

Doctoral School Poster Conference February 2011

Institute of Education

Abstracts

Nicola Bailey

Learning, Curriculum and Communication

Community in the Classrooms: What's Going on Here?

Full service extended schools (FSES) were an initiative brought into the UK by the 1997 Labour administration in response to acknowledging areas of spatial disadvantage which appeared to be linked with academic underachievement.

It was believed that FSES would contribute to the address of multiple policy agendas, such as, underachievement, childhood deprivation, poor health, local socio / economic disadvantage and community regeneration.

Using a framework based on social capital, gender and transformation theory this research sets out to establish an understanding of the relationship that adults who access support services and learning programmes, in a 'full service extended school,' have with the provision and its associated effects for the adults and their families, as perceived by the adults.

Irene Brew-Riverson
Continuing and Professional Education

In Search of Transformative Approaches: Foundation Degrees as a Means of Widening Participation

Widening participation is defined as a policy that seeks to 'Create a higher education system that includes all who can benefit from it – people who might not otherwise view learning as an option, or who may be discouraged by social, cultural, economic or institutional barriers.'

("Action on Access", 2005, p 3 cited in R. Halsall, 2006.)

This institutional study is based on a desire to explore the needs of under-represented groups in higher education. It seeks to investigate the design, content and delivery of the first year of Foundation Degrees in Business and Public Administration programmes during the 2010-11 academic year to ascertain the learners' expected, experienced and preferred approaches to course design. The study aims to articulate the 'learner's voice' with a view to proposing ways in which the curriculum may be altered to meet the needs of learners more effectively. Questionnaires and interviews are the means of primary data collection.

Maureen Ellis
Geography, Enterprise, Mathematics and Science

The Personal and Professional Development of the Critical Global Educator

An acknowledged challenge for Global Citizenship Education for Sustainable Development (GCESD) in its many forms, is the lack of an explicit philosophical basis and theory, resulting in peripheral academic status and prestige. Yet mainstream philosophy and theories do exist;

can provide a sound, unifying foundation for progressive reformist education; and are vital to the 'internal conversations' essential to empowered praxis, as we incorporate the historically valuable into our principles, pedagogy and practice. Critical Realism, Cultural Historic Activity Theory, and the more recently acclaimed Frame theory together offer conceptual and practical tools for political empowerment, research, analyses, and evaluation. This presentation will share a matrix and resultant interview questions, designed to facilitate both self and negotiated evaluation of the critical global educator. A five-point survey will allow willing participants a taste of the emergent focus of my research.

Samuel Haihuie

Learning, Curriculum and Communication

Wantok, Wanpis Na Pasin

This thesis explores the pedagogical practices of distance education in Papua New Guinea (PNG) involving adult students as they interact with distance learning resources. My research focus incorporates PNG's unique indigenous cultural practices, forms of social organisation, knowledge and ways in which these 'ways of being' frame the uses of distance learning resources. The research aims to use a concept of 'pedagogic structures' as a way of interrogating these forms of social organisation and social position reconstruction.

My research design voice takes an interpretive approach and informed by ethnographic research techniques. Students from three study centres, lecturers, and instructional designers participated in the research. Qualitative analysis of data used a heuristic approach to code and categorise emerging themes. The intersecting concepts of Ososom and Osisim are introduced as orientations of learning in a distance education pedagogy.

Research findings reveal that while the transmitter prescribes certain pedagogic principles, the adult distance learners go beyond these prescribed types of interaction to acquire knowledge. Students draw from their invisible social capital and pedagogic practices of tribal and communal forms of organisation to manage learning in their invisible world.

Sally Hancock
Continuing and Professional Education

To Serve the Knowledge Economy? Exploring the Impact of the Political Discourse of the 'Knowledge Economy' Upon Stem PhDs at a Research-Intensive UK University

Since the late 1990s, the 'knowledge economy' has become the default context of reference for UK Higher Education reform. The purpose of this research is to explore what is meant by the term 'knowledge economy', and what the logical consequences of its rationale might be. It is argued that despite a multifaceted theoretical legacy, UK policy-makers have sculpted a very precise notion of the knowledge economy, which led to an unequivocal focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). PhD students undertaking these subjects have become a special interest group for UK policy-makers. Drawing from historical and sociological studies of science, it is suggested that the policy projection might be problematic for STEM PhDs. In order to demonstrate this, questionnaire data from STEM PhDs at a research-intensive UK university is presented. It indicates complimentary and contradictory aspects between STEM PhD students' own aspirations and experiences, and those of government and industry.

