 ARK and the revolution of state education in England

Carolina Junemann* & Stephen J. Ball*

Abstract
This paper addresses some recent changes in the landscape of state education in England. In particular, it focuses on the way in which Academies, state-funded independent schools introduced by New Labour and now being drastically extended and taken further by the Coalition government, are contributing to the ongoing and increasing blurring of the welfare state demarcations between state and market, public and private, government and business; and are pointing up the shift in the role of the state from “directing bureaucracies” to “managing networks” (Smith 1999). Academies have been contracted out to a wide range of sponsors (entrepreneurs, business, charities, faith groups) and removed from local authority control (they are funded directly by central government). They involve a deliberate attempt to promote a new set of values and modes of action in public education, enterprise and competitiveness in particular. The paper will look closely at the case of one multi-academy sponsor, the charity Absolute Return for Kids (ARK), which was founded by a group of hedge fund managers and is rapidly expanding its involvement in state education in England (and in the USA, India and Uganda), taking up positions and roles previously reserved for the state itself and bringing new practices and methods to bear upon education problems.

Keywords: education policy, governance of the education system, new philanthropy, academy schools, ARK

Introduction
This paper aims to indicate and illustrate, through the case of the charity Absolute Return for Kids (ARK), some recent changes in the landscape of state education in England and relate these to more general shifts and changes in current education policy and governance methods and mechanisms. Here, we focus on the way in which, through the sponsoring of Academies (state-funded independent schools that are being drastically extended by the current UK Coalition government1) and other involvement, new actors and organisations, with new interests, methods and discourses, are increasingly participating in service delivery and policy processes in education. The ambitious and expanding involvements of ARK in service delivery as a sponsor of a chain of Academy schools (see below) and across a wide set of areas of traditional state activity in education are used here as a case in point to illustrate quite markedly the inter-relation of philanthropy, together with business and social enterprise, as alternatives to the traditional forms of public sector organisation and

*Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL, Tel: +44 (0)20 7612 6000. Email: C.Junemann@ioe.ac.uk
©Authors. ISSN 2000-4508, pp. 423–441

Citation: Education Inquiry (EDUI) 2013, 4, 423, http://dx.doi.org/10.3402/edui.v4i3.22611
practice. Through these processes, as we will try to show, there are now new actors and voices within policy conversations and new conduits through which alternative policy discourses enter policy thinking which have the effect of increasingly blurring the demarcation lines between state and market, public and private, government, business and third sector, and producing a convergence of methods, values and forms of organisation across sectors.

The paper draws on data collected and analysed as part of an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funded study on the role of ‘new’ philanthropy in the processes of education policy in England. The study sought to map and understand the recent growth in philanthropic involvement in educational provision and policy in England, and at the same time it considered ‘new’ philanthropy as one aspect of new governance, or as a lens for analysing current changes in the form and functioning of the state (governing through governance (Bache 2003), through the identification of relevant policy networks and communities (see Ball and Junemann (2011 and 2012) for examples of education policy networks). The research drew on a complex set of data; interviews with some key individual philanthropists and foundations involved in education (and participation in relevant meetings and events); thorough Internet searches around particular (corporate) foundations, philanthropists and philanthropically funded programmes; and the mapping and analysis of ‘policy networks’ that were constructed using both these interviews and searches. Together these comprise something we have called a “method” of “network ethnography” (Howard 2002; Wittel 2000), a qualitative, in-depth description of the “workings” of policy networks that maps the form and content of policy relations in a particular field (see Ball 2012; Ball and Junemann 2012).

The paper begins with a brief discussion of the framework of network (or “polycentric”) governance to situate the current developments in state education in England within the context of the more general shift from government to governance (Bevir and Rhodes 2003) in social and education policy. We go on to outline the main aspects of the ongoing transformation of state education in England whereby more areas of state activity in relation to education are being contracted out to, or run in partnership with, private and/or charitable providers and thereby expanding the number and types of actors and organisations participating in the processes of policy. This is done with a particular focus on the programme of the creation and expansion of Academy schools. We then address the case of ARK as one of the new key organisations (or primary “nodes” as Williams (2002) calls them) in education governance in England. As we shall see, ARK is a significant governance partner with a large range of engagements, activities and influence in service delivery, dialogue and decision-making. ARK is now involved in a range of forms of alternative provision across a wide set of areas including school management, professional development, teacher training, curriculum and learning strategies development and is growing vertically and horizontally, nationally and internationally; it is working in
complex partnerships with government, business and third sector organisations and it is a recipient of cross-party support; it is bringing new practices and methods from the business sector to bear upon the education problems it addresses and it is an active agent of education reform. In many ways, ARK reflects the blurrings and crossings of the roles and relationships of these organisations with government and between sectors; it is a blended or hybrid organisation that is emblematic of polycentric governance. Finally, we suggest the need for the development of new research sensibilities and methods to address the new landscape of education policy and governance.

