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Research Centre for CfLaT Learning and Teaching

CfLaT Headlines

Alina Schartner has joined CfLaT as a researcher - read more about her inside.

Pam Woolner and Ulrike Thomas have succeeded in gaining funding from the University's Institute for Social Renewal to continue their work with the staff of Rickleton Primary School to develop the school learning environment (the initial work was reported in the last issue of the CfLaT Newsletter)

Laura Mazzoli Smith, CfLaT researcher, is just about to head off on maternity leave. We wish her all the best and look forward to her return in March 2015.

Prof Guy Claxton is the Key Note speaker at a coming conference hosted by CfLaT. Dare to imagine: A conference for the 21st Century (about enquiry/project based learning) is on 25 June 9a.m. - 4p.m. in the King's Road Centre, Newcastle University and costs £125 to attend. For further information contact Ulrike Thomas: u.thomas@ncl.ac.uk



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NEWSLETTER

May 2014

Issue 18

BERA-RSA report out

A national BERA-RSA inquiry into Research and teacher education has reported.

The report draws on seven commissioned papers including Teachers' Views: Perspectives on Research Engagement, written by CfLaT's David Leat, Rachel Lofthouse and Anna Reid. *Research and the Teaching Profession* concludes that teachers across the UK should be supported to become research literate.

More details, the papers and the report itself can be found at <http://www.bera.ac.uk/project/research-and-teacher-education>



CENTRE RENEWAL

CfLaT has had notification that we have been approved by our University Research Committee.

This approval will now go forward to Executive Board and Senate for University approval and we should be 'renewed' as an official University Research Centre for a further three years starting August 1st 2014. This is important recognition of the hard work and achievements made by CfLaT, which is one of only 9 officially recognised research centres in our faculty.

Centre Director, David Leat, said, "This recognises our research work and profile. Continuing as a research centre will enable us to bid for university funding to take our existing interests into an international arena and develop our emerging ideas."

Forthcoming events:

What is your vision for today's schools?

Prof Peter Mortimore, former director Institute of Education, University of London and Professor at University of Southern Denmark, will talk on his vision for a better education system followed by a chance to discuss your own ideas
Tuesday 3 June 4-7pm, Newcastle University, The Beehive, Old Library Building

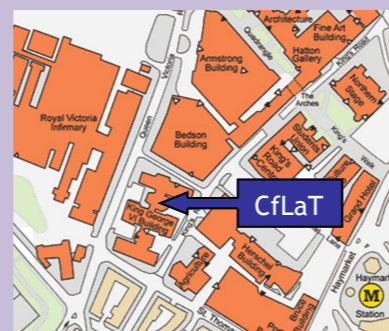
ECLS seminar

Prof Peter Mortimore will give a more informal presentation of his ideas about educational policy based on his new book *Education Under Siege*.

Wednesday 4 June 11-1 King George VI Building
RSVP to Liz Todd@ncl.ac.uk

Both these events are free to attend with refreshments provided!

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CfLaT welcomes Alina Schartner

Alina joined CfLaT as a Research Associate in March 2014.



Her research interests include the internationalisation of higher education, and cross-cultural communication, most especially cross-cultural mobility and the concept of intercultural competence. She is working closely with Sue Robson and other members of the Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Research Group.

Alina obtained an undergraduate degree in Political Science from the University of Salzburg, Austria in 2008. She subsequently studied for an MA in Cross-Cultural Communication and Education at ECLS, and recently completed her PhD research investigating the adjustment and adaptation of international postgraduate students in the UK. She also teaches MA students and supervises dissertations in the Applied Linguistics section at ECLS.

You can contact Alina on alina.schartner@ncl.ac.uk or catch up with her at one of the seminars she organises for the [Teaching and Learning in HE Research Group](#)

CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Two members of CfLaT – Jill Clark and René Koglbauer – were invited by the Vice Chancellor to an event to recognise and celebrate recent successes within the University.

