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Author(s): Stewart Ranson

Article Title: The Changing Governance of Education

Year of publication: 2008

Link to published article:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1741143207087773>

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*For EMAL Special Edition 36 (2) 2008*

## **The changing governance of education**

Stewart Ranson, Institute of Education, University of Warwick

### *Abstract*

*The 1988 Education Reform Act sought to deconstruct the framework of post Second War social democratic governance and replace the tacit rule of professional providers with mechanisms of choice and market competition, thus empowering parents and school leaders. Functions, powers and responsibilities were fundamentally reconstituted and have transformed the governance of education. New Labour, when it came to power in 1997, did not alter but extended the practices of this neo-liberal polity. Now, within the frame of this regime, a new re-constitution of the governance of education may be emerging: schools, colleges and agencies are encouraged not to compete, but to collaborate in creating a community of practice with families. Two modes of governance are developing in parallel. The paper concludes that only a wider reconstituting of the public sphere, one that restricts the power which the advantaged are accruing from the education market place, can enable very different purposes of learning, and conditions necessary for a cosmopolitan civic society to emerge.*

*Key words: governance, constitution, mediation, public sphere, citizenship*

### **I Introduction**

The 1988 Education Reform Act created the most radical reconstitution of the governance of education since the Second World War. The Act redefined the relationships between central and local government so as to strengthen Whitehall's control over the curriculum, diminish the administrative powers of Local Education Authorities, and made schools and colleges more responsive to the wishes of parents and employers. Through these changes the Act created an administered market which increased public choice in two ways. First, by empowering active consumer participation, providing parents with information, including the right to choose, appeal and register complaints, and an opportunity to play a leading role in initiating and running a new form of school funded directly by central government. Second, deregulating the local government of education and empowering schools with delegated finance and controls to become self-governing institutions. A quasi market of increasingly differentiated and autonomous schools would foster competition and thus, it was believed, improvement of performance, while services would become more accountable through having to respond directly to the choices of individual consumers. As in other forms of market exchange, the products which thrive can only do so if they have the support of consumers. These reforms were designed not merely to improve 'a service' but also to restructure a purported outmoded polity of social democracy shaped by the authority of professional knowledge. A new political order of 'neo-liberal' public choice was constituted based upon principles of rights designed to enhance individual interests. The public (as consumer) was empowered at the expense of the (professional) provider. Public goods, to achieve equity rather than equality, were conceived as aggregated private choices and interests that would, more effectively than public planning, deliver the goals of opportunity and social change.

A New Labour Government from 1997 did not alter, but rather accentuated the purposes and practices of this polity of enhanced consumer choice, contract law, audits of performance, corporate power and regulative accountability – all designed to create the education service as a sphere of market exchange relationships, in which actors are provided with an account of quantifiable performance enabling them to calculate their individual relative advantage. Market exchange was thus strengthened by national regulation and scrutiny.

Yet, while this policy regime remains, it is beginning to be challenged, not only by local authorities, professional practitioners, governors and parents striving to realise different educational values and purposes, but also by parallel national policy agendas (*Schools Plus: Building Learning Communities* (1999); *Sure Start and Children's Centres* (1999); *Extended Schools* (2002, 05); *Every Child Matters* (2003, 04), *The Children Act* (2004); *Education Act 2006*) which are themselves informed by fundamentally different assumptions about the purpose and practice of education. These policies are establishing a new Children's Service which is to integrate services and agencies involved in the education and care of children and encourage participation of parents, families and communities in creating a wider learning community. In striving to interconnect school, local services and community, public policy seeks not only to improve a service, but, by modelling a renewed community of practice, aims to remake the public sphere and the inherited post war welfare settlement. (Schools Minister, 2004; Secretary of State, 2005).

A new form of education governance is taking shape within the problematic frame of the old. The contradictions are manifest (Harris and Ranson, 2005). Choice for parents as consumers of the service stands in tension with policies designed to encourage local partnerships between schools, parents and services. State regulation of a national curriculum and audit stands in tension with schools seeking to respond to pupil-centred learning needs, to exercise local entrepreneurship and accountability to the community. Strengthening the professional quality of the service can appear to stand in tension to the orientation to include parents as complementary educators and co-producers of learning.

This paper explores what can be learned about the nature of governance by studying the different regimes of education government established since 1944 Education Act. The dominant interpretive paradigm of governance as networks will be critically examined and an alternative approach of constitution and mediation proposed.