Polycentric governance

In national settings around the globe entrenched problems of public policy are increasingly being addressed through a mix of “networks, partnerships and many other forms of collaboration across sectoral and organizational boundaries” (Williams 2002, 103) “involving mutuality and interdependence as opposed to hierarchy and independence” (Peterson 2003, 1) – although this interdependence is, as some commentators point out, “asymmetric” (see Rhodes 1997). Governments are increasingly “catalyzing all sectors – public, private and voluntary – into action to solve their community’s problems” (Osborne and Gaebler 1992, 20). These new working arrangements expand the “territory of influence” (Mackenzie and Lucio 2005) over policy as they “enlarge the range of actors involved in shaping and delivering policy” (Newman 2001, 125), and involve a shift from the hierarchy of the state towards a new form, or more precisely a dramatic expansion of “polycentric” (Jessop 1998) governance based upon network relations. These processes are sometimes referred to as the shift from government to governance (Rhodes 1996), a term which is used to encompass “the whole range of institutions and relationships involved in the process of governing” (Pierre and Peters 2000, 1). A contrast is drawn here between government as accomplished through hierarchies, within administrations and by bureaucratic methods, and governance as carried out through the more flexible and “informal authority” (Rhodes 1997) of diverse networks, with the effect of policy being done “in spaces parallel to and across state institutions and their jurisdictional boundaries” (Skeleher, Mathur and Smith 2004, 3). Such a mode of governance involves a shift in the role of the state from “directing bureaucracies” to “managing networks” (Smith 1999). As Marinetto (2005) argues, the state “although not impotent, is now dependent upon a vast array of state and non-state policy actors” (p. 599). Some authors go further to suggest that network-based modes of coordination are displacing both hierarchy and markets as the dominant mode of interaction (Pierre 2000; Rhodes 1997; Kooiman 1993; Pierre and Peters 2000).

Alongside the introduction of new actors and organisations, the shift to polycentrism also involves the displacement of some others, like trade unions and professional associations. In England, the move to governance in education has
rested upon a reinvention and reconfiguration of both the state and the public sector, a dual process of, on the one hand, gradual but steady decentralisation, of creating autonomy (e.g. a system of more autonomous schools directly related to central government) and, on the other hand, an increase in direction, specification and intervention by the central state (e.g. distributing money directly, setting performance targets, closing failing schools, etc.). This dual process has involved the gradual marginalisation of local government in the provision of state education in an education system that now rests upon the involvement of a multiplicity of new providers of different kinds, and the redistribution of power and responsibility for local planning of service delivery away from the local authority to new and diverse actors and agencies and to parts of the central state.

The transformed/transforming landscape of state education in England is the effect of a long process of many changes which can be traced back to the Education Reform Act of 1988, which triggered “an incremental process of breaking up established assumptions and modes of operation and taken for granted practices and replacing these with new ‘freedoms’, new players and new kinds of relationships and new forms of service delivery in many different parts of the education system” (Ball 2008, 195-6). Gradually but steadily, new modes of entry for alternative providers (businesses, voluntary organisations, social enterprises), the deregulation of educational labour (and the disapplication of national pay and conditions agreements), and the invention of new types of school (Trusts, Academies, Free Schools, Studio schools) have created a new framework for educational governance made possible by a new set of technologies of government.

The private, philanthropic and voluntary sectors are now all prominent and significant constituents of new governance in England. Although, as we have shown in previous research, the role of philanthropy as a new kind of ‘partner’ is not distinct from either business or social enterprise as a field of action in relation to the state (see Ball and Junemann 2012). Indeed, as we will try to demonstrate through the example of the charity ARK, philanthropy is now inter-related with business and social enterprise as alternatives to the traditional forms of public sector organisation and practice with the effect of blurring the boundaries between sectors and producing a convergence of methods, sensibilities, values and forms of organisation.

“**We want to go further, faster**”

Education policy under the current Coalition government has maintained strong elements of continuity with preceding New Labour policies and methods and in many cases this has led to an extension and elaboration of previous initiatives rather than constituting a complete rupture or change of direction (something that has been noted by many commentators, see for example Bochel 2011). However, greater emphasis is being placed in Coalition education policy and across public policy in general on diversity, on ‘freedoms’ and on localism – although all of these elements
of policy were part of New Labour’s policy thinking. Specifically, all of these are very
evident in the pace, depth and vigour with which the Coalition government is moving
to expand the number and variety of ‘independent schools’ within the state system.
That is, by extending and taking further the Academies programme and introducing
the Free Schools initiative as we shall see below, and in the creation of Studio schools
and University Technical Colleges, the Coalition is using this agenda to bring about,
or advance further, a general break-up of the state system and of the relationship
between schools and local authorities.

Academies are state-funded schools that are removed from Local Authority
control, funded directly by central government and contracted out to a wide range of
sponsors including entrepreneurs, businesses, Higher Education Institutions and
Further Education Colleges, charities and faith groups. Direct relations are
established between the Department for Education and schools and school providers.
These schools are given more ‘freedoms’ than other state schools over the pay and
conditions of staff, curriculum, admission and timetable and sponsors are invited to
bring their innovative approaches, culture and methods to bear to improve standards.
In the process, new sets of values and methods of organisation are promoted
within public education, with entrepreneurship and competitiveness given particular
emphasis, although a very significant proportion of the new schools are sponsored by
or associated with faith groups of various kinds. Announcing the take-over of 400
under-performing primary schools by academy sponsors in November 2012, Prime
Minister David Cameron said:

Time and time again we have seen how academies, with their freedom to innovate, inspire
and raise standards are fuelling aspirations and helping to spread success. So now we want
to go further, faster, with 400 more under-performing primary schools paired up with a
sponsor and either open or well on their way to becoming an academy by the end of next
year (The Guardian, 12 November 2012).

