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## **Releasing the Socio-Imagination: Children's voices on Creativity, Capability and Mental Wellbeing**

**Lisa Stephenson and Dr Tom Dobson**

With increasing concerns in the UK about the positive mental wellbeing and flourishing of children, our research using drama and creative writing with Primary School teachers, children and a theatre company, looks at the links between creative processes and children's wellbeing. This pedagogy applies a capability approach and we use this lens to examine children's critical reflections on the project. Our interview data highlights the link between agency, social imagination and subjective wellbeing. Our project offers some concrete examples of the ways in which creative processes can move beyond an outcome-based understanding of the curriculum by offering a legitimate space for children to explore their values and develop competencies which are crucial for wellbeing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Key words:

wellbeing, agency, drama, writing, Primary education, creativity, Inclusion

## **Releasing the Socio-Imagination: Children's voices on Creativity, Capability and Mental Wellbeing**

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### **Introduction**

Over the last decade there has been an increasing concern in the UK about the positive mental wellbeing and flourishing of children. This concern focusses particularly on children's 'ability to withstand the complexities and challenges they face' (McLaughlin, 2018 p281). Furthermore, data from NSPCC 2017-18 stated that some 18,870 children aged under 11 were referred for specialist support linked to mental health. This was a rise of 5,183 - more than a third - on those referred in 2014-15. According to a report by the National Children's Bureau and Young Minds 2018, we are facing a growing 'mental health crisis' in our schools with 'too much emphasis on academic attainment and not enough focus on promoting the wellbeing of students' (Cowburn & Blow, 2017, p4). Whilst there is increasing guidance and advice for schools which advocates the development of whole school preventative factors to support children by fostering a sense of belonging and control (Department of Education, 2016), there is little or no support in how to implement this. Schools are struggling to cope with the demands of this crisis and to prioritise wellbeing in a curriculum that is already oversubscribed. The long-anticipated Government Paper on Mental Health (2017) was accused of 'failing a generation of children' and heavily critiqued for being 'not ambitious enough,' rolling out the support plans to only 'a fifth to a quarter of the country by 2022/23' (House of Commons report on the Green Paper, 2018, p4). The report advocated a more widespread implementation and 'iterative learning methods' to inform best practice including a multidisciplinary approach to supporting schools. They cited a narrowing curriculum and exam pressure as contributing factors to mental wellbeing.

With this in mind, we draw from our partnership project sponsored by the United Kingdom Literacy Association (UKLA) in which we worked with teachers, a theatre company and Key Stage 2 Primary School children, to deliver meaningful opportunities for creative writing across the curriculum through drama. We term the writing produced as a result of the pedagogy 'Agentic Writing.' (Dobson and Stephenson, 2018). In this paper, we look at the links between the creative processes which we engaged with the children and their wellbeing. We draw from the Irish Department of Education documentation on Mental Health (2015) to define wellbeing in school as:

'the presence of a culture, ethos and environment which promotes dynamic, optimal development and flourishing for all in the school community which encompasses the domains of relationship, meaning, emotion, motivation, purpose, and achievement. It includes quality teaching and learning for the development of all elements related to healthy living whether cultural, academic, social, emotional, physical or technological with particular focus on resilience and coping.' (ibid, p9)

Central to this paper is the positioning of children as social, active and political agents within this creative process. In other words, they had capacity to make, influence and change the narratives within the pedagogical process of story making, working alongside teachers and artists.

This pedagogy applies a capability approach and we use this lens to examine children's critical reflections on the project in this paper. Our interview data highlights the link between agency, social imagination and subjective wellbeing. Building on the work of Hart & Brando (2018), we also apply Amartya Sen's (2009) capability approach which makes explicit links between freedoms, wellbeing and agency. This allows us to expand an evaluative space for children's wellbeing and flourishing, building on the competences needed to support positive mental wellbeing. Our project offers some concrete examples of the ways in which creative processes can move beyond an outcome-based understanding of the curriculum by offering a legitimate space for children to explore their interests and values. We suggest that this model could be used to support schools in becoming a platform that may enable a child's exploration and development 'of the values and aspirations that foster

both wellbeing and agency in tandem' (Hart & Brando, p305) as well as developing competencies that are crucial for learning and wellbeing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### **Policy Muddles**