## **II Restructuring the governance of education**

Conventional wisdom has identified at least two distinctive formations of governance of education since 1945. Social democracy and the 'age of professionalism' which lasted until the late 1970's and the 'age of neo-liberalism', which has developed over time since the 1980's, forming very different practices of policy formation and regulation, of structuring the distribution of power between tiers of government, institutions and the public, while the different forms of governance mediated diverging codes of what it has been to be a citizen. These forms of governance can only be understood in the historical and political contexts that have shaped them.

### *Social democracy and the age of professionalism*

Education became the key-stone of public policy making during the post-war period (1955-75). A broad social and political consensus supported the role of education in enabling economic growth, equality of opportunity and social justice. A rising birth rate, economic growth and, most importantly, political will for social reform, coalesced in the expansion of education. The service enjoyed a period of unrivalled growth and privilege. Education policy focused upon the fundamental change of introducing comprehensive schools in place of a tripartite school system which selected and excluded the majority of young people.

The system of education governance constituted by the 1944 Education Act provided an appropriate framework to support the growth of a service committed to the expansion of opportunity. The 1944 Act was not without its contradictions and ambiguities. Such creative ambivalence was intrinsic to a settlement which sought to systematise yet divide powers and

responsibilities between partners to the service. The Act sought to establish a national education service, led by strong central government, and therefore created for the first time a Minister of Education, ostensibly with absolute powers. The previous President of the Board of Education merely had "superintendence of matters relating to education" but the 1944 Act installed a Minister who was: "to promote the education of the people of England and Wales and the progressive development of institutions devoted to that purpose and to secure the effective executive by local authorities *under his control and direction* of the national policy.." (Section 1, 1944 Act: my italics). Nevertheless despite the manifest policy of strengthening the central authority, the 1944 Act only provided the Minister with limited and specific powers (the Minister would not control the curriculum or the teachers, although control of specific grants provided significant influence over local education until 1958). The newly constituted Local Education Authority with wide ranging responsibilities and powers to provide education in order to develop their local schools and communities. But just as the Minister of Education was not provided with direct control of the LEA so they in turn were deprived of absolute direction of their schools and colleges. Institutions were provided with a quasi-autonomous status under the general guidance of a governing or managing body.

By creating two strong authorities - central and local government - responsible for the provision of education and by leaving it unclear as to the nature of the relationship between them the Act was implying that they would have to work together: and both with a third interest - the teachers. The key tasks, therefore, of winning resources, of planning and providing institutions, and of developing curriculum and teaching methods came to be divided between three of the critical partners to the service: the centre, locality and institutions; between Ministers, councillors and teachers (though the inertia of the - university influenced - exam system lasted until 1959). The 1944 Act thus created a "complex web of interdependent relationships among the manifold participants". (Weaver, 1976). Whitehall was to promote education, town and county hall were to plan and provide, and teachers were to nurture the learning process so as to meet the needs of children and the wishes of parents. The constitutive system of the government of education formed a complex, 'polycentred' division of power and responsibility appropriate to differentiated tasks. Power was diffused between the partners. The upshot is what Briault (1976) has called a "distributed" system of decision taking and responsibility, so as to form a "triangle of tension" of checks and balances. Emphasis was given to the value and spirit of partnership. Celebrating a jubilee of the creation of a centralised department, the Ministry stressed the importance of 'the progressive partnership between the central department, the local education authorities and the teachers'. The secretary to the Association of Education Committees, Sir William Alexander, affirmed the significance of smooth and flexible partnership in education.

This post-war system of education governance constituted a political order of social democracy based upon the principles of justice and equality of opportunity and designed to ameliorate class disadvantage and class division (cf. Perkin, 1988). Public goods were conceived as requiring collective choice and redistribution. Thus the significance of systems of administrative planning (the LEA) and institutional organisation (the comprehensive school). Recognition of the complexity of professional purpose and practice shaped the mode of accountability. Public trust was afforded to the specialist knowledge of professionals and the necessary requirements of answerability could be fulfilled by delegating authority to heads, teachers and advisors - only the trained eye could judge the quality of teaching and the pupil progress (cf. Kogan, 1978). Their monitoring of progress was typically informal and ad hoc. Professional relationships, though located in administrative hierarchies, formally expressed partnership, collegiality and trust between and within tiers of the service.

The LEA Education Committee formed the arena for dialogue on public accountability in which professional judgements were tested.

