

# International Centre for the Study of the Mixed Economy of Childcare



## SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

**2008/2009**

It is a great pleasure for ICMEC's co-directors to present the second annual report of the International Centre for the Study of the Mixed Economy of Childcare in the Cass School of Education. At the end of the second year of operation value has been added to ICMEC's activities and reputation as an authoritative source on the mixed market economy of childcare in the UK and internationally.

In summary, as part of ICMEC's work programme ICMEC's co-directors:

- submitted six research bids, of which four have been agreed;
- published or are expecting publication of eighteen articles and chapters, all but two in academic publications and two in practitioner publications;
- organised four international ICMEC events in London.
- gave eleven presentations on ICMEC and its subject matter.

Further activities already planned include two seminars in the third ICMEC international seminar series and with European Universities. Building on our record of work so far, we hope to be able to bid for major grants to sustain the activities of the centre.

### **1. Background to ICMEC**

This section serves as a reminder of the history of ICMEC to date. The proposal from Dr Helen Penn, Professor of Early Childhood and Eva Lloyd, Reader in Early Childhood, for the establishment of a multi-disciplinary research centre, received preliminary approval Cass School of Education Research Committee, the School Board, and the Senior Management Team in April 2007. On 10<sup>th</sup> May 2007 the UEL Academic Board's Research Committee approved the establishment of ICMEC. The proposal set out the ICMEC International Advisory Board, drawn from Business, Local Authorities, Policy Institutes, and Academia, and stressed the close links with the Business School (see below).

The aims and programme of work for ICMEC continues as before and are outlined below.

## **2. ICMEC staffing during 2008/09**

Helen Penn and Eva Lloyd have continued in their role as co-directors of the Centre and its research programme. They both work on ICMEC on a one/two day week basis. Since June 2009 Helen Penn has reduced her commitment and is working part-time. Between April and October 2009 Eva Lloyd is working .6 as a result of her research commitments.

Zena Brabazon, previously a senior executive in the London Borough of Haringey, did receive Graduate School approval to take up a research fellowship with ICMEC in September 2008. She subsequently gained a practitioner research grant from the *Children's Workforce Development Council* to carry out a research project on access and take-up of provision in Children's Centres. Her project report can be found on the ICMEC website.

At the end of June 2009 ICMEC was able to appoint a part-time research assistant on a .6 basis, with funding from the internal grant received from the UEL Business School in April 2009 for a comparative study exploring childcare markets in England and The Netherlands. See also point 5.1.2 below. Casey Edmonds, who graduated this year from UEL's School of Psychology, will be supporting the comparative study until the end of October 2009.

## **3. ICMEC's international Advisory Board**

Prior to gaining the University's approval, Helen Penn and Eva Lloyd had received support for their proposal from eight national and international experts in early childhood policy and economics, who subsequently agreed to become members of the Centre's Advisory Board. Since the first ICMEC annual report appeared, Mike Brewer's role has been taken over by Dr Gillian Paull, also from the Institute for Fiscal studies. All other members agreed to continue to serve on the Board, so in 2008/09 these members were:

- [Jim Barry](#) - Professor of Gender and Organization Studies, Business School, UEL and Visiting Professor at Luleå University of Technology in Sweden.
- [Kazem Chaharbaghi](#) - Professor of Management at UEL Business of School and Director of University of East London's multi-disciplinary research programmes.
- [William Laing](#) - economist and Chief Executive of Laing & Buisson, a market research organization specializing in the social care sector, including childcare, which he set up in 1976.
- [Peter Moss](#) - Professor in Early Childhood Provision at the Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.
- [Dr Gillian Paul](#) - Research Associate at the Institute for Fiscal Studies, London.

- [Susan Prentice](#) - Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg Manitoba, Canada.
- [Jennifer Sumsion](#) - Foundation Professor of Early Childhood Education, Charles Sturt University, Australia NSW.
- [Raymond A Whyte](#) - the Business Support Officer for London Borough of Brent Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and a member of the Strategic Planning and Information Management Team in the Children's Services Directorate

ICMEC's co-directors are grateful for advice and practical support received from these individuals throughout the whole of the Centre's second year of operation.

