Comparative induction of primary and secondary school teachers in New Zealand: Indicators of success

Eileen Piggot-Irvine and Pip Bruce Ferguson

*Unitec Institute of Technology, New Zealand*

**Abstract**

This paper draws on findings from the third stage of a national study on the quality of induction of New Zealand beginning teachers in order to compare sector results. As described in an earlier paper (Piggot-Irvine, Aitken, Ritchie, Bruce Ferguson, & McGrath, 2009), in the study a ‘success case study’ methodology was employed in five primary and five secondary schools using interview, focus group, observation and documentary analysis methods. A sector comparison shows that in both primary and secondary schools similar, high quality, features existed for elements of induction support, leadership, systems and development. Intensive and extensive support was provided to the teachers that went beyond the mentor contact alone. Leadership modelled valuing and commitment to the new teachers and their mentors. There were well developed systems for induction evident though these systems varied in flexibility, and each school was dedicated to professional development associated with induction. Significantly, the focus on sector comparison showed little evidence to support earlier suggestions (from a range of authors) that there was reduced quality of induction in the secondary sector in New Zealand schools due to factors of size, complexity and individualistic teaching approaches.

**Keywords:** Induction; primary and secondary school sector; success case studies

**Introduction**

Teacher education graduates entering schools in New Zealand are granted status as provisionally registered teachers (PRTs) by the New Zealand Teachers Council (NZTC) and this is associated with a two to five year period of advice and guidance before these new teachers can apply for fully registered teacher (FRT) status. A PRT is entitled to a structured programme of mentoring, professional development, observation, targeted feedback on their teaching, and regular assessments based on the Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions established by NZTC. Final attestation determines whether or not the teacher meets the Council’s Dimensions followed by NZTC granting full registration to the teacher.

A previous overview paper (Piggot-Irvine et al., 2009) has outlined the background to the research, associated literature on induction, and the methodology for the ‘success case studies’ (Brinkerhoff, 2003) that constituted the third stage of a national study on induction of beginning teachers in New Zealand schools. This former paper also outlines the first two stages of the *Learning to Teach* research programme commissioned by NZTC, that is, a literature review (Cameron, 2007) then a national survey and focus groups with PRTs who had recently finished their induction programme (Cameron, Dingle, & Brooking, 2007). In the third stage, criteria for effective induction were derived from a literature review and these criteria collated into a matrix of indicators that guided the selection of a sample of success cases from the early childhood education, primary school, secondary school, and the indigenous Māori-medium sectors. Following selection, an extensive examination of each site was conducted via interviews, focus groups, and documentary analysis. This paper draws upon the general third-phase data but is focused on a more detailed, comparative, analysis of findings for the primary and secondary sectors. Results are thematically reported based on mentor teacher support, wider
support, systems, leadership, and development. In the final part of the paper, conclusions are drawn about the comparative findings, and implications and limitations are discussed.

Background literature
Generic literature on induction is summarised in the first part of this review and literature specific to the topic of primary and secondary induction follows.

Generic literature on induction
Feiman-Nemser (2003) sees induction as helping new teachers to become good teachers. She believes that the first years of teaching should be seen as a phase in learning to teach with a professional culture that supports such learning. Extensive research on induction has been widely reported by many authors and the key features are provided, in summary form only, in Table 1. A previous paper (Piggot-Irvine et al., 2009) includes a comprehensive summary of these features but essentially most conform to Feiman-Nemser’s perception of provision of a professional culture to support new teacher learning. The research literature summarised in Table 1 shows the extensive mentor, wider support, systems, leadership, and development factors that are associated with effective induction. These factors form the structure for reporting upon the primary and secondary sector comparison.