The limitations of this framework of governance lay in the mediating codes of the period. The assumptions of professional expertise reinforced by the orderly controls of rational bureaucracy, were the defining conditions of the welfare and social democratic state. To question practice of professional standards and rules would be to doubt the underlying assumptions of the public sphere: that a just and open society that improved the well-being of its members could be provided and, as it were, handed down to the public. The good society was to be *delivered* by knowledgeable specialists. A passive public were clients of the universal knowledge of professional bureaucracy.

*Neo-liberal democracy – and the age of public choice*

It was this professional domination that the Conservative Government elected in 1979 sought to regulate and diminish. The quality of public services should not be a matter for specialists to decide, but for public choice to determine. The neo-liberal policy was constructed on the principles that ‘there are only individual people with their own individual lives (Nozick, 1974). Public services should develop in response to individuals acting as consumers to express their rights and interests in a market place that allowed them to choose between services. Such competition, rather than provider control and judgement, would be the most effective means of improving the quality of public services.

Inaugurated by the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA), this regime of education marketisation has been growing in extension over a couple of decades, each phase of development – contract, performativity, and now corporate influence - accentuating the constitution of neo-liberal governance. The 1990’s saw the legal regulation of the market being strengthened. A ‘new public management’ (Pollitt, 1990; Hood, 1992) encouraging the adoption of private sector models of management, especially the separation of the purchaser role from the provider role and the growth of contractual or semi-contractual arrangements. Contracts enforce clear accountability for public servants, ensuring they are answerable for the service levels delivered, the resource targets set, and the outcomes achieved. The performance criteria for accountability embody clear technical, means-end, rationality. Trust is secured in the increased specification of purpose, task and condition of service delivery.

This preoccupation with specification began to reach into the pedagogic core as well as the supporting services. A principal purpose of the 1988 Education Reform Act had been ‘above all to raise standards of attainment for all pupils by a better definition of what is to be taught and learnt...’ believed necessary for enhancing quality and accountability and for securing the trust and confidence of the parent body in what schools were offering. The National Curriculum provided the vehicle for this greater specification of learning, enabling accounts of achievement to be presented in public league tables, thus informing parental choices, and be monitored by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. A sophisticated national system of regulations – the trappings of the audit state - was put in place to measure and monitor a limited set of performances and outcomes – principally, test and examination results.

New Labour has been accentuating the characteristics of neo-liberal education, increasingly constituting schooling as an independently governed corporate sector. The *2004 Strategy* followed by the *Education Act 2006* strive to reconfigure the governance of education with ‘new energies’ and ‘smarter accountabilities’. Schools and services must be ‘opened up to new and different providers and ways of delivering services’. Such new providers might include ‘parents groups... able to sponsor schools, enabling successful schools to establish

and manage entirely new schools and federations.’ Schools themselves are encouraged to form ‘foundation partnerships and federations that will work together to raise standards but also take on new responsibilities, ‘in areas such as provision for SEN, or hard to place pupils.’ Schools may draw into their partnerships ‘employers, volunteers and voluntary organisations to maximise life chances of all.’ The business and private sector, in addition to the churches, are perceived not only as extending their increasing control and provision of state schooling, but also as playing an emergent role in a new system of local governance, offering ‘some local brokerage to make it work’ as well coordination to ensure joined-up provision: *‘This cannot just be a partnership of state providers – the voluntary and community sector, business and private enterprises need to be a part of this partnership to provide joined up services* (DfES 2004).

This reconstituting of education governance mediates a direction of change for the public sphere of education, indicating that control of education is seeping from the public to the corporate sector and that traditional forms of local governance are being steadily eroded (cf. Crouch, 2003; Ranson, 2003; Marquand, 2004). The growth of a corporate sector reflects two dimensions of change from a public service that traditionally has been described as a national service locally governed or administered. Firstly a growing number of schools are controlled by providers who bring exogenous interests to the public provision of education: defining the concern for school provision is an ‘external’ interest in business, or profit, or a denominational interest. This dual ownership of schools, traditionally exemplified in the voluntary sector relationship between church and state, is now being extended to the business and private sectors. A public good now accommodates sectional interests whose principle end is not alone the need of the citizen as such but the defining interests of the organisation. They are appropriately termed ‘corporate’ to capture this separate, organisational and financial entity, interest and accountability. A second dimension of corporatising of education provision is revealed in the rebuilding and renovation of schools through the use of private capital (to be discussed further below). Such finance can enable the corporate sponsors to gain a controlling influence over the practices of a school (McFadyean and Rowland, 2002; Whitfield, 2001). The corporate sector therefore is defined directly by the exogenous interests and accountabilities that are brought to the public sphere. This reinforcing of corporate interests is reinforced indirectly by the demise of the local education authority, and thus the requirement to be accountable to a democratically accountable local government.

