Developing the Emotional Intelligence of teams

An Action Research and Development Project – Main Report

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Foreword

As we approach the next decade many challenges will face school leaders. One such challenge is the urgent need for staff at all organisational levels to better understand the importance and benefits of the development of emotional intelligence (EI) competencies for staff, pupils and parents.

This may not be an easy task. There still may be some individuals within schools who believe that the most important task of education is to develop cognitive abilities without paying any genuine regard to the development of emotional competencies. This thinking appears to be based on a belief that reason is a process which is entirely independent from emotion. Recognising the interdependence of the cognitive and emotional brain is seen as unnecessary. Research conducted by some of the world’s leading experts on the neuro-psychology of emotion has made this view unacceptable.

“Emotion is integral to the process of reasoning and obsession – making for worse and for better” (Antonio Damsio: The Feeling of What Happens).

CEA has recognised the importance of this aspect of personal development for staff and pupils and in the revised N.I. curriculum has stressed the need for pupils, at all Key Stage levels, to develop emotional intelligence competencies.

“Through personal development children can develop insights into their own emotions, attitudes and moral values. The activities at all key stages aim to enhance the emotional competencies of children, their understanding of themselves and their relationship with others”.

CEA’s strategy is largely focused on the production of activities/resources to support the development of emotional intelligence competencies of pupils. There is, however, a recognition that, if this aspect of personal development is to be implemented effectively, that school leaders too will need training and support.
It is timely, therefore, to disseminate the findings of this RTU research and development project. The project set out to develop the emotional intelligence competencies of school principals and their teams – essential prerequisites if all staff are to model emotional intelligence competencies, and feel motivated and confident in developing emotionally intelligent schools. Findings from the project show that it is possible to improve the emotional intelligence of individual team members and, consequently, the effectiveness of teams. However, it is also clear that this process involves exploring long-held beliefs, attitudes, thinking processes and the practice of new behaviour, over a period of time, in a variety of situations. One school leader summed up the difficulty of changing behaviour when she stated:

“I tend when I think I have been successful (e.g. I have spent time monitoring, reflecting and practising more effective listening skills) to fall back very quickly into old habits. I think that changing habits of a lifetime is difficult and a very slow process. You need to stick with it”.

It is reassuring to find that one year on since the completion of the research and development project, the principals involved have ‘stuck with it’ and are now reporting lots of anecdotal evidence relating to the very positive impact of this work on staff, both at a personal and professional level, and on the improvement in pupils’ self-esteem, learning and behaviour. Inspectors too have commented favourably on programmes of work now being developed by schools to ensure the development of emotional intelligence of staff and pupils.

I trust that this Executive Summary will encourage you to access (on RTU’s website www.rtuni.org) both the full report and, more importantly the learning resources/workshops underpinning the project schools’ EI journey so that you too can explore how EI can enhance both your personal effectiveness and the effectiveness of those leading, teaching and learning in your school.

Tom Hesketh (Dr)
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PART ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

We need to work towards a more harmonious integration of reason and passion in the brain, a development that will allow future humans to better know their true feelings and fuse them more effectively in daily life.

Le Doux

The long-term effects of Leadership and Management Development Programmes?

1.1 Leadership and management development programmes have been provided for principals and senior leaders in Northern Ireland for the past twenty-five years and yet facilitators continue to be uncertain about the long-term effects of programmes. Studies in a wider context have shown that real change can, in many cases, result from training but for most of the participants this change is not sustained (The Emotionally Intelligent Workplace – C. Cherniss & Daniel Goleman). There is some evidence to show that leadership and management development programmes have had little effect on the development of leaders’ emotional competencies (The New Leaders – Transforming the Art of Leadership into the Science of Results – Goleman D., Boyatzis R., McKee A.). This finding is not surprising as, to date, designers and facilitators of programmes have put little emphasis on this central aspect of personal development. The emphasis in leadership and management programmes has frequently focused on identifying task processes, which simply stress the need for trust, cooperation and emotionally intelligent behaviour, as if these were innate skills with which we are all born, whereas, most of us need support and practice in developing these skills.

1.2 The skills and qualities needed by school leaders in building shared leadership are not the same skills as those needed for budgeting, drawing up development plans or target setting. The skills which are required are those that bring about deep shifts in how we think, feel, behave and interact with others. It is important that leaders know what to do but it is equally important to ensure that they have the skills and qualities necessary to carry out their plans.

1.3 Reflection on existing practice

In the academic year 2000 - 2001, as part of the remit of the Regional Training Unit, a five-day leadership and management development programme for leadership and management teams in primary schools was designed and implemented.

The programme had two broad aims:

- to consider radical alternatives to the traditional models of school leadership and management in primary schools.
- to support leadership and management teams in recognising their collective responsibility to ensure improvement and excellence for all.
On completion of the programme participants were expected to have:

- agreed and stated the role of the leadership and management team (see appendix A).
- clarified the advantages and disadvantages of their present leadership/management structures.
- acquired a better understanding of the benefits of a shared leadership model.
- recognised that the central role of the leadership and management team is to ensure quality learning and teaching.
- agreed learning and teaching guidelines, which would be implemented over a two-year period.

1.4 Short-term evaluations

Analysis of evaluations, over the last three years, has shown that this programme was highly rated by participating teams. There is evidence in some schools of a significant change in approaches to learning and teaching. However, for some schools changing from a hierarchical structure of management to a collective leadership model will have involved fundamental changes at many levels within the school and to be successful will have required modelling by staff of highly developed emotional intelligence competencies. It was evident, after visits to schools involved in the leadership and management development programme, that despite the initial enthusiasm, some were still struggling to implement a shared leadership model.

1.5 Recognition of the need to build on existing programmes.

Reflection on the effectiveness of the present Regional Training Unit model for developing primary leadership teams raised awareness of the many strengths of this model, but it has also highlighted the challenges arising from schools which decentralise authority without ensuring that all those who are given leadership responsibilities have the skills and qualities necessary to carry out new roles. Changing structures will not change the mindset of individuals.

1.6 Lack of emotional intelligence competencies demonstrated by some members of leadership and management teams (based on experience of working with leadership and management teams).

