



**PRIMARY EDUCATION:  
what is and what might be  
DISCUSSION GROUP ABSTRACTS**





## PRIMARY EDUCATION: WHAT IS AND WHAT MIGHT BE

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Hamilton House, London WC1

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# MORNING SESSION

## Group A: Equity in curriculum and pedagogy

Chair: Michael Jopling (Northumbria University)

### 1. Rediscovering educational equity (Carmen Mohamed and Gill Johnson, University of Nottingham)

School outcome data consistently identifies schools in challenging circumstances as underachieving, triggering rigorous scrutiny by external government agencies. Pupil Premium funding is provided to schools to identify disadvantaged pupils and incorporates the requirement to collect data on the impact of any extra support purchased with the money. This scrutiny, suggest Leonardo & Grubb (2014: 139), means they will 'become places where [pupils] are endlessly drilled on basic English, maths and test preparation, to the detriment of other subjects'.

Given the focus on knowledge and skills contained within the primary curriculum we consider the concept of teaching for understanding as a pedagogic approach to closing the gap for disadvantaged children. In this presentation we explore the employment of memory building in teaching and the rediscovery of a thematic, creative, cross-curricular approach in order to provide high quality learning contexts. Providing time to develop mastery of concepts, teaching how to store and retrieve information and employing meta-cognitive talk to extend critical thinking and questioning can be meshed into a creative pedagogic approach which both involves and engages the learner and employs affective motivation to enhance responsibility for self-efficacy.

Recent comparisons to other European countries suggest that the performative data driven UK system is what actually disadvantages our children. Putting the pleasure back into learning is an over-riding philosophy of the higher attaining school systems. We believe this requires urgent consideration in the UK primary curriculum.

### 2. Exciting the imagination and making learning accessible to all children regardless of their background: a bespoke curriculum approach (Iain Erskine, The Fulbridge Academy, Peterborough)

The presentation will focus on the importance of providing a relevant, engaging curriculum approach that is inclusive and appropriate to all children no matter what their social or cultural background.

It will give examples of engaging activities based on first hand experiences and a project based approach. The presentation will demonstrate how to imaginatively use the environment within the school grounds and beyond to engage pupils in their learning, developing a love of learning and at the same time being accessible to high ability, SEN or EAL pupils.

I will illustrate the presentation with pictures more than words. It will exemplify the CPR wish that a curriculum should, 'Engage children's attention, excites and empowers their thinking and advances their knowledge, understanding and skill.'

As our Academy is in an area of high deprivation I will talk about our belief that we need to fill the gaps in our children's early years, by providing lots of experiences that will engage them with reading, writing and especially talk. I will emphasise the importance of oracy and illustrate the impact it has had throughout school, especially in Early Years.

### 3. How might the capacity of primary schools to respond to pupil diversity be supported in the context of primary school independence, autonomy and variety? (Mel Ainscow and Lise Hopwood, University of Manchester)

The English primary school population is a highly diverse one which in recent decades has been supported by a range of local and national frameworks setting out expectations for the learning opportunities for all children, regardless of social background or of ability. The opportunities to access learning for groups of pupils who differ



in their educational experience, their language background, their cultural background and their achievement have been monitored and evaluated under common national frameworks of curriculum, funding and assessment.

Changes in governance are bringing the potential of greater autonomy for schools to meet the diversity of their pupil populations. However, this freedom operates within stringent national accountability requirements and a single Pupil Premium funding structure which defines educational need primarily according to narrow, economic criteria. As national frameworks reduce so too do the wider support networks that accompany them, and an increase in school autonomy can bring isolation and fragmentation of expertise.

This 'think piece' presentation will consider how primary schools can be supported in keeping broad pedagogical values at the heart of the education they offer as the school system becomes more varied and as school funding policy continues to be determined by the economic backgrounds of pupils rather than their learning needs. It considers how the current pressure for primary schools to move from local authority structures to academy status brings with it the need for a fundamental evaluation of how an educational system that promotes the autonomy of individual schools to make choices about curriculum, about pedagogy and, potentially about pupil intake, can ensure that all children have fair access to opportunities for learning that meet their diverse needs.

In the light of the recent CPRT review *Primary Schools responding to diversity: barriers and possibilities*, this 'think piece' considers how schools can be supported in developing creative and co-ordinated ways of responding to the diversity of their communities. It suggests strategies for promoting collaboration between schools and their communities that will enable education to be viewed as more than short-term attainment and that will engage with a broader, more meaningful view of diversity. It identifies the contribution that an intermediary layer of educational expertise and experience can bring to collaborative school partnerships and considers how local responses to diversity can permeate policy and practice nationally.

## **Group B: Practical applications of children's voice**

Chair: Jo Evans (CPRT)

### **1. What does pupil voice work aim to achieve? (Carol Robinson, University of Brighton)**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) which sets out specific rights and freedoms for children and young people, and affirms that children are equally legitimate holders of human rights as adults, was ratified by the UK government in 1991. Article 12 of the UNCRC gives children and young people the right to express their views in all matters affecting them, and for these views to be given due weight in accordance with the child's age and maturity. Recent government policy within England makes specific reference to this Article, e.g. Working Together: Listening to the voices of children and young people (DCFS, 2008), and Listening to and involving children and young people (DfE, 2014).

Pupil voice work in schools aims to acknowledge the principles of Article 12: however, notions of best practice in relation to 'giving pupils a voice' varies widely from school to school and within schools. There is no universally defined 'ideal' which school communities strive to accomplish when embedding pupil voice practices thus school communities work towards different goals to achieve their aim of giving pupils a voice. This presentation will draw on school-based research which identified aspects of good pupil voice practices; it will highlight cautions about the development of such practices and will promote discussion about what 'ideal' pupil voice work might look like in schools

### **2. Curiouser and curiouser: developing a pupil-led enquiry-based curriculum (Deborah Myers, Canterbury Christ Church University and Catherine Westgate, Hudson Road Primary School, Sunderland)**

This project evaluated the use of science inquiry as 'a way of knowing' to develop the scientific capital of primary pupils living in an area of social and economic disadvantage. The Headteacher and Science Subject Leader recognised their roles as cultural change agents in the lives of their pupils and sought to improve children's access, participation and engagement with the school science curriculum.

Through the implementation of a research protocol and a programme of professional development, teachers and children were challenged to interrogate their beliefs about scientists, science teaching and working scientifically using a mixed methods approach to collect data. By creating opportunities for professional dialogue and guided reflection, requiring peer coaching, mentoring and goal setting, teachers were supported to co-construct new teaching and learning pedagogies that better align with children's natural dispositions of playfulness and curiosity. The development of teachers' pedagogical design capacities has resulted in a whole-school shift in emphasis from directed to independent enquiry enabling pupils to devise their own scientific methodologies to generate evidence to support conclusions. This approach required teachers to transfer responsibility for decision-making to children during open-ended investigations and to review the quality of questioning necessary to prompt children's creative and productive thinking. This project enables pupils and teachers to work together more authentically as scientists, co-constructing new knowledge about phenomena and has indeed facilitated pupils' greater access, participation and engagement with both the science and wider curriculum resulting in a DAISIES initiative (Diversity and Identity: Supporting Inclusive Education in Science).

### **3. Involving pupils in classroom decision-making: teacher perspectives** (Geraldine Rowe, Educational Psychology Service, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead)

Schools are rightly proud of the opportunities that they offer students to experience democratic debate and decision-making, 'having a voice' through school councils and schemes that enable them to take part in decision-making processes such as involvement in selection of staff, for example. Numerous studies have found that both teachers and students value the experience of sharing responsibility for problem identification, decision-making and implementation of solutions in their schools. The evidence, now well-documented, shows strong links internationally between increased participation, engagement and academic achievement, especially for pupils from a disadvantaged background.

