

## Teacher Training Centre for Burmese Teachers (TTBT)

CfLAT Visiting Fellow Dr Thein Lwin has recently sent his report on the Activities of the Teacher Training for Burmese Teachers (TTBT) programme in 2010. Thein Lwin is an alumni of ECLS and his work to develop the TTBT programme has been influenced by his studies for the MEd and EdD in ECLS and his subsequent collaboration with CfLAT.

Thein Lwin's education program reached approximately 3000 Burmese people in 2010.

Sue Robson

### Thinking through leadership and management in education: A context related approach

The course is taught in the context of the workplace, experience and expectations of individual course members. The methods are highly interactive, experiential and encourage a high level of deliberate

thinking and other thinking strategies including those of the Newcastle University "Thinking through" series (Optimus Publishing). The Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking theoretical framework and selected strategies are used where appropriate, and attention is drawn to metacognitive processes at every opportunity. In presenting the course, we consciously model interactive teaching behaviour and encourage detailed self and context analysis. Emphasis is on instigating and supporting change - in self, in curriculum, in in-service training, in monitoring and evaluation. As in previous years, course members represented diverse contexts, and levels of responsibility from aspiring to established management and leadership positions. All students designed and undertook Projects intended to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their institutions. With one exception, students demonstrated worthwhile professional and personal development over the period of the course.

### Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) Teacher Training

The Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) program is based on the idea that democratic practices in schools play an important role in the transition towards peaceful and thoughtful societies. RWCT work-

shops are designed to help teachers to promote active learning, critical thinking and democratic practice in the classroom. These methods are designed to help students think reflectively, take ownership for their personal learning, understand the logic of arguments, listen attentively, debate confidently, and become independent lifelong learners.

Dr. Thein Lwin provides advice to Mon Education Department, Kachin Education Department and Burmese migrant schools in Mae Sot. Kachin Education Department uses RWCT teaching strategies in their 20 middle schools and 3 high schools attended by 15,000 students. Mon Education Department has decided to practice RWCT at their 8 middle schools, 3 high schools and 2 post-ten schools attended by over 15,000 students. In Mae Sot there are over 60 Burmese migrant schools attended by about 12,000 students. Within three years (2008-2010), over 200 migrant school teachers have completed RWCT training.

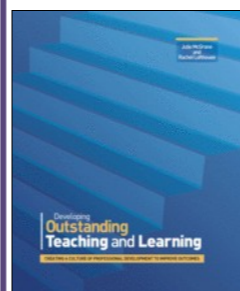
TTBT is also helping the Burmese Migrant Teachers' Association (BMTA) to develop its curriculum. Our education program can reach policy level by the small step of giving some suggestions to Mon and Kachin education leaders. However, our work inside Burma and for migrant schools is only at classroom and school level. For a nation-wide educational change, it is necessary to change education policy at national level. Much depends on democratic change in Burma and we do hope that the dialogue between Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the regime will come and it will lead to a peaceful transition to democracy



Course participants doing a Mysteries thinking skills activity from Thinking through Primary Education

## Research Centre for CfLAT Learning and Teaching

### CfLaT Headlines



Julie McGrane and Rachel Lofthouse have just had their new book published: *Developing Outstanding Teaching and Learning: Creating a culture of professional development to improve outcomes. It draws on local case studies and illustrates the reflections of developing practice from those in our M.Ed, research and PGCE community. It is available through Optimus Publishing*

A BIG congratulations go to Elaine Hall who passed her viva in November and so gains her doctorate., Well done Dr Hall!!!

Congratulations and a sad farewell go to Dr Kate Wall who has taken a new job at Durham University from the 1st May. Kate has been at Newcastle for over 10 years and has worked on a range of projects, but in particular Learning to Learn, She has also been the Centre's Partnership Development Coordinator and Degree Programme Director for the EdD.