Over the last decade, education policy has changed the face of teaching and learning considerably. The English Primary Curriculum (2014) advocates a 'back to basics approach', becoming much more focused on accountability and testing. There are critiques of this neoliberalist curriculum affecting both children's engagement, purpose for learning and anxiety levels. Our initial project drew from a study by Lambirth (2016, p230), who concluded that primary school children 'saw little or no purpose in the act of writing,' viewing it as purely a 'technical exercise' which focused on spelling and grammar meaning they felt 'alienated from the act of writing.' Ball (2018, p234) goes further, describing the current state of English education as 'muddlesome' and 'incoherent', as teachers feel let down and compromised, 'delivering an impoverished curriculum, to children who are increasingly stressed by the demands of performance, many of whom experience low levels of individual well-being, without any clear sense of purpose and value, other than that which can be calculated from test scores and examination grades'.

At the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, under New Labour, there was great interest and value placed on creativity in Education, often used as an integrated curriculum approach. There was work which began to codify creativity within the curriculum to create a clear curriculum framework. Creativity was considered good for the economy, society and learning, considered as 'an essential life skill which needs to be fostered by the education system' (Craft 1999, p137, cited in Burnard, 2008) and there was provocation to explore how creativity could be sown throughout Primary school in a meaningful way as well as a call to develop a better understanding of 'creative learning.' However, in 2010, following the general election and the formation of a coalition government, these programmes were axed in favour of a 'relentless focus on the basics' (DOE 2013).

The discourses from policy which address concerns relating to children's wellbeing, self-efficacy and motivation clearly promote an 'integrated' curriculum which is relevant to children's lives (Department of Education, 2015). Additionally, the guidance for schools suggests the development of wellbeing competences such as 'good communication skills, sociability, being a planner and having a belief in control, humour, problem solving skills and a positive attitude, experiences of success and achievement, capacity to reflect' (Department of Education, 2016). However, delivering this agenda is increasingly challenging for teachers in a system which favours mandated standards. Furthermore, the role of the creative arts is complex to 'measure' in neoliberalist standards (Burnard and White, 2008).

Our project revisited this investment in art partnerships by working with a theatre company to deliver sessions. Through our interview data with children we were able to develop some codification linked to 'creative learning' and children's subjective wellbeing, which we will term in this paper as 'capabilities.'

### **Dramatic Enquiry as a Capability Model**

During our project, we viewed learning as socially constructed and situated (Vygotsky, 2004). We therefore positioned the children as active participants within the project. To facilitate agentic learning, we used the pedagogy of dramatic enquiry. Advocated by Brian Edmiston (2015), this uses fictional problem solving or inquiry scenarios to frame the imaginary world which is constructed and negotiated collaboratively between the teacher and children, often positioning the teacher with equal or less power than the child. Curiosity frames the inquiry and decisions made in the fiction are complex, often highlighting the messiness of the lived world. The child has negotiated power and agency over ethical decision making and interpretation of events along with the participant group. It is this desire to engage with the problem or dramatic frame that is the key motivational force in actual engagement and subsequent learning in drama. The opportunity to map their lived experiences into the learning or narrative ignites motivational playing and deep learning. It is

embodied and aesthetic learning in the sense that it happens in the moment, values emotional response and is a critical space to examine held values. We therefore link this creative approach to a capability model of children and childhood as it acknowledges the importance of the characteristics and views of their present life. This view of childhood does not only take a future view of children 'being' but also acknowledges their role in 'becoming.' They are active participants in this process (Baraldi et al, 2014).

A key to drama's motivational force is that young people and teacher facilitators come to that space without an 'intention to learn' but with 'an intention to create or take part in or solve something' (Bolton, 1984, p154). We drew on research into creative writing (Crumpler 2005, Cremin et al, 2006) to promote opportunities for spontaneous creative writing both within the drama and outside the drama. Hypothetically, these creative processes clearly advocated the development of many of the competencies suggested as preventative factors (DOE, 2016) to children's wellbeing such as motivation, relationships, purposeful learning, a sense of control and, specifically, learner agency. Furthermore, within our drama sessions children were positioned as responsible agents. For example, in one drama children from Year 5 created a village community who came across a runaway (teacher in role) from a neighbouring village who had stolen some food. They were asked 'in role' to decide her fate.

