FOREST SCHOOL ENGLAND

FRAMES

MSC THESIS

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FOREST SCHOOL ENGLAND

FRAMES

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Summary

Forest School is a unique concept that uses a natural environment to encourage children to use their natural curiosity and motivation to learn. The combination of nature and child initiated learning provides a wide range of positive effects reaching beyond the development of children.

This research is conducted because the Forest School concept has the potential to play an important role in the English society by (re)establishing the contact between children and nature. For this to happen it seems important that there is a clear understanding about the content of the concept. Now, a decade after the concept was introduced in England it has spread throughout the country. Ever since new FS Training Companies have been established training many FS leaders providing FS session to numerous children. The success and speed with which this happened also created misconceptions on FS, difference of opinion on the content and sometimes loss of quality in both FS sessions and trainings. This has created a situation in which the concept needs clarification for its survival.

By applying the theory of frame and the concept of Collective Action Frames as a product of the Social Movement theory, this research looks for similarities and differences among the FS actors and translate these to FS frames. This way it hopes to provide the necessary knowledge to contribute in the clarification of the concept and future development. For this 13 semi-structured interviews have been conducted with actors who are involved with the FS concept.

Two different frames have been identified: (1) The Nature Conservation/Development of child frame (ND-Frame), (2) The Financial/Development of child frame (FD-frame).

The most prominent feature of the ND-frame is that it consists of FS actors who primarily use FS to reach Nature Conservation. The most prominent feature of the FS –frame is that it consists of FS actors who primarily use FS for commercial reasons.

There is clearly a hostile attitude between the FS actors from both frames which is primarily caused by the fundamental differences in principles between the profit and non-profit FS

actors. Besides these hostilities there is also the need for a consistent approach and the necessity to safeguard the FS quality which is expressed in the initiative to establish a National Governing Body.

Apart from differences between the two frames there are also clear similarities. There is a 100% consensus among the respondents that the core of the FS concept consists of the development of the child, including the social (emotional), cognitive and physical (health) development. Together with the aspect of nature, because it is inextricably linked with the FS concept and also contributes to the positive effects of the concept. This core value of the FS concept forms the basis of a FS master frame.

The FS master frame can be characterized as an open, flexible frame because it only addresses the absolute key aspects of FS, leaving the other aspects open for interpretation. Despite the open character of the FS master frame it does define three aspects: (1) a minimum of 6 consecutive FS sessions, (2) sessions have to be child-led, (3) FS trainings can only be provided by experienced (sufficiently trained) FS leaders. Furthermore the MF functions as a 'solution frame' because it articulates the positive effects of FS as solutions without articulating the problems that can be solved. This way it is up to an actor to decide if, and if so, which problems it resolves with FS.

This research shows that besides the diversity between FS actors there also is consensus on the core of the FS concept. This implies that there are no fundamental differences between the FS actors on this account. The fact that the FS community has taken the initiative to form a National Governing Body increases the chances of future survival of the FS concept. In a way, this initiative represents the intention of the FS community to present itself as a collective network, as a FS organisation, to the outside world. In this respect the FS master frame serves as a tool through which the FS community can present itself and thereby the FS concept to the world. To use the FS master frame in an effective way the members of the FS community should actively and deliberately shaped the master frame the same way a Social Movement Organisation does with a Collective Action Frame.

1. Introduction

Just a few decades ago children were still playing outside, they built tree houses and caught tadpoles from the ditch. For many of these children 'nature' was still the same as 'being outside.' The experience of escaping from your parents watchful eyes, the hunger for adventure and the continuously changing playground made that many of these children cherish these experiences in their adult life. Scientists agree that early childhood nature experiences determine the way we look at nature in our adult lives (Tanner, 1980; Chawla, 1999). Today, those children have become parents themselves, their children are also playing, but times have changed. Research indicates that the current generation is growing up under different circumstances. More and more children prefer their computer above a 'natural' playground, they chose to play inside rather than outside (Kahn & Kellert, 2002, Louv 2005).

One of the reasons that today's children spend more time inside than their parents did, is because there is less nature to play in. Amongst others, this is caused by urbanization, a continuously withdrawing nature is simply less accessible for children to play in. This is just one of the reasons why children are losing their contact with nature, their natural connection with nature (Bouw & Karstens, 2004; Louv, 2005).

1.1 Nature for children

It is obvious that a disappearing nature is not good for nature itself, but it also has a negative effect on children. The fact that there is less nature available for children to play in causes children to disengage of nature. This increasing distance between children and nature can have negative effects on the ability to concentrate, lead to overweight and causes children to experience more stress (Louv, 2005). Other research indicates that there is a positive correlation between people spending more time in nature and the quality of their health, both physically and mentally (Van den Berg & Van den Berg, 2001). According to Louv (2005) this specifically applies for children. The positive influence of nature on the physical health of people is also clearly shown from research conducted by Ulrich (1984). His research shows

that patients assigned to hospital rooms with a view on a natural scene had a significant shorter recovery process and experienced less pain than patients without a window overlooking a natural scene. Taking the results of the above mentioned research into consideration, one can say that it is important for the wellbeing of children, and people in general, that they have the opportunity to interact with nature.

1.2 Children for Nature

Nature is not only important for the wellbeing of children, it also works the other way round. It is important for the existence of nature that children spend time in a natural environment, so they learn to respect and appreciate it. You cannot expect from children who never learned to appreciate the values of nature, that they will, more or less instinctively, do so in their adult lives, it needs a basis in the form of nature experiences (Tanner, 1980; Chawla 1999; Louv 2005). The decisions we are making today will affect the way nature looks like in twenty, thirty years from now. In other words we are responsible for the nature our children will inherit. The question is, what will happen when they inherit this nature, will they be concerned about the state of it and make the right decisions to preserve it? In this respect the fact that children are spending less time in nature is not a good development (Verboom, 2004). The widely accepted view that the nature experiences we gained during our childhood are essential in the way we value nature in our adult life (Tanner, 1980; Kahn, 2002; Louw, 2005, Ewert et al, 2005) suggests that there is reason to worry about future nature policy and therefore about the continued existence of nature as an entity as well.

1.3 Nature education

Based on the above mentioned we can say that it is in the interest of both the children and of nature that we encourage our children to get back in touch with nature. The most obvious way of doing this is by letting children play outside. Since this is not always encouraged by parents, who both have fulltime jobs and live their lives following a tight time schedule (Verboom, 2006; Louv, 2005), another way of doing this is by means of nature education. In

the Netherlands many different nature (environmental) education programmes exist. They all have in common that they want to bring nature back into the lives of children. Some of them focus on the transfer of knowledge (Veldwerk) whilst others focus more on the experience of being in nature (Bewaarde land, Natuurwijs). When this report uses the term nature education, it refers to those programs that bring children outside into nature. Hence the emphasis is more on the nature education programmes that have their focus on the experience of being in nature than on the transfer of knowledge. To provide some insights about the effects of nature education programs on children a short overview is provided that discusses the following aspects: health, cognitive effects, social effects and effects on nature awareness. This overview also serves as the backdrop for introducing the Forest School concept.

1.3.1 Health
When talking about health a distinction can be made between physical health and mental or emotional health. The physical dimension is more about the overall condition of the body while the emotional dimension it is about issues as fear, happiness, self-confidence etc.

Research conducted by van Waal et al (2008) shows that children who participated in a nature experience programme are significantly less scared, sad, angry or worried. It also had a positive effect on the self-esteem of the children. Other research indicates that children who experience difficulties in a 'normal' classroom environment, e.g. children with ADHD, function much better in an outdoor learning environment creating a feeling of 'happiness' through accomplishing learning tasks (Swarbrick et al, 2004; Ewert et al, 2005, O'Brien & Murray, 2007).

Research conducted in Sweden shows that children who spend time in a natural environment develop better motor skills, coordination and sense of balance compared to children who do not go out (Fjortoft & Sageie, 2000; O'Brien & Murray 2007). Having well developed motor skills in its turn prevents children from having accidents (Kunz, 1997 in Berg & Berg, 2001). Another clear indication that children who spend time in nature live a healthier life than children who do not is provided by Dutch research focusing on the differences between children (people) who live in a rural area and children living in an urban area. The children who live in a rural area are in most cases healthier than those who live in

urban areas. There is even a positive correlation between the presence of 'green' in urban areas and the health of people (de Vries et al, 2003; Maas et al, 2006; Mitchell & Popham, 2008; Sugiyama et al, 2008).

So all in all, research indicates that spending time in nature or even the presence of green has a positive effect on people's life.

1.3.2 Cognitive effects

The natural environment plays an important role in the development of cognitive skills with children. The possibilities to roam around and discover the area stimulates the natural ability to learn and therefore has a positive effect on the development of their cognitive skills (Wohlwill & Heff, 1984 in Gezondheidsraad, 2004; Cornell et al, 2001). Especially the element of play - constructive play and play in which fantasy is used - , performs an essential role in the development of the cognitive skills of children (Faber et al, 1998). It is especially the natural environment that stimulates the development of the cognitive skills and not so much the educational part.

1.3.2 Social effects

The emotional and social development of children is better developed with children who are able to play outside and explore their natural environment in an adventurous way than it is with children who do not (Gebhard, 1994 in Gezondheidsraad, 2004). The natural environment stimulates children to play with each other and therefore stimulates the development of the social skills. Once again, the same as with health, even the presence of urban green stimulates children to go out and play. In these 'green' areas children are also more often allowed to play without the supervision of their parents. This independence is positively correlated with the number of social contacts children have (Faber et al, 1998; Prezza et al, 2001). When children visit a natural area in a more educational setting these same positive effects occur (O'Brien & Murray, 2007).

1.3.3 Effects on nature awareness

For the development of nature awareness it is important that children spend time in nature since the basis for nature awareness is formed by nature experience itself (Tanner, 1980; Chawla, 1999; Born et al., 2001; Kahn & Kellert, 2002 in O'Brien & Murray, 2007). The more time children spend in nature the stronger their experiences are, the stronger their nature

awareness is. But nature awareness is also positively influenced by knowledge about nature, children who have been participating in nature education programmes, hence possess more knowledge and show a higher level of nature awareness than children who do not possess the same amount of nature knowledge (Bogner, 1998; O'Brien & Murray, 2007; Kievit & Koppen, 2008). And as previously mentioned, a high level of nature awareness can be important for the existence of nature.

Overall it is possible to conclude that spending time in a natural environment has a positive effect on the development of children. When this is combined with nature education which provides knowledge about that same natural environment a certain symbioses can occur where both people and nature can benefit from. And this is where the concept of Forest School comes in.

1.4 Forest School

Nature education programmes are capable of bringing children in contact with a natural environment, hence providing a healthier life and creating a higher level of nature awareness. The more and the longer children spend in a natural environment, the more profound the effects are. However many nature education programmes only embody a short stay in a natural environment. There is however one exception, Forest Schools (FS).

It is not completely clear where the FS concept comes from. One version is that it originates from the Danish kindergarten from where it was introduced in the United States where the first School Forest was founded in Wisconsin 1928 (Wikipedia). The US concept however was more focused on conservation education. Its founders intended to provide students hands-on experience with tree planting and forest management as well as an understanding of the interrelationships on natural resources. In order to achieve this, the forest schools purchased land on which reforestation programs were executed (Envedweb.madison).

The clearest origin of what we now know as FS is the 'Skogsmulle' that was introduced In 1957 by the Swede Goesta Frohm with the intention to promote learning about nature, water, mountains and pollution (Skogsmulle Foundation). With the use of the figure 'Skogsmulle' who represents the forests it was easy to appeal to children's fantasy and teach

them more about nature. Three other figures representing lakes, mountains and outer space have been introduced since so that children can experience all outdoor environments in a playful way (Skogsmulle Foundation). Based on this concept, Siw Linde and Susanne Drougge from the kindergarten Mulleborg on the island of Lidingoe, opened the first 'I Ur och Skur' school in 1985, which means 'Rain or Shine'. This can be regarded as the first FS in Sweden (Robertson, 2008). The basic principles behind this school are:

- "….children's need of knowledge, activities and togetherness is fulfilled by being in nature.

- Children learn how to be in nature and how to protect it…..

- Cooperation with the children's parents maintains quality outdoor activities.

- Nature is not indestructible. By improving knowledge about nature and understanding of the interrelationships in nature, this can change people's attitudes "(Robertson, 2008:5).

Since the opening of the first school there currently are 180 kindergartens and 18 primary schools in Sweden operating based on these same principles. It is not only in Sweden that this approach has been a success; the approach has also been established in other Scandinavian countries as well as in Germany, Japan, Latvia and Russia.

These principles fit well in the Scandinavian approach of teaching children which highlights the importance of children having contact with nature from an early age (Grahn, 1996). In Scandinavia children are formally not educated until the age of seven, until then they learn through (outdoor) play. Because there are many accessible forests, children often experience nature on a daily base (Robertson, 2008; Forest School Wales; Norfolk Schools).

The FS concept was introduced in the UK after child care students and their lecturers from Bridgwater College Somerset visited a FS in Denmark. It appeared that children who freely explored their natural environment grew in confidence and at the same time took responsibility for their own learning and showing a greater appreciation for the natural world (Swarbrick et al, 2004; Forest School Wales; Norfolk Schools). Back in England the lecturers considered how they could apply their experiences to the childcare provision in

their own Early Years Excellence Centre. From that moment the idea has grown and FS has spread through England.

The FS main focus is to encourage children to use their natural curiosity and motivation to learn. Therefore the centre of attention is with the whole child and not just the development of their academic skills. For this reason FS is mainly applied at primary schools but this does not have to be the case, it is also being used with teenagers who have emotional and behavioural difficulties (O'Brien & Murray, 2007).

The key aspects of FS are:

- The use of a woodland setting which is made suitable for this purpose, meaning it is fenced and has some form of shelter.
- A high ration of adults to pupils, only small groups (max 15 children) will go to the woodland setting at the same time. This way you don't put the children at undue risk of harm and it allows the practitioners to get to know the children and their individual learning styles.
- The principles of FS can be applied to the National curriculum.
- Focus is on the whole child and not just on the development of the academic skills.
- There has to be regular contact for the children over a significant period of time. This can be for instance once a week one morning for a period of 6 months and includes all year round and in all weathers (O'Brien & Murray, 2006).

Research by O'Brien & Murray (2007) indicates that FS has a wide range of positive effects on the development of children. These effects are especially positive on the social skills, language and communication skills, physical skills and it promotes the development of children's self-confidence.

This wide range of positive effects means that the FS concept is able to attract a wide variety of actors, each with their own motives and their own goals. It seems that this wide variety of actors provides both strength and weakness to the concept as will appear from the next section.

1.5. Problem statement

After its introduction in England FS has been spreading throughout the country. Over time, many FS leaders have been trained, Forest Schools and FS Training institutions have been established, i.e. FS has become an industry. Like with all new ideas or concepts such a development causes inevitable changes to the original concept. At the moment FS England is undergoing a crucial phase because it seems that the diversity within the concept has created a sense of urgency among several FS practitioners to establish a set of FS standards and quality assurances.

The announced cuts in the State budget by the English government are a second threat to FS and provide additional incentives to clarify the meaning and value of FS and secure it for the future. This reasoning applies since most Forest schools depend on external funding, most of which is provided by the Forestry Commission which is currently facing severe budget cuts. So especially when subsidies are scarce, it is important that the government has a clear understanding what FS stands for and what it can mean for the English society.

Thus, on the one hand, FS has been able to attract a wide variety of actors. On the other hand, this diversity has also has created a lot of diversity within the concept and the concomitant need to establish standards and safeguards.

This research is conducted because the FS concept can play an important role in (re)establishing the contact between children and nature. Especially since the concept does not deliberately seek to establish the child-nature contact, but rather uses it as an instrument for the development of its participants, it might succeed where nature education programmes seem to fail.

For this to happen it is important that there is a clear understanding about the content of the concept. Hopefully this research will contribute in this clarification by looking for similarities and differences amongst the FS practitioners (FS actors) and translate these to FS frames. And, by doing so also contributes in the survival and effectiveness of the FS concept enabling future research to the positive long term effects of regular contact between children and nature.

1.6 Structure of thesis

The first chapter provides an introduction to the research as well as the problem statement.

The second chapter discusses the theoretical background of the research. It will first mention the different perspectives within the theory of frame providing some insight in the process of thought that has preceded this research. This chapter concludes with a description of the theory of collective action frames in the field of social movement research.

Chapter three details the methods through which the research data was collected. Furthermore it gives a short description of the FS practitioners who participated in the research.

Chapter four provides empirical information about the development of the FS concept and its content.

Chapter five presents the identified frames by describing in detail the FS actors which it includes. Besides the reason why an actor fits in a particular frame, this chapter also describes the way they relate within the frame and between the frames. The second part addresses the FS community and how it behaves as such. The introduction of a Master Frame forms the conclusion of this chapter and at the same time the necessary base for chapter 6.

Based on the variable features of Collective Action Frames, chapter six assesses the extent to which the FS Master Frame functions as a Master Frame in the context of Social Movements. Furthermore this chapter discusses these results within the broader context of previous research enabling it also to be read as a discussion.

Finally, chapter 7 answers the research questions and encompasses recommendations and a short reflection on the research.

2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter discusses the theoretical background of this research. First, section 2.1 serves as an introduction to the theory of frame which will be introduced in section 2.2. This section provides an overview in which different approaches to framing are mentioned and sets forth the considerations made. Finally section 2.3 describes the theory of collective action frames in the field of social movement research and this chapter is concluded with section 2.4 in which the research objectives and research questions are mentioned.

2.1 Interpreting the World

2.1.1 Exogenic and Endogenic perspective

In this research frames are used as a tool to interpret the world, or in this case the FS part of that world. In this context it is good to first take one step back and discuss the different perception that exist in the world and how perception are communicated. In this context it is possible to make two distinctions; there is a *natural world* and *a human world* (Stone, 1989). In the natural world things are what they are and there is no logic involved in the events. For instance atmospheric precipitation that falls when temperatures are above freezing, falls as rain and when it freezes it falls as snow. It is clear that there is no intention behind such an occurrence. In a more epistemological perspective this point of view is also called the *exogenic* perspective. Thinkers like Locke, Hume and Mills belong to this group. They believe that the source of all knowledge can be traced to the events in the real world and that knowledge is a '*pawn*' to the natural world (Gergen, 1985).

On the other hand, in a human world the real world is seen through the eyes of humans, and they interpret or construct that natural world in such a way that it fits into their '*own*' world. A good example in this respect is a glass that is filled half with water. For one person this glass is half *full*, while somebody else will say the glass is half *empty*. Again, when we place this in the epistemological perspective this point of view is called the *endogenic* perspective. Thinkers who belong to this group are philosophers such as Spinoza, Kant and Nietzsche. They believe that humans have the inherent tendencies to process information and that it is this tendency that is of paramount importance in the production of knowledge (Gergen, 1985). The endogenic perspective will function as a basis in this research.

A similar distinction is made by Stone (1989) in her article about causal stories she emphasizes the difference between a natural and a social world, but she uses causality to clarify the difference. In the natural world there is no wilful intention behind the events, at least no *human* wilful intention. Whereas in the social world the events are considered to be the result of the human will, making the social world the realm of intent and control. So in a social world causality can only be understood when you can identify ones motives or intentions and link those to the actions (Stone, 1989).