Unawareness of:

- the impact of emotion on all aspects of personal and professional lives, and on the learning process
- the affective dimension of educational change
- the effects of leaders’ emotional behaviour on the school community and on the culture of the school
- the emotional cost of genuine reflection
- the negative aspects of emotional ‘shut-down’ teams with no display of passion, enthusiasm, focus or trust
- the chaos which may result from unresolved relationship problems
• the distrust which may be caused by poor communication between the leadership and management team and staff
• the effects of poor listening skills within teams, resulting in the absence of any skilled discussion or dialogue taking place
• the fact that some team members may be feeling isolated as a result of not belonging to the ‘clique’ of favourites formed by the principal
• the display amongst members of staff of the following social defence mechanisms:
  – withdrawal
  – forming of covert coalitions
  – denial of thoughts and emotions which are deemed too difficult to deal with.
  – resistance to change
  – projection of blame on to others; inability to recognise that the cause of the problem may lie within oneself
  – unwillingness to reflect on values, beliefs, and assumptions
• the confusion, frustration, low morale, and low self-esteem of staff resulting from:
  - their inability to fully understand the ‘connectedness’ of the profusion of initiatives in education
  - the requirement to implement changes which they believe to be ideologically or educationally unsound

1.7 Personal problems affecting the work situation.

At the beginning of each conference all participants, including facilitators, are invited to talk about aspects of their lives outside their professional expertise, for example, their interests, hobbies and aspirations.

At a recent conference three participants, out of a total of twenty-four, shared with colleagues their feelings resulting from deep personal experiences. These feelings ranged from sadness, hurt, loneliness and isolation to frustration and anger. All three agreed that professionally, ‘they were just hanging on’. These negative experiences are surfacing more frequently at conferences from a powerful negative subtext operating outside professional lives.

1.8 Current thinking on emotional intelligence

• many people distrust emotion as unreliable, intrinsically irrational and disruptive. Such views need to be challenged in the light of recent research.
• emotions are not random, chaotic events. They are systemic processes and may be experienced consciously or unconsciously.
• a vocabulary of emotion is needed in order to help us to understand, reflect upon, articulate, and analyse our feelings. The lack of this vocabulary can lead to feelings of frustration, loneliness and irrational behaviour.
• although certain cultural universals exist regarding emotion, (e.g. it is easy to recognise a smiling face irrespective of culture or background) individual cultures teach us how and when to express feelings.
• positive emotion motivates the thinking process and influences behaviour in ways that are helpful. Negative emotion can block the learning process and lead to irrational decision-making.

• leaders underestimate the impact of their emotional behaviour on others. Enthusiastic, optimistic, passionate, caring leaders are more likely to engender similar feelings and attributes in members of staff.

• emotions are usually not static; instead they follow a certain course as feelings lessen or intensify (e.g. frustration, annoyance, anger, rage). It is important, therefore, when dealing with negative emotions to recognise this process and deal with the emotion at an early stage.

• it is possible to experience a range of contradictory emotions at the same time e.g. joy/sadness.

• the ability to manage emotions does not mean that we need to suppress our emotions. It does mean, however, that we have good emotional self-control, think clearly when expressing strong feelings, make decisions based on rationality and reflect regularly on our own emotions and emotional behaviour.

• it is not possible to be emotionally intelligent at all times. Sometimes when we are experiencing emotional turmoil we feel cauterised, unable to articulate our feelings or think straight.

• in attempting to understand the emotional history of a colleague we need to understand the individual’s cultural framework. Childhood and life experiences will have determined how an individual views and demonstrates emotion. Not all learning about emotion and emotional behaviour may have been positive.

• emotional intelligence competencies can be learned at any stage of our lives. This process, however, does take courage, determination, and practice over a long period of time.

• how members of staff feel about their institution has a direct influence on the effectiveness of the organisation.

1.9 Schools are heavily influenced by non-rational forces, especially emotions

The emotional nature of the work of teachers can be overwhelming, with guilt a key feature of their emotional lives. When we asked teachers recently about their feelings concerning their professional lives, one response as follows summed up the feelings expressed:

‘I always feel a sense of disappointment, regret and sadness that I am unable to give all the children in my class the time, care and attention they need. I am anxious all the time because I feel my job is never ending…never a feeling of completion. There are always books to mark, plans to do, more children with behavioural problems needing understanding and attention, more meetings, greater emphasis on tests, another new curriculum to be implemented, …and a family which I feel I continually neglect. My feelings range from short times of intense satisfaction to times of guilt and deep anxiety.’

In schools, at all levels emotions and the feelings they engender flow back and forth, often creating instability and turmoil:
'Emotions move between and within individuals, groups and institutions – throughout the whole system. The dynamic of these emotions and the defences that are put in place to protect against them can compel the institution to work in certain ways. They can entrap those who work there and block the creativity and neutralise the passion required to understand good educational work. The emotional experience, which is essentially abstract and untouchable, becomes reified and made null. Such institutions can be resistant to change.' Professor Chris James - University of Glamorgan.

Although we may wish to disregard emotion, dismiss it or rationalise it, it is ever present in educational leadership and management, and in the teaching and learning process. Leaders need to work with the emotional experience of their schools in order to create an ethos of respect and trust, where creativity and innovation are welcomed and where there is a passion for the work of educating young people.

The Missing Dimension: stepping into the light of emotional intelligence

1.10 Emerging research is now making a study of the link between cognition and emotion. Emotions are viewed as biological functions of the nervous system and, as a result of research on the brain, new light has been thrown on the role of emotion. These new findings trace the processes by which our emotions influence our mental and physical health. Perhaps one of the most interesting of these research findings is the discovery that emotional learning can be mediated by pathways that bypass the neocortex. This suggests that emotional responses can occur without the involvement of the higher processing systems of the brain, systems believed to be involved in thinking, reasoning and consciousness. These new findings may explain why many of our emotional responses may be irrational, poorly considered and can distort our thinking processes.

