'The Word Gay has been Banned but People use it in the Boys' Toilets whenever you go in': Spatialising Children's Subjectivities in response to Gender and Sexualities Education in English Primary Schools

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This paper critically analyses children's (6-11 year olds) contradictory, sociospatial responses to 'gender and sexualities education' in English primary schools. Drawing on ethnographic, interview and focus group data from an 18-month study, the paper foregrounds 'formal' and 'informal' spaces of learning in order to illustrate how children's gendered and sexualised subjectivities are both constituted within – and constitutive of – the spatialities of schooling. Utilising subjectivity and performativity theory after Butler, a 'good student' that performs 'acceptance' of liberal discourses of gender and sexual diversity in classrooms is distinguished from a 'good peer' that is simultaneously compelled to reinstate (hetero)gender/sexuality in the playground, toilets and corridors. These contradictory sociospatial stances, which came to the fore in focus groups that defy 'formal' or 'informal' categorisation challenge gender and sexualities education centred on equalities and anti-bullying. Findings from this study point to the urgent need to acknowledge and counter the dominance of wider heteronormative ideals.

Keywords: geographies of education, inclusive education, gender, sexualities, childhood, performativity

Introduction

Since the repeal of Section 28 of the 1988 Local Government Act, educators and third-sector organisations have utilised UK government legislation and guidance to create 'gender and sexualities education' in English primary schools. Section 28 prevented UK Local Authorities from 'promoting' homosexuality as a 'pretended family relationship' (S.2A(1) Local Government Act 1986) and its repeal in England in 2003 has been widely celebrated as a turning point for sexualities equality and inclusion in schools (DePalma and Atkinson, 2008). While the repeal of Section 28 is significant, there has been a lack of critical research scrutinising the basis of 'post-Section 28' gender and sexualities education, and an absence of studies exploring how children respond to these programmes. This paper addresses this gap in a novel way through taking a geographical approach. By foregrounding diverse spaces of learning within school, the paper traces how liberal discourses of gender and sexual equality move across micro-institutional space and how children's gendered and sexualised subjectivities are constituted within – and constitutive of – the spatialities of schooling. These new socio-spatial insights into children's constructions and negotiations of gender and sexualities highlight the possibilities – but also the limitations – of liberal equalities programmes, particularly those based around anti- sexism/homophobia and anti-bullying.

In this paper, I critically analyse children's (6-11 year olds) contradictory responses to two schemes of work delivered in two English primary schools as part of gender and sexualities education: 'Alternative Fairy Tales' (introduced in Year 2) and 'Heteronormative Masculinity and Homophobic Language' (introduced in Year 4). The former revolves around alternative (or feminist) fairy tales (i.e. King and King (De Hann and Nijiland, 2002); The Paper Bag Princess (Munsch, 1980/2012); Prince

Cinders (Cole, 1997) while the latter is concerned with challenging heteronormative masculinity and homophobic language through books such as The Boy with Pink Hair (Hilton, 2012), Oliver Button is a Sissy (DePaola, 1979) and The Sissy Duckling (Fierstein and Cole, 2005). These schemes of work, which are part of a school-wide curriculum contesting normative assumptions about (hetero)gender/sexuality are delivered by two leading exponents of Stonewall's 'School Champions' programme. This national initiative for preventing and challenging homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia will be discussed in the next section.

To conceptualise children's responses to gender and sexualities education, I draw on subjectivity and performativity theory after Butler (1990; 1997; 2004) where a performative self that cites recognisable liberal pluralistic equalities discourse in 'formal' micro-institutional spaces (i.e. classrooms) can be distinguished from a performative subject that is simultaneously compelled to reinstate (hetero)gender/sexuality in 'informal' micro-institutional spaces (i.e. playground, corridors and toilets) in order to achieve viable subjecthood (see Thomas, 2008; Youdell, 2006). The former is understood in light of subjection and the curriculum where the syllabus can be conceived as a 'governmental document' which 'contains and shapes the 'conditions of possibility' available to school students' (Davies, 2006, p. 430). From a Butlerian standpoint, schemes of work, lesson plans and accompanying resources are regarded as performative insofar as they present the terms of engagement for students and what students are to become: tolerant and accepting liberal citizens. The latter is understood in light of how subjection works on, and in, the psychic life of the subject where processes of identification require the rejection (abjection) of other identities (Butler, Laclau and Zizek, 2000; also see Nayak and Kehily, 2006). In

spatialising subjectivity and performativity in this way, I offer an original account of children's sociospatial negotiations of gender and sexualities education that enhances previous research, particularly those concerned with gender and/or sexualities in schools and the micro-institutional construction of social identities (i.e. Ansell, 2002; Bragg, Renold, Ringrose and Jackson, 2018; DePalma and Atkinson, 2009a; Epstein, 2000; Hemming, 2011; Holloway, Valentine and Bingham, 2000; Holt, 2007; Renold, 2005; Thomas, 2011).

Contextualizing a Study on Gender and Sexualities Education in English Primary Schools

Before situating this paper in a wider academic context, I outline the legal frameworks governing gender and sexualities education. To do this, I must first clarify what I mean by gender and sexualities education.

Gender and sexualities education is not a term used in UK law or statutory/non-statutory government guidance. Rather, I use this term to encapsulate schools' work around sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and 'gender and sexualities equality' (DePalma and Atkinson, 2009b) more generally which, when brought together with relevant UK government legislation and guidance, could be seen as producing gender and sexualities education. While I primarily focus on sexuality, I use the term 'gender and sexualities education', rather than simply 'sexualities education' as government legislation and guidance directing schools' work around gender intersects with, and informs, how schools approach sexualities. It would therefore be inappropriate to separate gender and sexuality. However, by including gender (as this relates to sexualities education) I do not claim to encapsulate everything which could be

considered 'gender education'. Now that I have clarified what I mean by gender and sexualities education, I will briefly outline the contested nature of education law.

There is currently no requirement in UK law for English primary schools to provide sex education (known as Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) in guidance), although primary schools must adhere to statutory guidance (DfEE 0116/2000) if providing SRE. SRE guidance, which formed part of a government compromise with religious groups to get a repeal of Section 28 of the 1988 Local Government Act through the House of Lords (Vanderbeck and Johnson, 2015) affirms 'the significance of marriage and stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society' (§1.21). As Vanderbeck and Johnson (2015) have shown, this negotiated framework for sex education illustrates one of the ways in which religious interests influence legal frameworks that govern the circulation of knowledge about homosexuality in schools. Indeed, Vanderbeck and Johnson use the phrase 'non-statutory knowledge' to indicate how knowledge about homosexuality is kept outside the requirements of the National Curriculum. While this may be the case, primary legislation since the repeal of Section 28 has put an onus on schools to proactively 'eliminate discrimination', 'advance equality of opportunity' and 'foster good relations' (S.149(1)(a)-(c) Equality Act 2010) with gender and sexual orientation highlighted as crucial areas to be recognised in school programmes (DCSF, 2007). National Curriculum subjects (particularly Literacy) are key in this regard as schools can incorporate knowledges about gender and sexual diversity so as to be proactive in eliminating discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity while meeting statutory subject requirements. This means that teachers do not have to divert from the National Curriculum to introduce these knowledges in separate, non-statutory subjects (see Hall, 2015).