The above described examples show that it is possible to have different views on one subject. There are however constant factors in the way a subject can be interpreted. The first is very obvious but nevertheless important; interpretation is always done by people. Since no two people are exactly the same this is what *creates* the different points of view. If all people were the same we would all think alike, and if there were no people out there at all (or other intelligent organisms) there is just simply nothing to think about. This leads to the second factor and that is language. Without language it would be difficult to know each other's point of view. This is illustrated by the above mentioned research of Stone (1989) in which she developed a theory of problem definition in the context of policy agenda's. She concludes that problems only exist because people regard something or some situation as problematic. This way problems are defined as problems through the *"portrayal of causal stories"* (Stone, 1989:299). With the stories people tell something is taken out of the realm of accident, the natural world, and taken into the realm of human control, the social world. This shows that besides the different views people can have, there are also different stories to be told and these stories are told with the use of language. So by listening we can understand what we are *saying* but this does not mean that we always *understand* what is said. One way of finding out what is actually said is by conducting a discourse analysis.

2.1.2 Discourse

In general, discourse analysis can be regarded as 'language in use'. By looking at language as an abstract system one tries to analyse how language is used in a specific context, what is said and what is the meaning of what is said. However, discourse analysis has different meanings in different places. In everyday life discourse can be seen as a synonym for discussion, but from a social scientific point of view discussion is the object of analysis through which different social backgrounds and social effects of a particular discussion or

statement can be identified. In other words an analysis can be performed by focussing on the context of the statement, what is said and to who it is said, i.e. the focus is on the social practices in which the statement is produced. Or the focus of the analysis is on the content of the statement, this way one is interested in the ideas or concepts used by the actors involved (Hajer, 1995).

Van den Brink (2009) describes three different traditions that can be distinguished within the discourse theory. In the first tradition discourse theory is concerned with the analysis of language in use. For example with a conversation analysis or a content analysis a combination of linguistic expressions and different styles are used to produce certain representation of reality (van Dijk, 1977; Brink, 2009). The second tradition extends the concept of discourse by including a wider set of social practices and phenomena and not restricting it to spoken and written language only (Brink, 2009). In the third tradition all social phenomena are included. This means that both discursive and non-discursive practices and elements are used. It is Laclau and Mouffe (1985) who argued that non-discursive phenomena such as technology and institutions are eventually created through discourses. In other words they say that discourse and practice are intertwined.

There is a general assumption that our social world is created by narratives based on linguistic conventions which enable us to make sense of the world and interact with other people. In other words a discourse is a particular way of talking and understanding the world by which "social reality is produced and made real" (van den Brink, 2009:21). This implies that one way or the other theory of discourse is used in social research. As in this research discourse is used to look for different motives and views on FS. or in the words of Hajer & Versteeg (2005:175) to look for:"*an ensemble of ideas, (...) and categories..*" to give meaning to the FS.

2.2 Introducing Frame theory

The concept of frame has been used by many scholars in a broad range of disciplines. These include public policy studies (Rein & Schön, 1977; Rein & Schön, 1996; Laws & Rein, 2003), linguistics and discourse analysis (Van Dijk, 1977; Tannen, 1993), social movement research (Gamson et al, 1982; Steinberg 1998; Benford & Snow, 2000), conflict and negotiation research (Lewicki et al, 2003; Dewulf et al, 2009), communication and media studies (Scheufele, 1999; Entman, 2004; van Gorp, 2007). As a result, the concept of frame (and framing) has become very diverse, so diverse that it is helpful to provide a short overview. However, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to elaborate on all different perspectives that exist.

2.2.1 Interaction and Cognitive approaches

From a historical point of view it is possible to distinguish two main traditions that form the origin of the concept of framing; the cognitive tradition and the interactive tradition (Dewulf et al, 2009). The interactive tradition is rooted in the field of anthropology with the work of Bateson (1954). He argued that every form of communication, verbal or nonverbal, can be understood with a reference to a meta-communicative message. With this message it is possible to understand an ongoing interaction, i.e. it provides a particular *frame* in which the interaction takes place. It is the ambiguity of people that can hinder a correct interpretation of the interaction and therefore frames can function as a tool that enable us to make the right interpretation. It was the sociologist Goffman (1974) who introduced this line of thought, based on the insights of Bateson, that individuals perceive events in terms of certain *frameworks* that enable us to make a distinction between different sorts of reality. Frames help us to make sense out of events and therefore serve as a guide for action based on experience. The process of framing is strongly connected with or influenced by how individuals think about norms, values, objectives, interests, convictions and knowledge at a certain moment in time (Aarts & van Woerkum, 2006).This tradition can be seen as the interaction approach to framing.

The second tradition has its roots more in the field of cognitive psychology with Bartlett*'s* (1932) schema theory of memory. In his theory, he approaches frames as mental structures that help us to interpret new information and experiences by placing them into already

existing schemas, or frames about reality. This tradition is explicitly formulated within the field of artificial intelligence by Minsky (1975:211): "*When one encounters a new situation (or makes a substantial change in one's view of the present problem), one selects from memory a structure called a 'frame'. This structure is a remembered framework to be adapted to fit reality by changing details as necessary.*" This tradition can be seen as the cognitive approach to framing.

An important difference between the two approaches is that the interactional approach sees frames/framing as the "*dynamic enactment and shaping of meanings in ongoing interactions*" (Dewulf et al, 2009:162), whereas the cognitive approach sees frames as "*representations stored in memory*" (Dewulf et al, 2009:162). Or in other words; in the cognitive approach meaning is located "*between the ears*" and in the interactional approach meaning is *between "the noses"* (Dewulf et al, 2009:162: Gergen, 1996).

Since this research has its main focus on determining the frames that are in use by different actors involved with FS, the identification of the frames is largely conducted in line with the cognitive approach. The research is conducted under the assumption that the existing frames within FS are *created* by an already available repertoire of frames. In this perspective it should be noted that the cognitive representations, from which the actual frames are eventually originated, are not considered to be static, but are considered to be dynamic, in line with Bartlett (1932) and Tannen & Wallat (1987). The reasoning behind this is that since FS only exist for a decade in the UK, the FS frames that are currently in use will have to be based on experiences/frames/knowledge from *before* the introduction of FS in the England. This implies that the cognitive representations have to be regarded as dynamic otherwise FS frames would simply not exist.

On the other hand, the interaction approach is also applicable since, as previously said, the FS concept is clearly developing. This development is likely to happen under the influence of interactions between individuals and actors with different perspectives involved with FS. A frame analysis based on this approach would thus predominantly be based on analysing observations of these interactions. However, the assumption in this research is that the results of an interaction analysis will be better when after the identification of the main frames that are in use. And, in a sense both approaches are intertwined in such a way that

mental structures are shaped through interaction, with the use of language (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005), which in turn affects the interaction. This implies that by focussing on the cognitive approach one automatically includes the interaction approach. The next section will elaborate on different ways of looking at frames to further clarify how frames will be applied.

2.2.2 Frame images

In their article on how to study and cope with public policy controversies Rein and Schön (1996) described four different ways of looking at frames. It is important to realise that these distinctions should not be seen as competing conceptions but are more mutually compatible images. According to both authors a frame can be seen as:

1. an inner structure

2. a boundary that sets off phenomena from their context

3. a cognitive schema of interpretation

4. a generic prescriptive story.

The following section will briefly elaborate about each of these types.

In their first image a frame functions as an underlying structure 'which is sufficiently strong and stable to support an edifice'. In this approach the idea of structure implies a sense of regularity. But it creates at the same time a lack of adaptability to events that occur over time. The first image is most closely related to the common insight on which they have based their four different ways of looking at the frame which is: "*there is a less visible foundation – an "assumptional basis"– that lies beneath the more visible surface of language or behaviour, determining its boundaries and giving it coherence*" (Rein & Schön, 1996:88). It fits into the cognitive approach in which Bartlett's (1932) schema's can be compared with the underlying structure which help us to interpret perceive incoming information.

The second image approaches a frame as *the frame of a picture.* In this context it determines the boundaries of what to focus on and what not to focus on. By taking a snapshot of time it captures the stream of events of that moment. A segment of those events is subsequently framed and analysed (Goffman, 1974 in Rein & Schön, 1996). This way a frame enables us to make a distinction between different sorts of reality, serving as a guide for action, which is in line with the interaction approach.

The third image approaches a frame as a cognitive schema of interpretation. In this perspective frames function in such a way that they organise experiences and events in a meaningful way and therefore guide action (Snow et al, 1986 in Rein & Schön, 1996). This image is also closely related to Bartlett's ideas and can be seen as the cognitive approach to framing.

The fourth image treats frames as 'strong generic narratives that guide both analysis and action in practical situations' (Rein & Schön, 1996). This approach considers frames as story lines that underlie the problem stetting stories found in any policy controversy. It is especially the storylines that give strength to this approach, they make the frame more capable of adjusting to new events.

The third image is most applicable in the way the identified FS frames function in this research. This will be explained using the following quote: "*By rendering events or occurrences meaningful, frames function to organize experiences and guide action*" (Snow et al, 1986 in Rein & Schön, 1996:89). In the context of this research this quote is translated to: "By rendering the motives and the way FS actors put the FS concept into practice, in a meaningful way, the identified FS frames contribute in the clarification of the FS concept and guide action for future development." This way frames enable an inventory of the motives and practices shared by FS actors.

Furthermore Rein & Schön (1996) state that regardless of how you look at frames, they are not self-evident. So if you want to study them, they must be constructed. This implies that you need some sort of evidence from which this construction can occur. And in this process of constructing a frame you "*encounter inherent possibilities for ambiguity, because the same beliefs and meanings can be consistent with different courses of action and attitudes towards frames*" (Rein & Schön, 1996:90). They make two crucial distinctions in the evidence from which frames can be constructed. The first distinction puts frames in the realm of debate, also called *rhetorical frames*. The second distinction puts frames in the pattern of actions undertaken by practitioners, also called *action frames* (Rein & Schön, 1996). Rhetorical frames are constructed from relevant texts. Here the emphasis is on what gives the text its appearance or persuasiveness. In answering such a question the evidence can be found in analysing the actual language in the text. In contrast, action frames are constructed

from the patterns of actions in the practice of practitioners. *"The evidence for the construction of an action frame is the data of action observed"* (Rein & Schön, 1996). Based on this distinction, the emphasis of this research will be more on the action frame and not on the rhetorical frame.

2.3 Collective Action Frames

Collective action frames find their roots in the 1980s when a school of thought developed from political sociology and social psychology focused their attention on framing within social movements (Snow at all, 1986; Gamson, 1992).

For a long time scholars considered Social Movement Organisations (SMO) to be carriers of ideas and meanings that grew automatically under the influence of events and existing ideologies (Benford & Snow, 2000). They largely ignored ideologies to be relevant in the development of SMOs (Benford & Sow, 1992). In general, ideology is described as a set of coherent, sustainable beliefs, which are strong enough to affect a person's daily activities (Oliver & Johnston, 2000). As illustrated by Diani's (1992) definition of an SMO, ideologies do play a role in the development of SMOs. He describes SMOs as networks based on a common believe or collective identity, consisting of groups of individuals and/or organisations engaged in political or cultural conflict. This shows ideologies both form the basis for the network to exist as well as for the political or cultural conflict. In this context ideologies resemble frames because they help to identify occurrences and guide action. But they differ from frames in the sense that ideologies are fairly broad sets of believes whereas frames rather amplify existing ideologies or components of them and consequently condensing aspects of the world out there (Snow & Benford, 1988; Benford & Snow, 2000). According to Benford and Snow (2000) SMOs are signifying agents who are actively engaged in selecting and shaping ideas and meanings to create support or demobilise antagonists. The construction of meaning is referred to as framing and the resultant product as a Collective Action Frame (CAF) (Snow et al, 1986). This way CAFs are *"action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organisation"* (Benford & Snow, 2000:614). They differ from Goffman's (1974) schemata of interpretation because they are not merely a selection of individual

perceptions, individual frameworks, but also the outcome of deliberate production of shared meaning (Gamson, 1992).

2.3.1 Core tasks of Collective Action Frames

Generally SMOs seek to alter a situation that is unjust or unacceptable with the use of a campaign (Dill & Aminzade, 2007). In this campaign SMOs try to affect interpretations among potential adherents by creating meaning to the situation in the sense that it becomes problematic to them as well. The underlying thought is that humans act based upon the meaning things have for them (Blumer, 1969 in Benford, 1997). Whether the campaign, and the CAF in it, will succeed is contingent upon its ability to attend to the problem of 'consensus mobilization' and 'action mobilization' (Klandermans, 1984). In this respect it is important that a CAF contains a well-defined (set of) problem(s), make attributions to who or what to blame, articulate solutions and convince bystanders to act in concert to affect change. Snow & Benford (1988) refer to this as the core tasks of CAFs; (1) diagnostic framing, (2) prognostic framing, (3) motivational framing which will be discussed in the following section.

Diagnostic framing

Diagnostic framing involves the identification of a problem and attribution of blame (Snow & Benford, 1988). Diagnostic framing is considered to be a core task since an SMO owes its existence to the presence of the problem. After all without a problem there is nothing that needs to be changed, nothing to fight for, no reason for a SMO to call for action. Diagnostic framing is often associated of what Gamson (1992) refers to as injustice frames. This is not surprising since injustice frames are a commonplace across various SMOs (Johnson 1997, Meyer 1995, Weed 1997). However, according to Benford & Snow (2000) a CAF does not need to include an injustice element. It is more important that the problem draws borders between what is wrong and what is right and that it enables the SMO to distinguish itself from other SMOs.

Furthermore diagnostic framing involves attribution of blame. This is a crucial component since SMOs cannot alter a problematic situation by merely promulgating its existence. With the identification of the source of the problem a SMO can direct its action. In addition it serves to further delineate the boundary between good and wrong. Consensus with respect

to identifying the problem is often no subject to discussion, however, attributional consensus can be more problematic (Snow & Benford, 1988; Benford & Snow, 2000). This is mainly due to the fact that one problem often includes a variety of causes, and by articulating the wrong cause the frame can lose its resonance.

Prognostic framing

While diagnostic framing identifies the problem and attributes blame, prognostic framing involves the articulation of the suggested solution(s) and the strategy to reach a certain goal proposed (Benford & Snow, 2000). This implies that identifying the problem affects the number of possible solutions (Benford 1987, Nepstad, 1997). In other words, "diagnostic framing" affects "prognostic framing" and not vice versa. Because different SMOs can frame the same problem prognostic framing typically includes the refutation of solutions advocated by opponents and at the same time justifying its own solutions (Benford 1987). This way prognostic framing is one of the primary ways for SMOs to create distinctions and promote their unique identities (Haines, 1996; Benford & Snow, 2000).

Motivational framing

With motivational framing, SMOs provide the rationale for engaging in collective action (Benford & Snow, 2000). To some extent this is also achieved with prognostic framing, after all, by proposing a solution a SMO does not only imply the possibility for an action to occur, it also conveys the intention to engage in action (Vicari, 2010). This way the prognostic plan for action affects or determines the possibilities with motivational framing.

Motivational framing converts the prognosis and diagnosis into vocabularies that provide adherents with compelling accounts for engaging in action (Benford & Snow, 2000). This way it conveys a sense of agency, *"the possibility for an action to occur and confute a normalized situation"* (Vicari, 2010:507). It removes the feeling of collective helplessness that prohibits collective action (Gamson, 1995; Vicari, 2010). Research by Benford (1993) shows that vocabularies can also work contradictory rather than a complementary way.

Arguably, FS actors do not resemble active SMOs in the sense that they do not necessarily attempt to move people from the balcony to the barricades. However, there are also some similarities related to ideology. Actors involved with FS appear to do so because they believe the concept provides something extra, e.g. compared to the 'normal' educational system or

the 'normal' way of nature protection. They believe in the concept and are likely to have strong ideas about how the concept should be applied and put into practice.

The theory of Collective Action Frames, and especially the variable features of CAFs that will be discussed in the next section, will be used to assess the identified FS Master Frame. The theory of Collective Action Frames will only be applied to the Master Frame since the purpose of this Master Frame is more in line with the way a SMO uses a CAF. The FS frames associated with the individual FS actors will be identified with the more general theory of frame as discussed in the first two section.

2.3.2 Variable features

In addition to the core tasks of CAFs, social movements scholars have identified variable features. Whereas core tasks indicate the purpose of a CAF, the variable features can be used to indicate the difference between CAFs. This characteristic not only enables variable features to be used in the comparison of CAFs, it also makes them suitable to see if a frame can function as a Master Frame (MF). In this research they will be applied to assess the identified FS MF. This section will briefly discuss the variable features and at the same time indicate how they relate to the MF. By doing so it not only provides understanding in the way the variable features will be applied to assess the FS MF, but also helps to understand the concept MF.

Problem identification and Locus of attribution

The most obvious way in which CAFs vary from each other is in terms of the problems and corresponding attribution of blame addressed (Benford & Snow, 2000). In this context a problem can be SMO specific in such a way that it is too closely connected to a particular SMO that it is of no use for other SMOs. Such a frame will most likely function as an "*organisational frame*" (Evans, 1997:454). In this respect Gerhards & Rucht (1992:580) hypothesize that "the larger the range of problems covered by a frame, the larger the range of social groups that can be addressed with the frame and the greater the mobilization capacity of the frame." This way a CAF creates points of leverage for other SMOs focussing on one or more of these problems. However, the sheer number of problems alone does not create a high mobilizing capacity. On the contrary, it is more likely to cause an overextension of the frame (Snow & Benford, 1988; Gerhards & Rucht, 1992). Only when the range and

number of problems can be plausibly connected to each other, a CAF can function as a MF (Gerhards & Rucht, 1992). Furthermore a CAF increases its MF potency if it can also identify the causes of the problems addressed, especially when these causes can be linked to concrete persons (Gerhards & Rucht, 1992).

Flexibility and Inclusivity

CAFs can also vary in the way they are flexible and/or inclusive in terms of the number of themes or ideas they incorporate (Benford & Snow, 2000). This suggests that the more flexible and inclusive a CAF is, the more likely it is to become a MF (Benford & Snow, 2000). This is clearly illustrated by Noonan (1995) in her study of the mobilisation of woman against the state in Chili. It shows that the original leftist MF was too narrow or too "*restricted*" to provide room for feminism. It was only when the leftist MF was crushed and replaced with a more "*elaborated*" and inclusive "return to democracy" MF that it could accommodate feminism (Noonan, 1995:106). Hence, for a frame to function as a MF it has to be sufficiently 'broad' in the way that it provides room for SMOs and flexible in how it interprets the existing themes.

Noonan (1995) also assumes that the characteristics of a MF not only serve as an inspiration for SMOs but also shape the way in which CAFs within the MF compete for dominance. With competition being more likely and intense under a restricted MF since there is not enough room for different SMOs to participate. Whereas a more elaborated MF allows room for different interests to be expressed making competition less likely to occur.

Interpretive scope and Influence

The scope of a CAF is in most cases limited to the interest of a particular group or a specific (set) of problem(s) (Benford & Snow, 2000). This implies that the scope is affected by the problem identification in such a way that a large range of problems provides a broad scope whereas a small range of problems provides a narrow scope. Subsequently a CAF with a broad scope will be more influential compared to a CAF with a narrow scope and therefore the first is more likely to function as a MF.

Besides the problem identification and the locus of attribution, it is also the level of flexibility and inclusivity which affects the scope and influence of a frame. According to Benford & Snow (2000:619) *"(…) master frames may indeed vary in terms of how inclusive and flexible*

they are, and thus in their interpretive scope, (…)". This implies that the more flexible and inclusive a frame, the broader its scope and influence and the more likely it is to function as a MF.

Since it is apparent that the scope and influence of a frame are directly affected by the problem identification, locus of attribution, flexibility and inclusivity of a frame, scope an influence will not be used to assess the identified FS MF.

