

Developing Environments of Enquiry

an experiential professional development course for early years' and primary education

Developing Environments of Enquiry is a professional learning programme developed and led by Sightlines Initiative consultants.

It provides an opportunity for educators to develop their practice, expertise and capacity to build environments in which children's learning flourishes.

It is founded upon building learning environments of:

"Everybody knows that early years' educators can be creative, critical and reflective; that young children are creative, strong, powerful learners, and that educators and children thrive in creative enabling environments ... It's very difficult to turn beliefs, values and aspirations into practice ... there's a gap between what we want to do and what actually happens. This work is designed for everybody who wants to bridge that gap."

Mary Jane Drummond,
Early Childhood Education Consultant

ENCOUNTER



ENQUIRY



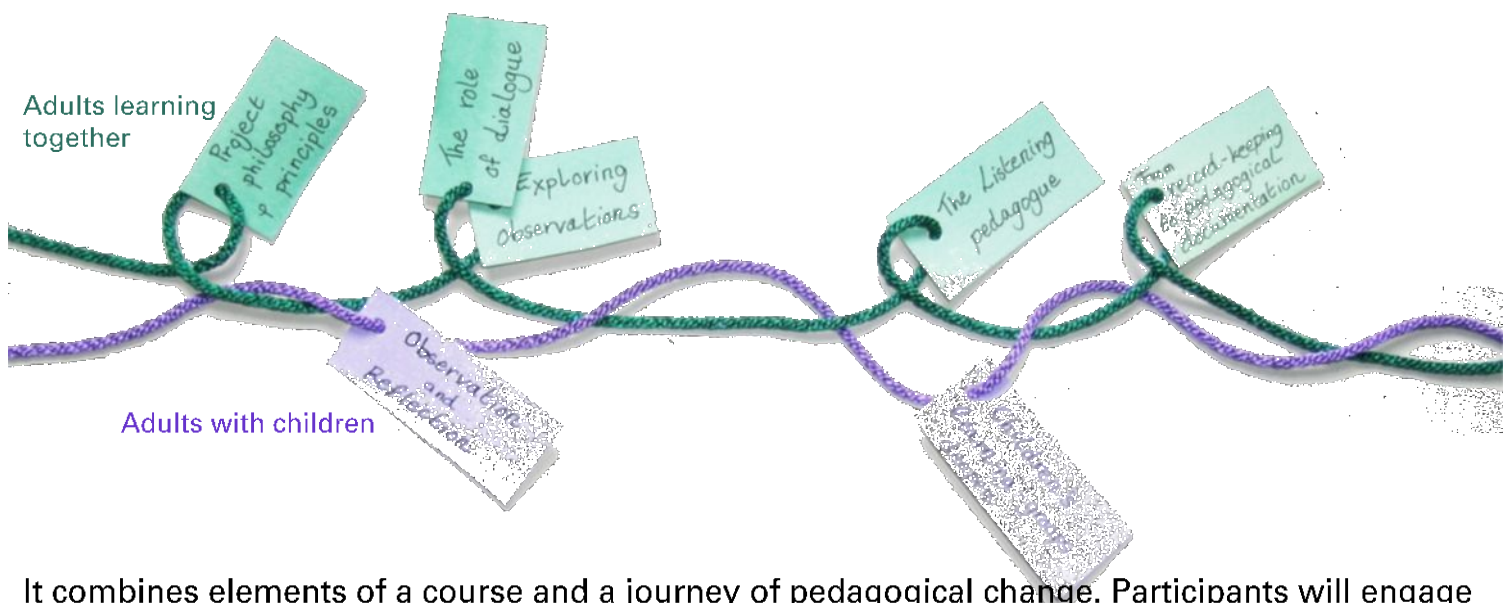
EXCHANGE



EXPRESSION



In order to live these qualities in their classrooms, participants need to be immersed in enabling learning environments. The course invites and challenges educators to deepen their understanding through action research, reading, reflection, dialogue and the undertaking of transformational change.



It combines elements of a course and a journey of pedagogical change. Participants will engage in ongoing enquiry and development in their settings. A framework of review, reflection and development days wraps around, and is interwoven, to offer guidance and support.

[Further background here.](#)



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Developing Environments of Enquiry: Is it for you and your colleagues?

Developing Environments of Enquiry is centred on valuing children as competent, sociable, imaginative and expressive learners. It aims to develop pedagogical frameworks that focus on children's fascinations and enquiries in relationship with others using many expressive languages. It is informed by the experiences of colleagues in Reggio Emilia whose early childhood centres are built upon and embody such an approach, and by twenty years of Sightlines Initiative action-research work.

It is for educators in schools & centres, which are ready to take bold steps in developing their approach to learning:

"Wise teachers know that the curriculum for education must be co-authored with the children." Colwyn Trevarthen, Professor of Child Psychology and Psychobiology Edinburgh

You will be bringing your experiences, expertise, competences, aspirations, questions, tensions, dilemmas, exploring them as you encounter and work with the framework. You will find new and exciting opportunities as well as dilemmas - and we will support you in encountering them.

Timeline (draft)

June 2016: Introduction morning & lunch for interested key staff and their head teachers.

July: Registration

July - August: Reading and other preparation. (Interested participants are strongly advised to also participate in [related 2016/17 professional development](#) where they can.)

Sept - Dec 2016: Course Phase 1: the foundations of a 4E culture

Jan - July 2017: Course Phase 2: working with children's enquiries; building learning groups

"For me, the whole course, and especially my classroom enquiry were profound experiences; through active listening, through attentive, respectful interactions, I saw so much learning. The Cambridge Primary Review highlights 'well-being, engagement, empowerment and autonomy' as key values: my own small-scale enquiry has convinced me that these are not just fine words on a page, but practical possibilities for all educators and their children."

Tracey Hutchinson,
DEoE M.A. cert course Uni of Northumbria
Also see her article in ReFocus Journal 10

"Our DEoE learning group was made up of ten leading educators from seven early years settings, and seven advisors. I made visits to the settings to support their process of change. The work involved transforming attitudes and culture within settings. All the group members said that the company of others in the learning group going through the same transition, and the commitment of management, was crucial to our success. The introduction of such a cultural change requires enthusiastic, determined, assertive and passionate participants."

Clare Schmieder, Poole Early Years Advisory Team, DEoE in Poole

Sightlines Initiative develops and demonstrates reflective and creative practice in UK early childhood education through action research projects and professional development activity. We are the UK reference point for Reggio Children, Reggio Emilia, Italy, and are members of the Reggio Children International Network..

We understand that children are born innately sociable, curious, competent and creative, and that the role of early years education is firstly to nurture, value and respect these qualities, and create engaging and meaningful learning environments for children.



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Reggio Children International Network UK reference point