Conference or Workshop Item

Title: Still talking about inclusion? Carving new spaces between policy and practice

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Still talking about inclusion? Carving new spaces between policy and practice

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The poles of the debate

1997

We want to see more pupils with SEN (special Educational Needs) included within mainstream primary and secondary schools.’ (Green Paper, Excellence for All Children, DfEE, 1997)

Inclusion as Mainstream

2011

We will remove the bias towards inclusion (Green Paper, Support and Aspiration, Department of Education, 2011)

Inclusion as Bias
What then?

An impossible dream?

Beautiful but unachievable?

It works, but only in theory?

A school open to all is not only a right of each child, but also everybody’s responsibility. An inclusive school is an act of social and human responsibility.
Content

1. Contextualising inclusion

2. Definition and identification of key principles and challenges

3. Towards and inclusive pedagogy

4. New spaces
FROM SEGREGATION TO INCLUSION: 1960-2013
Brief historical journey: 1960-2013

1960-1980: Human rights, policies against segregation
1980-1990: Mainstreaming
1990-2000: Global trends
2000-2008: Personalisation
2008 - ...: Economic crisis and the need to build a cohesive society

From segregation to integration
From integration to inclusion
Education as human capital: the need to build a viable and competitive workforce
Schools and their communities: the children at the centre of their education
Austerity, development and counter-resistance
Development of Inclusion related policies

Historical development

1944
Divisive school system; 11 categories of disability

1978
Towards integration; coinage of the term special educational needs

2003
Focus on children’s wellbeing; personalised learning; pedagogical and social inclusion; return of some form of classification of disability and SEN

2011 …
Radical review:
• New classification system;
• Education, Health and Care plan
• More power to parents and less power to local authorities

Education Act 1944

Warnock report

Every Child Matters

Support and Aspirations

Every Child Matters
Be healthy
Stay safe
Achieve economic well being
Make contributions and progress
Achieve

Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability
A consultation
Tensions within school reform policies

Case 1

Inclusion → Attainment

Case 2

Inclusion → Attainment

COMPETITION

COLLABORATION
DEFININING THE TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT
How shall we define ‘Inclusion’?

*Education of children with disabilities in the general school system* (Department of Education, 2013)

Is this definition appropriate? Justified? Inclusive?
## Alternative definitions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<td>Being a full member of an age-appropriate class in your local school doing the same lessons as the other pupils [...] (Hall, 1996)</td>
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<td>Inclusion can be understood as a move towards extending the scope of ‘ordinary’ schools so they can include a greater diversity of children (Clark, Dyson and Millward, 1995)</td>
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<td>Inclusion describes the process by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individuals by reconsidering its curricular organisation and provision (Sebba, 1996)</td>
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<td>Inclusive schools are problem-solving organisations with a common mission that emphasises learning for all students (Rouse and Florian, 1996a)</td>
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In Florian, L. (1997)
Key principles of inclusion

**Celebrating diversity**
Diversity is part of the nature of the human condition.

**Ensuring active participation**
Inclusion is not placement in a classroom or school. Being inclusive demands a continuous effort to ensure children’s active participation in their learning and social life.

**Developing collaborative practices**
Inclusion is not the result of a single heroic person working against all odds. It is the result of ongoing collaborative engagement of all interested parties.

**Imagining a different school**
An inclusive school is a school that thinks and acts differently, which learns from itself and promotes change and development.
Putting principles into practice: some challenges

Principles

- Celebration
- Participation
- Collaboration

Challenges

- Resources
- School leadership, management and administration
- Policies
- Staff professional development

Attitudes towards diversity, whether disability, and/or social economic or cultural disadvantage

Dilemmas of classification and use of resources
Statistical data: number of children with SEN

1.62 million children classified with SEN (19.8%) in 2011-12 (DfE, 2012)

226,000 with a statement of Special Educational Needs

1.39 millions with SEN (School Action/School Action Plus) - 94% enrolled in mainstream school

• What does these data tell us?
• Are they reliable?
• Are they useful?
• What are they based on?
• Do they reflect reality?
The use [and abuse] of categories

Categories serve to identify:

1. patterns of exceptional child functioning relevant to education,

2. underlying disorders, disabilities or impairments relevant to child functioning in education,

3. kinds of exceptional placement and general provision (by location, kinds of resources allocated), and

4. kinds of curriculum design and content, and teaching strategy. [Norwich, B., 2007]
More to the point ...

‘they reflect administrative, placement and resource allocation decision-making and not necessarily categories of learner characteristics that have pedagogic relevance’ (Norwich & Lewis, 2005:4)
WHICH ‘REALITY’ DO CLASSIFICATIONS REFLECT?
Assessment and identification of SEN

(1) A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

(2) A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she

   (a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
   (b) has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

(4) A child or young person does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been spoken at home.
The impact of children’s age

- Who has a difficulty here?
- What would the consequences be of identifying early a child as having SEN?

http://www.education.gov.uk/lamb/module4/M04U02.html
Variation in the identification of SEN: school phases

Age | 7 years | 11 years | 17 years
--- | --- | --- | ---
Speech, communication and language difficulties | Moderate learning difficulties | Behavioural difficulties

http://www.education.gov.uk/lamb/module4/M04U02.html
CARVING NEW SPACES FOR INCLUSION: FROM ASSESSING NEEDS TO BROADENING CAPABILITIES
Education should be ...