Resonance

The concept of resonance deals with the question why some frames seem to be more effective, resonate, than others. In other words, what is the effectiveness in terms of reaching the target group or certain pre-set goals (Snow & Benford, 1988). The degree of resonance is determined by two sets of factors, the credibility of the frame and its relative salience (Benford & Snow, 2000). The credibility of a frame depends on: 1) *"frame consistency"*, (2) *"emperical credibility"*, (3) *"crediblity of the frame makers"* (Benford & Snow, 2000:620). Whereas salience depends on: (1) "centrality", (2) *"experiental commensurability"*, (3) *"narrative fidelity"* (Benford & Snow, 2000:621). All will be discussed below.

Credibility

The frame consistency refers to the coherence between the *"believes, claims and actions"* articulated in a CAF (Benford & Snow, 2000: 620). This implies that the greater and more transparent contradictions within collective action frame are, the less resonant that frame is and the more problematic it is to mobilise bystander support. Such a frame can be qualified as inconsistent (Benford & Snow, 2000).

The empirical credibility refers to the fit between the claims made in a frame and the events in the world. I.e. there has to be fit between the frame and the event that is being put forward by the frame (Snow & Benford, 1988). The empirical credibility does not depend on whether the claims are valid, it rather depends on whether they can or will be regarded as valid (Gamson, 1992b). In this respect the presentation of the evidence is more important than the factual truth. A good example of this is illustrated by the case of the 'Heavens Gate', whose members committed mass suicide because they believed there was a spacecraft hovering behind a comet that would bring them to heaven (Maniscalco, 1997).

Whenever one speaks about the core tasks of CAFs, the variable features or its mobilising powers, it is important to realise that it is not the frame itself but the people behind the frame, "*the human agency*", that do the framing (Benford, 1997:418). In this respect it is also people, activists or the speaker that communicate the frame to the world. A speaker that is regarded as more credible is also generally more persuasive, making the claims more plausible and resonant, eventually even making a frame more likely to function as a MF (Aronson & Golden, 1962; McGuire, 1985; Benford, 1987).

Salience

Centrality largely depends on how strong the values and believes associated with a CAF are to those who are tried to be reached. Research indicates that there exists a certain hierarchy among the values and believes of people. And that the more important the values and believes are, the more central they are in a person's daily life (Rokeach, 1973). So the more central the espoused believe of the SMO are to their target group, the greater the possibility of mobilisation and the more likely a frame will function as a MF (Benford & Snow, 2000).

Furthermore a frame's salience is affected by experiential commensurability. Meaning a frame will resonate when it matches the everyday experiences of its target group. Therefore, experiential commensurable claims are more salient and increase the probability of mobilization (Benford & Snow, 2000).

Finally it is the narrative fidelity that appears to have an impact on the frame's resonance. I.e. to what extent do the claims match the target group's cultural narrations (Snow & Benford, 1988; Benford & Snow, 2000). The importance of narrative fidelity, or cultural resonance is illustrated by the way Swart (1995:465) defines a MF as: "*general symbolic frames that are culturally resonant to their historical milieu.*" This suggests that a non-culturally resonant frame will not function as a MF. This argument is confirmed by Berbier (1998) who concluded that the "*New racist white separatist movement*" had to change their MF from "*hate*" and "*destruction*" to "*preservation*" and "*love*" to align it with the "*contemporary American culture*" (Berbier, 1998:437).

The variable features problem identification, locus of attribution, flexibility and inclusivity have been applied in the interviews because it was possible for the respondents, being FS actors, to provide useful information on these feature making them suitable for assessing

the identified FS MF. However, the concept of resonance has not been applied in the interviews since it is difficult for FS actors to provide useful information on this matter. To gather information on this account requires respondents that can be regarded as 'FS consumers', not being FS actors who are actively engaged with FS. Since this did not happen, the concept of resonance is only used to look at the implications of the findings for the development of the FS concept.

2.4 Research Objective and Research Questions

2.4.1 Research Objective

For the survival of the FS concept it is important there is a clear understanding about the content but also about the different ways in which it is put into practice. This study aims to contribute in this clarification by identifying the various frames that exists among the FS actors. And subsequently, the results will hopefully be useful in the decision making for the future of the FS concept.

2.4.2 Research Questions

These research objectives will be attained with the use of the following research questions. In addition, with each research question the applied theory is mentioned as well as where the answer can be found.

1. What are the frames of Forest School England and what are their differences about?

For this question the theory of frame is used from an endogenic perspective. Meaning a frame is approached as a cognitive schema of interpretation. In this perspective frames function in such a way that they organise experiences and events in a meaningful way and therefore guide action (cognitive approach). This way frames enable an inventory of the motives and practices shared by FS actors

The answer to this question is provided in section 5.3, 5.4 and 7.1.1.

2. How do the frames relate and what are the similarities?

For this question the theory is applied in the same manner as with the first research question.

The answer is provided in section 4.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6.

3. What would a potential Forest School Master frame look like?

For this question the same theory is applied as with the previous two research question. In addition the theory on CAF is used to identify and subsequently assess a potential MF. For the identification of the FS MF the core tasks of a CAF, diagnostic framing, prognostic framing and motivational framing are used together with the variable features problem identification, locus of attribution, flexibility and inclusivity.

The answer to this third question is provided in section 5.6, 6.2 and 7.1.3.

4. What are the implications of the findings for the development of the concept of Forest School?

The answer to this question is primarily based on the CAF theory, but with a clear emphasis on the variable feature resonance.

The answer to this question is discussed in section 7.2.

3. Methods

This chapter describes which methods are used and how they are used to obtain an answer to the research questions. This research consists two components, a literature research and an empirical research. Section 3.1 provides insight in how and why the literature research is conducted and were it is applied. Section 3.2 does the same but for the empirical research. Finally section 3.3 provides a description of the respondents which serves as background information.

3.1 Literature Component

The literature research has served two main functions: (1) gathering background information on the FS concept in England, (2) establishing the theoretical framework.

(1) gathering background information on the FS concept England

The literature used for this component of the research mainly consists of information obtained through the websites of FS actors and additional documents provided by the respondents. Since the scientific literature concerning FS is primarily focussed on the effects of FS, providing little information about the content, it could only be occasionally used.

This information is used as background information on the origin of the FS concept and as such applied in chapter 1, 3 and 4. Furthermore it has been used to identify existing themes among the FS actors prior to the interviews and is used in formulating the interview questions (annex 1) and is applied in chapter 5.

(2) establishing the theoretical framework

For the theoretical framework literature from different scientific perspectives on frame and framing were consulted. For this purpose the Wageningen University library and scientific research engines such as Scopus or Science Direct have been primarily used. This information is also be used in the formulation of the interview questions and is applied in chapter 2, 6 and 7.

3.2 Empirical Component

The empirical research is primarily conducted by means of semi-structured interviews and the analysis of the results. This method is chosen for a number of reasons. The main reason is that semi-structured interviews are a qualitative research method well suited to clarify complex situation in which different actors interact (Baarda et al, 2000), as such is the case with FS. Furthermore semi-structured interviews are a good method in situations in which sensitive information is asked (Baarda et al, 2000). The preliminary research and the contact with Liz O'Brien showed that this was the case with FS. In this respect an added value of semi-structured interviews is that the respondent can be asked to clarify what they have said and to probe for more information (Gray, 2006). Another reason is that semi-interviews are a good research method in situation where you are likely to encounter respondents who enjoy talking about the research subject (Gray, 2006). l Since it was plausible that many actors involved with FS do so from an ideological perspective, it was assumed that they would enjoy talking about, therefore providing detailed information. Finally interviews provide the possibility to create a comfortable setting for both the interviewer and the respondent which creates the right atmosphere for an open discussion (Kumar, 2005).

3.2.1 Selection of respondents

For the selection of respondents a non-random sampling design has been used (Kumar, 2005). This method was selected because there was (is) no central body representing the entire FS community, nor was there another source, which could provide a list containing all registered FS actors. Therefore it was impossible to make a random selection.

The sampling design consisted of two phases. First a selection of FS actors was made based on the websites and literature found on the internet. This list was complemented with information provided by Liz O'Brien. Subsequently the selected actors were contacted through email from the Netherlands. The second phase would be based on the snowball sampling method, i.e. making use of the respondents' network to find other respondents (Kumar, 2005). However, one of the contacted FS actors turned out to be the Communication officer of the Institute of Outdoor Learning FS Special Interest Group and offered to send an invitation (through email) to all members. This resulted in a large

response of FS actors willing to participate. From these responses a selection was made, aiming for the highest level of diversity.

To keep the expenses within the limited budget the majority of the respondents were located in the South-East of England, not too far away from the location the researcher was based. This area was also selected because there had been a lot of FS activity according to Liz O'Brien.

3.2.2 Conducting the Interviews

In total 13 semi-structured interviews were conducted, all on a location chosen by the respondents. In all cases this was where the respondents worked or lived accept for the interview with Louise Ambrose which was conducted at Alice Holt. This means all conversations took place in a face to face situation.

The interviews took approximately between 25 minutes to 1.5 hours depending on the respondent. On 7 occasions it was also possible to have a look at the FS site used. Due to illness the interview with the head of Camelsdale Primary School did not take place. As an alternative it was possible to attend a FS session, during which questions were asked and notes were taken. This is not been accounted as an interview but the gathered data is used.

Using the snowball method in England has only resulted in one new respondent willing to participate in the research, despite several attempts in reaching other interesting FS actors. A possible reason for this can be found in the bad weather conditions. Severe snowfall not only made it difficult to reach respondents in time, in two occasions it also caused an invitation to be turned down.

3.2.3 Data analysis

With permission of the respondents all interviews were audio-taped and subsequently transcribed. For the analysis sections of the transcript have been labelled based on the information it contained. For this purpose the interview questions had already been roughly divided in categories matching the research questions. For example, with the identification of FS frames, sections have been labelled corresponding the existing theme which were identified in the literature research (see 5.1). And for assessing the identified FS MF sections were labelled corresponding to the variable features of CAFs such as flexibility and problem identification.

For the analysis the interviewed FS actors have been divided into two categories, respondents and informants. Respondents are those FS actors that represent a FS organisation and as such can be 'attached' to an identified FS frame. Examples are the Sussex Wildlife Trust and the Bishops Wood Centre. Informants are FS actors who do not represent a FS organisation and as such cannot be attached to a FS frame. Examples are Sara Knight as a scientific researcher and Louise Ambrose as a communication officer of the FS Special Interest Group. An overview on this account can be found in Annex 2. This distinction is only relevant for the identification and description of the FS frames in chapter 5.

The data provided by the interviews is applied in chapter 4 and 5 with respect to general information about FS and the identified FS frames and FS MF. And in chapter 6 and 7 with respect to the assessment of the identified FS MF and the future development of FS.

3.3 Forest School respondents

This section will provide a brief description of some of the FS actors labelled as respondents in section 3.2.3. The purpose of this section is to increase the readability of section 5.2 and 5.3 by providing background information on the organisations the respondents represent. Therefore this section only addresses those respondents with *a lot* of relevant background information, the background information from the other respondents is included in chapter 5 without affecting the readability. For the same reason informants are not described.

One FS actor requires further explanation, this is Liz Magraw who works as a senior FS practitioner at Hind Leys Pre-school. She turned out to be well informed about the overall FS situation and as such she did not provide information from a Hind Leys Pre-school perspective but from a more general FS perspective. For this reason she has been regarded as an informant.

Bishops Wood Centre

The Bishops Wood Centre is a partnership between the National Grid (large energy company), Worcestershire County Council and Worcester College of Technology and as such part of the National Grid's Environmental Education Centre Network. It is their mission to

educate people of all ages for a sustainable future (Bishops Wood Centre). For this reason it is regarded an environmental organisation.

The Bishops Wood Centre has been involved in supporting and leading FS sessions from early years through late teens for the past 12 years. Apart from providing FS sessions they also provide FS training courses which are accredited by the Open College Network (see 4.1).

Sussex Wildlife Trust

Sussex Wildlife Trust is a charity that is supported by members to conserve the Sussex natural landscape and wildlife. This is achieved through environmental education, working with landowners, businesses and local communities. In this research it is regarded a nature conservation organisation.

With FS sessions Sussex Wildlife Trust offers young people and adults an opportunity to appreciate and enjoy their local woodlands. With FS they aim to nurture an understanding and respect for natural places.

When the interview with Sussex Wildlife Trust was conducted they were only involved in providing FS sessions. However, they now also provide OCN accredited FS training sessions.

Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission is the Government Department responsible for "*protecting, expanding and promoting the sustainable management of woodlands and increasing their value to society and the environment*" (Forestry Commission).

After WWI it became clear that England depended greatly on the import for its demand on wood. The Forestry commission was founded to create a strategic resource of timber. This is the reason why, to this day, expanding and promoting the use of woodland is still highly visible in its mission statement.

The Forestry Commission is especially involved with FS as a funding actor. For this reason it initiated the establishment of the Forest Education Initiative (FEI) which now functions together with 8 partners as a national organisation. The FEI aims to "*increase the understanding and appreciation, particularly among young people, of the environmental,*

social, and economic potential of trees, woodlands and forests and of the link between the tree and everyday wood products" (Forest education, b).

The FEI acts as a facilitating and stimulating actor by bringing together organisations and individuals concerned with matters within the objectives of the FEI in so-called cluster groups. This way knowledge and experience is exchanged at a local level. FEI cluster groups are now funding and supporting the development of FS in over 30 counties.

The FEI and Forestry Commission does not represent a particular sector or type of organisation, therefore is regarded as the Forestry Commission.

4.Forest School England

This chapter provides an overview of the FS concept based on the results of the interviews. The first section describes the manner in which the FS concept has spread through England. Subsequently section 4.2 describes the FS concept through the eyes of the respondents elaborating on the FS site, the number of sessions and target groups. Section 6.3 discusses the value of FS according to respondents. Section 6.4 addresses what is not a FS. The chapter is concludes with a section about the possible obstacles respondents experience in their FS practice.

4.1 Development of Forest School

FS has been introduced in England a decade ago. This implies that at the time of its introduction FS did not exist as a profession on its own. This seems obvious and irrelevant but within the context of this research this is an important factor. It is because of this that FS had to fit in existing professions, believes, discourses or frames. When you combine this with the nature of the concept as in that it has a wide range of positive effects on people who participate in FS sessions, it becomes clear that the people who became FS leaders did so because of the wide variety of reasons. As with any concept, people will always use that bit they need. And any concepts will change over time, the same with FS.

At the moment the concept of FS is growing rapidly in England. All interviewees mentioned that this is the trend that is currently going on. Because of this development FS has become a market on its own, and in that respect it attracts people with more strong economic motives rather than idealistic ones.

When Bridgwater College that started running a BTEC FS training course, more people became trained. Some of these people then decided, because of the growing demand, to start their own training companies. Until 2002 there were only two places, apart from Bridgwater College, these were Archimedes Training and the Forest School Training Company. Through the Open College Network (OCN) training providers could use their units to start FS training, this caused a growth in the number of training companies. Initially the rules OCN applied on those who wanted to become OCN accredited FS trainers were quite strict. But they have become less strict over time and nowadays you will only need to be qualified to teach adults in order to start providing FS trainings. This development has led to

a rapid growth in the number of training providers in England. Amongst these providers there is a growing number of trainers who deviated from the original FS concept or ethos. But more importantly, there are now trainings provided by people who never did any FS sessions themselves. Since the nature of FS is to allowed to risk assessments instead of risk avoidance and tools are quite frequently used, and there is a real concern that accidents will happen in the future. This can have a negative impact on the whole FS concept. For this reason FS trainers have started to set certain standards. Especially the Forest Education Initiative (FEI), who played an important role in the introduction of FS in the UK, has now specific set of standards which have to comply before you can call yourself a (FEI) FS. Apart from the FEI, Archimedes Training and the Forest School Training Company initiated the FS trainers network. The goal was that work is to set standards within the FS training companies in England. Around the same time the Institute of Outdoor Learning initiated a Forest School Special Interest Group (IOL FS Special Interest Group). Both networks try and safeguard the FS essentials, the core of the concept.

Based upon the outcome of a survey which was conducted during a conference were members of both the IOL FS Special Interest Group and the FS Trainers Network were present, in which the question was asked whether there is a need for a national governing body within FS England, 80% of the respondents voted in favour for such a body, a task group has been established to look at possibilities to come to such a national governing body. Although many FS practitioners believe this is a good development in respect to assuring the quality of the FS concept, there is at the same time a concern that this will take away the unconstrained or open character of the concept.

4.2 What is Forest School?

All respondents emphasize the ethos, the philosophy behind the concept as being very important. Whether something is a FS depends on the ethos behind the concept rather than the way it is put into practice. This implies a large diversity exists in the way FS can be put into practice, i.e. diversity exists on the surface whereas to a large extent similarities exist at the heart of the concept.

4.2.1 Target groups

Essentially FS is for all ages, it can literally vary from 2 till 90 years. There are FS practitioners that focus on toddlers aged 2 to 5 years, but it is also used to deal with social family issues in deprived areas. The majority of FS is applied in education especially in primary schools were it is used with all children, although it works best with children that experience difficulties in a regular classroom environment such as autistic children or children with ADHD. In secondary schools it is only used with children that experience specific learning or behavioral problems. It appears that the focus of FS lies especially with children. For this reason, in the remainder of this research FS participants are referred to as children.

4.2.2 Child-led

All respondents emphasize that child-led learning is one of the key aspect of FS. However, it seems that some qualification on this account is to be applied. FS practitioners without a background in education will be more likely to apply child-led FS sessions than those who have their roots in education. This is primarily because teaching in England has a teacher-led tradition in which the emphasis is on reaching preset curriculum goals. In this respect the priority is with the results of exams, especially since they are made public. Therefore it is no surprise that this profession will easily fall back on this teacher-led way of teaching. Despite the fact that there is a clear consensus on the importance of the child-led aspect, some respondents admitted that they experienced difficulties on this matter. These difficulties are not only caused by the teacher, it is also the fact that FS greatly depends on the assistance of volunteers which are usually parents. And the parents themselves have experienced a teacher-led education therefore they act in the same manner.

The child-led learning does not mean there are no rules within FS, on the contrary, the frequent use of tools, the risk assessment instead of risk avoidance and the fact that most FS session are in a natural environment make clear safety rules an important aspect of FS, especially when young children are concerned. It is obvious that during the explanation of safety rules, or during the demonstration on how to use tools, there is no child-led learning, but it is a necessary step which allows child-led learning in a later stage.

4.2.3 Duration

Among all respondents there is consensus that a FS should always consist of more than one FS session. In this respect there is also consensus on the fact that the positive effect of FS increases with the number of consecutive sessions and that this especially applies to children with specific learning or behavioural problems. This is primarily because a large number of consecutive session enables a trusting relationship to develop in which a FS leader can better meet the needs of the child. Furthermore some respondents claim that the experience of different seasons with the accompanying types of weather, also adds to development of the child.

Despite the consensus on the number of sessions (the more the better), there seems to be a difference in the number of session respondents actually put in practice. This varies between six session to each week as session throughout the year. It is noteworthy that especially respondents from primary schools use the more pragmatic 6–12 sessions whereas freelance FS leaders and training providers opt for session that last at least one year. The decision on the number of sessions seems to be primarily a practical decision. This issue will be further addresses in section 4.5.

