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SERA

Researching Education Bulletin

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Editorial

Welcome to the seventh issue of SERA's *Researching Education Bulletin*. We always welcome summaries of research from all education stakeholders. If you have something you wish to share or if you feel strongly about an issue in education then we would be delighted to hear from you. Just contact me Lorna.Hamilton@ed.ac.uk

We start this issue with a summary of key research into young people and police stop and search approaches by Ross Deuchar. This is then followed by an individual piece of research within a specific school context by Laura Cougan. Here the focus is on the use of homework clubs. Our next paper reflects on the ways in which student teachers try to develop their approaches to behavior in classrooms written by Lorna Hamilton. The following paper discusses interesting new research from an academic based in Pakistan. Sumera Umrani's work acknowledges the dominance of English as a language in a post colonial context but then looks more deeply into the kinds of struggle and negotiation involved for those from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds when English is the key means of getting on in life. A final paper briefly introduces readers to some of the issues raised by the National Improvement Framework, provides a link to key issues raised during the consultation on this document and invites thoughts and comments on an important government strategy.

I am sure that this rich range of papers will stimulate discussion and debate. On behalf of the Editorial team I hope that you enjoy reading issue 7 of REB.

Lorna Hamilton
University of Edinburgh, November 2017.

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Police Stop and Search

Ross Deuchar, University of the West of Scotland

Against the backdrop of an unprecedented level of criticism, scrutiny and policy change within Police Scotland in relation to the use of stop and search, over the past 12 months I have led a new research project - funded by the British Academy – which has sought to explore and examine the impact of this particular police tactic on the lives of young people from disadvantaged communities. Specifically, the research has focused on exploring the nature of police presence in the lives of these young people, the extent to which stop and search procedures are perceived to be underpinned by a focus on procedural justice (fair processes – fair outcomes) and their impact on young people's responses to and cooperation with the police.

Data was collected in both the east and west of Scotland (mainly, but not exclusively, in Glasgow and Edinburgh) and an ethnographic approach, drawing upon participant observation, was used. I firstly shadowed officers from flexible, proactive units, observing over 50 engagements and interventions with young people on the streets that included the implementation of stop and searches. Secondly, I interviewed a cross-section of the patrol officers I worked with and their immediate superior officers. And thirdly, I conducted semi-structured interviews and focus groups with young people in each of the focus communities who had had recent experience of engaging with the police and/or had been recently stopped and searched.

Officers across all of the communities where I worked, generally vocalised a strong commitment to procedural justice values and the need for stop and search to be underpinned by fairness, dignity and respect (MacQueen and Bradford, 2014). However, in Glasgow and its surrounding areas 'robust' policing was also very commonly viewed as being synonymous with authoritarian approaches, the need to enact disciplinary power and to use stop and search as a tool for both detection and deterrence. This was in stark contrast to the views and perspectives of officers in Edinburgh. In police divisions there, the current structural and cultural changes being initiated by Police Scotland in terms of reducing the volume of stop and searches and embedding an increased focus on human rights represented a return to the more familiar, low-key approaches that have always characterised officers' approaches to policing in the east (Murray, 2014; Murray, 2015; SPA, 2014; AGSS).

From a Foucauldian perspective, police presence in the lives of the young people I interviewed and observed in the west of Scotland was, like the panoptican, operated as a 'system of surveillance' (Foucault, 1977: 202). Officers mapped out and controlled public space by monitoring and intruding on the lives of the 'usual suspects' (most commonly, teenage boys in socially deprived neighbourhoods) and using disciplinary techniques. One of the most prominent disciplinary tactics used was stop and search. The young people I interviewed in the west of the country clearly felt that their encounters with the police were far from being characterised by procedural justice. They felt unfairly and unjustifiably stopped and searched, believed that the decisions to search were based on stereotypical social information and that the encounters themselves were disrespectful and stigmatising in nature.

Panopticon imagined

Accordingly, the tendency of the police to use disciplinary power on the streets to create a 'carceral society' (where officers regulated youth access to public space to the point where the young people felt like prisoners) led to alienation and resentment (Foucault, 1977: 298-306).