1.11 In his book ‘The Feeling of what Happens’ Antonio Damasio has shown that emotion is integral to the process of reasoning and decision making ‘for better or worse.’ The findings come from a study of several individuals who were entirely rational until the time when, as a result of neurological damage in specific areas of the brain, they lost a certain range of emotions and, consequently, lost their ability to make rational, personal and social decisions. Damasio concludes:

‘These findings suggest that selective reduction of emotion is at least as prejudicial for rationality as is excessive emotion. It certainly does not seem true that reason stands to gain from operating without the leverage of emotion. On the contrary, emotion probably assists reasoning. I do not suggest, however, that emotions are a substitute for reason. Well targeted and well developed emotions seems to be a support system without which the edifice of reason cannot operate properly.’

1.12 A review of the literature on leadership development suggests that the concept of emotional intelligence has, to date, had little impact on leadership development. It remains marginal to the discourse in theory and is often ignored in practice.

‘Teaching and learning are profoundly emotional activities. You would not guess this from much of the education and reform literature however.... If educational
reformers ignore the emotional dimension of educational change, emotions and feelings will only re-enter the change process by the back door.’ Andy Hargreaves

The results of recent scientific evidence about the role of emotion in our lives challenge those who may want to dismiss emotion as irrelevant. This challenge is central to the procedures and rationale of this report.
2.1 Literature Review
A review of the literature was carried out to inform the approach to the project and current research findings have guided the thinking throughout.

2.2 The action research project had four broad aims:

A. To develop the emotional intelligence of leadership and management teams

B. To design and develop activities, workshops and discussion papers to help team members develop their emotional intelligence.

C. To incorporate a range of models of learning: self-evaluation, reflection, dialogue, skilled discussion and collaborative coaching.

D. To evaluate the effectiveness of resources and strategies used throughout the project and to make recommendations for a range of Regional Training Unit course provision.

2.3 Developing a Common Language
For the purpose of the action research and development project, the term ‘emotional intelligence’ has been chosen and put in the context of Howard Gardner’s range of intelligences. Peter Salovey and Donal J. Sluyter (Emotional Development and Emotional Intelligence) have suggested that emotional intelligence can be considered an actual intelligence as opposed to a highly valued social trait. Their concept of emotional intelligence is primarily focused ‘on the complex, potentially intelligent tapestry of emotional reasoning in everyday life’.

2.4 The definition of emotional intelligence taken as the basis for the project was:
‘The ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth’

Peter Salovey and Donal J Sluyter.

This definition combines the ideas that emotion makes thinking more intelligent and that one thinks intelligently about emotions. Both connect intelligence and emotions.

2.5 Selecting competencies to promote emotionally intelligent leaders.
A bewildering array of emotional intelligence competencies has been claimed to be critical for success in life. Goleman (1998) lists twenty-five different competencies in the workplace. The three competencies focused upon throughout the action research
and development project conform mostly to an ability model of emotional intelligence. They are:

(a) awareness of emotions in self  
(b) regulating emotions in self  
(c) empathising and working with the emotions of others

Many of the competencies listed by Goleman are directly related to the above three competencies.

2.6 Leadership teams involved in the action research project

Three leadership teams from the primary sector of education in Northern Ireland were involved in the action research project. The leadership teams met, at monthly intervals, for seven afternoons (3.15 pm – 6.00pm) and on a two-day residential conference.

The activities and learning strategies adopted throughout the project were also disseminated by the Regional Training Unit throughout a series of four-day conferences with twenty-three leadership teams from primary and special schools.

2.7 Roles and responsibilities of participating teams

Members of the three leadership teams agreed to:

- ‘test’ and evaluate a range of strategies and resources designed to develop the emotional intelligence of individual team members and the emotional intelligence of teams
- share experiences gained from participating in the research and development project with colleagues attending Regional Training Unit Leadership and Development Programmes

2.8 Embedding self-reflection, dialogue, extended practice, coaching and feedback as central learning strategies.

These learning strategies, have been discussed and adopted throughout the action research and development project.

2.9 Activities have been devised to help school leaders

- achieve a greater awareness of self  
- regulate emotions in self  
- empathise and work with the emotions of others  
- demonstrate their emotional intelligence
All activities i.e. workshops, role-play activities, discussion papers, and facilitators’ notes are in an accompanying workbook. The areas dealt with are as follows:

**LIST OF ACTIVITIES**

WHAT IS EDUCATION FOR?
WHAT I VALUE MOST
DEVELOPING THE EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES OF INDIVIDUAL TEAM MEMBERS
RECOGNISING HOW A LEADER’S EMOTIONS IMPACT ON OTHERS
GIVING FEEDBACK
RECEIVING FEEDBACK
DEALING WITH SOME COMMON REASONS FOR THE BREAKDOWN IN RELATIONSHIPS
THE LADDER OF INFERENCE
DEALING WITH THE PERSONAL PROBLEMS OF STAFF WHEN THESE PROBLEMS BEGIN TO AFFECT THEIR WORK
UNDERSTANDING HOW TEMPERAMENT SHAPES OUR EMOTIONAL RESPONSES
UNDERSTANDING HOW MOOD MAY AFFECT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS AND OUR DECISION MAKING
UNDERSTANDING HOW NURTURE MAY DETERMINE OUR EMOTIONAL RESPONSES
MANAGING EMOTIONAL IMPULSES
UNDERSTANDING CONTROL, POWER
EMOTIONALLY LITERATE LISTENING
FINDING YOUR GENERAL APPROACH TO PROBLEM SOLVING
UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF DIALOGUE IN DEVELOPING THINKING AND FEELING
UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF COLLABORATIVE COACHING IN DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
PART THREE: THE DEVELOPMENT MODEL WHICH EMERGED

Although there was clarity about the fundamental principles and aims, which would guide the project, there was a degree of uncertainty about the form of the final model. What did emerge was as follows:

3.1 School Visits

Visits to schools by the research and development project leader to invite teams to participate in the project and to discuss the aims of the project.

3.2 Presentation and Discussion on ‘The Rationale for the Development of Emotional Intelligence’

The benefits of developing emotional intelligence for leaders, teachers, pupils and parents were stressed and discussed.