As part of this celebration Jill attended in recognition of her European Union Funded FaSMEd project to improve Mathematics and Science Skills in Europe and South Africa. René was invited to celebrate his appointment as President of the Association for Language Learning. Both members received a personal mention by the Vice Chancellor!



NEW APPROACHES TO LESSON OBSERVATIONS

Continuing her interest in developing new approaches to lesson observation Rachel Lofthouse has been trialling the use of 'learning rounds' with PGCE students.

This is based on a model she first took part in during a study visit to Glasgow University and its partner schools. During a learning round Rachel works with a pair or triad of student teachers based in the same school, and their mentors or class teachers.

Each student teacher is observed for the first half of a lesson by Rachel, the other PGCE students and their school-based colleague. They each record features of the lesson that they notice (using three headings as a guide). The observations are not judgmental, but include interesting features of the lesson or characteristic qualities. After observing half the lesson the observers retreat and meet to share their observations - remembering to remain non-

SOLEs

Laura Mazzoli Smith has been awarded a Faculty Early Career Fund for a project entitled 'Investigating whether and how Self-Organised Learning Environments (SOLEs) enable pupils to perform outside of normal academic roles'.

Laura will conduct research in two schools, one which has been using SOLEs for some time and another which will start to use SOLEs across the school in September 2014, to follow-up early evidence that SOLEs enable pupils to work outside of their expected academic roles and thus lead teachers to re-evaluate their pupils' academic abilities.

For more information, contact: Laura.MazzoliSmith@ncl.ac.uk

judgemental, but starting to identify interesting themes. Observations and themes are shared with the student who taught the lesson and the learning 'round' observation starts again with the next student teaching their lesson.

At the end of the observations the participants meet up to discuss the themes that emerged - some being common and some distinct. They draw on each others' experiences and pedagogic knowledge to engage in relevant professional dialogue and as such explore both details of practice and related theory and research. In one such plenary discussion for example a considered conversation evolved regarding patterns of teacher questioning, their scope, purpose and limitations.

Development of this approach is ongoing; but Rachel is keen to hear from any-one interested in trialling it as part of CPD or ITT. **Contact Rachel.Lofthouse@ncl.ac.uk**

FaSMEd project goes live

We are pleased to announce that we now have our own logo and that the FaSMEd project website is now live at: <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/fasmed>.

This will be an important vehicle for dissemination of the project. There is plenty of general information about the research and a 'Meet the team' section with details of all the partner countries, strategic advisory committee, evaluation team and advisors. In addition, there are sections for news and events, newsletters and outputs which it will be kept up to date as the project progresses



In the spirit of our technological focus and dissemination, we also have a FaSMEd Twitter account and Facebook page.

Follow us at <https://twitter.com/fasmedproject>

and find us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/fasmedproject.



RESEARCH TEA TIMETABLE (Summer 2014)

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), unless otherwise stated, with the session officially beginning at 3.15.

21st May 2014 in the Staff room, third floor King George VI building: Year 9 students from Monkseaton High School, Whitley Bay - Practices of Enquiry

11th June: Alina Schartner - 'They are people just like you' - The effects of study abroad on intercultural communicative competence

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!!

Anna Kristín says 'Thanks for having me'

Anna Kristín Sigurðardóttir from the University of Iceland writes of her visit here:

I had the privilege to stay in the Centre for Learning and Teaching in the University of Newcastle, for five weeks in February 2014 as a visiting fellow. Pamela Woolner was the main attraction for me as we share interest in physical learning environment in schools and are keen on developing further collaboration.

I had also met some members of the CfLaT before and got a good feeling for their professional ambition and hospitality, which was demonstrated during my stay. My stay at the Centre was professionally fruitful: I had an opportunity to present my work and learn a little bit about the extensive work that is done there. I also visited two very interesting primary schools, not to mention an unforgettable story telling event in Newcastle.

Most of all I appreciated the warm atmospheres and friendship that I met in the Centre. Many thanks to everyone.

