

<b>Institution:</b> Durham University
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 28 (Modern Languages and Linguistics)
<b>Title of case study:</b> CS2 The History of Russian Child Science in Contemporary Context
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>In 2012 and 2013 <b>Andy Byford</b> provided expert consultancy at the Department of Educational Psychology, Moscow Pedagogical State University (MPGU), advising its staff, trainees, and a wider network of beneficiaries in Russian educational and child-welfare services. Insights from Byford's research prompted the network to perceive itself as part of a broader scientific and professional movement, and stimulated further collaboration within Russian children's and educational services. The Department expanded its use of the history of Russian child science in the training of educational psychologists, teachers and other specialists in education and child welfare. Byford's research also contributed directly to the Department's teaching and assessment, and was incorporated into a textbook of professional training for educational psychologists, of which he is co-author.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>Since joining Durham University in October 2009, Byford has been substantially developing research on the history of the Russian child science movement from the 1880s to the 1930s, which he began prior to his appointment. Supported by grants from the British Academy and the AHRC, awarded in 2011, his research examines the social, cultural and political contingencies in the rise and fall of scientific movements, professional frameworks and expert discourses in Russian education, psychology and child welfare. It shows that early twentieth-century child science developed as a heterogeneous field of scientific and professional work, carried out through interactions between experts belonging to different institutional and professional structures and environments [output 2]. It demonstrates that Russian child science was a 'scientific-professional movement' akin to a 'social movement', that is to say a relatively temporary form of mobilisation and collective action for a particular purpose [output 3]. It explains that this movement was vital to professional and disciplinary formation in areas such as educational psychology and special education [outputs 2 and 3]. It ties these processes to certain broader types of anthropology of childhood, social reproduction and social transformation [output 1]. Byford's research also places the development of the Russian child science movement in the wider social and cultural history of childhood in Russia [output 4].</p> <p>Russian child science emerged around 1900 as a controversial area of expertise, bringing together different professions and disciplines which treated child development and socialisation as a territory of specialist investigation. In the 1930s, Soviet paedology was eliminated by Stalin on political grounds, leading to the dismantlement of its institutions, the purging of its specialists, and a ban on its methodologies (e.g. mental testing). After the Soviet Union's collapse, the ban was lifted, and since the 1990s, the history of Russian child science has come to be regarded as directly relevant to contemporary transformations of educational and children's services in the Russian Federation. This professional field faces significant dilemmas about how to approach a number of key issues: the professional role of school psychologists, inclusive vs. special education, class streaming, intelligence and ability testing, teacher authority and classroom discipline, the use of technology in the classroom, traditional vs. free-educational models, the development of experimental innovation in pedagogy, relations between parents and professionals. Professionals in the field have asked themselves whether these problems might be resolved through the revival of certain early twentieth-century Russian traditions of child science, as a uniquely 'holistic' approach to addressing the issues of child development and socialisation [output 3].</p> <p>Byford's research draws out the historical underpinnings of these issues, and their relevance for contemporary professional and scientific expertise on the development of children. It has revealed the means by which different stakeholders are brought into child science [output 1]. It has explained how different professions collaborate and what the main obstacles to this might be [output 2]. It has analysed how experts interact with the wider public, especially parents [outputs 1 and 2]. It has charted transformations in the working relationships between experts, on the one hand, and political and administrative structures, on the other [output 3]. It has elucidated historic controversies surrounding, in particular, mental testing, special education, juvenile delinquency and</p>

developmental neuroscience – issues that remain a topic of on-going debate in Russia [output 3].

### 3. References to the research

1. BYFORD, A. (2013) 'Parent Diaries and the Child Study Movement in Late Imperial and Early Soviet Russia', *The Russian Review* 72 (2), pp. 212-241
2. BYFORD, A. (2013) 'Roditel', uchitel' i vrach: k istorii ikh vzaimootnoshenii v dele vospitaniia i obrazovaniia v dorevoliutsionnoi Rossii' [Parent, Teacher, Doctor: Towards a History of Their Interrelations in Matters of Education and Upbringing in Pre-Revolutionary Russia], *Novye rossiiskie gumanitarnye issledovanie* [New Russian Humanities Research] 8 (<http://www.nrgumis.ru/>).
3. BYFORD A. (2013) 'Zagrobnaia zhizn' "nauki" pedagogii: k voprosu o znachenii "nauchnykh dvizhenii" (i ikh istorii) v sovremennoi pedagogike' [The Afterlife of the 'Science' Called Paedology: Towards a Question of the Significance of 'Scientific Movements' (and their History) in Contemporary Pedagogy], *Prepodavatel': XXI vek* [The Teacher: 21st Century] 1, pp. 43-54
4. BYFORD, A. (2012) 'Childhood Studies: Russia', *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Childhood Studies*, ed. Heather Montgomery, New York: Oxford University Press, 2012 (<http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/page/childhood-studies>)