3.3 Baselining - Completing an emotional intelligence questionnaire

Individuals completed a questionnaire, which concentrated on the development of the following three competencies:

- Awareness of emotions in self
- Regulating emotions in self
- Empathising and working with the emotions of others

A team with emotionally intelligent individuals does not necessarily ensure an emotionally intelligent group. A team, like any other social group takes on its own character. However, it did seem important to try to ensure that individuals involved in teams had the opportunity to assess their level of emotional intelligence and to develop their emotional competencies.
3.4 **Individual Team Members Select Competencies for Development**

As a result of outcomes to the questionnaire individuals selected specific areas related to the three main competencies to develop over a period of time. It was agreed that participants would keep a reflective diary. Members also selected a partner/coach to work with from within the group. Some individuals chose to work with a colleague from a different school. It was agreed that time would be given, at the beginning of each meeting, for partners to work together in order to give and receive feedback.

3.5 **Developing Emotional Intelligence Competencies of Teams**

Team members discussed workshops, case studies, and role-play activities (see accompanying booklet).

3.6 **Application – creating an emotionally intelligent school**

Members of teams reported that they were drawing up action plans which would be implemented, over a two-year period, to ensure the development of an emotionally intelligent school i.e. a school with emotionally intelligent:

- Leadership
- Ethos
- Teachers
- Pupils
- Parents

They stated that they had strongly motivated leadership teams which would try, at all times to model emotionally intelligent behaviour and lead the task of creating an emotionally intelligent school.

3.7 **Evaluation**

Project leader interviewed team members.
Questionnaire completed by team members (appendix D)
Repeat of initial emotional intelligence questionnaire.

3.8 **Future Development**

The project leader arranged for follow-up support to ensure implementation at school level.
PART FOUR: EVALUATION OF THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

‘When we agreed to complete the statement sheets about the effectiveness of each other’s leadership qualities I was very nervous. I was scared of hurting my colleague’s feelings. I was also very worried about how she would rate my leadership skills and qualities. However, when she spent two afternoons taking to me about her comments I found this discussion the most useful activity of all. Initially I felt a bit defensive, but then I realised that this was a very thoughtful, balanced evaluation. Her comments provided me with lots of aspects to think about regarding my leadership skills.’

(A leader who participated in the project)

4.1 Comments relating to various workshops

* ‘I realised through the workshops, discussions and reading that emotional intelligence is essential in a leadership role. If you are not aware of your own emotions and able to regulate them during stressful times, then the leadership team and the school as a whole can be unstable and ineffective’.

* ‘I found the whole approach in this project difficult and demanding – the practising of changing behaviour, the collaborative coaching approach and reflecting on aspects of my thinking which I had never before seriously questioned’

* ‘I was really surprised when we discussed the two workshops on mental models (i.e. the Ladder of Inference and the workshop with the exchanges between Helen and Imelda) and I began to realise how we make such false assumptions based on speculation. I have spent a great deal of time reflecting on this.’

* When sorting out problems between children I do encourage them to think about how the other person might be feeling. I think I’ll now ask the ‘aggrieved’ person to try to explain her feelings, more often. An important aspect of our work is helping children appreciate the work, ideas, thoughts and feelings of others and to develop their emotional intelligent competencies in the same way as we are trying to develop ours.’

* ‘The guidelines for dealing with staff who may be having personal problems were very helpful. I had a similar situation in school to the one in the case study and I found the situation very difficult to handle.’

* ‘The workshop which had the most effect on me was the one which dealt with how leaders can, in subtle ways, misuse their power to control staff. It made me reflect on my leadership style and as a result I am determined to delegate more responsibility to staff.’
'I think it is very difficult to pick out just one workshop. I think you have to go through the whole process: reading, reflecting, discussing, practice, coaching, feedback and then more practice. It is a painfully slow process.'

4.2 Practising new skills of behaviour

'At conferences in the past the importance of building good relationships has always been stressed. I was always aware of this but I never fully realised how much I needed to examine my own attitudes, beliefs, behaviour and to practise new patterns of behaviour in order to change.'

'Through reflecting on my behaviour I have become aware of how my thinking and feelings can dictate my behaviour. I am now learning to pause and question the basis of my assumptions. I can do this when I have time to reflect but I can’t do it yet when I am in a face-to-face difficult interaction.'

'I find that when I think I have been successful (e.g. I have spent time monitoring, reflecting and practising more effective listening skills) I can fall back very quickly into old habits. I think that changing habits of a lifetime is difficult and a very slow process. You need to stick with it.'

'I think that developing the skills of reflection have slowed down my thinking process so that I am now less likely to act in an impulsive way which may cause hurt to others.'

'There were parts of my journal that were very personal to me. I think that emotions affect all aspects of our lives, not just our professional lives. So there were aspects that I did not want to share with anyone.'

'Keeping a diary for me is another chore. I feel more at ease reflecting and discussing with another person and I have done this very successfully throughout the project.'

All participants agreed that the main disadvantage to keeping a reflective diary was lack of time. One leader said that she spent a short time each night writing about her anxieties and nagging frustrations:

'I found this very therapeutic. Just holding a pen and feeling free to write down all my feelings helped me to feel less stressed and more able to cope.'

Many commented on the fact that 'looking forward to a discussion with my partner/coach at the monthly meetings kept me focused. The danger is, if this had not happened, I may have given up.'

'I found that the time allocated for coaching at the beginning of each monthly meeting was too short, too rushed.'
‘I discovered that as I related my experiences to my coach and analysed my reactions to events, that this helped me to see things more clearly. I also found it interesting to have to listen and to use a variety of skills to help my partner analyse his progress.’

‘I think I acquired a great deal of help and encouragement from my coach in helping me to persevere in stressful situations. The meetings helped me to think about various issues in a different way.’

‘The benefits of Email were that I could contact my coach when problems were occurring and get immediate feedback. I found this very helpful.’

‘I enjoyed working with a coach who was a member of staff from another school. Sometimes we can become too familiar with each other, too isolated in our own school, so the more we exchange ideas with others working in many similar but also different situations the better.’

Two teams reported that they were involved in coaching with beginning teachers and teachers at an early professional development stage. Members agreed that this process had become a very powerful way of introducing mentoring and coaching into a school:

‘It gives teachers a solid base on which to begin and continue their career. The teacher-tutor becomes a friend as well a mentor and coach.’

