

**Positive Behaviour for Learning:
Local Features of an Adapted US Model of Behaviour Management**

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Abstract

Adapting a behaviour management program from another culture requires concerted efforts in the local school community to add in features that are specific to the local school environment. Since the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) initiative of the NSW Department of Education and Training Western Sydney Region (DET WSR) was derived from the Positive Behaviour Interventions and Support (PBIS) program developed in the US, for local WSR schools to implement such a program, local adaptation would be expected. Fieldwork with three schools that had implemented the program for over 1 year found 3 common features and 3 differences in the implementation. The common features were (a) consistency, especially with regard to language and expectations, (b) the inclusion of local examples in the training, and (c) the critical interaction of coaches and PBL teams especially in regards evidence (data) about changed behaviour. The differences were (a) involvement of students in decision making, (b) clustering between primary and high schools, and (c) staff ownership of the PBL process. Both common features and differences were found to be distinctive in the implementation of PBL in the region. For sustainability of outcomes, PBL may be further improved on the basis of the strengths elucidated from the common features and differences.

Student behaviour and its implications for learning are a frequent concern of teachers, parents and policy makers in Australia and elsewhere. Disruptive student behaviour not only impedes learning outcomes for students but also impacts negatively on teacher efficacy and wellbeing (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001; Lewis, 1999). Teachers who feel overwhelmed and undermined by poor student behaviour, low student engagement and motivation are less effective in the classroom. These teachers experience less satisfaction and are more likely to resign their positions, leading to an exacerbation of poor educational outcomes and associated behavioural problems and contributing to the problem of 'hard-to-staff' schools (Howard & Johnson, 2002). A recent study of primary teachers in Western Sydney found that even teachers who felt confident about their teaching abilities expressed concern about student disobedience, distractibility and disruption of others, as well as less frequent but more challenging behaviours such as physical aggression and bullying (Stephenson, Linfoot, & Martin, 2000). Focus group discussions conducted by DET WSR in 2004 revealed widespread dissatisfaction with the ways that behaviour problems in schools were being dealt with.

In New South Wales the Department of Education and Training (DET) recently revised its discipline policy guidelines to emphasise that 'quality learning environments' should provide 'an environment free from disruption, intimidation, harassment and discrimination. To achieve this, all schools are expected to maintain high standards of discipline' (NSW DET, 2006a). It was apparent that the challenge to manage problems at the school level had frequently led to an escalation of conflict. This is consistent with research findings that show that coercive discipline aggravates problem behaviour (Lewis, 2001).

Further, DET Western Sydney Region (WSR) has noted disparities across the region in the capacities of different schools to deal effectively with student behaviours. Consequently, DET WSR has highlighted the need for schools and teachers to employ more effective behaviour management programs and emphasised the adoption of a consistent region-wide professional development program for behaviour management (NSW DET, 2006b). Derived from the Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program that was developed in the United States, Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) has become an important initiative of DET WSR, which has been progressively introduced into schools across the region from 2005. Despite the apparent success of the program in improving student behaviour and school-wide behaviour management practices, it was unclear how the implementation of the program adapted from another culture could accommodate features that are specific to the local school environment. Fieldwork was conducted in three local schools that had implemented the program for over 1 year. The purpose was to examine any common characteristics across schools and specific adaptations to suit specific school needs.

From PBIS to PBL

Impressed by the adaptability and whole school focus of the PBIS initiative in the U.S., DET WSR introduced the U.S. model to local principals from primary and secondary schools across the region. WSR adopted the title of *Positive*

Behaviour for Learning (PBL) to reflect their priority on improving not only students' behaviour but also their learning outcomes. It was decided to adopt the model progressively for government schools across the region.

The emphasis on positive behaviour in the original PBIS approach is consistent with established, evidence-based methods of behaviour management that aim to identify, explicitly teach, and reinforce identified target behaviours and minimise the use of punishment (Sulzer-Azaroff & Mayer, 1994). "Teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehavior to occur before responding. The purpose of school-wide PBIS is to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm" (OSEP Center on PBIS, 2006). Thus, the PBIS model encourages schools to use data to inform the adoption of systems and practices that apply sound behavioural principles in their approach to managing student behaviour. It aims to equip schools to identify and teach behaviours that they have determined are appropriate for their students.

