**Jamie Mackay**

Could you introduce yourself and say a little about your arts, education context?

**Lesley Eadie (she/her)**

Oh, Hi, yes, I'm Leslie Eadie and I have a couple of different jobs. I split my week between and teaching, I'm a drama teacher, and I've also taught dance in the past, but at the moment just teaching drama, and I work for Time for Inclusive Education (TIE), which is an LGBT charity. It's delivering the Scottish National Approach to LGBT inclusive education, and I do some arts work within that as well. So, I am the person that is responsible for theatre, music and things like that within that.

**Jamie Mackay**

Can you say a little bit about why you applied for the MEd program?

**Lesley Eadie (she/her)**

I wanted to get excited about teaching again. I was principal teacher at the time, actually, but of raising attainment, and I wanted to upskill my practice. But I knew that I wasn't interested in becoming a deputy head. I wanted, I mean, a lot of the people who were going for a masters at the time were all going for leadership and all of that stuff, and I just knew that that wasn't the one for me, although I'd had the opportunities to do things like those kind of leadership roles, but I just wanted to get better at what that's within the classroom.

**Jamie Mackay**

Could you just describe your journey through the MEd?

**Lesley Eadie (she/her)**

Okay, I started off not really knowing where I was going with it, just knowing that I wanted to try some things out and have a wee play with some of the theories and the practitioners you guys were talking about. As I got into second year, I started thinking about equalities within the classroom, and thinking about kind of personal development and things like that, so my Context and Culture [a 60-credit Arts Practice Enquiry module], which I absolutely loved doing was all about autobiographical theatre and the therapeutical practices of theatre and my kind of a researchy project with in that same bit what I was doing was completely different because it was about how kids, how kids write about dancing, and what makes them feel that they cannae do it, that they cannae write about it when they they're clearly, very, very good at the actual practice of it. How do they feel, they… why can't they just write what they do? And so that was interesting putting those things together. And then, when, after second year, and second year was quite difficult, it was the middle of Covid, so my project had to get stalled, my dance project got stalled because the schools all shut down a week before I was about to finish it. So, I had to redo that project for the next year. And so yeah, so I went from that, to move school and when I moved to school I had a wee reassess for my final projects and discovered that the kind of equality issues was what I was really, really interested in and then I started looking at the LGBT Inclusive Education Bill that was coming out because it just luckily came out, and they passed the recommendations in September of 2021, just as I was about to start embarking on that, so that was just really nice timing for me.

**Jamie Mackay**

So you've started to answer this, but what did you focus on then for your final project, can you say a little bit more about that?