Primary and secondary sector comparison
Much of the research on induction in the compulsory school sector in New Zealand has been conducted on primary and secondary sites independently and the focus has almost exclusively been on the quality of induction rather than sector as a factor influencing the quality of induction. Lang (1999), for example, studied primary teachers’ experiences and determined the importance of both collaborative planning and support from the mentor in effective induction. The latter was also identified by Smales (2002) with another primary-sector study and reiterated by Main (2008) who studied five exemplar induction programmes in lower socio-economic New Zealand schools. Main’s findings indicated the existence of good pedagogical support and structured balance (reduced workload, work-life balance, and a programme with a clear vision) for PRTs in these schools. However, professional agency (teacher efficacy, leadership, and beginning teachers holding a reciprocal status within an integrated culture) was not so strong. An interesting finding was that beginning teachers who were involved in a culture of collaborative analysis of student data appeared to experience a more effective induction programme. Additionally, Main found that management support was necessary, but not solely responsible, for socio-emotional support for beginning teachers and that few mentors had received training for their role. Brunton (2007) also focused on the primary sector with an examination of the socialisation of five PRTs into the micro-political environment (culture, ideologies, etc.) of the school that highlighted the importance of reflective practice in making sense of the school context. No comparison with secondary-sector data was provided by any of the latter authors but collectively their findings show that support (school community, mentor, leadership, collaboration) for induction was generally strong in the primary sector, that systems were in place to strengthen that support, but that mentor training/development was rare.
Table 1. Summarised literature review on induction (adapted from Piggot-Irvine, 2008)

**Support – mentor:**
- Availability of suitable mentors.
- Mentor providing balance of support and challenge. 
  *Tuakana–teina* (‘experience–inexperience’) support is evident.
- A suitable ‘match’ between PRT and mentor.
- Mentor has time to fulfil responsibility.
- Advice and guidance is planned together by PRT and mentor.
- Clear understanding of expectations exists.
- Feedback from mentor to PRT is formative and grounded in evidence/observation.
- Mentor assists with documenting professional growth of PRT.
- Mentor demonstrates commitment to developing and studying their own practice.
- Mentor has knowledge of Māori customs and language.

**Support – wider than the mentor:**
- PRT is welcomed and valued in the school.
- Induction reinforces the learning culture.
- More experienced teacher/s support PRT.
- Valuing of *whanaungatanga* (‘connecting’), *manaakitanga* (‘hospitality’), *ako* (‘learning’), and *wairua* (‘spirit’) with PRT.
- Māori PRT (in mainstream school) has support which is reflective of Māori customs, etc.
- Proximity of PRT enables sharing ideas and resources, informal feedback and observation.

**Systems:**
- Process regarded as support rather than a compliance.
- Programme is built around the identified needs and interests of PRT.
- Support tailors the matching of resources to the needs of the PRT.
- Formal and informal support processes are used.
- Release for PRT and/or mentor provided to allow induction.
- Attention is paid to class composition, timetable, and mix of subjects for PRT (secondary sector).
- Contact and time between mentor and PRT is prioritised.
- Close location/proximity of PRT and mentor is arranged.
- Evidence of transparency and understanding by mentor/PRT of how entitlements/funding is spent.
- Frequent opportunities provided for PRT to observe other teachers.
- Strong emphasis given to teacher evaluation for improvement.

**Leadership:**
- The principal shows interest in the progress of PRT.
- There is evidence of leadership capability in other staff (appropriate role models).
- School leadership protects the PRT from additional responsibilities/roles.

**Development:**
- Availability of ongoing professional development (PD) for mentor.
- PRT encouraged to participate in professional learning networks outside the school.
- Opportunities created for PRT to develop understandings of effective teaching.