#### **4. ICMEC's Aims and work programme**

ICMEC's aims and work programme were agreed at the Advisory Board's first meeting, which took place in London on Monday 10 September 2007.

##### **IMMEC's aims are threefold:**

- To generate greater knowledge about Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) provision in countries which employ mixed economies of welfare and education services;
- To explore the contribution to young children's well being within mixed economies of childcare; and
- To develop an international and multi-disciplinary approach to exploring mixed economies of childcare.

##### **The Centre's work programme therefore focuses upon:**

1. developing a policy-relevant research agenda concerning comparisons between ECEC privatisation and marketisation processes in a variety of countries;
2. establishment of a virtual network of academics and stakeholders from the public, private for-profit and private not-for-profit (PVI) childcare sectors, in order to create a forum for the discussion of pertinent trends and developments in mixed economies of childcare;
3. organising a programme of events and international seminars to profile relevant scholarship and support knowledge transfer;
4. presenting ICMEC generated research and other pertinent findings to a wide range of audiences nationally and internationally, including policymakers, academics, childcare professionals and parents.

#### **5. ICMEC's activities and achievements in 2008/09**

The Centre's activities and achievements during its second year are summarised below in chronological order under headings which relate to the four domains of its work programme.

## **5.1. Developing a policy relevant research agenda**

### **5.1.1. Publications**

Relevant journal articles, magazine articles, reports and book chapters are listed below.

- Lloyd, E. (2008) 'The interface between childcare, family support and child poverty policies under New Labour: tensions and contradictions', *Social Policy and Society* Volume 7(4), 479-494.
- In the issue of practitioner magazine *Nursery World* dated 6 November 2008 Eva Lloyd published an analysis piece: 'Informal care too costly for the Dutch.' The Netherlands has pioneered financial help for grandparents childminding for their family, but while uptake has been huge, the system has thrown up unintended side-effects.
- November 2008 Helen Penn presented a paper, *International perspectives on quality in mixed economies of childcare*, at a conference organised by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research. Her paper has now been published in the *National Institute Economic Review's* (see below)
- October 2008 Helen Penn presented a keynote *Key Lessons from Research for Policy Makers*. at an EU conference on Early Education and Care in Brussels. This keynote was expanded and published by the EU. See below.
- In the summer of 2008 the Department for Children, Schools and Families published the *Childcare and Early Years Survey 2007: Parents' Use, Views and Experiences*, carried out by NatCen, of which Eva Lloyd was a co-author.
- In early summer Eva published a piece on this major survey in a practitioner journal: Lloyd, E. (2008) 'Showing the way to go: the Childcare and Early Years Survey.' *Nursery World*, 12 June, 14-15.
- In July 2009 the Department for *Children, Schools and Families* published the evaluation of the pilot of early education for two year old children by the National Centre for Social Research and Oxford University, of which Eva Lloyd was a co-author. Follow this link for the report:  
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RR134.pdf>
- Lloyd, E. (2008) review of: J. Belsky, J. Barnes and E. Melhuish (Eds) (2007) *The national Evaluation of Sure Start: Does Area-based Intervention Work?* *British Educational Research Journal*, Vol 34 (6), December, 871-872.
- Penn, H. (2008) *Public and private: the history of early education and care institutions in the UK*: in Eds. K. Schweie and H.Willekens. *Childcare and Pre-school Development in Europe* Palgrave MacMillan
- Penn, H. (2008) *Early Education and Care in Southern Africa; Think-Piece for CfBT Educational Trust*.
- Penn, H. (2008) *Understanding Early Childhood: Issues and Controversies*. Maidenhead. Open University Press/McGraw Hill 2<sup>nd</sup> revised enlarged edition.
- Penn, H. (2008) 'Working on the Impossible: Early Childhood Policies in Namibia' *Childhood*, V15(3) pp378- 398.
- Penn, H. (2008) Mapping Donor Initiatives in Early Childhood Education and Care. *Report for ISSA*. March. 2008. (A version of this report has

been submitted to *Childhood* under the title 'Travelling Policies and Global Buzzwords'

