

# Learning in and for interagency working

**Project grant holders:** Harry Daniels, Anne Edwards, Angela Greese, Jane Leadbetter and Deirdre Martin

## Aims:

This study will develop and test a model of work based professional learning for interagency working. This is the inter-professional learning that is necessary for welfare services to provide joined up responses to complex problems.

We will enhance research capacity through our use of Developmental Work Research (DWR) methods with practitioners and our discourse analysis techniques with research staff.

## Significance:

Current policy initiatives aimed at the social inclusion of at risk children, young people and their families call for joined up responses from professionals. These responses need to be flexible and require practitioners to be able work together to support clients.

## Partnerships:

This project has been developed with a number of key professionals who work for Local Authorities.

We will work very closely with three Local Authorities in a series of change laboratories in which researchers and practitioners will examine data gathered in interagency working. In partnership, they will seek to identify and understand the tensions and dilemmas which inhibit successful practice and formulate proposals for change.

Local Authority personnel will be employed as members of the research team. They will ensure that the project is fully embedded in Local Authority networks.

## Work to be done:

We are taking the education or care plans of at risk secondary pupils as a focus of the learning-in-action of professionals who come together, however fleetingly, to support those plans. Our concern is how these professionals learn to collaborate to provide responsive support to these young people. Our study will be partnered by another with a similar focus on interprofessional learning, but based in medicine and business and to be funded in the Finnish Learning for Life Programme.

We suggest that individual learning cannot be separated from organisational learning. This project builds on this view in three ways.

First, we look at learning across traditional organisational and professional boundaries and not simply within one organisation or team.

Second, we examine professional learning by following the object of professional actions (i.e. the education and care plans). In this way we can assess learning outcomes at the level of clients and include the clients' voices in the study.

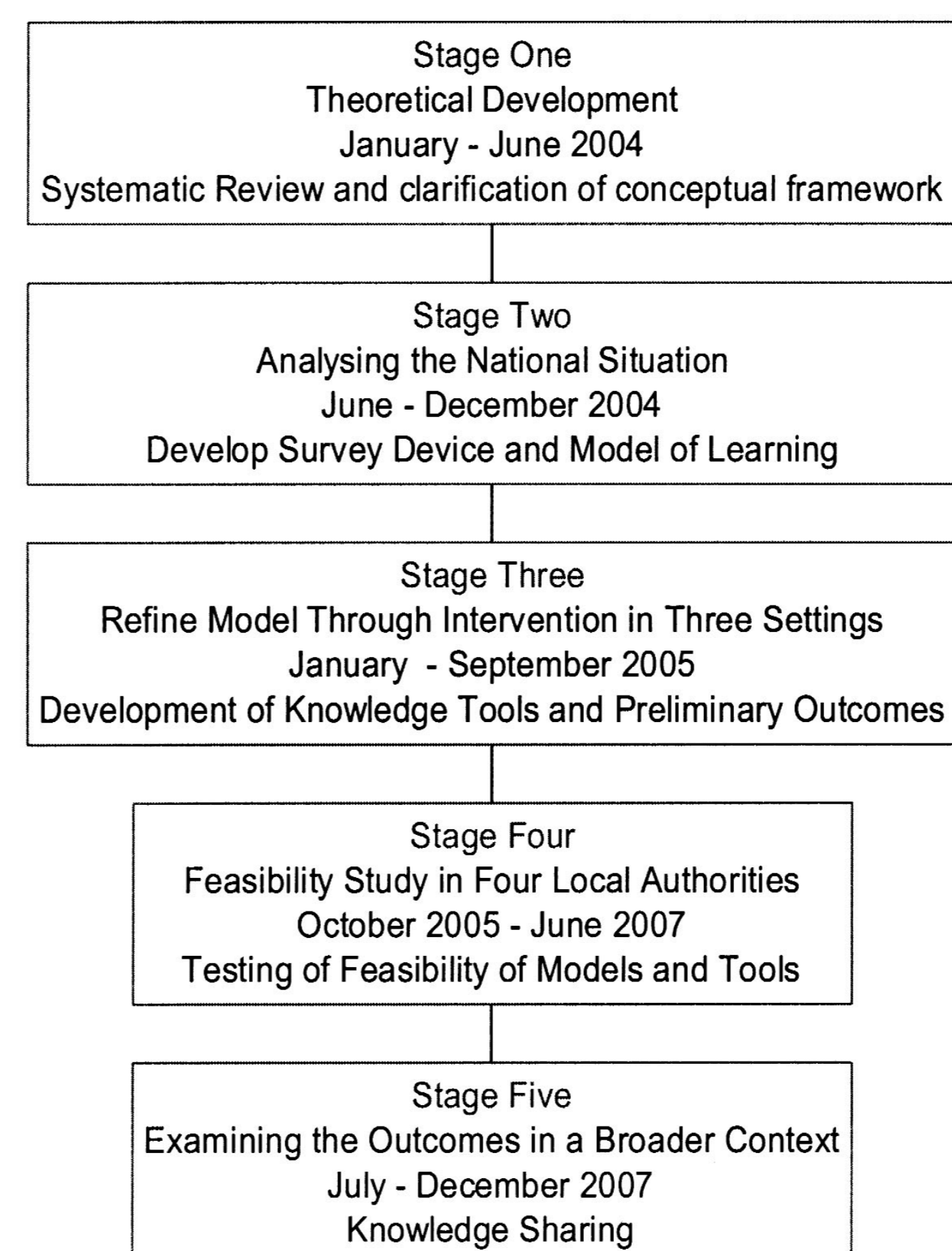
Finally, together with our international partners, we will develop and test new ways of enhancing professional learning.