In addition to the Equality Act (2010), other key primary legislation – including the Civil Partnership Act (2005)/ Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 and various gender equality legislation (i.e. Gender Recognition Act, 2004 and Gender Equality Duty, introduced as part of the Equality Act 2006) – have reinforced schools' statutory responsibilities towards promoting gender and sexualities equality. The Civil Partnership Act (2005), relevant at the time of research placed an onus on schools to challenge homophobia through recognising same-sex couples in monogamous nuclear relationships while gender equality legislation emphasised schools' obligations towards addressing homophobia through tackling gender-based bullying (DePalma and Atkinson, 2008). The Education and Inspections Act (2006), which places a duty on Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) to ensure that schools prevent homophobic bullying (§89(1)(b)) underscores this dominant approach centred on anti-homophobia, anti-bullying and liberal discourses of equality and tolerance (also see Ofsted, 2012). Parallel, non-statutory government guidance, including *Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence* (DfES, 2002); Stand Up for Us: Challenging Homophobia in Schools (DfES/DOH, 2004); Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools (DCSF, 2007); Combating Transphobic Bullying in Schools (Home Office, 2008); and Guidance for schools on preventing and responding to sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying (DCSF, 2009) consolidate this approach for introducing gender and sexualities education.

Government legislation and guidance carves out this policy context for gender and sexualities education, although to date there has been no national government programme. Instead, UK government supports third-sector organisations who create

educational initiatives by operationalising this legislation and guidance. Arguably, Stonewall – a prominent, national LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) charity – has received greatest government support through the Department for Education (DfE) for their 'Education for All' campaign which was launched in 2005 to prevent and tackle homophobia and homophobic bullying in schools and colleges. In strengthening this already dominant anti- homophobia/bullying approach, Stonewall commissioned research on the extent of homophobic bullying in UK schools to gain popular support for their campaign (Stonewall, 2007/2012). While this may have allowed homophobic bullying to become 'a legitimate object of social concern' (Monk, 2011, p. 181) such research, including academic scholarship (most notably Rivers, 2011) have consolidated what is a highly criticised way of approaching gender and sexualities education.

Along with Monk (2011), numerous scholars (i.e. DePalma and Atkinson, 2009a; Ellis, 2007; Formby, 2015; Hall and Hope, forthcoming; Ringrose and Renold, 2010; Quinlivan, 2002; Talburt, 2004) have challenged the dominance of anti-homophobia/bullying approaches premised on liberal ideals of equality and tolerance for the way they 'determine the construction of the harms focused on and the legitimacy of the means used to challenge them' (Monk, 2011, p. 196). While a focus on safety – stemming from protectionist talk of LGBT youth 'at-risk' – may be more palatable for a public that wants to understand itself as tolerant of gayness, scholars have criticised this reactive approach for masking subtle yet harmful everyday effects of institutional (hetero)sexism (see Ringrose and Renold, 2010 in particular): the conditions in which homophobia is produced (Ellis, 2007). In responding to this, critical educational initiatives – most notably No Outsiders (see DePalma and Atkinson, 2009a) – have

attempted to move beyond anti-homophobia/bullying to understand, challenge and undo heteronormativity (processes and practices through which heterosexuality is normalised; see Warner, 1993) in English primary schools (for equivalent international initiatives see Hall and Hope, forthcoming; Hope and Hall, 2018; Laskey and Beavis, 1996; Letts and Sears, 1999; Sadowski, 2016). However, this radical, queer progressive politics[ii] inspired project, which foregrounded queer praxis and moved beyond equalities so as not to limit potential interventions faced adverse reaction from sensationalist tabloid news media and some parents and school staff for unsettling institutionalised discourses of childhood (sexual) innocence in the 'cultural greenhouse' (Renold, 2005) of the English primary school. Significantly, Stonewall also distanced itself from early involvement in the project following this 'moral panic' which centred on the alleged teaching of 'gay sex' (see Hall, 2015). In effect, the 'moral panic' surrounding No Outsiders perceived inappropriateness galvanised *Stonewall's* more 'child-friendly' and 'age-appropriate' initiatives in English primary schools which continue to overlook heteronormativity by relying on less challenging anti-homophobia/bullying approaches.

A Feminist Poststructural approach to theorising *Children's dis/engagements* with Gender and Sexualities Education

This study addresses a lack of critical research scrutinising the basis of 'post-Section 28' gender and sexualities education, particularly as this relates to children's socio-spatial dis/engagements in English primary schools. Previous research initiated a policy critique of school-sanctioned knowledges about sexualities, particularly the dominance of anti-homophobia and anti-bullying approaches (i.e. Ellis, 2007; Formby, 2015; Monk, 2011; Ringrose and Renold, 2010). However, to date, children's own voices have been largely absent in this work and with the exception of some isolated studies of

single class engagement with fleeting anti- sexist and homophobia initiatives (Cullen and Sandy, 2009; Epstein, 2000; Evans, 1998), research has not examined how children of different ages respond to sustained, 'whole-school' gender and sexualities education.

In responding to the above, I take a feminist poststructural approach to theorising children's dis/engagements with gender and sexualities education in English primary schools. In this paper, I draw on Butler's theory of subjectivity and performativity (Butler, 1990; 1993; 1997; 2004) which, in accounting for the paradoxical conditions through which the accomplishment of subjecthood is made possible distinguishes between a self and a subject: 'an 'I', with a conscious sense of self, and a subject with unconscious (dis)investments in social norms, qualities, differences, and valuations' (Thomas, 2008, p. 2866). For Butler, there is no pre-given subject, no 'doer behind the deed' (Butler, 1990, p. 25). Identity does not prefigure action but is constituted through action, discourses or the words we speak and the ways we behave (Davies, 2006). These elements of queer theory are deeply wedded to psychoanalytical discourse (see Lesnik-Oberstein and Thomson, 2002). Psychoanalysis examines what 'insists on being spoken rather than what is allowed to be said' (Rose, 1986, p. 86). These theorisations are used to conceptualise children's contradictory responses to gender and sexualities education.

