

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SEMINAR

held on

Saturday 2nd March 1996

Organised by Avon Disability Equality Forum
and Avon Equal Opportunities Unit

This booklet is available on audiotape, in braille, on disk and in large and standard print from The West of England Coalition of Disabled People (see Contacts, page 56).

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Disability Equality Training, and How to Choose Trainers

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Reading and Resources ...

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Seminar Participants

"Post It" Comments and Suggestions from the day!

The Seminar was organised, and this Booklet was produced by ANN PUGH, on behalf of ADEF and Avon's Equal Opportunities Unit.

Inclusive Education Seminar

Held on Saturday 2nd March at College House, Brunel College of Arts and Technology

Programme

9.45 Registration, tea and coffee.

10.00 Chair's introduction -*PENNY GERMON*

Penny is co-chair of the Avon Disability Equality Forum, and is Co-ordinator of the West of England Coalition of Disabled People

10.20 "The Disabled People's Movement, Human and Civil Rights' and Education"
ANNE RAE

Anne is currently General Secretary of the British Council of Disabled People and an Executive member of the Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People.

SIMONE ASPIS

Simone is Parliamentary Campaigns Officer for People First, a national organisation controlled by People with Learning Difficulties.

10.40 "What is Inclusive Education?"

MICHELINE MASON and RICHARD REISER"

Micheline and Richard are both founder members of the Alliance for Inclusive Education, formerly the Integration Alliance, and authors of "Altogether Better' and "Disability Equality in the Classroom: A Human Rights Issue"

The Alliance for Inclusive Education is a national organisation of Disabled People, parents and allies campaigning for Inclusive Education and for an end to the compulsory segregation of disabled children in education.

11.10 Tea and coffee break

11.40 "The Development of Inclusive Education Policy and Practice in The London Borough of Newham"

LINDA JORDAN

Linda was Chair of Newham's Education Committee from 1988 to 1994 and has been involved in policy development from the beginning of Newham's commitment to end segregation in education.

BARBARA BURKE

Barbara has worked as a teacher in both "special" and mainstream schools in Newham. Currently as Assistant Director of Education -Learning Support,

she is responsible for the services that support disabled children in mainstream schools throughout the borough.

12.05 "Inclusion in Practice in Our School" - Holway Park Community Primary School, Somerset.

PAUL UPTON

Holway Park in Taunton is Paul's third headship, a post he took up three years ago after spending four years as Principal Lecturer on Education and Education Management at The University of The West of England.

CAROL BANNISTER

Carol is an experienced mainstream and "special" school teacher. She was one of the first Barnardos staff to move out of the Princess Margaret Special School to support their disabled pupils who were moving into mainstream schools. Carol coordinates support for disabled pupils who have moved into Holway Primary and two other schools.

12:30 Questions to speakers

1:00 Lunch

2:00 Discussion Groups:

LOCAL AUTHORITY STRATEGIES

Facilitators: *GERALYN MEEHAN AND LINDA JORDAN*

Geralyn is Principal Disability Equality Officer within Avon County Council. Geralyn is a disabled parent of a disabled child who attends a local mainstream school in Avon.

INCLUSION AND MY SCHOOL

Facilitator: *SUE RICKELL*

Sue is a Disability Equality Consultant and Trainer and is currently consultant to the Barnardos Somerset Inclusion Project.

SUPPORT FOR PARENTS

Facilitator: *PREETHI MANUEL*

Preethi is a teacher, writer and parent of a disabled child. Last year, after a four year battle with her local education authority, Preethi succeeded in getting her 8 year old daughter into school for the first time. Her daughter is now successfully included in a local mainstream school.

RACE AND SEGREGATION

Facilitators: *MILDRETTE HILL and SAADIA NEILSON*

Mildrette is a student barrister and research writer. She is a Disability Equality Trainer, co- founder of the Black Disabled Peoples Association in London and is a founder member of The Black Spectrum.

Saadia is a Disability Equality Trainer and Consultant and a member of The Black Spectrum, a national organisation and consultancy of Black Disabled People.

INVOLVING ORGANISATIONS OF DISABLED PEOPLE Facilitator:
IAN POPPERWELL

Ian is a founder member of the West of England Coalition of Disabled People and currently works as Disability Equality Officer within Avon Social Services and as a Disability Equality Trainer.