Conversely, young people in Edinburgh clearly believed that officers were generally doing a good job, and tended to be aware of their rights and to be exposed to practices that upheld these rights. During my observations there, I noticed the tendency towards a less 'robust' style of policing, as it tends to be characterised in Glasgow; officers were less inclined to confront young people and as a result friendly, less combative forms of engagement emerged and this facilitated trust and mutual respect.

Sufficient reciprocal ground may often exist between young people and the police that can be drawn upon to sow the seeds of a 'more communicative future' for police/youth relations, and particularly those involving officers and disadvantaged youth (Loader, 1996: 145). During my study, I came across some encouraging statements made by young people in Glasgow in relation to the positive engagements they experienced with *some isolated* officers, including campus police officers. However, promoting a wider sense of equity and justice among disadvantaged young people in the west of Scotland will require a much greater focus on discursive and 'ambient policing' styles and a rejection of the prevailing neo-liberal view of the police as the 'discipline mechanism' of panopticism (Loader, 2006: 203; Elden, 2003: 249).

As a result of the recent intense media and political scrutiny that has been extended to Police Scotland (and particularly focused on the use of stop and search), a new reform movement has emerged within the single force focused on the need for greater proportionality, procedural justice and the prioritization of human rights (SPA, 2014; AGSS, 2015; Fyfe, 2015; Police Scotland, 2015). Let us hope that this results in the building of social 'bridges' between young people and the police and a greater feeling of social justice in socially deprived communities in the west of Scotland. However, perhaps it will be important for future targeted professional development training for the police (particularly in the west of Scotland) to focus on supporting officers to re-define the concept of 'robust' policing to be synonymous with the implementation of procedural justice. Additionally, perhaps there needs to be a particular emphasis on ensuring that the voices

and perspectives of disadvantaged young people are represented within such training. Finally, it is evident that this type of officer training would benefit from having opportunities for sharing of policing styles and practice between the east and west of Scotland, wherever possible.

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Ross Deuchar is Professor and Assistant Dean within the School of Education and Director of the Interdisciplinary Research Unit on Crime, Policing and Social Justice at the University of the West of Scotland.

ross.deuchar@uws.ac.uk

Scottish Educational Review
http://www.scotedreview.org.uk/

Aims and Scope *Scottish Educational Review* (SER) publishes academic articles and research notes relating to the field of educational policy and practice. The journal is written for academics and researchers in the field of education, teachers and managers in schools and local authorities and those concerned with the development and implementation of education policy. While some of the focus is Scottish, we aim to publish work that is of wider interest to the readership. We also publish work relating to education out with Scotland that may be of interest to a Scottish audience.

Availability of papers SER is available in paper form by subscription. The website contains an archive of back issues (papers as downloadable pdfs). The most recent edition is available as **abstracts only**, but all older articles are available in full back to 1997.

Homework club

Laura Cougan

Introduction

This paper provides a summary of an action research designed to evaluate a pilot Primary 6/7 homework club in an area of deprivation. Recent literature contends that homework clubs have a significant range of benefits with perhaps one of the most thought-provoking being that they show promising potential to prevent a further widening of the attainment gap between the richest and poorest pupils (Sosu and Ellis 2014; Hirsch 2007; Cummings et al 2012). However, the findings of this study and engagement with the literature would suggest that homework clubs do not automatically solve the inequalities surrounding the homework debate and can in fact, create new conflicts. This study set out to ascertain the perceived benefits and tensions of the homework club and to examine motivational factors affecting participation in the club.

The key findings from this study were as follows:

- pupils, parents and staff held a wide range of differing perceptions on the benefits of the homework club, with relatively few shared perceptions
- pupils, parents and staff held a wide range of differing perceptions on the tensions of the homework club, with relatively few shared perceptions
- pupils' "forced" attendance at the homework club proved detrimental to learning

Methodology

Between February-May 2015, ten pupils, two parents, two class teachers and the head teacher were interviewed. The Primary 6 and Primary 7 pupils participated in focus group interviews and also took part in a drawing and writing technique developed by Wall and Higgins (2006), where drawing and speech bubbles are used to explore pupils' own cognition in general, and thought bubbles are used to explore metacognition.

Having audio-recorded and transcribed all pupil, parent and staff interviews, an inductive analysis (Mertler 2009) was conducted to identify emerging themes. The key themes were then selected using categorization (Gibbs 2007) and a colour-coding technique developed by Dana and Yendol-Hoppey (2009) was applied.

