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| <b>Institution: Leeds Metropolitan University</b>   |
| <b>Unit of Assessment: 25 (Education)</b>   |
| <b>Title of case study: Supporting Children: Childhood, Communication, Professionalism and Pedagogy</b>   |
| <p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>Four staff align with impact in the interdisciplinary field of Childhood Studies; Broadhead, Brock, Moss and Potter. Their research examines different, related aspects of early to late childhood. The impact is evident in several domains. Research has contributed to policy and professional development in relation to the early years and autistic spectrum disorders. It has enhanced pedagogies in schools concerning play and children's social participation. It has improved communication with children through the development of play approaches and approaches for those children diagnosed on the autistic spectrum. It has contributed to childhood workforce skill enhancement in relation to the early years and men's professional and familial involvement with children. This research has also informed public awareness of children's perspectives and experiences through the use of media and other forms of public engagement.</p>  |
| <p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>This interdisciplinary research is informed by different academic disciplines and enhances the rights and well-being of children across the age range. Research projects [reference 1] have involved policy analysis and considered rewards, retention and recruitment in children's workforce reform, the effectiveness of workforce reform and the impact of practitioner research projects on children's workforce development [1]. This work impacts substantially at a policy and professional practice level. Research into play and pedagogy (Broadhead, 1992-ongoing) also contributes to professional practice in schools and other settings. The research considers how children learn through play in educational settings [2]. It is well-established with regular national and international presentations and includes numerous publications, evidencing an extensive body of knowledge in an under-researched field. Impact on current policy development is extensive, invited conference keynotes are regularly undertaken. Broadhead has been involved with Taylor and Francis and international colleagues in launching the International Journal of Play (2012), a singular absence in the journal literature. Research that considers dimensions of professionalism, communication and pedagogy (Brock, 2000-ongoing) initially involved practitioners working across early childhood education and care. It was then promoted within the interdisciplinary early years' team in education, social work and other professions involved in children's services [3]. It involves an international partnership with a colleague in Massachusetts, USA, and is presented on the TACTYC website bringing responses and requests for papers from students and practitioners nationally. This research led to a commission to evaluate the social impact of the National Year of Reading in two local authorities in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. Research into childhood and social change (Moss, 2007-ongoing) has impacted on pedagogy and public awareness. This focused on children's social participation and considered under-researched life-experiences relating to wider social change and social inequality, broadening the canvas for understanding children's social engagement. Articles related to the methodology and children's political engagement have been published in high ranked journals [3 and 4] and a research monograph has also been published with Bloomsbury Academic. Other internationally significant research encompasses both autism (Potter, 1997-ongoing) and father inclusion (Potter 2004-ongoing). Autism research [5] led to the development of an innovative approach to working with children with autism and severe receptive language problems, namely the "minimal speech approach" which has since become a recognised intervention in the field. Father inclusion studies have been carried within local Sure Start evaluations and schools. Potter's outputs provide evidence of effective approaches to engaging poor fathers in early years' services, making her work amongst the most extensive bodies of knowledge around service inclusion for fathers in disadvantaged areas in the UK. Research findings have been disseminated to a wider professional audience through a book co-edited with Roger Olley, M.B.E. a national expert on father inclusion [6]. Potter's contribution in the field of autism and father inclusion has been recognised through the award of a Leverhulme Research Fellowship in 2013, "Fathers of Children with autism: needs, practices and service use", which will explore themes associated with fathering and children with autism.</p> |

## Impact case study (REF3b)

Pat Broadhead: Leeds Met 2006-2011 (Professor, Emeritus).

Avril Brock: Leeds Met 2005 (Senior Lecturer, Principal Lecturer).

Dorothy Moss: Leeds Met 2004 (Senior Lecturer, Principal Lecturer).

Carol Potter: Leeds Met 2007 (Senior Lecturer).

### 3. References to the research

1. Purcell, M. and Broadhead, P. (2007) Shaping New Policies and Strategies in Childcare: The Application of Systematic Search and Analysis of Existing Data Sets. *The International Journal of Inter-disciplinary Social Sciences*. 2 (3) pp. 103-110. Available from the institution.
2. Broadhead, P. and Burt, A. (2012) *Understanding Young Children's learning through play: Building playful pedagogies*. London: Routledge. Available from the institution.
3. Brock, A. (2013) Building a Model of Early Years Professionalism from Practitioners' Perspectives. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 11,1,27-44. doi: 10.1177/1476718X12456003.
4. Moss, D. (2013). The form of children's political engagement in everyday life, in *Children and Society: The International Journal of Childhood and Children's Services* 27, 1, 24-34. doi:10.1111/j.1099-0860.2011.00373.x.
5. Potter, C. A. and Whittaker, C. A. (2001) *Enabling Communication in Children with Autism*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. Available from the institution.
6. Potter, C. A. and Olley, R. (eds.) (2012) *Engaging Fathers in the Early Years*. London: Continuum. Available from the institution.