3.00 Tea and coffee break

3:30 Questions to panel: -

Panel *SIMONE ASPIS*

GERALYN MEEHAN

RUTH PICKERSGILL -Ruth is a former Principal Equalities Officer within Avon County Council and is currently Director of the West of England Centre for Integrated Living

ANN PUGH -Management Committee member of the West of England Coalition of Disabled People and Producer of the "Old School Ties" BBC2 Series

DAVE WALKER -Principal, Barnardo's Princess Margaret School/Somerset Inclusion Project in Taunton

4:00pm Chair's round-up

Introduction – Disability Equality in Education

The Inclusive Education Conference held on March 2 1996 was organised by the out- going Avon County Council Equal Opportunities Unit and the Avon Disability Equality Forum (ADEF).

The Avon Disability Equality Forum was established by Avon County Council in 1992 as the formal mechanism for consulting with disabled people about the services they provided. Representatives from organisations of disabled people elected disabled individuals and a minority of organisations for disabled people came together to meet with Councillors on the Disability Equality Advisory Review Sub- Committee, known as DEARS. The mechanism was comparable to that which was established to represent Black people.

In 1991 Avon County Council adopted its Disability Equality Policy after persistent campaigning by disabled people. In doing so it showed itself as a progressive authority on Disability issues, it was the only local authority to have such a policy throughout England, Scotland and Wales. The policy formed the bench mark for disabled people's campaigning at a local level.

With local government reorganisation upon us, ADEF and the Equal Opportunities Unit were keen to promote disability equality in the newly established Education Departments of the four Unitary Authorities and to build on the work that had already been started in Avon. Reorganisation brings with it an opportunity to develop services which promote choice, self determination and equality for disabled people, across all service areas including education.

The Disability Equality Policy has its roots in the 'social model of disability' and therefore defines disability as the physical, attitudinal and environmental barriers which prevent disabled people from taking up an equal part in social, economic and political life.

"Disability is the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organisation which takes little or no account of people who have impairments, and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activity"

(Avon County Council Disability Equality Policy 1991)

This definition has been developed from the work of the Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS). UPIAS was the first group run by and for disabled people to begin to define disability in this way. This is significantly different to the dominant view of disability which identifies disability as an individual 'problem' with our bodies. The emphasis is on the person to fit in and strive to be as non-disabled as possible. If we cannot 'fit in' then we are 'cared for'.

There is a panoply of services designed to look after us away from non disabled people, education is no exception.

The view that Disability is an issue of equal opportunities, and of changing society, underpins the work of ADEF and most other organisations run by and for disabled people. When discussing Inclusive Education it is very easy to get locked into a debate about segregated or "special" education. We did not want to do this. We wanted to stimulate debate and most importantly action on inclusion. In local authorities which have equal opportunities policies or are concerned to address disadvantage, there is an alternative.

Disability equality is about addressing the barriers within the school so that all young people including disabled young people can participate. Traditionally a disabled young person's impairment has been the reason why they cannot attend mainstream school. Instead, we need to be asking what is wrong with the school? How can we change it so that non disabled children can benefit from an education with disabled children and disabled children can learn about the 'real world'. We want young disabled people to be able to grow up alongside their brothers and sisters, with their peers, feel good about themselves and have aspirations about work, relationships, leaving home. Too many young disabled people miss out on this.

Inclusive Education is not about making it easier to cut the education budget, it is about transferring resources. It is also not about young people being let down or not having their needs met. It is about meeting access and support needs within a mainstream environment. Too easily such aims are dismissed as unrealistic or inappropriate. We have only just begun to explore the possibilities.

This conference draws upon the expertise, knowledge and experience of disabled people involved in the Movement who are working on Inclusive Education; Councillors, Local Education Authority personnel, teachers and support workers who are delivering Inclusive Education; parents, many of whom have struggled long and hard to try and secure mainstream education for their children -many are still struggling; and many other people who support the right of young disabled people, disabled children and adults to access appropriate and meaningful education opportunities alongside the rest of the population.