However, the democratic practices celebrated in such studies have generally been outside the classroom and not accessed equally by all pupils. At the same time, studies have highlighted the perception of pupils that their views are rarely taken into account when it comes to decisions about classroom practice.

I am carrying out a doctoral research study to find out more about the experience of teachers who are already developing democratic partnerships with their pupils to play an active part in classroom decision-making. I hope this study will identify some of the factors that have facilitated/constrained these teachers' teacher-pupil partnerships, and contribute to discourse about what classrooms of the future might look like if pupils felt that their contributions really mattered. By the time of this conference my research will be in progress and I will be able to offer an overview of the project and invite delegates to discuss their own experience and aspirations around democratic classrooms.

## **Group C: Pedagogy, research and teacher education**

Chair: Mary Anne Wolpert (University of Cambridge)

### **1. Mantle of the expert in initial teacher education: an imaginative partnership** (Hanneke Jones, Newcastle University)

Workshops on the innovative imaginative enquiry approach Mantle of the Expert (<http://www.mantleoftheexpert.com/>) have been offered to Primary PGCE students at Newcastle University for a number of years. In 2015-16, newly accredited Mantle of the Expert training school St John's Primary School in Newcastle partnered up with the Primary PGCE course at Newcastle University, to enable student teachers to see Mantle used in practice across the school. Following the university workshops, student teachers were invited to a Mantle training day at St John's where they were able to observe the deeply transformational impact of this approach in practice. Following this day, one student teacher was also able to spend her final placement on the course at St John's, and integrate Mantle in her teaching practice.

In this presentation we will share perspectives from the school, the university and student teachers on this new partnership. We will discuss the reasons for the partnership, the highlights it has offered and the challenges it has provided. Importantly, we will discuss the impact which this Mantle of the Expert partnership has had on the practice of student teachers and the pupils they work with. Implications of the discussion will not only relate to the Mantle of the Expert, but also to other partnerships within Initial Teacher Education which have a specific focus on innovative pedagogies.

## **2. Translating findings from research in cognitive sciences into practice: what does it look like in the classroom? (Derek Bell, Learnus)**

‘So what do I do with my class?’ is one of the most frequent questions from teachers when introduced to findings from the cognitive sciences including educational neuroscience. The challenge of bridging the gap between research and practice is not unique to education but, as the drive towards evidence-based approaches increases, it is a major challenge for teachers and researchers alike. The review by Goswami (2015) for CPRT very helpfully identifies ‘implications for education’ derived from the evidence from cognitive sciences. However, for obvious reasons, it does not go on to the next step and suggest how these implications might inform pedagogical practice in schools. This presentation will endeavour to explore the issues raised in addressing this challenge of translating research findings into actual classroom practice. Does the evidence indicate that there needs to be major changes in teachers’ practice or are more subtle adjustments required? Are there examples of current practice that build on the evidence effectively? What needs to happen in schools in order to take advantage of improvements in our understanding of learning? What channels are there available in order to introduce these changes into classroom practice? In short how can we give an effective answer to ‘So what do I do with my class?’

## **3. Action research for mastery (Amelia Hempel-Jorgensen, Open University and Georgina Nutton, Preston Park Primary School, Wembley)**

This session reports on the CPRT Action Research funded by CPRT London Network and the two participating London Primary schools: Marlborough and Hallfield Primary Schools. Six teachers, ranging from reception to Key Stage 2, from across the two schools, were supported by academics at The Open University to carry out their own action research projects on the theme of ‘mastery learning’. Dr Amelia Hempel-Jorgensen, Dr Gill Goodliff and Kim Walker at The Open University lead the project and hosted a series of sessions with the teachers to develop their skills as action researchers and their individual projects. The project links with the CPRT priority of pedagogy, particularly as the schools have developed and implemented their own models of mastery as a new form of pedagogy and assessment. In the presentation, Amelia will outline how the project was designed, the nature of action research in schools and some key findings from the teachers’ projects.

## **Group D: Curriculum: subjects, subject knowledge and empowerment**

Chair: Julia Flutter (University of Cambridge and CPRT)

### **1. Conceptions of subject knowledge in the initial training of primary school teachers (Deborah Pope, University of Chester)**

The CPR highlighted the lack of coherence to the discourse about subject knowledge in teacher education in England in comparison to other European countries.

A qualitative research study conducted in the initial teacher training departments of two Higher Education Institutions (140 participants) has explored the discourse around subject knowledge within undergraduate primary education programmes enabling a deeper, critical understanding of the conceptions held by trainee primary teachers, school-based mentors and university tutors.

Findings indicated that conceptions of ‘subject knowledge’ are highly individualistic and idiosyncratic. Understanding of the nature of content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman 1986) was

found to be under-developed in a large proportion of participants. The narrow primary curriculum experienced during training experiences is reflected in conceptualisations of subject knowledge for primary teaching. Notions of teaching expertise held by the majority did not include extensive pedagogical content knowledge despite this being one of the key features identified by empirical evidence that discriminates the expert and non-expert teacher (Berliner 2004).

Trainee teachers' thinking about 'subject knowledge' is influenced by their professional self-understanding and their subjective educational theory (Kelchtermans 2009). This has been captured through a series of narrative vignettes, some of which I propose to share as a prompt for discussion in response to this presentation.

Recommendations from the research include the need for ITT to address idiosyncratic interpretations of subject knowledge within programmes and improve the quality of the 'tools' used in the assessment of trainee primary teachers in relation to subject knowledge.

## **2. How to nurture young mathematicians: is mastery enough? (Ems Lord, NRICH, University of Cambridge)**

In primary schools across England, the words 'mastery' and 'maths' are becoming synonymous with implementing the new curriculum. Although mastery is not specifically mentioned in the statutory curriculum, and its meaning remains unclear, debates centering on implementing a mastery maths curriculum overlook the bigger question: is mastery sufficient for nurturing young mathematicians?

At NRICH, we have explored this question with teachers and academics, subject associations and researchers. We have identified a model which we believe enables all teachers to nurture young mathematicians which informs the development of our NRICH resources and our support for schools. In our session, we would like to share this model with you, why we believe it is essential for the development of the habits of mind essential for young mathematicians and explore the role of mastery within our model.

## **3. What should we think about? How philosophy in primary school can help children become active citizens (Laura Kerslake and Sarah Rimmington, University of Exeter)**

Philosophy in primary schools is a practice which is growing in popularity in the UK, and there are many examples of research and testimonials from teachers which extol the benefits for children. In a knowledge culture, a strategy for instilling thinking skills in young children is widely considered to be an important aspect of a child's education.

In the media, philosophy in schools is usually reported in terms of the benefits for attainment in curriculum subjects. This is an important claim for philosophy, as are the critical thinking and oracy skills which are also developed through philosophical dialogue – particularly if this can help to address the skills gap for disadvantaged children.

However, we argue that the benefits of philosophical discussion extend beyond these points. Drawing on examples of practice from Germany and the UK, and considering the international context more broadly, we consider the ways in which philosophy in primary schools can connect good thinking skills to vital issues for future global citizens. In Germany, children contemplate the environment and sustainability through philosophical discussion: it is the application of philosophy to important global issues that is the real point of developing good thinking skills in school.

We consider that developing a culture of philosophy amongst the youngest learners in Primary schools can impact upon life choices for children and so also impact on local and global communities. Given this, we explore practical ways in which this culture can be developed in the classroom.

## Group E: Sustainability and global citizenship

Chair: Ben Ballin (Tide~ Global Learning)

### 1. Embedding sustainability and global citizenship in educational policy and practice: the experience of the Global Learning Programme (England) (Harriet Marshall and Clive Belgeonne, Global Learning Programme)

The first in the series of 32 interim reports from the Cambridge Primary Review, entitled 'Community Soundings', ended with a series of questions for further discussion. The first question (under 'The national and global context') asked: *What perspectives on the wider world should primary schools be providing? How should primary schools and the primary curriculum respond to those particular global challenges - climate change, environmental sustainability and international poverty and injustice - about which witnesses voiced the most consistent concern?*

The Global Learning Programme (England) is a ground-breaking programme which is creating a national network of like-minded schools, committed to equipping their students to make a positive contribution to a globalised world by helping their teachers to deliver effective teaching and learning about development and global issues through a whole-school approach. Its aims include helping young people to understand their role in a globally interdependent world and explore and create strategies by which they can make it more just and sustainable.