4.3 How teams are more effective

Repeating the initial baseline questionnaire

When members of the leadership teams repeated the initial baseline emotional intelligence questionnaire, at the end of the research and development project, participants’ scores, apart from two, showed a significant change in all three competencies.

One team member who had stated initially that his scores had not changed, on reflection, commented:

‘I do feel in ‘Empathising and Working with Others’ my score did go up significantly.’

The second team member commented:

‘I have been working in this area for years and, although I feel I have come a long way I know that this is a never-ending process.’
4.4 Understanding the importance of emotional intelligence in creating the fundamental conditions that allow effective task processes, within teams, to emerge.

In their evaluations team members made the following comments:

‘I think it was important for each of us to have been involved in the action research project. Often we tend to think that all the problems lie with the other person and are unwilling to recognise our own failings. As a result of the emotional intelligence project we have all become more aware of our own failings, more humbled really, and, consequently, a more united team.’

‘Before undertaking this project we would not have worked as a team or have had the confidence to comment in an honest way, on each other’s leadership skills. This process really helped us to understand our own strengths and highlighted areas we needed to develop. I think this has made us a far better team.’

‘We are now able to listen to each other in a non-judgemental way and to have genuine, challenging, good-humoured discussion. I now really enjoy our team meetings.’

‘Overall there is greater trust, openness, focus and motivation amongst all teams throughout the school. All staff are actively involved in leadership, working with curriculum teams to ensure real learning and good teaching for all.’

Members of teams reported that they planned, over a two-year period, to develop an emotionally intelligent school.

They stated that they:

- had a strong, motivated leadership team which would try, at all times, to model emotionally intelligent behaviour and lead the task of creating an emotionally intelligent school
- had kept staff informed about the emotional intelligence project
- had started to discuss the importance of emotional intelligence with parents
- needed to reflect on how emotional intelligence can be integrated into the various initiatives, policies and practice (see appendix E)
- intend to involve all staff in undertaking the initial questionnaire completed by the leadership team
- planned to undertake some workshops with staff and parents
- would present emotional intelligence as an essential development for each child in the school
- would give consideration to the appointment of a co-ordinator who would lead and manage the process involved in developing an emotionally intelligent school
4.5 Comments made by school leaders who participated in the dissemination programme:

'I am determined to ensure that the children in my school are given the opportunity to develop their emotional intelligence so that they are better prepared than I was to deal with the many challenges life throws up. Our team will, first of all, help all staff to develop their emotional intelligence. We will then, over a three-year period, introduce a taught programme of work to ensure that all our children are given the opportunity to develop emotional intelligence competencies. We feel excited and committed'.

'I think that the emotional aspect of education has been neglected within our system of education, with an over-emphasis on the development of cognitive skills. I think this has been responsible for a lot of ills in society.'

'I think that part of the reason for behavioural problems in our schools is due to the fact that we have neglected the whole area of emotional intelligence. We need to teach children how to express and manage their emotions. This doesn’t just happen for all children. We, as leaders and teachers, also need to learn how to demonstrate emotionally intelligent behaviour.'

'I am horrified by the large number of young people in Northern Ireland who commit suicide. I think that if we paid more attention in our schools to helping children to acquire the language to express their emotions and to learn how to manage their emotions they might not feel so lonely, isolated, and desperate. Surely this is at least worth trying.'

'I feel I have benefited personally and professionally as a result of this conference. I now have a heightened awareness of the impact of emotion on my thinking and behaviour, and I recognise that there are many areas I need to work on'.

(The impact of the conferences on individuals’ personal and professional life was commented upon in almost all evaluations).

Many participants involved in the four-day conference organized by the Regional Training Unit to disseminate the work of the action research and development project stated that they had the will, conviction and knowledge necessary to try to create an emotionally intelligent school. However, some participants stated that they felt that 'further support may be necessary to help us in this task.'
5.1 Children will experience an education, which will prepare them for life in the 21st century.

The responses to this debate emphasised, amongst others things, the importance of ensuring that children need to be confident, self-aware, resilient, able to understand and regulate their emotions, and capable of forming rewarding relationships. Preparation for life is recognised to be of central importance by leaders of schools, and this discussion provided a helpful starting point to engage those who may not see the relevance of emotional intelligence to all aspects of education and life.

5.2 Enabling adults to become more socially and emotionally competent

A growing body of research on emotional learning and behavioural change suggests that people of any age may be helped to become more emotionally intelligent. The evaluations in the research and development project bear this out. However, the process requires much more sustained effort than planners of programmes realise.

5.3 Support for leaders

Those who comment on training have tended to consider all training as a whole without considering the purpose of training and the type of training involved. To facilitate a programme designed to support the development of the emotional intelligence of leadership teams is demanding and difficult. Facilitators need to be aware of the difficulties which may be experienced by participants throughout this process. Participants involved need to show great courage and openness in exploring long-held beliefs, attitudes, thinking processes and feelings (and the culture in Northern Ireland has not encouraged this process!).

5.4 Research literature provides few examples of relevant resources to support the process of helping adults develop their emotional competencies. Frequently, therefore, materials had to be developed, workshops devised, role-play and case-studies designed to match the learning needs of participants.

5.5 Agreeing a model for developing the emotional intelligence of leaders

It may have been helpful to discuss with participants an outline of an agreed model for developing EI competencies at an early stage of the project but this was not possible. Although there was clarity about the fundamental principles and aims which would guide the project, there was a degree of uncertainty about the form of the final model.
5.6 School readiness

Some schools may not be ready to engage in sustained emotional intelligence development. Participants need to have decided that they want to undertake a programme of personal development. It may be helpful for those agreeing to participate in an emotional intelligence development programme to reflect on their readiness by discussing the following questions:

Does your school:

- ensure that values are explicit, shared and put into practice?
- show care for the health and welfare of all staff?
- ensure that all staff are given the opportunity to undertake a leadership role?
- believe that the development and modelling of emotional intelligence competencies are important for the development of an effective school?
- have a supportive and encouraging leadership team with all members modelling emotionally intelligent behaviour?