‘... the site for the unthinkable, the site for the impossible’ [Bernstein, 2000:30]
The nature of inclusive pedagogy

1. A shift in focus from one that is concerned with only those individuals who have been identified as having ‘additional needs’, to learning for all—the idea of everybody (not most and some);

2. Rejection of deterministic beliefs about ability (and the associated idea that the presence of some will hold back the progress of others); and

3. Ways of working with and through other adults that respect the dignity of learners as full members of the community of the classroom.

Florian, L. and Black-Hawkins, K. (2011)
‘Lives, freedoms and capabilities’: lessons for disability and education

IF ...

‘In assessing our lives, we have reasons to be interested not only in the kind of lives we manage to lead, but also in the freedom that we actually have to choose between different styles and ways of living’ (Sen, 2009: 227).

THEN EDUCATION MATTERS BECAUSE ....

It is instrumental to provide the person with the knowledge, skills and understanding to make

‘intelligent choice[s] between different types of lives that a person can lead’ (Sen, 2003 cited in Walker, 2010:155)
Some tenets of the capability approach

- Equality and justice should be considered at the level of capabilities (Sen, 1979, 1992, 2009)
- A capability is ‘what people are effectively able to do and to be’ (Robeyns, 2005)
- It focuses on the freedom people have to choose opportunities (capabilities) and functionings (realised opportunities) that they have reason to value
- It rejects an evaluation of wellbeing based on purely subjective accounts of happiness (such as utilities), or income or consumption
- It broadens the informational basis necessary to make judgments on equality and justice
- It posits questions about justice as ‘realization-focused comparisons’ (Sen, 2009)
- It locates positive freedoms at the centre of the evaluative process
- It takes into consideration freedom as both an end of and a means to development as both the opportunity and process aspects of freedom (Sen, 2009:228)
Capability approach, disability & justice

‘Any substantive theory of ethics and political philosophy, particularly any theory of justice, has to choose an informational focus, that is, it has to decide which features of the world we need to concentrate on in judging a society and in assessing justice and injustice’ (Sen, 2009: 231)

‘It is particularly important, ..., to have a view as to how an individual’s overall advantage is to be assessed’ (Sen, 2009: 231)

‘Whether the disability arises from physical problems, or from mental handicaps, or from socially-imposed restrictions, the person with disability has an immediate reason for social attention in a capability oriented theory of justice, which she or he may not have in other approaches, including in utilitarianism, the Rawlsian theory of justice, and the opulence-based welfare economics’ (Sen, 2009, 23–24 cited in Biggeri et al, 2011: 1).
Disability and SEN on a continuum of disadvantage

Impairment

Disability/SEN

handicap

Deprivation/limitations of

functioning

opportunities

potential
Justice and the distribution of provision: a capability based argument

• Ways in which provision is determined and distributed do not take into account the broadening of capabilities

• Provision is based on the fulfillment of externally determined ‘desirable outcomes’ and problematic identification processes

• The distribution of resources making up the provision is determined by different theories of justice which while necessary are not in themselves sufficient to develop functionings and capabilities

• Therefore the present system is only partially just and thus the capability approach is necessary, albeit not sufficient, to broaden our evaluative framework
Provision: converting resources into capabilities

Provision is a collective term used to refer to the material, financial, human, and intellectual resources, which enable the child to have access to education, participate in it, and gain from it the necessary and sufficient means to flourish as an active adult member of society.
Desirable outcomes: what provision should achieve

• life and physical health;
• emotions:
• love and care;
• social relations and participation;
• control over one’s environment: agency, autonomy and respect, shelter and environment;
• education and knowledge;
• practical reasons 1: paid work and other projects;
• practical reasons 2: mobility;
• personal expression and recreational activities: “sense, imagination and thought”, spiritual/religion, sport and recreational activities. (Biggeri et al, 2011)
Factors impacting on the distribution and use of provision

- Social expectations
- Policy expectations
- Organizational expectations
- Individual expectations
Present educational provision process

Identification

- Medical based identification
- Educational based identification
- Based on what a person cannot do

Provision

Provision is used to ‘fill the gap’ between the limitations of the individual and the desired outcomes. Provision is compensatory

Desired outcomes

- No agreement on what a desirable outcome could be
- Usually chosen by others
- Externally evaluated

NEEDS
Present provision process: a capability critique

Beyond the dichotomy medical vs social model (Terzi, 2008), ICF model

Limitations of utilitarianism and resource based principle (Rawls, 1971; Dworkin, ) Biggeri, et al’s (2010) mosaic approach

Person centred approaches focusing on determining capabilities and functionings Bellanca et al’s (2011) dis-capability
Children’s evolving capabilities

‘A-capabilities’ (capabilities as abilities), the complexity of innate talents and of acquired competencies (skills);

‘P-capabilities’ (capabilities as potentialities), the set of imagined prospects or conceivable chances for improving well-being or alternatives that can be considered admissible’

‘O-capabilities’ (capabilities as opportunities), the set of actual, accessible or available chances for improving well-being;
Building an inclusive school: The four horsemen of the apocalypse metaphor

- Complacency: Accepting the status quo without questioning it
- Timidity: Being unable to take brave decisions which go against the ‘grain’
- Competence (lack of): Embracing the necessity to learn
- Risk aversion: Avoiding doing something new and different

Petford, N. (2013)
Final remarks

1. If the end is to be inclusive, then we need to learn to accept that we must become inclusive first of all

2. Becoming inclusive is a process where we learn to accept others different from us, and where through this ongoing learning process we can improve our pedagogical response through effective management and organisational structures

3. The inevitable challenges in the implementation of inclusive practices should be seen as primary responsibilities of a professional workforce

4. Continuing professional development is therefore essential not only to ‘upskill’ teachers and managers, but also to enable their active and responsible participation
Thank you for listening

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References