Academies were first introduced by the New Labour government in 2002 in an
attempt to turn around low performing schools by providing these schools with
greater freedoms to innovate. In its original version, Academies were usually
secondary schools in areas of high deprivation that were mainly replacing those
which had been deemed unsuccessful. They were therefore meant to remain a
minority of state schools. However, Labour twice expanded its target for the number
of academy schools and the Coalition government has shown a determination to
expand such forms of alternative provision even more dramatically in a drive to
introduce further ‘flexibilities’ into the education system by gradually enabling all
schools (including primaries and those judged as ‘outstanding’ and ‘good’ by the
official body for the inspection of schools, Ofsted) to become Academies in a series
of policy moves initiated with the Academies Bill of July 2010. As a result, as of
1 November 2012 there were 2456 Academies open in England and a further 823 in
the pipeline but only 333 of the new Academies were formerly failing primary or secondary schools. These figures are compared to a total of 203 Academies at the last general election in May 2010. According to the Department for Education, 45% of secondary schools are either already open or in the pipeline to become Academies.

Further, other policy moves are providing additional opportunities for existing players to expand their participation. In November 2012 Prime Minister David Cameron announced the creation of a GBP 10M fund to develop new sponsor links to encourage the creation of more chains of Academy schools. The government “wants to help more Academies expand into chains such as the ARK and Harris groups and said other Academies, schools, businesses and faith organizations were among those who could apply for a share of the fund” (Financial Times, 12 November 2012). The dramatic expansion of the Academies model is steadily taking place despite the argument that “the huge expansion of academies, freed from local authority control, is leading to growing centralisation of education” (The Guardian, 17 October 2012) and creating accountability issues.

In addition to Academies, and as part of the Coalition’s agenda involving “a power shift away from central government to the people, families and communities of Britain” (Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg in HM Government, 2010, p. 1), the government has legislated (Academies Act 2010 and Education Act 2011) the creation of Free Schools, “all-ability state-funded schools set up in response to what local people say they want and need in order to improve education for children in their community”. This initiative has both introduced a very different group of new players in state education enabling parents, community groups and local charities to open and run their own schools and offered new opportunities for expansion to existing Academy providers. Free schools are loosely modelled on Sweden’s independent free schools and American Charter Schools and, like Academies, have greater freedom over the pay and conditions of staff, including the possibility of hiring unqualified teachers, and over curriculum and the length of school terms and days. The first 24 Free Schools opened in September 2011 and 79 more have been approved by the government to open in September 2012 and beyond.

The increasing introduction of ‘flexibilities’ into the school system brought about by the massive expansion of Academies and the introduction of Free Schools is part of the general process of subsidiarity involved in network governance linked to new forms of ‘steering’ and central performance management. At the same time that these processes offer new ‘freedoms’ to providers, they residualise local government, professional organisations and trade unions and contribute to a general change in the labour conditions of teaching.

As mentioned, among the elements of autonomy from which Academies and Free Schools can benefit is the opportunity to set aside existing national agreements on the pay, conditions and certification of teachers – part of the flexibilisation of the education workforce. Again, the government is demonstrating vigour and
determination in its deconcentration and flexibilisation agendas and has announced the extension of further freedoms concerning teachers’ pay to all schools by giving individual school heads the ability to base staff pay rises on performance rather than on length of service. The new system, which will begin in September 2013, involves abandoning the national salary scheme for teachers and is a new clear step in the marginalisation of professional organisations and trade unions. On the other hand, the use of forms of performance-related pay ‘focuses’ teacher work ever more firmly on classroom ‘productivity’ and specifically the generation of ‘outputs’ for institutional performance indicators which are set, monitored and used by government to manage the system.

These various policy moves and the freedoms and flexibilities they enable all contribute to the creation of a set of conditions within which there are opportunities for profit-making from the delivery of state schooling. As market advocates like conservative think tank Policy Exchange celebrate, as “a key flexibility if for-profit providers are to be attracted into the system” (Laird and Wilson 2012, 12). Indeed, a number of influential think tanks are now calling for the possibility of the entry of for-profit providers into the delivery of state-funded education to be the latest addition on the road of privatisation. For example, the influential think tank Policy Exchange is proposing that the shortage of school places in London and elsewhere could be solved by setting up schools run under a “social enterprise” model (see Laird and Wilson 2012). In a report written by James Croft, the Adam Smith Institute proposes to address the sustainability of the Free School programme by allowing the private profit-making sector which, according to the report, currently operates with spare capacity and with outstanding results, to run free schools – and in the process meeting the predicted rising demand of school places and injecting the system with renewed elements of choice and competition (Croft 2011). A report published by the Institute of Economic Affairs (Stanfield 2012) provides a collection of essays that again claim that the success of the current education reform requires for-profits to be allowed to set up and operate free schools, addressing the prevailing capital constraints and poor quality and bringing about further innovation and competition.

These reports, seminars (see See 2012) and studies work on policy debate and within and through policy conversations to make the idea of profit thinkable and to deflate controversy. They open up new discursive possibilities through which policy can be articulated. The argument is being made in these reports that the disciplines of profit are what is needed to reform and re-energise the public sector. That is, enterprise can succeed where the state has failed.

**Extending the ARK’s tentacles**

“ARK is the future of education across the globe”

Former Prime Minister Gordon Brown (ARK website)
As outlined above, the landscape of state education in England (not Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland – at least to the same extent), is being fundamentally transformed and increasingly more areas of state activity in relation to education are being contracted out to or run in partnership with private and/or charitable providers (see Ball and Junemann 2012). One of the new policy organisations that has considerably expanded its involvement in state education in England (and in the USA, India and Uganda, see below), taking up public sector responsibilities previously reserved for the state itself and increasingly involved in the new Coalition policy developments, is the charity ARK. The charity has been supported and funded by the Coalition government to continue growing and developing to such an extent that it is quickly becoming one of the larger of organisations running chains of state schools as Academies as well as proving several other services to education.