Key Findings

Perceived benefits

When asked directly about the benefits of the homework club, nineteen different benefits were perceived by pupils, parents, teachers and the head teacher. The most common perceived benefit was that the homework club provides an environment conducive to learning where one is not available at home. This reflects the findings of MacBeath (1993), MacBeath et al (2001) and Cosden et al (2004), and is particularly pertinent in the current Scottish education context where there is growing focus on efforts to close the attainment gap.

All participants, with the exception of one pupil, were able to offer at least one benefit of the homework club. This suggests that the homework club is worthwhile in some respects and provides some justification for it to be offered again in the next session. An implication for future practice is that in Scotland at present, the decision to offer a homework club is at each school's discretion (see DirectScot.org 2014) and there is currently no ring-fenced budgetary allocation for this (Sosu and Ellis 2014). This brings to light staffing conflicts as teachers are currently unpaid to

run homework clubs.

In considering the potential limited spaces in the homework club, on account of budgetary and staffing issues, this study discussed the controversial matter of only offering places to 'targeted' pupils, using criteria offered by MacBeath (1993) such as pupils on free school meals or pupils with more than three children in the household. It is worth noting that the wider research (Scottish Executive 2006; Sosu and Ellis 2014; MacBeath 1993) deems this educationally sound.

Perceived Tensions

Twelve different perceived tensions emerged from this study. The most common perceived tension of the homework club was that the club itself leads to a lack of parental involvement in homework. This mirrors one of the risk factors identified by Cosden et al (2004), whereby homework clubs can potentially mean that parents are taken out of the homework 'loop'. An interesting dichotomy arising from this study was that some of the pupils attending the homework club intimated that they wanted more parental involvement with their homework.

This study also uncovered a potential new source of conflict – that of the homework club itself causing tension between pupil and parent.

Motivation

Of the ten pupils attending the homework club, two pupils intimated they were "forced" to attend by their parent(s). The data triangulated and analysed in this study (including interview transcripts, homework club attendance records and pupil drawing templates) pointed towards the homework club having a detrimental effect for these two pupils.

This brought to light issues surrounding the debate about homework and motivation, where Sharp (2002) and MacBeath (1993), warn against making attendance compulsory. An informed approach for future practice might be to 'target' pupils (given the limited spaces) but only offer the place if the pupil wishes to attend voluntarily.

Conclusion

Although no claims of transferability are being made, the findings of this study would suggest that a primary school homework club in an area of deprivation can be worthwhile. However, homework clubs are not without their tensions and several key issues may be considered for future practice. Firstly, there is a strong case that pupil participation in the homework club should be voluntary. Secondly, there is justification for targeting pupils for the club, albeit on a voluntary basis. Thirdly, the action research cycle should be repeated with any new cohort of pupils, parents and staff due to the wide range and individuality of perceptions regarding the homework club.

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Laura Cougan is a teacher-researcher in West Lothian. Laura.Cougan@westlothian.org.uk

How do new teachers learn to manage young people in the classroom?

Lorna Hamilton

Many people may think that learning to manage young people in the classroom is straightforward and achieved through a combination of behavioural 'tips', experience and observation of experienced teacher modelling. Yet, I would argue that this approach can be very hit or miss in what is achieved and may be reliant on a superficial and short term approach which is reliant on gaining control in the classroom. We can see from the three yearly research into behaviour in schools (e.g (2006, 2009, 2012 etc) funded by Scottish government, that Local Authorities and schools have embraced a much more complex and holistic approach to engaging with young people. Policy has tended to focus more on the importance of building up positive relationships with young people in order to work towards more long term and constructive learning experiences. However, it is unclear how student teachers may develop such approaches, especially when they are subjected to diverse and sometimes contradictory models from individual schools and teachers.

I have been particularly interested in how student teachers try to build on this aspect of their practice as so many I have met in ITE have highlighted behaviour as something which worries them, often as a result of scare stories in the media. This brief summary paper shares work I did with a group of student teachers working towards a one year teaching qualification in secondary teaching. Drawing on individual and focus group interviews as well as creation of significant behaviour management moments experienced by student teachers on school placements, participants were encouraged to build critical accounts of their experiences and how they tried to reconcile the tensions and sometimes contradictory advice and modeling they experienced.