This presentation will explore:

- How can engagement with real world issues motivate pupils and teachers?
- How can the primary curriculum respond meaningfully to current events such as climate change and the refugee crisis?
- How can the UN Sustainable Development Goals provide a framework for curriculum activities?
- How does the linking of knowledge, skills and values lead to effective global learning and education for sustainable development?

### 2. Global Citizenship: creating a real life primary curriculum (Liz Newbon and Kate Lea, Oxfam Education)

[Oxfam Education](#) has been working with schools in the UK for over 50 years to promote education that helps young people to understand the global issues that affect their lives and take action towards a more just and sustainable world. We view education for global citizenship as a framework to equip learners for critical and active engagement with the challenges and opportunities of life in a fast-changing and interdependent world.

The main focus for this presentation will be to share and discuss practical examples of how some primary schools have taken creative approaches to embedding global citizenship in the curriculum and other aspects of school life.

The presentation will also include a brief overview and opportunities for further discussion of the following areas:

- What [education for global citizenship](#) means and its importance for primary children, teachers and the wider world.
- The changing policy context, both internationally and within the UK. For example, the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) make specific reference to global citizenship and sustainability and recognise the importance of young people as agents of change in the creation of a better world. 'Global competencies' will feature in the PISA report for the first time in 2018. Details will also be provided of some of the responses from policy-makers in the UK.
- Recent global learning initiatives such as the Global Learning Programmes running in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.



### **3. The Early Years Foundation Stage through a sustainability lens; practical implications for pedagogy (Nicky Hirst and Diane Boyd, Liverpool John Moores University)**

The presentation seeks to explore the practical application of a current project with Eco schools England and OMEP UK. The initial phase included embedding the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2014) within the Eco-Schools framework. Although the areas of learning and development are considered, the emphasis has been on exploring how young children learn (characteristics of effective learning) and making connections to education for sustainability. Whilst young children clearly need protection and support, the authors note the purpose of ESD in EC as ‘fundamentally about values, with respect at the centre: respect for others, including those of present and future generations, for difference and diversity, for the environment, for the resources of the planet we inhabit’ (UN, 2005: p.23). With the EYFS embedded into the Eco schools England handbook, the applicants are actively seeking dialogue with the Department for Education to embed the guidance as a visible presence on the DfE website to support practitioners. Eco-schools are advocates for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and the guidance within the Eco-Schools handbook, notes ‘a school’s based, action-learning framework for sustainability’ (2015/16 pg 6). As an English statutory framework, the EYFS (DfE, 2014) has been adapted, with notable revisions since 2007, however, the constructivist premise of this developmental framework means that there are a plethora of opportunities for young children to become aware of aspects related to the three key pillars of sustainable development: environmental and ecological concerns, social and cultural implications and economic aspects (Brundtland, 1987). Young children are capable of sophisticated thinking in relation to socio- environmental issues and the earlier ESD ideas are introduced, the greater their impact and influence can be (Siraj-Blatchford, Smith, & Pramling, Samuelsson, 2010). Phase two of the project supports the development of communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991) with early years’ providers coming together to support each other with principles, pedagogy and practice.

## **Group F: Assessment reform**

Chair: David Reedy (CPRT)

### **1. Formative and summative assessment in harmony (Wynne Harlen, independent consultant)**

Current practice in primary and secondary education still prioritises summative assessment at the expense of formative assessment, despite an accumulation of convincing evidence and arguments in favour of formative assessment. The role that formative assessment can take in active learning, and the support it receives from learning theory, means that it should become and remain a key part of primary pedagogy. But this is unlikely to happen unless the assessment for formative and summative purposes can be brought into harmony. At present the domination of summative assessment, through external tests and teacher assessment that is modelled on tests, has a negative impact on the breadth of the primary curriculum and on pedagogy. This paper presents an approach to summative assessment using evidence of learning gathered and used by teachers in formative assessment. Not only does this mean that the full range of learning goals can be included in summative assessment but that formative assessment is encouraged, almost required, as the source of data. The approach involves the accumulation over a period of time of best evidence of learning gathered by teachers and pupils in the course of regular work and the judgement of this evidence in terms of medium-term goals such as apply at the end of a year or stage. Of course there are considerable challenges in using data collected by teachers, but there also great benefits, which need to be considered as a part of a vision for the future.

### **2. Understanding how feedback frames a pupil’s learning gap in the primary classroom (Ruth Dann, Manchester Metropolitan University)**

Pupil feedback is reported as one of the most effective strategies to enable learning (Hattie, 2009). Although there is evidence to support it having a positive ‘effect size’, there is contrasting evidence about who most benefits from it and how it is interpreted. Dann, 2015, highlights from a sample of pupils who struggle to succeed in the classroom, that pupils interpret feedback in different ways from that intended by the teacher. This paper builds on existing research and is located within the notion of ‘assessment as learning’. Feedback is shaped as a

meta-learning construct and teased out in three new ways that seek to enable more effective teacher and pupil understandings and engagement.

The research approach used is qualitative, drawing on pupils' (aged 9-10) perspectives in three different schools. The data is analysed in a way that reveals three ways in which feedback frames the pupils' learning gap (the gap between pupil's learning now and the learning desired next). The findings reveal how feedback is largely framed in a 'deterministic' manner by teachers in line with the performance and outcome measures of the national curriculum. Such framing has tokenistic collaboration with pupils and is designed to construct pupil learning in predetermined ways. Within the research, a 'relational approach' to feedback is developed, in which pupils co-interpret feedback using dialogic approaches. Finally, pupils' articulations of their own 'individualistic approaches' to internalising feedback, through their own reflections on their learning as well as their anticipation of future learning, are presented.

### 3. Early years assessment: policy in the making (Nancy Stewart, TACTYC)

Government plans for baseline assessment have been abandoned following widespread and organised opposition from education professionals, academics and teaching unions. Far from acknowledging the negative aspects of this form of high stakes accountability testing, however, DfE has indicated that it still intends to introduce an assessment at the beginning of the reception year. This discussion will examine to what extent the DfE is meeting its own five policy tests (What's the point? What's it got to with us? Who made you the expert? Are you being predictable? Will it actually work?) in recent and current development of policy for early years assessment.

Examination of the tests will involve discussion of purposes and uses of assessment, including the confusion and tension between assessment for learning and accountability. To date professional expertise has largely been ignored, but there could now be an opportunity to avoid the detrimental aspects of narrow assessments and instead build on established EYFS formative approaches considering the full range of areas of learning and development. Evidence on the critical nature of children's developing powers as learners, which are difficult to quantify but must be a core focus of early year's assessment, should be part of an informed debate about where we go from here.

## Group G: Successful Educational Actions for All (SEAs4ALL): towards learning, equity, and social cohesion through egalitarian dialogue

Chair: Rachel Snape (The Spinney Primary School, Cambridge)

Linda Hargreaves (University of Cambridge), Maria Vieites (SEAs4ALL), and Paul Bradford (West Earlham Junior School, Norwich)

**Overview:** This three-part session will focus on the CPRT priorities of equity, voice, community and pedagogy as exemplified in two 'Successful Educational Actions' (SEAs), Interactive Groups (IG) and Dialogic Literary Gatherings (DLG) within the ERASMUS+ project 'SEAs4ALL'. SEAs4ALL involves schools in England, Italy, Cyprus and Spain. These SEAs were identified, implemented and evaluated in the Europe-wide EU-funded research project: 'INCLUD-ED: Strategies for inclusion and social cohesion in Europe from Education' (2006-2011) (see Flecha, 2015). INCLUD-ED found improvement in attainment, social relations and inclusion in schools as Learning Communities in nine European countries, subsequently replicated in England. Going beyond 'best practice', SEAs are effective across the spectra of achievement, socio-economic situations, age-groups and social contexts. They were developed originally by Ramon Flecha in adult education in Barcelona in 1978. They are effective in very challenging circumstances, with immigrant communities and for people whose mother tongue differs from the official language medium.