Notes: Mentor is the person assigned to support the PRT. Definitions of Māori words/phrases compiled from Reed (1998), Reed and Kāretu (1988), and the online version *Te Aka Māori-English, English-Māori, dictionary and index* (www.maoridictionary.co.nz).
There are several studies that focused on the secondary sector independently but, once again, without comparative analysis with the primary sector. Dewar, Kennedy, Staig and Cox’s (2003) interviews in 20 secondary schools led them to conclude that induction programmes appeared to be ad hoc, and that PRTs wanted more mentoring and observation than they received. Hansen, Haigh and Ashman’s (2003) case studies of two secondary-sector PRTs investigated the challenges and dilemmas in the induction experience. The first year was seen by PRTs as a survival year and a lack of formal support from the senior management team was a key finding from this study. Goold’s (2004) focus groups with 19 PRTs in five secondary schools showed that initial orientation programmes were missing in some schools, developmental support and opportunities for observation varied, advice on understanding differing learning needs was frequently not provided, information on the guidelines and assessment associated with induction varied, and in some departments teachers were perceived as unwilling to share knowledge possibly for reasons of competition. Pettigrew’s (2004) study of five secondary teachers’ early experiences concluded that departmental staff provided most support and also reiterated Goold’s (2004) finding for the need for both subject and pedagogical assistance as well as Hansen et al.’s (2003) view of lack of senior management support. In an additional study, isolation for some secondary PRTs who are the only teacher in their subject area was identified by Cameron, Baker and Lovett (2006). In summary, in the secondary sector a more negative perception of support, systems, leadership and development has been apparent in this sector-specific research.

In further research linked to induction in schools in New Zealand, Mansell (1996) was one of the first researchers to examine both sectors. This author surveyed both primary and secondary PRTs about their experience of induction and the findings somewhat confirm the conclusion drawn in the summary statement in the previous paragraph. In Mansell’s study, although the two sector sets of PRTs were positive about their experience, primary teachers were more positive and reported engaging in extensive learning in induction with good support. Renwick’s (2001) study supported Mansell’s (1996) findings that PRTs in the primary sector were “more likely to have a designated tutor/supervising teacher who provided regular support” (Cameron, 2007, p. 55).

The 2005 Education Review Office (ERO) study of second year PRTs (119 primary, 79 secondary) was specifically a comparative study and noted the importance of the quality of the school’s support arrangements and the mentor/PRT relationship, and opportunities for PRTs to work with, and meet, other beginning teachers. The study also determined the percentage of beginning teachers meeting or exceeding ERO’s expectations with many areas showing relatively small differences between the primary and secondary sector results. In two areas, however, the results were significantly different, although still positive overall. These were the school’s guidance programme meeting the individual development needs of the beginning teacher (80% primary, 68% secondary), and the school effectively promoting the teacher’s development of constructive professional relationships within the school community (86% primary, 75% secondary).

The Cameron et al. (2006) longitudinal study (57 primary and secondary teachers from their third year of teaching) also showed that the primary-sector teachers were more positive, with nearly three quarters (74%) of the primary teachers stating that they had received systematic and supportive induction, compared to 36% in the secondary sector. Further, although most primary teachers indicated that highly supportive mentors were important, only about a third of secondary teachers reported the same.

Cameron (2007) concluded from this study that “almost half of the secondary teachers considered that they were provided with minimal or unsupportive induction” (p. 63). Primary teachers, Cameron noted, … appeared to have more opportunities both within and outside their schools to develop greater
subject specific expertise, as well as to build deeper understandings of areas such as formative assessment, and evidence-based pedagogy than did their secondary colleagues. Participation in school-based professional development contracts appeared to support the professional learning of primary teachers, and encouraged shared understandings of evidence-based practice to develop across the school. Well-supported teachers also tended to report greater satisfaction with teaching at the end of their third year of teaching. (p. 63)

Anthony, Bell, Haigh and Kane (2007) concluded from these New Zealand comparative studies that “… the provision of systematic, sustained and structured induction experiences are not always evident within secondary schools in New Zealand” (p. 4). Whilst the latter might be true as a generalisation, the findings reported in the following section of this paper demonstrate that such experiences can be evident in secondary schools that actively support induction. The following methodology section outlines the specific success case study (Brinkerhoff, 2003) approach employed to generate these findings.

