a guide to teaching practice

fourth edition

louis cohen, lawrence manion and keith morrison

A guide to teaching practice

Fourth edition

Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion and
Keith Morrison

London and New York

First published 1996
by Routledge
11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
29 West 35th Street, New York, NY 10001

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Typeset in Times by Solidus (Bristol) Limited
Printed and bound in Great Britain by Clays Ltd, St. Ives PLC

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data
Cohen, Louis, 1928–
A guide to teaching practice / Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion, and Keith Morrison. — 4th ed.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
1. Student teaching—Great Britain. 2. Teachers—Training of—Great Britain. I. Manion, Lawrence. II. Morrison, Keith (Keith R. B.) III. Title.
LB2157.G7C64 1996 96-7564
370'.7'33—dc20

ISBN 0-415-14221-0

Foreword to the fourth edition

It is seven years since the third edition of *A Guide to Teaching Practice* was published and we are indebted to Routledge for the opportunity of updating the text with a fourth edition. Keith Morrison joins Louis Cohen and Lawrence Manion as co-author to map the dramatic changes that have taken place since 1989 to the aims, content, pedagogy, evaluation and assessment of teaching and learning. The book has been comprehensively rewritten, with inclusion of several major new topics:

Some perspectives on teaching and learning,
Preparation and planning,
Beginning curriculum planning,
Practising teaching – primary teaching, secondary teaching,
Mixed-ability teaching,
Language in the classroom,
Equal opportunities,
Management and control in the classroom,
The classroom environment and situational factors,
Assessment, record-keeping and records of achievement.

The fourth edition also includes outlines and/or discussion of:

1 The Education Reform Act of 1988.
2 The national curriculum of England and Wales.
3 The rise of local management of schools.
4 The growth of managerialism in education.
5 The context of curriculum planning within a whole-school framework.
6 The increased emphasis on quality-assurance and quality-control mechanisms.
7 The politicisation of education and the intervention of a centralist government.
8 The growing numbers and types of educational innovations.
9 The rise of consumerism and quasi-market models of education.
10 The return of an extended version of a back-to-basics curriculum.

11 The strengthening of the relationship between education and the economy.
12 The growing concern for school effectiveness.
13 The development of diversity in educational provision and its impact on preparation for teaching.
14 The rise of competency-driven views of curriculum design, development, content and assessment.
15 The impact of information technology on flexible learning, resource-based learning and student-centred learning.
16 The extent of assessment-driven curricula and reforms in assessments and examinations.
17 The development of new initiatives in education such as: the rise of records of achievement, schools and industry links, vocational qualifications, modular curricula, subject-specialist teaching in primary schools, alterations to management structures in secondary schools, cross-curricular issues and collegial planning in secondary schools.
18 Changes to the purposes, contents, assessment and management of courses of initial teacher education.
19 The development of school-based training and partnership models of initial teacher education.
20 The shrinking role of local education authorities and the reduction of teacher autonomy and decision-making.
21 The changing nature of teacher induction and mentoring.

We should like to think that the comprehensive updating of the fourth edition will ensure that *A Guide to Teaching Practice* continues to be a major, standard text on preparing student teachers to work in contemporary classrooms.

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Acknowledgements

We are indebted to the following for allowing us to make use of copyright material:

Macmillan, for *Class Management and Control: a Teaching Skills Workbook*, by E. C. Wragg (DES Teacher Education Project with Focus books); Heinemann, for *Language in Culture and Class* by A. D. Edwards and V. J. Furlong; Cassell, for *Reflective Teaching in the Primary School* by A. Pollard and S. Tann, *Changing English Primary Schools? The Impact of the Education Reform Act at Key Stage One* by A. Pollard, P. Broadfoot, P. Croll, M. Osborn, D. Abbott; George Allen & Unwin, for *Learning in the Primary School* by K. Haslan and *Classroom Control: a Sociological Perspective* by M. Denscombe; Basil Blackwell, for *School Discipline: a Whole-School Approach*, by C. Watkins and P. Wagner and *Teaching Infants* by T. Kerry and J. Pollitt; McGraw Hill, for *Multicultural Teaching; A Guide for the Classroom* by M. Saunders; NFER/Nelson, for *Educating Pupils with Special Needs in the Ordinary School* by S. Hegarty, K. Pocklington and D. Lucas; Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd., for *Relationships in the Primary Classroom* by P. J. Kutnick; Longman, for *A Practical Guide to Improving your Teaching* by E. Perrott; *Educational Research*, for the article 'Curriculum Planning in Multicultural Education' by R. Jeffcoate in vol. 18 (3) pp. 192-200; the Development Education Centre [Birmingham] for *A Sense of School* by C. McFarlane and S. Sinclair; Routledge, for *Learning to Teach in the Primary School*, by A. Proctor, M. Entwistle, B. Judge and S. McKenzie-Murdoch, *Explaining* by E. C. Wragg and G. Brown, *Questioning* by G. Brown and E. C. Wragg; Routledge and Kegan Paul, for *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* by L. Wittgenstein; Trentham Books Ltd. and The Runnymede Trust, for *Equality Assurance in Schools*; Bodley Head, for *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* by R. Pirsig; School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, for *Planning the Curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2*, SCAA (1995), *A Curriculum for All*, NCC (1989), *The National Curriculum for Pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties*, NCC (1992); Crown copyright is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO for: *Records of Achievement:*