## Schedule:

The study lasts four years and has five Stages.

In stages one and two, we will develop a model of learning for and in interagency working using library work, workshops with practitioners and a national questionnaire. In the third stage, we will test and refine the model through detailed study in two Local Authorities. In the next and longest stage we will test the model of learning in three Authorities and compare outcomes with a fourth where we don't introduce the model.

In the final stage we examine the relevance of the model for a wider range of professional groups and set up a national practitioner network on learning for and in interagency working.



Professionals working together

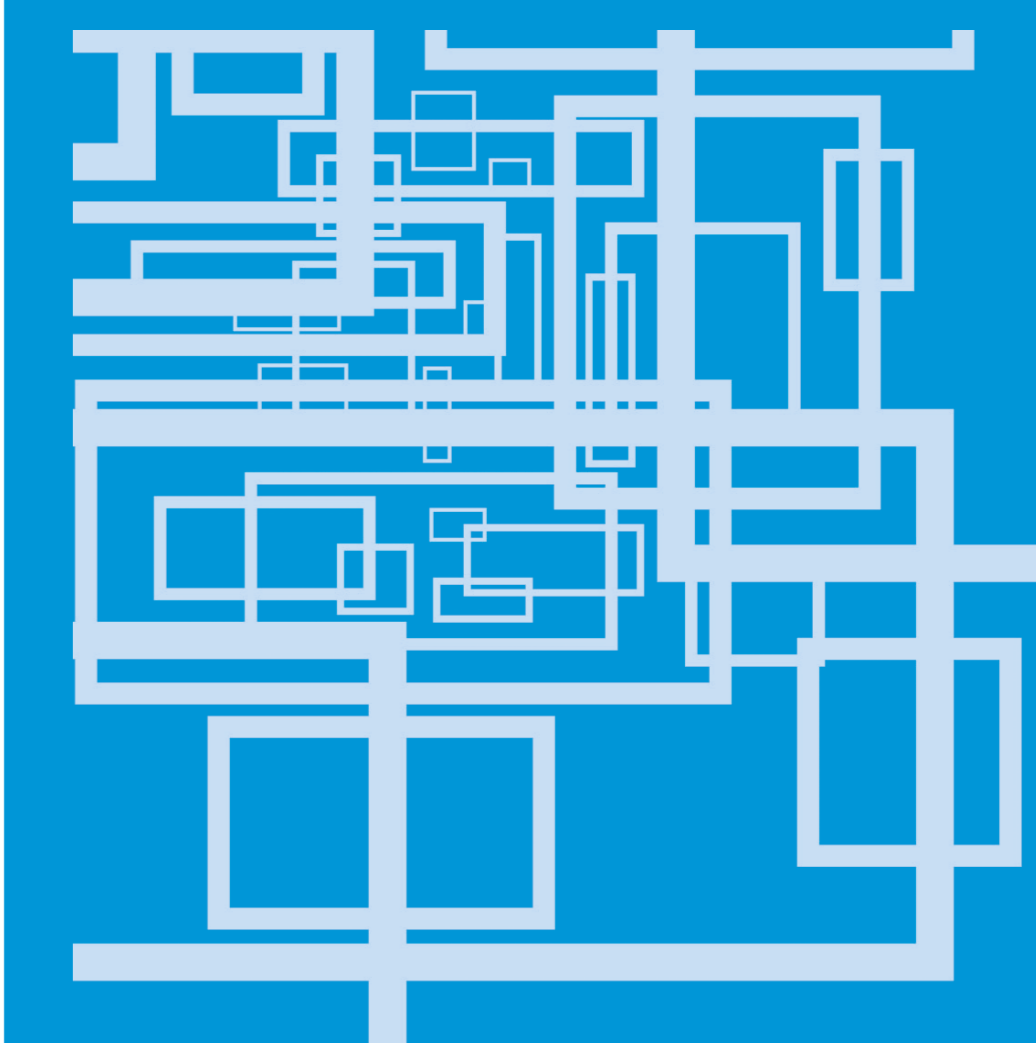
## Project team:

Professor Harry Daniels,  
Project Director, Birmingham  
Professor Anne Edwards,  
Project Director, Birmingham  
Dr Angela Creese, Birmingham  
Dr Jane Leadbetter, Birmingham  
Dr Deirdre Martin, Birmingham  
Dr Stephen Brown, Loughborough  
Dr David Middleton, Loughborough

## Contact details:

Professor Harry Daniels  
School of Education  
The University of Birmingham  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham B15 2TT  
Tel: 0121 414 6482  
Email: H.R.J.Daniels@bham.ac.uk

## Teaching and Learning Research Programme



TLRP involves over 30 research teams with contributions from England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Work began in 2000 and will continue to 2008/9.