Laura Johnson
International and Lifelong Education

Conceptions of Global Citizenship in Education

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) is a broadening field, manifested in both academic and policy contexts around the world. It runs both parallel to and with significant overlaps to areas such as development education, education for cosmopolitan citizenship, peace education and human rights education and is interpreted from a myriad of perspectives. Consequently, for teachers of GCE, policy-makers and academics, the field is sufficiently ambiguous to cause confusion and misunderstanding. This study aims to develop and refine a heuristic analytical framework through which GCE policies, programmes and philosophies can be explored, compared and deconstructed in context. Initially through a critical review of the literature, the study establishes a set of categories and classifications for this complex field, which are subsequently refined using qualitative research involving two case study models of GCE in practice: Model United Nations programmes and the Commonwealth Youth Summits.

Azlina Ahmad Kamal
Learning, Curriculum and Communication

Making Sense of Leadership: A Case Study of How Heads of English Language Departments in Primary Schools View their Roles as Subject Leaders within the Malaysian Education Context

Research has indicated that the extent to which subject teams work collaboratively, share common goals and is largely dependent on the leadership of the subject leader (Harris *et al*, 1995; Harris, 1999). Essentially, the subject leader is in a position to affect the motivation and performance of other teachers within the department. By implication, if the department is well managed it will not only impact positively on the quality of teaching and learning but also contribute to the improvement of the whole school.

This poster presentation summarises the key aspects of my research which is interested in exploring the thoughts, ideas and understandings of these heads of department with regard to their leadership roles and identities and how these interrelate to the wider discourse of English language education in Malaysia. The purpose of the study is to generate credible, accessible and practically useful findings for those within and outside schools – school leaders, providers of professional development, teachers and policy-makers – who are interested in understanding how heads of English language departments see themselves in their role as leaders with close reference to the context within which they have to work.

Grace Kimble
Geography, Enterprise, Mathematics and Science

International Year of Biodiversity 2010: Lessons for School Education Providers?

Biodiversity education can be seen as the successor to Environmental education. What can we learn about current trends by looking at activities for school pupils offered for the UN International Year of Biodiversity 2010?

This poster explains a pilot comparative study. Over twenty UK natural environment organisations responded to a survey circulated in January 2011, and the results will be presented as work in progress.

Alison Leonard
Geography, Enterprise, Mathematics and Science

The South / North Educational Linking Process: A Southern Perspective, From Schools in Ghana, Uganda and Tanzania

This research is now in its fifth year, investigating how schools and the communities which they serve in Ghana, Uganda and Tanzania, are affected by their relationships with UK schools. The poster will share findings from Ghanaian and Ugandan schools and seek feedback from those attending the conference on my Northern interpretations of the data. While data from interviews and pupil focus groups in Tanzania has not yet been transcribed some findings from visiting schools in Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania will be shared. Contentious aspects of these global school relationships, including resourcing and power relations are reviewed.

The methodology for this project is largely qualitative and relies on mixed methods and a case study approach.

Cheuk Hang Leung
Educational Foundations and Policy Studies

Educating Deliberative Citizenship

This project focuses on the education for deliberative citizenship. It aims at offering a philosophical account of citizenship education in the context of deliberative citizenship. I will argue that the ethical traits cultivated by deliberative citizenship can serve as possible ideals for teaching active and reciprocal citizens in the framework of political liberalism. These specific ethical traits I refer to reflect the political conception of person that, for example, Rawlsian political liberalism requires. This formulation of citizenship education could accommodate the issue of political neutrality in respect of the tension between state and education in contemporary liberal-pluralistic society.

Following the justification of teaching deliberative citizenship, this project will illustrate two scenarios for teaching political morality for deliberative democracy, namely (i) liberal institutionalised democracy, and (ii) quasi-liberal-democracy. The former infers a liberal democratic society that is fully institutionalised, while the latter portrays a society with fragile democratic institution or undergoing democratisation.