**Lesley Eadie (she/her)**

So I looked at LGBT education and what that looks like within the with school curriculum. But I wanted to look at it through the voice of children, through the learners voice so I wanted to see what they thought of it, and then how that would impact upon the teaching population. And to do that I did some LGBT inclusive education with them, and it was a drama class who looked at, and the reasons why people would want it, the reasons why people wouldn't want it, what was happening in the world about it, and then I gave them their choice to have their own voice, so complete personalization and choice of what they did. They did a production arts piece of work, where they chose exactly what their response was going to be, so I had lots of different responses, like animations, film projects costume designs, mask design, just like you name it, the kids probably come up with it, and it was unbelievable. The work that they come out with was incredible, and from that I digitized it, made it into a web resource. And surveyed teachers before looking at it to see what they thought about LGBT education and then got some teachers to, teachers that volunteered, I wish it was all the teachers, and I'll talk about that in a minute, to have a look at the pupil voice, the website for pupil voice to see what impact it has on them, and it was just amazing what the kind of the things they were saying about it. There was just teachers, not understanding how much of an impact just being seen in the in the curriculum, what that impact is on children, and at TIE they talk about mirrors and windows, which I think is a beautiful analogy, of seeing yourself within the curriculum. So, if you can't see yourself in the mirror, you can't see yourself in your curriculum. You can't be yourself, and if you can't see out the window and see other people, how can you ever have empathy but anybody else? And that's exactly what this project did I think for a lot of teachers, it made them see out the window to see to see what the kids see. Which was really, really impactful. And the kids that did the project, they were a third year class, they weren't LGBT kids. There were LGBT kids in there, and it was quite struggled to do the project. It took 5 months to get ethical approval, not from you guys from my school, which said a lot, I think, about equalities in education within Scotland. If this was a project about race, I would have got ethical approval from my school within about 2 days, but it took 5 months and a lot of meetings, and I just persevered and persevered and persevered. Until it was at state which wasn't that different than the state that had said in the in the first place, to get it done. So that was a new eye opener for me. The fact that when someone is looking at something that affects quite a big population of the school or that it was quite difficult to, you know, to get their voices heard. So yeah, that was, that was an interesting one, an interesting one, looking at that, the idea of ethics for an equalities issue and seeing how differently different equalities are looked at within schools. The other thing that really got me, and I think if I was gonna do this project again, and I would love to do a project like this. So maybe I'll do a PhD, who knows, was the fact that the teachers that spoke to me and looked at the kids work were the teachers who were interested in what they were doing, and the teachers who would have been accepting to, you know, to be trained up and upskilled anyway. So out of 90 teachers there was only 33 of them who actually did the first lot of surveys and there's only 11 of them that opted in to see the work out of 90, which is, you know just over what, just over 10% of the school population and the responses from the teachers that saw it, and even though they were they were on board with it to begin with, and how much it moved them. So, I don't know how you reach that other lot of teachers. And I think at the moment it's going to be mandated, which is gonna happen in the future, I think, but I don't know how you reach teachers when they just refuse to engage with something, and one of the teachers within the project said it felt like the school, most of the school was still in Section 28 times. Which is terrifying for kids, cause I know how I felt when I was at school, and I was at school. I was just going into fifth year when Section 28 came in, and I went from a kid who was supported in school to nobody speaking to me about it, even when I was getting horrifically bullied. So that was terrifying to hear. One of the kids pieces actually took words from lots of different people from over the years from 1970 to 2022 and one of the most impactful bits of it was someone from 1996, saying exactly the same thing as someone from 2022. How they felt and what it was like. So, it just shows that it's something that needs to be done within schools, and I think everything that the teachers felt was echoed in the literature that I had read, so obviously, I'd done a big literature review before embarking on this, and it was all true within that school, within that little microcosm of the world. You know, the last year wasn't making it up. It was, it's all there, it was all happening. And you know, so yeah, it took it took me on a wee emotional roller coaster, I think. I was so proud of the kids though and the work that they, I didn't think in a million years that they would have come up with the standards that they come up with. So yeah, it was great, loved it.

**Jamie Mackay**

we've already begun to answer this, but what impact did this have in your practice then, as an arts educator?

**Lesley Eadie (she/her)**

It made me, I think I already knew that pupil voice is really, really important to me, but it made me understand how impactful it is, and how we can use, you know, the advocacy of young people for good, and it also made me… cause as part of it I did a lot of work on kind of looking at things from all angles. So, a lot of work on critical literacy, which is something I'm really, really interested in, and I now work for the people who pushed this legislation through, the policy through. So it’s not legislation yet, its policy. And, so I work there now on a part time basis, so that's had quite a big impact on what I'm doing, and it does mean that I am now able to do the project that I did within my MEd, I'm doing it on a bigger scale, because the verbatim project that I've got just now is getting piloted all across Scotland, and it's probably gonna go live in February. So there'll now be pieces of work that looks like, you know the work that I've created for the other teachers will be using all across Scotland, which is good. And the screen Scotland project I'm working on is actually a bigger version. A proper, bigger version of MEd project, but it won't be, the kids won't get to choose what they're doing, they'll get a brief to create a film. But it's doing exactly the same thing, it's looking at things from lots of different angles to create that film and give them the opportunity to have their say, to have their voice heard. So, quite impactful.

**Jamie Mackay**

So again, you’ve already possibly answered this, but what has changed as a result of you studying the MEd then?

**Lesley Eadie (she/her)**

Eh, my career. My focus, I think, what I’m focused on within my career as well and the Equalities work that I found probably around about second year within the MEd has now taken over my life. So yes, my career has changed.

**Jamie Mackay**

Thank you so much.