Queer geographies first initiated a discussion about how sexed and gendered performances produce space and, conversely, how spatial formations shape how sexual dissidents present and perform their sexualities in public spaces (see Browne, Lim and Brown, 2009). Queer geographers used such insights to expose how the everyday repetition of heterosexual relations become normalised so that quotidian space is not

assumed to be sexual at all (for example, see Thomas, 2004). Alongside this scholarship, Gregson and Rose (2000) argued that a notion of performance was crucial for critical human geographies. For Gregson and Rose, space needs to be thought of as performative – as brought into being through performances and as a performative articulation of power. In following Gregson and Rose (2000), geographers of education have gradually spatialised Butler's theorisations of performativity and subjectivity to illuminate the micro-institutional construction of social identities such as: gender, (hetero)sexualities, race and dis/ability (i.e. Evans, 2006; Holloway et al., 2000; Holt, 2007; Thomas, 2011). This has involved moving beyond the content of lessons to examine how children's identities are (re)produced through sociospatial practices within informal geographies of the hidden curriculum; that is, obscured and informal peer learning spaces such as school playgrounds, dining halls, and corridors (Banks, 2005; Newman, Woodcock and Dunham, 2006; Pike, 2010). For example, Thomas (2011) demonstrated how teenage girls' everyday socio-spatial practices in a US high school dining hall and playground reinstated racial difference and contradicted students' in-school responses to multicultural education. Thomas's oeuvre influences the approach taken in this paper.

Research Sites and Methods

Weirwold and Cutlers (both pseudonyms) are co-educational, maintained community primary schools[iii] located in socially, economically, and ethnically diverse communities in Greater London; the cosmopolitan capital of the UK. This wider geography is significant since the schools are nested within what is considered the most diverse, open, and embracing city in the UK. At the time of research, Weirwold had one-form entry and approximately 250 pupils on roll, which – according to Ofsted – makes it an

average-sized primary school. Cutlers had two-form entry and approximately 450 pupils on roll, making it a large primary school. Stonewall assisted in identifying these schools, which they described as leading exponents of their 'School Champions' programme. The schools were selected for this reason since they are held up by Stonewall as 'good practice' schools.

The study took place between November 2011 and May 2013 and consisted of multiple, short-term visits totalling 10 weeks in school mainly during key topic weeks, such as 'Anti-bullying Week' and 'Diversity Week' (see Table 1). Ethnographic research in the 'least-adult' role (Epstein, 1998) took place in diverse learning spaces throughout school, including classrooms and the playground. In classrooms, I observed lessons and interacted with pupils, asking questions but mostly listening to discussions. I divided my time equally between Year's 2-6 and dropped in and out of classrooms (I identified relevant lessons in advance). In the playground, I observed how children interacted with each other and, if invited I joined in games. I spent almost every break time and lunch time with the children and this allowed me to immerse myself in their everyday lifeworlds in school (see Renold, 2005). 31 focus groups with children took place in resource areas away from teachers towards the end of each school visit (see Table 1). This allowed children to reflect on relevant lessons when I visited during key topic weeks and it gave me a chance to devise tailored focus group schedules. Consent forms were issued to every child and typically 3-7 were returned per class. Every child wishing to participate were invited to the focus group for their class. On a few occasions, up to 12 consent forms were returned, but rather than select pupils I simply ran two focus groups. In focus group extracts, culturally and ethnically sensitive pseudonyms are given to children. This retains a sense of the diverse cultural and ethnic

backgrounds of the children (see Epstein, 1998). Table 2 provides additional information on those participating in focus groups. 14 semi-structured interviews with Stonewall representatives (2) and school staff (governors, senior school management, teachers and teaching assistants) were also conducted.

As Morgan explains, a focus group is 'a research technique that collects data through group interaction' (1997: 6). Thus, when the negotiation of 'collective knowledge' is the focus of research, as it is here, group interviews could not be more relevant since they retain 'the usual patterns of negotiation, communication, and control' (Freeman and Mathison, 2009: 103). That said, focus groups can only provide a partial account of children's experiences, hence why the 'voice approach' was combined with 'ethnomethodological insights' (Warming, 2011). This robust methodological approach generated rich, complex and contradictory data that allows a deeper understanding of the complexities of children's lives (Hemming, 2008).

Table 1: Schedule of School Visits

November 2011	Cutlers primary school • Two-week ethnography during key topic weeks • 3 Focus Groups with 15 pupils from Years 4 & 6
February 2012	Weirwold primary school • One-and-a-half-week ethnography prior to and during key topic week • 6 Focus Groups with 31 pupils from Years 2-6
May 2012	Cutlers primary school • One-week ethnography outside of key topic weeks • 3 Focus Groups with 17 pupils from Years 4 & 6
May 2012	Weirwold primary school

	• One-week ethnography outside of key topic week • 5 Focus Groups with 24 pupils from Years 3 & 5
November 2012	Cutlers primary school • Two-and-a-half-week ethnography prior to and during key topic weeks • 8 Focus Groups with 43 pupils from Years 4 & 5
February 2013	Weirwold primary school • One-and-a-half-week ethnography prior to and during key topic week • 6 Focus Groups with 30 pupils from Years 2-4 & 6
May 2013	Cutlers primary school • One day ethnography and feedback outside of key topic weeks
May 2013	Weirwold primary school • One day ethnography and feedback outside of key topic week

Table 2: Overview of Focus Groups

14 focus groups at Cutlers primary school and 17 at Weirwold primary school		
105 pupils participated in focus groups (62 once, 31 twice and 12 three times)		
Total number of girls: 56 Total number of boys: 43		
	Number of focus groups	Number of participants
Cutlers Year 6	2	10 (7 girls and 3 boys)
Weirwold Year 6	2	9 (7 girls and 2 boys)
Cutlers Year 5	3	17 (5 girls and 12 boys)
Weirwold Year 5	5	26 (16 girls and 10 boys)
Cutlers Year 4	9	48 (18 girls and 30 boys)
Weirwold Year 4	2	10 (7 girls and 3 boys)

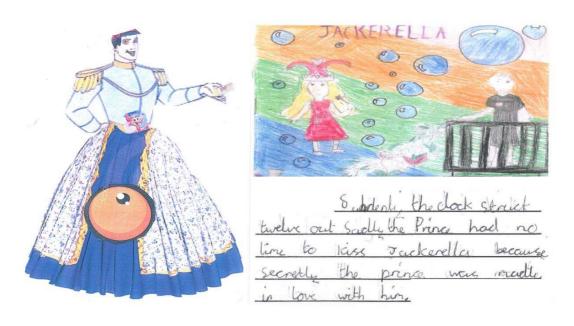|		
Weirwold Year 3	5	29 (17 girls and 12 boys)
Weirwold Year 2	3	11 (5 girls and 6 boys)

