child can be recorded more than once.

Foreign-national pupils.. *(Number)*_____

Pupils of families from the Travelling Community.. *(Number)* _____

Pupils with language difficulties (where native language is other than English / Irish) ... *(Number)* _____

Pupils with physical / sensory disabilities .... *(Number)* _____

Pupils with learning / intellectual disabilities. .... *(Number)* _____

22. Approximately, what is the *Average Daily Attendance* for your school this year (2006 / 2007)?

_____% Average Daily Attendance   **OR**   _____Average number attending daily

23. What percentage of pupils missed 20 days or more in the 2005 / 2006 academic year (as per the NEWB figures)

_____ %

24. Approximately what percentage of the pupils in your school would you say come from the immediate area, that is, live within about 20 minutes walking distance of the school?

_____ %

25. Please indicate which of the following get involved in supporting children with emotional / behavioural problems in your school. [Please tick all that apply]

Principal..$\square_1$
Classroom Teacher ....$\square_2$
Learning support / resource teacher ....$\square_3$
Other staff member...$\square_4$
External assistance [please specify] _____ .$\square_5$

26. In your assessment, approximately what proportion of pupils in the school would have such literacy, numeracy, or emotional-behavioural difficulties as to adversely impact on their educational development? Please tick one box on each line to indicate approximate percentage.

Approximate percentage of children with each problem

	None	less than 10%	10-25%	26-40%	More than 40%
a) Literacy Problems	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$	$\square_5$
b) Numeracy Problems	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$	$\square_5$
c) Emotional / Behavioural problems	$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$	$\square_5$

27. Does the school have a Home-School Community Liaison Co-ordinator?   Yes .... $\square_1$ No .... $\square_2$

28. Over the past five years, has the number of pupils coming to this school….

Increased...................... $\square_1$ Decreased.......... $\square_2$ Remained fairly stable .... $\square_3$

29. Are all of the pupils who apply to this school generally accepted? Yes… $\square_1$ ➤ Go to Q.31   No.. $\square_2$ ➤ Go to Q.30

30. What criteria are used to admit pupils [Please tick all that apply]?

Proximity to the school	Other siblings in the school	Parents attended the school	Performance on tests	Date of application	Religion	Other (Please specify below)
$\square_1$	$\square_2$	$\square_3$	$\square_4$	$\square_5$	$\square_6$	_____ $\square_7$

31. Are there any other local schools to which pupils in your school might go? Yes .... ☐₁   No........ ☐₂

32. In general, do more pupils apply to come to this school than there are places available?

Yes .... ☐₁   No................. ☐₂

33. If there is more than 1 class in any year-group, on what basis are pupils in the school allocated to classes?

Randomly / alphabetically .... ☐₁   Performance on tests .... ☐₃
Only 1 class per year-group .... ☐₂   Other [please specify_____] . ☐₄

34. Does the school hold formal parent-teacher meetings at least once per year? Yes ...... ☐₁   No..... ☐₂

35. Approximately what percentage of parents attend parent-teacher meetings? _____ per cent

36. How important is each of the following in the school as a _curricular_ activity?

	Very important	Fairly important	Not important	Not sure
a. Physical Education / Sport	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
b. Music	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
c. Speech and Drama	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
d. Environmental Awareness	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
e. Awareness of Social Justice	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
f. Scientific education	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄

37. And how important is each of the following in the school as an _extra-curricular_ activity?

	Very important	Fairly important	Not important	Not sure
a. Physical Education / Sport	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
b. Music	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
c. Speech and Drama	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
d. Environmental Awareness	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
e. Awareness of Social Justice	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
f. Scientific education	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄

38. To what extent are the following forms of discipline used in your school:

	Often	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
a. Suspension	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
b. Expulsion / permanent exclusion	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
c. Extra classwork	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
d. Extra homework	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
e. Writing of 'lines'	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
f. Detention	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
g. Exclusion from sports or other popular activities	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
h. Verbal (phone or otherwise) report to parents	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
i. Written report to parents	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
j. Cancellation of popular lesson e.g. art	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
k. Warning card system	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄
l. Other (specify) _____	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃	☐₄

39. Does the school have a written discipline policy? Yes .... ☐₁   No .... ☐₂ Go to Q.41

40. To what extent were the following involved in developing this policy?

	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all
a. Teachers	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃
b. Parents	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃
c. Pupils	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃
d. Board of Management	☐₁	☐₂	☐₃

41. To what extent is bullying a problem in your school?

A major problem .... ☐₁   A minor problem .... ☐₁   No problem at all .... ☐₃

42. Does your school have an explicit anti-bullying strategy? Yes .... ☐₁   No........ ☐₂

43. Does your school have a written policy on bullying?   Yes ..... ☐₁   No........ ☐₂

44. Please indicate the extent to which you believe each of the following to be true of teachers in your school.

	True of nearly all	True for more than half	True for less than half	True of only a few
a. Teachers are positive about the school	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
b. Teachers get a lot of help and support from colleagues	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
c. Teachers are open to new developments and challenges	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
d. Teachers are eager to take part in in-service training	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4

45. Compared with other Primary Schools of your size would you say that the scale of day-to-day problems in running the school are? [Please tick one box only]

Much greater than in other schools	Slightly greater than in other schools	About the same as in other schools	Slightly less than in other schools	Much less than in other schools
☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5

46. What makes you say that? [Please describe as fully as possible]

_____

47. Compared with other Primary Schools of your size would you say that, in general, the environment in your school is happier, as happy or less happy for pupils as in other Primary Schools

Happier................☐1   As happy ....☐2   Less happy ....☐3

48. In general terms (a) how *stressed* do you feel by your job and (b) how *satisfied* do you feel with your job?

	Very	Fairly	Not Very	Not At All
a. How **stressed** do you feel by your job..........	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
b. How **satisfied** do you feel with your job	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4

Thank you very much for having completed this part of *Growing Up in Ireland*