a Statement of Policy by the Department of Education and Science (1984), *The National Curriculum from 5-16: a Consultation Document* by the Department of Education and Science (1987), *Education Observed 5: Good Behaviour and Discipline in Schools* (1989 edition) by the Department of Education and Science (1989), *National Record of Achievement* letter to accompany the publication of the National Record of Achievement by the Department of Education and Science and the Employment Department (1991), *National Record of Achievement: a Business Guide* (ref. PP3/2267/891/55) by the Employment Department, *Circular 9/92* by the Department for Education (1992), *Circular 14/93* by the Department for Education (1993), *Curriculum Organisation and Classroom Practice in Primary Schools: a Discussion Paper* by the Department for Education, written by R. Alexander, J. Rose and C. Woodhead (1992), *Mathematics in the National Curriculum* by the Department for Education (1995), *Guidance on the Inspection of Schools* by the Office for Standards in Education (1995); Taylor and Francis, for *Developing Topic Work in the Primary School*, by S. Tann; Ward Lock Educational, for *The Integrated Day – Theory and Practice*, by J. Walton (ed.).

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Part I

Some perspectives on teaching and learning

Education is context-specific and context-dependent. Context refers to the settings or surroundings in which education takes place. A student teacher is faced with the exciting but challenging task of assimilating a variety of contexts very rapidly when embarking upon teaching practice, whether during a course of initial teacher pre-service education or as a newly qualified teacher entering a first appointment in a school. These contexts vary from the very broad and general macro-contexts at a societal level to the very specific micro-contexts of a particular individual in a particular school, class and lesson. The prospect can be daunting, as we see in some student teachers' concern for short-term survival in a new classroom. The thrust of this book is to support students in their initial teaching experiences – the micro-contexts of everyday life in classrooms. However, localised education is set in broader contexts of society. This part of the book sets the contemporary scene for daily teaching and learning in these broader contexts. It also describes some of the major themes of education in the last decade.

The convention used in discussions here and throughout the book will be to refer to students in initial teacher education as 'student teachers' and to children and young adults attending school as 'students'.

Chapter 1

The politicisation of education

Education has been the subject of increasing political debate for two decades. It is hard to understate the effects of a *dirigiste*, interventionist government dominated by the Thatcherite agenda of introducing market principles into education.

The economic aspect of government policy affects funding issues for education. Since the 1988 Education Act[1] there has been a clear market ideology in education that embraces: *competition*, *consumerism*, *individualism*, *choice*, *diversity*,[2] *privatisation*, *quality control*, *efficiency and information*.[3] These features include:

- A common national curriculum, coupled with formal assessment at ages 7, 11, 14 and 16 to enable schools to be compared to each other in 'league tables' of test results; schools themselves organise their 'delivery' of the national curriculum.[4]
- The abandoning of ceiling numbers for schools, together with 'open enrolment' (i.e. no catchment areas), designed to enable 'good' schools ('magnet schools') to flourish and 'poor' schools ('sink schools') to close – though, in fact, Brighouse and Tomlinson[5] indicate that 'sink' schools do not close, they are simply starved of resources for improvement because of the *per capitum* funding formula. In this respect Apple[6] argues that schools become locators of social class. Indeed Tomlinson[7] points out that it is perhaps an irony that many 'good' schools do not wish to expand simply because their existing size has contributed to their success.
- The increased number of types of schools available for 'consumers', for example 'grant maintained schools' (those schools that have opted out of local authority control); city technology colleges (whose funding was originally intended to be derived from industry); and sixth form colleges (which compete with comprehensive schools and colleges of further education for recruitment).
- The delegation of budgetary control away from local education authorities (LEAs) and into schools (i.e. local management of schools – LMS).

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