Newcastle will be hosting a seminar for the Research Methodology SIG of the British Educational Research Association entitled Making experience visible. The event will be held at the Baltic Centre for Contemporary art on the April 8th 2011. for more information contact: Vivienne.Moffett@ncl.ac.uk

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# NEWSLETTER

January 2011

Issue 8

## SUCCESSFUL VISIT FROM HELEN TIMPERLEY

Professor Helen Timperley from Auckland University spent 2 weeks with us in the autumn as a Visiting Professor. She is an expert in a wide range of topics including literacy and teachers' professional learning (and growing an amazing variety of fruit).

If you have not already come across her report on CPD activities which have an impact on student outcomes it is well worth checking out, even if you just go for the summary. It is Timperley, H., Wilson, A., Barrar, H. & Fung, I. (2007) *Teacher Professional Learning and Development*, Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration (BES), <http://educationcounts.edcentre.govt.nz/goto/BES>.

The report gives a deep insight into the conditions, processes and content that is associated with better student outcomes, and therefore indicates very important lessons for anyone organising or participating in professional learning. For example, teachers don't need to volunteer for a programme or project, they just need to commit to it at some stage. Classroom experimentation is important, as is the opportunity to be part of a 'community of practice', (a group of colleagues who work collaboratively) and connecting practice ideas with theoretical principles about teaching.

Her activities while here included a public lecture, a number of seminars, helping us with the process of developing a research council bid on coaching, visiting a number of schools with whom we work, getting to grips with Learning To Learn, going to a Mark Watson concert at the City Hall and trudging through sleet and cold wind to have a quick look at Hadrian's Wall and Housesteads.

For further information about the visit outcomes contact D.J.K.Leat@ncl.ac.uk



## Cambridge Primary Review North-east and Cumbria regional network

Newcastle University including members of the Research Centre for Learning and Teaching has been announced as the Cambridge Primary Review regional network base.



With Dr Kate Wall as regional coordinator, the network aims to evidence the Cambridge Primary Review as it is implemented in schools. It will provide new avenues for research around innovative primary practice. The network will bring together a range of practitioners from local schools as well as local authorities, policy and third sector organisations to share good practice as well as support the generation of new understandings and collaborative learning opportunities across the region.

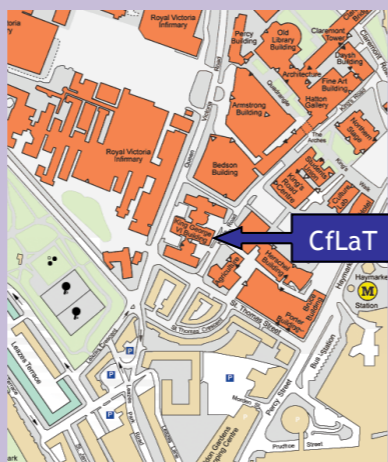
The network will launch on the 8th March with a conference that will include keynote presentations from Professor Robin Alexander (Director of the Review) and Alison Peacock (National Coordinator) as well as showcases from regional schools already putting the CPR recommendations into practice. The event will end with 2 hours for networking (with drinks and canapés) representing a commitment to facilitating the sharing of expertise and furthering opportunities for primary aged children.

For further information see the CPR website: [www.primaryreview.org.uk](http://www.primaryreview.org.uk)



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## Enquiring into Student Enquiry

In December the PGCE Geography students worked with Year 9 pupils from Longbenton Community College facilitating an enquiry day at the Robinson Library.

In designing the event Rachel Lofthouse built on the successful work completed by university librarians Linda Kelly and Sara Bird, who worked in partnership with local schools using special collection archives as part of the CfLaT EQUATE project in 2010. The Longbenton event allowed the pupils to explore the big question of how people have changed the local environment, a deliberately open question to which they had to provide a group presentation response within three hours. The event also gave the PGCE students an opportunity to develop practitioner research skills.