A noteworthy feature of the PBIS model is its systemic focus. This was explicit in the design of PBIS from its genesis, where the aim was to develop a means of changing school-wide discipline practices so as to achieve better support and reduce the risk for children with special education needs placed in mainstream settings (interview with Tim Lewis, 9/10/07). PBIS emphasises the need for schools to comprehensively monitor student behaviour as a basis for developing and applying school-wide and teacher-initiated behaviour management strategies. Furthermore, to address issues of sustainability, the PBIS model promotes an explicit, structured, team-based, problem solving process for developing schools' capacities to assess and address behaviour issues (OSEP Center on PBIS, 2004).

As noted by Porter (2000) and Edwards and Watts (2004), the range of existing approaches to dealing with student behaviour can be differentiated in terms of their relative emphases on teacher control or student autonomy. Many Australian schools have adopted approaches that seek to balance these two dimensions by applying behavioural principles while emphasising the need to establish and maintain strong relationships with students and build student responsibility for their own behaviour. The models proposed by William Glasser (1992) and Bill Rogers (1998) both exemplify this dual focus, perhaps accounting for their popularity with school educators.

However, despite the recent emphasis given by both these theorists to adopting a consistent school-wide model, application of their approaches in schools, had been patchy. For example, the Glasser model (1992), which advocates that students take responsibility for making their own behavioural choices, is frequently wrongly invoked by teachers as a means of threatening students to choose between two aversive teacher-imposed 'choices'. Gail Wykes, a senior member of the DET WSR team, observed that the Glasser model is often misunderstood or misused. She also reported that Bill Rogers' staff development sessions, though popular, had not eventuated in lasting positive change. Research on classroom management across Australia has found that teachers frequently revert to coercive and ineffective forms of discipline when they are challenged with difficult behaviour (Lewis, 1997). Consequently, the establishment of workable, positive and sustainable processes for dealing productively with student behaviour issues remains an educational challenge for this region and others.

The Present Study

The change of nomenclature to PBL was critically important for the adoption of the PBIS model within the region. In interview, members of the Regional Leadership Team commented that "Changing the name to PBL was critical and symbolised contextualisation," and that "the purpose of the name change was to want schools to own it, to take it on." "Its credibility was the notion 'this is not a panacea for behaviour'; this will support 'fabulous learning' in schools." The Team, though impressed by the PBIS model, recognised that its emphasis on behaviour support needed to include overt emphasis on learning to appeal to WSR schools. This changed emphasis of implementing PBL in WSR, and how it impacted on the cultural transfer of the PBIS model to WSR, were deemed to be of central significance to the research focus.

Nevertheless, adapting a behaviour management program from another culture requires concerted efforts in the local school community to add in features that are specific to the local school environment. Hence the changed emphasis from PBIS to PBL would inevitably involve local adaptations. Such adaptations may result in specific processes that suit the different school contexts although the schools may also share common features that are crucial for intervention effectiveness. Research questions of the present study are: (a) How have schools implemented PBL; and (b) Which processes have schools found effective for their different contexts?

Method

Participants

Fieldwork was conducted in three of the DET WSR schools that implemented PBL. In these schools we conducted individual interviews and focus group discussions with the school PBL leadership teams, teaching staff, students, parents and PBL coaches. Of these three schools two were Phase 1 schools (i.e., they started the program from the beginning of the school year). One was a primary school and the other one was a high school. The third was a Phase 3 primary school (i.e., they started the program near the middle of the year). The students' parents also received invitations to participate in the survey, as did staff from the consenting schools. The Regional PBL Leadership Team and their US coach also consented to be involved in in-depth interviews and group discussions. The fieldwork also involved attendance at PBL meetings and the analysis of research artifacts such as regional training documents.

Procedure

Research procedures were conducted according to the approval conditions set by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Western Sydney. Approval to conduct the research in the WSR schools was requested

through the State Education Research Approvals Process (SERAP). The schools remain anonymous and are identified as a number in this report.

Results

Data from the in-depth fieldwork in three schools are analysed in responding to the question, how have schools implemented PBL? In the main, these three schools have implemented school-wide and non-classroom PBL strategies, including the establishment of three to five school-wide expectations, routines and procedures for non-classroom settings, and the development of teaching and practice opportunities and consequences, as well as the management of relevant data collection (Lewis & Sugai, 1999). In these two Phase-1 and one Phase-3 fieldwork schools, features have emerged that illustrate the common paths these schools have taken in faithfully implementing PBL. There are also some differences between schools as they engaged with the systemic processes integral to PBL, which constitute a significant frame through which to observe implementation. This chapter is contextualised at the school level where both features common to the three fieldwork schools and differences in the way schools have contextualised the process are distinctive to the implementation of PBL in the Western Sydney Region. The features shared across the schools are the provision of consistency in teacher response to students; the relevance of increased local examples in the training of teachers and coaches; and the warmth of the interaction between schools and their coaches. Differences between schools in how they contextualised the PBL process between schools include the involvement of students in decision making about the systemic processes; clustering between primary and high schools; and staff ownership of the PBL program.