**Methodology**

A detailed outline of the methodology associated with the predominantly qualitative set of success case studies that were utilised has been provided in Piggot-Irvine et al. (2009). Essentially, success case studies were employed to determine the features of effective induction. The Success Case Method (SCM), as described by Brinkerhoff (2005), usually begins with a review of the literature which, in turn, informs establishment of ‘success’ criteria that are utilised to ‘purposively’ sample cases (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). It is important to note that in the induction cases a focus on ‘success’ did not preclude identification of barriers or limitations or unsuccessful attributes. The argument that SCM promotes optimistic and potentially uncritical findings has not been the experience of one of the authors in previous research (Piggot-Irvine, Marshall, & Aitken, 2009) and it has been suggested that the approach offers considerable advantages for entry, recruitment and non-defensive openness of respondents.

Five sites were sampled for each of the primary and secondary school sectors. Within each sector, sites of variable size, location (urban/rural), and decile (socio-economic rating: 1=low; 10=high) were selected as shown in Table 2. Note that school codes included for each site are referred to in subsequent sections of this paper. PrA – PrE are used as codes for primary sector sites and SA – SE for secondary sites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>School details</th>
<th>Total No. of Participants</th>
<th>No. of PRTs (participants only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PrA</td>
<td>Primary (decile 3)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 PRT; 1 FRT *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PrB</td>
<td>Primary (religious; decile 8)</td>
<td>7**</td>
<td>3 PRTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PrC</td>
<td>Primary (decile 6)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5 PRTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PrD</td>
<td>Primary (decile 8)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6 PRTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PrE</td>
<td>Intermediate (decile 3)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6 PRTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>Co-educational secondary (rural; decile 6)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4 PRTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Co-educational secondary (decile 10)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5 PRTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Co-educational secondary (decile 4–5)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4 PRTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Single sex (boys) secondary (decile 8)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6 PRTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Co-educational secondary (decile 9)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3 PRTs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* FRT = Fully Registered Teacher; ** Māori mentor included
Multiple, triangulated (Denzin, 1997) perspectives of induction were gathered from the varied data sources about the range of successful skills, knowledge, and abilities employed by the participants in ‘success’ sites. The main data-collection tools employed were focus group interviews held with key stakeholders (PRTs, managers, principals, mentors, heads of department, and FRTs), one-to-one semi-structured interviews (to probe in depth the attributes of successful induction), and documentary analysis of material such as PRT and mentor plans for induction and policies. All focus groups and interviews were taped and transcribed then thematically coded in a way which derived increasingly specific categories within and across each sector. The findings associated with a comparison of the primary and secondary-sector data are reported in the following section.

**Results**

Key features of successful induction of the case study sites are summarised in Table 3 with only the most distinctive features of each school selected because most schools demonstrated a wide range of strategies that were described as effective in PRT support.

**Table 3. Primary and secondary schools results summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School code</th>
<th>Features of success site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| PrA         | • Appraisal system relates strongly to registration process and record keeping expectations  
              • Strong support from principal and other teachers |
| PrB         | • School practices have clear links to effective development opportunities for the PRT  
              • PD available for mentors |
| PrC         | • Highly structured process of initial induction  
              • Time given and prioritised for PRTs  
              • Principal committed to sound PRT support |
| PrD         | • The principal plays an active part in registration process  
              • PRTs attend both external workshops and ‘in-house’ PD |
| PrE         | • Multicultural school which actively seeks PRTs for fresh input  
              • Use of dedicated, highly qualified, reliever for PRTs on release time  
              • Involvement in ‘outside’ projects as a conscious form of schoolwide PD |
| SA          | • Good in-house PD regularly offered  
              • Deputy principal in charge and regularly reviews suitability of induction programme |
| SB          | • School practices have clear links to effective PD opportunities for the PRT  
              • Highly systematic process |
| SC          | • Induction process is systematic and organised  
              • Documentation is regularly checked and feedback about progress is provided to PRT |
| SD          | • Strong emphasis on appropriate PD for all staff  
              • Induction process is structured and formal as well as informally supportive, including support from principal |
| SE          | • School policies link with effective PD opportunities for PRTs  
              • Wide support for the PRTs beyond the mentors  
              • Principal involved in PRT observations  
              • Strong emphasis on teacher improvement |

* Pr = Primary; S = Secondary
The features described in Table 3 are thematically expanded in further discussion of the comparison of the primary and secondary sectors under the headings of mentor support, wider support, systems, leadership, and development.