Our view of childhood also acknowledges the Conventions on the Rights of Children to 'develop the capabilities to pursue their own wellbeing achievement through the exercise of their own freedom' (Hart, 2018, p297). They are given the opportunity to develop these capabilities by practicing agency within the creative frame both individually and collaboratively. It is a safe, nurturing freedom space. The dramatic frame also allows for 'protection into role' - in other words, the teacher as facilitator is there to guide and support if necessary and children can come out of the drama frame to reflect on the imagined world if needed. This dramatic device acknowledges the tension between protection and participation, positioning them both as competent agents and vulnerable beings simultaneously.

## Theoretical lens

In terms of the afore mentioned factors for children's emotional wellbeing, a sense of control is seen as a key attribute advised by the Department of Education (2016) and it could be suggested that many aspects of the neoliberalist curriculum have disprivileged children with an opportunity to explore their own selves and their place within society in the learning process (McLaughlin, 2018). This could result in aspects of curriculum education becoming disconnected from children's social and cultural experiences with the world and their ability to operate within it. In this sense, drama pedagogy becomes an important space for all children to exercise imaginative freedom, develop imaginative capacities, aspirations and contextualise learning, whilst also particularly addressing the specific needs of marginalised groups. Students from marginalised groups can often find themselves 'with little or no power over their learning, when learning has little or no relevance to their life or aspirations' (McInerney, 2009, p24). Here, with the present 'crisis' in children's mental wellbeing (Cowburn & Blow, 2017), we clearly can see an example of Ball's notion of 'incoherence' in relation to policy and practice. (Ball, 2018).

In their recent consultation report *Shaping the Next 10 Years 2020-30*, the Arts Council concludes that the opportunities for children and young people to experience arts and creativity inside school are not equal across the country. As part of their call to action, the Arts Council focus on nurturing creative people through learning opportunities for all. This was backed by the Durham Commission on Creativity in Education (Oct 2019) which has called for more research into creativity and recognition of creativity in Education. The lack of arts education becomes then a 'social justice issue', as identified by a recent report by the Paul Hamlyn foundation and Cultural Learning Alliance (Oct 2019) linking arts education to social mobility not just to marginalised groups but all children.

Additionally, all children are not given the opportunity or power to practice making choices and take meaningful action to see the results of their decisions. This is defined as learner agency and is linked to self-efficacy, aspiration and becoming a lifelong learner - all key suggested competences in



promoting positive mental wellbeing. We are interested in defining a more useful definition of 'control' by exploring further conceptualisations of learner agency and wellbeing in relation to our project.

We further develop the links between creativity and wellbeing by drawing from Hart & Brando's (2018) work on wellbeing and agency in education. They critique a global landscape which is 'scattered the variable judgements of legitimate agency,' demanding 'a re-examination of the children's competences freedoms and wellbeing' (ibid, p294). We draw on their analysis of the work of Amartyr Sen's capability approach (1999) adapted in Hart (2007) to conceptualise and analyse our interview data with children. Sen suggested human flourishing and value goes beyond wellbeing and should encompasses not only the process where by an outcome is achieved but also the outcome itself. This was intended as an evaluative space to assess individual advantage. Of specific interest to this project is Sen's conceptualisation of flourishing as going 'beyond wellbeing interests' (Hart et al, 2018, p294) and including 'agency freedom' and 'agency achievement' as two central features. His space of evaluation therefore includes a quadrant: 'wellbeing freedom,' which is the freedom to achieve living which is considered of value and 'wellbeing achievement,' which is realisation of those goals which are important. Realising 'wellbeing freedom' would require certain skills which Sen terms as 'capabilities', such as reflection. The third and fourth areas of the quadrant are 'agency freedom,' which is the capacity and opportunity to influence others beyond oneself, to make valued choices and 'agency achievement.' Realising 'agency freedom' requires capabilities, such as social problem solving.

We agree with Hart et al (2018), that there is a need to attach value to children's 'wellbeing freedom and achievements,' and 'agency freedoms and achievements,' which raises questions about how our education system can support them in enabling these. Furthermore, we also propose that creative learning is a legitimate space to maximise children's freedom capabilities or competences and which can facilitate those freedoms in a safe way. For example, children may choose to come out of the

dramatic frame to reflect on their decisions made within the narrative and change those viewpoints and values. They also have the capacity to view the social making decision making from multiple perspectives as they work collaboratively. They may reflect on those ideas individually or collaboratively. Sen terms this as 'critical agency' and argues that the state should develop children's skills and development to 'ask questions about prevailing norms and values' (Sen in Hart 2018, p297). We advocate that our creative processes enabled children to *practice* agency through social participation within the drama and creative writing process. We term agency within this socio-cultural framework as the 'capability to open up different courses of action in communication processes' (Baraldi, 2014, p2). We see the creative process as a 'conversion factor' in developing these capabilities or competences (ibid).