This neo-liberal regime of consumer choice and corporate control was designed, purportedly, to restore public trust by making services accountable and responsive to public choice conceived as consumer preference. Providing consumers with accounts of performance and service quality produced a regime of performativity that works from the outside in, through regulations, controls and pressures, but also from the inside out, colonising lives and producing new subjectivities. Such performativity, experienced as a regime of externally imposed controls, generates identities disciplined by targets, indicators, measures and records of performance (Lyotard, 1997; Ball, 2001). Such a regime cannot, it is argued (Ranson, 1994; 2003) realise its purposes of enhancing institutional achievement or strengthening public trust. Achievement grows out of the internal goods of motivation to improve (that follows recognition and the mutual deliberation of purpose) rather than the external imposition of quantifiable targets. While public trust cannot emerge from the neo-liberal forces of competition that only create a hierarchy of class advantage that turn educational opportunity into a hierarchy of advantage. Different conceptions of purpose, of who we are and what we can become, are excluded by such a regime. Public trust can only emerge when the wider community of citizens is provided

with the possibility of participating in and deliberating the common goods of a community (Ranson and Stewart; 1994, 1998; Ranson, 2003; Leys, 2001; Marquand, 2004).

### **III Theorising governance as constitution and mediation**

The restructuring of education governance constituted by the 1988 ERA was designed to replace and defeat its predecessor, and yet the neo-liberal framework is confounded with contradictions and unable to fulfil its public purposes. What can be learned about the nature of governance from these changes? Contemporary theorising of governance has been dominated by the political science paradigm of networks. 'Networks are the analytical heart of the notion of governance in the study of public administration', proposes Rhodes (1996; 1997; 2000). The restructuring of the state required, it was argued, a new theory of governance - of governance without governing. The functions of the unitary state had been 'hollowed out' and were distributed across increasingly autonomous quangos, agencies and authorities. Governance came to describe self-organising inter-organisational networks that were characterised by: cross-sector interdependence; exchange of resources and purposes; regulated by 'the rules of the game', and significantly autonomous from the state.

Governments could only steer at a distance. This model of governance as networks has become the dominant paradigm with different traditions contesting not the theory but the form it took (Rhodes, 2002; Stoker, 2004; Pierre, 2000).

The network model has been valuable in capturing many changes in the nature of the neo-liberal polity, yet it is weak in its explanatory power and remains a partial theory of governance. While describing emergent change it avoids causal analysis of the active work of the state in restructuring itself as a neo-liberal polity, differentiating functions, de-regulating powers while centralising others, and constructing public spaces as quasi-markets of choice and competition. It describes outcomes rather than explains sources and neglects the continuing power of the state over the system frame, and the regulation of resources. The paradigm, therefore, takes for granted and fails to theorise the prior re-structuring of governance which provided the conditions for networks to operate. A theory is needed which does not erase the practice of networks, but gathers it up, sublates it (*aufheben*), into a more comprehensive interpretive analysis.

If such formations and re-formations of governance are to be understood, theoretical work is needed to address the constitutive and mediational practices of change. Governance *constitutes* a system of rule and power in relation to the diverse and competing social interests within society (Ranson and Stewart, 1994; Peters, 1996; Barnes et al, 2003; Newman et al, 2004; Newman, 2005). The distinctive task of governance in these practices of distributing and exercising power is to constitute the public sphere to undertake those activities which individuals cannot do alone, but only together, collectively. These collective tasks are of three kinds: deciding which public goods and services are to be provided for all (eg defence, or road infrastructures and street lighting); establishing collective efficiency (eg regulating the collective action dilemmas of traffic congestion, soil erosion, carbon emissions); and most significantly, constituting collective rules and purposes. They are fundamental because the deep purpose of the public sphere is to constitute what Rawls (1971) would call 'the basic framework' of liberties and opportunities, establishing the social and political preconditions for justice in society, the agreements that enable social life to proceed.

To constitute public sphere is thus to establish the relationship between individual and collective and thus the nature, the duality, of citizenship: being a person but also a member of the public as a political community. Governance establishes what it is to be a citizen, who is to be a member and what are to be their rights and duties to each other. Decisions about

such matters determine the bases of individual identity, well-being and the nature of their social ties.