4.2.4 Forest School-site

One of the core aspects of the FS concept is that FS sessions should always take place outside the regular classroom, preferably in a natural environment. For this reason the FS site fulfils a key function in the FS concept. Nevertheless, there is a difference in opinion in the requirements of a FS site. The 'early years', or conservative FS actors go by the opinion that a FS site should always be in a wooded area, since they address much of the effects of FS are caused by nature. The continuously changing conditions of such a site stimulate the natural instinct to learn. Furthermore, being in nature usually has a calming effect on

children which further improves the conditions in which the development of children takes place. However, more often FS session seem to take place in a less natural environment such as schoolyards or green areas in urban environments. Similar to the number of FS session, this is especially the case with respondents from primary schools. The location of the FS site seems to be primarily based on practical considerations (see 4.5). Besides primary schools, some respondents say that there are cases in which less natural FS sites are actually promoted with the intention to increase the demand for FS. All respondents agree that a less natural FS site increases the accessibility of FS but at the same time reduces its effectiveness. In this respect it is important to ensure that practical and economic motives will always take the quality of FS session in consideration.

4.3 Value of Forest School

There is a strong consensus among the respondents that the core value of FS lies with the development of the child. In this respect the focus is more on the process in which the development takes place than it is on the accumulation of knowledge. This is also evident from the fact that FS aims in increasing the level of self-confidence (see 1.4). All respondents agree that children show an increase in confidence on language skills, social interaction and being in nature after participating in FS sessions.

Children becoming more at ease, more attached to nature, is mentioned as a value by the respondents. This aspect is however divided, on the one hand there are the Nature Conservation respondents who see the created nature awareness itself as an added value, on the other hand there are the 'other' respondents who emphasize the effect it has on the development of children. This way they see consider nature awareness as an instrumental value rather than an intrinsic value.

4.4 What is not Forest School

Despite the differences in which FS is put to practice, respondent show considerable similarities in what is not a FS. They all agree that FS sessions should be outside. Several respondents refer to stories in which due to bad weather conditions FS session are held inside, all respondents label these practices as being not a FS.

Furthermore a FS that consists of only one FS session is not a FS. Despite the fact that differences of opinion exist on the minimum number of FS sessions, all respondents agree that one session cannot be FS.

As already mentioned in section 4.2.4, there is a clear difference between the respondents on the 'naturalness' of a FS site. However most respondents do agree that a FS site should at least be located in some sort of outdoor natural environment. If this is not the case it is not a FS.

A very important aspect of FS is that it is always the children who determine what will happen during a FS session, the children determine their own development rate. The FS sessions have to be child-led not teacher-led. A FS session in which a FS leader tries to achieve pre-established learning goal within a pre-established amount of time, is not a FS. It seems that especially teachers from primary schools find it difficult to deviate from the traditional teacher-led way of teaching. In addition, the same applies to parents who are frequently used as volunteers to ensure the high adult to children ratio.

Some respondents mentioned the manner in which is dealt with the FS site. Because the same piece of woodland is frequently used for an extended period of time could cause depletion of the FS site. FS sites which are not used in a sustainable are to their opinion no FS. It should be noted that this aspect is only mentioned a few times. The respondents rather see it as their moral obligation instead of a requirement.

4.5 Obstacles

The obstacles in FS are twofold. On the one hand obstacles exist for training providers and/or freelance FS leaders, on the other hand they exist for the FS 'customers'. With regard to the first group the obstacles are mostly of an economic nature. This section emphasizes the obstacles that belong to the second group. The second group, the customers, consist of those who have become trained as a FS leader and use FS within their current profession and those who pay a freelance FS leader to provide FS session for them.

Costs

All respondents mention the costs involved with FS as a potential obstacle. When somebody decides to start FS there are two options. The first option is to hire a freelance FS leader, this way each FS session has to be paid separately with an average cost of 150 pounds per session. Since FS is only effective after a number of sessions this option becomes very expensive, especially when it is the intention to use FS over a longer period of time. A second option is to become trained as a FS leader. However the average costs of a FS training are around 1200 pounds, making this option only economically viable when FS will be used for a longer period of time.

Furthermore the transportation of children from and to the FS site can be expensive. In the best case it is possible to walk to the FS site but more often some form of transport has to be arranged , which involves extra costs. In many occasions, especially on primary schools, for this matter a mini-bus is purchased.

Since FS sessions proceed in almost any weather condition it is essential that children are provided with proper all weather clothing. In the majority of the cases this is the parents' responsibility, but when it is not, it means a considerable amount of extra costs.

With most FS sessions only small groups (max 15 children) will go to FS site at the same time. This means that whenever FS is applied on schools and the teacher is a trained FS leader, there are very few occasions in which an entire class can do FS at the same time. Therefore substitution has to be paid to allow one part of the class to do FS while the other part remains at school.

Most FS depend on funding to run their FSs. The announced cuts in budget by the government, makes the costs even more an obstacle.

Forest School site

Finding an appropriate FS site can be a major obstacle. Problems that arise in finding a FS site are primarily caused by the distance to the FS site, the further away it is the more costs are involved in arranging transport. A second obstacle is to receive permission from a landowner to use their land as a FS site. Of course this only applies when one does not own land, which is in most of the cases. Once permission is received the piece of land (preferably) has to be used in a sustainable way meaning the area has to be big enough to accommodate multiple sites enabling a rotation scheme. Finally vandalism and/or theft can be a big obstacle. Since most FS sites are on public ground also non-FS participants have access to the site, making it vulnerable to vandalism and/or theft. This can also have a negative effect on the effectiveness of the FS sessions. Since nothing can be left on the site, children cannot participate in long lasting activities such as the construction of huts. In this respect it is not surprising that an increasing amount of FS sites are located on schoolyards.

Attitudes

If a FS is actually put into practice largely depends on Personal experience, believe and enthusiasm. A good example is the fact that Oxfordshire, Worcestershire and Milton Keynes have integrated FS in their local policy for different reasons. According to the respondents this is mainly due to the fact that somebody has a personal interest or strong belief in FS. For the same reason there are also counties in which FS does not exist.

Also in schools it depends on the personal attitude and previous experience of the (head) teacher if FS will be used. Many schools decide not to do FS because it deviates to much from the traditional top down teaching method and that it does not fit into the curriculum. The belief that FS can contribute in reaching the traditional curriculum based learning goals is an absolute necessity. This seems obvious but since it takes a lot of energy and money before FS can be put into practice, it is a very important issue.

Besides the personal belief it is also important to convince others that FS actually works. In the case of primary schools this is especially the case with parents. Most parents worry about the risks of being in nature especially since FS is child-led and uses tools. Many of the

worries are caused by the fact that parents themselves rarely visit natural areas and have no clear understanding about the actual risks that are involved. All primary school respondents confirm the initial lack of understanding and lack of outdoor experience with parents. All respondents describe occasions in which parents do not sufficiently dress their children for the occasion e.g. when it is freezing outside they are send to school without a jacket, despite the fact that they were asked to dress their kids for a day in the woods. Respondents also say that after a few FS session most parents have lost their initial worries and actually see the positive effects themselves.

Time

Time can be an important obstacle for FS. This is especially when one is not trained as a FS leader yet. The actual training takes several days, but also includes the composition of an extended portfolio and organising a number of test FS sessions. In most cases this happens in personal (spare) time. In addition, it takes time to find a site, go to and from the site, develop FS sessions and of course the actual FS session itself generally takes half a day. Especially in primary and secondary schools which usually work with tight schedules, time can be a real obstacle.

Drifting of the Forest School concept

The different ways in which FS are put into practice can be an obstacle itself. In some cases this diversity causes people to highlight certain FS aspects in such a way that they drift away from the FS concept. All respondents agree that FS practitioners exist who say they are doing FS but are actually not (see 4.4). They also say the problem is amplified by FS training providers who train FS leaders while they have no experience as FS leaders themselves. Besides the fact that this has caused confusion about the content of FS and differences in the quality of FS sessions and trainings, a badly trained FS leader can also jeopardize the safety of children participating in FS session. And once accidents occur, this could very well mean the end of FS.

This chapter clearly shows that FS is not an easy walk in the park, that one really has to believe in the strength of FS to reach the desired positive effects it can have on children. Furthermore it shows there are differences and similarities among the respondents in their

opinion on what FS is and how the put it into practice. Chapter 5 will further elaborate about the differences and similarities by discussing the identified FS frames.

5 Forest School Themes & Frames

This study focuses on the identification of possible FS frames based on semi-structured interviews with FS players in the UK. The results of these interviews will be discussed in this chapter. In section 5.1 and 5.2 the way in which the frames were identified is described. In section 5.3 and 5.4 the identified frames are defined. The FS community and how it behaves as such are addressed in section 5.5. The introduction of a Master Frame in 5.6 forms the conclusion of this chapter and at the same time the necessary base for chapter 6.

5.1 Forest School Themes

As the previous chapters have shown, the way in which the FS concept is put in to practice in the United Kingdom is very divers. This diversity is mainly observable on an individual level. In order to structure these individual perceptions concerning FS, the concept of framing is used to look for similarities between actors (group identity), on the basis of which different groups can be identified and their position in relation to each other. Bearing the individual nature of the diversity in mind, a great variety of frames can be expected. Since a complex web of frames does not contribute to the clarification of the FS concept, which is the central aim of this research, themes are used on which frames can be identified. These frames can be considered as *main frames*. Although these main frames offer less detailed insight in the differences and similarities between the individual FS actors, they do allow for a more generalised and structured approach which is in line with the aim of this study.

On the basis of the literature research the following themes were formulated:

1. Nature Conservation
2. Financial
3. Didactic/Development of child
4. Social
5. Health

Then the interviews were analysed to see whether these themes were actually expressed by the FS actors. The analyses revealed that all interviewed FS actors believe that the quality of the FS concept is located in the holistic approach of the development of the child and the

fact that the FS sessions are held outside (in a natural environment). This shows a connection between themes 1, 3, 4 and 5. This is, among other things, demonstrated by the comments of Liz O. On the question whether she could rank the themes (which were called 'aspects' in the interview) in terms of importance, she answered:

> "I think that will be very difficult for the Forestry Commission to say one was more important than the other really. I mean I guess they might start from the education, but you know they would probably say all of those are as important as each other (…) education, social and health yes"

Asked the same question, Jon answered:

> "I see them all connected you know. I mean financial could get into it, but it is, the social health and nature conservation, development of the child, they are all so interlinked. I would say they are all completely interlinked. That is probably the whole holistic approach to Forest School, that interlinking and looking at that whole aspect, yes."

In addition, respondents found that the themes 3, 4 and 5 jointly contribute to the development of the child and as such are closely linked.

For example, Louise stated:

> "But when I said development of child I don't just necessarily mean kind of academic education I mean holistic development.
> (..)
> so it would be kind of social and emotional development and physical development and everything in there."

Some actors do make a distinction between the themes. This becomes clear from the interview with Liz M.:

> "I will say the first one would be the education, the development of the child. Followed very closely by the social, health is very much part of it."

And from the interview with Helen:

> "I think social is the most important. I think their social and emotional understanding of each other's, each other and themselves. But then that fits with development of child and education as well.

(…)

And then health is a, I think is a by-product rather than something I would put on the top of the agenda."

Despite the fact that these three issues are valued differently by the actors in terms of importance, they lie so close together that they do not indicate significant differences between the actors. Given the small number of interviews and the absolute consensus on the importance of the development of the (entire) child, themes 3, 4 and 5 have been merged into the one theme 'child development'.

The fact that all the actors found the child development themes of major importance, makes this theme unsuitable for differentiating between the actors. The interviews further revealed that the main differences between the FS players are based upon the Nature Conservation and the Financial themes. The following quotes reflect this clearly.

Judy:

"Financial, I don't think there's ever going to be huge financial gain out of this."

Helen:

"Financial is less important. In our network of schools we have managed to pinch some other money (…)"

Nick:

"I always say everybody is in it for the money even the Forestry Commission, they are paid to do their job. There's a lot of jealousy in this country, people don't like to see successful people."

Based on the above, ultimately three themes form the basis for the identified frames:

1. Nature Conservation (NC theme)
2. Development of child (DC theme)
3. Financial (F theme)

5.1.1 Nature Conservation

One of the key aspects of FS is that the sessions are held in the open air and in most cases this involves a natural environment. This fact makes the concept attractive to actors engaged with nature. Firstly, this includes several conservation organisations like the Wildlife Trusts in England, but also landowners and governmental agencies concerned with nature conservation. The focus of this theme is that actors through FS primarily strive for nature conservation. This should not be understood in the strictest sense as FS is no direct means of conservation. Rather it provides an indirect way of contributing to the conservation of nature because it is supposed to raise environmental awareness. This theme also includes the striving for a better environment, and the closely related sustainable lifestyle.

5.1.2 Development of child

The theme "Child Development" is especially prominent in actors for whom the interest of the child is paramount. As already discussed in Section 5.1, this theme is actually composed of an educational, social and a health component. The educational component is all about the cognitive development of children but also about the extent to which the FS concept can be incorporated in the national curriculum. The social development of a child is obviously central to the social component. This is an important component, because the FS concept works particularly positive among children who do not function properly in a regular (classroom) environment which in some cases can lead to social deviant behaviour. When these children participate in FS classes an improvement in social behaviour occurs. This makes FS particularly interesting for actors who are engaged in special education or social problems in deprived areas. Finally the health component involves both physical and mental health. The fact that the children are outside and perform physical exercise has a positive effect on their fitness but also improves things like motoric skills. The positive effects on mental health are mainly caused by the fact that FS focuses on increasing the confidence of the children.

5.1.3 Financial

The financial theme can be interpreted in different ways. Of course everyone who is professionally involved with FS has a more or less financial motive, simply because they earn a living performing activities which are contributing to FS. But there is a difference between getting paid for work performed, or primarily pursuing making a profit out of FS. The latter

falls under the financial issue. In this theme therefore primarily commercial actors are found, people who want to make money with FS. As will be seen, it is mainly the financial issue that causes tensions within FS in England.

5.2 From Theme to Frame

As the themes form the basis of the frames, it is the presence of a specific theme in an actor that inserts the actor in the corresponding frame. In the most straightforward approach three themes form three frames. But because the DC theme is present in all respondents it should also be present in all frames. Placing all the actors in one frame is not an option. This has resulted in the identification of frames based on the way in which the themes are arranged by the respondents. It appeared that none of the respondents found all three themes more or less equally important which rendered the identification of a frame consisting of all three themes impossible. As shown in section 5.1 the main differences between the FS operators are defined by the NC theme and F theme. For this reason, every frame consists of two themes. Furthermore the interviews showed that none of the respondents with a F theme considered the NC theme of more importance than the DC theme This has finally resulted in the identification of the following two frames:

1. Nature Conservation/Development of child frame (ND-frame)
2. Financial/ Development of child frame (FD-frame)

The presence of two themes in one frame means that actors can emphasize one of the two themes. For an actor to be part of a frame it is not required that both themes are equally present.

Based on this construction, it was possible to situate players in a frame. An exception were the primary school actors. In this group the DC theme plays such an important role that they actually would form a separate DC frame. The interviews nonetheless showed that the schools differ greatly in the degree to which the NC theme and the F theme are present. Since none of the primary school respondents indicated that the F theme is more important than the NC theme, the decision was made to situate these actors in the ND frame. In the following description of the actors these subtle differences will be addressed.

5.2.1 Actors

All the respondents represent an actor. Given the time frame within which this research was to take place and the limited financial resources that were available, it was not possible to interview all actors involved in FS. To structure the differences between FS actors and to enhance the readability of the research the view of individual respondents has been extrapolated to the sector represented by that specific actor. Any differences between respondents in the same sector will be discussed. In the next two sections the actors are discussed in relation to the frames to which they belong. For each individual actor is indicated why they are considered to belong to a particular frame and how they relate to other actors. This provides insight and understanding of the subtle differences within the frame and the relations between the two frames.

This chapter and especially the following sections, contain a lot of quotes. The source of each quote is indicated with the use of the respondents' firs name. Annex 2 can be consulted to see which FS actor the name represents.

5.3 Nature Conservation/ Development of Child Frame (ND-frame)

The ND-frame is characterized in that the frame is handled by actors who are concerned with nature conservation and try to contribute to this purpose through the use of FS. It is not necessary that the actors also focus on the development of child, although this is off course possible. It is important to note that the primary focus lies on nature conservation and the possible presence of a financial motive is subordinate to the development of child motive. The following sections describe the actors who belong to the ND-frame.

5.3.1 Nature Organisations, the Wildlife Trust

The various Wildlife Trusts are well represented in FS England. The nature conservative character of these organisations has made that FS is mainly used to put people back in touch with nature. It is on the basis of this characteristic that the Wildlife Trusts assign greater importance to the conservation component of the frame than on child development. This becomes evident in an interview with Judy. When asked what her motives were to use FS she replied:

> *"the motivation is because, it's just a brilliant way of connecting young people to the outdoor environment."*

And:

> *"And the reason is that it is a really good tool for connecting children to nature. So, it gets back to the nature conservation and connecting nature to children."*

However, not only the conservation component is important, the development of child is also of importance. In her reply to the same question:

> *"Obviously the benefits to the child is very important to us as well"*

It is clear that the nature conservation is dominant. This is not surprising for a Wildlife Trust. But the development of child motive needs further explanation. For Wildlife Trusts the development of the child lies not in the three components, educational, social and health as described in section 5.1.2, but lies more in the development of environmental awareness. This environmental awareness ensures that these children into their adult lives will be more inclined to make an effort to preserve nature than children who have not developed natural awareness. As Judy puts it:

> *"But I think our prime one is getting them to connect with the outdoor environment and hopefully become, like you know become the custodian to the future, because they care about it they protect it, and I think that is our main thing."*

Herein lies also a financial motive. After all, people who have awareness of nature and as such pursue the conservation of nature, are more likely to join and financially support a Wildlife Trust than people who do not care about the preservation of nature. According to this reasoning, the FS sessions of the Wildlife Trusts can also be considered as an investment in their own future. This future is dependent on money which creates a financial motive. But in the short term there is no question of financial profit.

> *"... and although we do charge, we get money for it, it is not financially viable to us at all."*

But this is not always the case, there are Wildlife Trusts who offer FS training for economic reasons themselves. An example is the Green Light Trust, which mainly provides training in Sussex County.

> *"…well some of the Wildlife Trusts have set themselves up as trainers, are actually doing it to make money."*

Conservation and development of children is probably still considered more important than the financial aspect and the latter must be seen as discussed in section 5.1.3, that everyone has a financial interest in the execution of his / her work but this is not considered a stand-alone goal. But this remains hypothetical since it was not possible to interview a FS Wildlife Trust which also provides training.

This interview further reveals the possibility of a difference between professional and personal reasons for the involvement in FS. For Judy personally the emphasis might lie primarily with the development of child theme understood as discussed in section 5.1.2, and secondary with the development of environmental awareness.

> *"..that's the Trust, but on a personal level, as someone that goes out there and teaches it, you just want to give the opportunity to every child really."*

The interview with this specific actor clearly shows that both themes Nature Conservation and Development of child are present within this frame and are communicated externally. Nonetheless, the interview further revealed that these themes do not determine the entire frame. Although less visible and not communicated externally as much, personal opinions and motivations also play an important part and make the frame more complex than first meets the eye.

5.3.2 Environmental Organisations, the Bishops Wood Centre

An organisation that has played an important role for FS England, and still does, is "The Bishops Woods Centre. The main reason for this lies in the presence of one particular person, Jon. He has always been very active in the FS community, and is currently working on monitoring the quality within the FS concept. It should be noted that the close involvedness of this subject with FS makes him a very interesting actor to interview, but less representative of other environmental organisations. This has been taken into consideration.

The interview with Jon clearly shows that FS is both used for the development of child and nature conservation. Asked about the value of FS, he answers:

"Oh my God. I guess the main value is, there is two things. One is it really does help learners confidence in all sorts of ways, in their language, in the way they work with others, in the way they are in the outdoors, so it's that side of things. And the other value for me is the fact that they are, well we are doing it and they are thinking about caring for a piece of woodland. And woodland is an important thing, there is something about woods (...)"