### **Methodology and Project Design**

As previously mentioned, this project took place over Spring and Summer terms 2017 in a suburban Primary School in the North of England. The catalyst for the project was the school's improvement plan and the deputy head teacher who wanted to explore drama's pedagogic potential to make writing across the curriculum more meaningful. As higher education experts in drama and creative writing we worked alongside the deputy head, teachers and Theatre Company to plan professional development sessions for the teacher on drama conventions leading to creative writing at the beginning of each term. Following these sessions, a local theatre company worked alongside teachers to develop an integrated planning approach to for classes of 7-11-year-old children (Year 3, 4, 5 and 6) for three sessions over two terms. The sessions were initially facilitated by the theatre company who we briefed to use what we call a 'weakly framed' approach (Bernstein, 1990) - they would plan for improvised moments within the drama where children would have choices about how to interpret and lead the narrative collectively and also make decisions within the narrative which could influence those characters within it. We also encouraged children to write spontaneously within the drama at moments of their own choosing, calling this 'word collecting'.

During phases 2 and 3 of the project, teachers would lead more of the session without the theatre company and eventually plan and lead a session themselves.

We sought ethical approval in line with the British Education Research Association guidelines, including teacher participants' informed consent and children's verbal assent to take part in the project. We outlined that they could withdraw from the project at any time.

During the project, we collected a large amount of data through interviews, reflective conversations, observations and reflective journals. For this paper we focus directly on data collected from children. After each session children and teachers reflected upon the use of drama for writing within the session in line with an 'action-reflection' cycle of research (McNiff and Whitehead, 2006). We provided reflection questions within their journals which asked them about their likes and dislikes within the lesson and whether the drama helped with writing. As a baseline assessment, we also asked the children to rate their confidence, enjoyment and perceived competence in drama and writing before and after the project to look. At the end of the project, we conducted group semi structured interviews with a representative sample in terms gender and ability of 6-7 participants from each year group lasting 30 minutes. These interviews explored children's perceptions of the project including what drama means to them, what they enjoy most and least about drama, how they feel in drama and what they think that they were learning. They were also asked about their perception of this in relation to creative writing. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Teachers also provided a vignette of the child in terms of their confidence and competence in drama and creative writing and in terms of this paper, the participant children were all seen by teachers as having positive mental wellbeing.

Following Miles and Huberman's (2014) approach to qualitative data analysis, key themes from the interviews were mapped in relation to Sen's model of flourishing (Sen 1999): children's notion of their freedom wellbeing and achievement; and children's freedom agency and achievement. This allowed us to begin to map and codify children's own perceptions of their developing freedom

capabilities within the creative sessions and in relation to other school lessons. We additionally drew from our observations of the drama sessions and our own and children's research journals to apply Bernstein's (1990) model of 'framing', where lessons were broadly categorized as weakly, moderately or strongly framed based on the level of construction that the children were afforded within the story by the teachers and theatre company. This allowed us to map their responses directly to agentic learning.

### **Findings and discussions**

Table 1 shows children's responses to our interviews in relation to agentic learning and we select a sample of responses from each focus interview group to highlight links between creative pedagogy and developing wellbeing 'capabilities.' **Table 1: Drama Workshop Framing and Analysis**