### Evidence of Quality

- Byford's research at Durham was funded by a British Academy Small Research Grant (2011; SG101445; £4,200) and an AHRC Early Career Fellowship (October 2012-March 2013; AH/J00362X/1; £41,973)
- Outputs 1, 2 and 3 all appeared in prestigious international peer-reviewed journals. Output 1 has been submitted to REF2
- *Oxford Bibliographies Online* [output 4] is a portal of literature-review-style subject bibliographies (fully annotated and contextualised), commissioned by OUP from key experts in the relevant fields and much used in both research and teaching

### 4. Details of the impact

In July 2011, as a result of his established reputation in the history of Russian child science, Byford was invited by the Department of Educational Psychology at Moscow Pedagogical State University (MPGU) in July 2011 to act as an expert consultant on the history of child science [source 1]. He undertook two periods of consultancy, in March-April 2012 (part-funded by the British Academy) and in March-April 2013 (funded as part of an AHRC Early Career Fellowship). During these two periods, Byford advised the Department and the wider network of stakeholders associated with it, including local practitioners in psychology and education, policy advisors, and representatives of parent groups. He presented his latest research on the history of child science, which conceptualises it as a scientific-professional movement involving a multiplicity of stakeholders engaged in both collaboration and conflict, and focused particularly on its relevance for the following issues: problems of inter-professional collaboration; the influence of expert knowledge on society; reform and innovation in educational and child science research; and the role of history in conceptualising contemporary problems in education and child psychology.

MPGU played a major role in the development of child science in the Soviet 1920s, when it was an institutional base of key figures in educational research and child psychology. The Department of Educational Psychology was created in 2010 with the explicit aim of developing new approaches to the psychology of education, in part by drawing on a wider than usual range of resources from representatives of different disciplines, and more especially, international academics, whose work has the potential to innovate contemporary educational theory and practice. Its ten researchers and lecturers train postgraduate students studying towards qualifications in the 'Psychology of Educational Management' and the 'Practical Psychology of Education'. As a research group they occupy a strategic position in the field of educational-psychological expertise in the Russian Federation, analogous to that occupied by early-Soviet 'child scientists'. They provide regular

## Impact case study (REF3b)

advisory services to over one hundred educational establishments in Moscow, working with both schools and children's homes. They provide training to teachers and parent groups. They organise special, psychologically informed, learning and teaching workshops and events directly with pupils. The Department invited Byford as it believed that an understanding of the historical legacies of Russian child science would assist its contribution to contemporary processes in Russian education, and inform its collective work as researchers and experts in this field.

During his first visit in 2012, Byford took part in staff meetings and a number of outreach activities [source 4]. His consultations took the form of a seminar on child science as a multi-professional field, followed by a discussion with the Department's staff and postgraduates, and with staff of the Russian Academy of Education [source 2]. Byford gave an introductory lecture on this topic to over 50 trainee primary school teachers studying at MPGU [source 3]. In the words of the Department's Head, 'the social-historical studies of Andy Byford allow[ed] us to understand the causes and risks of educational reforms currently taking place in Russia, including such areas as inclusive education, the professionalisation of teachers, and the disciplinary fragmentation of specialists in this field'. Noting that the issues raised by Byford are rarely considered in modern Russia, the Department's Head concluded that his contributions 'proved to be much needed in contemporary psychological-pedagogical research as well as educational practice in Russia'. He emphasised the significance of Byford's research 'for the appropriate development [in Russia] of interdisciplinary research in childhood and contemporary educational practice' [source 4].

A second round of consultations took place in March-April 2013. These involved (a) a series of three seminars for twenty postgraduates; (b) two focus-groups, one with the department's staff and participants in its postgraduate professional training programme, and the other with their wider network of contacts and beneficiaries in the Russian education field (fourteen participants in total); and (c) a public lecture on the 'afterlife' of Russian child science [source 5]. The lecture was attended by over fifty lecturers, PhD, Masters and undergraduate students based at MPGU's Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology, as well as by representatives of other Moscow-based universities and research institutes. It also attracted the attention of representatives of 'Researcher', the all-Russian movement of creative educators, as well as teachers and psychologists from leading Moscow schools [source 7]. The lecture was published in expanded form in *Prepodavatel': XXI vek* [The Teacher: 21st Century], a professional academic journal widely read by Russian teachers, educational psychologists and related professionals. All these activities were documented and publicised on Byford's Durham-based project website (in English and Russian; 2,119 visitors by 31 July 2013) and on the MPGU website (in Russian; 281 visitors to the 2013 seminars pages by 31 July 2013), as well as through social media, including Twitter (28 followers) and Youtube (94 views for the public lecture) [source 9].