ARK is a charity founded in 2002 by a group of hedge fund managers “pooling their skills and resources to improve the life chances of children” (ARK website). ARK operates in the areas of health (in Sub-Saharan Africa), child protection (Eastern Europe) and education (India, Uganda, the USA and the UK). In the UK, ARK’s activities focus on educational disadvantage and underachievement. Lucy Heller, the new ARK chief executive, explained to the TES that:

What we ultimately want is for every child to be able to make proper choices at 18, either going to the university of their choice or getting an apprenticeship or whatever. And not only in terms of qualifications, but also in the sense that this is their birthright and that they will therefore have the aspirations and motivations that will drive them (Times Educational Supplement 6 September 2011).

ARK claims to apply innovative methods and “find new solutions”¹⁰ to persisting public policy problems. Its approach to philanthropy draws from business methods, in particular those of the hedge fund industry. Business methods are regarded as able to provide novel and effective answers to challenging social problems of inequality and disadvantage. As Paul Marshall, a founding trustee, explained in an interview, ARK’s founders aspired for the charity to be “a proper hedge fund charity, which demonstrated the commitment of the hedge fund industry to giving something back and which also used our combined financial and business experience to try and make a difference, apply some of the principles of our business to charitable giving”.

At the same time as business methods are presented as effective solutions to educational under-achievement and its associated inequities, those very same methods are involved in re-working the modes and techniques of philanthropy itself (see Ball and Junemann 2011):

We wanted to apply the same robust measurement and accountability to philanthropy as we do to business, in order to deliver programmes that transform the lives of the most disadvantaged children¹¹.
ARK applies the same principles to its charitable activities as it would to running a business, with a focus on rigorous piloting, meticulous evaluation, measurable results, impact and social returns on investments, and quick scale-up if effective. It is also claimed that charities like ARK can be, as Amanda Spielman, the research and development director of ARK schools put it, “more flexible than governments about modifying and developing what they do . . . start small and expand gradually and change what they’re doing in response to early stage feedback – a different sort of developmental model”.

The ARK Board is made up of representatives of finance capital yet their multiple affiliations and involvement in business, third sector and policy roles and across party divides illustrates the current blurring of boundaries between sectors and the increasing convergence of methods, values and forms of operation and organisation across them (see Ball and Junemann 2012 for a detailed discussion). For example and among others, Paul Myners, (appointed in November 2010) who, having had a successful career in the investment management business (as chief executive and then chairman of pension fund manager Gartmore and as independent director of hedge fund GLG) was appointed as Financial Services Secretary to the Treasury (City Minister) under Gordon Brown (2008–2010), led government reviews under the last Labour government and was chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Corporate Governance. Stanley Fink, Director and Trustee of ARK, Conservative Party Treasurer, made a Lord in 2011, Chief Executive Officer of International Standard Asset Management (ISAM), previously of the Man Group and ARK Chairman since 2009 replacing founding chairman Arpad Busson. Paul Marshall is co-founder and Chairman of Marshall Wace LLP, a USD 15bn hedge fund whose other founding partner Ian Wace is also an ARK Schools Chairman. Paul Marshall also funds the LibDem think tank CentreForum.

ARK’s main source of direct funding (apart from the per-capita income from central government for its Academy schools) comes from fund-raising activities, principally its very high-profile annual gala dinners attended by top financiers and celebrities, which have raised around GBP 180m since 2002, but the charity claims that a further GBP 460m has been leveraged from government and partners. The ARK gala dinners receive ample coverage in the press and have been reported as “one of the most ostentatious shows of wealth in London’s social calendar” (The Telegraph, 8 June 2011) although recently ARK has decided to deliberately lower the profile of the 2013 fundraising dinner: “The press write a lot about our glamorous dinners, but we want them to focus more on all the work we’re doing with young people” (ARK spokesman in the London Evening Standard, 10 January 2013), an indication that ARK aspires to be taken seriously and participate in policy debates. ARK acts as a government partner in several programmes and both ARK Schools and Future Leaders (see below) are co-funded and co-governed by government.
ARK has been considerably extending its involvement in education in England since its establishment in 2002 and is ambitious and keen to continue growing its ‘business’ and diversifying. ARK’s schools division is becoming one of the largest sponsors of Academies running a chain of 11 such schools in London, Birmingham and Portsmouth (three spanning the 3 to 18 age range, five secondary Academies and three primary academies) and with plans to extend the network of Academies to 50 by 2015. There are also economies of scale that can be developed:

We are also creating ‘virtual all-through schools’. By bringing primary schools near our existing secondary academies into the ARK network, we give local communities access to an ARK education from nursery to A level (ARK Annual Report 2012).

The Academies programme in general has been a policy space for experimentation with new policy ideas and methods and ARK in particular is playing a significant role within that terrain. ARK Academies are being praised by the Coalition government for “driving up standards in the poorest areas” and Michael Gove (the Coalition’s Secretary of State for Education) is a strong admirer who has claimed to share their philosophy and methods and has frequently celebrated their success: “ARK results show an average 11 percentage point increase across their academy network”13.