- Penn, H. (2009) *Early Childhood Education and Care: Key lessons from research for PolicyMakers*. To see the report follow this link:

[http://www.nesse.fr/nesse/nesse\\_top/tasks/analytical-reports/ecec-report-pdf](http://www.nesse.fr/nesse/nesse_top/tasks/analytical-reports/ecec-report-pdf)

- Eva Lloyd has a paper in press, together with Elaine Hallet at the Institute of Education, for a themed issue on professionalism of the journal *Contemporary Issues in the Early Years*. This is due for publication in early 2010.
- Helen Penn has a paper in press for the *Journal of Early Childhood Research* based on an earlier ESRC early childhood seminar series conference paper *Gambling on the Market*. This is due for publication in early 2010

### **5.1.2 Research proposals**

Over the course of the last twelve months both co-directors progressed the ICMEC research agenda by submitting a number of research proposals individually and jointly, as well as in collaboration with other agencies and/or early years consultants.

1. Helen Penn won a CfBT Educational Trust grant of £62,500 for a childcare costing study in South Africa.
2. In the summer of 2008 Eva reached agreement with the Families and Children Group at the National Centre for Social Research on her contribution to the DCSF funded evaluation of the early education for two year olds pilot, worth approximately £8000.
3. In June 2008, with Eva, Helen Penn submitted an outline bid to the Soros Foundation to review Open Society ECEC programmes. This was unsuccessful.
4. In February 2009, having gained the cooperation of senior colleagues at five other international research centres, Eva Lloyd submitted an outline bid to the Leverhulme Foundation under their International Networks funding strand for £125,000. This was to fund an international network of researchers who are investigating the operation of the for-profit childcare markets in the US, Australia, Canada, South Africa, New Zealand and the UK. Unfortunately this bid was unsuccessful as its subject was considered to fall outside this particular Leverhulme funding strand's remit, despite early consultation regarding this bid.
5. In March 2009, *Family Action*, a national voluntary organisation specialising in family support, agreed to fund an eight month research project jointly directed by Eva Lloyd and Professor Angela Harden of the Institute of Health and Human Development within UEL's School of Health and Biological Sciences. Further input into this project, worth £12,000, which aims to improve the measurement of family functioning in work with BME Families receiving family support in *Family Action* projects.
6. In April 2009 Eva Lloyd received £35,000 funding from UEL's Business School for a seven month comparative study of childcare market functioning in England and The Netherlands.

## **5.2 Establishing a virtual network of academics and stakeholders**

### *5.2.1 The ICMEC website and leaflet*

While the creation of the ICMEC website – [www.uel.ac.uk/icmec](http://www.uel.ac.uk/icmec) - in October 2007, has contributed significantly to the establishment of a virtual network of academics and stakeholders from the public, private for-profit and private not-for-profit sector, its format has rapidly gone out-of-date. However, no improvements can be made until the entire UEL website has been updated and reformatted. This website is currently being maintained by Eva Lloyd. Relevant publications and news from other countries with mixed economies of childcare is published alongside announcements of and presentations and reports resulting from ICMEC events. The A5 size ICMEC publicity leaflet has been widely distributed at conferences and other events from late May 2008 onwards.

### *5.2.2 The ICMEC mailing list*

A great deal of work went into the maintenance of a mailing list of relevant individuals among politicians and policy makers at central and local government levels, relevant academics, childcare providers in all three sectors and childcare umbrella organisations. The list, which currently features some 500 names, and which is constantly being added to, is being used to publicise ICMEC events. A small number of names belong to international experts who have asked to remain informed of ICMEC events.

Additionally, all individuals who attended or signed up to attend an ICMEC event have become 'associates' of the Centre.

Associates include senior Government Officials from DfCSF, DfID, and the Treasury; representatives from business include CEO's of the major national nursery chains and private nursery umbrella organisations; senior local Government officials including those from the LGA, and LDA and a number of local authorities from in and outside of London; representatives from Policy Think Tanks include Daycare Trust, NatCen, NIESR, IPPR and Policy Exchange; union representatives from NUT, VOICE and UNISON; academics include professorial colleagues from a variety of academic disciplines from UEA, IoE, Open University, LSE, Bristol University, Chester University, Derby University, Roehampton University, Warwick University, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, Charles Sturt University, NSW, Australia, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and the University of Toronto, Canada.