Shared Feature 1: Consistency

One of the most often reported strengths of the PBL process is its ability to produce consistency. All schools involved in the survey and the fieldwork reported on the importance of consistency. As a result of PBL implementation behaviour is taught consistently, referrals are made consistently and data is collected systematically. The consistency brought in by PBL is seen by teachers to be a factor in improving their satisfaction in the classroom and a contributor to the outcome often mentioned that students are now 'more settled.' It is certainly the case that schools sought more consistency and the process of PBL is very systematic, so consistency was likely to be a principal outcome. It is noteworthy that in the Phase 1.1 School (first fieldwork school in Phase 1), the introduction of consistency was also found to be a desire of the student population. Evidence based on a student survey revealed that students wanted greater consistency from teachers in relation to playground expectations.

This Phase 1 School has been proactive about creating signage in the school and playground, explicitly so that teachers would know and use the rules and create this consistency. Posting school wide expectations around the school is one of the features of PBL training. There is some indication that the effort to promote consistency in rules in the playground was also having an impact on classroom teaching, although the school had not reached the stage of addressing school-wide expectations in the classroom. In an exchange, members of the PBL team said:

Teacher 1: I use it every time I have to reprimand a student. I always refer to the sign and make them stop and say 'are you using any of those points.' That is what my head teacher suggested I do and it has been really positive in my classroom.

Teacher 2: It is about consistency.

In a focus group, students provided corroboration that consistent use of the core expectations was happening in the school. They noted:

Student 1: My PE teacher always brings it up. How 'we have expectations of students.' He always talks about that and incorporates it. The expectations are up in every classroom.

Student 2: So does my English teacher.

Student 3: Everyone of my teachers basically.

At Phase 1.2 School (second field work school in Phase 1) the special education teacher commented:

The teachers all know what they have to say, "Daniel, you know that that's not being respectful or safe, you now need to do this." And it goes from those low level hints or cues, to a formal reminder. "Now I am reminding you of our being safe rule. You know the consequences." Then it goes to a second reminder, a warning and then he knows he has to leave the classroom or playground.

In summary, the view of the participants at the Phase 1 schools was that consistency of rules and their application was valued by the staff and students and this was a feature of PBL.

Schools in Phase 3 placed a similar emphasis on consistency, seeing PBL as being a way of making this happen. The principal of the Phase 3.1 School (first fieldwork school in Phase 3) explained the aims in this way:

We want consistently the same rules from all teachers so that students know what's expected of them. They get the same from one teacher to another. Before we started implementing PBL, we had some teachers put a student on detention for minor things while you could do something major with other teachers and be ignored. As we get a lot of change in staff and executive there were structures that were beginning to drift. When we took PBL on board it was time and PBL offered support. So, there's consistency in the way staff implemented and acted and consistency for students to be aware of our expectations, for parents to be comfortable. It was time to tie our welfare things together. We wanted to ensure that the positive behaviours are valued.

Teachers at this Phase 3 School were appreciative of the consistency resulting from the introduction of expectations and the dissemination of these through the school. One said:

It is just a different way of teaching students the rules instead of me just making up rules with them in the classroom. It is consistent right across the school. The children in my class know it is not just me that is expecting that, it is everyone. All teachers follow the same set of procedures.

This teacher, new to the school, appreciated being able to tap into a framework like that provided by PBL. Two other teachers interviewed at this school made similar comments. The special education teacher at Phase 3.1 School expressed the view that consistent rules were a great asset for her students. She gave an example of one student:

He kept on running in the out of bounds area and then someone told him, and he didn't know it was out of bounds, so we took him on a little orientation. He is so much happier now he knows what is expected of him. It's great and it makes a big difference to everybody not just the children.

Students in focus groups at this school expressed the view that having these rules, and having teachers all work with them had made life better at school.