## 1. Successful Educational Actions for All (SEAs4ALL): Overview

SEAs4ALL is based on extensive research in the European INCLUD-ED project (2006-11), whose scientific, social and policy impact now extends to over 600 schools in Europe and Latin America, and is endorsed by the European Commission. We shall present, briefly, the aims and scope of the SEAs4ALL project, and its recent research history through INCLUD-ED, and subsequent replication in the ChiPE project in six English primary schools ([chioproject.eu](http://chioproject.eu)). SEAs are based on Flecha's Principles of Dialogic Learning, drawn from the work of Habermas, Freire and Vygotsky. Commitment to the principles of ensuring egalitarian dialogue, encouraging and respecting cultural intelligence, and the participation of the local community concur closely with the CPRT priorities equity, voice, and community, and especially 'pedagogy' with its emphasis on 'fostering high quality classroom talk'. They also support sustainability. The two SEAs to be presented are Dialogic Literary gatherings (DLG) and Interactive groups (IG). We shall explain how SEAs differ from 'best practice', show how SEAs fit into the holistic concept of schools as Learning Communities and, during the whole three-part session, include video examples in English and international schools. Congruent with the CPRT's 'Equity' priority, SEAs and schools as Learning Communities are especially effective in challenging social and economic circumstances.

## 2. Dialogic Literary Gatherings (DLG)

Dialogic Literary Gatherings embody the CPRT priorities of equity, voice, community and pedagogy. They involve the whole class reading classic works and discussing them through 'egalitarian dialogue' (Flecha, 1997, 2001). This means that contributions to the discussion are valued on the basis of their arguments and not the status of the person making the contribution. Thus, everyone taking part, children, as well as other adults, family, and teachers if participating, has equal right to make a contribution, inspired by the text or the dialogue. Each participant reads an agreed section of an age-appropriate edition of a classic book, such as *The Odyssey*, with help if necessary. While reading, each person chooses an idea to share with the others in the DLG, which typically lasts 40-60 minutes. At the DLG, usually chaired by the teacher, participants take turns to read out their chosen idea and explain their choice. Other participants comment, agreeing or disagreeing and justifying their positions. The dialogue often tackles moral and social issues, and drawing on 'funds of knowledge' from home and community. The teacher's role is to listen, and ensure fair distribution of turns. DLG gives children voice and agency as they introduce the topics. Observations show dramatic transformation of pupil-teacher interaction. Children become highly motivated to read, social relations are improved, while oracy and literacy improve. Family and community members may join and often get involved in the text. DLG is successful for all, including immigrants and those with another first language.

## 3. Interactive Groups (IG)

Research has demonstrated Interactive Groups as a form of classroom organisation that improves both student achievement and social cohesion. Typically, the class is organised into four heterogeneous groups of students, the more heterogeneous the better, such that each group should be mixed in levels of knowledge (the most important variable), gender, socio-cultural background, cultures and languages. An adult volunteer from families or the community accompanies each group. IG are often used in mathematics and languages, but can be used in any curricular area.

The teacher prepares four 15-minute activities for the groups and briefly explains these to the four volunteers before the session starts. The volunteer's role is to facilitate interaction between the children, so that they work together and, critically, explain the task to each other. The children move to the next activity after 15 minutes. The teacher supervises the whole session and attends to individual needs.

In IG the classroom becomes more dynamic and inclusive. Learning is guaranteed for all students, with high expectations for all. Those with a higher level of understanding help accelerate others' learning and their own through the metacognitive exercise required to formulate their explanations. In Interactive groups, we have observed improved levels of engagement, while achieving a more personalised education. The teacher is attentive to the needs of each person in the classroom, so time is spent more effectively. Children develop an attitude of solidarity improving co-existence in the class. Families' and communities' cultural intelligence is capitalised upon in the classroom.

## Group H: Power of the arts in primary schools: reflections on research

Co-chairs: Penny Hay (Bath Spa University) and Emese Hall (University of Exeter)

Penny Hay (Bath Spa University), Emese Hall (University of Exeter), David Allinson (St Vigour and St John's Primary School, Radstock), and Sue East (St Andrew's Primary School, Bath)

The final report of the Cambridge Primary Review identified a fundamental need to vigorously reassert the educational importance of the arts. Through focused action research projects, five schools in the Bath area have been exploring the power of the arts in their school contexts.

In collaboration with Exeter University, Bath Spa University and 5x5x5=creativity, each school has been engaging in a creative and reflective cycle of action research, putting the power of the arts under the spotlight. Through research questions focusing on diverse aspects of learning and teaching and on a variety of arts based experiences, each school has engaged in a critical exploration of the arts within the context of their own practices and pedagogies. The methodological approach within this project links with the current work with 5x5x5=creativity with a specific focus on the arts.

This open panel session seeks to share the emerging research processes and findings through critical and democratic discussion. Each school will share their own critical reflections on their research so far, exploring key themes that have emerged from their research, reflecting on their developing approaches to methodology within the context of the action research study, and consider the potential implications of their findings so far on the use of the arts in their own school contexts and in relation to broader issues of the arts and creativity in education.

## Group I: Fostering creativity in early years science

Chair: Esmé Glauert (UCL Institute of Education)

This series of three presentations will share findings from research and curriculum development in schools drawing on work undertaken over the last five years in two linked projects funded by the European Union, *Creative Little Scientists* (CLS) (2011-2014) and *Creativity in Early Years Science Education* (CEYS) (2014 -2017). The session will also offer space to discuss the two projects' findings and processes. *Creative Little Scientists* was an EU/FP7-funded project led by Ellinogermaniki Agogi in Greece, involving partners in eleven institutions in: Belgium, England, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Malta, Portugal and Romania. It aimed to build a picture of the nature and role of creativity in early science and to explore the potential for creativity in current policy and practice in different national and school contexts. In the current Erasmus+ funded project CEYS, members of the original partnership from Belgium, England, Greece and Romania are collaborating with teachers in schools to build on these findings and develop curriculum materials and activities for use in teacher education.

### 1. Potential for creativity in early years science education (Esmé Glauert, UCL Institute of Education)

This presentation will provide an overview of the different stages of research in the CLS project followed by a summary of key findings and their implications for policy and practice. An important first step was to examine what might be meant by creativity in early science and how it might be recognized. The presentation will introduce the shared definition of creativity in early science and the pedagogical connections identified between creative and inquiry-based approaches to learning and teaching employed across the project. This was followed by a desk study of policy in early science, a questionnaire survey of teachers' views and practices and fieldwork to examine practices in a variety of preschool and early primary settings across partner countries. The potential for creativity in policy and practice was examined in relation to the curriculum dimensions identified by Van den Akker (2007) and used as a framework to inform each phase of research. Research findings from across the project fed into guidelines for teacher education that informed the current CEYS development of materials for teacher education.



