



University of  
**Portsmouth**

# Welcome to the School of Education and Childhood Studies

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## Annual Conference

### Education and Childhood Studies: Research, Practice and Impact

Monday 11 July 2016

Keynote Speakers

Professor Rachel Brooks, University of Surrey

Dr Sarah Riley, Aberystwyth University



# Welcome

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Welcome to the School of Education and Childhood Studies Annual Conference on

## **Education and Childhood Studies: Research, Practice and Impact**

As a School of Education, we are involved in research activities based around the following research clusters:

- Mental Health and Well-being in Childhood and Education
- Childhood and International Development
- Action Research in Teacher Education
- Creative Pedagogies

With this conference we would like to share with you some of our and others' research on their important issues.

We hope you enjoy the day.

Dr Wendy Sims-Schouten

With special thanks to Amanda Jones and Sandra Kerr for the administrative support for this event and to others for assisting today.

## **About the School of Education and Childhood Studies**

A career in the education sector allows you to work in a vital and fascinating field. Whether you are aiming to be a teacher, a trainer, an administrator or an early years practitioner, the School of Education and Childhood Studies provides the ideal environment for you to undertake your study.

We offer a wide range of courses, from professional development training to undergraduate and Masters' degrees, alongside PhD supervision; the staff comprises a team of respected lecturers with teaching and research specialisms that embrace theoretical excellence and practical experience. On our PGCE Initial Teacher Training courses, you may either take a professional or postgraduate approach to teacher training, and you can be supported by subject knowledge enhancement courses in several fields if needed.

Regular inspections by Ofsted and the Quality Assurance Authority have confirmed Portsmouth as an excellent provider of courses in education and childhood studies, a position supported by strong performance in league tables and the National Student Survey.

Courses currently on offer:

### **Undergraduate:**

*Foundation Degree (Arts) Early Years Care & Education*

*Foundation Degree (Arts) Learning Support*

*BA (Hons) Education and Training Studies (Top up degree)*

*BA (Hons) Childhood and Youth Studies*

*BA (Hons) Childhood and Youth Studies with Psychology*

*BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies*

*BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies with Psychology*

### **Postgraduate:**

*PGCE Business Studies, Computer Science, English, Geography, Maths, MFL and Science*

*PGCE Further Education and Training*

*MSc Educational Leadership and Management*

*MA Education Studies*

*MRes in Education*

*MRes in Childhood Studies*

*PhD – Mental Health and Wellbeing in Childhood and Education, Childhood and International Development, Action Research in Teacher Education, Creative Pedagogies*

### **Professional:**

*Early Years Initial Teacher Training*

# Timetable

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Time		Room
09:00 – 09:30	Registration	Atrium
09:30 – 09:45	Welcome by Dr Peter Starie <i>Head of School of Education and Childhood Studies</i> Professor Matthew Weait <i>Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences</i>	1.74
09:45 – 10:45	<b>Keynote 1</b> – Dr Sarah Riley, Reader in Psychology, Aberystwyth University <i>'If looks could kill': The social aspect of body image and how we might use that to build resilience</i>	1.74
10:45 – 11:15	Coffee	Atrium
11:15 – 12:30	<b>Parallel Sessions</b>	
	<b>Parallel Session 1</b> <i>Mental Health and Well-being in Childhood and Education – Part 1</i>	1.74
	<b>Parallel Session 2</b> <i>Childhood and International Development</i>	0.41
	<b>Parallel Session 3</b> <i>Creative Pedagogies</i>	0.28
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch	Atrium
13:30 – 14:30	<b>Keynote 2</b> – Professor Rachel Brooks, Head of Department of Sociology, University of Surrey <i>Internationalisation, Global Capital and English Secondary Schools</i>	1.74
14:30 – 15:45	<b>Parallel Sessions</b>	
	<b>Parallel Session 4</b> <i>Mental Health and Well-being in Childhood and Education – Part 2</i>	1.74
	<b>Parallel Session 5</b> <i>Action Research in Teacher Education</i>	0.41

# Keynote 1

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*Dr Sarah Riley*

**Sarah Riley is a Reader in Psychology at Aberystwyth University, Wales.**

Sarah's research is informed by a poststructuralist approach to identity, with a particular interest in gender, sexuality, embodiment and youth cultures. Her methodological interests are in discourse analysis, co-operative inquiry and visual methods. Her main publications include the following collaborative works: *Critical Bodies: Representations, Practices and Identities of Weight and Body Management* (Palgrave/MacMillan, 2008), *Doing Your Qualitative Research Project* (Sage, 2012); *Technologies of Sexiness: Sex, Identity and Consumer Culture* (Oxford University Press, USA, 2014) and *Postfeminism and Health* (Routledge, forthcoming).