Method:

This project was about dialogue between tutor and students, and students with each other as they set out to explore their development in relation to behaviour. Each round of data collection was analysed and fed into succeeding data collections. In order to ensure a scaffolded and critical approach to student teacher experiences in schools, use was made of David Tripp's critical incidents where student teachers choose events/observations to describe and analyse. These are chosen, Tripp says, as a result of a value judgement we make and the basis of that judgement is the significance we attach to the meaning of the moment. Here, the focus of such moments was to do with relationships, negative or positive, behaviour policy and practice issues. Participants discussed the nature of Tripp's incidents and, although supportive of the concept as set out by Tripp, they were unhappy with and sensitive to the language being used and asked to use an adapted term – significant moments. Thus, across the length of the project, student teachers created reflective commentaries that focused on significant moments in their teaching placement around teacher–pupil relationships.

The main focus of the data collection was built around following two cohorts of seven PGDE Secondary students. A semi-structured, one-hour interview took place with each individual student after their first placement period in schools. A group interview comprising three or four students then took place after the following two placements. Each placement lasted six weeks. In addition, students were asked to complete a brief reflective diary/commentary on each placement in relation to behaviour management experiences and issues. Student teachers established reflective commentaries around significant moments with regard to behaviour. Each interview and

set of significant moment accounts fed into following interviews, allowing an ongoing engagement with and understanding of the processes and conflicts experienced by student teachers.

Key findings

Across the two cohorts, participants were frequently faced with authoritarian approaches linked to behaviour modification and behaviourist stances rather than the humanist approach taken in LA policies built around the building of relationships. Punitive action was an important aspect of this approach: pupils might be moved away from friends, they might be excluded from the classroom for a short amount of time, referred to head of subject for attention, or a punishment exercise could be given etc. Emphasis was placed on teacher control within the classroom. For student teachers, this context resulted in a tension at times between school and student teacher beliefs about behaviour management. This brought forth issues of compliance or resistance to the dominant discourse of the school, especially given the uncertain status of the student teacher (in transition between learner and teacher persona). The vulnerability of the student teachers was apparent and affected the choices they made, particularly as they were subject to school and university assessments. The use of praise and reward of some kind, to encourage positive behaviour, resulted in a dilemma for student teachers as experienced teachers questioned whether this was simply 'bribery' and therefore could not be justified as a way of encouraging young people to recognise appropriate behaviour. Experienced teachers were more likely to focus on pupils facing consequences for poor behaviour as they could not be allowed to 'get away with it'. Student teachers were also concerned with a perceived need in schools for a moral absolute that could be applied to all

- Despite LA and school evidence on building positive relationships, students found themselves faced with diverse teaching models, often focused on traditional ideas of control and compliance through punishment.
- There is a need to acknowledge the experiences, assumptions and prejudices of student teachers and the problems that occur when they face competing or conflicting models within ITE and in schools.
- It is important to provide student teachers with the critical tools to engage with diverse models of behavior management. This promotion of critical thinking rather than simple replication of sometimes negative models, was achieved through use of significant moments. Additionally, as part of this process, dialogue and discussion around behaviour approaches were promoted rather than behaviour being an isolated and singular experience for the individual teacher.

Link to academic article with references:http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13664530.2015.1032338

Lorna Hamilton is a Senior Lecturer in Education Research at the University of Edinburgh.
Lorna.Hamilton@ed.ac.uk

Constructing and Negotiating English Language Learner Identity in Pakistan

Sumera Umrani
sumera.umrani@usindh.edu.pk

Summary

Proficiency of English language carries special rewards in Pakistan. It is a means of academic, professional and social progress at different levels (Rahman, 2002; Shamim, 2008, 2011). The extensive practice of English language learning has inadvertently become part of the English language learners' identity. Hence, this study aimed at studying the construction of English Language Learner Identity (ELLI) in Pakistan and focused on how English language learners reconstruct, redefine and negotiate their language learner identities during their English language learning journeys. In particular, it attempts to explore learners' investment and agency in learning English and what 'future possible selves' they want to achieve after acquiring English language skills. Consideration is given to how learning English as a second language may be impacted by students' gender, social class and ethnolinguistic selves. Funded by Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, this project was carried out at a public sector university of the province of Sindh in Pakistan.