Obviously, Bishops Wood Centre uses FS to obtain the sustainable lifestyle that is expressed in their mission. The same goes for the Wildlife Trusts, with the difference that they strive for people to become conservationists instead of stimulating a sustainable lifestyle.

For Jon, his personal background also played an important role is his decision to get involved with FS

"I was youth worker originally and I wanted this to get involved with the teenage side as well and see how it could work with that."

His motivation to help young people with problems is evident in the way FS is used within the Bishops Wood Centre. In principle, nobody is excluded from participation in FS sessions but the focus is on young people with social problems

"We work with private nurseries, we work with state nurseries, we work with primary schools, we work with secondary schools, we work with, I mean at teenage level it is hard working at secondary schools, we are working much more with special needs schools."

How great the influence of one's personal interest or passion can be in the way FS is practiced, is shown in the way other actors talk about the Bishops Wood Centre. Sara, who works for the Anglia Ruskin University refers to the Bishops Wood Centre as:

"(...) for people with special needs, for youngsters that Jon deals with(...)"

And Judy:

(...) there is Bishops Wood, and I think Jon is a very genuine person, and he does it probably more for the development of the child, (...)his background is working with children isn't it?"

So despite the fact that stimulating a sustainable lifestyle is the objective of the Bishops Wood Centre, this is not what the Centre is associated with. Apparently other actors

associate the Centre with helping youngsters with issues, which is the personal interest of Jon.

At the Bishops Wood Centre child development is the key interest, but the natural component is also very important:

> "(…) the social health and nature conservation, development of the child, they are all so interlinked. I would say they are all completely interlinked. That is probably the whole holistic approach to Forest School, that interlinking and looking at that whole aspect, yes."

Yet for the Bishops Wood Centre the financial aspect also plays an increasingly important role. Because of the fact that The Centre is in part dependent on government subsidies, the announced cutbacks forces the organisation to generate more income. In addition to offering FS sessions on their own territory for a fee, they also started organising FS training. In this way additional income is provided which makes the Bishops Wood Centre less dependent on government subsidies. At the same time, the training of FS leaders enables the Bishops Wood Centre to actively influence the quality of FS.

5.3.3 Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission (FC) has played an essential role in the distribution of FS, not just in England but also in Wales and Scotland. The main reason for this is the fact that FC has granted fundings to actors who were planning to start their own FS. In fact the Forest Education Initiative (FEI) has been most active in this regard (see 3.3). The reason for granting funds becomes apparent from the following comment by Liz O:

> "But I guess the FEI kind of definition that it is about raising awareness about socially and economic and environmental benefits of Woodlands is a first bit of it. And then linking the tree with every day wood products. You could say, and FEI people do say, that Forest School fits into that."

For the FC the focus is less on nature conservation and more on the usefulness of the forests. The FEI acts as a stimulating and facilitating actor in order to assemble different organisations and individuals who are involved with matters within the objective of the FEI, into so called cluster groups. These cluster groups are not specifically meant to focus on FS, but in reality around 80% of the fundings granted by the FEI is used for FS and mainly for the

training of FS leaders. Thus the FC, through the FEI has unintentionally played a prominent role in the distribution of the FS concept. FS even became so popular it threatened to outshine other activities of the FEI. In addition, the way in which the forest (nature) is viewed within the FS concept, namely as an instrument for the development of children, does not really suit the main objective of the FEI. For this reason, the decision was eventually made to not allow for more than 40% of all fundings to be granted to FS.

Liz O:

> *"and they found a lot of that money was going to Forest School things and a lot of that was used for training. And then they decided a few years ago, to say that only 40% of the FEI funding could go to Forest School and we are going to fund other things. So that was the way of limiting this kind of take over from Forest School."*

This shows that for the FC the emphasis is on the Nature Conservation theme. Even though the primary objective of the FC is to foster wood production, which is something quite different than conserving nature, it can still be considered part of the Nature Conservation theme since forests are needed for the production of wood.

It is however not just the Nature Conservation theme that is used by the FC. The Child Development theme is also present. This becomes apparent form the objectives that are formulated in the '*FEI annual review 2009*'. As fourth, and last objective is stated "Developing emotional and physical well-being" (Forest Education c). The fact that this particular objective is last mentioned, can be seen as an indication for it not being the primary goal of the FC. This is confirmed by the answer given by Liz O when asked what the FC is trying to accomplish with FS:

> *"It's the awareness, but it's also about the whole child I guess. So it's learning about the environment but also learning about yourself, so kind of personal and social development are strong aspects."*

Form a financial stance FS is mainly viewed in terms of available subsidies. Asked if the financial aspect plays a part for the FC Liz O answered:

> *"I would have thought more about how the Forestry Commission funds it. And obviously there is concern at the moment because all funding gets less."*

There is no question of a financial motive in the context of the financial theme, the FC earns no money with FS. But because the FC is a government organisation (non-ministerial governmental organisation), they are dependent for their budget on the government. The announced cuts could therefore hit the FC hard and as a result also have negative effects on the subsidies granted to FS. In this context, the FC will benefit if money is saved on areas other than 'nature'. Since FS is primarily aimed at the development of children, and as such has positive effects on areas such as health, it contributes indirectly to the reduction of public expenditure in this area. These savings could then theoretically be assigned to the FC. In this way, the FC could potentially benefit from stimulating FS as much as possible. This reasoning is however mainly an assumption that is not overtly expressed, which becomes clear from the wording of Liz O:

> *"And there are things about, you know what we spoke about in terms of finance, you know you can save money down the line, I would imagine the Forestry Commission to think that was a strong possibility."*

In addition, the same line of reasoning is possible as with the Wildlife Trusts that were discussed earlier. In a sense the FC is for its survival depend on nature conscious people. Indeed, in a democracy, the will among the people to preserve nature *should* result in a government that responds to this by including it in a coalition agreement and make the necessary funds available. It is likely that the FC would receive a portion of these funds and thus secures its own future survival. However, this is not an argument that can be supported by data from this study. Rather, the opposite is the case: because of a lack of longitudinal research into the effects of FS, it is not yet to say whether FS creates positive effects, and if there are positive effects whether these are caused by FS. Liz O puts it as follows:

> *"But I feel kind of powerless to say much about it* (referring to long term effects of FS, red.) *because they haven't got any evidence. And I think the whole thing about research is that it is still kind of in the early days in some respect, the research in this area, there is no longitudinal research. A lot of research focus on personal social development and some people will say that doesn't mean that more children will get their qualifications and how do you do research to that and prove it."*

Since governments, especially in times of announced cutbacks, need to justify their spending even more than usual, the absence of such long-term impact assessment is currently a great loss. This is clear from the interview with Jon:

"What is desperately needed at the moment is more evidence-based stuff of the impact that it is having. There's quite a lot short-term studies being done, no long-term studies yet and that is desperately needed to convince the powers of Bay really"

The situation described above shows how great the interests of scientific research can be, especially if the existence of important bodies depend on it. This is however a discussion that goes beyond the scope of this research.

For the FC as an actor, the focus lies clearly on the Nature Conservation theme. The fact that the influence of the FC on FS England is high, is mainly due to the subsidies it has supplied and because through the FEI and cluster groups it has created a platform for FS.

5.3.4 (Local) Government, Milton Keynes Council

The Milton Keynes Council uses FS as a tool to achieve its objectives which are to create environmental awareness with its citizens, and thereby contribute to a better environment. This goal is listed as a key component of the Local Agenda 21 and more extensively in the Handbook for Change: "*Equip MK Citizens with the knowledge, values and skills to Creatively Engage in pursuit of sustainable development*" (Milton Keynes strategy). Milton Keynes is trying to achieve this sustainable development by paying more attention to nature environmental projects and in this context, FS is used to assist in achieving that objective.

In addition to the above mentioned objectives, the Council also tries to improve the quality of local schools through NME projects. This is reflected in the Milton Keynes Corporate Plan which states: "(..) *all which includes improving school standards through environmental education*" (Milton Keynes Council). With this, both components of the ND frame are met. First is conservation, in terms of environmental awareness, and secondly the development of education and hence the development of children. This is confirmed in the interview with Stephany. When asked what goals the council is trying to achieve with FS she replied:

"It gives children an identity in green spaces and they can actually grow up with the wildlife situation so they actually look after, we hop,e their home with a little bit more than perhaps if we didn't."

This shows that FS is used for conservation aims. The development of the child is reflected in the following quote:

> "We do try and match Forest School with our national curriculum."

The emphasis on conservation becomes particularly apparent from the fact that the initiative for the Milton Keynes Forest School Project has been taken by the Countryside department which is responsible for maintaining the rural character of Milton Keynes. Stephany:

> "We sort of did it the other way round in the fact that Milton Keynes has objectives and because we could see, we are at the countryside section which I mentioned to you before, we could see the benefits of open space. So we would look into the goals, the policies and what the council wants to do, and we could see that forest school would fit into that."

And more specifically:

> "Because it came through countryside section, not the education section .."

This quote also confirms that the Council with FS is trying to achieve sustainability and conservation goals. The schools were eventually involved because teachers had the opportunity to train for FS leader. This way the project has been given a (sustainable) long-term character, both for the Council and for the schools that have participated in the project.

Stephany:

> "It was a lottery funded project for three years, and we chose to make it sustainable throughout Milton Keynes, so we made sure the schools were qualified, so teachers got paid to be qualified."

There is a big difference in how local governments deal with FS. If and how local governments encourage FS, often depends on personal interest and the position of a person. This has led to FS being quite popular in some Counties, while other Counties have never even heard of it. Also, FS is used differently in different Counties. For example, FS can be used for educational goals, but also for nature and environmental goals. Jon form the Bishop

Woods Centre for example, named the following Counties where FS is seen as a means to achieve the goals of the biodiversity action plan:

"Forest School is up there in the biodiversity action plan of Worcestershire, but it won't be in others for example. It's up there in Shropshire, in Warwickshire it is mentioned too so and it depends on the local authority. But at heart of it will be the development of the child with these local authorities."

That there are also Counties where the concept is unknown is clear from the interview with Francis.

"Well in Hertfordshire, where I live there is no policy on it. And when I rang up the County Council to ask about it somebody said: "I've been in this job for 22 years and I've never heard of that!", which shocked me. In Essex their outdoor learning advisor is really proactive, helps teachers fill in the grant application forms, really does a lot. So he is initiating and pushing."

The existence of differences in how Counties view FS is confirmed by Liz M:

"There are some counties which are a little bit more ahead, who have had a vision of putting somebody in charge of doing Forest School. And obviously these have got their own policies internal to the County."

In addition, she is working with local authorities and schools to implement the FS concept in local policy.

"But I am now working with a local authority with schools and so on, to be able to extend it further to the whole of the local authority."

It appears that County Councils use FS for conservation and / or educational purposes and for this reason they fall under the ND frame. Whether and for what purposes FS is used by a County Council depends on factors of personal interest and position of a person within the Council.

5.3.5 (Primary)schools, Graffham Infants, Barons Court Southend, Camelsdale Primary School

Because of the fact that the development of the child plays an important (central) role within the FS concept, it offers many applications especially for education. Therefore the concept is mainly put into practice in schools. This makes schools a key FS actor. At the same

time within this group a great diversity can be observed in the way the concept is put into practice. Judy puts this as follows:

> *"But I think the implementation varies enormously. And I think that's what you're going to get with any teacher, it is like a subject like English, and you have the class teacher that is inspired by English or particularly literature, and then you get someone that is in the grammar side, and then you've got a different way of teaching. So, I think that's what's happened."*

Mainly primary schools are involved with FS. This is partly because in primary education they still have the opportunity to initiate activities outside the curriculum. This is evident from an interview with Bridget working for the Southend Education Trust, Learning Outside the Classroom:

> *"In Southend on the whole the teachers who went for the Forest School training work with younger children and that's where it seems to happen. The staff of the older children seem to say it's okay for the younger ones because they have got the time, but they have important curriculum issues to cover and they haven't got the time. We have got one school, one secondary school who is involved with Forest schools."*

FS is also used in special schools, though to a much lesser extent. Here it is used in children with learning disabilities who need special educational attention. Louise says the following:

> *"Yes the majority tend to be in the primary age range as well. It's been very difficult trying to get the secondary kind of up here. It tends to be, we've got some happening in secondary age, but it tends to be special education needs, or a kind of behavioural issues, we haven't got any Forest School leaders working with mainstream secondary age people at the moment in Norfolk."*

What all schools have in common is the fact that they use the FS concept because they believe in the positive influence it has on the development of children. This is also shown by the interview with Jill:

> *"The development of the child is the most important thing to me."*

And Helen, who explains why she got involved with FS:

> *"From my experience of working all the way through a primary school, when you come into reception, so when you come in at the age of four or five, children can do anything they haven't*

got a feeling of fear of failure, nervousness, worried on, they just get on with everything. And I began to realise a couple of years ago that actually as you go up through the school system children have failure built in,.... So I started to look into something that we could do that would change children's emotional resilience to their learning, and Forest School seem to fit."

There is a noticeable difference however when it comes to the Financial and the Nature Conservation theme. Information about schools with a financial motive came from interviews with actors other than primary schools. Like Judy for example:

"I work with schools, and schools are doing it for the development of the child but they are also trying to do it in a way, financially, because they're trying to…they like to become a Forest School to attract children to their school."

Of the schools interviewed, however, none pursued a strong financial goal. They all put the interests of conservation over the financial interest.

Jill:

"The development of the child is the most important thing to me, and then also social skills is an element of it, and then there, I would say their health and then I would go to nature conservation and financial."

Helen:

"I think social is the most important. I think their social and emotional understanding of each other's, each other and themselves. But then that fits with development of child and education as well. (…) Financial is less important."

Sarah:

"But also schools also apply Forest school to nurseries because it is a unique selling point. So the people who are doing it will believe in it, but those who are paying those who are doing it, is because it sells."

But there is a clear difference in the way the nature conservation theme is valued. For example, at the primary school in Southend conservation is deemed less significant than at the school in Graffham. Amongst other things, this difference manifests itself in the way FS is put into practice. In Southend this is done in a grove next to the schoolyard while in

Graffham FS is put into practice in a beautiful piece of forest with a stream and badgers in it. Yet another school in a Camel Dale owns an area next to the playground which is called the 'Secret Garden'. In addition, this school also has a piece of forest that they can use for their FS sessions. Depending on the weather, they switch between these two locations. The location of the FS site plays an important role in the extent to which the Nature Conservation theme is present. In schools with a natural FS site this theme is more present than in schools where this is not the case. The fact that schools with a natural FS site are usually situated in a rural environment is also a factor of importance. This is because the parents of children from a rural environment generally value the natural aspect of rural life and are therefore more inclined to enlist their children in a FS school. This is shown in the interview with Helen:

> "My schools are in a very rural area, so from that point of view I think it is very important that the children whose parents have bought into a rural area have a rural experience and understand well the land."

However, with the FS concept schools also meet an existing demand of their target groups, in this case the parents of children, which reveals an additional emphasis on the Financial theme.

The interviewed schools had in common that they view the natural environment in which FS must take place as a place that promotes the development of children. Helen puts it as follows:

> "And alongside to that goes the fact that it wouldn't work if weren't in a place within nature, and it is nature that does it."

Jill:

> "Well I really do believe it is important for children to be outside and I think it develops a sense of well-being."

And Liz M:

> "Forest School is an, is an ethos which gives opportunities to youngsters in particular, but to people to have an experience in the natural world in order to develop their sense of well-being, their self-respect, confidence."

For schools the added value of nature is especially in the effect it has on the development of children and not in its preservation. At the same time this creates an interest in preserving nature, which increases the importance of the Nature Conservation theme.

So there are big differences in how schools put FS into practice. Many of these differences are caused by the natural character of the FS site. There is also a disagreement on this point within FS England. Especially the more conservative leaders believe that FS should always and only take place in a natural environment. A FS session in a schoolyard is in their eyes 'just' school. A quote that suits the more conservative view comes from Francis:

> "A lot of Forest schools are done practically in the school playground with a tree or two. I think it is really quite a different experience when you do that. I think what makes a forest school special and contributes to what it looks like, is that it has to be different from where they go every day."

But there are also people who believe FS sessions can take place in for example school yards. Jill belongs to this less conservative group. She has adapted her school ground especially to make FS sessions possible.

Jill:

> "I think the goals, as well for me, is to develop our school ground. So it enables it to happen readily and to work with the staff."

It is striking that at this particular school one of the key elements of FS, that it is mainly children who determine what happens during the sessions, much less emerges.

> "...they would go and work in the same place and date would have some basic activities that they would do in every session. So it might be like a warm-up and a concluding part, but then they'd be doing different skills on each of those visits. But they would have certain set things that they would have to do which is part of that Forest School elements of it."

As chapter 4 has shown the practical feasibility of FS is often seen as an obstacle. Applying the concept on the school grounds is one way to make FS more accessible to schools. This ignores however one of the key strengths of the concept, namely that the sessions take place in a natural environment because it is exactly this environment stimulates the child development and thereby promotes the learning capabilities of these children. The fact that

more and more schools are applying FS, or at least say they do, when they do not have a FS site available in nature, indicates that the original concept of FS has become diluted. This is shown for example by the number of hits that the Archimedes Training website has for *Forest School in London*. Obviously schools in London are likely to have less access to FS sites in nature.

Sarah:

"And I think at the moment there is a big push in London. We have over, I don't know, over a 150,000 hits on our website, (.......) So what we're doing is actually upping the number of training courses that we are going to deliver in that environment and in Birmingham as well. Because there's a lot more people who are suddenly realising actually I can run Forest School in my setting, you know in my back, I don't have to go to the woodland to do it."

The interviews with the schools reveals that particular emphasis lies on the Child Development theme. Differences in the way FS is implemented is caused for a large part by the nature and location of the FS sites chosen. The popularity of FS causes some schools to use it because it allows for more students. Because of the fact that the Nature Conservation theme is not very present in the schools, these schools should thus be placed within the FD-frame. These schools however do not focus on the intrinsic value of nature but on the instrumental value. The specific properties of nature allow for the (positive) development of the child.

5.4 Financial/Development of Child Frame

The FD-frame is characterized by being used by actors who, in addition to the development of the child, pursue a clear financial goal. An actor is considered part of the FD frame when the Financial theme is more strongly represented than the Nature Conservation theme. In reality, this means that mainly commercial actors belong to this frame. An actor uses the Financial theme when FS is used specifically for a profit target. As shown in the discussion of the ND theme, there may also be actors involved with less pronounced profit target. Since the data used for this research is not sufficient to substantiate this claim, these actors

cannot be placed under the FD frame. The following sections discuss the actors who are part of the FD- frame.

5.4.1 Forest School Training Companies, Archimedes Training, Forest School Birmingham& Midlands

As discussed in 5.1.2 the most FS actors earn money with FS. But within the commercial organisations, there are basically two ways this can be achieved. On the one hand, there are organisations that provide FS trainings and on the other hand, there are organisations that provide FS sessions. In many cases, organisations that provide training, also provide FS sessions. Archimedes Training is the largest provider of FS training in England.

The commercial character of Archimedes Training clearly puts it within the FD frame. As will be shown, the interviewed FS training companies focus much more on the Child Development theme then on the Financial theme. This becomes apparent from the answer Sarah gives to the question why they offer FS courses:

> " …so actually it is about how they think and feel, and giving them an opportunity so that they don't have to be a victim of circumstances, they can actually make a decision and a choice, where it is totally naturally for them to be able to do that. And the fact is that people's lives have changed, and what could be a better job than to train somebody who then goes and work…"

As with Judy and Jon, for Sarah her personal background also plays an important role:

> "I had a very bad time at school, hated it. Had a very complicated process in terms of growing up, and went on a journey trying to find out about myself, couldn't get a job and finally found one and that was working with children with disabilities, and they were let down by educational system massively due to a number of reasons."