**Learning:** TLRP's overarching aim is to improve outcomes for learners of all ages in teaching and learning contexts across the UK.

**Outcomes:** TLRP studies a broad range of learning outcomes, including the acquisition of skill, understanding, knowledge and qualifications and the development of attitudes, values and identities relevant to a learning society.

**Lifecourse:** TLRP supports projects and related activities at many ages and stages in education, training and lifelong learning.

**Enrichment:** TLRP commits to user engagement at all stages of research. It promotes research across disciplines, methodologies and sectors, and supports national and international co-operation.

**Expertise:** TLRP works to enhance capacity for all forms of research on teaching and learning, and for research-informed policy and practice.

**Improvement:** TLRP develops the knowledge base on teaching and learning and policy and practice in the UK.

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Professor Andrew Pollard ■ Cambridge  
Dr Mary James ■ Cambridge  
Dr Kathryn Ecclestone ■ Newcastle  
Dr Alan Brown ■ Warwick  
John Siraj-Blatchford ■ Cambridge

## TLRP Programme Office

Dr Lynne Blanchfield ■ Lsb32@cam.ac.uk  
Suzanne Fletcher ■ sf207@cam.ac.uk

## TLRP

University of Cambridge  
Faculty of Education  
Shaftesbury Road  
Cambridge CB2 2BX UK

Tel: +44 (0)1223 369631