5.7 Pacing of programme

The project leader must gauge the readiness of participants at different stages of the programme and refrain from providing too much data in too short a period. This can weaken the impact of the approach. The research and development project may have been too ambitious and tried to cover too much in too short a time.

5.8 Resourcing implications

More resources need to be developed. Appropriate challenging workshops, case studies, role-play activities, and videos which show how individuals have developed emotionally intelligent competencies, need to be devised.

5.9 Issue of integration

It is important for leaders to understand how emotional intelligence relates to all aspects of school-life i.e. school ethos, leadership and the curriculum (see appendix E).

5.10 Recognising the complexities of changing behaviour

Practice and repetition are important elements in any type of learning but practice repeated over an extended period of time, in a variety of situations, is essential in developing emotional intelligence competencies. Initially, it was not recognised how difficult and how slow the process of changing behaviour can be. This is highlighted in a comment made at the end of the year by one of the participants:
‘Through reflecting on my behaviour I have become aware of how my thinking and feelings can dictate my behaviour. I am now beginning to pause and question the basis for my assumptions. I can do this when I have time to reflect but I can’t do it yet when I am face-to-face in a difficult interaction.’

5.11 Embedding coaching and feedback as important learning strategies
Although participants found collaborative coaching and feedback sessions very valuable, the time allocated for coaching at the beginning of each monthly meeting was too short and too rushed. More time should have been spent on developing the principles, skills and qualities necessary for successful collaborative coaching.

5.12 Defining the role of the facilitator
Research on training and development has largely ignored the role of the trainer/facilitator, in particular the important aspects of the personal characteristics of the facilitator. Based on experience gained from the action research project the following thoughts may help facilitators.

- developing emotional intelligence is a life-long process – no individual can ever be certain about how he/she will deal emotionally with various life events.
- it helps to be aware of the life-experiences of those with whom you are working.
- the whole process is about reflection and discovery, which lead to illumination and greater understanding of self.
- frequently there is a mutuality of recognition by participants and facilitator, which could not have been predicted.
- many blind alleys will be taken and, at times, the facilitator may experience a sense of failure. This should not deter him/her from the pursuit of ‘a road less travelled’.
- working in a raised emotional state of awareness may, at times, give the feeling of participating in a play rehearsal or scrutinizing a complex but potentially beautiful work of art!
- it is not possible to have a framed agenda. There are frequently no ‘neat’ outcomes.
- individuals will find their own very different pathways into enlightenment depending on their personalities, genetic make-up and life experiences.
- participants may go through stages of anxiety and uncertainty before realizing that they can change their behaviour.
- the pattern of learning is not linear; there will be lots of ‘wobbles.’
Knowledge and skills, which will help:

The facilitator needs:

- to be well informed about the concept of emotional intelligence and aware of the research findings from a scientific, educational and psychological background. It also helps if he/she has gone through the process of personal reflection, and if necessary has developed, emotional competencies so that, at all times, emotionally intelligent behaviour is demonstrated.

- to feel passionate about the importance of emotional intelligence and convey enthusiasm and conviction to participants. However, it is important to remember that commitment and passion can sometimes become a liability rather than an asset.

and will need to be adept at:

- creating a safe, respectful, challenging, good-humoured environment by demonstrating how emotional intelligence is valued

- dealing with discord and resistance

- building trust and a feeling of safety within the team and ensuring that there are no hierarchies

- facilitating team discussion and dialogic sessions

- helping participants make sense of complex information

- giving participants control of the process

- showing knowledge only when necessary, remembering that this is a process in which the facilitator too is learning

- understanding and empathising with those who, for genuine reasons, may have difficulties working in this area

- feeling at ease with ambiguity

- motivating, inspiring and influencing

- gauging the motivational level of participants

- monitoring the emotional atmosphere during the process by paying attention to his/her own feelings and those of the participants

It also helps to foster good relationships if the facilitator is prepared to reveal moderate self-disclosure.
PART SIX: RECOMMENDATIONS

“What we feel and how we feel is far more important than what we think and how we think since all the motives which govern and drive our lives are emotional”

The philosopher John McMurray working in 1935.

(i) **Avoid the danger of treating the development of emotional intelligence as a new initiative.**

The philosopher John McMurray, working in 1935, regarded the education of the emotional life as the core and essence of human life and the education of the emotions as the most important aspect of education.

(ii) **Promote the benefits of developing emotional intelligence.**

ETI, CCEA and ELBs should continue to promote the benefits of developing emotionally intelligent schools which, research shows, will lead to more effective leadership, improved learning, increased inclusion and improved behaviour.

(iii) **Ensure that emotional intelligence is given high priority in the new curriculum for schools in Northern Ireland.**

(iv) **Develop a common language**

There is a wide range of reference in use in this field which can lead to confusion. We need agreement across the system on terminology.

(v) **Develop a whole school approach**

There is strong international evidence to suggest that a whole school approach is vital in promoting emotional intelligence i.e. an approach which focuses on leaders, teachers, parents and all pupils.

(vi) **Debate the practical implications involved in creating emotionally intelligent schools**

This may involve:

- ensuring that all school leaders are themselves emotionally intelligent
- assessing the current level of emotional intelligence in schools
- creating a greater awareness of the benefits of emotionally intelligent schools
- recognising that the development of emotional intelligence is a process rather than a goal
- realising that staff need the same opportunity as young people to practise developing emotional intelligence competencies
- ensuring that all children have the opportunity, through a taught curriculum, to develop emotional competencies through all areas of the new curriculum
- embedding self-reflection, coaching and feedback as central learning strategies within the school
Regional Training Unit

(vii) **Promote the development of emotional intelligence in initial teacher training and at the continuing professional development stage (CPD)**

(viii) **Support school leaders in the development of emotional intelligence competencies**

The concept of emotional intelligence has great significance for leaders and teachers in schools. It touches on so many issues that are of central importance to school leadership, teaching and learning. It will be necessary for leadership teams to model emotionally intelligent behaviour and for all members of a team to feel confident and committed to developing emotionally intelligent schools. It will, therefore, be necessary to ensure that school leaders are offered, through leadership and development programmes, the opportunity to reflect upon and to develop their emotional intelligence competencies.