The recognition is so strong that Gove has been accused of “becoming far too close to a ‘cosy cartel’ and that ARK was wielding influence out of all proportion to its size” when, following his recommendation, Amanda Spielman, the research and development director of ARK schools, was appointed as chairwoman of Ofqual, the qualifications regulator. The designation of Spielman followed the appointment of two other ARK people to top positions within government, Sir Michael Wilshaw, a previous director of education of ARK and head of ARK’s Mossbourne Academy and hailed a “hero” by Michael Gove, as head of Ofsted, the UK regulatory body for schools inspection, and Baroness Morgan of Huyton (Sally Morgan), adviser to ARK’s board, as Ofsted’s chairman. The Daily Mail cites a senior source at the Department for Education responding to the critics: “We are just trying to get the best people into the best jobs. Ark is a fantastic organisation which has transformed schools and driven up standards. It is not surprising that their top people are getting these jobs” (Daily Mail, 4 December 2011).

A significant contributing element to the success of ARK schools is attributed to innovations with teaching methods and curriculum, although in this respect ARK is also aiming to ‘export’ these beyond their sponsored schools (e.g. see Mathematics Mastery below). ARK’s methods and philosophy draw heavily from US charter schools, particularly from the model of the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP). As Paul Marshall explained in a newspaper interview:

At ARK, we demonstrate that if you set high expectations, robust discipline and focus relentlessly on literacy and numeracy, poor children can achieve as well as prosperous ones.
We model ourselves on the American KIPP schools that have 80 per cent on free school meals and send 80 per cent to university (London Evening Standard, 7 March 2011).

KIPP is a national operator of free, open-enrolment, college-preparatory public schools (Charter Schools) in under-resourced communities in the USA that currently runs a network of 99 schools across the country\textsuperscript{14}. KIPP schools have a strong emphasis on discipline and behaviour management that is replicated within ARK Academies. One of ARK's co-founders and trustees, Paul Marshall, said in an interview that the only way for headteachers to reverse underperforming schools is if they “first of all sort behaviour” (Evening Standard, 7 March 2011). In 2005 ARK hired Jay Altman, a “pioneer of US charter schools”\textsuperscript{15} and current Chief Executive of First Line Schools (another Charter Schools operator in New Orleans) as director for education. Altman is a co-founder of ARK's Future Leaders programme (see below) and has been promoting the deployment of non-traditional methods and actors in closing ‘the attainment gap’. Charter Schools more generally are being used as points of reference for the Coalition's Academies and Free Schools initiatives (Ball and Junemann 2012) and are portrayed as an effective and rapid market-based solution to entrenched under-performance and inequalities in education.

A further innovation in pedagogy and curriculum is ARK's \textit{Mathematics Mastery} programme, a new bespoke curriculum, pedagogy and training programme for teaching Maths based on the curriculum in Singapore “and tailored to UK schools” that is currently being used across ARK's Academies as well as 40 other primary and secondary schools\textsuperscript{16}. As part of ARK's attempt to “continue to act as a seedbed for innovation beyond ARK schools”, the charity aims to develop \textit{Mathematics Mastery} to sustainability and has already received a GBP 600,000 grant from the Education Endowment Foundation to expand the programme to over 100 schools in 2013\textsuperscript{17}.

ARK is also forging new partnerships with businesses to develop a series of initiatives to provide pupils with higher education and career skills. In 2012 the charity organised taster trips to leading universities for 300 pupils from year 7 (aged 11) onwards and, in partnership with Bloomberg, J.P. Morgan and Actis, run workplace visits, mentoring and coaching sessions on career skills (ARK Annual report 2012). A new corporate mentoring partnership with Bloomberg is planned for 2013.

\textbf{Leading change}

The school leadership training programmes we co-founded in the UK, Future Leaders and Teaching Leaders, are nurturing a new generation of heads and senior teachers for inner city schools (ARK Annual report 2012)

One of ARK's most significant and growing programmes that has garnered attention and support from successive governments since its inception is \textit{Future Leaders},
a three-year leadership development programme for current ‘talented’ teachers who have the potential to become senior leaders or headteachers of challenging schools through an accelerated training programme. Participants are expected to “gain senior leadership posts in challenging schools at the end of their residency year and will be working towards headship after a very intense four years”\textsuperscript{18}. This programme also draws on the leadership model of US charter schools and draws explicitly on business methods. In particular, the scheme offers new expedited routes into headship with a slighter and speeded up experience of classroom and school life.

Again the Future Leaders programme has received the support of the Secretary for Education Michael Gove: “we want to work with excellent organizations like Future Leaders who help place inspirational professionals in some of the most challenging schools in the country”\textsuperscript{19}. Gove has also encouraged Future Leaders to look into setting up Free Schools. This again reflects Michael Gove’s and the government’s commitment to strip away bureaucracy and reduce red-tape in English education. Indeed, Future Leaders now has plans to extend its work to involve Future Leaders in the setting up of new schools therefore creating the possibility of a network of Future Leaders schools. As Heath Monk, Chief Executive Officer of Future Leaders, anticipated:

Free Schools have the potential to transform the life chances for children in the most disadvantaged areas. Our Future Leaders have been inspired by the inner-city charter schools that they have seen in the US – and many would relish the opportunity to lead similar schools here\textsuperscript{20}.