## 2. Curriculum development in partnership: principles and practice (Teresa Cremin, The Open University and CPRT)

This presentation will share the three phase process of the CEYS collaborative curriculum development work and the principles underpinning this work which was shaped in partnership with teachers, school mentors and school leaders. The analytic phase involved both eliciting teachers and teacher educators' ideas about training needs for ITE and CPD that would promote creativity in early years science education, and exploring teachers' attitudes, beliefs and experience about creativity and inquiry-based science. The second phase involved each EU partner working with at least 5 teachers from lead schools through five day-long commonly structured curriculum development workshops. The teachers were supported to develop two action research cycles which responded to school need, and connected to the CLS project's pedagogical synergies and Van Den Akker's (2007) curriculum web. Additional support was offered by some partners in school and in twilight sessions and as co-participant curriculum developers, the teachers shared their work at a summer school in Athens in 2016. The third phase involves the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum development process, methodology and products. The presentation will also share the challenges and opportunities that this partnership development work offered in diverse country contexts.

## 3. Curriculum development in partnership: advancing teaching and learning (Jillian Trevethan, UCL Institute of Education, Vanessa Henry-Edwards and Bryony Scudamore, lead teachers from the CEYS project)

This presentation will draw on the teachers' experiences of reshaping the curriculum in their classrooms through their action research projects which foregrounded questions relating for example to questioning and curiosity, problem solving and agency, play and exploration and reflection and reasoning. The teachers documented the process and in particular observed three focus children in their classrooms, seeking to consider the consequences of their own actions for the children's learning and creative dispositions. Two teachers will examine their classroom work and their two HEI partners will explore the consequences for the development of the CEYS ITE and CPD training materials which will be available free to use from 2017.

# AFTERNOON SESSION

## Group J: Childhood, aims and classroom practice

Chair: Linda Hargreaves (University of Cambridge)

### 1. Importance of respect, reciprocity, trust and psychological safety in securing successful educational outcomes (Rachel Snape & Yvonne Hartley, The Spinney Primary School, Cambridge)

**Exploring, knowing, understanding and making sense:** drawing on the writings of Daniel Goleman, Professor Robin Alexander, Ramon Flecha, Amy C Edmondson, Michael Fullan, Andy Hargreaves and Steven Munby, delegates will be invited to participate in an interactive session through which participants will explore themes of creativity, connectivity, compassion and collaboration.

**Learning, knowing and doing/Exciting the imagination:** practical and physical tasks in pairs, small groups and as a whole group, including using Lego, drawing and writing will be consciously and sensitively facilitated to prompt humour and enable confident open discussion.

This methodology will be a stimulus to explore and discuss which intrapersonal qualities and pro-social characteristics contribute to optimal conditions for learning and colleagues will be invited to consider their learning and how it can be successfully transferable to their own contexts e.g. classroom leadership, school leadership, system leadership.

**Encouraging respect and reciprocity:** the optimal outcomes will be that colleagues will reflect on the importance of Respect, Reciprocity, Trust and Psychological Safety as fundamental to success.

**Celebrating culture and community/Empowering local, national and global citizenship:** this session will conclude by manifesting that this way of working is an enactment of many of [the CPRT Aims](#) and will provide delegates an opportunity to engage and familiarise themselves with the CPRT aims if they have not had a chance to do this before.

## **2. Meaningfulness in learning: a power for enduring change? (Rob Bowden, Northumbria University)**

This input introduces the concept of 'meaningfulness' (developed by Lips-Wiersma and Morris in relation to meaningful work and living) and explores what this might offer to discussions about the future of primary education.

The paper links to current research and practice on meaningfulness with primary schools in England and Shanghai and draws upon almost twenty years of experience in global learning, participatory dialogue and action, values-based pedagogies and change leadership.

Through a combination of theoretical signposting, experiential engagement and practice-based evidence, the case will be made for closer engagement with meaningfulness and in particular for its potential in unleashing powerful new forces and actors for systemic educational change.

Employed as a holistic development model, meaningfulness has the potential to contribute to all of the CPRT priority areas, but this input will focus on the priorities of community (specifically the development of communal school values) and aims (specifically the development of a coherent vision for 21st century primary education). These areas are often rich in rhetoric that is not always transferred into practice – an authenticity void that meaningfulness is particularly relevant in addressing.

Evidence suggests that an appreciation of, and ability to work with, meaningfulness can help to bridge the gap between rhetoric and reality by engaging unapologetically in the messy reality of transformational processes, and by giving those involved the permission (comfort) and power (confidence) to make brave choices that move learning towards its full potential.

## **3. Developing meta-cognition and resilience in key stage 1: how can we more effectively support young children to learn about learning? (Jane Reed and Rachel Barton, UCL Institute of Education)**

Recent research has shown that an emphasis on learning helps pupils' performance but over emphasising performance can interfere with learning. Jane and Rachel have worked on an enquiry for the past three years to develop powerful, active learning with the adults and children at Littleton School. They have found that when learning is effective children have a more explicit role, language and understanding of the learning process. To take more responsibility for their learning children need insight into the strategies and skills of becoming a good learner. This approach to developing pedagogy investigates four inter-connected aspects: classroom learning, leadership, school culture and outdated beliefs about learning held in the school community.

Early findings suggest that in this systemic approach to school development children have become more engaged and responsible as well as learning better together. Professional learning has been re-vitalised, classrooms are more focused on learning and adults and children learn together more productively. There are benefits for behaviour and attendance and outcomes have improved. This project is also a way of responding to the research into the Pupil Premium that shows that meta-cognitive practices can enhance attainment.

## **Group K: Assessment and pedagogy in primary science**

Chair: Marianne Cutler (Association for Science Education and CPRT)

### **1. Teacher Assessment in Primary Science (TAPS): using assessment to enhance learning** (Sarah Earle, Bath Spa University)

The Teacher Assessment in Primary Science (TAPS) project is funded by the Primary Science Teaching Trust (PSTT) and based at Bath Spa University's Institute for Education. It aims to develop support for valid, reliable and manageable teacher assessment, which can have a positive impact on children's learning. The Nuffield Foundation (2012) developed a pyramid model which recommended that the rich formative assessment data collected by teachers in the course of ongoing classroom work in science should also be made to serve summative reporting purposes. The TAPS team worked with local project schools, the Primary Science Quality Mark and PSTT College Fellows to operationalise this model, defining and exemplifying of teacher assessment at pupil, teacher and whole school levels (Earle et al 2015). The TAPS approach was recommended in CPRT's blog in November 2015 since, like CPRT's Assessment Priority, it aims to support teachers to use assessment to support learning rather than stifle it. This presentation will briefly introduce the TAPS project and provide case studies for discussion to consider how schools are using the TAPS self-evaluation pyramid to develop assessment practices and processes which enhance learning.

### **2. Wonder-rich learning in science: an opportunity to thrive or an opportunity to squander?** (Lynne Bianchi and Christina Whittaker, University of Manchester)

Question-led, child-centred, investigative, exploratory, playful, creative, curiosity-infused, immersive, experiential and outdoor are all terms used to describe approaches to teaching and learning that move us as educators to embrace the riches that emerge from within those we teach. In reality the practice of such approaches can be found to be more difficult especially where pressures of teacher and school accountability and measurement are high, or where the status of the subject, as with Science, is lower than the core subjects of Literacy and Numeracy.

This presentation explores how the curriculum for science has been enriched by embracing the role of wonder. Drawing on curriculum and professional development projects undertaken with primary teachers, it reports on the pedagogical implications on curriculum design that encourages teachers and children to wonder at, wonder about and wonder whether (Goodwin 2001) and how we can ready teachers to be embracing of context, activity and response-rich learning (Bianchi, 2014). It recognises the realities that challenge teachers to provide quality-first teaching experiences infused with wonder and challenges the seeming national acceptance that science is important in a children's learning career and for national prosperity, yet its image as a quasi-core subject in the English National Curriculum continues to be perpetuated.

### **3. Thinking, doing, talking science** (Helen Wilson, Oxford Brookes University)

Thinking, Doing, Talking Science was an Education Endowment Foundation funded project run jointly by Oxford Brookes University and Science Oxford from 2013 – 2015. It explored the effect of working with a cohort of teachers to develop primary science lessons characterised by a focus on the encouragement of the pupils' higher order thinking skills, through practical activity and pupil discussion. The methodology was via a Randomised Control Trial (RCT) involving over 1200 pupils from 42 Oxfordshire primary schools, measuring the impact on the pupils' (age 9-10-years) attitudes to science and on their attainment in the subject.

