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AGM Seminar

Guest Speaker: **Kathy Sylva** is Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Oxford. Her research work focuses on longitudinal studies as well as randomised control trials. Kathy has carried out policy related studies on the effects of Early Childhood Education and Care on children's development, with a particular interest in the contribution of quality to children's outcomes. She also studies ways to support early literacy through school and home based interventions. She has been a lead researcher on the "Effective Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education" (EPPSE) project and also on the National Evaluation of Children's Centres. A dominant theme throughout her work has been the impact of education and care not only on 'academic knowledge' but on children's behaviour, self-regulation, and disposition to learn. She was specialist adviser to the Parliament's Select Committee on Education 2000-2010. She has been a member of the expert panels of The Good Childhood Review 2008 and also the Tickell Review on the Early Years Foundation Stage 2011. She was awarded an OBE in 2008 for services to children and families.

Topic: Investigating what high quality looks like in British pre-schools: evidence from observations in pre-school centres

Time & Date: 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. on February 26, 2013 (Tuesday)

Venue: Room 408-410, Meng Wah Complex, The University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam, Hong Kong

Language: English



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Title of seminar: 'Investigating what high quality looks like in British pre-schools: evidence from observations in pre-school centres'

Abstract for seminar:

The purpose of this seminar is to show how curricular quality is related to the day-to-day activities experienced by children and the pedagogical activities of staff, both coded through systematic target-child observations. Data were drawn from the Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) and the Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years (REPEY) studies. Curricular quality was measured by coding the ECERS-E, an English curricular extension to the well-known ECERS-R. In centres scoring high on the ECERS-E, staff engaged in pedagogical practices that included more 'sustained shared thinking' and more 'direct teaching' such as questioning or modelling. In high-scoring centres, children were also observed participating in more activities associated with early reading, emergent writing and active listening. Children in centres assessed as 'adequate' spent more time in activities associated with the 'Physical Development' and 'Creative' curriculum. Thus the ECERS-E gives higher scores to pedagogical practices and activities where staff take a more active role in children's learning, including scaffolding young children's play, especially in the communication and literacy domains of the curriculum. The seminar will close with questions about cross cultural differences in quality.