Underlying the Coalition government’s move to giving school leaders increasingly more freedoms is the belief that, as Michael Gove put it, “The best schools share certain characteristics. They have a strong head and good discipline” (\textit{The Telegraph}, 2 September 2010), a conception that resonates with Future Leaders’ portrayal of leadership as “the most determinative factor on pupil outcomes”\textsuperscript{21}. Huge expectations are therefore vested in the role of school leaders who are seen as gifted with the powers to save failing schools by bringing their vision and charisma to bear to raise standards. Sir Michael Wilshaw, the ex-‘super-head’ of ARK’s Mossbourne Academy (2004–2011) and current Chief Inspector of Schools is a case in point, and there are others. Sir Michael replaced Jay Altman as ARK’s education director (part-time) in 2008 when, thanks to Wilshaw’s leadership, famous for its traditional approach to discipline and pedagogy, Mossbourne Academy was reported as having gone from being “Britain’s worst-performing school [to] one of the best” (\textit{The Telegraph}, 23 February 2011). Michael Gove is also a strong supporter and has on several occasions called Wilshaw “my hero” and said he wished all schools were like Mossbourne.
As indicated above, ARK also runs the Teaching Leaders programme in partnership with other third sector organisations (the National College, Teach First and Future Leaders) and partly funded by the Department for Education, to “train and develop middle leaders working in schools in the most challenging contexts”22. Paul Marshall of ARK has described it as Future Leaders’:

Next version, which instead of taking actual headteachers or potential headteachers, takes the younger generation, the kind of early thirties people, who will eventually be headteachers and fast-tracks them in a similar way. It allows them to go into model schools and to see what best practice looks like and then it speeds up their career path.

The scheme is a two-year programme of formal training, coaching and support to provide leadership and management skills for talented teachers to become middle leaders in challenging urban schools. Started in 2008 with a first cohort of 30 participants in London, the programme secured funding of GBP 8.9 million from the Department for Education in July 2011 that enabled it to expand nationally and access 90% of challenging schools in England23. Schools Minister David Laws told the third cohort of Teaching Leaders’ graduates in December 2012 that “Inspirational leadership in schools is paramount to closing the gap between rich and poor. Teaching Leaders’ ability to identify today’s outstanding middle leaders and develop them into the influential headteachers of tomorrow is truly impressive”24.

The scheme has also developed Teaching Leaders on Demand which provides customised leadership courses for groups of teachers within one school, another initiative that is quickly growing with plans to reach 175 schools in 201325. Further, ARK seems to be aiming to benefit from the Coalition government’s general shake-up of teacher training provision with an increase in school-based schemes such as School Direct and other alternative routes of initial teacher training that replace traditional university courses. According to the Teaching Leaders’ website:

Teaching Leaders also envisage a role in the Government’s reorganisation of teacher training. Six of our partner schools have so far been awarded the new Teaching School status26, which means they will become local hubs for training new teachers and for the professional development of more experienced staff27.

All in all, ARK’s Academies designated Teaching Schools and the Future Leaders and Teaching Leaders programmes span all the way from initial teacher training through to leadership and headship development and further indicate the increasing involvement of ARK in significant areas of traditional state activity in education. ARK has also launched, in partnership with The Foundation of Prince William and Prince Harry, Expanding Horizons, a programme to provide training of schools’ staff, equipment grants and subsidies to provide school children with low-cost outdoor trips. The programme has supported trips for children from 15 secondary
schools and from 2013 onwards will look into signing up schools nationwide for the programme, as well as including primary schools.\(^\text{28}\)

ARK is also actively growing its education involvements globally. In the USA, ARK is funding *Leading Educators*, a programme similar to the UK’s *Teaching Leaders*. In Uganda, in 2012 ARK opened the first two of a future network of secondary schools and is working with the Ugandan government to help develop public-private partnerships for privately-run, state-funded secondary schools. ARK “hope to demonstrate a scalable, cost-efficient model for secondary education with our partners.”\(^\text{29}\).

In India, ARK ran for a time a two-year leadership training programme (School Leaders for India) based on the Future Leaders model, training 25 headteachers in Mumbai and Pune between 2008 and 2009.

ARK India is now involved in two further programmes, one to extend the use of synthetic phonics in the teaching of English in primary schools through a four-year phonics-based English teaching programme in government and low-cost private schools across nine states; ARK is also piloting a voucher scheme intended to improve access of the poorest families to private schools in Delhi where 635 children have already completed their first academic year across 69 schools.

Finally, in 2012 ARK became, together with the British Council and a private company TSL Education, a founding partner of STIR Education (Schools and Teachers Innovating for Results), “a global venture in promoting grassroots innovation by dynamic teachers and schools to transform educational outcomes for the world’s poorest children” (ARK Annual report 2012). STIR identifies and supports grassroots “micro-innovations” that can improve the quality of education in schools in major developing world cities. STIR is starting its activities in Delhi, India, working with 25 STIR Innovators “who have demonstrated outstanding initiative and enterprise in developing micro-innovations that have the potential to make a significant impact at scale.”\(^\text{30}\).

**Conclusion**

What we see here is ARK, as one example among many other similar organisations now active in the education system and other fields of social policy, as an agent and beneficiary of education reform. This is a co-reform which is changing both the landscape of provision and the landscape of the state. ARK is now a policy actor in network governance bringing new practices and methods to bear upon education problems, changing the way in which these problems are addressed. This is a complex configuration of power and knowledge, practices and discourses that is both strategic and technical. ARK representatives are taking up key positions within the infrastructure of policy, that is to say, policy is being re-peopled. Policy entrepreneurs and boundary spanners (Williams 2002) are establishing new links and relationships between government, philanthropy and business. They are moral and ethical subjects – enterprising, innovative and responsible. ARK is ambitious in a
dual sense. On one hand, it seeks to influence the direction of policy and, on the other, it is committed to a business model of growth, of vertical and horizontal, national and international expansion.