Spatialities of Performative Selves

This first section establishes how a performative self cites recognisable liberal pluralistic equalities discourse and performs acceptance of gender and sexual diversity in 'formal' micro-institutional school spaces within classrooms in order to be a 'good student'. In doing so, I consider how space is 'brought into being through performances and [is itself] a performative articulation of power' (Gregson and Rose, 2000, p. 434). Formal micro-institutional spaces, in this respect, are not only configured through 'progressive' gendered and sexual performance, but also configure those performances. I explore how formal school space becomes synonymous with 'acceptance' of gender and sexual equality and how this, in turn, regulates un/acceptable attitudes. I also illustrate how some children treat research focus groups as an extension of formal school space in which to repeat, and therefore sustain, performances of acceptance of liberal discourses of equality.

This first part focuses on an alternative fairy tale lesson plan used at both schools in Year 2 (6-7 years old). The lesson plan is based on the classic book The Paper Bag Princess (Munsch, 1980/2012), which is a reversal of the well-known fairy tale Rapunzel (Brothers Grimm, 1812/2014); a story about a 'passive princess' held captive in a tower who is awaiting rescue by a 'heroic prince'. The Paper Bag Princess further defies heteronormative conventions by featuring a princess who does not wear a dress or marry the prince (see Davies, 1989; Epstein, 2000). The lesson plan centres on

these themes and in the first Literacy lesson at Weirwold primary school I observed

how the teacher paused at significant moments in the story, such as when the 'heroic

princess' went on an adventure to emphasise and legitimise this subversive trajectory.

These kinds of subversions continued to be endorsed in subsequent activities in

Literacy, Art, PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) and Philosophy for

Children. For example, in Literacy children completed sentences which encouraged

them to reflect on how the princess had been 'courageous' and 'clever', while in PSHE

different kinds of relationships were discussed, including same-sex. This was all

brought together in Art where children produced posters with the title, 'Wouldn't it be

boring if we were all the same'. Some other examples of children's work in subsequent

Year groups are shown in Figure 1.

Title: Examples of Children's Work from Years 3 and 5

Left to right: A gender-transgressive fairy tale character created by children as part of a

Year 3 Prince Cinders (Cole, 1997) lesson plan and a sexually-transgressive fairy tale

written by Year 5 children as part of a King and King (De Hann and Nijiland, 2002) inspired lesson plan. Source: Weirwold Primary School (February 2013)

Activities in subsequent years continue to subvert dominant, (hetero)normative discourses that circulate in conventional fairy tales (Zipes, 2006) and as Figure 1 demonstrates, children embrace counter-discourses in their schoolwork by actively queering (hetero-) gender and sexuality (see Cullen and Sandy, 2009; Davies, 1989, 1993; Epstein, 2000). This queering opened-up discursive space in classrooms in which (hetero)sexism could be examined, questioned, dismantled, and reimagined, if only temporarily (see Cullen and Sandy, 2009). In a Foucauldian sense, the hegemonic status of (hetero)normative knowledge came under review with the circulation of school-sanctioned same/equal 'rights' discourses offering children new possibilities for thinking otherwise (Foucault, 1980; also see Gramsci, 2003). As the extract below illustrates, these liberal discourses challenged an existing 'regime of truth' and provided children with a new form of 'power-knowledge'[iv]:

> The teacher asks the children what week it is and one child replies 'Diversity Week'. The teacher emphasises that diversity and difference is 'a wonderful thing' and one child - referring to the book Prince Cinders - remarks that 'it doesn't matter what a prince looks like' (in this story the prince is described as 'small, spotty, scruffy and skinny'). The teacher then asks the children what it would be like if everyone was like Ellie (a child in the class). The children state that it would be 'boring', before one child exclaims 'just because someone's different to you it doesn't mean you have to bully them'.

Observation from Year 3 PSHE lesson, Weirwold (February 2013)

As is often the case, appreciating difference is coached within an anti-bullying sensibility, which in part reflects a dominant framing of gender and sexualities education in the UK (Ellis, 2007; Formby, 2015; Monk, 2011). This too 'contains and shapes the 'conditions of possibility' available to school students' (Davies, 2006, p. 430) and can be regarded as spatially performative after Gregson and Rose (2000); something I will return to later. Classroom-based responses, of which the above is illustrative advocate that diversity and difference is good and should be valued as 'it would be boring if we were all the same'. This and other similar responses emerging from 'formal' micro-institutional spaces performatively produce such spaces as synonymous with liberal pluralism, which in turn shapes subsequent (now appropriate) performances of acceptance within these spaces. However, children's performative selves were not always tied to formal micro-institutional spaces and sometimes focus groups were used to (re)create space for repeated performances of acceptance.

As described earlier, focus groups were predominately conducted in resource areas away from teachers which connect adjacent classrooms; conceptualised by Fargas-Malet, McSherry, Larkin and Robinson as 'an in-between of the formal and informal worlds of the school' (2010, p. 178). Given how research context affects what children talk about (Hemming, 2008), this liminal space was purposively chosen so as to be conducive to 'open' discussion. I also attempted to perform a 'least-adult' role (Epstein, 1998) throughout school prior to focus groups to minimise power discrepancies and forge 'empowering research relations' with children (Holt, 2010). However, I sometimes found that children regarded me as a teacher and would tell me what they thought I wanted to hear, despite how I reaffirmed that I was not a teacher

and that there were no 'right or wrong' answers (Fargas-Malet et al., 2010). On reflection, such children had not repeatedly seen me perform a 'least-adult' role in their classroom. As such, familiarity with this positioning had not been established and there was – consequentially – unintended formality.

In these instances, children treated focus groups as an extension of 'formal' school space in which to repeat, and therefore sustain, performances of acceptance of gender and sexual equality. There was a great deal of 'acting up' whereby children performed acceptance rather than revealing more ambivalent attitudes, which came to the fore elsewhere. These performances can be seen in this illustrative vignette when a group of Year 2 girls challenge (hetero)sexism and reaffirm gender and sexual equality in light of new possibilities made available in the Paper Bag Princess story:

JH   Should princesses rescue princes or should princes rescue
        princesses?

Gabi   Both

Gina   They both need to have a chance of doing everything … they
        can do whatever they want

Gabi   They should have chances to do the same thing

[…]

JH   What about the ending, do you think they should or
        shouldn't have married?