(ix) **Organisations with responsibility for providing leadership and management development programmes should ensure that all senior leaders are given the necessary training and support to develop emotional intelligence competencies.**

As a result of experience gained from working on the research and development project it is suggested that those involved in planning programmes to support leaders may find the following suggestions helpful:

- provide guidelines for schools to enable staff to gauge their readiness for participating in an emotional intelligence leadership and management development programme.

- present current research findings on the importance of emotional intelligence in education to inform and convince those who may be sceptical about the importance of emotional intelligence as a life-skill.

- raise emotional intelligence awareness by giving participants the opportunity to assess their level of emotional intelligence.

- encourage participants to select relevant competencies for development based on the results of self-assessment.

- ensure that time is given between training sessions for participants to practise new skills in a variety of situations.

- recognise that changing behaviour is a complex and slow process.

- ensure that self-evaluation, reflection, practice, coaching and feedback are learning strategies deployed throughout the programme.

- ensure that most of the programme involves experiential learning and is well resourced with videotapes, role-play activities, case studies, etc.

- help learners to anticipate the barriers and problems they may encounter when they begin to apply their learning so that they will not become demoralised and give up.
• evaluate the programme to establish if it has produced meaningful behavioural change in the professional lives of participants. This may require a different form of evaluation from that which is currently in use

• select, train, support and monitor facilitators (see section in the report which may give some guidance in this area)

• recognise that there may be a temptation to build aspects of the development of emotional intelligence into existing programmes. This is better than nothing but may not, in the long term, achieve a great deal.

• **When disseminating the E.I. Programme with members of leadership teams the following approach was adopted:**

  (a) On the first two days of the conference leaders were helped, through a range of workshops, case studies, role-play activities and discussions, to acquire a greater understanding of:

    (i) the importance of emotional intelligence as a life-skill
    (ii) the level of their emotional competence
    (iii) the impact of emotional intelligence on their leadership effectiveness
    (iv) how to model, at all times, emotionally intelligent behaviour

  (b) An agreement was reached with members of all leadership teams that they would take responsibility for carrying out a similar programme of training with all staff in their schools.

  (c) On the third and fourth day of the programme the following issues were discussed:

    (1) implications involved in creating an emotionally intelligent school
    (2) implementing emotional intelligence competencies in the classroom (taught or caught curriculum?)
    (3) resourcing implications – practical ideas for developing emotional intelligence competencies through all areas of the curriculum
    (4) discussion on strategies for developing emotional competencies i.e. dialogue, cooperative learning, coaching and feedback
    (5) action planning: ‘how, over the next two years, we intend to create an emotionally intelligent school?’
(x) **Assess the emotional intelligence competencies of candidates applying for a job when the job description requires emotional intelligence skills** (e.g. leaders: self-awareness, empathy, conflict management, and regulation of own emotions)

(xi) **Use all available resources**
It is evident that schools are going to find it difficult to meet the wide range of needs which young people will present and which are manifested through poor behaviour. Therefore, partnerships and collaboration with other agencies and professionals will need to be established (see appendix F ‘What does an Integrated Services Model look like?’).

…and finally…remember that emotions are an essential part of being human:

‘Human emotion is not just about sexual pleasure or fear of snakes. It is also about the horror of witnessing suffering and about the satisfaction of seeing justice served; about the delight at the sensuous smile of Jeanne Moreau, the thick beauty of words and ideas in Shakespeare’s verse; about the world weary voice of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau singing Bach’s ‘Ich habe gemug’ and the simultaneously earthly and otherworldly phrasings of Maria João Pires playing any Mozart, any Schubert; and about the harmony that Einstein sought in the structure of an equation’

Antonio Damasio
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Very practical: Appendix 1 – good self-study section

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Although all examples are from the business world this is an extremely interesting and helpful book.

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Senge P.M.
Very helpful – good sections on personal mastery, dialogue, and skilled discussion

The Emotional Brain (1998)
Le Doux J
This is essential reading. Le Doux explains: “I tried to write ‘The Emotional Brain’ so that it would be accessible to readers not trained in science or versed in scientific jargon. But I also tried not to water down the science.”

Emotional Development And Emotional intelligence
edited by Salovey P and Sluyter DJ - Excellent first chapter

Building A Great Team (1996)
Jay R.
Very practical; deals well with the importance of creating emotionally intelligent teams.

Starr J.
Good guide to the process, principles and skills of coaching

Emotional Confidence (2000)
Linderfield G
Gael Linderfield is a psychotherapist and approaches EI from this background. The book helps us to understand and manage our emotions

Nurturing Emotional Literacy
(2002) - Sharp P.
Peter Sharp was principal educational psychologist in Southampton. A very practical book with examples of how Southampton LEA supported schools in developing emotional competencies.

The Emotional Literacy Handbook
The text includes an array of case studies illustrating how different schools implemented a strategy of emotional literacy - very practical and helpful.

The New Leaders
(2002) - Goleman D; Boyatzis R; Mckee A
Useful for facilitators involved in leadership and development programmes – very practical.
Building Learning Power  
Claxton G  
This book is about how teachers can help young people become better learners – strong links to E.I.

Emotional intelligence Science And Myth  
(2002) Mathews G; Zeirdner M; Roberts RD  
This is not an easy book to read but the authors do integrate current emotional intelligence theory, research and practice in a very helpful way.

The Feeing of what Happens  
(2000) Antonio Damasio  
The author has shown, through extensive research, how emotion is integral to the process of reasoning and decision-making:  
‘Well targeted and well developed emotions seem to be a support system without which the edifice of reason cannot operate properly’  
This book is essential reading for those who are interested in exploring the link between cognition and emotion.

The Mysterious Underpinning of Emotional life  
Le Doux J (1998)  
Le Doux describes how emotional learning occurs and how emotional memories are formed. Many of the passages in the book have a poetic quality. Compelling in many ways.

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Goleman D, Cherniss C S  
A very practical book with interesting contributions from Richard Boyatzis, Cary Cherniss, Robert Caplan and others.