Forest Schools Birmingham & Midlands also emphasise the Development of Child theme. Questioned how he got involved with FS, Nick answered:

> I've always been passionate about outdoors, I've always been passionate about getting people outside, and Forest School just came alongside and I took it on from there, that's it.

And concerning his motivation:

> "I have to say it's the kids, children, that's it."

In first place comes the theme of Child Development. As the following quotes show, the Nature Conservation theme is present in the same way as was the case with the schools. It's not about the intrinsic value of nature, as is the case for the Wildlife Trusts, but about the instrumental value. This is apparent from the following remark by Nick.

> "People are often surprised that the programme, (...), that it's got nothing to do with the outdoors. I can take them on a program and never once they know the name of tree or plant or so, it is not about that, it is about the kids, that's the core of everything we do. (...) Nature is almost incidental, (..)"

Sarah:

> "So those nursery (...), it is because of the way they learn actually as well, because they are almost undamaged, or not as severely damaged, is that you can allow nature to do its stuff, (...)"

And:

> "They learn to become independent and use those strategies for themselves (...) and it happens in the natural environment because nature provides opportunities (...)"

So the Nature Conservation theme is also present. A remark made by Sarah reveals that the Financial Theme is also of importance for these actors. Remarkably, she makes the comment more or less in between the lines.

> "...and people at that time told us that we weren't real forest schools because you can't do forest schools in an urban environment. And as you know, now it's the best new business."

And:

> "And obviously trying to make an income as well, we are taking over the world."

Nick also confirms the presence of the Financial theme, although his opinion is less testament to a specific profit target.

> "I always say everybody is in it for the money even the Forestry Commission, they are paid to do their job. There's a lot of jealousy in this country, people don't like to see successful people."

Aside from the fact that this quote shows the presence of the Financial theme, the last sentence also reveals a certain frustration with it. These frustrations are also clear in the following quote from Nick:

> "I will keep mine short, my motivation. I'm going to say money, because that's what they expect, that's why they think why we are doing it. But anyone who actually does their job properly knows that money does not come into it, otherwise I would be driving around in my Rolls-Royce and living a lifestyle."

This again confirms that the Financial theme is not necessarily the most important. At the same time it reveals that other actors, actors who are not part of the FS frame, are the ones who emphasize the Financial frame for Archimedes Training and Birmingham FS.

Judy:

> "I mean I think some training organisations are doing it because they want to make money. And I think they sometimes go quite away from the principles of it.
>
> (...)
>
> Well over in this part of the country the main ones are, there's now the Forest School Training Company who I know two of the people that are in that training company. And I think that they are quite genuine although, you know I think they are good people, but they are charging an awful lot of money for the courses. There's Archimedes, I'm not sure of that, I only went to their conference and I was rather appalled by some of their aspects. But I've heard that they are trying to rewrite everything themselves really.
>
> (...)
>
> I don't know, they (Archimedes; Red.) have certainly done something that have upset the whole community. But I think they have, honestly and they have brought in a level IV.
>
> (...)
>
> and it is their own set piece. And no one else has latched onto that. And I think everybody is going like, they have just brought that to make money out of it. That's what it is. As actually, that's interesting isn't it, because I can see that's what can easily happen and then you can have a level V that allows you to do professional development of something, you know what I

mean? I think, and I think all of it from what I've seen and heard is very different from what happens in Scandinavia."

Jon:

"And then there are other key bodies, that are like independent bodies, like Archimedes, the Forest School training company. Who are there for, obviously they've got a business to run, so the financial side is going to be important."

The interviews with the non-profit actors revealed a disapproving attitude towards profit actors. This attitude comes to the fore in the quotes above and is confirmed by Sarah:

.. it is like we have Archimedes as being the target of an ongoing barrage of discontent, because we are private",..

A possible explanation was given by Liz M:

"(…) we have become associated with, forest school practitioners have become associated with the Institute of outdoor learning. Because the Institute of outdoor learning is re-presenting all people as a charity, all people that have an interest in outdoor pursuit of some kind, and they have a voice in government. They have a voice and they can, so through them forest school can be put on a platform and be pushed forward. It's starting to happen in certain areas."

It is possible that the non-profit actors feel that the profit actors benefit from the efforts that they put in the institute for outdoor learning. This reasoning is however not reflected in the other interviews.

In a sense, it also seems that Archimedes Training, as it is the major FS training company in England, is competing with other FS training companies. That there is indeed competition is confirmed by Sarah:

"I have had the FEI they have e-mailed me with horrible letters about us setting up newsletters, how dare we, you know, not writing a level IV qualification because they are going to do it and I am taking the initiative off that all."

And by Liz M as well:

"I think there's a whole clique in Worcestershire that are the ones that are trying to create a niche for themselves."

(…)

"Because it's (Archimedes; Red.) so big and because it's such a strong one, it's probably seen as a threat by other people."

This competition is fuelled by the fact that the large demand for FS has resulted in a growing number of FS training companies and an even bigger growth in the number of FS leaders. Conservative estimates point in the direction of 15,000 FS leaders.

Liz O:

"And Susannah Potmore thought there might be about 15,000 people trained as Forest School leaders (…)"

And Sara:

"I only know Essex, and I know there are 200 in Essex. (…) And that is only one county. (…) There is a huge, I mean the speed of growth, it is not surprising it is overtaking itself because it's grown so quickly. We do need a period of consultation."

Because of this dramatic increase in FS leaders, it is expected to be only a matter of time before the demand for FS training will decrease. The further development of the FS training, as Archimedes Training did in a Level IV training, can therefore be seen as a long-term strategic decision that the survival of the company must guarantee. This development can also be observed in other FS training companies. For example, the courses were extended with FS skills training, FS Taster days, Inset Training, FS conferences, Professional Development Days and even Forest Fun Parties led by experienced FS leaders. It is clear that this extension of the courses on offer is prompted by commercial and financial motives.

As the quote by Judy shows, these developments are not always perceived positively.

"(…) they have just brought that to make money out of it. (…) I can see that's what can easily happen. And then you can have a level V that allows you to do professional development of something, you know what I mean?"

Besides from the fact that this remark again shows the dissatisfaction with the commercial purpose of Archimedes Training, it can also lead to the conclusion that FS leaders see this development as a risk that additional training is constantly required to continue their work as FS leader.

On the other hand, the commercial interests of private FS companies allow for the FS concept to adjust to developments in society. As Sarah states:

> *"And the course they* (Bridgewater College, Red) *are delivering now is exactly the same course as they were delivering before. There is no change, there is no updates, no recognition that things change."*

And Liz M:

> *"Because she* (Sarah, red.) *is very much in the centre of it. I think because there are some, I think it's the nature of human beings, there are people that once they have achieved something feel that if they change they are going to change what they have done. So, they can't see that you need to change constantly to be able to sustain what you have achieved."*

It appears that actors from the ND frame see Sarah especially as "representative" of the FD-frame. It is also clear that the Financial theme for the commercial actors is much less evident than the actors from the ND frame would suggest. There is a clear focus on the theme of child development and even the Nature Conservation theme is present. So it is only the commercial nature of the actors that puts them in the FD-frame.

5.4.2 Landowners

Which FS actors fall under the category of landowner is not always clear at first sight. This is mainly because FS players who for instance, belong to the category of Environmental Training Companies and Organisations also can be seen as landowners. So before the interviewed actors are discussed, this shall be clarified.

A FS actor is included in the category landlord when the actor has power of decision about a piece of land. This only involves land that can be regarded as ´nature´ and is as such suitable as a FS site. Schools that intent to use their school ground or park directly next to this land as FS site, are not seen as a landowner. The government is also not included in this category. When the government in its capacity as for example a County uses their territory for FS

purposes, it will be counted in the category (local) government. The Forestry Commission is an exception, this actor has his own category.

Within the category of landowner two types can be distinguished. On the one hand, the FS landowners who facilitate FS sessions in their territory. These include private landowners (Estate), but also individuals who possess small plots of nature. On the other hand, FS actors who are also land owners and use their land for their own FS purposes. These include FS Training Companies, as well as Wildlife Trusts and Organisations such as the Bishops Wood Environmental Centre. In this study, the latter two however are considered to be part of the ND-frame and are therefore discussed in the corresponding sections (see section 5.3.1 and 5.3.2).

Landowners don´t always allow the use of their land for FS sessions solely from a financial point of view. As will be seen this is especially the case for the private (large) landowners. For FS actors who own land the financial motive does play a larger role.

The estate that Andrew works for is primarily considered part of the FD frame because earning money is the primary objective.

> *"(…) it is all, everything is run to make money. So there is the forestry departments, there is the farm and he's got 300 houses by rents out. So the forestry Department has to make money. That particular bit of woodlands is on the outside of the estate, is not that special commercially, so that's why we've got flexibility in there."*

In addition the estate receives funding from the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. Besides money for improving and maintaining the existing nature, this organisation also promotes educational activities, which makes it possible to use FS.

> *"(…) this countryside stewardship which is now coming to an end and there is a new stewardship scheme starting. But we sort of still carry on. And part of this scheme is it enables landowners to do educational visits. And for each visit you get £100. But you don't charge the groups, so it's free to them."*

The money that is produced by the FS sessions vanishes in comparison to the total turnover of the estate. Nevertheless, this also means that the sessions cost nothing. Since it is the responsibility of Andrew to generate income through his activities, the FS sessions would not

have been possible without a subsidy. These are the two main reasons that this actor is considered belonging to the FD frame. For the estate the Financial theme is dominant, however, for Andrew the DC theme is most important. It is mainly the subjective opinion of Andrew which has led to his involvement with FS.

> "Because I've always noticed all through life, children brought up on farms, are all well balanced grounded children. You know they have experienced life-and-death, everything is common sense compared to town children. And I have always felt it is mine and the landowners responsibility, because it's a private estate, to encourage adults or children to get out there and just to get back to, get back to nature is the wrong word but try and reconnect, it all becomes lost."

He confirms this by saying:

> "I see the whole thing as sort of the hinge, that's why I haven't put nature conservation high. It's a means of getting a better child's, (…)"

Again, it can be concluded that the people who decide to get involved with FS do this based on personal reasons and these reasons may be different from the organisation in which the person is employed. In this particular case, the FS sessions should generate income for the estate, or at least the sessions should cost nothing, but without the personal interest of Andrew FS sessions would not have taken place. This is evident from the interview when discussing the problems putting FS into practice:

> "If I wasn't here it would not be happening, it's only because I am interested that it can happen. So it could easily not happen.
>
> Interviewer: *So it is, it greatly depends on the personal interest of the woodland manager?*
>
> Yeah. You know I've got the full support from the landowner. But I also have his full support if I didn't want to do it."

You could say that FS in the first place must fit into the vision of the 'organisation' that will work with it but that it is the individual motivation that actually puts FS in to practice.

For Francis also personal interest is the reason why she allows FS sessions on her land. As Francis herself is the owner of the land, this is not different from an employer.

5.5 Forest School Community

In this section, the FS community itself is discussed. Attention is also paid to the way in which different FS actors view the FS community.

As shown in the discussion of the FD-frame, the commercial character of an FS actor leads to a division within the FS community between profit and non-profit actors. There are also differences between the actors in the way the concept is put into practice. This is illustrated for example by the differences between the number of sessions offered and the location of the FS sites (see 4.2.3, 4.2.4). Besides these differences there are also similarities in the form of a consensus among respondents that the core of the concept is the development of the child, that FS sessions should be held outside and finally that the sessions are child-led (4.2). As shown in the following quotes, there clearly is a flexible attitude towards other views on FS outside these key aspects:

Jon:

> *"Yes, I'm always open to other views but I still hold onto that child-centred long-term thing. That for me is immovable."*

Helen:

> *"So yes, the inflexible bit is the fact that children will do Forest School they will go to another place to do it, it will be a special place and in that experience they will have a lot of child initiated experience within the natural environment. And, but around that it's becoming flexible."*

Judy:

> *"So there is, there's flexibility in the way we are doing it, but I don't think we can get compromised over the method,(...)."*

This flexible attitude of the actors, or in other words the flexibility within the FS concept, is considered a strength of FS by the respondents.

Liz M

"And I think one of the main important things is about being flexible. Because it has to follow the interest of the people that you are supporting with the experience."

Francis:

"And I think the other thing is there are some tremendously different approaches. (...) There's a lot to make from those different perspectives, it just shows how it can benefit people in different ways."

Yet this flexibility is also the weakness of the FS concept, which becomes clear from the interview with Jon:

"Yes, definitely. And I guess that's one of the reasons why it has grown so quickly but that's one of its Achilles heels to. Because actually a lot of outdoor learning has become labelled Forest School which to me is not Forest School, it's not that child-centred long-term approach."

Louise confirms:

"So I don't understand why, at the moment there seems to be this, trying to force everything within the Forest School whole, but not everything is Forest School. Forest School is a certain approach, just like field studies is an approach."

All respondents affirm the rapid expansion of the FS concept over England after the introduction of the concept by Bridgewater College:

Sara:

"It is growing so quickly. And what is nice is that it is moving so that people are recognising that it is not just used for small children, it is used for other groups as well."

Louise:

"Well it seems to be sort of growing definitely. It seems to be quite a lot of interest in it and it seems to be you know demand for training seems to be high."

Jon:

"At the moment the trend is upwards, it is growing, growing, growing big-time."

This success has also attracted players who are not really dealing with FS but use the FS name to benefit from the success. This results in a general concern amongst genuine FS actors about the quality of the FS training and FS sessions which is shown by the following quotes.

Liz M

> (…)"but there has got to also be an umbrella that says, there are certain standards that have to be met, these are the standards and you have to go by those."

> "(…) people that are claiming that they are doing Forest schools and yet aren't qualified or haven't got an understanding of it. And I think some people see it very superficially, this is just the activities and don't see what is beyond that."

Jon:

> "And there are people running Forest School that are doing that stuff, and I think, hang on a minute that's not Forest School."

Where quality is concerned the training providers play an important role. If the quality of the training is not good enough the entire FS concept is undermined from within. As there is no clear standard for FS training providers it is possible for almost anyone to offer FS training. This has resulted in major quality differences between the FS training providers.

Sarah:

> "The OCN doesn't give you teaching material, it doesn't tell you how to teach them. So that's why you get all the discrepancies."

Judy:

> "Basically anybody with a teaching qualification is fine. You know it can be a certificate of education or a post-grad or anything really. So, it's sort of opened it to people that are not necessarily trained to teach adults."

Jon:

"Yes because, and it's down to the training providers, so you can guarantee people who have been through our training definitely will have that very child-centred ethos, long-term ethos that is coming out."

Liz M:

"If it's not run by people who are professionally trained as forest school leaders it won't be Forest School because you need that's really strong backgrounds and understanding of it."

Louise:

"(...) currently there is nothing to stop anybody running Forest School training. Which is one of the concerns people have (…) Because at the moment there are people who have never run or seen a Forest School, running Forest School trainings."

This shared concern has led to the unification of FS actors in the FS Trainers Network and the IOL FS Special Interest Group.

Liz M:

"There is now, like I said to you earlier on, you know the Institute of outdoor learning has set up a special interest group, so that we can set something national. And which will give, which will provide quality assurance in terms of the training and the provision."

Louise:

"Well there is a national training network of Forest School trainers. (...) And these are trainers, training providers of Forest School qualifications that voluntarily join the network and they all agreed to use the same unit for training."

Eventually these two networks have jointly taken the initiative of establishing a National Governing Body. The objective is not only to achieve a quality label but also a distinctive FS feature so that it is clear to everybody what is and is not a FS.

Sara:

"Yes I do. I think we need consensus because otherwise people will move away from it, it becomes too difficult to understand and to fractured (...)"

Louise:

"So there's the trainers network and there is the special interest group and members of each of those have formed a steering group for looking into a national governing body."

Liz M

"Yes, and it comes from individual providers like me that are fighting and thus are setting up as much as possible. And the special interest group has come through the grassroots of providers wanting to have some representation, some protection and some recognition."

Sarah:

"We have got forest school special interest group which is part of the Institute of Outdoor Learning, and that is gaining coherence, (...) and alongside that there has been the forest school training network. And we are working towards now, to get a national governing body. If we can get that up and running then we stand a chance of getting some overarching theoretical basis to it."

Liz M:

"I think there is a real need for an umbrella that, like I've said before, that actually sets standards for both practice and training."

According to the results of an online survey in the FS community, initiated by a partnership between the IOL FS Special Interest Group and the FS Training Network, with 928 respondents, of which 80% voted for a National Governing Body and only 5% voted against (Institute for Outdoor Learning), there is a substantial support for a National Governing Body. Such an outcome clearly shows that the FS community as a whole, is aiming for a collective future in which unity and quality of the FS concept play an important role.

5.6 Master Frame

The above mentioned development shows that, despite the presence of different frames and a diversity in the way the concept is implemented, there is a collective effort to preserve the FS concept. With the development of a National Governing Body the necessary first steps to have been taken. But before this platform can actually do something for the FS community, it is necessary that it is provided with the necessary tools, a clear message to the

outside world with which it can monitor the quality of FS. With a Master Frame FS (FS MF) this demand can be met. Based on the results of this study an initial attempt for such a MF is made. As described in section 2.3.2, an MF should be broadly applicable, it should not be aimed specifically at the interests, goals or problems of one involved party. This means that a FS MF should at least contain the core elements of FS on which consensus is reached between all FS actors involved.

Additionally it is also important that the FS community through the FS MF radiates unity in society. Therefore the FS MF should also encompass quality standards. This way it leaves no room for FS practitioners and trainers who deliver poor quality. However, it is essential that the FS MF fulfils these functions without sacrificing the flexibility and openness within the FS community.

In summary, this means that the FS MF contains at least the following elements:

Development of child

- Social (emotional) -, cognitive and physical (health) development
- Child-led

Nature aspect

- FS sessions always take place outdoors
- Broad definition of the 'naturalness' of the FS site

FS sessions

- Should consist of several consecutive sessions
- At least 6 sessions and no maximum (the more the better)

Quality

- Quality is ensured by the FS Training Providers
- Quality label for FS training

In essence, the FS MF in this form is an enumeration of the respondents present agreements. Whether it can function as an MF, is described in the next chapter using the from the Social Movement Theory derived properties of Collective Action Frames (CAFs).

6 Forest School Master Frame

This chapter will assess the FS MF (see 5.5) using the variable features of Collective Action Frames (CAF). For this assessment it is important the FS MF is approached in the context from which it has been identified. Therefore also other aspects of the CAF theory are used such as the core framing tasks. Another consequence this brings forth is that besides the FS MF also the FS community will be discussed from a Social Movement Organisation (SMO) perspective. Furthermore the findings will be discussed within the context of other scientific research on this matter. Therefore it is also possible to read this chapter as a discussion.

Section 6.1 discusses the FS community and the FS frames in the context of CAF theory. The assessment of the FS MF is discussed in section 6.2. Finally section 6.3 provides the conclusions concerning the assessment of the FS MF and the applied theory.