The findings showed that there was a positive and statistically significant impact on the attainment of the pupils in the intervention group compared to the control group, and on their attitudes both to science as a subject and to school science lessons. The control schools received the CPD the year after the completion of the original intervention.

Whilst there are many reservations about the use of RCTs in education, the findings are such that they can be used to increase teachers' confidence that a focus on the encouragement of pupils' thinking through dedicated

discussion slots, teacher and pupil questioning and through practical science results in deeper learning. We talk about a 'win-win-win scenario': science lessons that teachers enjoy more, pupils' enjoy more and that result in increased attainment

## **Group L: Pedagogy and drama**

Chair: Penny Hay (Bath Spa University)

### **1. Drama for thought, talk and writing (Patrice Baldwin, National Drama and D4LC)**

The place of spoken English and 'talk' in the national curriculum has been significantly reduced, as has the place of Drama. However, some schools still recognise the centrality of talk and are willing to consider using drama strategies as structures for stimulating and scaffolding different types of 'thought and talk.' Most teachers know few or no drama strategies, yet there are dozens that would be useful to any primary teacher. Drama should ideally be recognised and developed as both a subject and pedagogy in primary schools.

Since Autumn 2015, several groups of primary schools in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk have engaged with a term long, ongoing project, 'Drama for Thought, Talk and Writing'. This presentation will explain the rationale underpinning this classroom based project, provide an outline of the project elements and consider some of the outcomes and possible developments.

Additionally, there will be some direct links made with the complementary 'Talk for Writing' initiative, as the presenter has been simultaneously and regularly working at times, with Pie Corbett on 'Drama and Talk for Writing' and 'The Arts of Storytelling.'

### **2. Using drama in pedagogy to develop children's understanding: reflections on learning in science lessons (Deb McGregor, Oxford Brookes University)**

Drama can mean many things to different people. Some think of it as a scripted way of learning: that is to say, the children taking a role or part in a play organised and choreographed by the teacher. Another common interpretation is that of children 'enacting' concepts in the classroom: that is to say, moving as if they are an entity of some kind, like a particle in jelly or a planet in the solar system. The children can be instructed to change their movement to represent what happens when the solid melts and becomes a liquid or to show how day and night are created by the earth rotating around the sun. These are two quite common views of the ways that drama can be teacher-led to teach science and are perhaps the most usual forms applied in classrooms to consolidate conceptual understanding. However, drama can also be used to promote procedural understanding (that is *working scientifically*) in science. Presenting children with particular kinds of learning situations can help them better understand how science and scientists work. Drama conventions can scaffold the ways children discuss and convey their ideas about science. Inviting them to work together to enact what well known scientists did in the past (like Isaac Newton as a small boy creating coracles) can promote high quality talk. Inviting them to be-in-role like past scientists to solve an authentic problem can re-position them so that they *think, talk* and *feel* like a real scientist.

### **3. Theatre in schools: possibilities and challenges (Catherine Greenwood, the Unicorn Theatre, Southwark and Susanna Steele, Greenwich University)**

How can we make a case for all children to have access to theatre as part of their schooling and articulate what theatre and drama can offer children and teachers across the curriculum?

The Unicorn is the UK's leading professional theatre for young audiences. Our schools' programme brings children into our theatre and uses the experience as a springboard for rich, creative classroom work, supporting teachers' priorities and curriculum planning. Our partnership programmes ensure that learning materials are developed in collaboration with teachers.



We believe our schools' programme is an example of best practice, rooted in rigorous creative pedagogy, providing teachers with high quality training which is applicable across the curriculum.

*We re-organised the planning for the whole year after the CPD, to make room for work around the shows.* Teacher

With increasing pressures on schools we have seen some head teachers stop visits to the theatre entirely, citing the need to concentrate on core subjects. In contrast we have seen others increase visits, booking for every child from EYFS to year 6 and sending teachers on the accompanying CPD. One school in central Brixton has written their whole school curriculum around theatre and drama.

*This project turned a reluctant writer into one of our most prolific writers.* Teacher

*We've seen a marked improvement on our underachieving pupils, particularly boys and children on FSM.* Teacher

## **Group M: Schools and community, community in schools**

Chair: Iain Erskine (The Fulbridge Academy, Peterborough)

### **1. Community engagement: diminished or enhanced?** (Robert Young, NAPE, and Rachel Ford, Bannockburn Primary School, Greenwich)

The notion of community engagement would appear to be under threat. At the level of governance, the recent White Paper, *Educational Excellence Everywhere* (March 2016), following the constitutional changes implemented in 2015, steers us further away from the concept of representative governance towards a business model of a slimmed down executive body. The removal of the elected parent governor strikes at the heart of the notion of governance as being rooted in and deriving its strength from the interests of the stakeholders in education, including the local community. Are there ways, however, of preserving the democratic voice on the governing body through the mechanism of co-options and yet at the same time nurturing the range of skills needed for contemporary governance?

Beyond governance, the interface between school and community raises some key challenges for the profession. How do we enhance the parental voice in particular, and play a role in strengthening parental ownership of educational processes in the context of an increasingly mobile and culturally diverse society? How can the pastoral dimension of school life respond to the crises and tensions which characterise the lives of so many families? A review of initiatives taken at Bannockburn Primary School will, we hope, generate some valuable discussion about ways of strengthening relationships with the wider community.

### **2. Enriching children's lives and curriculum provision through community partnerships** (Marcelo Staricoff, Dawn Loader and Sandra Mullholland, Balfour Primary School, Brighton)

Balfour Primary School joined CPRT's Schools Alliance in June 2015. John West Burnham explains that the main determinants that influence the life chances of children are schools (20%), society (40%) and families (40%). I am fascinated by the idea of tapping into the 'other 80%' through community links as defined by the community strand of the CPRT list of priorities.

Our approach is focusing on community links that enrich educational provision through national and international partnerships, that encourage children's participation in community arts and sporting initiatives and that promote an understanding of a wide range of aspects related to health, wellbeing and environmental sustainability.

At the presentation I will describe how the school's formal links with a number of community partners is enabling children to develop the skills and attributes that will ensure that they become successful participants and contributors to society and to their local, national and global communities.

Examples of community partners that are enabling us to develop our initiatives include the Aldrich Arts Foundation, Local Secondary Schools, Local Football, Tennis and Cricket Clubs, schools in Britain and Europe, Local Food Markets, Local Environmental Agencies and the Universities of Brighton and Sussex.

For each one of these partnerships we will describe the impact that they are having in terms of developing children with a deep love of learning, how it is all helping to strengthen the pupil-school- family triangular relationship and how it is all helping to drive our strategic school improvement planning process.

### **3. Dementia and the primary school: bringing the community together** (Michael Jopling, Northumbria University and Andrew Bainbridge, Bernard Gilpin Primary School, Houghton-le-Spring)

This discussion group will outline innovative practice which is introducing primary age children to older people with Alzheimer's. Called 'The Living Room', this intergenerational project brings together older people with Alzheimer's and primary age children in a group which meets every Tuesday afternoon during term time to eat, sing, dance and interact. Held in a primary school in an area of the North East characterised by high levels of deprivation, the project aims to bring the local community into the school and build relationships between young and older people to benefit both groups. As such, the project addresses the CPRT priorities of community, equity and voice. The discussion will outline how the project works and plans for researching its impact on the school and the wider community, and will explore options for sustaining and extending the project in the long term.