In constituting the form of citizenship, governance also *mediates* the relations of difference in society and thus the relations of cultural classification. Cultures codify and mark essential boundaries arising from our deepest values and beliefs. To be placed in a different world is thus to experience the deepest codes of social classification: who is to be included as a member, who excluded as alien sets the boundaries of the social order; the identities of self and other, of sacred and profane are defined within the moral order; while the relations of power, of super and subordination, constitute the political order. Systems of social classification (Bourdieu, 1999) so embody the relations between communities that to be regarded as other, outside, profane is to experience the greatest disadvantage - to be denied the dignity, and thus the sense of agency, that derive from being acknowledged as a fellow citizen with shared rights and responsibilities.

The governing of education mediates regulative principles about the knowledge required to become a citizen as well one's place in the social order. Governance mediates a semiotic order (Bernstein, 2000; Halliday, 1978). The curriculum encodes, in texts, documents, displays, communications, a particular form of knowledge and thus accessing it is a matter of the relationship between the cultures of home and school. This 'grammar' goes beyond formal properties to explore the social positioning of agents, their relations with established forms of language that are encoded in the conventions, registers and genres of linguistic exchange, and how social identities position agents in the social field. How you speak – the style and codes you can access and deploy – will determine your capacity to gain recognition in the social world of education. Different forms of life produce different orientations to meaning. While the school encodes knowledge in particular ways in the curriculum it may fail to grant positive recognition to the socially meaning systems of different segments of the population. Moreover, the 'style' of transmission of knowledge may also exclude socially produced varieties of cultural identity. This operates critically at the level of language, effectively disempowering those social groups that do not have 'automatic' access to the forms of knowledge and the codes of the institution.

The practices of constituting and mediating governance have informed the restructuring of education since the Second War. Social democratic governance was constituted by legislation and administrative guidance which emphasised the authority of local government and schools. The structuring of governance mediated the cultural code of specialist authority shaping the purposes and modes of the political order. The 1988 ERA neo-liberal displacing of the age of professionalism was led by the reconstituting of powers and responsibilities in the different tiers of governance, the restructuring mediating the codes of possessive individualism, and allowing private and sectional interests to mask as public goods. Does this theorising of governance as constitution and mediation help to interpret the transforming of education into a children's service?

#### **IV A new governance of education in embryo?**

The accession to power of New Labour in 1997 did not lead to a change in the dominant neo-liberal paradigm constituted by the 1988 Education Reform Act, rather an accentuation of the principles of choice, diversity and competition (Ranson, 2003). The creation of *A New Specialist System* (1997, 2003) followed by the *Academies Programme* (2001, 2004) and *Self Governing Trusts* (2004) all seeking to reinforce belief in the capacity of strong independent institutions to raise standards of achievement. New Labour strengthened the regulatory practices of the audit state (Power) to support performance accountability for the education market place. Meticulous

definition, targeting and monitoring of the inputs, processes and expected outputs of schooling would, it was insisted, improve standards of attainment: 'standards not structure' improve performance. A sophisticated national system of regulations was put in place to measure and monitor a limited set of school performances and outcomes – principally, test and examination results - to constitute performance accountability for marketability.

The governance and ownership of schooling, as well as its institutional formation and regulation, was also developed to reinforce diversity. The *Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners* (2004), followed by the White Paper *Higher Standards, Better Schools for All* (2005), proposed that schools and services must be 'opened up to new and different providers and ways of delivering services'. Such new providers might include 'parents groups... able to sponsor schools, enabling successful schools to establish and manage entirely new schools and federations.' Schools themselves were encouraged to form 'foundation partnerships and federations that will work together to raise standards but also take on new responsibilities.' The business and private sector, in addition to the churches would not only extend their increasing control and provision of state schooling, but also play an emergent role in a new system of local governance, offering 'some local brokerage to make it work' as well as coordination to ensure joined-up provision. 'This cannot just be a partnership of state providers – the voluntary and community sector, business and private enterprises need to be a part of this partnership to provide joined up services.' (DfES, 2004). New Labour thus intensified dependency on specifically neo-liberal practice – strengthening consumer choice, contract law, audits of performance, corporate power and regulative accountability - all designed to create public services as a sphere of market exchange relationships.