**Support from the mentor**

Clear support from the mentor was evident in all success site schools, regardless of sector. A PRT in PrC offered the following statement of appreciation for mentor support:

> I have a brilliant mentor (he’s the Deputy Principal as well). The school leaves it up to the mentor autonomously to create the relationship with the PRT. Every release day, he books an hour to an hour and a half to spend with me. We talk about my goals for the term, week by week, we have a plan and we stick to it. He’s taught lessons in my room and I’ve taught in his ... it’s reciprocal. It’s so supportive, it’s the best thing that this school does for PRTs.

This statement indicates that mentor autonomy, time release, and focus was important for support. A good match between the mentor and PRT was also considered to be important and in PrD several respondents noted the active role of their principal in deciding the PRT/mentor match in order to secure a ‘good fit’.

In SE mutual mentor and PRT improvement strategies enhanced support. Honesty and openness about the mentors’ own knowledge and skills, plus a willingness to exchange views and expertise, were particularly noted by mentors in this school as features of how they helped their PRTs to develop. One mentor suggested:

> We treat them as professional people; try to remember your own experiences, reflect on what went wrong for you; respect their abilities and the fact that they’ve been well trained ... Be prepared to admit if you have no idea on something, offer to find out and get back to them.

**Wider support than the mentor**

In every success case school, in both sectors, extensive mention was made of support beyond the mentor that was provided for PRTs from other teachers through to the wider community. In PrA a mentor described this as “It’s just what we do here. People don’t sit in their own little classrooms and think ‘for me’. It’s the wider community, how can we help one another?” This outward-looking and supportive culture was also recognised by a PRT, who stated, “They are great. Fostering, that is what I would say. They look after us really, really well. Just so supportive and nurturing. It’s a nice place to be.”

Support was provided in varied ways across the schools. For example in PrE (a middle school) there was a focus on the employment of a cohort of PRTs (both first and second year) to enable mutual support. The principal and staff valued this collective PRT energy and the ability of previous cohorts to appropriately support them, as one PRT noted, “There are a lot of new teachers at the school so a lot of teachers here are into their fourth year of teaching or whatever, and can relate back to what it was like being a first year.”

In SB, wider support was achieved via a ‘buddy’ assigned to the PRT to deal with issues that arose. One PRT said: “If I had any problems, the buddy would help with the low level stuff; the mentor with other stuff.” In SE the support of experienced staff was noted and it was identified that “the availability and support of a range of highly experienced staff and the ‘role modelling’ provided readily by these staff” were part of the features of the school’s induction processes.

**Systems**

In both the primary and secondary sectors the systems for induction (orientation sessions, manuals, resource allocation, time organisation, co-ordination, etc.) were well established. PrC had a highly structured process with time given and prioritised for PRT support, care taken over selection of classes for PRTs to ensure
manageable students, and structured resource support provided through, for example, dedicated extra funding to procure resources and time. The principal noted:

*We give PRTs extra money for curriculum development, recognising that they won’t have much in the way of resources built up. The school has no resentment that they have all this ‘spare time’; the school trusts them to use it wisely. I don’t think the PRTs get any sense that it’s begrudgingly given.*

In PrE (that had a high level of students requiring careful management) resource allocation included the employment of a full-time, highly qualified and experienced, ‘release teacher’ who taught classes of PRTs during induction sessions.

