



Dr Sarah Eagle
B.A.(Oxon.), PhD(Bristol)

Lecturer

Area of research

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Summary

In my research work I use theories from psychology, particularly cultural-historical approaches (Vygotsky, Bruner) to investigate questions about learning and the contexts of learning, for example: How can we understand/assess how and whether out-of-school learning impacts on education as delivered at school? What lies behind problematic school attendance patterns for young people from low SES backgrounds? What is the relationship between technology use and the wellbeing of secondary school students - how might we begin thinking about 'balance' and how to achieve it?

Biography

I teach on the Masters in Psychology of Education at the School of Education, and also work as a researcher.

My academic career began with a degree in Experimental Psychology from the University of Oxford, after which I carried out some research into quality of life of people with learning difficulties moving from long-stay hospitals into ordinary homes in Bolton, Lancashire. The research inspired me to apply for a postgraduate course in Housing Management at the University of Bristol. After some years in housing (in Housing Associations and small voluntary organisations working for and with people with special needs) I returned to academic study. The MSc in Human Communication and Computing, run by the department of Psychology and the department of Computing at the University of Bath, got me interested in ideas about young children's learning and the design of technologies that were marketed to families with young children, and this led to me coming back to the University of Bristol, this time to do doctoral research young children's experience and learning with technologies, gaining my PhD in 2011.

At the School of Education I have been able to participate in a wide variety of interesting research projects. I am currently working on two: first, a project with the University's Centre for Public Engagement named [PERFORM](#), alongside partners in France and Spain. Recently I completed a study of possibilities for community-based initiatives to support school attendance for [Merlin Housing Society](#), for pupils attending schools in South Gloucestershire (September 2017) and a project to evaluate some of the work of the digital citizenship project [ReConnect](#) (October 2017).

Some examples of past projects:

- As a member of the European Network of Excellence, [STELLAR](#), for which I co-authored the Grand Challenge Vision and Strategy Reports. This EU-funded network brought together institutions and projects in European Technology-Enhanced Learning (TEL) with the aim of unifying a diverse community and to set a mid term agenda for research in TEL.
- With colleagues from the department of Computer Science on a series of workshops for which I submitted a successful proposal to the UoB's Institute for Advanced Studies. The workshop series, entitled '**Exploring The Internet of Things, Creativity and Learning**', brought academics from a wide variety of disciplines together with some of [Bristol's Creative Technologists](#) and members of technology hobbyists group [Bristol Hackspace](#) to compare and explore ideas, experiences and theories about learning, creativity, material artefacts, and the social and physical environment in which we think and act.
- With Professor Rosamund Sutherland on an evaluation of the Brunel Institute's five-year project for young people aged 12-16, the **Future Brunels**. Based at Brunel's ship the ssGreat Britain, the project aims to inspire the next generation of Brunels. In this work I carried forward my interest technologies and learning in informal settings, investigating how experiences of activities designed to support interest in STEM subjects intersect with school but also experiences in family life (for example, the nature of enquiry and understanding that are stimulated/supported by leisure interests and social contact with others in the course

of everyday life).

- I was a member of the Research Team for a European project named **Co-Creat**, funded by the EU's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency as part of its remit to support work that explores the potential of ICT as a catalyst of social and educational innovation and change. Co-Creat was concerned with technologies to support creative collaboration.
- I spent 2015 away from the University of Bristol, taking up the offer of a twelve month [ERCIM](#) Postdoctoral Fellowship 2014-15 **Norwegian University of Science and Technology** (NTNU) in Trondheim, Norway

My PhD was funded by the ESRC and supported by NESTA Futurelab through a [PhD Student Network](#). The network supported collaboration between myself and Dr. Andrew Manches, (then at the LSRI in Nottingham, now at Edinburgh) whose work also centred on young children's learning with technologies. We produced the papers that form the core of a Futurelab publication, [Perspectives on early years and digital technologies](#), published in November 2008. We were working in different theoretical traditions and were intrigued by the difficulty we sometimes had when we discussed our work. We produced a conference paper on this subject during our studentships. My interest in the issues, problems and potentials of interdisciplinarity working has developed further since then and underpins the contributions I bring to my work as researcher and teacher at the SoE.

Teaching

MSc Educational Psychology; dissertation supervision

Memberships

Organisations

[School of Education](#)

Selected publications

- Eagle, S, 2012, '[Learning in the Early Years: Social Interactions around Picturebooks and Digital Technologies](#)'. *Computers and Education*, vol 59., pp. 38 - 49
- Eagle, S, Manches, A, O'Malley, C, Plowman, L, Sutch, D & Sutherland, R, 2008, '[Early Years Learning with Digital Technologies: The Relationship Between Research and Design](#)'. in: International Society of the Learning Sciences (eds) *Eighth International Conference for the Learning Sciences, Utrecht, The Netherlands*.
- Eagle, S, Manches, A, O'Malley, C, Plowman, L & Sutherland, R, 2008, '[From Research to Design: Perspectives on early years and digital technologies](#)'. Futurelab
- Eagle, S, Havnes, A, Lazarou, D, Lillejord, S, Reed, M, Riese, H & Sutherland, R, 2008, '[Individual agency within sociocultural perspectives on learning](#)'. in: *Second ISCAR Congress: Ecologies of Diversities..San Diego, 8 -13 September 2008*.
- Eagle, S, 2011, '[Children, adults and designed artefacts: what insights can older traditions and existing artefacts offer to designers of new technologies for young children?](#)'. in: *STELLAR 2nd Alpine Rendez-Vous, Massif des Aravis (France) 27-31 March 2011*.

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Recent publications

- Eagle, S, 2019, '[Learning to Play: Stories of learning mathematics, language and music](#)'. in: *Storytelling: Global Reflections on Narrative*. Brill Academic Publishers, pp. 28-32
- Eagle, S & Triggs, P, 2017, '[Young people's views on technology in their everyday lives: A Study for the ReConnect Project](#)'. University of Bristol
- Eagle, S & Sutherland, R, 2016, '[Evaluation of the Future Brunels Programme: 2011-2015](#)'. University of Bristol
- Vuopala, E, Hyvönen, P & Eagle, S, 2014, '[Collaborative processes in virtual learning spaces - Does structuring make a difference?](#)'. in: *New Horizons in Web Based Learning - ICWL 2011 International Workshops KMEL, ELSM, and SPeL and ICWL 2012 International Workshops KMEL, SciLearn, and CCSTED, Revised Selected Papers*. Springer Verlag, pp. 271-278
- Eagle, S & Bennett, P, 2013, '[Exploring the internet of things: An interdisciplinary workshop approach](#)'. in: *HCI 2013 - 27th International British Computer Society Human Computer Interaction Conference: The Internet of Things*. British Computer Society

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