



*You are warmly invited to the  
BRIAN SIMON MEMORIAL LECTURE 2012*

## **EDUCATION AS RECONSTRUCTION: *another way of looking at primary education***

**MICHAEL ARMSTRONG**

**Clarke Hall, Institute of Education, University of London  
Saturday 24th November 2012, 2.15 pm – 4.00 pm**

FREE ADMISSION (no pre-registration, just turn up on the day)

**Michael Armstrong** was one of the co-authors of *Children, Their World, Their Education*, the final report of the *The Cambridge Primary Review*. In his lecture Michael will argue that the apparently triumphant standards agenda fails to recognise or to promote children's distinctive powers of thought and action and is a betrayal of their intellectual needs and interests. He calls for a radically alternative approach to primary education, founded on the centrality of the imagination and he demonstrates the creativity that lies at the heart of learning by means of an extended example of one six-year-old child's entry into the world of literature.

Michael began his long teaching career at Wandsworth Comprehensive School, London, in 1959. From 1964 to 1970 he was a research officer, first at the Institute of Community Studies, where he worked with Michael Young, with whom he wrote *New Look at Comprehensive Schools* (1964), and later at the Nuffield Foundation Resources for Learning Project, directed by Tim McMullen. He returned to the classroom in 1970 as a teacher at the radical Leicestershire Upper School, Countesthorpe College. In 1976 he left Countesthorpe in order to carry out research and to teach at Sherard Primary School in Melton Mowbray. During this time he wrote his first book, *Closely Observed Children: the diary of a primary classroom*. In 1981 he became headteacher of Harwell Primary School in Oxfordshire, where he remained until his retirement in 1999. Since 1986 he has also taught each summer on the MA summer programme of the Bread Loaf School of English, Middlebury College, Vermont, USA, as a visiting Professor of English. Since his retirement from Harwell in 1999 he has continued to write, lecture and carry out research into children's learning, both in England and in the USA where he still teaches every summer. His second book, *Children Writing Stories* was published in 2006 and a collection of essays entitled *What Children Know: essays on children's literary and visual art*, came out in 2011.

Michael joined the Editorial Board of *FORUM: for promoting 3-19 comprehensive education* ([www.worlds.co.uk/FORUM](http://www.worlds.co.uk/FORUM)) in 1964 and has been Chairperson of the Editorial Board since 1994.