## **'If Looks Could Kill': The Social Aspect of Body Image and How We Might Use That to Build Resilience**

The prevalence of body dissatisfaction and its associations with psychological, health and educational issues makes it a key challenge for those working with young people. This presentation explores the possibilities enabled when using a social constructionist framework that conceptualises body image an interactional process located in wider discourses around health, attractiveness, morality and normalcy. Presenting the work from a range of studies with young people, the paper highlights the role of social interaction, particularly looking, in body image development. It considers how the way that young people come to feel about their bodies occurs in relationships that are also located in particular places (on and offline). Delegates will be encouraged to explore how these findings might relate to their own work with young people, where 'hot spots' for body image anxieties might be produced in the young people they work with, and how they might be able to address these.

# Keynote 2

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## *Professor Rachel Brooks*

**Rachel is a Professor at the University of Surrey.** Her research interests lie in the sociology of education and include: higher education; transitions from school to university and from education to work; lifelong learning; international education; citizenship education and political participation; the impact of friends and peers on experiences of education; and education policy.

### **Internationalisation, Global Capital and English Secondary Schools**

Analyses of UK higher education have provided compelling evidence of the way in which this sector has been affected by globalisation. There is now a large literature documenting the internationalisation of British universities, and the strategic and economic importance attached to attracting students from abroad. Within the schools sector, it has been argued that parents are increasingly concerned about the acquisition of valuable multicultural 'global capital'. Nevertheless, we know little about whether 'internationalism' and/or the inculcation of 'global capital' is an explicit focus of UK schools. To start to redress this gap, the paper will draw on an analysis of websites, prospectuses and other publicly-available documents to explore the extent to which internationalism is addressed within the public face that schools present to prospective pupils, and the nature of any such messages that are conveyed.

# Parallel 1 – Mental Health and Well-being in Childhood and Education – Part 1

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## Paper 1

### **Best Friends Forever? What Teachers Need To Know About Best Friendship In Primary School.**

*Mrs Karen Morris, Senior Lecturer, University of Winchester*

Relationships are important for wellbeing across the lifespan (Peterson, 2006; Waldinger *et al.*, 2015). This presentation looks at a relationship familiar to all educators but arguably given little attention by school staff: best friendships in school. Sullivan (1953), deriving theory from clinical practice, argued that ‘chums’ play a unique role in children’s wellbeing. The presentation reports on an investigation into such claims in the light of recent psychological research. A short systematic literature search demonstrated a range of methodological approaches to studying best friendships and revealed some findings to support Sullivan’s ideas. The correlational designs, usually cross-sectional, rather than longitudinal, mean that caution should be exercised with respect to causal explanations. The presentation unpacks the links between best friendships and wellbeing and their implications for teachers. It is argued that schools should be respectful of children’s best friendships and ideas are presented to help schools audit and extend their practice in this regard. Emphasis is laid on high quality best friendships as a potential protective factor for children. Finally, it is suggested that qualitative studies would allow children’s voices to be heard and enrich information about likely causal pathways.

## Paper 2

### **Constructing Positive Education with Students with ADHD: A Mixed Methods Student Voice Study**

*Dr Kate Carr-Fanning, Lecturer, Childhood and Youth Studies, Coventry University*

The study explored stress, emotion, and coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) with students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in an Irish context, in order to study “needs” free from “labels”, from a strengths-based perspective, to contribute to an understanding of “what works” in practice. 15 students (aged 7-18 years), their parents, and teachers participated in a semi-structured interview, which was transcribed, and coded using principles

of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Further triangulation was achieved using other evidence-based sources, including visual methods, to contribute to a highly contextualised understanding of students' experiences within their ecological niches (person-environment relationships: Bronfenbrenner, 2005). This paper will explore findings regarding factors (psychological, social, and environmental) which contributed to positive niches and resiliency in the lives of these students; including positive relationships, strengths-based practices, flexible structures, socio-emotional support, empowerment, personal resiliency, and collaboration.

### **Paper 3**

#### **The Mental Health Issues Facing Children with Cancer and Their Siblings.**

*Mr David Bara, Senior Lecturer of Special Needs, University of East London*

According to Cancer Research UK (CRUK) 1 in 500 children in the UK will develop some form of cancer by the time they are 14 years old. Cancer has an impact on the whole family and some treatments can take up to 3 years, physically surviving cancer is only one part of the journey, Clark (1975) identified 25 social costs that arise. Of relevance to this conference is the mental health issues facing children with cancer and their siblings (CWCaTS).