An approach to creating more systematic support for induction that was specific to the secondary sector was the appointment of an Induction Co-ordinator who was often a senior manager in the school. The allocation of the role in this sector is unsurprising given the frequent larger sizes of management teams and associated additional funding for management roles. Co-ordinators most frequently were reported to have established streamlined systems and ensured that regular reviews of the induction programme occurred. The Co-ordinator in SB noted, for example, that there was “an extremely systematic, thorough induction system, commencing with a pre-school two-day meeting complete with ‘orienteering task’ and the provision of a good solid manual.” Mentors felt that this system supported their work with PRTs, with one stating: “It’s very thorough and they follow very strictly the guidelines set down by the Teachers Council.” A mentor in SC commended the Co-ordinator for his careful checking of progress:

*He’s also right onto it when things aren’t being done the way he thinks they should be, he sends a little hurry-up out. He’s really good at bringing PRTs into the system ... and there’s always been a meeting time with them, once a week or fortnight.*

As with all good systems, however, it is not enough just to implement a process. As the Co-ordinator in SB noted, she was keen not to rest on her laurels, stating that: “It’s very much a work in progress. Each year I evaluate it, do a survey, and we change according to feedback.”

The formality of the systems set up varied slightly between schools, irrespective of sector. For example, the Co-ordinator in SD stated:

*In the first term there is a weekly meeting (lunchtime) to support PRTs, covering very vital information, e.g. how to use [our computer network programme]; before the first Parent Meeting the Principal guided the PRTs through that. Pastoral care – we have a lot of clear cut systems for this.*

In SC, however, a less formal emphasis was noted by one PRT: “Lots of stuff at this school happens informally; you meet at lunchtimes, after school, you don’t always record it. A lot of the times you don’t even realise it’s happening.” This informality may have been partly a function of the difficulty in programming shared non-contact time between mentors and PRTs – a factor that was common across the secondary sector.

One interesting ‘system’ element in some of the case study schools was that of the links made between induction and appraisal, the other key accountability and development process, and this was most evident in PrA. The principal believed that having such links was a strong feature of the school’s successful induction process and he suggested that the appraisal programme resulted in “real change, with learning conversations, goal setting with teachers, and observation and feedback amongst colleagues.” This belief was shared by teaching staff too.
Leadership

Principal support was another feature reported in almost all success sites, regardless of sector. In PrC the principal was noted as “firmly committed to support.” In PrD, the principal was seen as “actively involved in the provisional registration process.” Here, the principal took a strong role in deciding the PRT/mentor match, and was cited in the school’s ERO report as “[showing] strong visionary leadership in promoting initiatives to improve teaching and learning practices.”

In PrE, the principal’s active involvement extended to carrying out formal observations of PRTs for the registration process. The principal noted that although this took time, it was also a way of giving support and enhancing communication. This approach, modelled from the top, was not lost on the PRTs. One stated: “They take an interest in you as a person, not as just another bunch of PRTs we have to get through … they personalise the programme by making it very flexible.”

In SD the principal’s active involvement was commended by the Co-ordinator, and the principal reflected on the importance of fostering this talent pool of new teachers in the following statement:

It’s so critically important that your beginning teachers are cherished and nourished, because then they become your master teachers so much more quickly, and we have a huge range of first and second year teachers.

Development

Support for, and involvement in, professional development was a key feature of all success cases regardless of sector. In PrB the principal had a strong commitment to ongoing professional development, with a PRT stating: “They’re really for professional development at this school.” One of the mentors indicated the consultative aspect to professional development, as noted in the comment:

X [a mentor] had commented on the benefits for her in picking up communication skills through a course that facilitated better progress for her PRT (reinforced by the PRT who commented on the principal’s and her mentor’s collaboration with her to improve issues she had concerns about).

The principal also encouraged development to boost staff careers, as suggested in the comment from a mentor:

X had been specifically encouraged to develop leadership skills and to take on the MT role even though she is a relatively new teacher. “[The principal] thinks just because you’re new doesn’t mean you can’t be a leader.”

In PrD the principal encouraged PRTs to attend external workshops in addition to substantial ‘in-house’ professional development. A mentor said “I think we get pretty good in-service training here”, while a first year PRT commented that:

I did a literacy [course] last year, that was really, really good, in school. We do that in our syndicate as well, but last year it was just for the teachers that were new to the school, and beginning teachers. That was really neat, and we got the opportunity to observe teachers who were effective in their writing practice … This year I go and do numeracy professional development with another teacher at a neighbouring school, and we come back and feed back to our colleagues.