Lisha Liu
International and Lifelong Education

General Features of Taught Master's Students' Curricular Engagement in English Universities

The poster describes a study which seeks to establish parameters of taught Master's students' curricular engagement. Taught Master's students have become the largest group of the UK postgraduate cohort in recent years. However, academic discussion about their curriculum learning tends to be overlooked. This study regards taught Master's students' curricular engagement as an experiential inquiry-based process, involving a series of learning approaches grouped by three types of inquiry. Fifty-three students from three universities were involved in this study. Statistical analysis was applied to capture students' perceptions in order to answer research questions. The results mainly suggest that intellectual inquiry was regarded as the most important inquiry by this group of students, followed by emotional inquiry and practical inquiry. The three types of inquiry have a relatively equal positive interplay, but the correlations between the specific engagement approaches vary.

Reyhan Luttman
Learning, Curriculum and Communication

Turkish Supplementary Schooling in London and Melbourne

This poster concerns Turkish supplementary schooling in London and Melbourne and describes the research I am carrying out into bilingual levels among the pupils in both cities. The main aim of this study is to deepen the understanding of the factors that influence individuals' Turkish language acquisition, and their bilingual and bicultural environment at supplementary schools. It also looks at their cultural development and identity in both cities.

The study will comprise comparative case studies using:

- Questionnaires
- Interviews
- Classroom Observations

The research will include the completion of questionnaires, with both open and closed questions, directed to parents, teachers and children in the supplementary schools to determine attitudes to, and experiences of, bilingualism and to measure the extent of cultural identity. Interviews will also be carried out to discover the way in which parents help their children in mainstream and supplementary schools.

The poster will also include charts of the initial pilot study.

Anna Mazenod
International and Lifelong Education

Cultural Typologies of English, French and Finnish Education Systems: Comparative Reading of Apprenticeship Education for 16-18 Year Olds

This study explores cultural typologies of English, French and Finnish education systems with regards to apprenticeship education for 16-18 year olds. The starting point is a concern that a limited understanding of socio-economic, political and cultural factors often weakens findings of comparative vocational education research commissioned by policy-makers. Finland, France and England represent three of the four cultural typologies referred to by Green, Wolf and Leney (1999) as respectively communitarian solidarism, universalism and liberal individualism. The study compares the apprenticeship education systems, examines how these are embedded within the wider socio-economic, political and cultural structures, and whether they represent the three cultural typologies. This is followed by a review of recent academic literature on apprenticeships and initial vocational education published in the three languages to examine whether the same cultural typologies emerge from the research questions that are being asked, or the discourse that is being used.

Mohsen Mir Mohammad Sadeghi
Psychology and Human Development

Peer Relations and School Adjustment

Studies on peer relationships consider three major aspects for that: friendship, sociometric status and relationships in cliques. However, such aspects have seldom been studied simultaneously. The present study focuses on its association with school adjustment after transition to a new school that can be argued is a critical stage for adjustment.

This study draws upon 412 participants from first year of junior high school in Iran. The data was collected at the beginning and again at the conclusion of the 2008 school year. Results depict meaningful associations within and between the two domains of this study (ie, peer relations and school adjustment) and emphasise the role that children's peer relations can have on their adaption. It also shows that this association is complicated and sometimes bidirectional. The study also reveals the vital importance of including different types of peer relations collectively in the research.

Additionally, there were significant findings for each relationship type. For example, it was found that the benefits of friendship are not the same for all children and depends on their social status. This study has other theoretical and methodological implications and suggestions for practice and direction for future research are suggested based on the findings.

Nagi Baldo Mohamed
Psychology and Human Development

Inclusion of Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Sudan

This research is the first attempt to explore Sudan's context of special education, and what teachers' perceptions of their competencies and training needs are in relation to the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN).

A questionnaire was developed following extensive literature review of teachers competencies related to SEN. This was complemented by qualitative data obtained from semi-structured interviews with twenty teachers, ten teacher trainers, and ten educational supervisors.

The research concludes that only twelve teachers had received any in-service or pre-service training in special educational needs. The findings also revealed that most educational supervisors had little or no training in this area. Teachers' perceptions did not vary with their personal characteristics. They generally showed lack of confidence in their competencies in all the dimensions investigated except personal skills. However, they expressed the need for training to identify pupils with SEN besides the need for support and advice in practical aspects of inclusion.

Georgia Niolaki
Psychology and Human Development

Lexical and Sublexical Spelling Intervention Studies with Two Multilingual Children

Two case studies with multilingual children were carried out. The first, a ten-year old girl, was a good reader of Greek and English but her spelling ability for words requiring word-specific lexical knowledge (eg, *yacht* for English, *εκκλησία* (church) for Greek) was impaired. Two strategies were employed - a visual imagery and a flashcard method - in an attempt to remediate the lexical deficit. Post-intervention assessments revealed that the child's visual attention span for whole array reports was impaired in comparison with control performance.