The paper will present findings from a qualitative study that explored the educational, personal and social needs of CWCaTS . The study utilised a qualitative, narrative and free associative (Hollway and Jefferson, 2008) methodological approach to explore the experiences of 12 parents from across the United Kingdom with a focus on the impact of the children's mental health issues and how schools managed these.

Themes to emerge include concerns that:

- Educators had a lack of understanding of impact of treatment on the CWCaTS
- There is a lack of strategies to support CWCaTS
- Social and emotional isolation felt by CWCaTS
- The significant impact on siblings, including self-harm or suicidal tendencies.

# Parallel 2 – Childhood and International Development

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## Paper 1

### **Against the Rules? Which Rules? Navigating Regulatory Discourses of Pregnancy in Mozambique**

*Dr Francesca Salvi, Lecturer in Childhood Studies, School of Education and Childhood Studies, University of Portsmouth*

In this paper I explore teenage pregnancy in Mozambique as a means to revoke binaries such as childhood and adulthood, or tradition and modernity. By engaging with young people's attitudes toward their own identity, I suggest that individuals navigate different regulatory frameworks in order to make sense of their lives, and the context they live in. This does not mean that identities are 'free-floating' (Humphreys, 2013), as they are constrained by social structures. By conjoining their actions within different normativities, young people render themselves intelligible via various discursive formations. By so doing, young mothers exert their own agency and suggest identities that both resist and conform by the myriads of regulatory frameworks that are available to them. In line with Aboim (2009), I depict a degree of complicity between the world of pre-colonial tradition, transposing into the modern world, but also one that is oriented by and to Western standards in both family life and gender relations. Change and continuity, in other words, coexist making it hard for one single normative hegemony to prevail over different regulatory sets.

## Paper 2

### **Making the Transition to Adulthood in Zambia: A Comparison of the Experiences of Caregiving and Non-Caregiving Children and Youth**

*Dr Caroline Day, Lecturer in Human Geography, Department of Geography, University of Portsmouth*

Studies of 'young carers' in sub-Saharan Africa have increased in recent years. A focus on 'children' caring for parents with a chronic illness or disability has meant the role of older young people has often been neglected in discussions of caregiving, particularly how caring influences their futures and life transitions. Young people are under increasing pressure to obtain a good education and employment to support their families and make 'successful' transitions to 'adulthood', whilst in some instances also having to cope with the loss of parents and care for relatives with little external support. This paper draws on findings from a comparative, qualitative research study

that explored the experiences and perceptions of young people (aged 14-30) who had significant family caring responsibilities and those without such responsibilities in Zambia. Interviews and life-mapping methods were conducted with a total of 35 young people, 12 parents and relatives and 14 professionals. This paper will analyse the strategies children and young people undertake in order to balance their increasing responsibilities with their education and employment aspirations. The paper offers unique insights into the lives of Zambian young people from their own perspectives, as well as from the perspective of the wider community.

### **Paper 3**

#### **Implementing Best Practices from a British School to Nigerian International Primary School. Case Study of a Teacher.**

*Dr Stella Adagiri, Portsbridge Educational Services Ltd*

There is an increasing interest in western education in developing countries and International Schools seeking to incorporate the British curriculum and pedagogy to improve their standards and attract a certain category of clientele. To this end International Schools invest in their teachers' professional development and send them abroad to get exposure to best practices in developed countries that are perceived to have higher standards of education. This presentation will be based on a case study of a Nigerian International School that has invested in sending their teachers for professional development programmes in the UK in order to implement best practices from the British system of Education. The research method was largely qualitative and included Interviews from teachers who participated in the programmes and the School senior management team. The aim of the study was to evaluate the training, using the Kirkpatrick framework, and find out if the programmes have had any impact on the school. Findings are based on initial feedback forms from participants, reflective interviews with teachers and management. There is evidence that some of the aspects of the programmes are being implemented, but there is also evidence of some of the challenges they have faced with implementation. The study highlights the possible reasons and makes recommendations for improving the effectiveness of professional development programmes.

# Parallel 3 – Creative Pedagogies

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## Paper 1

### **Head, Heart and Hands: Constructing a Holistic Approach to Professional Identity Development in the Early Childhood Workforce**

*Dr Joy Chalke, Principal Lecturer, School of Education and Childhood Studies, University of Portsmouth*

The field of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) has been significantly engaged in discussions about professionalism and professionalisation of the workforce for a considerable period. It is this problematic nature of definitions and constructs that are not universally agreed but often contested that (Simpson, 2010a; Furlong et.al.2000) allows for the possibility of new forms of professional identity to emerge. This session proposes a holistic model of professional identity construction that considers three elements; head (knowledge, reason and thinking), heart (passion, feelings and expressions of self) and hands (practice and the workplace) and how these aspects can be constructed into an holistic consideration of professional identity that also remains fluid and flexible, so is able to respond to changing external demands. It explores how the model can be utilised not just to examine others constructs of their identity but as a tool for use with students and practitioners in the field to help them examine, discuss and take ownership of shaping their own professional personas.