A second-year PRT commented on the “training every single week for everybody – topic changes all the time” indicating that there is obviously a culture of ongoing, whole-school, participation in professional development at this school.
In PrE, a feature of development was active involvement with research and curriculum projects/contracts. A PRT noted: “This is an exceptionally busy school with ‘fingers in a lot of pies’.” The induction development was deliberately integrated with the other contracts, as the following quote from a mentor shows: “As we’ve taken on wider PD through Literacy contracts, Numeracy contracts, we’ve certainly upped our game in supporting beginning teachers. It’s bucked the ideas up, woken us up, and as a result we are in a very supportive environment.”

In the secondary cases, similar success strategies associated with development were noted. In SA, a co-educational rural secondary school, the existence of the in-house professional development was described as a strength by a mentor:

> We do really good whole staff PD (Tuesday morning); there is an emphasis on developing your professionalism here, in terms of your teaching and reflecting on your teaching. There’s been a huge emphasis on getting up to speed with computer technology.

A feature of SB was that of school practices having clear links to effective development opportunities for the PRT. Developmental progress in this school was considered to be ‘timely’, as the Induction Co-ordinator said: “This school provides ‘at need’ information. Every Thursday morning we meet, to do the manuals, to do their journals, for half an hour before school. That way, if there are parent interviews coming up, we talk about those – timely – right before they need it.”

Professional development across the school was also a feature of SD where all PRTs were expected to attend regional PRT days and also to attend in-house professional development offered, in the main, by the Induction Co-ordinator. Both a PRT and mentor stated that the Co-ordinator “does a good job of selecting things she thinks will be beneficial.” A mentor said:

> Regular PD out of school is encouraged. Structure varies from department to department so is responsive to different needs. We look at the person and their particular needs. We try not to give them too much to begin with so they don’t lose confidence or passion for teaching.

**Discussion and conclusions**

In this final section of the paper conclusions are drawn on the themes of support, leadership, systems, and development specifically focussing on the comparison between the primary and secondary sectors.

Support generally for PRTs in these success case schools was provided both intensively and extensively regardless of school sector. There is no confirmation for the suggestion of more positive perceptions of support in the primary sector made by Anthony et al. (2007), Cameron et al. (2006) and others, or confirmation of the reduced support in the secondary sector reported by Cameron et al. (2006). PRTs in both sectors in the success cases had their need for “opportunities to learn from their experienced colleagues” (Feiman-Nemser, 2003, p. 28) well met and their mentors operated with support in keeping with Huling-Austin’s (1992) and multiple previously noted authors’ perceptions (for example, Aitken, 2005; Cameron, 2007; ERO, 2004; Lang, 1999) of the need for cohort and professional support. In some cases mentors provided more structured initial support and then ‘weaned’ the PRT to operate at Honold’s (2003) self-directed learner developmental stage. The mentors also ensured that intensive on-going progress checking and observation were part of their role.

However, support in the success cases extended beyond the mentor to colleagues, leaders, and the wider community where sharing and collaboration could be said to be that of a whānau, or extended ‘family’, of support. This was in keeping with Doerger’s (2003) point that: “All school community members … have a profound effect on beginning teachers …” (p. 8). Such authentic valuing of PRTs was a genuine feature of all
success cases and there was no evidence of more intensive support at a departmental level in the secondary sector (as previously recorded by Pettigrew, 2004).

In all of the schools, the role of the leader in modelling support, valuing and commitment to PRTs (and mentors) was distinctive. The concerns that Hansen et al. (2003) and Pettigrew (2004) had earlier raised about low levels of senior management support in the secondary sector were not evident. Baldwin (2005), Fletcher (2003), and Timperley, Wilson, Barrar and Fung (2007) all note the importance of the role of the leader in effective professional development – and induction is a form of professional development. Mulford (2003), more broadly, suggests that principals also influence the development of an environment which attracts and retains teachers. In the success cases principals were often actively involved in induction in both sectors and provided subsequent support in ways such as ensuring that:

- PRTs were given manageable classes;
- release for mentor and PRT interactions occurred;
- they sometimes carried out classroom observations and feedback; and
- funding was targeted at making time available for a nominated co-ordinator for induction.