Gabi   It is a good ending/[v]

Gina   They shouldn't/

Gabi   She could live with all other princesses in their castles/

JH   Will she eventually marry a prince?

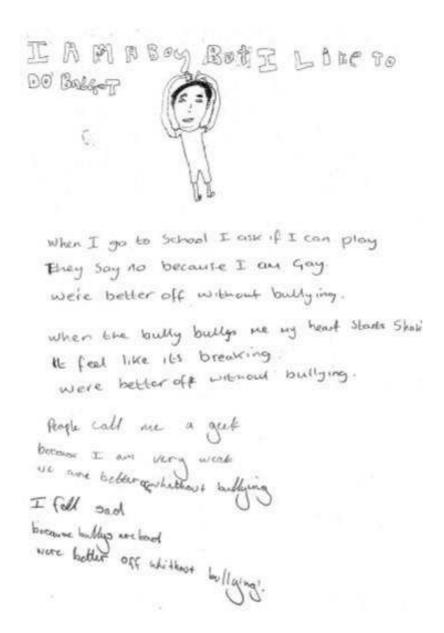Gina   No … she could do whatever she wants

Focus Group with Year 2, Weirwold (February 2013)

Well-established, (hetero)normative discourses which pervade many conventional fairy tales render the prince an active agent that goes on adventures, rescues princesses and eventually marries them (see Davies, 1989; 1993; Zipes, 2006). However, in this story 'subjugated knowledges' that challenge an existing 'regime of truth' are embraced by these girls who continue to perpetuate same/equal 'rights' discourses in the performatively constituted space of the focus group (Davies, 2006; Foucault, 1980). The same occurred in relation to the second scheme of work introduced in Year 4 (8-9 year olds) which centres on challenging 'heteronormative masculinity and homophobic language'. In the next section, I focus on a Year 4 lesson plan used at both schools which revolves around the book The Sissy Duckling (Fierstein and Cole, 2005).

The Sissy Duckling is an inversion of the well-known story The Ugly Duckling (Andersen, 1844/1979) and is based around Elmer, a duckling who defies heteronormative masculinity (typified here as embodying sporting prowess) by pursuing supposedly effeminate interests, such as homemaking (see Cullen and Sandy, 2009). Given how gender transgression is often conflated with sexual orientation, challenging pejorative use of the word gay – together with synonyms (including sissy) – is combined with this focus on subverting (hetero)sexism (see DePalma and Atkinson, 2009b). The lesson plan centres on these themes and in the first Literacy lesson at

Cutlers Primary School, I observed how the teacher emphasised and legitimised subversive moments while also contesting 'homophobic language'[vi]. For instance, the teacher reaffirmed a key passage in the book when Elmer's mum insists that 'sissy is a cruel way of saying that you don't do things the way others think you should'. Sentiments, such as these continued to be endorsed in subsequent activities in Literacy, Art, PSHE, Drama, and Philosophy for Children. For example, in Literacy children rewrote the story of The Sissy Duckling to reflect acceptance of gender and sexual diversity, while in Philosophy for Children essentialist statements about gender were discussed and debated[vii]. Some other examples of children's work are shown in Figure 2.

Title: Examples of Children's Work from Years 4 and 5

Left to right: anti-homophobic bullying poem written by Year 4 pupil as part of The Sissy Duckling (Fierstein and Cole, 2005) lesson plan and a poster produced by a Year 5 pupil as part of The Different Dragon (Bryan and Hosler, 2011) lesson plan endorsing gender transgression. Source: Cutlers Primary School (November, 2012)

As with the alternative fairy tale scheme of work, activities in subsequent year groups continue to subvert dominant, (hetero)normative discourses while

simultaneously legitimising gender and sexual transgressions. Children continued to embrace counter-discourses made available to them, as the vignette below illustrates. This presents an exchange around homophobic bullying in a Year 5 (9-10 year olds) classroom in which 'progressive' liberal attitudes emerged:

> Children have been given a type of bullying (sexist; racist; homophobic) and are asked to come up with a role play scenario. In the case of homophobic bullying, some children shout at other children, calling them gay for not wearing blue. In comes a superhero who says 'it doesn't matter what they're wearing, it doesn't make them gay'. After the sketch, the teacher asks the class to comment on the performance, and later concludes, 'yes, they were being called gay in a negative way, but it's ok to be gay isn't it?' The class agrees.

> Observation from Year 5 Drama lesson, Cutlers (November 2012)

Within the formal micro-institutional space of the classroom, children understood that acceptance of gender and sexual equality was expected to be considered a 'good student'. This and other similar responses emerging from formal micro-institutional spaces performatively reproduce such spaces as synonymous with liberal pluralism, which in turn consolidate performances of acceptance within. Overt objections to school-sanctioned liberal discourses of gender and sexual equality were rare within the classroom to the extent that some teachers were convinced of children's absolute acceptance of homosexuality and gender non-conformity. As one teacher commented:

You do see them change ... whether it is even just the fact that they become used to hearing the words gay and lesbian […] we were hearing, three or four years ago 'you're so gay' in a negative way in the playground [but] if we said that now they would react with oh no, we don't use gay […] so it has completely reversed and turned around their perceptions and opinions, I think

Interview with Year 4 teacher, Cutlers (November 2012)

Again, performative selves were not always dependant on the micro-institutional space of the classroom for mutual recognition of school-sanctioned liberal discourses of equality and children would sometimes use focus groups to (re)create space for repeated performances of acceptance of gender and sexual equality. These performances can be seen in the following vignette where Year 4 children reproduce liberal pluralistic equalities discourse:

Emily	I think it (The Sissy Ducking book) taught you a lesson
JH	What lesson was that?
Ana	It told us that it is good to be different
Emily	Yeah, even if you're different you're special and you don't have to try to be like everybody else

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| Tahseen | It doesn't matter if you're a sissy […] it doesn't matter if you're different because you're unique in your own way |
| ALL | Yeah |

Abigail   You should be confident and you should be happy that

you're who you are ... and it would be boring if we were all

the same

In these exchanges children latch onto recognisable diversity phrases introduced in formal classroom settings to somewhat legitimise gender transgressions. While this liberal pluralistic equalities discourse provides children with a form of 'power-knowledge' (Foucault, 1980), it can only go so far in challenging the dominance of heteronormativity. This is evident in the final vignette when Year 4 children discuss homophobic language:

Abigail   It is not bad to be gay or lesbian but when you use it in a

bad way or like meaning it bad then it is but really it is not

bad if you're lesbian or gay because you're different and it

is fine

Callum   If we were all the same wouldn't that be boring

The 'performative utterance' of homophobic language may be open to challenge, redefinition and reinterpretation, as can be seen here; however, normative heterosexuality – to which other sexualities are compared – is obscured and left unchallenged (Youdell, 2006). Thus, while pupils cite socially acceptable discourses

and display the 'right' values that the schools teach *in the 'right' places* (see Hemming, 2011; Thomas, 2008), heteronormativity does not lose an overarching dominance and largely remains intact. In the next section, I show how 'heterosexual hegemony' (Butler, 1993) continues to underwrite peer group relations in micro-institutional spaces beyond the classroom.