The second case involves a trilingual boy. In English and Greek his ability to spell non-words was significantly impaired. Assessments revealed a significant impairment in phonological ability and letter recognition in both languages. A phonological programme, combined with training in sound-letter correspondences, was employed. Post-intervention assessments, as well as those carried out four months after the intervention, showed that gains were significant and were sustained.

Will Parry
Centre for Longitudinal Studies

Investigating the Links Between Youth Exercise Experiences and Adult Exercise Behaviour

Modern lifestyles seem to be increasing the risk of obesity, cardiovascular disease and related morbidities in adults and children in the UK. Current government policy is attempting to tackle these trends by using physical education and school organised sport opportunities

to increase the amount and variety of exercise children experience, a key assumption being that this will increase exercise levels throughout life.

This research will analyse data from the British Cohort Study 1970 to investigate whether and to what extent exercise experiences in childhood are associated with adult exercise behaviour. Two central aims of this research will be to answer the following questions:

- 1) Does childhood experience of exercise and sport inside and outside of a school setting influence adult exercise behaviour?
- 2) Are the variety and nature of exercise and sporting opportunities in schools and other school characteristics associated with adult exercise behaviour?

Rachel Rosen
Early Childhood and Primary Education

An Ethnographic Study Exploring Young Children's Perspectives on 'Taboo' Play

This poster outlines the early stages of my MPhil / PhD research. My aim is to examine the interplay between structural inequities, cultural discourses, and children's agency in everyday activity. In particular, I will consider how children reproduce, reconstitute, and / or resist structural inequities in their 'taboo' play. I use 'taboo' play to denote play that contains themes which are troubling to adults, such as those involving death or violence as can be seen in war, weapon, superhero, fantasy, mythic, and magic play. I will explore young children's perceptions of 'taboo' play in one early years setting using ethnographic and participatory research methods involving children as co-researchers.

Jo Shah
Educational Foundations and Policy Studies

Level 2 Provision in FE: An Exploration of Learner Experience, Quality, and Policy Contexts

The study explores Level 2 provisions in the British FE system and attempts to elicit experiences of learners that have connections with Level 2 within an FE setting. The study deploys a mixed methods approach, including contemporary qualitative methods such as, Cyber and Visual Ethnography. The research is currently in its third year, and is presently focused on a specific FE setting in the South East.

Yvette Twumasi-Ankrah
Educational Foundations and Policy Studies

A Sense of Belonging: Second-Generation Ghanaians in England and Ghana

My research will explore how different second-generation Ghanaian socio-economic groups construct and maintain (if they do at all) their ethnic identity. Overall, I aim to address issues relating to identity formation and will concentrate on the intersections between ethnic identity and socioeconomic status. The empirical research will focus on people born of Ghanaian parentage who have been raised in England. My key questions are:

- Does socio-economic status affect how they view their identity?
- To what degree does class matter to the second generation Ghanaians?
- And how much does class status impact on return?

Using a transnational lens I want to see how theories about ethnic identity and class, as explored by scholars such as Gans and Waters, translate to the second-generation Ghanaian cohort raised in London.

Niek van Der Steen
International and Lifelong Education

School Improvement in Tanzania: School Culture and the Management of Change

From a critical humanist perspective I explore the influence of staff values and practices on the scope and management of change in two 'improving' urban Tanzanian state primary schools. Combining case study with action research, I collected mainly qualitative data on 48 whole-school improvement initiatives, implemented during one academic year (2004).

Staff development training on agreed topics enabled generation of process knowledge, while contributing to concrete improvement and staff empowerment. Achievability of school improvement depended crucially on available space for change, core elements of which were staff motivation, capabilities and 'room to manoeuvre'. Under existing conditions quality improvements remained limited to incidents of enhanced effectiveness, rather than more comprehensive transformations requiring fundamental organisational and attitudinal change. As 'cultural change agents', school leaders are in a position to create space for change through challenging established pedagogical and managerial values and practices, and entrusting collaborative staff with genuine freedom and responsibilities.