ARK also exemplifies the international movement of innovative ideas and innovation – “borrowing”, and the way in which new governance ideas and initiatives cluster – as “discursive ensembles”, producing a convergence of methods, sensibilities, values and forms of organisation in relation to a “foundational epistemology” (Shamir 2008, 14) – “pragmatic entrepreneurialism”. This is one aspect of what Shamir (2008, 6) calls the “economization of the social”, within which government becomes a facilitator of a “market of authorities”. The policy networks, and networks of provision within which ARK is active, are also networks of discourse – legitimating, disseminating, persuading and recruiting. They are bringing school management and leadership, pedagogy and curriculum and teacher training within a single discursive logic of practice. They also draw up and encourage a moral commitment to change and to practices of a particular kind.

The shifts and moves involved here are made up of and driven by a complex set of political and economic processes involving advocacy, business interests, ‘new’ philanthropy, and changes in the form and modalities of the state – that is, a transition from government to governance; from bureaucracy to networks, from hierarchy to heterarchy. Each of these elements needs to be attended to in the analysis of the new philanthropy and new forms of education policy. Further, as we have suggested, the incursions of philanthropy into the heartland of state education may also be establishing a framework and structure of legitimacy for direct for-profit participation in the delivery of mainstream education services.

What we are trying to capture and convey here is the increasingly complex and opaque crossings, blurrings, interweavings or hybridities that constitute and animate the current landscape of English education policy and governance. Traditional lines and demarcations, public and private, market and state, are being breached and blended in all of this and in many ways those categories are no longer useful analytically. As researchers we need a new analytic language and new research techniques if we are to keep up with the shifts to polycentrism in education governance, with the new ways in which education policy and educational solutions are being generated. Policy is being done in new ways, in different places, by a diverse range of new actors, and concomitantly the methods and practices of policy are also changing. Organisational forms and relationships from business are now being deployed. The methods of venture philanthropy and the measurement of social ‘returns’ on philanthropic investments; the opportunities for profit from public service delivery; the writing of contracts and application of performance management techniques – all of this requires policy analysts to develop a new research skill set – including an understanding of accounting procedures, of investment decision-making and of due diligence and the ability to read stock market reports and company
accounts. We also need to think and research policy beyond the limits of the nation-state and ‘follow the money’ and the flows of policy by engaging with social media. Our research methods must be appropriate to the form and modalities of the object of our interest.

Carolina Junemann is a Research Officer at the Institute of Education, University of London, UK. Her research interests focus on education policy analysis, the social impacts of policy and more broadly the relationship between educational and social inequalities. Email: C.Junemann@ioe.ac.uk

Stephen J. Ball is Karl Mannheim Professor of Sociology of Education at the Institute of Education, University of London, UK. His main areas of research interest are in education policy analysis and the relationships between education and education policy and social class. Email: S.Ball@ioe.ac.uk
Notes

1 A Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government came into power in May 2010 following the Conservative party’s failure to win an overall majority in the House of Commons at the 2010 general election.

2 ‘New’ Philanthropy, Education Policy and the State, ESRC RES-000-22-2682.

3 Here we refer to the ‘new’ philanthropy phenomenon (Handy 2006) as distinct from ‘old’ forms of philanthropy in a move from ‘palliative’ to ‘developmental’ forms of giving. This move is characterised by a more marked relationship between giving and outcomes and impact; an increased focus on ‘returns’ to philanthropic investments and the penetration of philanthropy by business and business values and methods (strategic/venture philanthropy, philanthropic portfolios, metrics, due diligence); a givers’ more active approach to their donations and their increasing involvement in policy communities (Ball and Junemann 2011).

4 Prime Minister David Cameron at Academies special meeting, 12 November 2012 (http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/struggling-schools/) (Accessed 2012-12-11)

5 http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/speeches/a00201425/michael-gove-speech-on-academies

6 Academy sponsors may sponsor a single academy or a ‘network’ or ‘chain’ of academies (a ‘multi-sponsor’ when they sponsor three or more schools), e.g. Academies Enterprise Trust (AET) (64), Oasis (19), E-Act (29), Ormiston Trust (19), ARK (11, see below), Harris (13), United Learning Trust (21) (including open and in the pipeline academies, as of December 2012).

7 Also see http://www.publicfinance.co.uk/news/2012/09/free-schools-and-academies-open-accountability-gap/ (Accessed 2012-10-12)

8 http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/freeschools (Accessed 2012-12-12)

9 http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/inthenews/a00199061/79-new-schools-now-approved-to-open-from-2012-wards (Accessed 2012-09-10)

10 http://www.arkonline.org/about-us/our-approach (Accessed 2013-10-01)

11 ARK (2012), Annual Report. http://www.arkonline.org/media/59711/ARK%20Annual%20Report%202012%20PDF%20final.pdf (Accessed 2012-05-15)

12 ARK’s Facebook profile http://www.facebook.com/pages/Ark/158077654257155?sk=page_map (Accessed 2013-10-01)

13 Michael Gove’s speech on Academies, 4 January 2012, available at: http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/speeches/a00201425/michael-gove-speech-on-academies (Accessed 2012-10-10)

14 http://www.kipp.org/index.cfm?objectid=A1ED7570-A995-11E0-B5B5005056883C4D (Accessed 2012-09-09)

15 http://www.future-leaders.org.uk/news/2-archived-stories/13-tes-one-of-the-future-leaders-founders-jay-altman-talks-to-the-tes (Accessed 2012-10-12)

16 http://www.mathematicsmastery.org/ (Accessed 2013-09-01)

17 ARK (2012), Annual Report, op. cit.

18 http://www.future-leaders.org.uk/our-programme/the-programme (Accessed 2012-15-11)

19 Michael Gove cited on the Future Leaders’ website, http://www.future-leaders.org.uk/impact/our-impact (Accessed 2012-15-11)