Throughout the day a PGCE enquiry team used observations, diamond ranking, fortune lines and interviews to gather evidence

and opinions related to the activity from both the learners and facilitators. They found that the most common learning activity across the day was pupils talking with each other and with the group facilitators, and that this discussion was relatively equally spread between discussing content and task processes.

When asked to select words to describe their experiences the pupils most frequently chose interesting, challenging and enjoyable and sociable. But it wasn't all about the blarney, pupils also noted using the diamond rank activity that they had to be good at planning, able to identify relevant information and to ask questions. And for the PGCE facilitators it provided an insight into alternative pedagogical model and the challenges and opportunities that this presents for the teaching and learning relationship.

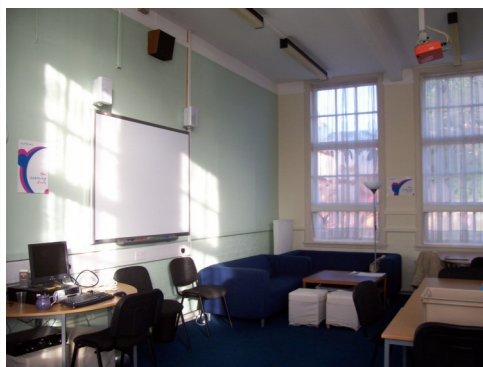
For more information contact: Rachel.Lofthouse@ncl.ac.uk

## School Buildings Conference:

bookings now being taken

BSF may have ended but we still need to think how we use schools as places to learn and teach. The CfLaT conference, School Buildings: achieving productive relationships between school settings and educational activities, is taking place in July 2011. The speakers and workshop organisers are practitioners and researchers from education and architecture who have ideas about how education and school premises can be mutually supportive. So delegates should go away with plenty to think about and act on.

For details and to book your place: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/cflat/news/schoolbuildings2011.htm>



## Doing something about the effect of poverty on children's education

Please tell us about any projects to change the attitudes and aspirations of parents and young people

CfLaT members have been successful in tendering for a new Joseph Rowntree Foundation review of evidence: 'Interventions in aspirations and attitudes: influencing educational attainment'.

The research team is led by Prof Liz Todd and includes a multi-disciplinary group: Colleen Cummings, Dr Elaine Hall, Dr Pam Woolner, Prof James Law (from speech), Dr Janice McLaughlan (from sociology and Director of PEALS) and Dr Ivy Papps (economist from Tecis Lts). Running until July 2011 the project will include an agenda day run by the Durham Council organization 'Investing in Children' to enable young people to respond to initial findings from the project.

The review aims to explore how far policy and practice solutions that address attitudes and aspirations can reduce the educational attainment gap between richer and poorer children. Evidence will be looked for under the following questions: How far is it possible to change attitudes and aspirations of parents, children and young people? Does bringing about such changes lead to an improvement in educational outcomes, par-

ticularly amongst low-income children - and what is the scale of any such improvement? Are there proven interventions for bringing about these changes?

The team is keen to hear from you if you have carried out any interventions in this area. By educational aspirations they mean the aspiration on the part of children and their parents for the child to do well educationally, to participate in advanced education, and so to enhance their job and career prospects. They are interested too in any attempts to change the way people value school - defined as the sense on the part of children and their parents that school and school results are important in life.

Finally the team are interested in any ways you have tried to change people's locus of control - the belief on the part of children and their parents that their own actions can change their lives. They would like to know what you did and what happened - and if you have any reports of any evaluations you have carried out. The CfLaT team will be reporting on what seems to be the most promising interventions.

Please contact [liz.todd@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:liz.todd@ncl.ac.uk)



### CAMBRIDGE PRIMARY REVIEW NORTHEAST AND CUMBRIA REGIONAL NETWORK LAUNCH CONFERENCE

1.30-5 plus drinks 5-7pm 8th March Kings Hall, Newcastle University

Keynote speakers: Professor Robin Alexander and Alison Peacock

Plus contributions from network schools

For more information contact: [Vivienne.Moffett@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:Vivienne.Moffett@ncl.ac.uk) 0191 222 6943



## Using Narrative Practice around the theme of 'Change'

In October 2010 Liz Todd from the Research Centre for Learning and Teaching worked with Marilyn O'Neill (Sydney Narrative Therapy Centre) on a number of training sessions with different groups of adults, developing the use of narrative practices to assist resilience building amongst communities.