Systems for induction were well developed in success cases across both sectors even though these systems varied in flexibility. One distinction that was apparent between the secondary and primary schools was that of the appointment of an Induction Co-ordinator – an unsurprising element given the larger pool of senior managers and the attendant funding for the role. Co-ordinators had opportunities to strengthen and review systems. In terms of systems also, process links between appraisal and induction were exceptionally clear in one primary school. There was no evidence in the secondary sector cases of PRT dissatisfaction about observation (previously reported by Dewar et al., 2003) or a lack of initial orientation programmes or information on induction (noted by Goold, 2004). As Baldwin (2005) and Fletcher (2003) suggest, systems generally associated with development require substantive financial and time resources. Induction, as a form of professional development, is no different and, returning to the earlier point about the role of the leader, the principal in the success case schools played a key role in ensuring resource distribution in the school.

Dedication to and generous engagement in development (often apparent in a palpable learning culture) was another distinguishing factor in all of the case studies, regardless of sector. In some cases a deliberate attempt was made to dovetail induction with major development projects that involved all staff. In keeping with Darling-Hammond’s (2003) conclusion, the professional development programmes in many of these schools (including induction) demonstrated collaborative, active, connected and ongoing features. There was a learner-centred environment where professional development happened “pretty much all the time, not just at the time set aside for teacher learning” (Lewis, 2003, p. 1). The ‘popping in’ that was frequently referred to between mentors and PRTs is an example of this claim, and was one of the few features of induction that was more evident in the primary sector.

It can be concluded that there is virtually no evidence to support a difference in the quality of induction in the primary and secondary success case studies reported upon. The findings do not confirm Cameron’s (2007) conclusion that PRTs in the primary sector were less positive about induction than those in the secondary sector. It would seem that the elements of success can be equally well implemented in either sector and therefore sector alone may not be the key variable determining effectiveness.

Limitations and implications

Potential limitations associated with the findings (apart from the predictable low generalisability linked to
restricted numbers of cases) are those of selection bias associated with the ‘success’ focus. Bias of sampling/selection is inherent and deliberate because ‘success’ sites are purposively (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) chosen to provide insight into what works well. This does not mean that the deliberate bias in sampling might have restricted revelation of ‘unsuccessful’ elements because, as noted in the earlier methodology section, such revelation has been noted to be forthcoming in SCM. In the induction case studies respondents were exceptionally open about constraints and factors that were unsuccessful – more so than experienced in other data gathering in schools where, in the authors’ experiences, defensive, self-protective responses (Argyris, 2003) have often predominated. As Yin (1994) suggests, such extreme cases often reveal more information on the situation being studied. Further, Bassey (2007) contests that a random sample emphasising representativeness is seldom able to produce this kind of insight and recommends that it is more appropriate to select few cases chosen for their validity. The limitation of ‘success’ may therefore be an advantage.

The varied findings in the induction cases suggest multiple implications and recommendations for improved induction in both the primary and secondary sectors, not only for PRTs but for all new staff in schools. Valuing and supporting new staff both in the local and wider school community, leadership modelling of support and providing resources, strategic alignment of induction to other initiatives, having high quality planning, systems and materials (for example manuals) in place, and fostering professional development of mentors and PRTs are all important, as is generally establishing a strong learning and development culture for all in the school so that induction exists within the infrastructure rather than it being seen as an additional task.

References
Comparative induction of primary and secondary school teachers in New Zealand


**Authors**

**Associate Professor Eileen Piggot-Irvine** is Director of the New Zealand Action Research and Review Centre (NZARRC) in the Department of Education at Unitec Institute of Technology. She was formerly the Director of the New Zealand Principal and Leadership Centre at Massey University, Auckland.

**Dr Pip Bruce Ferguson** is an independent researcher with extensive expertise in primary, secondary and the Māori sector research.