The Disabled People's Movement have been leading the call for Inclusive Education as part of our struggle for civil and human rights. It was significant, therefore, that the day started with a presentation from Anne Rae and Simone Apsis both activists in the movement through organisations of disabled people, Anne through the British Council of Organisations of Disabled People (BCODP), and Simone through People First. They talk about the Disabled People's Movement and education. There are many myths about Inclusive Education like so many of

the demands of the Disabled People's Movement. Micheline Mason and Richard Reiser from Integration Alliance discuss "What is Inclusive Education?". Following a break Linda Jordan and Barbara Burke from Newham in London demonstrate how they developed an Inclusive Education policy for the Borough which determines education provision in the area. Finally, Paul Upton, Dave Walker and Carol Bannister from Somerset show us all that it can be done. They discuss the practicalities of ending segregation and bringing about inclusion in a school.

An important part of developing Inclusive Education is consultation with disabled people.

We have often been neglected because our voice has not been required by legislation. Many disabled adults are yesterday's disabled children and have a vital contribution to make. LEA's need to find a way of being informed by a disability equality perspective through organisations of disabled people. Ian Popperwell reports on the workshop "Including Disabled People's Organisations". It is also important to remember that disabled people are affected by racism, sexism and heterosexism. These equal opportunities issues must be integral to developing education for all. It seems ironic that more and more service providers are beginning to acknowledge the need for Inclusive Education for disabled people when more and more Black young people are being excluded from schools. We need to be looking at the way education is set up and delivered, so that we can make it relevant to young people. Millie Hill gives feedback on the workshop discussing Race Equality in Inclusive Education.

As one of the Co-Chairs of ADEF I was pleased that we were able to put on such an important conference as one of our last opportunities to promote disability equality and the rights of disabled people. We were able to bring together many people, who between them have a vast experience of developing and delivering Inclusive Education. On behalf of ADEF I would like to thank all those who gave their time, energy and commitment to the day. I urge you to read about their experiences in this pack and make contact with them. Many are doing what others dismiss as impossible. ADEF has inspired many disabled people to get involved in the work of the Disabled People's Movement through organisations of disabled people. The West of England Coalition of Disabled People will be continuing to work locally with disabled people, parents, teachers, schools, governors and Local Education Authorities to develop Inclusive Education opportunities and work on anti-discriminatory practice through the Disability Equality in Education Network.

I hope you will find this pack useful and assist you in progressing the work which was started at the conference.

Penny German Co-Chair ADEF 1995-96

Opening Speakers

Anne Rae

[I can't] give you the history of the Disabled People's Movement within the space of ten minutes. But what I will try to do is to pick out the significant steps that we have taken over the last 20 years, which have brought us to the kind of seminar that you are at today.

The Disabled People's Movement I suppose started 100 years ago, and was initiated by visually impaired people who became quite active in identifying their needs for sheltered workshops and sheltered employment, and has since moved on quite rapidly into various areas of development, until perhaps 1981 which was a catalyst because that was the Year of Disabled People. Well it was actually the Year for Disabled People and the International Year for Disabled People, and I think at that point, disabled people started to worry about that word "for". "For" - who was it "for"? Who were doing "for" people? And a huge commission was set up headed by Lord Snowdon, and it was at that point that organisations like the Liberation Network and the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation decided enough was enough, and BCODP (that is the British Council of Organisations of Disabled People) was formed. It had no funding and struggled on with people working on a voluntary basis. But it started to develop political thinking based on what Penny has already indicated as the Social Model of Disability, and that came out of the thinking of an organisation called the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation, and that title was incredibly significant, because it is so easy to be "for" integration, it is so easy to be "for" so many things, it is perhaps harder to be against something. To be against segregation is what our movement is all about.

After the Union of the Physically Impaired started to identify that our disability, as differentiated from our impairment, was imposed upon us by the social structure and the physical structure of society, and that was developed into the Social Model. I am sorry if that sounds repetitive, but it is really important that people who don't know what the Social Model is really understands it, because it is the framework within which the Disability Movement works, and it is the framework within which we want society to start changing to accommodate disabled people in a fair and equal way. So, that happened with the identification of the Social Model of Disability is that disabled people were able to say once and for all "this is not our fault, because we have been bludgeoned by the medical profession, and all the other professions who did 'for' us, into believing that we were the problem". Penny talked about gratitude that we were expected to feel -and gratitude used to be drawn out of us in bucketfuls, and what has distressed me over the years is how certain words that should have pleasant connections for us have been corrupted by the medical profession and the other professions who have destroyed words like

'gratitude' and 'special' - how can we feel gratitude when it is asked of us for the things that constitute our oppression - what a situation to put people in.