Spatialities of Performative Subjects

In this section, I illustrate how a performative self that cites recognisable liberal pluralistic equalities discourse and performs acceptance of gender and sexual equalities in 'formal' micro-institutional spaces can be distinguished from a performative subject that is simultaneously compelled to reinstate (hetero)gender/sexuality through recuperating heteronormativity in 'informal' micro-institutional spaces. This is understood in light of how subjection works on, and in, the psychic life of the subject (Butler, 1997; Butler et al., 2000; Nayak and Kehily, 2006). To achieve viable subjecthood, children must simultaneously negotiate contradictory and competing discourses surrounding gender and sexualities (see Thomas, 2008; Youdell, 2006). As I have established, children are not unaffected by liberal pluralism and this partly influences pupils' sense of themselves: they identify strongly with liberal pluralistic norms of valuing and respecting diversity (see Hemming, 2011; Thomas, 2008). However, at the same time the pupils – as with all subjects – have deep investments in marking and maintaining gender and sexual difference (Davies, 2006). As Thomas explains, this is because 'identifying with certain social categories – and disidentifying with others – are the only ways that they have become viable social subjects' (2008, p. 2866).

While some children treated focus groups as an extension of 'formal' school space in which to perform acceptance of gender and sexual equalities, on other occasions children's familiarity with my 'least-adult' role allowed focus groups to be produced as a liminal – third – space (Matthews, Limb and Taylor, 2000) in which dissent could be more fully articulated. This created space for performative subjects whose spatial expression had been confined to 'informal' places in school (i.e. the playground, corridors, and toilets) where gender and sexual difference was regularly reinstated through children's everyday spatial practices. Resistance to school-sanctioned gender and sexual equality can be seen in this first vignette where Year 4 children reveal alternative readings of The Sissy Duckling book:

JH   Who can tell me what you have been doing this week?

Abraham   We were reading the Sissy Duckling 'cos he's been doing

            like not natural stuff for a boy

JH   What do you mean by that?

Abraham   His dad wanted him to do baseball and all that but the

            sissy duckling didn't want to so he did everything like

            cooking and that wasn't natural for a boy

                              ***

JH   How did everyone in the class react to the book?

Callum   Martin was laughing his head off

Emily   I thought that the class kind of acted like … like talking

            about it and joking around about the fact that they were

            using the word sissy

Despite challenging (hetero)normative masculinity, these extracts reveal that for these children (hetero)normative masculinity has been naturalised to the point that other gender expressions are untenable. As Merlin states, 'boy[s] can sing, they can dance and they can play with dolls […] but I don't think they really would' (Year 4, Cutlers). While in principle children drew on liberal pluralistic equalities discourse to sanction gender transgressions, these responses suggest that (hetero)normative masculinity is still considered an ideal[ix] (Cullen and Sandy, 2009; Epstein, 2000; Evans, 1998). This is particularly noticeable in the final extract where (hetero)normative masculinity's Other, delineated as 'sissy' is treated with humour. A clear distinction emerges here between what children know as the 'right answer' and what they might actually think (Youdell, 2006). In this instance, where children are encouraged to share their opinion, the performative subject reveals itself and other identities are expelled in order to achieve viable subjecthood (Butler, 1997; Butler et al., 2000; Nayak and Kehily, 2006). Indeed, as the next vignette illustrates, 'sissy' is not viable in school:

> JH   What would happen if Elmer (the sissy ducking) came to
>   this school?
>
> Brandon   I would just burst out laughing
>
> JH   Would other people laugh?
>
> Brandon   No, if he doesn't tell them his secret

<center>***</center>

Emily	If Elmer came to this school I think people would be surprised if he was a boy and he was wearing pink ... I think people might tell him off
Ana	People might laugh if he wants to stay in and do painting or drawing

<div align="center">***</div>

Alex	Boys would be rude but the girls could be rude too because they would be like why is this boy doing stuff like us
Julia	I agree with Alex ... a few of the girls would be mean to him
Ben	I think some of the boys might bully him

Focus groups with Year 4, Cutlers (November 2012)

Children's reaction to this hypothetical scenario exposes the gap between performative selves and performative subject. Here children acknowledge the compulsion to perform normative (hetero)gender/sexuality in order to achieve viable subjecthood (Butler, 1997; Butler et al., 2000; Nayak and Kehily, 2006). This compulsion renders non-normative performances of gender as unintelligible and insists that heteronormativity be recuperated (Cullen and Sandy, 2009; Youdell, 2006). These Year 4 accounts resonate with alternative readings of The Paper Bag Princess book by Year 2 and 3 children. While earlier I demonstrated how children challenged (hetero)sexism and legitimised non-normative gender and sexual transgressions through mobilising liberal pluralistic equalities discourse, in the next part I show how children remain largely constrained by 'traditional' fairy tales and wider master narratives of 'compulsory heterosexuality'. As a result, children are compelled to recuperate

heteronormativity by 'rescuing' alternative fairy tales from feminist interpretations and re-inscribing them in sexist discourse (Davies, 1989; 1993). Children's alternative responses to The Paper Bag Princess book demonstrate how established heteronormative ideals are in popular culture and children's literature with (hetero)gender and sexuality positioned as both natural and desirable. Therefore, it is not surprising that children also greeted this story with much scepticism, as the following vignette indicates:

JH   So what do you think about this story?

Jonah   It was a bit weird because it is the wrong way round because
        the princes have to save the princesses

Nadiv   And the princesses have to be taken by dragons

Jonah   Yeah

***

Haleem It was boring

JH   Why was it boring?