As noted by the Head of MPGU's Department of Educational Psychology, the issues raised in the focus groups and seminars allowed the group 'to define [their] approach to topical psychological and pedagogical problems, to conceptualise the underlying logic of this approach and to support this with arguments'. He also stated that 'the knowledge of the mechanisms of paedology's evolution as a scientific movement enables an appropriate interpretation of contemporary processes and grounds our prognoses of how pedagogy and psychology will develop in the future' [source 7]. Byford's research insights affected the group's perception of their existing work and professional role as part of a wider social enterprise. One participant found it particularly useful to understand 'the complexity [and] importance, of forging multi-professional relations and relations between specialists and parents'. Another noted that the discussions 'enhanced [their] sense of responsibility'. A third remarked that 'the path of developing influence [became] clearer – what [was] possible and what the difficulties might be'; others, who initially 'thought that [their] influence was minimal – now [saw] various possibilities opening up' [source 6]. The group was particularly 'impressed by the depth and thoroughness' [source 7] of the discussions concerning Russia's historical experience of mobilising parent groups in the work of professionals in education, psychology and child welfare, and the challenges posed by diverse forms of partnerships that parents and professionals are able to form in matters of childcare, education and research, which go well beyond a fixed expert-client relationship. A postgraduate trainee in psychology, who works in preschool education, stated that this topic 'made [her] rethink aspects of [her] practical work' [source 6].

## Impact case study (REF3b)

Participants emphasised the relevance of Byford's approach to early twentieth-century traditions of Russian/Soviet child science for contemporary educational and child welfare reforms in the Russian Federation. The Head of Department pointed out that before Byford's consultations 'the history of paedology remained mostly outside [his Department's] purview [...]. Many [of their] PhD candidates and Masters students thus [thanks to Byford's seminars] for the first time turned their attention to the legacy of paedology'. As a result of this second period of consultancy, the Department took the decision to revise, with immediate effect, their courses in the 'Psychology of Education' and 'History of the Theory of Educational Psychology' for undergraduate and Master's students, incorporating the use of research articles by Byford, and other materials produced by him during the two periods of consultancy [source 7]. Podcasts of Byford's lectures and seminars, together with associated material, remain in place as a teaching resource on MPGU's website [source 9]. In the June 2013 examination session, assessment on the Department's Masters programme included questions on topics covered in Byford's lectures and seminars [source 7].

In April 2013, at the end of the second period of consultancy, following suggestions by staff and students at MPGU, Byford was invited by the Head of Department to join a team of authors to prepare a new undergraduate textbook for educational psychologists (*Introduction to a Profession: The Educational Psychologist* [in Russian]) as the author responsible for the textbook's historical section (two and a half chapters, amounting to 20% of the textbook). Byford adapted his research publications for this purpose, with particular focus on the historical relationship between education and psychology. The textbook is scheduled for publication in early 2014 in 1,500 copies in its first edition. It will be marketed to undergraduates training as educational psychologists and related professionals across the Russian Federation. Its Russian publisher Iurait is a well-established producer of high-quality academic textbooks, specialising in professional training [source 8]. Byford has been invited by MPGU to undertake a third spell of consultancy in 2014 (again funded by the British Academy), to coincide with the completion of his project [source 7].

### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

1. Letter of invitation, dated 5 June 2011, from the Head of the Department of Educational Psychology and leader of the group of educational psychologists at the Moscow Pedagogical State University to whom consultancy was being provided.
2. Video recording of the 2012 seminar event.
3. Letter of acknowledgment, dated 15 April 2012, from the Head of the International Office of MPGU, describing the lecture given to MPGU's trainee primary school teachers on 6 April 2012.
4. Report by the Head of the Department of Educational Psychology, dated 18 April 2012, detailing the activities and outcomes of Byford's first consultancy (21 March – 18 April 2012).
5. Video recordings of the key events that took place at MPGU in March-April 2013 (three seminars, two focus groups, and one public lecture).
6. Feedback cards received from members of the audience and participants of discussions in the events carried out in 2013 (40 cards returned in total): public lecture (24 cards returned), seminars (8 cards returned) and focus-groups (8 cards returned). Included also are full lists of attendants of the seminars (24 names in total) and focus groups (14 names in total), with their contact details.
7. Report by the Head of the Department of Educational Psychology, dated 15 April 2013, detailing the activities and outcomes of Byford's second consultancy (21 March – 15 April 2013).
8. Book contract for the textbook *Vvedenie v professiiu: Psikholog obrazovaniia* [Introduction to a Profession: The Educational Psychologist], Moscow: Iurait, 2014, co-authored by A.S. Obukhov, A.M. Fedoseeva and A. Byford, accompanied by a note, dated 22 May 2013, from the head of the authorial team, as signatory of the contract, confirming and clarifying the publication details, plus a PDF of the preliminary front-cover bibliographical information.
9. Project website: <http://www.dur.ac.uk/russianchildscience/>, fully documenting all the above activities, with hyperlinks to the MPGU website. Accompanying Google analytics data is provided.