Across the region this tendency for PBL to create a consistent approach to process may be reflected in the way the data is reported. For example, such data is captured in a regional report in Term 2, 2007 (Western Sydney Regional Report Submission, May 2007) demonstrating that the number of long suspensions in Phase 1 and 2 schools declined by 15% from 2005 to 2006 compared to a 14% increase in long suspensions among non-PBL schools. The educational impact of fewer long suspensions is the corresponding increase in the number of days available for learning to occur.

In summary, the findings from the fieldwork study suggest that the processes of PBL contribute to the shared language that is developed between teachers, students and parents creating a valued consistency. Developing such consistency is explicitly addressed in PBL training, which emphasises universal prevention-development of a common language, common vision and common experiences.

Shared Feature 2: Applying PBL to the School Context

Training. The WSR of the Department of Education and Training (DET) has solicited local examples from the schools involved in PBL and embedded it in the training of teachers and coaches. The Regional PBL Leadership Team has also encouraged schools involved in PBL to tell their story to regional administrators, the wider school community, and the teaching community. There have been presentations by several schools about their PBL journey. As noted by one coach this has enabled the Region to increase local examples in training school teams thus building relevance and inclusivity.

The School PBL Leadership Team. Within the local ownership, the role of the executive is significant, as is membership of the PBL Leadership Team. In Phase 1.1 School there was stable leadership, with the principal appointed to the school in 2003, the year of publication of Quality Teaching in NSW public schools (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2003). The model was strongly implemented in the school. To a large extent, staffing was also stable. The principal discussed the longevity of staff members (one of 25 years, another of 15 years service) as a positive contribution to school life. He also made the point that PBL gives long serving staff 'a language with which to speak with Generation Y'. In Phase 1.2 School the staffing was also very stable, working productively as a team. In Phase 3.1 School the Principal took up the appointment at the school just as the PBL process began. Stability of the team was tested with ongoing changes in staffing, including from the leadership team. One of the team at Phase 3.1 said:

For us it's been a very slow, gradual process. We have such a large staff turnover. Even this term, we had to refresh staff at a training and development session. That is really unusual. We talked about this at our last PBL meeting. ... With new teachers, next year we are going be revisiting the whole thing and how it all works, on the first day back, the staff development day.

It was found during the data gathering process that some of the other schools who participated in the survey underwent changes in both executive and PBL leadership team. Staff turnover has an impact on schools especially in terms of the momentum of implementing PBL. It is something worth emphasising within the context of local ownership – that change in both the executive and the PBL team could produce challenges for a school to address while

implementing the PBL process.

Schools' ownership of PBL is reflected in everything they have done and the evidence shows that these schools have not been required to implement a prescriptive program. All three fieldwork-schools have made the process their own, developed their own core expectations, devised their own lessons and approached it with their own priorities. This shared decision-making process worked effectively in schools where members of the Leadership Team were open to new ideas and shared responsibility with the school executive in a distributed leadership model. At Phase 1.2 School the coach felt that he had had the chance to introduce ideas that work in relation to the local needs and satisfaction of the school. In an early presentation to staff at the Phase 3.1 School, the School PBL Leadership Team used some slides and information from US examples. In a subsequent Powerpoint presentation all slides had the student-devised logo attached and all of the information was generated within the school.

Shared Feature 3: Interaction of Schools and Coaches

Coaching is essential in the PBL process to increase transfer of learning in the areas of needs assessment, planning, evaluation, systems development and action planning. Part of their role is collecting the School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) data from schools. That the coaches are teachers/teacher consultants is important. This has enabled the PBL teams in the three case study schools to respond to them as colleagues. They have valued the way coaches have helped participants transfer learning experiences in training sessions into practice in the schools. The principal from Phase 1.1 School commented that having a coach to work with is something different from other change processes for schools. His view was that it has been very beneficial, helping keep the PBL team on track towards the achievement of their goals.

This comment of 'keeping on track' introduces language of shared accountability that demonstrates a change from language of collegial support. As coaches are external to the school setting, they do not engage in the day-to-day issues of the schools with which they work. Consequently they can, and it seems are expected to, be accountable for helping the team focus on the challenges they have to meet. The coaches discussed 'providing a picture of how the whole process works' (Phase 1.2 School) and 'getting data recorded accurately' (Phase 3.1 School). They are in the position of supporting school leadership teams to use the PBL process to achieve their goals. At the same time, they also experienced workload pressure and the perceived notion of accountability is different to the way it is addressed in the training for coaches, and in the documentation of their role.