### 4. Details of the impact

Three funded projects have been undertaken for the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) with outcomes feeding through reports, regional conferences and high-level meetings, into policy on workforce reform [corroborating source A]. This informing of public policy contributes to improved public services in a rapidly expanding arena and parallels similar international trends. Research and dissemination on playful learning has seen increasing impact through practitioner publications [B] and (to date) eight keynote presentations at practitioner conferences, regular meetings with senior policy officers charged with re-configuring the curriculum for young learners and has fuelled the now high profile national debates on play and learning in the early years. As a long-time Chair of the key national professional early years' organisation (TACTYC) Broadhead convened a high status research colloquium at Leeds Met in 2008 and presented summaries from this with colleagues to MPs and policy makers in the House of Commons (HoC) and to the Select Committee on Children and Families [C]. Documents from HoC presentation were referenced in a major review of the primary curriculum undertaken by Sir Jim Rose and advocating for playful learning in primary education. Recognition of expertise in the broader area of children's workforce development and integration of services has attracted two internationally renowned Visiting Professors (Peter Moss; Angela Anning). Their regional seminars held under the auspices of the Centre for Research into Childhood (now incorporated into the Centre for Social and Education Research across the Life course) and the Carnegie Research Institute have been well-attended by policy makers, workforce staff, University staff and students, creating a forum for information exchange at all levels of influence.

Brock has also been a member of the TACTYC executive and involved in the aforementioned colloquium, the evaluation of early years policy and the development of national conferences. Research models of professional practice developed in this research are widely drawn on and two handbooks of professional practice have been published, the first on interdisciplinary work [D] and a forthcoming one concerned with reflective practice. This research directly informs practice in the field, as evidenced by a keynote at a professional symposium organised by Kirklees Local Authority and attended by 70 Early Years Professionals [E]. This led to the commissioning of an evaluation of the social impact of the National Year of Reading in two local authorities in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. As the keynote speaker at the Staffordshire early years conference in June

2010, Brock presented research on early language development, story and bilingualism to 100 early years practitioners.

Research into social change and childhood (Moss, 2007- ongoing) challenges social assumptions about children and young people lacking motivation, being disengaged or apathetic. The focus is on the ways they engage with wider social change and the research explores the form of their political engagement. This research has raised public awareness, redressing the distorted portrayal of young people in relation to the 2011 riots and drawing attention to the cuts in services to young people. This impact was through a contribution to BBC Radio 4 programme 'Thinking Allowed', chaired by Professor Laurie Taylor [F], a programme which introduces the wider public to aspects of sociological research. Following this Moss was invited to contribute to *Sociology Review*, the magazine that enhances pedagogy related to A' level sociology [G]. The magazine is a teaching and learning resource for teachers and pupils following the curricula and is disseminated internationally.

The research into autism and especially the development of a "minimal speech approach" (Potter and Whittaker, 2001) has introduced an innovative and widely referenced approach in working with children with severe autism. It has Influenced professional guidelines at national level in the UK, being cited in government guidance on best practice approaches to education in the area [H]. Further afield, this work is cited in the international reference work "The Encyclopaedia of Autism" (Volkmar, 2013) which reviews research findings globally to define best practice in the field [I]. The research on father inclusion (Potter, 2004-ongoing) has impacted on skill enhancement in workforce development through changes in training delivered by leaders in the field of father inclusion work. Specifically, the main charity commissioning the research, Fathers Plus, developed a work-based learning element to their training and a range of training materials focusing on the key skills needed by those in the field of male engagement, as identified in the research [J].

#### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- A. Broadhead, P. Purcell, M. Frost, N and Campbell, A (2008) *Annotated Bibliography and Review of the Evidence of the Effectiveness of Workforce Reform*.
- B. Broadhead, P (2008) *NCB Highlight: Play in Schools, a review of the literature*. London: NCB (Commissioned research review of the field).
- C. House of Commons, Children's Schools and Families Committee *Training of Teachers. Fourth report of Session 2009-10*. HC 275 11 pp. 16-35 London: The Stationary Office.
- D. Brock, A. & Rankin, C. (2011) *Professionalism in the early years interdisciplinary team: supporting young children and their families*. London: Continuum.
- E. Brock, A. (2013) Keynote: Being Professional in the Early Years, presented to Kirklees Early years Professional Symposium, Huddersfield, 6<sup>th</sup> March.
- F. Moss, D. (July 13<sup>th</sup> 2011) Liverpool Riots and Political Children, Thinking Allowed, Professor Laurie Taylor, BBC Radio 4. (podcast available <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b012fqt5>).
- G. Moss, D. (2013) Politics and Memory, *Sociology Review* 22, 3, 24-28 (Magazine enhancing pedagogy related to Sociology A' level material).
- H. Department for Education and Skills (DfES) (2002) *Autistic Spectrum Disorders: Good Practice Guidance, Part 1*. London: DfES.
- I. Volkmar, F. (2013) (ed.) *The Encyclopaedia of Autism*. New York: Springer.
- J. Service Lead for Including Men (former Director of Fathers Plus).