Haleem It's dumb ... nothing makes sense

Focus Groups with Year 2, Weirwold (February 2012)

Throughout these exchanges, 'heterosexual hegemony' (Butler, 1993) is called upon to legitimise (hetero)sexism. This works in conjunction with well-established heteronormative discourses in 'traditional' fairy tales which frame understandings of alternative texts (Davies, 2006; Epstein, 2000). These exchanges demonstrate how familiar children are with these prevailing discourses and it shows how this familiarity

influences how children can talk about alternative fairy tales (see Davies and Banks, 1992). This was most profound in the first extract where children insisted that 'princes have to save the princesses' and 'princesses have to be taken by dragons'. 'Heterosexual hegemony' reinforces this citational chain because without repeat performances of (hetero)gender and sexuality normative heterosexuality loses its hegemony (Butler, 1993). Thus, children are simultaneously compelled to (re)inscribe heteronormativity, especially in the face of subversion (Youdell, 2006). Children's compulsion to recuperate heteronormativity were even more profound a year later when the children revisited the story in a focus group. As the following vignette demonstrates, the story's potentially subversive ending was completely reinterpreted:

JH	What do you think Princess Elizabeth should do now?
Nadiv	Find another prince
Ramha	She's going to find another prince then she's going to marry the prince … if she likes it or if she doesn't like it

[…]

Haleem	The prince left the princess because she was rank
Usman	He said that he didn't want to marry
Lucy	He said come back when you're wearing better clothes […] next time she should go to the closest supermodel shop and buy some nice clothes

[…]

Niyanthri	I think that she went to this man web-site/
Lucy	Match.com
Niyanthri	Match.com where you date people and have babies

Hura   She looked for a guy

Lucy   I think she went on match.com and she saw this man and

              went on a date

In the children's recollections, the heroic deeds of Princess Elizabeth had been erased and (hetero)sexism had been reinstated. As such, Princess Elizabeth became an unintelligible princess that the prince had rightly decided not to marry. Perhaps the most alarming sentiment is the final remark where a group of girls feel compelled to impose a heterosexual destiny despite Princess Elizabeth's decision to 'go it alone' at the end of the story. Thus, while some children previously articulated liberal feminist attitudes and resisted the inevitability of heterosexual destines, other children later re-established heteronormative compulsions. These findings support previous studies which have also been concerned with children's in/ability to make sense of 'feminist tales' (see Davies, 1989; 1993; Epstein, 2000; Evans, 1998). These studies overwhelmingly found that children overlook, misread, or reject anti-sexist stories. As Davies (2006) argues, while alternative fairy tales present children with new possibilities, children are – to a large extent – already hetero- gendered and sexualised beings.

These accounts illustrate how children's ideal selves do not match the circumstances they find themselves in or the spaces they create and adapt themselves to (see Thomas, 2005). While 'formal' micro-institutional school spaces have been infused with 'progressive' liberal discourses of gender and sexual equalities, heteronormative understandings of gender and sexuality persist in 'informal' micro-institutional peer

spaces. This will be explored further in this final part of the paper where I reveal how children are compelled to recuperate heteronormativity through everyday spatial practices beyond the classroom. As I show, these practices shape peer-group relations in performativity-constituted spaces within the playground, corridors, and toilets; peer-relations which seep into focus groups presented in this section.

Informal Geographies of the Hidden Curriculum: reinstating (Hetero)Gender/Sexuality through Everyday Spatial Practices

Informal geographies of the hidden curriculum were powerful sites in which heteronormative social relations were continually inscribed and reproduced through children's everyday play. In the playground, this ranged from performing and embodying hegemonic (hetero)masculinities (aggressive, intimidating and competitive masculinities) on the football and basketball pitches to accomplishing heterosexualised femininities (selfless, abiding and nurturing femininities) through (hetero)familial role play and hetero-romantic fantasy games in/ around the playhouse. As other scholars have documented, kiss-chase games and heterosexualised skipping rhymes were also common, everyday practices (Epstein, 1998; Renold, 2005; Thorne, 1993). While some boys and girls invested in (hetero)gendered/sexualised practices more than others, it was clear that enacting hegemonic (hetero)masculinities and heterosexualised femininities implicated everyone since those initiating such performances relied on others to imitate or participate (even unwillingly at times) in these enactments. Since children's (hetero)gendered and sexualised play is well-documented by the aforementioned scholars, I will not elaborate on these particular playground practices. Rather, I will

focus on two other 'informal' micro-institutional spaces that have not received as much attention: corridors and toilets.

In both schools, children's playground peer-group relations and practices spilled into micro-institutional spaces in school. Corridors and boy's toilets were places where heteronormative social relations framed children's everyday social inter/actions. Corridors were rich sites for children's hetero- gendered/sexualised play with numerous corridor games disclosed during focus group discussions. The game discussed below, which children played when lining up is illustrative of the many hidden games that children play:

Kate	We have these silly games where basically we say boy germs or girl germs/
Annabel	That's just joking around
JH	What happens in these games?
Kate	If a boy touches a girl/
Annabel	They say girl germs/
Kate	And you have to cross your fingers to not get girl germs
JH	Show me
Kate	Like this (shows a crucifix) ... for protection
Annabel	Basically, if a boy goes back to a girl they pass it on and the girl goes back to someone else
JH	When do you play these games?
Ruth	Whenever we're lining up

Annabel   And when we're bored we start pushing and getting rough

... oh, I touched a boy, oh I touched a girl

Focus Group with Year 6, Cutlers (May 2012)

In this example, any physical contact with the opposite sex leads to contamination with disease central to children's psychoanalytical 'borderwork' (see Davies and Banks, 1992). As Renold (2005) and others have shown, metaphors of disease are often used to police the 'boundary maintenance' between boys (masculinity) and girls (femininity), and in many of the children's corridor games disease and infection were invoked to symbolise children's fear of opposite-gender proximity. Like other year groups, this Year 6 class also segregated themselves into same-gender groups once in the classroom with seating arrangements reflecting gender differentiation which had been established in the corridor and playground[x].

The boys' toilets were another key site for (re)affirming heteronormative social relations in school. Whilst many teachers were convinced that pejorative use of the word gay was no longer a feature of school life (see earlier interview with Year 4 teacher), boys confessed to almost constant use within toilets. Thus, while 'homophobic language' may have become spatially confined, it had not lost currency in school as the following indicates:

JH   Have these words been banned (pejorative use of gay and

lesbian)?

Callum   Yeah, we're not allowed to say gay or sissy/

Abigail   Or lesbian

JH   Do people still use these words?

Callum   Not as much … gay's used

JH   In the playground?

Callum   Yeah, but if you told a teacher they would be in Chris's
          office (deputy head teacher)

JH   So you would be in trouble?