Coaches have recognised that they encourage teams to become self-analytical by asking questions to promote reflection. One coach (at Phase 3.1 School) described her role as being a 'positive nag' while allowing the team with whom she worked the ability to retain ownership, even if it meant allowing them to take the long route. Another (at Phase 1.1 School) explained:

As coaches, we're given a scaffold and a framework, to see their [the teachers'] role within that. I see my role as being a member of that PBL team, giving guidance and strategies. Often trying to guide the team to come up with the ideas themselves. In Australia, we expect a coach [eg. of a sporting team] to have all the answers. In this role, we don't do that but get the team to come up with the answers to their problems, and have ownership of those solutions, so it's not some outsider coming in. Often I'm working with the team to come up with a scaffold of how they're going to implement something. Then they take those examples back to their staff meetings, get input from the staff and then we meet together. We want to ensure that it is their project.

Another coach (at Phase 1.2 School) linked the role strongly to the data collection:

I'm a different voice at meetings. I present a broken record or mantra in saying "Does the data tell you there's a problem?" I counter knee-jerk reactions and am always asking: "Have you seen any changes?" It's easier for the coach to have this job. And I put items on the PBL leadership agenda.

This coach commented that the leadership committee with whom he worked was a good model in that everyone on the team was involved in the feedback process to the whole staff. At Phase 3.1 School, the coach added:

It's the coordinated approach that makes all the difference. The benefit of making people look at what's happening is that they become proactive, not reactive.

The region has reported that, as increasing numbers of schools come on board, it is increasingly difficult to attract sufficient coaches to support school PBL teams. Pressure will increase as more schools move to implementing second and third tier supports, as a new set of skills and expertise will be required of coaches to effectively support schools operating at these levels.

Contextual Difference 1: Involvement of Students in Decision Making

In the primary schools the whole school support for implementing PBL extended to the students, who were involved at many stages of the process. At the Phase 3.1 School, for example, the students had participated in a poster

competition to design a logo, and were very proud of the winning entry. Each class had self-evaluation surveys, which they filled out as part of their PBL learning, and one teacher commented:

I was actually surprised with the self-evaluation surveys. A few of the boys are very challenging at times, and they don't enjoy writing, so to do a survey every afternoon about their behaviour, where they have to give examples of how they had done the right thing or the wrong thing was not easy. I was surprised by how much they enjoyed doing this, and how honest they were. They would write down if they had said something inappropriate to someone, if they had done something inappropriate. Things that I could have checked if I needed to but they were just really honest. I feel that has made a big impact on the kids, doing those evaluation surveys, because they feel that they are part of it and all learning it together.

In summary, the primary schools had an exemplary record of involving their students in the process. Phase 3.1 School in particular had a very effective policy of student involvement in their own learning about behaviour. This involvement appeared to reflect the school's developing inclusive practice. For example the principal of Phase 3.1 noted:

Since I arrived I have worked hard on children having a say. A lot of teachers back then didn't understand why they should listen to a kid. The culture has now changed to one where teachers will listen to children. We can now set up a resolution meeting with the child when there is a problem. Teachers will come on board with this where once they wouldn't have. PBL supports this process.

Contextual Difference 2: Clustering Between Primary and High School

Some links between high school and partner primary schools have been achieved through their proximity and purposeful collaboration in developing their schools' expectations. Maximising this, in some cases, the high school and primary school share the same coach. So there have been interesting ways in which the idea of clustering has begun to work for the schools. At Regional level strategic support has been provided for clustering, combining primary and high schools in the same region so that the PBL process would result in consistency through transition. While this is not yet a common feature, it has resulted in Phase 1.1 School planning future developments to extend links between partner schools.

The Phase 1.1 school had entered the PBL program in concert with two feeder schools. The reason given by a member of the PBL team was:

It actually had links, because we were both year advisors and we were both concerned that we didn't have a common language with the primary school about our expectations. Our original submission put in that we would be working with the 2 feeder schools and be talking about common language. Reinforcing our expectations.

The idea of having a common language where we talk to the kids and where we say we treat people with respect and we know what respect means from one school to another was very appealing. We felt demographics were changing and cultural background was changing and what we were expecting was not necessarily what the community understood that we wanted. So we were trying to address that imbalance.