## **Group N: Thinking outside the policy box**

Chair: Nancy Stewart (TACTYC)

### **1. How can we ensure primary education's voice is heard?** (Tony Eaude, University of Oxford)

I propose a discussion on how best to ensure that primary education, both in general and in line with the CPRT's vision and priorities, has a higher profile in the political discourse leading up to 2020 General Election and beyond. Despite the Cambridge Primary Review and the CPRT's subsequent work, the purpose of primary education is rarely seen or presented, by politicians, and the wider public, as anything other than a limited view of 'standards' and/or pupils being 'secondary-ready'. This is in part the result of the historical context that primary education has never been accorded as much importance as the education of older students or, more recently, the early years.

I believe that this will only change with a concerted effort from a coalition of stakeholders to advocate a broader and richer view of primary education for a changing world as outlined in the CPR and subsequently. I think that, while the CPRT, other groups within the profession and teacher unions can provide leadership and intellectual backing, such a campaign will only succeed if those outside the profession such as parents/carers (and other family members) and employers (noting the CBI's report 'First Steps') can be mobilised. I suggest that this will require clear, simple messages through very short research-informed policy papers and the use of social media (and therefore some compromises) as well as more traditional means of lobbying.

### **2. What might be: against prophetic pedagogy** (Mandy Swann, University of Cambridge, Patrick Yarker, University of East Anglia, Holly Linklater, University of Edinburgh)

Edmond Holmes' passionate critique of the school system in *What Is and What Might Be* (1911), denounces it as an "ingenious instrument for arresting ... mental growth and ... deadening all ... higher faculties". His description remains alarmingly acute today. Successive governments have undertaken to measure children's learning in the name of standards, and hence to define what matters in education as that which can be measured. Baseline Assessment metrics, the phonics screening check, and high-stakes public tests, all work to narrow the curriculum, endorse content-centred approaches to teaching and learning, and validate a normalizing conception of children, rooted in fixed ability thinking and the assumption of predictability. In this arid climate, the principles and educational perspectives that inform the CPR are all the more vital.

Even in this policy context, teachers can be agents of What Might Be. The resolutely optimistic idea of the educability of everybody, and the pedagogical principles that follow from it (Hart et al ,2004, *Learning without Limits*), mean that, when teachers' thinking and practice are no longer constrained by fixed-ability thinking and practices, the choices they make, and the open-ended opportunities for learning they offer, can transform the quality of school and classroom experiences. There is now a community of researchers and teachers who are taking this principled stance to inform, develop, and enrich practice in schools across the UK and internationally. We would like to share and discuss what we currently know about how teachers are finding ways to change things for the better.

### **3. Assessment of an educational journey (Nansi Ellis, ATL and Kath Hames, NAHT)**

Primary assessment has been through extensive change, much of which is designed to measure the system not assess the child. NAHT set up an independent review group looking at what would constitute a comprehensive, cohesive and coherent assessment system for primary. This group is meeting during the summer and first part of the autumn term, and will be ready to present a think-piece based on our outcomes, for discussion at this Conference.

Membership of this group comprises school leaders (heads, deputies and assistants), head teacher and class teacher union representatives, key stage 1 and 2 practitioners and academics. DfE, Ofsted, Ofqual and STA have been invited to have observer status.

## **Group O: Embedding pupil voice in the learning of children and teachers**

Chair: Julia Flutter (University of Cambridge and CPRT)

### **1. Researching pupils' perspectives: developing trainee and early career teachers' practice (Mary Anne Wolpert and Jane Warwick, University of Cambridge)**

Building on the research carried out at the Faculty of Education in Cambridge into pupil voice, we present how Aim 2 of the Cambridge Primary Review Trust's priorities is embedded in our Primary Post-Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) course.

Despite the shift in recent years to considering children's perspectives in educational research, there has been less emphasis on the practical challenges inherent in conducting research with children in nursery to year six classrooms. We will present how we aim to develop trainee and early careers teachers as action researchers and reflective teachers through the research course taught on the PGCE programme and the classroom-based research project that they are required to complete as an examined Masters Level assignment on the PGCE. This project requires them to focus their studies into researching pupil perspectives on learning. The choice of the research topic is left to the individual trainee and, as a result, the projects are extremely varied and relate to many of the CPRT's aims. We will share some representative projects for discussion.

Trainees are also invited to submit their Researching Pupil Perspectives assignments to JoTTER, the Journal of Trainee Teacher Educational Research, so that their work can be accessed by, and inform other students, teachers and researchers.

### **2. Independent enquiry in primary education: developing children's research and self-directed learning skills (Tahreem Sabir and Foziya Reddy, Islamic Shakhshiyah Foundation)**

This presentation illustrates how an enquiry-based thematic curriculum captures the child's interest and encourages parents to support their child's *personalised learning journey* in school and at home through independent research. This approach exemplifying the CPRT priorities of children's *voice*, building a learning *Community* and child-centred *Pedagogy* by celebrating children's independent learning and research throughout the year. This pedagogical approach ensures learning is *child-centred* as teachers facilitate the child's *voice* and *agency* through a mixture of high-level independent and group learning activities. Hence, the

curriculum is designed into six themes per year, at the beginning of which each child is encouraged to think about what he/she would like to learn using a thematic *Learning Mind Map*; this helps formulate a *Research Question* to independently answer a query about a topic that they do not have any previous knowledge about. Over the six weeks, each child builds new knowledge upon the classroom's *Enquiry Wall* as he/she works on *Independent Learning* projects. To culminate each six-week theme, children enthusiastically present their research to the school community through *Learning Walks* and multi-disciplinary *Research Exhibitions*, as they construct 3D models, produce 2D art and displays, and prepare oral and multi-media presentations. In addition, the school holds an annual *Research Exhibition* community event in local libraries, coinciding with the national *British Science and Engineering Week*.

Hence, through the thematic enquiry-based curriculum, children develop their research and self-directed skills whilst gaining deeper understandings in stimulating contexts; essential for lifelong learning and working in the real world.

### **3. How can student teachers' pedagogy be enhanced by heeding feedback from children about their learning?** (Kate Hudson, University of Bedfordshire)

This enquiry enabled student teachers to engage with children's views to construct classroom learning experiences. The underpinning assumption was that learning is socially constructed.

Issues addressed:

- what pupils thought helped/hindered their learning,
- how heeding children's views can be used in student teachers' reflective practice,
- how children's views can support student teachers' understanding of learning and pedagogical practices,

This comprised two case studies; pilot and subsequent larger-scale project. It incorporated action research in classrooms where student teachers were teaching. Bespoke pedagogical tools were used to create dialogic spaces and for data collection. These tools scaffolded inter- and intra-personal exchanges to enable student teachers to understand children's learning from a socio-cultural perspective, mediate children's reflection on their learning and feedback to the student teacher about their learning and what would help them more.

The results indicated:

- enhanced student teachers' understanding of how children learn and adapted practice,
- enhanced learning by the children owing to their exchanges on the interpersonal plane, with peers,
- mentors require development to support student teachers to engage with children's learning.

Outcomes cannot easily be generalised from case studies. This study found:

- children can express learning needs when appropriate scaffolds enable them to articulate thinking,
- when student teachers respond to children talking about learning their practice develops.
- Initial Teacher Education should:
  - highlight the importance of children's voice to develop pedagogy,
  - model the creation of dialogic spaces for children's inter-thinking,
  - develop mentors to support student teachers' understanding of children's learning in classrooms.

### **Group P: Addressing 21<sup>st</sup> century literacies in the primary school: compelling questions and emerging responses**

Chair: Cathy Burnett (Sheffield Hallam University)

Educationalists and researchers have been arguing for some time that there is a need to re-examine the literacy curriculum in primary schools if we are to develop a coherent curriculum for the 21st Century. This reflects a key



finding of the Cambridge Primary Review (Alexander, 2010), reiterated recently in a research review for Cambridge Primary Review Trust (Burnett, 2016). In this session, conveners of the United Kingdom Literacy Association 'Digital Literacies in Education' Special Interest Group will stimulate discussion on this theme by highlighting a series of pertinent issues, questions and priorities arising from the increasing presence of digital technologies in children's literacy lives.