## Paper 2

### **Learning to Live in a Future Technological World: a Relational Pedagogy**

*Dr Simon Edwards, Lecturer, School of Education and Childhood Studies, University of Portsmouth*

This paper addresses the fact that, despite the need to equip students with skills necessary to enter increasingly technological employment markets, significant numbers of students are being excluded from UK schools.

I draw on my doctoral study, which explored the cultural worlds of dis-engaged secondary school students, to claim language is located in relationships and the production of collaboratively produced self-projects rather than school based discourses. An intervention allowed for the analysis of knowledge production located within relationship building activities, enabling them to re-engage their learning.

I propose future education embraces this pedagogy located within students' social worlds. It extends online tuition to encourage symbiotic relationships between students and technologies in order to 'hit the ground running' when gaining employment, addressing the current digital divide between students' use of technologies inside and outside the classroom.

By relocating learning primarily into students' community and family relational sites online and offline this pedagogy also helps meet the aim of successive UK Governments - to involve parents more with their children's learning. It could also facilitate higher levels of GCSE attainment along with the development of collaboratively developed complementary skills such as entrepreneurship, teamwork and problem solving increasingly deemed necessary for employment.

### **Paper 3**

#### **The Sound Of Silence: Hearing the Voice of the Underrepresented Students in the Classroom**

*Dr Jessica Gagnon, Research Fellow, University of Portsmouth*

"I don't feel like I belong. ... I mean, I'm not very well spoken. .... At the same time, I'm an ethnic minority, and in a class full of white people. ... I don't think anyone else in my class could ever fully understand." This presentation explores the university experiences of the daughters of single mothers who are first generation students through a thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with and reflective writings from 26 undergraduate students in the United Kingdom. Specifically, the theme of accents, vocabulary, and knowledge as they impact student classroom experiences will be discussed. This presentation focuses on the intersectionalities of gender, socio-economic class, race, and family status as they shape the participants' classroom experiences. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks upon which this study is built include feminist theory, intersectionality theory, and the concept of social exclusion.

While the research was conducted within higher education, the findings have broader implications for teaching practices at all levels. How are students' experiences in our classrooms shaped by their background and identity? How can our teaching practices be more inclusive? How can we encourage classroom participation and engagement from all students?

# Parallel 4 – Mental Health and Well-being in Childhood and Education – Part 2

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## Paper 1

### **Examining Mental Health Literacy in UK University Students**

*Dr Paul Gorczynski, Lecturer, Department of Sport and Exercise Science, University of Portsmouth*

Many university students in the UK experience mental health problems and little is known about their overall mental health literacy and help seeking behaviours. The purpose of this study was to ascertain levels of mental health literacy in UK university students and examine whether mental health literacy is associated with better mental health outcomes and intentions to seek professional care. Overall, 380 university students filled out surveys on mental health literacy, help seeking behaviour, distress, and wellbeing. Students had low scores of mental health literacy and women exhibited higher levels of mental health literacy than men with postgraduate students scoring higher than undergraduate students. Those with previous mental health problems had higher levels of mental health literacy than individuals with no history of mental health problems. Individuals were most likely to want to seek support from a partner or family member and most participants indicated they would be able to access mental health information online. Mental health literacy was significantly positively correlated with help seeking behaviour, but not significantly correlated with distress or well-being. Strategies, such as anonymous online resources, need to be designed to help UK university students become more knowledgeable about mental health and comfortable with seeking support.

## Paper 2

### **The Role of EI in the Development of Adolescents' Social and Emotional Abilities and Skills**

*Mr Arif Mahmud, PhD student, Middlesex University*

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a concept that can explain how individuals develop and manage their own emotions and the emotions of others. High levels of EI have been found to be related to improved emotional well-being, social adaptability and academic achievement. Previous EI programmes implemented in the US and UK have led to mixed results as they focused

primarily on whole school approaches and inaccurate EI constructs. The purpose of this study was two-fold.

Study 1 conducted research to understand the school context in order to ascertain the main social and emotional challenges facing young adolescents. Observations were carried out to check for nonverbal expression of feelings, grasp how participants communicate with each other and check where problem behaviours occur. Additionally, to understand at a level of detail, interviews were held with staff to guide the focus of the intervention.