Callum   Yeah but no one tells, that's the problem … the word gay
          has been banned but people use it in the boys' toilets
          whenever you go in

Focus group with Year 4, Cutlers (May 2012)

Butler (1997) warns that attempts to censor speech may propagate the very language it seeks to forbid. While I had not heard homophobic language in the playground, its reported use in the boy's toilets demonstrates not only children's understanding of homophobic language as spatially regulated, but also the malleability of school space with the boys' toilets reconfigured as an informal peer-group space in which liberal school-sanctioned discourses of gender and sexual equalities could be resisted and challenged. In doing so, children policed heteronormative masculinity by continuing to use homophobic language as a 'performative utterance' (Butler, 1997), despite citing liberal pluralistic equalities discourses elsewhere. Thus, a place already demarcating binary gender is utilised to repudiate homosexuality and regulate acceptable boundaries of boyhood.

Conclusion

By foregrounding spatialities of performative selves and performative subjects, this paper has demonstrated how liberal education programmes, such as the one examined here, do not always succeed in changing people's subjectivities as these are 'performed moving through multiple spatial-temporal domains' (Pykett, Cloke, Barnett, Clarke and Malpass, 2010, p. 489). In this paper, I focused on informal institutional geographies of the hidden curriculum to illustrate how – despite prevailing acceptance of liberal discourses of gender and sexual equalities in 'formal' micro-institutional spaces – gender and sexual difference is regularly reinstated through children's everyday spatial practices. As such, I accounted for the 'informal lessons which students learn, enforce, reject and rewrite in schools' (Holloway, Hubbard, Jöns and Pimlott-Wilson, 2010, p. 588) and foregrounded 'the role of space inside the institution for constituting and mediating social relations' (Hemming, 2007, p. 355). However, as Ansell (2002) and others stress, schools are distinct from, but embedded within, the contexts of everyday life. Therefore, the informal lessons children learn about gender and sexualities should not be regarded as simply flowing from or residing within hidden institutional geographies identified here as these simultaneously emerge from informal learning environments in homes, neighbourhoods, and community organisations (Holloway and Jöns, 2012). Given that spaces of schooling and education reflect and contribute to their wider communities, it is therefore important not to see them as isolated from broader sociospatial processes and practices (also see Collins and Coleman, 2008).

Appreciating children's compulsion to perform normative (hetero)gender/sexuality and recuperate heteronormativity requires a greater understanding of these wider, everyday geographies which children negotiate. As

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Holloway and Jöns argue, this involves looking 'more closely at the ways in which the different worlds of home, (pre-)school/college/university and informal spaces of learning coalesce in shaping the lives of individuals' (2012, p. 484). In this respect, scholarship building on the likes of Ansell (2002), Bragg et al. (2018), Gagen (2004), Hall and Hope (forthcoming) and Thomas (2004) is crucial in gaining broader and deeper understandings of the context-specific ways in which children and young people encounter and become embroiled in competing discourses surrounding gender and sexualities. As Collins and Coleman (2008) point out, this should not downplay the importance of schools, which arguably remain central to the geographies of children and young people by playing a central role in shaping social identities (also see Holloway et al., 2010). With this in mind, the remainder of the conclusion outlines the implications of the above for in-school gender and sexualities education. The recommendations put forward for a more radical and critical gender and sexualities education that exceeds liberal constraints will be of interest to schools, activists, and policy-makers.

Recognising the institutional spatialities of children's gendered and sexual subjectivities challenges an exclusive curricular focus on sexism/homophobia, homophobic/ sexist bullying, and gender and sexual equalities. As numerous scholars argue, focusing on the above discretely individualises 'the issue' and masks institutional forms of (hetero)sexism (Ellis, 2007; Monk, 2011; Ringrose and Renold, 2010). This dominant approach stems from UK government legislation, guidance, and support which perpetuates a victim-perpetrator binary and reduces gender and sexualities education to concerns over discrimination, harassment, bullying, and equalities. This is how schools are encouraged to conceive and implement gender and sexualities education. Yet, these liberal framings overlook and conceal the pervasiveness of wider

heteronormative ideals and relations (see Ringrose and Renold, 2010). As such, this study re-emphases Ellis's (2007) call for a combined pedagogic focus on anti-homophobia and a curricular critique of heteronormativity. After all, 'compulsory heterosexuality' and mundane (hetero)sexism create the very conditions in which homophobia and gender inequality are produced (DePalma and Atkinson, 2009b; Valentine, Jackson and Mayblin, 2014). Therefore, normative constructions of (hetero)gender and sexuality – (re)produced in 'informal' micro-institutional spaces and often unwittingly legitimised through everyday institutional practice – need to be recognised and critiqued. Focusing on how (hetero)gender and sexuality is naturalised and privileged is one way of queering it's supposed ordinariness (Valentine et al., 2014).

While this study calls for more radical and critical interventions informed by queer praxis (see DePalma and Atkinson, 2009a; Hall and Hope, forthcoming), the pioneering efforts of schools, such as those included in this study should not be downplayed. Indeed, these schools have explored and exposed the limits of liberal gender and sexualities education, which – notwithstanding critiques – does have performative effects. I would not suggest that children featured in this study were disingenuous when they cited liberal, pluralistic equalities discourse. However, I do question how well this equips children to negotiate gender and sexualities in everyday life. What I hope is that pioneering schools develop more radical and critical approaches that can be shared with other schools and I hope that future research will examine the possibilities of this queerer kind of gender and sexualities education while accounting for how this can be undermined through prevailing discourses and misguided backlash

that hastily cast children as innocent, naïve, and in need of 'protection' from 'dangerous' sexual knowledge (Epstein, 1999).

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Endnotes

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[ii] See Duggan (2003) and Stychin (2003) for in-depth discussion of queer progressive politics within a contemporary climate of Third Way sexual politics of neoliberalism.

[iii] Maintained community primary schools are funded by central government via their local authorities and are required to teach the statutory 'basic' curriculum, which encompasses the National Curriculum (introduced under the Education Reform Act 1988). At the time of research, they accounted for 87% of all English primary schools (NFER, 2014).

[iv] A 'regime of truth' is what is taken as self-evident and 'power-knowledge' infers that power (envisaged as a process operating in our social worlds) and knowledge are inseparable and strongly influence each other (see Foucault, 1980).

[v] To signal that the speaker was interrupted.

[vi] Scare quotes added in recognition of the contextual contingency of homophobic language (see Monk, 2011).

[vii] Statements included; 'Girls are more gentle than boys', 'Only girls should have long hair', 'Boys are better at sport', and 'Women are better at caring for babies than men'.

[viii] To signal that the subsequent excerpt is from another focus group.

[ix] Such views, beliefs and opinions are not necessarily shared by all children. They may well represent prevailing discourse which other children do not feel confident to challenge.

[x] For Renold, lining up, seating arrangements and gender differentiation in the playground are 'key organisational features in which the spatiality of boy/girl dichotomies became most visible' (2005, p. 84).