6.1 Collective Action Frames in Forest School context

As described in chapter 2 a SMO can be regarded as a network based on a common believe or collective identity (ideology), consisting of groups of individuals and/or organisations engaged in political or cultural conflict. Based on this definition the FS community shows similarities with a SMO. After all, the FS community consists of individuals (FS leaders), organisations (Wildlife Trusts, FS training companies, local governments) connected to each other based on a common belief in the form of the FS ethos, the heart of the FS concept, and with a visible network in the form of the FS Trainers Network and the IOL FS Special Interest Group. This research shows that all FS actors use FS to reach their own goals, like the commercial goals of Archimedes Training, the educational goals of primary schools and the sustainability and biodiversity goals of local governments. However, none of these goals mention solving a conflict. The absence of conflicts on a FS actor level implies there is also no collective (shared) FS community conflict. In this respect the FS community differs from a SMO. In addition, by mentioning a political or cultural conflict, Diani (1992) indirectly refers to a political or cultural cause of the conflict. In other words, he refers to a collective external enemy with whom everybody has a conflict. As became clear from the respondents,

this is not the case with the FS community. Besides the absence of a collective conflict and a collective enemy there is also no collective external problem which needs to be solved. Therefore the FS community cannot be seen as a "*signifying agent*" that is actively engaged in selecting and shaping ideas and meanings to create support or demobilise antagonists and cannot be regarded as a SMO (Benford & Snow, 2000:613). However, when the focus is more on the internal behaviour of the FS community there seem to be more similarities. In this respect the difference of opinion on the content of FS can be regarded as an internal conflict. Furthermore the lack of quality with some of the FS sessions and trainings is clearly being regarded as a collective internal problem. FS actors who put FS into practice with disregard to the FS ethos, are regarded as the cause of the quality issues and thus seen as the collective internal enemy. So from an internal perspective the FS community has clear similarities with a SMO and can also be seen as a signifying agent actively engaged in shaping ideas and meaning to create (internal) support for solving their collective problems. In this respect the initiative for a National Governing Body confirms the above mentioned.

So when the FS community is compared to a SMO in the context of the Social Movement Theory, few similarities exist. There is no collective (external) problem or conflict that needs to be solved, no cause or enemy to focus on, no collective solutions and no intention to mobilise bystanders for collective action. But when the focus is on the FS community itself there are clear similarities. There is a collective (internal) problem and clear cause and collective proposed solutions with a clear intent for collective action. From a societal (external) perspective the FS community consists of separate FS actors each solving their own problems. But from a FS community (internal) perspective it behaves as a collective network similar to a SMO. Whether the internal problems will eventually cause the FS community to behave as a collective network in society remains to be seen.

In the following section the FS frames will be compared with CAFs based on the core tasks of CAFs as formulated by Snow & Benford (1988).

6.1.1 Diagnostic framing

Diagnostic framing serves two functions, the identification of a problem and attribution of blame, the attributional component. (see 2.3.1). As became clear in the previous section, from a societal (external) perspective the FS actors have no shared collective goal, they use

FS only to reach their own individual goals, goals in which there are no visible collective conflicts or collective problems, or at least they are not mentioned as such. But as the interviews revealed, many respondents based their goals on problems. In this respect the educational goals of primary schools are based on the problems caused by the current education system, the nature conservation goals are based on the problems that occur when nature is not protected (disappearing nature) and the sustainability goals on the problem sustainable behaviour is insufficiently visible in society. This way the FS actors actually do solve problems with the FS concept but they are not as such visible in their FS frames. In this respect the FS frames differ from CAFs. Instead of articulating a problem, the FS frames articulate the positive effect (solutions) of FS. The same applies to the causes of the problems. The FS actors are well aware of what causes their problems, this is not surprising because in a sense knowing the cause of the problem is a prerequisite for solving the problem, but this research shows that the causes of the problems are even less articulated in the FS frames. For example, the Sussex Wildlife Trust especially articulate the contact with nature and the positive effects it has on the wellbeing of people. Whereas in a similar situation a SMO would articulate the disappearing nature and the lack of proper legislation on nature conservation. Another example, Graffham Infants primary school articulates the positive effects of FS on the self-confidence of children, whereas a SMO would frame the lack of self-confidence and put the blame with a malfunctioning of the education system. So from a prognostic framing perspective FS frames differ from a CAF because they articulate the positive effects of FS as a solution instead of the problems and attribution of blame. However this only applies for the 'individual' FS frames, not for a collective FS frame.

The absence of a collective problem and collective attribution of blame suggests there is no collective FS frame similar to a CAF. However, there is a clear intention within the FS community to develop a (unified) frame to ensure good practice and end the internal and external misconceptions of FS. This way such a frame does articulate a collective problem and attributes collective blame. The misconceptions on the content of FS and the lack of quality in FS sessions and trainings are the articulated problems, the lack of FS standards and bad FS practice as the attributed blame. But this concerns no real societal problem, it is more an internal FS community problems.

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So looking at the FS frames from a diagnostic perspective reveals FS frames articulate the positive effects of FS as a solution instead of articulating problems and attribution of blame. Furthermore it shows that this only applies for the 'individual' FS frames, not for a collective FS frame. Finally it shows that a collective FS frame which articulates a collective problem and attributes collective blame, does exist, however, this is from an internal FS community perspective and not from an external societal perspective.

6.1.2 Prognostic framing

While diagnostic framing identifies the problem and attributes blame, prognostic framing involves the articulation of the suggested solution(s) and the strategy to reach a certain goal (see 2.3.1). This implies that identifying the problem affects the number of possible solutions (Benford 1987; Nepstad, 1997). In other words, diagnostic framing affects prognostic framing not vice versa. As mentioned in the previous section, FS frames articulate the positive effects of FS rather than the problems that are resolved. These positive effects can also be seen as solutions. This way the FS concept can be regarded as a concept consisting of solutions looking for problems. The interviews show that it is not the FS community itself as an 'organisation' that actively uses the FS solutions to find societal problems which can be solved, it rather is the individual FS actor who found in FS the solution for its own problems. The solution can be provided by just one or more aspects of FS, instead of the entire FS concept. This is illustrated by Sussex Wildlife Trust which specifically uses the aspect of nature in FS to create nature awareness as a solution to the subordinate role nature plays in society. Another example is the way primary schools use the child-led aspect as a solution to the problems caused by the traditional teacher-led education system. This shows FS actors use different aspects of FS as a solution to their problems. This also implies that the problems of FS actors are in a way connected through the FS solutions. So from a prognostic framing perspective FS frames differ from a CAF because they only articulate the solutions without connecting them to a problem. Once again, this only applies for the 'individual' FS frames, not for a collective FS frame since there is no collective activity to fame the solution to the outside world.

From an internal FS community perspective the same applies as in the previous section. The solutions to the internal problems consist of the creation of a National Governing Body, the

formation of FS standard and the elimination of bad FS practice and are clearly framed and presented as such to all FS actors by means network meetings or through the internet.

In short, looking at FS frames from a prognostic perspective shows FS frames differ from a CAF because they only articulate the solutions without connecting them to a problem. This way the problems are connected by the solutions which implies prognostic framing can affect diagnostic framing as well. It also shows that there is no collective FS frame in which the solutions are presented to society, meaning there is no collective FS activity that consists in searching for societal problems that can be solved, or that needs solving, with the FS solutions. Finally it shows that there is an internal collective FS frame in which the solutions are deliberately framed to solve the collective internal problems.

6.1.3 Motivational framing

With motivational framing, SMOs provide the rationale for engaging in collective action (see 2.3.1). Since the primary function of a CAF is to inspire and legitimate collective action, motivational framing can be regarded as the most important core task of a CAF. The interviews show that precisely this aspect is not present in the FS frames. Of course motivational framing is done by FS actors in the sense that by articulating the positive effects of FS they try to convince others to participate in (their) FS sessions or trainings, but it does not happen in the context of a SMO to provide rational for action with the intention to solve a problem or problematic situation. Furthermore the same conclusions apply as with diagnostic and prognostic framing in the sense that the FS community is not aiming for a form of (external) collective action apart from solving the misconceptions on FS. The only similarity between the FS community and a SMO from a motivational framing perspective is that it confirms the importance of socially constructed vocabularies. According to Benford (1993) a particular combination of vocabularies can work in a contradictory rather than complementary way. The different ways FS has been put into practice clearly caused misconceptions.

Looking at FS frames from a core task perspective shows there is no collective FS frame (FS MF) with which the FS concept is communicated to the world. Furthermore it shows the individual FS frames articulate the positive effects of FS as a solution, instead of articulating problems and attribution of blame, without connecting them to a problem. This way the

problems are connected by the solutions which implies prognostic framing can affect diagnostic framing as well. Additionally there is no collective intention to solve a societal problem or problematic situation.

However, from an internal FS community perspective a FS MF can be identified which articulates a collective problem and attributes collective blame. And that deliberately frames the solutions with the intention to reach collective agreement (action) to solve the internal problems.

6.2 Assessing Forest School Master Frame

This section will assess the FS MF as introduced in chapter 5 by using the variable features of CAF.

6.2.1 Problem identification, Locus of attribution

CAFs especially differ from each other by the problems they identify and the corresponding attribution of blame. The FS MF will first be discussed from a problem perspective followed by locus of attribution perspective.

Gerhards & Rucht (1992) hypothesize that the larger the range of problems covered by a frame the larger the range of SMOs that can use the frame, the bigger its mobilization capacity. A frame like this is more likely to function as a MF than a frame that articulates a specific problem. In a FS context the interviews clearly show that the FS concept in put into practice in a great variety of ways because it serves as a solution for many different problems. This range of problems varies from educational problems to nature conservation problems and from social problems to sustainability issues addressed in government policy (chapter 5 and 6.1.1). Since the identified FS MF contains the core values, which are based on the conducted interviews, it will continue to cover a large range of problems and therefore is likely to function as a MF.

Besides the range of problems, according to Gerhards & Rucht (1992) it is also essential that the various problems are connected to each other in a plausible way. A broad range of 'isolated' problems will cause overextension of the frame, i.e. it can lose its affiliation with

the actors therefore also losing its MF potential (Snow & Benford, 1988; Gerhards & Rucht, 1992). As discussed in the previous sections, the FS Mf does not identify or articulate problems. This way the problems are connected by the solutions. If this is a sustainable connection remains to be seen.

When a frame also attributes blame it increases its MF potential (Gerhards & Rucht, 1992). Because the FS MF can be regarded as a 'solution frame' (6.1.2) and does not articulate problems, means it does not articulate the attribution of blame as well. The solution character of the frame is confirmed by the fact that the distinct discussion within the FS community is about quality and content and not on the problems it solves or should be solving. This does not mean problems are completely left untouched, on the contrary, there appears to be consensus among the respondents that problems in the development of children exist that can be solved with FS. However, these are not articulated. The absence of attribution of blame will have a negative effect on the MF potential of the FS MF. This is especially the case from a societal (external) perspective. Within the FS community itself it is mainly because the FS MF does not articulate the problems that it functions as a MF. The articulation of problems would most likely cause even more discussion decreasing the internal MF potential of the FS MF. It should be noted that the internal problems in the FS community have also created a sense of togetherness which in turn has resulted in the initiative to establish a National Governing Body. It could therefore very well be that after the internal problems are solved, the National Governing Body can actively work on the development or adjustment of the FS MF by not only articulating the solutions but also the societal problems and the attribution of blame. However, according to the respondents there is also concern that the Body might cause unnecessary bureaucracy dictating what a FS should be.

6.2.2 Flexibility and Inclusivity

The more flexible and inclusive the themes or ideas incorporated in a frame, the greater the chance that it will function as a MF (Benford & Snow, 2000). In this respect the FS MF can be regarded as inclusive because it reaches the core of FS with the DC theme and the aspect of nature hence, at the same time, the motives of the FS actors why they have put FS into practice (see 5.5). The FS MF can be regarded as flexible since there is a clear consensus among the FS actors the FS MF should be flexible with respect to the extensive

interpretation opportunities regarding the DC theme in the sense that it includes both social and cognitive development as well as the aspect of health. This way the FS MF matches the various ways in which FS actors put these elements in practice.

Apart from the clear consensus about the flexible interpretation of the DC theme, there is no such consensus on the interpretation of the aspect of nature. Some respondents like the Bishop Woods Centre believe a FS site should always be located in 'real nature'. Whereas FS actors like Archimedes Training, FS Birmingham and Barons Court primary school believe it is also possible in less natural areas. With respect to this difference of opinion the FS MF is flexible because it uses the broadest possible definition of nature, i.e. it does not specifically mention this aspect apart from that a FS session has to be outdoors. So much of the flexibility is caused by the fact that not all FS aspects are defined, or at least not in detail, as is illustrated by the fact that it also does not articulate problems. The flexibility of the FS MF makes it an open frame accessible for a variety of actors. This also enlarges the inclusivity of the frame.

There is a limit however to how flexible the FS MF should be. According to the respondents it is the inclusive and flexible character of FS which attracts a diversity of actors. However, this diversity provides, besides the strength of the FS concept, also its weakness. As discussed in section 5.5 bad FS practice in both FS sessions and trainings have had a negative impact on the quality. The expressed desire to achieve a FS standard and the initiative to form a National Governing Body illustrate flexibility is limited and that the FS MF should become less flexible on these issues. There is a clear consensus among respondents that the diversity of actors should continue to exist provided that they meet certain standards. By specifying the minimum amount of consecutive FS sessions, that they should be child-led and that FS trainings can only be provided by experienced (sufficiently trained) FS leaders, the FS MF responds to this 'demand' to restrain the flexibility of the FS MF. By doing so the FS MF also shows some similarities with an organisational frame (see 2.3.2) in the sense that it describes how FS should be put into practice. This is even more so when the FS MF articulates the problems which should be resolved. By focusing too much on controlling the internal FS community matters, the FS MF will lose its appeal to other actors and with that its MF potential (Benford & Sow, 2000).

Looking at the FS MF from a flexibility and inclusivity perspective also shows that Noonan's (1992) hypothesis that elaborated MF (see 2.3.2) allows room for different interests to be expressed making competition less likely to occur, is not entirely correct. The FS research shows that it is exactly such an elaborated frame which enables a variety of actors to use the frame in a variety of ways. In the context of FS this has caused the FS concept to spread over England at an enormous rate, but also caused misconception and discussion on its content. In other words, an elaborated MF leaves room for actors to use it in their own way and subsequently develop (adjust) it to their own needs. As became evident from the interviews this has caused competition among different FS actors. Furthermore, because an elaborated MF allows actors to adjust or develop their frames to meet their own needs, it is possible that these frames themselves will develop into new MF, reducing the MF potential of the original MF. This is illustrated by the way some FS frames have developed in different directions such as Bushcraft, Urban Forestry and spiritual FS frames. When the FS MF leaves too much room on what FS actually is, these FS frames can become new MFs in such a way that they erase the original FS MF because it is divided among the new MFs. Or when the FS MF does define FS, these developing FS frames can adjust their frames to either stay in line with the FS MF or develop in such a way that they connect to other (already existing) MFs. This way the FS MF continues to exist. The importance of at least some demarcation of the core of a MF is also illustrated by research on the Environmental injustice MF (Walker, 2009). Through the active work of framing this MF became more flexible and inclusive to many dimensions of environmental discrimination. But at the same time this development made the MF "*struggle to maintain its salience and momentum*" (Benford, 2005 in Walker, 2009:358) and making it vulnerable to counter framing from within its own 'ranks'. This research also shows the importance of a MF being able to adjust to the developments within the frames it has fuelled or generated. This way it will not only be able to resist counter framing but it also stays in touch with the developments in the world therefore maintaining its salience (see 7.2) and momentum. The flexibility of a MF is therefore twofold, it is flexible in a sense that it provides space for a variety of actors and it is flexible in a sense that it is not static being unable to adjust to the changing circumstances.

This means that when the FS MF succeeds in demarking the core of FS without losing its flexible and inclusive character whilst at the same time is able to adjust to the massive

changes going on in English society, it stands a good chance to function as a FS MF in England.

6.3 Conclusions

This section discusses the conclusions which can be drawn based on the assessment of the FS MF. First the conclusions concerning the FS MF are presented followed by some theoretical conclusions.

6.3.1 Forest School Master Frame

An important conclusion is that the FS community shows few similarities with a SMO from an external (societal) perspective. In this perspective the FS community is seen as a collective network operating in England. The lack of similarities are caused by the fact that there is no collective intention to solve a societal problem. Therefore there is also no cause or enemy to blame, there are no solutions to be framed and most important of all, there is no intention to mobilise bystanders for collective action.

However, from an internal perspective the FS community does show some similarities with a SMO. In this perspective the focus is on the FS community itself, like a society in its own. Now there is a collective problem (misconceptions on FS and lack of quality), there is a cause (no FS standard, bad FS practice), there are solutions presented (development of FS standards, National Governing Body) and there is the intention to create support (among other FS actors) for collective action (solving the internal problems).

The same reasoning can be applied with regard to the FS frames. From an external perspective, there is currently no collective FS frame, apart from the FS concept which unwittingly functions as a MF, similar to a CAF. The individual FS frames differ from a CAF because they articulate the positive effects of FS as a solution, instead of articulating problems and attribution of blame, without connecting them to a problem. Making them 'solution frames' instead of 'problem frames'. And they are not used to motivate bystanders for collective action.

From an internal perspective a collective FS frame does not exist but there is a clear demand for such a frame. And this frame will have similarities with a CAF because it articulates the internal problems and attributes blame, the solutions are the result of mutual consent and collective action is promoted with the use of the internet and network meetings.

From the assessment of the FS MF can be concluded the FS MF articulates the solutions provided by FS instead of the problems that need to be solved. The solutions are provided by the core of FS in the form of the DC theme and the aspect of nature. This way the problems are connected by the solutions. Because the FS MF does not articulate problems means it does not articulate the attribution of blame as well.

The flexible and inclusive character of the FS MF is achieved by means of a flexible interpretation of the core elements and by not defining all elements, at least not in detail. The flexibility of the FS MF makes it an open frame accessible for a variety of actors which also enlarges the inclusivity of the frame. Because of the expressed desire to achieve FS standard and the initiative to form a National Governing Body the flexibility of the FS MF is limited on these issues. The FS MF is flexible in a sense that it provides space for a variety of actors and it is flexible because it will actively adjust to the changing circumstances in England.

Furthermore the FS MF functions as a MF from both an internal perspective as well as from an external perspective. Internally it safeguards the content and quality of both FS sessions and trainings, externally it takes away the misconceptions on FS. At the moment the priority is with the internal functioning. However, in the near future the FS MF can very well be developed for external use.

6.3.2 Theoretical conclusions

Despite the apparent differences between the FS context and the Social Movement context, the CAF theory proved to be very useful. The main reason for this is that on the one hand it serves as an instrument applicable for analysing an existing situation similar to the FS situation. On the other hand it helps in the development of a future strategy.

Furthermore this research suggests, other than is mentioned in the CAF theory, that the primary focus of a CAF or MF does not necessarily has to be on a problem or problematic situation. It seems that by focusing on the solutions a large range of problems can be

covered without risking dispute on the nature of the problems, increasing the MF potential of a frame.

This research also shows that there is a limit to the level of flexibility a frame should contain in order to function as a MF. Therefore Benford & Snow's (2000) hypothesis that the more flexible and inclusive the themes or ideas incorporated in a frame, the greater the chance that it will function as a MF is not that strict. Too much flexibility can cause actors to develop their frames (which are based on the MF) into new MFs reducing or taking away the MF potential of the original MF.

These findings also show that, in contradiction to Noonan's (1992) hypothesis, an elaborated MF can also create competition among its actors and their frames.

These conclusions should not be regarded as hard scientific evidence, they should rather be seen as findings in the context of this research that are worth mentioning.