With the students in Year 7 the high school staff have been explicitly teaching the expectations when they arrive. Staff spend the first week of orientation embedding the high school's expectations of 'safe respectful learner' and teaching the students what that means. They have trialed this in 2007, and in 2008 the school intends to expand the process through the focus on the element of being a learner and what that means. This includes having the staff run a year's study skills program. The principal confirmed that:

For us, literacy is a huge issue, has become so in more recent time. The gap, where kids are coming into the school as measured by the Year 7 SNAP and ELLA test, is widening between us and state average. In numeracy, we're having good gains in bringing kids back to the state average. But I'm not satisfied with literacy so we're going to be working fairly extensively on that. Without literacy, kids won't be able to access or express the curriculum. With the boys, that leads into the behaviour.

As will be discussed further in chapter 7, the shared language between primary and high schools created with PBL was expected to facilitate learning.

Contextual Difference 3: Staff Ownership of the PBL Process in their School

Overall, the process of rolling out PBL has been characterised by a supportive and giving ethos, possibly originating in the altruistic actions of the US team (who gave rather than sold the process), and extending down to school PBL teams. The importance of staff ownership of the PBL process is reflected in a set of minutes from Phase 1.1 School, which state:

Build in explicit teaching of playground rules into peer support so Yr 10 teaches Year 7 reinforcing the

expectations.

Teach staff each of the expectations in each of the areas as a means of clarifying what goes in the school handbook.

Increase staff ownership.

The staff ownership is an ongoing issue in this high school. There are a number of documents where the school's PBL team seeks more membership from faculties, or attempts to get staff involvement only to find 'time gets away from us.' By contrast the primary schools have a record of consulting teachers at each stage of the process. At Phase 3.1 School, after the PBL self-evaluation results were returned to a staff meeting, teachers collectively brainstormed the lessons on expectations and then the PBL team collated and distributed them to each class. The teachers responded by offering roleplays, explicit lessons and reward systems that would reinforce the core expectations. As the principal noted:

We're a small school and I think that on the whole we tend to be supportive. We didn't get a reaction from staff that said, "We're not doing that." People were supportive but cautious. And they did what they could.

Staff members supported this view. One commented:

Definitely we have been included in the decision making with the principal and we have worked together and collaborated on areas that needed more focus. For example, we found we need more emphasis on safety and respect in the toilets; from the surveys we found that lot of kids were going to detention for that. So in every class teachers would focus on safety or do pictures about how you can be safe and respectful in the toilets. We would give each other ideas about how you might teach a principle or try a reward system. I also found it positive because all staff know they are being supported, and we have had some workshops about it.

At Phase 1.2 primary school the Principal felt that all of his staff had been involved, and PBL only worked because all staff showed "a high level of professionalism". The Deputy Principal noted:

Everyone has pulled together. We've talked our way through each issue, for example, rules for games.

PBL team consists of people from all parts of the school and all can speak up.

Observations by the research team who attended the PBL leadership meeting and spoke to teachers would support the view that all staff were aware of and supportive of the PBL initiative.

A similar level of teacher enthusiasm and awareness was discernible at other primary schools where the charting of issues and possible solutions has been given a structure by the systemic processes set in place with the adoption of PBL. When Phase 1.2 School was generating the matrix of behaviours in the school-wide settings, the Principal recalled that they:

Had big board in staff room with ideas [for the PBL matrix]. We left it up for a number of weeks and every member of staff [had] the right to go there and put a post-it note up if they didn't agree. There was a lot of revising and everyone's opinions went up. The coach had very useful input. At that time, PBL meetings were very regular.

Discussion

In summary, addressing the research question concerned with PBL implementation and processes, the fieldwork has drawn attention to three shared features and three differences across the fieldwork schools. Schools have implemented PBL in ways that demonstrate their individuality while valuing particular features of the process. The common features were consistency, especially with regard to language and expectations; the inclusion of local examples in the training; and the interaction of coaches and PBL teams especially in regards evidence (data) about changed behaviour. Comments from coaches and PBL teams suggest important considerations around the teacher background of the coaches, their interaction with the PBL teams and an ambiguous notion of coach accountability. Differences in the implementation processes across the fieldwork schools were involvement of students in decision making; clustering between primary and high schools; and staff ownership of the PBL process. Both common features and differences are distinctive in the implementation of PBL in the Western Sydney Region.

Features common across the PBL schools such as the consistency of language and the interactions of coaches have made a strong stamp upon the schools that have implemented the PBL process. Differences between schools arise

from the groundwork on which schools were implementing this process. This groundwork includes programs by which student involvement in decision-making is scaffolded and fostered, and cross-school initiatives especially in the area of transition within the context of Quality Teaching.

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