Subsequently, Study 2 aimed to explore whether the introduction of an intervention programme, to support the development of EI competencies, could increase EI and academic achievement. It is hypothesized that students who develop improved levels of EI will develop an increased self-perception of their ability to cope academically and socially at school, and in terms of actual academic success than pupils with low EI. Results will be considered in terms of implications for future intervention studies and educational practice.

### **Paper 3**

#### **Cross Cultural Investigation of Children's Perception of Mental Health**

*Miss Carmen Li, Teacher, King Richard School*

This paper is a cross cultural investigation of the development of the perception of the following mental illnesses: depression, anorexia and dementia, by children between the ages of 11 to 18. Leventhal, Nerenz and Steele's (1984) conceptual framework was used to investigate children's cognitive representation of the illness through the five areas of: identity, cause, consequence, curability and time taken to cure the illness. Vignettes were provided for the illnesses, and then the participants proceeded to completing a questionnaire to show their perception of the illnesses. In order to measure cross cultural differences, a sample was recruited from Hong Kong to represent the collectivist culture, and a sample from the United Kingdom to represent the individualist culture. The hypothesis states that there would be age and cultural differences in children's perception of mental health. Results suggested that older children are significantly more likely to have a more accurate understanding of mental health, and there are slight cultural differences too. Children's understanding of mental health develops from the age of six, and different cultures have different values, which suggests that there could be different perceptions towards mental health within the participants in this study.

# Parallel 5 – Action Research in Teacher Education

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## Paper 1

### **16-19 Study Programmes: Initially Assessing Students Skills for Progression**

*Mr Stephen Corbett, Senior Lecturer, School of Education and Childhood Studies, University of Portsmouth*

In July 2015 a team at the University of Portsmouth was commissioned by the Education and Training Foundation to research, design and deliver training for further education teachers. The remit of the project was to support FE teachers with the implementation of 16-19 Study Programmes. The research conducted surveyed over 100 further education providers to establish their training needs. Furthermore it reviewed recent Ofsted reports to establish which aspects of Study Programme implementation providers would benefit from additional support. The research provided a mechanism which would help teachers to identify their students wider skills such as; communication, problem solving, team work, self management and commercial awareness. An initial assessment framework was developed and packaged with a set of lesson plans. This package of lessons along with lesson resources and the initial assessment framework was provided to further education providers via a half-day training programme.

This session is designed to provide greater detail of the research findings and present some of the resources created in response to the identified needs.

## Paper 2

### **Effective Communication of Leaders**

*Mrs Sally Evans, Inspector/Advisor in Mathematics, Children's Services, Hampshire County Council*

As a PhD student studying communication and its effectiveness in improving schools, the researcher has summarised some of the literature on effective communication. This presentation outlines how a leader can use this work to positively impact on staff's performance.

For an organisation to improve, communication has to be effective in directing staff appropriately and has to motivate. Staff must clearly understand the aim and the path to achieve that aim so that they can make informed decisions resulting in actions positively impacting on the institution. This can be

supported by the leader having an understanding of the different communication and the way communication remains memorable. It is also important to recognise different types of communication affect different personality types, and the signs of distress when needs are not met.

This presentation outlines the work of different researchers and summarises the way personality types respond to different forms of communication. The conclusion uses key points from this literature together with the observations that the researcher has made in her own research to make suggestions of how a leader should act to achieve the full positive effect using his/her communication.

### **Paper 3**

#### **Reforming Further Education and Teacher Education**

*Dr David Holloway, Principal Lecturer, School of Education and Childhood Studies, University of Portsmouth*

The paper builds on the author's earlier conference presentations and published work (Holloway 1994, 2001, 2008a, b and 2009) examining developments in Further Education Teacher Training with a specific focus on attempts to reform and professionalise the provision.

The paper provides a critical examination of selected reform initiatives with particular attention paid to the period between 2004 -2010. Earlier work utilised a policy communities and policy networks analysis to examine the policy development process using a three stage model (Burch and Ward 1990) in order to examine the context and initial policy text (Taylor et al 1997). The outcomes that were not evaluated in the earlier work are the focus of this paper.

The UK Coalition Government 2010-2015 rejected the approach that underpinned the FETT reform process. That approach had a strong emphasis on regulation. This paper extends the published work by examining the specific outcomes of the reforms and the approach towards the regulation of the FETT sector adopted by the Coalition Government and its successor, the Conservative Government elected in June 2015. Prospects for the future of FETT are considered and contrast drawn with developments in the schools sector.



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