### *5.2.3 ICMEC publicity*

The research centre and events it organised received press coverage in a number of practitioner journals, *Nursery World*, *Nursery Management Today* and *Nursery and Childcare Market News*. The latter publication also advertised ICMEC events. The Centre has been approached by a number of national print and TV journalists seeking information about the private childcare market.

## **5.3 Organising a programme of events and international seminars**

### *5.3.1 The second ICMEC international seminar series*

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As part of the second ICMEC international seminar series four seminars were organised, in September and December 2008, and in February and March 2009. Two of these featured international and two national speakers. The seminars took the format of one or two main presentations, followed by a response and analysis from another invited speaker, prior to a discussion with the audience. Each seminar attracted an invited audience of some 30 senior policy makers, academics, for-profit and not-for-profit childcare managers and other individuals who contributed to lively debates on the topics under discussion. All but the first one were held at UEL's Docklands campus.

[A report on each seminar in the second series is available on the ICMEC website by following the link in the lefthand margin of the landing page to 'seminars'. Most presentations have also been lodged there.](#)

Seminar 1, September 2008: 'The corporatisation of childcare in Australia'

- Speakers: Professor Christine Woodrow, School of Education, University of Western Sydney and Dr Fran Press, Faculty of Education, Charles Sturt University, NSW
- Response and analysis: Professor Collette Tayler, Graduate School of Education, the University of Melbourne

Seminar 2, December 2008: 'The social stratification of childcare.'

- Speakers: Professor Carol Vincent and Professor Stephen Ball, Institute of Education, University of London
- Response and analysis: Dr Gillian Paull, Research Associate, Institute for Fiscal Studies and member of the ICMEC Advisory Board

Seminar 3, February 2009 'Childcare settings and childcare quality.'

- Speaker: Professor Kathy Sylva, Department of Educational Studies, Oxford University
- Response and analysis: Professor Helen Penn, Co-director ICMEC

Seminar 4, March 2009: 'Childcare legislation in the Netherlands'

- Speakers: Rob Vergeer, CEO and Leontine Diemel, manager quality and control, Triodus NL, a Dutch not-for-profit childcare chain
- Response and analysis by: Carole Edmond, Managing Director, Teddies Nurseries, part of the BUPA Group and by Kazem Chaharbaghi, Professor of Management, UEL Business School and member of the ICMEC Advisory Board

#### **5.4 Other activities**

As part of the process of knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer on the mixed economy of childcare, Helen Penn and Eva Lloyd have undertaken a variety of meetings and presentations. These include the following.

- In July 2008 Eva Lloyd gave a keynote presentation on 'Early childhood policies and poor working families' at a national seminar organised by the National Centre for Social Research.
- In November 2008 Eva Lloyd gave a seminar on the mixed economy of childcare in The Netherlands and Australia at the Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London, where she holds a Visiting Fellowship.
- On 20 November 2008 Eva presented an inaugural seminar on 'The mixed economy of childcare' for a new seminar series on Early Childhood at the University of Derby.
- In March 2009 Eva delivered a seminar on 'The mixed economy of childcare' to postgraduate students at Canterbury Christchurch University, where she is an external examiner for the MA in Early Childhood.
- Helen Penn gave evidence to the Children's Minister's early years advisory group on 18 September 2008.
- On 10 October 2008 Helen gave a keynote speech Global Perspectives on Quality at conference organized by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research which was also written as paper for the National Institute Economic Review, Jan 2009.
- On 5 October 2008 she gave a keynote lecture Quality and Sustainability at 4 Children conference.
- On 21 October 2008 Helen gave distinguished guest lecture, International Perspectives on Quality in Early Childhood; the Role of the Private Sector School of Education, Warwick University.
- On 19 November 2008 Helen Penn was an invited attendee at an GTC early years seminar with the Minister for Children.
- On 4 December 2008 she was an invited attendee at HSRC/Department of Education Seminar on costing of childcare, Cape Town, South Africa

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