7. Conclusion

This research is conducted because the FS concept has the potential to play an important role in English society by (re)establishing the contact between children and nature. For this to happen it seems important that there is a clear understanding about the content of the concept. Now, a decade after the concept was introduced in England, it has spread throughout the country. Since then new FS Training Companies have been established training many FS leaders providing FS session to numerous children. The success and speed with which this happened also created misconceptions on FS, difference of opinion on the content and sometimes loss of quality in both FS sessions and trainings. This has created a situation in which the concept needs clarification for its survival. By looking for similarities and differences amongst the FS actors and translating these to FS frames, this research hopes to provide the necessary knowledge to contribute to the clarification of the concept and it's future development. For this 13 semi-structured interviews have been conducted with actors who are actively involved with the FS concept.

This chapter provides an answer to the research questions. The first three research questions are answered in section 7.1. The fourth research question is answered in section 7.2. Subsequently section 7.3 provides acknowledgements regarding both future research and FS. The chapter is concluded with a short reflection on the research.

7.1 Research Questions

To provide a clear overview on the answers to the research questions the following section will answer each questions separately.

7.1.1 What are the frames of Forest School England and what are their differences about?

Based on the research findings, two FS frames have been identified:

1. The Nature Conservation/Development of child frame (ND-frame)
2. The Financial/Development of child frame (FD-frame)

ND –Frame

The most prominent feature of the ND-frame is that it consists of FS actors who primarily use FS to reach Nature Conservation. An additional feature is that it does not contain the Financial theme. This implies that whenever financial motives do exist with FS actors they will be subordinate to motives related to the development of the child.

The ND-frame includes the following respondents.

- Sussex Wildlife Trust (Nature Organisations)
- Bishops Wood Centre (Environmental Organisations)
- Forestry Commission (Governmental Organisation)
- Milton Keynes Council ((Local) Government)
- Graffham Infants ((Primary)schools)
- Barons Court Southend ((Primary)schools)
- Camelsdale Primary School ((Primary)schools)

FD-Frame

The most prominent feature of the FD-frame is that it consists of FS actors who primarily use FS for commercial reasons. Therefore the FD-frame only consists of commercial FS actors (profit-organisations). Possible nature conservation motives will be subordinate to motives related to the development of the child.

The FD-frame includes the following respondents.

- Archimedes Training (Commercial FS Training Companies)
- Forest School Birmingham & Midlands (Commercial FS Training Companies)
- Landowners

The main difference between the two frames is determined by how a FS actor can be qualified economically. As a result a profit FS actor belongs by definition to the FD-frame whereas a non-profit FS actor belongs to the ND-frame. The consensus among the respondents on the core value of FS are so deeply embedded that the existing differences in

the consecutive number of FS sessions and naturalness of the FS site did not justify the formation of other frames.

7.1.2 . How do the frames relate and what are the similarities?

There is clearly a hostile attitude between the FS actors from both frames. This hostility is caused by the following reasons. In the first place it is caused by the fundamental differences in principles between the profit and non-profit FS actors which do not reconcile. The second reason is the presence of FS training providers who themselves have not been trained as a FS leader. According to non-profit FS actors these badly training providers merely apply FS in pursuit of their own commercial objectives without paying respect to the FS ethos. However, this hostile attitude is also directed to the commercial FS training providers who are experienced FS leader and who do pay respect to the FS ethos. It is obvious that these FS actors feel unappreciated. Thirdly it is caused by the fact that there are also non-profit FS training companies who provide FS trainings for the same prices as commercial FS training companies. This way they behave similar to a commercial FS training company but still criticize other training companies for pursuing commercial objectives.

Besides this evident hostile attitude there is also rapprochement between the actors of both frames. This rapprochement is caused by the shared belief in the need for a consistent approach and the necessity to safeguard the FS quality. It is visible in the form of FS Training Network and IOL FS Special Interest Group which is open for all FS actors and advocates the common interest of FS. But the rapprochement is most prominent in the existing consensus about the need for a National Governing Body to provide a unified voice for the FS community and safeguard the FS concept.

This research shows that despite the existing differences, there are even stronger similarities between the actors from both frames. This implies that all FS actors who participated in this research belong to one frame, a frame which contains the core of the FS concept, a FS MF.

However, it should be noted that there certainly are FS actors who do not belong to this FS MF because they are insufficiently trained or not trained at all, only bring part of the FS concept into practice or just use the name FS in an attempt to profit from its success. Since they did not participate in this research the conclusion concerning these 'bad' FS actors are based only on the account they were referred to as such by the respondents.

7.1.3 What would a potential Forest School Master frame look like?

The core of the FS MF is formed by the DC theme together with the aspect of nature. Among the respondents there is a 100% consensus that this covers the core of the FS concept. The DC theme includes a holistic approach with respect to the development of children. In this context it includes the social (emotional), cognitive and physical (health) development. Furthermore the aspect of nature is included because it is inextricably linked with the FS concept and also contributes to the positive effects of the concept. The MF applies a broad definition of the aspect of nature, varying from city parks to a natural forest.

The MF can be characterized as an open, flexible frame because it only addresses the absolute key aspects of FS, leaving the other aspects open for interpretation. Because of this flexibility the MF can be put into practice in various ways which is considered as a strong point by all respondents. Despite the open character of the MF it does define three aspects. The first aspect is that there must be a minimum of 6 consecutive FS session. The second aspect is these session have to be child-led in a sense that the speed and the manner in which the child develops is determined by the child and not by the FS leader. The third aspect is that FS trainings can only be provided by experienced (sufficiently trained) FS leaders. Despite the fact that these 'limitations' come at the expense of flexibility, there is consensus among the respondents that this is necessary to safeguard the FS quality and to ensure a consistent FS approach.

Furthermore the MF functions as a 'solution frame' because it articulates the positive effects of FS as solutions without articulating the problems that can be solved. This way it is up to an actor to decide if, and if so, which problems it resolves with FS thereby increasing the potential of the MF.

7.2 What are the implications of the findings for the development of the concept of Forest School?

As became clear from the answers to the previous three research questions there are differences among the FS actors in why and how they put FS into practice. But at the same time there is both consensus about the core of the concept and about the fact that too much difference in how FS is put into practice combined with a lack of standards will have a negative effect on the future of FS. To what extent the findings from this research may contribute to the development of the FS concept will be discussed on the basis of resonance (see 2.3.2).

The concept of resonance deals with the question why some frames seem to be more effective, resonate, than others. In other words, what is the effectiveness in terms of reaching the target group. The degree of resonance is determined by two sets of factors, the credibility of the frame and its relative salience (Snow & Benford, 1988; Benford & Snow, 2000).

Credibility

The frame consistency refers to the coherence between the "*believes, claims and actions*" articulated in a frame (Benford & Snow, 2000: 620). It is clear that the differences between the FS frames have contributed to the confusion about the content of the concept, both within and outside the FS community. By creating unity within the FS community, the FS MF also provides clarification outside the FS community. However, for this to happen it is necessary that besides the DC theme and the aspect of nature, the FS MF encompasses some FS standards. As mentioned in the previous section these standards are addressed by specifying the minimum amount of consecutive FS sessions, the child-led character of the sessions and the FS training requirements. This research shows that the consistency has been decreased because the FS frames within the FS concept have developed in their own way. In this respect it is essential that the FS MF functions as a dynamic frame and can be adjusted to the developments of the FS frames it 'contains' without decreasing the diversity among the FS frames (FS actors). This way the findings of Benford (2005) with respect to the Environmental Injustice MF (see 6.2.2) are taken into account, safeguarding the consistency of the FS MF, increasing the MF potential and therewith the effectiveness of the FS concept.

The consistency of the FS MF should be (re)established and subsequently monitored by the National Governing Body (see 5.4, 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3). Such a body may besides monitoring the quality also serve as a platform for the FS community to present itself to the world with a unified voice. In this capacity, it is important that the people in the National Governing Body are regarded as credible by the FS community. Therefore only well respected key FS persons should be asked or elected. But it is also important that the National Governing Body (the people in it) are regarded as credible outside the FS community. In this respect the empirical credibility of the FS MF is important (Snow & Benford, 1988), i.e. the fit between the content of the frame and the events in the world (England).

One way of achieving this is by using verifiable evidence such as scientific research. But it can also be achieved by the status or perceived expertise of a speaker. In this respect Sara Knight, as publishing author of scientific books on FS, would be an option. But it is also a possibility to use a former well appreciated politician. Research to the nuclear disarmament movement in which former members of the defence establishment were used, illustrates such a strategy enhances the apparent credibility of the movement's claims (Benford, 1987).

Events in society may also create 'framing' opportunities to increase the resonance of the FS MF. A clear event at the time of this research were the announced cuts in the State budget by the English government. Therefore this could be the right moment to frame the cost-saving potential of FS by articulating the positive experiences of children with learning difficulties. Another event that could be used is the released White paper (governmental policy lay-out) which gives primary schools more freedom in how they fill in their curriculum. This way FS could become a part of the curriculum instead of a supplement. In this respect it is important that the FS MF is continually adjusted in accordance with the developments in society and in the FS frames it 'fuels', because when it does not it could very well lose its resonance and MF potential (Benford, 2005, Walker, 2009).

Salience

The FS MF will resonate more when its message reflects the values and believes of people in society than when it does not. Because the development of the child is the core of the FS MF it is very likely, especially when it specifically articulates this aspect, to reflect the values and

believes of parents with (young) children. Which could cause a demand for FSs and, at best, to the inclusion of FS in the National curriculum.

Another way of increasing the resonance of the FS MF is to match it to the everyday experiences of the target group. The interviews show a clear presence of this aspect with respect to the DC theme (see 5.3 and 5.4). With the development of the child the FS MF clearly resonates within the FS community. By articulating this aspect the MF creates unity within the FS community which in turn has a positive effect on the resonance outside the FS community. It seems obvious that the FS MF should connect to positive experiences as is illustrated by Heitlinger's (1996) research. He found that the women's' experiences under state socialism had a negative impact on the resonance of the feminists frames in the post-Communist Czech Republic. However, 'bad' experiences can also be used to increase the resonance of a frame. By articulating the problems caused by the English educational system and presenting FS as a solution the FS MF will likely increase its resonance. This also means the experiential commensurability (see 2.3.2) is affected by problem identification and locus of attribution (see 2.3.2 and 6.2.1).

Finally the narrative fidelity can have a significant impact on a frame's resonance (Snow & Benford, 1988; Benford & Snow, 2000). The resonance of the FS MF can be increased when it matches the cultural narration of people. In this respect the prominent role of 'the English countryside' can be used. Especially with people from rural areas it is likely that this aspect of the English culture is internalized into their own personal values. For whoever will be involved in shaping and developing the FS MF, it is important to know that existing cultural narrations can be used, but can also be created in the same way as journalism does (Ettema, 2005). But even more important is that they are aware the FS MF can and therefore should be actively and deliberately shaped to increase it resonance.

This research shows that besides the diversity between FS actors there also is consensus on the core of the FS concept. This implies that there are no fundamental differences between the FS actors with respect to the FS concept. The fact that the FS community has taken the initiative to form a National Governing Body to ensure the quality of FS practice and to create unity among the FS actors, increases the chances of future survival of the FS concept.

In a way, this initiative represents the intention of the FS community to present itself as a collective network, as a FS organisation, to the outside world.

However, these developments also incorporate a danger. Among the respondents there is a visible fear that the establishment of the National Governing Body will have a negative effect on the flexibility of FS (MF) therewith limiting the range of application possibilities. So it greatly depends on how the Body will function, which people will be in the Body, how much power these people will have, how the decisions are made and executed and how it deals with conflicts of interests. It is clear the FS community requires the National Governing Body, but at the same time it is also clear that the success of such a body strongly depends on how it will function.

Finally it is evident that the political developments and cuts on statebudgets will cause a great deal of problems for FS. But at the same time these developments provide opportunities, opportunities that have to be exploited. In this respect the CAF theory has proven to be an good tool to actively and deliberately apply these opportunities in the FS MF and therewith increasing its influence and ensuring the future of FS.

7.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, recommendations can be made concerning the future of the FS concept and future research. This section first discusses the FS concept and concludes with recommendations on future research.

7.4.1 Forest School recommendations

The fact that the FS community has taken the initiative to form a National Governing Body to ensure the quality of FS practice and to create unity among the FS actors, is a step in the right direction for the survival of the FS concept. However, this strongly depends on how it will function within the FS community and within the English society. In this respect it is important that issues on power, decision making and execution, and conflict of interests are dealt with.

Furthermore it is important there is consistency in the way FS is put into practice and meets certain FS standards, standards that apply on both FS session and FS trainings. For this to happen it is important that the identified FS MF defines the core values of FS but at the same time remains flexible in the way it can be put into practice.

Since we live in a constantly changing world it is important that the FS MF is adapted to these changes so that it keeps connected to the FS actors and the people in England. For this to happen there should be awareness that the FS MF can and should be actively and deliberately shaped to ensure many children, many people can benefit from its existence.

7.4.2 Research recommendations

By identifying different frames among FS actors and the formulation of a potential FS MF, this research can (and should) be regarded as a first attempt to provide clarity in the situation surrounding the FS concept. The recommendations for future research are presented below.

- Since not the entire range of FS actors participated in this research, future research should therefore focus on the FS actors who did not participate in this research, completing the picture.

- Future research should further detail the differences between FS actors with respect to the way these differences can compromise the future of FS.

- This research only included FS actors and no one from outside the FS community. There is a need for future research on that account also with respect to how a National Governing Body is perceived by society. Obviously on the condition a National Governing Body exists.

- There appears to be a demand for scientific research on the effects of FS, especially on the long term effects. Future research could focus on this. It should not only focus on the effects on the development of children but should also include if, and if so, how it affects the level of nature awareness.

- Finally further research, and also the findings of this research and the recommended future research, can contribute in the development of FS standards.

7.5 Reflection

This reflection concerns how the research was conducted and reflects on the theoretical framework. This first section discusses the reflection on how the research was conducted followed by the reflection on the theoretical framework.

7.5.1 Empirical reflection

This research is only a first step in the overall mapping of the situation surrounding the FS concept in England. A limitation of this research lies in the fact that no FS actors have participated who were labelled as 'poor quality' FS actors by the respondents. The reason they are not included is twofold. In the first place actors were seldom mentioned by name by the respondents, making them hard to approach. Second, time and budget constraints left no room to include these actors in the research. Another limitation is caused by the fact that no respondents were found who are involved with FS but operate from outside the FS community, such as insurance companies and policy makers from (local) governments.

There also are some limitations with regards to the interviews and these are listed below.

- There was clear evidence of mutual criticism between the respondents, this criticism was not always (almost never) spoken about in so many words. During the interviews, the balance between keeping a pleasant conversation and getting as many useful (sensitive) data as possible often led to a situation in which not the most was made out of an interview.
- In transcribing the interviews it was noticed that in some cases the respondent was about to offer valuable information but this was not as such noticed by the researcher and a following question was asked.
- The personal interest of the researcher in the subject may not have contributed to his critical attitude in the interviews.
- For the transcribing of the interviews, special speech recognition software was used. It turned out there were many errors in the transcript so a lot of time was lost in the replay of the audio tape to find out the exact wording.
- One of the interviews took place in a public location with lots of background noise, thus it was difficult to hear some parts of the interview.

- The interview questions could have paid more attention to the concepts of resonance and influence.

7.5.2 Theoretical reflection

The applied distinction between the interactive and cognitive approach has proved to be useful in the identification of the existing themes among FS actors prior to the research (see 3.1). This is especially because it created awareness that the reason why actors got involved with FS was because of what they did before the FS concept was introduced and that these motives (themes) therefore can be regarded as already existing schemas.

However in the rest of the research the differences between these two approaches have added little value. This is primarily because in this research there was a strong connection between the two approaches with respect to how already existing schemas were influenced and reshaped by the interactions between FS actors. In this context the causal stories described by Deborah Stone (1988) proved to be helpful in the way that there can be a difference between views of FS actors have on the FS concept and the actual stories they tell.

Finally the CAF theory proved to be of good use in assessing the FS MF. The only difficulty was caused by the fact that it was not able to assess the *functioning* of the identified FS MF since it only exists in this research. This has caused that the distinction between the FS concept and the identified FS MF has not always been clear. However, this also showed that the CAF theory can serve as a tool for research on how a concept similar to FS functions in society without the presence of human agency. Finally the concept resonance as a variable feature of CAFs proved to be useful in looking at the implications of the findings from this research for the development of FS. There is a good possibility the CAF theory can serve many purposes other than the context of the Social Movement Theory.

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Annex 1 Interview Script

Frame Identification

What are the different frames of FS used by the actors involved in England and what are their differences and similarities?

- Could you tell me how and why you are involved with FS?
    o What is your motivation?
- What is the value of FS?
- What specific problems does it resolve?
- What goals are you trying to reach with FS?

- Can you give a description of what a FS really is?
    o What forms the origin of the concept and how was it introduced in the UK?
    o (Does a FS programme fit in the national curriculum? Why (not)?)
    o Is there an initiating authority/policy? E.g. an (local) educational authority?

- Which of these aspects is most/less important to you in relation to FS?:

    ▪ Nature Conservation

    ▪ Didactic/Development of 'child'

    ▪ Health

    ▪ Financial

    ▪ Social

    ▪ other

- Can you link the actors that are involved with FS to these aspects?

Frame analysis/ frame interaction

-         Do you think there are differences of opinion on what FS is, what it is good for and how it should be implemented?
-         What are the most important differences about?
- Are these different opinions represented by different actors involved with FS?
    - o Who holds compatible and incompatible views? (are there dominant views?)
- How would you rank the different views in terms of importance(dominant frames)?
- What is definitely not a FS ?

- Who is your target group?
- Who is not your target group?
- Do you see 'your perspective' as flexible/inflexible? Is it open for other perspectives? And why?
- Do you think it would strengthen your way of working with FS if you could get other target groups involved?
    - o If yes, which target groups?

- Have you ever thought about actively changing your perspective to FS?
- Which of the aspects is important to FS with a different perspective on FS?
- Can you rank these aspects in terms of occurrence/importance?

- Are there FS with a different perspective you collaborate with?
- Are there FS you would like to collaborate with? And why?
- Are there FS you would not like to collaborate with? And why?

- What are the main obstacles in practicing FS?
- Do you think there is a need for a 'widely accepted FS perspective?
    - o If yes, why and what would it look like?
    - o If no, why not?

- Is there a development/trend in the FS concept?
    - o What drives this development?
- How do you see the future of FS? (economic crisis, funding?)

Annex 2 Overview Forest School Actors

Overview FS actors who participated in the research.

Name	Organisation	Location	Category
Liz O'Brien	Forestry Commission	Throughout England	Respondent
Liz Mangraw	FS leader Hind Leys Pre-school	Loughborough	Informant
Louise Ambrose	Communication officer IOL FS Special Interest Group	N.A.	Informant
Francis Harris	Researcher Kingston University (landowner)	Kingston upon Thames	Informant
Bridget Frampton	Coordinator outdoor learning project Southend	Southend-on-Sea	Informant
Jill Wood	Head Barons Court primary school	Southend-on-Sea	Respondent
Helen Martin	Head Graffham Infants primary school	Graffham	Respondent
Jon Cree	FS trainer Bishops Wood Centre	Stourport-on-Severn	Respondent
Judy Powell	Manager Sussex Wildlife County	Henfield	Respondent
Andrew Thompsons	Woodland manager private estate		Respondent
Sara Knight	Researcher Anglia Ruskin University.	Cambridge	Informant
Sarah Blackwell	Director of Archimedes Training	Sheffield	Respondent
Nick Wale	Director Forest School Birmingham & Midlands	Stourbridge	Respondent
Stephany Kimsey	Milton Keynes Council, Forest School Project	Milton Keynes	Respondent