Annita Ventouris
Educational Foundations and Policy Studies

Integrated Education in Cyprus: The Case of the English School

The famous English School of Nicosia re-established its bicultural status, after the 2003 checkpoints opening in divided Cyprus, by enrolling Turkish Cypriot students for the first time after the 1974 Turkish invasion of the island. This newly established desegregation policy, though, has provoked a lot of controversy over Cypriot society and many problematic situations emerged regarding the students' daily experience of co-existing with the "other", but also among their parents and the alumni association members.

This research's main focus is to investigate the impact of the school's traditions, policies and practices - in terms of promoting an inter-culturally responsive school ethos - on various groups in the school. I am particularly looking at the following:

- a) how various members of the school community (students, teachers, parents) experience the newly established desegregation policy;
- b) the attitudes of each ethnic group towards the other and the formation of intergroup relations among the students;

- c) the nature, processes and consequences of cross-community or intergroup contact that occurs in this kind of integrated setting, on issues like ethnic and cultural identity, friendships, political attitudes etc;
- d) the role that an integrated school like the English School may play in social integration and in the wider community relations; and
- e) to give, in each context, a descriptive explanatory account of the current reality.

To achieve these, I am exploring the practices and the perspectives – and any changes in them – held by various groups in the school regarding the challenges the school faces at present. At the same time, an explanatory description of the school's historic past and bicultural status is constructed, in order to provide the context within which the investigation of current affairs is conducted.

This research is an exploratory, qualitative case study on how members of the English School community experience the desegregation policy; in-depth interviewing, direct observation and the collection of archived material are the principal methods of data gathering.

Ruth Wall
International and Lifelong Education

Fostering and Evaluating Transformative Learning in the Context of Preparing Professional Adults for Working in a Cross Cultural Context

This study explores the learning experience of professional adults attending a ten-week course at a UK Christian mission training college.

The central question asks 'How can transformative learning be fostered and evaluated in the context of mission training in the UK?' In answering that question a number of subsidiary questions arise including; 'How can any change resulting from the learning experience of these participants be measured?' And 'What factors enhance or inhibit transformative learning in this context?'

These questions will be explored through a case study of a ten-week course designed to prepare participants for working in a cross cultural context. Qualitative data collected from participants' written accounts of their learning and semi-structured interviews will be analysed.

It is expected that an outcome of this study will be to offer a more holistic approach to mission training in the UK and that it will provide new approaches to evaluating personal and spiritual formation.

Min-Hsuang Wang
Early Childhood and Primary Education

Young Children's Media Use and Parent-Child Interactions During the Co-Viewing of TV in Taiwan

This study aims to explore media use of children between six months to six years old and how parents co-view with their children in Taiwan. The study will be conducted in two phases:

- 1) An online survey of children's media use in Taiwan; and
- 2) A quasi-experimental study and interviews of parents, to investigate parent-child interactions during viewing.

Parents' attitudes regarding media use of their children will also be explored. A pilot study of phase 1 was conducted in October 2010. The main findings are that Taiwanese children start watching TV at a very young age and watch whilst having meals: 56% of children under two watch TV every day which goes against the American Academy of Pediatricians' recommendation that there should be no screen time for children under two. The pilot found that 43% of children have their meals with TV on all or most of the time.

Sean Whittle
Educational Foundations and Policy Studies

Towards a Theory of Catholic Education

This poster outlines the key aspects of my research project as a doctoral candidate. I am completing a theoretical thesis that is investigating central issues within the philosophy of Catholic education. The working title of my thesis (*Towards a Theory of Catholic Education*) is intended to show that I am involved in the task of constructing a robust and coherent theory of Catholic education. Increasingly faith schools, even successful Catholic ones, have been subjected to much scrutiny and criticism. Those who have criticised Catholic education and schools (both those inside the Church as well as those outside it in the wider secular society) have often struggled to identify and articulate what is genuinely distinctive about it. There has been a failure to engage with what makes a Catholic school 'Catholic'.

This thesis argues that the struggle here is rooted in the failure to make clear the connections between Catholic theology and what goes on in the curriculum of the average Catholic school. There has been no real attempt to develop a Catholic curriculum that could operate within these schools and be the basis for demonstrating what is educationally distinctive and so valuable about these kinds of schools. The challenge facing Catholic education is to find some way of developing this kind of curriculum.