Class	Drama space (Integrated curriculum- conversion factor 1)	Framing of roles for children (Conversion factor 2)	Agentic learning freedom Opportunities	Responses to Interview Questions Agency Freedom	Responses to Interview Questions Agency Achievement	Capability set
Year 3	The Romans: a wall built in Roman times.	Weakly framed - children in groups of 5 improvise stories of the wall.	Children improvise and share their own stories of the wall as freeze-frames.	<i>No one can tell you what to do. You can let your imagination flow. You can make up stories, in a group or by yourself (choice)</i>  <i>You can let your imagination go free, make-up scene. It's not serious. It doesn't matter. There isn't a right or wrong. (Safe decision making)</i>	<i>I feel happy (when doing drama) because you do it with your friends... You learn and feel what it was really really like when it happened. In your head you can imagine what it was like</i>  <i>words just come... that's why I'm proud of it</i>	Social imagination  Possibility thinking  Problem solving
Year 4	The Anglo-Saxons: The Wanderer and Seafarer poem.	Moderately framed – children positioned as crew on ship choose own roles.	Children improvise and share their boasts.	<i>I can just imagine – if we're doing Viking – I can imagine what it would be like to be them by acting out what happened. Like the Battle of Hasting we could act out and feel and do all the emotions they feel.</i>	<i>You're learning it's ok if you want to have this idea. You're learning not to be nervous if you make a mistake</i>  <i>The drama helped me as I got to feel the emotions. It's better that if someone just told me to write about it from the point of view of a soldier</i>	Resilience  Empathy
Year 5	The Victorians: prelude to reading Great Expectations	Moderately framed – one child selected as Pip; other children given free choice over role.	Whole class improvised free play to establish role as villagers.	<i>I find it interesting because it lets you break free from school and go into another universe. It's different from writing and maths when you're just sat there. In drama it sets off your imagination</i>	<i>I love doing drama and would like to do more because instead of just sitting down and doing lessons you can imagine you're actually being that person and doing what you want to do and saying what you feel. I find it interesting. Building confidence and doing what you want to do.</i>	Self-efficacy
Year 6	Charles Darwin: voyage to the Galapagos Islands.	Moderately framed – children given role on boat.	Whole class improvised free play of life on the boat.	<i>I felt like the teacher always tells us to write but does their own work and that here they were actually like us. I was almost in the story. They were saying things that could have happened walking up the mountain</i>	<i>Everyone's in the same boat. I've learnt not to be embarrassed</i>	Critical reflection  Compassion

Our data shows that children chose to reflect on drama sessions which were weakly to moderately framed, where there were more opportunities for agentic learning and where children could make and enforce collaborative decisions within the narrative events.

Year 3 children reflected on the lesson of The Wall. This lesson followed a session delivered by the Theatre Company on the Romans and Hadrian's wall. Run by a Year 3 teacher, children were told about a wall which was 2000 years old and, through teacher scaffolding, were invited through the use of 'real' stones from the wall to invent a collaborative event or 'moment of tension' which had happened there. Narratives ranged from animal, romance and war stories - all were developed and shared through the use of freeze frames. Interestingly, during this session the teacher 'abandoned'

his planning script to develop this agentic learning opportunity due to children's investment in the process. Our observational data recorded children 'literally running to write down their stories following the drama.' In year 4, children mainly chose to reflect on a drama following an interactive performance of *The Seafarer and Wanderer* by the Theatre company where they were inducted as crew members of a pirate ship and invited to create improvised 'boasts'. These stories would showcase their bravery as pirates. Investment in the embodied development of these stories was observed at playtime, well after the session finished. For Year 5, improvised moments were more tightly framed but children chose to reflect mainly on a drama when they were able to choose and develop their role as a character in their Victorian community within the drama. Year 6 also chose to reflect on the improvisation and development of their role on board an exploration to the Galapagos. All these sessions involved free play, improvisation, collaboration and a shift in power structures with teachers as equal players in terms of status.

From the interview data, we mapped a range of 'capabilities' linked to agency freedom and achievement in response to children's interview reflections on the learning process. These were in line with many of the skills that Department of Education guidance had proposed as key developmental areas in positive mental wellbeing such as social problem solving, self-efficacy, aspiration, possibility thinking and empathy but also went into more detail. These 'capabilities' had slightly different emphases for different year groups. In Year 3 and 4, children expressed positive subjective wellbeing such as happiness linked to having choice as there was 'no right and wrong' answer. Disrupting binaries between right and wrong answers, enforced by a neoliberalist curriculum favouring mandated tests, was important in opening spaces for possibility thinking or what if moments leading to self-efficacy. These spaces also exposed the messiness of social problems and working collaboratively. This discourse was seen throughout the data and had direct links to developing capabilities and supporting positive wellbeing such as tolerance. Difference was also seen as a positive characteristic, but children's responses indicated that they had to learn acceptance - 'you're learning that it is ok to have this idea.' The use of the word 'learning' here

suggests that the Year 4 child felt they needed permission to think differently. They articulated 'agentic achievements' linked to these moments such as seeing a different 'point of view' and meaningful learning such as 'learning what it was really like,' suggesting that the learning was internalised and felt.