Drawing on the data gathered through multiple sources such as interviews, diaries and focus groups this instrumental case study suggested that investment, learner agency, desire for possible future selves and historical and cultural consciousness are the main constructs of language learner identity in postcolonial Pakistan which has been termed as 'Third Space English Language Learner Identity'. It reinforced an understanding of learners' identities as dynamic and multidimensional and fluid in nature, being continually reconstructed and negotiated over time in different academic, social and cultural contexts leading to a hybridised English Language Learner Identity (ELLI) situated in the 'third space'.

Background

The importance and popularity of English in today's world especially in postcolonial states like Pakistan is never quite as simple as it may appear. Language learning is a political exercise where issues of legitimacy and power relations are crucial (Cook, 1999). Learning any second/foreign language is always value-laden and this is so in the case of English in Pakistan. In addition, Pavlenko (2002) argues that second language learning is not only about acquiring a new language but is also a means of socialisation and more importantly a process of identity building. Language is not simply a means to communicate or express ideas rather it is a product that is constructed by the ways language learners define and redefine themselves, their social surroundings, their histories and their possibilities for the future (Riasati & Mollaei, 2012). Wenger (1998, p. 215) arguing along the same lines says 'learning any other language transforms who we are and what we can do; it is an experience of identity'.

Thus, the intertwining of language and identity has become a pivotal focus and lies at the heart of this study. Informed by the readings cited above we argue that learners of English at a public sector university in postcolonial Pakistan similarly undergo a process of identity reconstruction and negotiations during their language learning journeys and their journeys are influenced by their core identity categories such as gender, social class and ethnolinguistic affiliations. In this study, a significant transition point in student English language learning forms

the basis for an investigation of the construction of Third Space English Language Learner Identity. This transition period is important as it is a time of particular fluidity, as young people move from young adulthood to adulthood and career development, and are exposed to broader views and diverse student groupings.

Methodology

This project utilised the design of instrumental case study which was qualitative in nature. The data was gathered using four main tools: i) Interviews ii) Observations (both participant and non-participant) iii) Student Diaries and iv) Focus Groups. I recruited four different cohorts (students from Years 1 to 4) from Institute of English Language and Literature (IELL), University of Sindh (UoS), Jamshoro, Pakistan. Some other stakeholders associated with English language teaching and administration at the UoS were also involved for data triangulation. Participants from Year 1 were the primary participants in this project who were individually interviewed at the beginning and at the end of the project, wrote diaries fortnightly, and were observed within their classrooms and also in their social spaces through the method of Shadowing. The participants from Years 2, 3 and 4 were the secondary participants for this study who participated only through focus group discussions. The focus groups helped me gain some snapshots of the learners' journeys over four years in terms of their perceptions and investment in learning English at a public sector university, and in their social settings.

Key Findings

Drawing upon the social constructionist and poststructuralist perspectives of identity, this study highlights that the language learners, like all other human beings are social actors who belong to different social groups hence negotiate and reconstruct their identity at different points of their life (Block, 2007). Their language learning journeys do not just end with the acquisition of linguistic skills but also involve a process of redefining who they are, and what they want to become having acquired the particular second language. Therefore their investment in second language is in a way an investment in their own identity (Norton, 2000).

The key findings of this study reinforced the idea that English language learner identity in postcolonial Pakistan is multi-layered, dynamic, fluid, hybridised and complex. Within this conceptual frame, the study includes the major constructs of Investment, Agency, Possible Selves, and Historical and Cultural Consciousness as the significant elements that form English Language Learner Identity (ELLI) in a public sector university in postcolonial Pakistan. It mainly engages with the construct of Third Space and Hybridity. All these elements come under the overarching concept of Negotiated Language Learner Identity in postcolonial Pakistan, as seen in the diagram below. We have presented that process of construction of language learner identity in the form of a model. The explanation of each of the constructs of English language learner identity, and their possible development within this model, is given below.