Yet from the early years of New Labour, unfolding within the trappings of the neo-liberal regime, a very different form of governance has been gathering pace and strength in response to growing understanding of the influences on learning as well as deepening concerns about the impact of economic and social change on young people. The *Five Year Strategy* (DfES, 2004) acknowledged that while policy had succeeded in opening up educational opportunities at every stage of life, fifty years of development had not broken the link between social class and achievement. Underachievement of disadvantaged young people in particular was being accentuated by 'too many disenchanted pupils getting in trouble and dropping out'. Many schools have been unable to engage not only these youngsters but also their parents and carers.

We fail our most disadvantaged children and young people - those in public care, those with complex family lives are those most at risk... Internationally our rate of child poverty is still high, as are the rates of worklessness in one-parent families, the rate of teenage pregnancies and the level of poor diet among children. The links between poor health, disadvantage and low educational outcomes are stark. (DfES, 2004, para. 24)

Specific tragedies, moreover (for example, the Victoria Climbié Inquiry, 2003), had revealed the more fundamental failures: to secure the safety of some vulnerable children at risk in the community or in care; the inability of public services to coordinate their practice effectively; and the urgency of remedying failure. Disturbed by such serious structural failings in education and public service has prompted a major revision of the purpose and role of education and the public sphere, for some 'the most important time for public services since the creation of the welfare state after 1945.... At stake is the prize of a public realm that promotes opportunity and security.' (Miliband, 2004; cf. *Five Year Strategy*, 2004).

Education and public services needed to transform their practice from 'a monolithic model of providing a basic and standard model for all (DfES, 2004) to one which addresses all the

needs of all the children if they are to enjoy opportunity and security throughout their lives. The Green Paper *Every Child Matters* (2003) and the ensuing legislation (*Children Act*, 2004, *Education and Inspections Act*, 2006) began the most significant reconstituting education as a children's service, integrating education, health and social services to constitute a new framework of holistic care for young people. The near universal tradition of providing an education service has been to conceive the object of learning as the child in the classroom of a school detached from the community. The movement of change is now transforming this practice to create a more inclusive learning community embracing family and neighbourhood with teachers, health and social workers collaborating to support all the learning needs of young people and adults throughout their lives. Emphasis is given to early years provision, with health, education and social care closely integrated through Children's Centres, support for parents at each stage of their children's development, and schools working in partnership with families and their communities. This vision of educational renewal is envisaged as necessitating long term systemic and cultural change (DfES, 2004).

A new form of community governance is emerging to constitute and sustain this remaking of education with its emphasis upon the integration of services and the inclusion of young people, families and communities. Following the *Children Act 2004*, Children's Trusts are constituted to draw together all the services and agencies engaged with children and to develop the strategic plans and commissioning practices that will secure interdependence of service delivery and better outcomes for children. In every Local Authority a Director is being appointed and a Lead Council Member elected to develop the new Children's Service. A framework of inspection and joint area reviews has been generated to ensure that collaborative and participative practices are being introduced throughout an area, while the powers of the local authority are enhanced to intervene in schools and centres to improve failing practice.

Central to this reconstituting of education into a Children's Service are policy initiatives that are necessitating the re-configuring of school, children's centres and agencies into collaborative 'localities and clusters': in particular, the policies of extended schools and 14-19 diplomas. Because all the services and curricular opportunities required by these policies to be made available to children and families cannot be provided by each institution, they will typically need to be offered in consortia arrangements. This is leading to fundamental changes in the leadership and governance of local education. For example, extended schools (DfES, 2002a,b; 2005a,b; Ofsted, 2005,06; NCSL, 2006a,b,c,d), growing out of the Exclusion Unit's neighbourhood renewal policies for 'schools plus' (DfES, 1999), seek:

to provide a range of services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of children, their families and the wider community.' (p7) We previously funded a category of full service Extended Schools with a specific remit of services. Now we want all schools to be able to access a core of extended services which are developed in partnership with others.

Extended services can include childcare, adult education, parenting support programmes, community based health and social care services, multi-agency support teams and after school activities (DfES, 2005).

The Department argued, building on the 'full service extended school' initiative<sup>1</sup> (DfES 2003a,b), that the extension of services and opportunities provided the conditions for

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<sup>1</sup> This DfES initiative built on policy development in America, and planned to sponsor each local authority to create one or more schools that provide a comprehensive range of services including child care, health

achievement: 'Extended schools know that by working in partnership with parents they can enable children and young people to fulfil their potential. They know that children's wellbeing and high educational standards go hand in hand. And they know that children will be better placed to achieve their full potential if they are in childcare that allows them to complete their homework, have their health problems addressed and get help from their parents to support their learning.' (DfES, 2005) The Education Act 2002 required schools to consult widely with families and the wider community before providing extended services: 'by consulting with parents and involving them in the planning of services, schools will, be better able to develop the package of services which best meets the needs of their community.' (DfES, 2005) The governing body of the school has a key role to play in consulting with the community about developing extended services.