### **1. Literacy in everyday life (Julia Davies, The University of Sheffield)**

Literacy in everyday life is commonly understood to be rapidly changing. The ubiquity of digital media has now set up expectations; lack of wi-fi connection is seen as irksome and disruptive to 'normality'. Face to face interactions are habitually suffused with the possibilities created by digital media – the selfie; the Facebook update; the tweet; even the short video film uploaded to Instagram or WhatsApp. These do not just record; rather they affect, drive or become embedded in our discourse and affect our understandings of the world and of who we are. We live our lives within and through the texts that we and others make.

- How is this affecting the way our children see themselves and their families?
- Is there any coherence between the text making and consumption practices of children in the home and what is happening in school?
- Teachers are being urged from all directions to respond to digital possibilities for education; but to what extent have schools been able to invest in 'newer' repertoires of practice?
- How can we be innovative, exciting but also safe?

In this presentation I introduce some of the questions and issues that we are addressing through the new UKLA SIG 'Digital Literacies in Education' and seek to open up the debate for this symposium.

### **2. A framework for 21<sup>st</sup> century literacies (Cathy Burnett and Guy Merchant, Sheffield Hallam University)**

In this presentation we will present a 'Charter for 21st Century Literacies' (Burnett, Davies, Merchant, Rowsell, 2014). Influenced by research exploring literacy in everyday life, the Charter provides a framework of nine recommendations for developing literacy curriculum and pedagogy. It is designed to be interpreted differently to suit different local circumstances, and to be flexible enough to respond to changing communicative practices in the future. In part it re-states calls made previously by literacy educators and researchers for a focus on multimodality, multiple media and multilingualism in the literacy curriculum. It highlights the need for children to use digital media for purposes that matter to them, to enable them to work on texts together and to re-work, review and respond to texts others create. It also foregrounds the importance of creating an environment where children feel encouraged to take risks and experiment and to consider critically the practices in which they engage. Such a framework, we suggest, is needed at a time when the curriculum for England contains no reference to the digital and when literacy is positioned – through curriculum, assessment and accountability – as individualised, fixed and predominantly focused on the decoding and comprehension of print texts. Such a framework, we suggest, is needed to inform a coherent literacy curriculum for the 21st century.

### **3. Children's 'writing' in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: curriculum, crafting and design (Clare Dowdall, Plymouth University)**

As a teacher-educator and researcher in the area of children's digital and print-based literacies, I have a strong interest in the impact that policy and accountability issues have on teachers' practice. The statutory requirements for writing in the *English National Curriculum* currently delineate children's writing as 'transcription', 'handwriting', 'composition', and 'vocabulary, grammar and punctuation'. These requirements share the over-arching aim that 'all pupils should write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences' (DfE, 2013:3). Set within an accountability context where children are subject to external testing in spelling, punctuation and grammar at age 7 and 11, I would like to suggest that this combination of factors can be regarded as reductionist and even protectionist, and at odds with the potential for creativity afforded by the 21st century 'new literacies' textual landscape. Drawing from a small-scale project based on preliminary work with trainee teachers, this paper seeks to explore how educators can support children to become agentive and playful crafters of text, with a strong sense of identity, voice, purpose, and aesthetic, despite the potentially constraining forces implicit in the new curriculum.

## Group Q: Global learning and sustainable development

Chair: Kevin Baily (TIDE~ Global Learning)

### 1. Can we think about the SDGs as a radical curriculum alternative? (William Scott, University of Bath Emeritus)

It is easy to be critical of the bloated nature of the sustainable development goals [SDGs], especially when compared to the more focused millennium development goals [MDGs], but that should not blind us to the potential that they have for focusing attention on ways to address, and perhaps even resolve some of the world's problems. In particular, the breadth of the issues covered by the SDGs has the power to be useful in education institutions as a means of bringing teachers, students, managers and external activists together. For example, every UK university already has teaching and research that is focused on a range of the SDGs, quite often in partnership with external groups and student unions. And as many graduates get jobs that focus on the goals, one way or another, the potential for constructive synergies is clear. Further, unlike ESD and other 'adjectival educations', which have to be patiently explained to audiences, the SDGs seem to offer a currency and a means of exchange that all can understand and get involved in. They may even have the power to bring those interested in the vast breadth of global learning to the same table.

But what about schools? Whilst a recent conference explored the idea of a school curriculum based around the SDGs, this kind of approach begs the question: is this just another adjectival education, or something quite radical that could really be an effective approach? It is this that the paper explores.

### 2. From theory into practice: towards a pedagogy of global learning (Ben Ballin, Tide~ Global Learning)

The nature of sustainable development and global learning raise crucial questions about the purposes and nature of primary education. The recent CPRT report, '[Primary Education for Global Learning and Sustainability](#)' highlighted the need for fresh thinking and evidence about appropriate pedagogies for global learning. Given the nature of a constantly-changing global context, and the contested nature of our knowledge about it, such pedagogies demand a multi-perspectival approach that prioritises critical and reflective thinking, and sees learning as an act of social meaning-making. However, if education is to respond adequately to the challenges of our times, and to allow hope to triumph over pessimism, then it also need to match such critical pedagogies to opportunities for informed and constructive action by young citizens. Seeing the agency of the learner as central to both the process of active learning and that of social participation allows us to locate such action as part of a legitimate learning process, rather than as passive conformity to received wisdom.

Reflecting on and considering high quality practice from a wide range of schools and year groups across the primary sector begins to offer us insights into what such a pedagogy looks like in practice, and to ask questions about the implications of global learning and sustainability for policy, schools, teachers and above all young people.

### 3. A critical analysis of the intercultural dimension of teachers' learning about global issues of hunger, poverty and sustainability (Fran Martin, University of Exeter)

The presentation will draw on research from a recent EU-funded project, involving teachers and young people in Spain, Kenya, Germany, The Gambia and the UK, and focusing on elements of intercultural learning.

## Group R: The power of talk: the CPRT/IEE Education Endowment Foundation project on dialogic teaching and social disadvantage

Chair: Robin Alexander (Universities of Cambridge and York, and CPRT)

The project *Classroom talk, social disadvantage and educational attainment: closing the gap, raising standards* is funded 2014-16 by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF). The project is run jointly by Cambridge Primary Review Trust and the Institute for Effective Education at the University of York, and directed by Robin Alexander and Frank Hardman. It builds on international research, and especially on Robin Alexander's work on dialogic teaching, in order to improve the quality of classroom talk as a means of increasing pupils' engagement, learning and attainment in contexts of social disadvantage. In 2014-15 the project's strategy was piloted in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and during 2015-16 the refined version was subjected to randomised control trial (RCT) in primary schools in Birmingham, Bradford and Leeds. Follow-up work in these cities is planned for 2016-17.

The intervention incorporates a carefully-structured sequence of professional development and teaching cycles spread over two terms, each cycle focusing on specific aspects of the talk of both teachers and pupils. It uses video and audio as tools for professional planning and evaluation, with school-appointed peer mentors providing teachers with guidance and support. Participants are trained by the project team, who also provide external monitoring and support. In addition to the independent test-based evaluation of outcomes, the project team have undertaken their own intensive evaluation based on interviews and both qualitative and quantitative analysis of lesson videos.

The symposium will have two main foci. First, the project's background, rationale and classroom strategy will be explained, and a mentor from one of the schools will talk about his/her experience of making the strategy come alive with children in the classroom. Then other members of the team will outline and reflect on the evaluation's initial findings.

1. **Dialogic teaching and social disadvantage: principles and strategies** (Robin Alexander, Universities of Cambridge and York, and CPRT)
2. **Transforming teaching and learning: findings from the process evaluation** (Jan Hardman, University of York)
3. **A school leader's response** (Sarah Ruddy, Bankside Primary School, Leeds)