20 http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/inthenews/a0061429/gove-free-schools-will-enable-excellent-teachers-to-createnew-schools-and-improve-standards-for-all-children (Accessed 2012-15-11)

21 http://www.future-leaders.org.uk/why-future-leaders/our-mission-and-beliefs (Accessed 2012-15-11)

22 http://www.teachingleaders.org.uk/who-we-are/mission-and-values/about-us/ (Accessed 2012-15-11)

23 http://www.arkonline.org/education/uk/teaching-leaders/looking-ahead (Accessed 2012-15-11)

24 http://www.teachingleaders.org.uk/third-cohort-of-teaching-leaders-graduates/ (Accessed 2012-15-11)

25 http://www.arkonline.org/education/uk/teaching-leaders/looking-ahead (Accessed 2012-15-11)

26 Teaching school is a new designation introduced following the Schools White Paper The Importance of Teaching (November 2010) which gives outstanding schools a leading role in the training and professional development of school staff. The designation, development and quality assurance of Teaching Schools has been commissioned to The National College and the aim is to have 500 such schools by 2014/15 which ‘will have driven significant improvement in the quality of professional practice and pupil attainment” (http://www.education.gov.uk/nationalcollege/index/support-for-schools/teachingschools/teachingschools-background.htm) (Accessed 2013-12-01)

27 http://www.arkonline.org/education/uk/teaching-leaders/looking-ahead

28 http://www.arkonline.org/education/uk/expanding-horizons/looking-ahead (Accessed 2012-15-12)

29 ARK (2012), Annual Report, op. cit.

30 http://www.stireducation.org/programmes/programme-overview/ (Accessed 2013-10-01)
References

Bache, Ian. (2003). Governing through Governance: Education Policy Control under New Labour. Political Studies, 51(2), 300–314.

Ball, Stephen J. (2008). The Legacy of ERA, Privatization and the Policy Ratchet. Educational Management Administration and Leadership, 36(2), 185–199.

Ball, Stephen J. (2012). Global Ed. Inc.: New Policy Networks and the Neoliberal Imaginary. London: Routledge.

Ball, Stephen J. & Junemann, Carolina (2011). Education Policy and Philanthropy: The Changing Landscape of English Educational Governance. International Journal of Public Administration, 34(10), 646–661.

Ball, Stephen J. and Junemann, Carolina (2012). Networks, new governance and education. Bristol: Policy Press.

Bevir, M. and Rhodes, R.A.W. (2003). Interpreting British governance. London: Routledge.

Bochel, Hugh, ed. (2011). The Conservative Party and social policy. Bristol: Policy Press.

Croft, James (2011). Profit making free schools: Unlocking the potential of England’s proprietorial schools sector. Adam Smith Research Trust. http://www.adamsmith.org/sites/default/files/resources/ASI_School_report_WEB.pdf

Handy, Charles (2006). The new philanthropists: The new generosity. London: William Heinemann.

HM Government (2010). Decentralisation and the Localism Bill: An Essential Guide. London: Department for Communities and Local Government.

Howard, Philip N. (2002). Network Ethnography and the Hypermedia Organization: New Media, New Organizations, New Methods. New Media and Society, 4, 550–574.

Jessop, Bob (1998). The Rise of Governance and the Risks of Failure. International Social Science Journal, 155(1), 29–45.

Kooiman, Jan, ed. (1993). Modern governance: New government-society interactions. London: Sage.

Laird, Andrew and Wilson, Justin (2012). Social enterprise schools: A potential profit-sharing model for the state-funded school system. London: Policy Exchange.

MacKenzie, Robert & Martinez Lucio, Miguel (2005). The Realities of Regulatory Change: Beyond the Fetish of Deregulation. Sociology, 39(3), 499–517.

Marinetto, Mike (2003). Governing beyond the Centre: A Critique of the Anglo-Governance School. Political Studies, 51(3), 592–608.

Newman, Janet (2001). Modernising governance: New Labour, policy and society. London: Sage.

Osborne, David and Gaebler, Ted (1992). Re-inventing government. Reading: Mass, Addison-Wesley.

Peterson, John (2003). Policy networks. Vienna: Institute for Advanced Studies.

Rhodes, Rod A.W. (1996). The New Governance: Governing without Government. Political Studies, 54, 652–667.

Rhodes, Rod A.W. (1997). Understanding governance: Policy networks, governance, reflexivity and accountability. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Pierre, Jon, ed. (2000). Debating governance. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pierre, Jon and Peters, B. Guy (2000). Governance, politics, and the state. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press.

See, Helena (2012). Profit in Education: Where we are now: An Overview of Policies and Controversies from around the World. National Skills Forum and Associate Parliamentary
Skills Group. http://www.policyconnect.org.uk/sites/default/files/Profit%20in%20education%20-%20final.pdf

Shamir, Ronen (2008). The Age of Responsibilitization: On market-embedded Morality. *Economy and Society*, 37(1), 1–19.

Skelcher, C.K. Mathur, N. and Smith S.N. (2004). *Negotiating the institutional void: Discursive alignments, collaborative institutions and democratic governance*. INLoGov: University of Birmingham.

Smith, Martin J. (1999). *The core executive in Britain*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Stanfield, James B., ed. (2012). *The profit motive in education: Continuing the revolution*. London: Institute of Economic Affairs.

Williams, Paul (2002). The competent boundary spanner. *Public Administration*, 80(1), 103–124.

Wittel, Andreas (2000). Ethnography on the Move: From Field to Net to Internet. *Forum: Qualitative Research*, 1, Art 21.