

Publications 2011/12

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May 2012

Issue 12

NEWSLETTER

Social Renewal and Education



On May 1st CfLaT held a select conference for 70 people with the title: Social Renewal and Education: The Great North Curriculum.

We had three aims. The first was to generate motivation, argument and ambition for enquiry and community based curriculum. We tried to create opportunity for dialogue from the vary varied audience, which included teachers, university staff (lecturers and others) interested in school education and a wide spectrum of people from the arts, outdoor learning and education charities.

The keynote speaker was Professor Keri Facer from Bristol University who spoke to the title 'We're all in this together?' Schools, communities and the challenges of the 21st century, which sketched out some of the trends affecting education and some of the possibilities open to us. Her talk was a big hit. We also quizzed some experienced volunteers in a hot-seating session and examined 25 exemplars of relevant practice. From here we are collating resources and expertise related to the theme and pursuing other avenues of action.



Please contact David.Leat@ncl.ac.uk for more information and to be put on the post-conference email bulletin list.

Coming up: Extended Schools Event

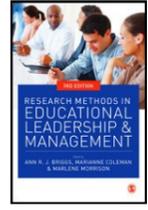
Moving forward: Extended schools and services into the future Research Beehive, Newcastle University; 12th June 2012. 10am-4pm
Key speakers: Alan Dyson, Professor of Education, University of Manchester
Liz Todd, Professor of Educational Inclusion, Newcastle University
Extended services providers from around the country

The event is free to attend and is being supported by the Newcastle University Social Renewal Fund. Refreshments and lunch will be provided. To book a place, please email k.j.c.laing@ncl.ac.uk or apply online @ <http://forms.ncl.ac.uk/view.php?id=3094>

CfLaT Headlines

A review of research about raising aspirations commissioned by JRF from CfLaT has been making waves with interest from many national organisations. Read more inside.

Just published is the third edition of the popular book Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management, edited by Ann Briggs and colleagues. This edition includes chapters by Rachel Lofthouse, Elaine Hall and Pam Woolner



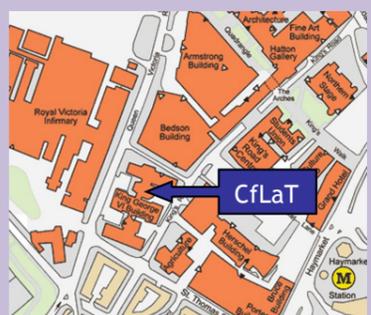
Prof Liz Todd and Karen Laing have won a research bid with TNS-BMRB, Manchester University and Tecis Ltd to evaluate the Pupil Premium, the flagship initiative of the coalition government to provide funding to schools for interventions to raise the attainment of economically disadvantaged pupils. This project reports in April 2013.

Carl Towler is developing a further research partnership with All Saints College, Newcastle. He is working with school colleagues and students to design a reading intervention. The process of refining and testing the intervention will be written up as Carl's PhD.

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Bulgarian Study Visit

In April Paul Dolan embarked on an Ecorys-funded 'Study Visit' to Sofia, Bulgaria.

Hosts from European countries put together an education-based package holiday of sorts, which teachers, academics and policy makers can select out of a catalogue and apply to attend via the Ecorys website (link included below). Successful participants receive a modest grant to pay for travel, accommodation and sustenance.

I chose to go to Sofia to learn about web-based partnerships. Sofia is a relatively quiet city with impressive architecture and a warm climate. I am baffled by the Cyrillic alphabet, but managed to get around with relative ease. The other participants were from primary, secondary and college sectors. There were Polish, Italian, Corsican, Maltese, Hungarian and more, all with a sense of humour about trying to communicate with each other with varying degrees of English ability. My English, of course, is excellent, although this soon worked against me as I was voted into compiling the mandatory

Study Visit report. The hosts were welcoming and had arranged for a very busy schedule of watching presentations and visiting government officials. On the final day, in response to our requests, we visited the hosts' school, where we observed a classroom of students interacting with a customised PowerPoint, each with their own wireless mouse.

Unfortunately, much of the content of the visit was not directly connected to the theme. Although there were plenty of channels for the group to feedback to the hosts, I would recommend that anyone considering taking part ask for a schedule ahead of time, to ensure the activities correspond to the theme. Study Visits are a good way to scout potential research partners and develop insight into the education systems and issues of different countries. I suspect if you find the right host, the visit could be very useful for discussion and sharing of practice. This time, however, I made do with the good company.

Study Visits: <http://www.transversal.org.uk/>



Evaluating two projects for young people

In 2011, Mentor UK presented two local projects with awards for their work with young people. Mentor UK then commissioned a team from CfL&T to undertake evaluations of the two projects. Lucy Tiplady, Karen Laing, Jill Clark and Liz Todd reported on the evaluations in April 2012. The two projects were 'Just for a Laugh' in Durham, and 'Sub 21' in Wallsend.

Just For A Laugh? (JFAL) is a risk behaviour resource designed and produced by Patrick Hargreaves and Les Watts with children and young people from Durham County schools. The available materials and support include a resource pack, DVD film collection, a one day training session and a two day on-site visit from a drama and substance misuse specialist. The approach is young person centred, focusing on risks that are relevant to the young people in the group but explored in an imaginary scenario. Through exploring a variety of possible situations, young people may be more prepared in dealing with real life situations now and in the future. The evaluation, led by Lucy Tiplady, found evidence that young

people gained knowledge, a variety of new skills and were able to engage critically with some very complex and sensitive topics during JFAL. JFAL inspired young people to think about the issues raised, and encouraged them to talk about them, not just with each other, but with family and friends as well; three young people reported that a family member had given up smoking as a result of discussions that followed their child's involvement with JFAL.