It is here that the theological anthropology of Karl Rahner can be of service. Rahner's anthropology provides a theological basis for developing a robust theology of education. It will be proposed that what is distinctive about a Catholic school is that through the standard subjects of the National Curriculum the student is able to get an understanding of what it is to be a 'spirit in the world'. Each subject will introduce the student into the holy mystery (AKA God) that is the horizon against which their learning takes place. It is through the RE programme that the student is given the space to be a 'hearer of the word' and so come to some position vis-à-vis their faith response. The intention of this paper is to maintain that

Rahner can be effectively put at the service of developing a much needed philosophy of Catholic education.

Emma Williams
Educational Foundations and Policy Studies

Is There a Distinctive Role for Philosophy in Post-16 Education?

In recent years, the question of whether philosophy should have a formal place on the school curriculum has come to the attention of policy-makers and philosophers of education. This research will contribute to this debate by considering the role of philosophy in the post-16 sphere. The research will be guided by three sub-questions, viz:

- (1) Is there an educationally relevant activity which can be uniquely identified as “philosophical”?
- (2) Is this kind of activity currently represented on the curriculum?
- (3) How might this type of activity be incorporated into the A-level curriculum?

The essential claim to be defended is that philosophical education addresses “problems of meaning” and, due to this, goes beyond “critical thinking” conceived in terms of logic and conceptual analysis. To this end, the research will engage with insights from Heidegger, Arendt and Lyotard who, it will argue, offer valuable insights for the educational role of philosophy.

Stephen Willoughby
Educational Foundations and Policy Studies

The Focus of Distributed Leadership Within the Context of Assessment for Learning

Aim: To examine Distributed Leadership within Assessment for Learning.

Rationale: To analyse Distributed Leadership practice within the context of Assessment for Learning; and to complete insider research that enhances professional quality.

Research Questions: What distributed leadership characteristics come out of the assessment for learning context? / How and why are the three schools using distributed leadership within the context of assessment for learning? / Who has power within each school in my case studies? How and why is leadership distributed within each school? / How effective is Distributed leadership in schools in getting teachers on board with assessment for learning?

Methodology: The sample is based on three case study schools where teaching professionals give evidence through semi-structured interviews; and supporting evidence includes observations and documentation.

Analysis: Pilot analysis of participant answers and observations completed; and main qualitative analysis is on-going.

Fei Yan
International and Lifelong Education

Changes of Minority Education in Contemporary China

This paper reports on the early stages of a research project which will address the question: How has the Chinese government responded to ethnic issues in the area of education, historically and currently? Initially the study examines policy changes towards different historical periods and subsequently examines the current Chinese mainstream curriculum to ascertain what ideologies have been adopted. Specifically the study will examine what messages are promoted about both minority groups and the Han majority in the mainstream curriculum.

Flora Yeung
Arts and Humanities

'Why Do You Sing in a Choir?' A Study of Choral Singers' Motivation in Hong Kong

This research studies the path of musical development of adult community choir singers in Hong Kong by inviting them to reflect on their choral singing journey since they first sang by using questionnaires sent to choir members, interviews with singers and conductors, and observations of choir practices.

The poster presents an abstract of data collected and suggests a motivation paradigm of singing in choirs which can be categorised as both intrinsic rewards such as (i) musical motivation (technical and aesthetic) and extrinsic rewards such as (ii) social motivation (identity and trust) and (iii) organisational motivation (administration of choir and leadership of conductor).

Among these motivations, singers place emphasis on the impact of aesthetic achievement on building their enthusiasm in choral singing, and therefore a model of engaging choral activity emerged from the body of research is suggested as to provide us several ways to keep the singing exciting and let our singers find choral singing pleasurable.

Helen Young
Educational Foundations and Policy Studies

An Exploration of Forms of Democratic Practices and Conceptions of Citizenship Demonstrated by a Range of School Governing Bodies

This poster describes planned qualitative research with four school governing bodies. The tentative research questions are:

- Do meetings operate as deliberative forums where a range of voices and perspectives are valued?
- What spaces are there for governors to recognise the possibility of alternatives to dominant discourses of education?
- Do governors discuss substantive issues about the kind of school they want? If so, in what context does this happen?

The poster summarises issues arising from pilot research in one primary school. These were around the inclusiveness of the limited deliberation which took place; the distinctions between acting as citizens and as state volunteers; perceptions of parent and staff views as 'narrow'; the construction of consensus; the lack of discussion of educational issues; and the relationship of lay people to professionals.