In year 5 and 6, the fear of looking silly was more challenging and difficult but all children in these groups reported overcoming these anxieties within the drama. They used discourses such as 'building courage' and 'helping with confidence.' There was strong subjective wellbeing from all year groups between the aesthetic, emotional aspect of the work and words such as 'enjoyed, happy and interesting' were frequently used in relation to the sessions. 'Agentic achievements' ranged from empathy to compassion and were linked to their role as active agents within the drama - 'you can feel the emotions, it's more realistic.' Clearly, aesthetic pedagogy and group participation were linked to agency development here as 'everyone' was felt to be 'in the same boat'.

In terms of agency freedoms, one of the most striking aspects of the data is that almost all children linked their 'agentic freedom and achievements' to the use of their imagination. Furthermore, their discourse (Gee, 2010) around their responses portrays the immediacy of this. Discourses such as 'setting my imagination free', 'breaking free' and 'I feel like my mind's escaped from captivity' were used by children across year groups. What is interesting and concerning is that children clearly positioned the imagination as a 'conversation factor' in the learning which was not presently afforded to them in the classroom. Thus, our data shows that at this moment in time, not only are 'agency, wellbeing freedoms and achievements' (Sen, 1999) key to flourishing but that 'Imaginative freedom' is a critical and compromised component to this conceptualisation of flourishing. Furthermore, we can conclude that the constraints of a neoliberalist curriculum were clearly preventing this school from prioritising children's freedom in this area of development.

## **Conclusion**

Our data begins to codify our creative processes and we recognise that further research is needed to develop a comprehensive understanding of the skills, characteristics and capacities linking creativity and wellbeing. Researchers such as Gordon and O'Toole (2015) proposed a 'Learning for Wellbeing Framework,' positioning creativity as a key development vehicle, linking self, or how we view the world, with others, or how our views are different, as well as environment, or how we communicate and participate as citizens. We show from our data that children were able to recognise and articulate aspects of these competences from their experiences of the drama and creative processes. Furthermore, they were able to competently articulate this learning as 'capable agents' without the enforcement of learning outcomes prior to the sessions. Data sets such as The Good Childhood Report (Pople & Rees, 2017) has been measuring children's subjective wellbeing over the last 6 years and based on our findings we propose that drama and creative writing spaces can offer important sites not only to 'listen to children and what really matters to them' (Hart & Brando, 2014, p297) but furthermore to develop a capability model through the arts which is directly linked to subjective wellbeing capability.

The researchers recognise that this is only with a small sample group but feel that the data highlights some important implications for policy and teaching regarding mental wellbeing and the creative curriculum. The integrated curriculum approach, clearly focused on the whole child - social, emotional and cognitive offers an inclusive learning space for all learners as well as addressing particular needs of marginalised learners. This involves aesthetic and relational pedagogy for all learners. Imaginative learning is a key aspect to this learning as it envisions creating possibilities, the idea that something 'other could be' and this is linked to hope and change. Maxine Green (1995) described this as the social imagination - 'the capacity to invent visions of what should be and might be in our societies' (ibid, p.5.). Linked to this, Greene advocated the arts as a more relationally imaginative way of being and of disrupting fixed notions of reality. She argues that the arts equip minds to question and critique with the potential to develop critical awareness.



This can be linked to Sen's (p297) notion of 'critical agency.' Not only to act, but to act responsibly. Developing 'coping strategies to face life complexities' in a constantly changing world is crucial, but we are lacking curriculum spaces to '*practice*' agency and develop a range of 'critical capabilities'. Our research has foregrounded the contribution that drama and creative writing processes can play as a 'conversation factor' in developing 'agentic freedoms, achievements and capabilities for children' (Sen, 1999). The research also has serious implications for policy makers in terms of the opportunities that the present neoliberalist curriculum allows for 'imaginative freedoms' which we propose as an extension to Sen's wellbeing quadrant and the long-term impact that this will have on the future development of children's agentic learning capabilities, wellbeing and flourishing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

'Ways must be found to eradicate the damage done to the creativity, well-being, and enthusiasm of teachers and students by the regime of performativity' (Ball 2003, cited in Ball 2018, p235).

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