Activities included narrative training for:

- educational psychologists on developing resilience in teams;
- university staff on tools for change;
- social workers on developing their roles in line with professional values; and
- with educational psychologists on using narrative therapy with individuals.

A day's training was delivered to 60 workers in child and adult services - and people working in other contexts - on using narra-

tive practices (see photo).

A group of about 20 public sector workers, who work with children, teachers, and families in school settings asked Liz and Marilyn to work with them to consider some of the difficulties that are needing to be faced in the current restructuring of the work-force because of government cut-backs. This team know themselves as innovative and hard working. They described their history of more than a decade of effort to provide an exceptional service for the school communities in their area.

A large number of the workers have taken up narrative approaches in the last couple of years and a few are very passionate about the possibilities it offers for their work.

Marilyn and Liz were inspired and encouraged by what they noticed as the day progressed of the knowledges this group of professionals had of themselves about their unique abilities and their combined strengths. It seemed that it was such abilities and strengths that had allowed them a decade of being innovative and effective in their work but which may now be needed as a means of getting them through hard times.

Liz Todd regularly offers training in narrative approaches and continues to work with teams in developing resilience.

For more information contact [liz.todd@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:liz.todd@ncl.ac.uk)



## RESEARCH TEA TIMETABLE

(Spring 2011)

Research teas aim to provide an informal forum for discursive examination of emerging research themes and concepts.

Tea and cakes will be available from 3pm in the Centre base (2.50 KGVI) with the session officially beginning at 3.15.

**January 19<sup>th</sup>**—Mairin Henneby: The Higher Education experience of international students

**February 16<sup>th</sup>**—Debbie Redshaw & René Koglbauer: Standardising expectations of PGCE students across a partnership and the role of the university in this

**March 23<sup>th</sup>** - Saandia Ali & Paul Dolan: French Speaking Kitchen for technology enhanced language learning

**April 13<sup>th</sup>** Wilma Barrow: A dialogic exploration of the use of philosophy for children as a tool to enhance children's participation in a primary school

Dates for the Spring Term: 18<sup>th</sup> May, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 20<sup>th</sup> July

Further information about the research teas can be gained from Pam Woolner (P.J.Woolner@ncl.ac.uk) or from the Centre website ([www.ncl.ac.uk/cflat/news/teas](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/cflat/news/teas)). You could even volunteer to contribute one yourself!!

## BREAKING THE CYCLE OF OFFENDING

CfLaT have been successful in gaining funds from Nacro, the crime reduction charity which reduces crime by changing lives.

Jill Clark has been awarded £5,000 to complete a research study: Breaking the Cycle of Offending. The Nacro Engage project has been specifically designed to enable repeat offenders to access support and means to employment opportunities, and builds an individualised programme to target issues that have led to reoffending behaviour in the past, with the aim of breaking this cycle. Jill, alongside Ian Hall, will be conducting a qualitative study in order to explore the impact of the project. More specifically, this will explore the expectations, understandings and experiences of those involved with the project from a variety of viewpoints including offenders, staff, key workers and key criminal justice staff.

For more information, contact [Jill.Clark@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:Jill.Clark@ncl.ac.uk).

## CONTRIBUTORS

### WANTED!

Learning and Teaching Update is a monthly Newsletter published by Optimus Publishing and edited by Centre members.

Each publication includes news, updates on policy and research, fund raising initiatives and case studies highlighting good practice in teaching and learning. We are currently looking for contributions for future issues. For more information contact: [Ulrike.Thomas@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:Ulrike.Thomas@ncl.ac.uk) (LTU)