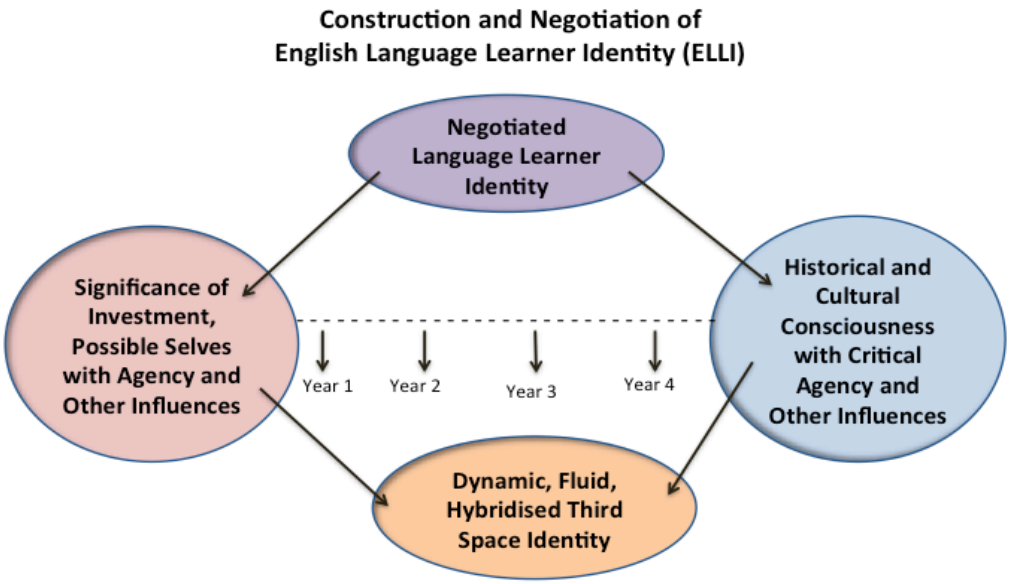

Diagram 1: Model of the Construction and Negotiation of Third Space English Langauge Learner Identity

The construction of English Language Learner Identity (ELLI) is represented by a dotted line (see diagram 1 above) that shows two distinct points of contact (one stands for Year 1 and the other for Year 4). The constructs of investment, possible selves and agency are predominantly situated at one end. These three constructs are quite noticeable in Year 1 and keep on evolving, with the passage of time, in subsequent years. The other end of the line (Year 4) is predominated by the constructs of critical learner agency, and historical and cultural consciousness. The nature and role of the constructs at both sides of the line are subject to change, characterising the fluidity of the process that leads to the 'negotiated hybridised third space English language learner identity'. In addition, both ends are also marked by the presence of other influences. These influences include identity markers such as gender, social class, and ethnolinguistic identities. This potential evolution of English Language Learner Identity (ELLI) also suggested a noticeable transformation from one end to the other as far as the other identity markers were concerned (e.g. gender, social class and ethnolinguistic identities).

Overall, this proposed evolution of English language learner identity showed a strong commitment to compliance as the predominant stance at the beginning of the students' time at university, and criticality at the end. However, in reaching for a more critical engagement with English language learning it was apparent that the shifting and negotiating, and the challenges faced, encouraged a much more fluid and dynamic appreciation of ELLI in a 'third space'. This space allows learners to accommodate various co-existing and interwoven constructs of their ELLI without challenging the authenticity and significance of each other (Bhabha, 1994). The third space creates a hybrid and multi-layered English language learner identity which is not fixed and remains in a state of flux.

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Sumera Umrani lectures in English at the University of Sindh, Pakistan.

Consultation on the National Improvement Framework in Scotland

Scottish Government's consultation on a new National Improvement Framework in Scotland (2015) involved representatives from all possible stakeholder groups. The intention of this document was to drive forward improvement in Scottish Schools. One of the organizations involved in this process was the Royal Society of Edinburgh. As this education strategy moves forward, we would like to encourage readers to reflect on the points made by the RSE report on this new government imperative and to let us know your opinions. There are many points but we would like to encourage debate in particular around teacher professionalism and the National Improvement Framework, as well as the consequences of a nationally standardized assessment at P1, 4 and 7 and S3 and the possible impact upon young people.

Link to full document: https://www.rse.org.uk/advice-papers/national-improvement-framework/

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Lorna Hamilton, University of Edinburgh

lorna.hamilton@ed.ac.uk

Ross Deuchar, University of West Scotland

ross.deuchar@uws.ac.uk

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Anna Beck, University of Glasgow

a.beck.1@research.gla.ac.uk

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We would also be interested in hearing from other stakeholders who might want to participate, so do consider this opportunity.