Achieving Emotional Literacy  
Steiner C (1999)  
Very easy to read with good practical ideas for developing emotional intelligence.

What Works in Developing Children’s Emotional and Social Competence and Wellbeing  
Weare K & Gray G  
This very interesting and practical report provides an outline of the work of schools in five LEAs in England. The schools are regarded as leaders in promoting emotionally intelligent schools. The project was funded by the Department of Education and Skills.

An Intelligent Look At Emotional Intelligence  
Guy Claxton: commissioned by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (2005)  
This is a challenging publication, which forces us to take a critical, analytical and intelligent approach to the concept of Emotional Intelligence.
Appendices

(A) Why do you need a leadership team?
(B) Range of intelligence
(C) Evaluation questionnaire
(D) Integrating emotional intelligence into all aspects of school life
(E) An Integrated Service Model
Appendix A

Why do you need a leadership team?

* to agree values, vision and goals

* to develop staff as leaders and learners and to ensure that they are given support and the opportunity to lead and exercise authority

* to monitor and evaluate the quality of learning and teaching

* to foster the emotional intelligence of staff and pupils in order to develop sound working relationships

* to ensure the optimum use of resources (human, physical and financial)

* to act as role models – for example ‘living’ the school’s values and modelling emotionally intelligent behaviour

* to plan strategically and act as a filter in making decisions about what is of real importance for the school

* to ensure the smooth running of the school on a day to day basis

* to review, regularly, the effectiveness of the school in achieving agreed aims and goals.
Appendix B

Range of Intelligences

- Visual-Spatial Intelligence
- Logical-Mathematical Intelligence
- Linguistic Intelligence
- Musical Intelligence
- Natural Intelligence
- Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence
- Emotional Intelligence
- Spiritual Intelligence
Appendix C

Evaluation of the Emotional Intelligence Research and Development Project

1. When you repeated the emotional intelligence questionnaire at the end of the project, were there any significant changes in the scoring?
   Yes ☐  No ☐

   If yes, please give your overall ratings in each of the three categories;

   a) The first time you completed the questionnaire
      ☐ Awareness of emotional intelligence in self
      ☐ Regulating emotional intelligence in self
      ☐ Empathising and working with the emotional intelligence of others

   b) The second time you completed the questionnaire
      ☐ Awareness of emotional intelligence in self
      ☐ Regulating emotional intelligence in self
      ☐ Empathising and working with the emotional intelligence of others

2. As a result of participating in the research and development project do you have a better understanding of the importance of emotional intelligence in ensuring greater effectiveness in the following areas:

   • Leadership  Yes ☐  No ☐
   • Learning and teaching  Yes ☐  No ☐
   • Team building  Yes ☐  No ☐
   • Building and managing relationships  Yes ☐  No ☐
If you have achieved a clearer understanding of the importance of emotional intelligence in any of the above areas please state which aspects of the project helped you to achieve this understanding.

3. Which of the activities, strategies, and discussions engaged in throughout the project did you find the most useful?
4. As a result of the research and development project is your leadership team:

More effective [ ]

Less effective [ ]

No change [ ]

If more effective, please give some examples:

If less effective, please give some examples:
5. What were the advantages/disadvantages to:

a) Keeping a reflective diary throughout the project?

If there were advantages please give examples.

If there were disadvantages please give examples.
b) Using mentoring/coaching approaches to bring about behavioural changes

If there were advantages please give examples.

If there were disadvantages please give examples.
6. Are there any forms of mentoring/coaching taking place in your school? (e.g. role of leaders developing members of curricular teams.)

Yes [ ]  No [ ]

If yes, please state the advantages or disadvantages of these strategies for helping staff to develop.

Advantages:

Disadvantages:
7. Do you plan to ensure that mentoring/coaching strategies are an integral form of staff development in your school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

8. Did the feedback which you received from the questionnaire completed by the leadership team help you to reflect on your strengths and weaknesses as an emotionally intelligent leader?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please state how you propose to use this information to develop your leadership skills.

9. How are you planning to develop an emotional intelligent school i.e. a school with an:

- emotionally intelligent culture
- emotionally intelligent staff
- emotionally intelligent pupils
- emotionally intelligent parents

(If possible please include your action plan)

10. As a result of the research and development programme has your leadership style changed in any way?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please give examples.
Appendix D

Integrating emotional intelligence into all aspects of school life

E.T.I. – Together Towards Improvement
When evaluating the effectiveness of leadership learning and teaching, school ethos etc the central role of EI will be considered.

Emotional intelligence forms the foundation for all of these areas: pastoral care, behavioural policy, bullying policy, child protection, special needs agenda, mental health, creativity

E.I. is the foundation for the whole curriculum
All subjects have an E.I. component

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Performance Management
Important to ensure that all staff demonstrate emotional intelligence competencies throughout this process

Development planning
Build proposals for developing emotional intelligence competencies (as part of a ‘taught’ and cross-curricular approach)

ICT
Developing ‘coaching partnership’ within schools and with staff in other schools

Assessment procedures
Need to find effective ways of assessing how children and adults are demonstrating emotional intelligence competencies

PQH
Emotional intelligence competencies are essential for good leadership.
Appendix E

WHAT DOES AN INTEGRATED SERVICES MODEL LOOK LIKE?

All schools are currently on a continuum with regard to provision of services to young people, their families and community. However, the majority of these services are uncoordinated and are largely irrelevant to the life of the school (i.e. they could be suspended and the school would continue).

Research has indicated that a co-ordinated approach to services that integrates them into the mainstream life of the school will:

- influence a greater number of young people and their families
- will increase the take-up rate of services by young people and their families
- will increase parents’ motivation to learn and be involved in the school
- will impact on attendance and accreditation positively
- will promote inclusion
- will decrease discipline problems
- will increase morale of staff
- will enrich the community

The diagram below gives examples of the types of services that may be integrated – they are only impeded by lack of imagination! Integration would occur through joint management; shared information; referral systems; good communication systems; good collaborative practices.
All workshops, role-play activities, discussion papers, and facilitators’ notes are available in an accompanying booklet available on [www.rtuni.org](http://www.rtuni.org)