The leading research, by Dyson and his colleagues, on the contribution which (full service) extended schools are making to educational achievement in areas of disadvantage provided some hopeful evidence of improvement (Crowther et al, 2004; Cummings et al, 2005, 2006). 'There is good evidence that full service extended schools can have significant positive effects on children, adults and families. They can be associated with benefits for schools in terms of improvements on performance measures (such as student attainment and exclusion rates) and increased intake numbers' (Cummings et al, 2006, p.ii). The report acknowledged, however, that 'it was not clear that the positive outcomes were sufficiently widespread to transform whole communities, nor did the benefits for schools materialise in every case' (p. iii). The balance of progress would need to be monitored closely.

The developing practice of extended schools and children's centres, nevertheless, is beginning to have significant consequences for the constitution of school governance. While partnerships between schools have grown since the turn of the century they have typically been led by professionals. But the growth of formal federations between the governing bodies of schools, and the increasing development of joint governing committees of clusters of schools is remaking the map of governance. The vision of *Every Child Matters* requires collaborative practice, the co-production of service and care, the creation of a learning community. This is underpinned by the constitution of an emergent community governance (Ranson, 2007). The movement to collaborative governance often begins when the responsibility for budgets between institutions requires distribution to become publicly accountable and legitimated by public participation.

These policy innovations are generating the need for a new form of collaborative and collective planning in and for the community. A system is being created which requires cultural change in the leadership of education. System leadership is the move 'towards a more deliberately collaborative and interdependent system and probably one more oriented towards the locality' (Fullan, 2004). But there is growing recognition that these changes are redescribing not just changes in local 'system leadership' but governance (Bentley and Craig, 2005). The changes will require new frameworks and models of governance: redefining the purposes and boundaries, re-allocating resources, re-authorising system relationships and redefining accountabilities. Such remaking of governance is needed because 'the system' that is being reconfigured is the public sphere and what counts as 'public value' (NCSL/Innovation Unit/Demos, 2007).

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services, adult learning and community activities. By 2005 the Department wanted all schools to become extended schools.

### **The changing mediations of governance: a collective or segmented public**

The present re-constituting of the governance of education as a Children's Service is embodied in extensive legislative restructuring of institutions and practices. Whether these changes are displacing or merely complementing the neo-liberal regime, constituted by the 1988 ERA and reinforced by New Labour since it came to power, careful scrutiny will be necessary over the next three to five years before the process of implementation is complete. It is clear, nevertheless, that policy remains fundamentally fractured between one strategy which asserts that achievement is improved through strong independent institutions which compete effectively in the market place of parental choice, and another which proposes that only a collaborative community of practice can create the conditions for all to achieve. If this bifurcation of public policy is acknowledged as contradictory then we might anticipate rational policy makers developing plans to enhance coherence and dissolve fragmentation.

From a different perspective, however, the present ostensibly contradictory policies might be perfectly consistent. Education has remained inscribed by class at every level of service and practice (Ball, 2003). Ministers in recent years have been concerned about the purported fragile confidence of middle class parents in the quality of urban secondary schools. At the time of the Labour Government's launch of its *Five Year Strategy*, the Secretary of State, expressed anxiety about the drift of middle class parents from the state sector, which had risen to 20 per cent in some urban areas and higher in London. '*There is a significant chunk of them who go private because they feel despairing about the quality of education. They are the people we are after.*' (Clarke, 2004, in Harris and Ranson, 2005). There is a duality in *the Strategy* and in ensuing legislation which the Government has sought to hold in tension by the rhetoric of choice – 'customised' for parents' choice of institutions and 'personalised' for students' choice of learning.

This duality of policy is informed, arguably, by the State seeking to regulate different class interests and concerns. One set of strategies is designed to satisfy the possessive individualism of the advantaged, providing them with the positional goods to secure their relative advantage in the spaces of the mobile global economy. While another set of strategies that are creating an integrated and collaborative Children's Service are designed to provide 'wrap around' care and 14-19 vocational training to secure adaptation of disadvantaged children and families to the changing demands of local labour in its place. *Every Child Matters*, *The Children Act* and *Extended Schools* could be generating a new sphere of participation, voice and co-production of public service, or if the broader compass of policy is taken into view then a different frame of class segmented education governance is revealed, driven by exigencies of a stratified labour market. Opportunity is mediated by the market for the advantaged while the integrated community of practice mediates the life chances for the disadvantaged. Reading the codes of significance of institutional re-form in its context can be a challenge. For example, do academies signify a corporatising of the governance of education, or reconfiguration within the new community of Children's Service practice? Millar (2007) reads the codes acutely: are academies more 'accountable, collegiate and 'mainstream' than hitherto?