For more information please email: Lucy.Tiplady@ncl.ac.uk

Sub 21 in Wallsend started as a pilot project in 2008, following a concern in the area around levels of street drinking by young people. Local providers work in partnership under the banner of extended services to provide a range of diversionary after-school and weekend activities. As well as being an open access provision for all young people in Wallsend aged over 11, some young people are specifically targeted by being picked up by the police and referred into the activities. The project aims to reduce levels of curb-side drinking and associated levels of antisocial behaviour. The evalua-

tion, led by Karen Laing, reported on young people's perceptions of alcohol, gathered their experiences of taking part in the project, and identified outcomes. Young people were overwhelmingly positive about the provision and the outcomes for them included gains in confidence and skills, and opportunities to be seen in a positive light by the community. The study concluded that Sub 21 is successful in keeping some young people off the streets and provides an alternative to drinking, especially at the weekend.

For more information please email: k.j.c.laing@ncl.ac.uk



NEW RESEARCH INTO MENTORING OF STUDENT TEACHERS

Our recent research focus on teacher coaching, and also on developing practitioner enquiry approaches to teacher observation has led us to a renewed interest in mentoring practices for initial teacher training.

With the setting up of Teaching Schools a new opportunity has arisen and a research project *Mentoring Practices in Teaching Schools*. This work is intended to develop understanding of successful mentoring which will be of value to ITT. The Principal Investigator is Rachel Lofthouse and the Researcher is Ulrike Thomas. We are interested in the extent to which mentoring is pivotal in ITT, how mentoring is perceived by different stakeholders, and what tools are deployed by participants to support the practice and to what effect. This is significant given the current policy drive towards schools-led ITT. The research will also add to the evidence base for a new PG Cert in Coaching and Mentoring for Teacher Development which we intend running from 2012/13. **More information from Rachel.Lofthouse@ncl.ac.uk**



<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/aspirations-attitudes-educational-attainment>

RESEARCH TEA TIMETABLE (Summer 2012)

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 (KGVI 2.50) with the session officially beginning at 3.15.

27th June 2012
Jill Clark and Karen Laing: What do we know about the involvement of children and young people in research in the criminal justice system?

18th July 2012
John Carson: 'Not waving, but laughing' Further information about the research teas from Lucy.Tiplady@ncl.ac.uk or from the Centre website (www.ncl.ac.uk/cflat/news/teas). You could even volunteer to contribute one yourself!!

Teacher Training and Education Development for a Democratic Future in Burma

On 23 April 2012 Dr Thein Lwin, Visiting Fellow to CfL&T returned to ECLS to deliver a seminar on Teacher Training and Education Development for a Democratic Future in Burma



After completing masters and doctoral studies in ECLS, Lwin was unable to return to Burma because of his participation in the democratic movement. The country's military junta have been accused of human rights abuses, including the forcible relocation of civilians. Around 140,000 displaced Burmese people are living in towns and camps around the Thai-Burma border. In 2001 Lwin established the *Thinking Classroom Foundation* to support the education of Burmese refugees. Since then the Foundation has provided training to 5,000 teachers.

Political changes in Burma give cause for cautious optimism. A nominally civilian government was installed in March 2011. In 2012 Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) successfully took part in by-elections. On 29 April Lwin returned to Burma for the first time in twenty years to visit his mother and to discuss moving his education programme inside Burma.

'Raising aspirations' a red herring?

A new review challenges the idea that raising aspirations is the key to improving the education of children from low-income families.

Liz Todd led a multi-disciplinary team that reviewed projects designed to raise aspirations and change attitudes as part of a Joseph Rowntree Foundation funded study. The findings have been making

waves with interest from many organisations and invitations to speak at national and regional conferences. Prof Todd says "For more than 10 years policy has focused attention on raising aspirations. But there is no evidence that if you want to impact on the attainment of lower-income pupils that changing attitudes and aspirations is the way to go."

CONTRIBUTORS WANTED!

LEARNING & TEACHING Update
Innovation and excellence in the classroom

Creative approaches can raise standards

One of the key findings of a recent research study is that schools are not doing enough to raise standards. This is particularly true in the area of creative approaches to learning. The research shows that schools are not doing enough to raise standards in the area of creative approaches to learning. This is particularly true in the area of creative approaches to learning. This is particularly true in the area of creative approaches to learning.

Effective parental support for transition

Research shows that parents play a crucial role in supporting their children's transition to secondary school. This is particularly true in the area of parental support for transition. This is particularly true in the area of parental support for transition. This is particularly true in the area of parental support for transition.

Students present research on learning

The study shows that students are presenting their research on learning in a variety of ways. This is particularly true in the area of student research on learning. This is particularly true in the area of student research on learning. This is particularly true in the area of student research on learning.

Learning and Teaching Update is our monthly newsletter published by Optimus Publishing.

Each issue includes news, updates on policy and research, initiatives and case study articles highlighting good practice in teaching and learning. We are currently looking for contributions for future issues.

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