'It is still the case that parents and pupils in academies receive less protection under the law on everything from exclusions to special needs and admissions than their counterparts in community, voluntary, aided, foundation, or indeed, trust schools. .... Staff are not protected by statutory terms and conditions, the governing body arrangements are still wholly undemocratic and largely exclude elected parents and other representatives of the community..... (and) the new academy prospectus states clearly that the sponsors will always have the controlling interest on the governing body, so once the school is up and running, the local council can exercise little realistic leverage.'

Bernstein (1975) was alert to the ambivalence of the codes which regulate the structuring and control of educational, particularly pedagogic, practice<sup>2</sup>. The dominant mode of control underlying traditional pedagogies (differentiated subjects with strong control of transmission) is academic hierarchy and surveillance. A divided curriculum is a controlled curriculum, yet the focus of control is on the ordering of knowledge rather than the person who can distance themselves from the penetration of the socialisation process. Progressive educationalists have typically sought to reform this traditional 'collection code' of passively acquiring separate bodies of knowledge, to develop a pedagogy based upon an 'integrated code' that recognises connections between fields of learning and the importance of active discovery and collaborative enquiry for effective learning. This requires teachers to work together across boundaries towards agreed purposes and shared practices. The focus of learning shifts from regulating acquisition of knowledge to close monitoring the attributes and character of students as they engage in the learning process. While the weakening of boundaries encourages the greater participation by students in the construction and experience of learning, it also intensifies regulation of the students' personal dispositions and affective engagements.

Is a comparable ambivalence apparent in the codes of contemporary education policy formation? Is the progressive re-constituting of education into a children's service, with its emergent re-configuration of institutions, inclusive participation and integration of practices at the point of service delivery, generating a collaborative governance appropriate to the needs of a cosmopolitan civil society, one that will replace the dominance of the neo-liberal regime of acquisitive individualism that was facilitated by the 1988 Education Reform Act? Or is the new governance to be nested within a public sphere which subordinates learning communities to the requirements of an entrenched neo-liberal regime? This would signal the constituting of a class segmented polity<sup>3</sup>, with governance constituting fundamentally differentiated forms of life and citizenship for advantaged and disadvantaged classes whose interests are interpreted separately in terms of the differential demands of global and local labour markets. From this perspective, the progressive practices of the new governance will, like Bernstein's integrated code, instead of unfolding capability and opportunity, work to mediate, relationships that require surveillance, socialisation and control adapting the disadvantaged to their place as subjects rather than citizens in a bifurcated public sphere. It will require considerable exercise of state power to reduce the scope of the market place and to restrict the middle classes from strengthening still further their relative advantage in the accumulation of power, wealth and life chances.

In an important review of their research on the community-oriented policies of New Labour, Raffo and Dyson (2007) contribute significantly to this concluding analysis. The dynamic of social and economic exclusion has polarised (gentrified and ghettoised) urban communities around segregated labour markets (cf. Meen et al, 2005) and, reinforced by educational market competition and choice, stratified schooling (cf. Riddell, 2005). A decade of neighbourhood renewal and community focused education reform has begun to make a difference to achievement in a number of disadvantaged urban contexts. But schools re-configured as community clusters will not be enough to transform capability and opportunity. They acknowledge, as the American researcher Lipman emphasises, that 'any serious effort to transform public schools ultimately can only succeed as part of a larger local and global social struggle for material redistribution and cultural recognition.' (Lipman, 2004, pp. 182-183) Raffo and Dyson, nevertheless, conclude with a glimmer of 'complex hope'

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ranson (1984) 'Towards a tertiary tripartism: new codes of social control and the 17+.'

<sup>3</sup> Cf Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas*

(Grace, 1994): that a set of interdependent participatory public policies could transform the urban context for schools, families and communities. In the language of this paper, a just and democratic public sphere can constitute the material and cultural conditions for active citizens to participate in layers of local and neighbourhood governance that can mediate the learning communities needed in a cosmopolitan civic society.

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