From a personal point of view, to watch disabled people start to understand the implications of the Social interpretation of disability, from a personal point of view was quite magical. It was like watching people drop a burden and become free. It was watching people change from submission to a joyous identification of self, and the confidence in that, and I shall never forget that change because I have been around for long enough to see it happen. But more importantly, it has been a political tool, (well it's not more important, it's in parallel to the personal liberation). It's been incredibly powerful political tool. It has more or less changed the face of social work. I don't think there are many disabled people today who are subject to the appalling kind of visits from an occupational therapist that we used to get. They used to come with van loads of walking aids and other appalling things we couldn't use without consulting us, and dumping them on us to be left in our spare room. That sounds slightly trivial, but it's not because it was our lives. We were at the receiving end of other people's prescriptions. Our lives were being prescribed for us traditionally in that kind of way. We were never asked what we wanted or how we wanted it supplied.

The acceptance and understanding of the implications of the Social Model of Disability, that change in the perception of what was happening to us as a group, that change led us to consider our lives outside the personal experience of being impaired people, because I do believe that until this point of liberation, which has been fairly slow in some ways, but incredibly rapid in other ways, that this slow realisation has made us realise that mainstream lives can be and should be for us. I do have a little problem in knowing quite what the difference is between civil rights and human rights, but it seems to me that it cannot be right on a human level for a society to systematically oppress another group within their society by segregating them either through institutions where we are bugged because we are perceived not to be able to control our own home care, into schools that don't give us any sense of self or a curriculum which could empower us, or give us any sense of belonging to a social world. That cannot be just simply a civil right, that has to be within the huge embrace of human rights.

It seems to me that if disabled people and disabled children are going to be kept out of mainstream schools, they are going to be kept out of life forever, because it is in schools that you learn not only how Harold got an arrow in his eye, which mayor may not be relevant to the rest of your life, it gives you so much more. It gives you social contact, it gives you a sense of how this world operates, and if you are going to be shoved away in a segregated school to be let out at the age of 16 or 17, you are moving into an alien world that you are not part of and cannot be part of because you haven't learned and been part of the growing process that your peers have been part of. When I went to meet Alistair Burt, who is the new

Minister for Disabled People, we were trying to explain to him how appalling the new legislation which is supposed to stop discrimination against disabled people is. This new legislation actually permits discrimination, it actually prescribes for it, and nowhere does it prescribe more strongly than in the area of Education. I said to Mr Burt that if this Bill did not address the education issues of disabled people, how on earth did he think that young disabled people could grow into a position to take advantage of any concession that this Bill or any other Bill will provide in the future? Because it seems to me it is only the confident and the socially aware people who can take advantage of any legislation which is in existence. He said to me (and I'm afraid I burst into tears with rage and frustration when he said it) "other disabled people have been coming to me and saying exactly the opposite to you" and I called him a liar, because I do not believe disabled people were going to him and saying disabled children must be in segregated schools and I think that this is iniquitous propaganda that we are subject to ad nauseam has got to be challenged at every level.

But what I would like to say also before I close, is that apart from the absolutely essential participation of adult disabled people in this struggle to get disabled children into mainstream schools, we also need to make allies of parents and people within the education sector who understand what we are saying, because this is a struggle that maybe disabled people can't win on their own, unfortunately. If I may say in closing, it is my view that in this particular case there is nothing as true as the saying that I came across some years ago that *there will be no justice until the people that are not hurt are as angry as the people that are*. There are two people in this room who are allies beyond what I have ever experienced in my 20 years of being involved in the Disabled People's Movement. They have supported us to a point where they have had themselves put in jail, and I think we should appreciate that, and I would really appreciate it if Joe Whittaker and John Kenworthy would stand up.

Simone Aspis

The first thing I want to say is that I am actually a Special School survivor myself - I think that is very important to say -I survived 10 years in a residential Special School. So I speak from personal experience, and I would like to share that with everybody in the room.

Yes, like the first speaker, 10 minutes to explain the injustice in the Education System is a very hard task to do, and I will concentrate on what is happening now, rather than the history of the development of the legislation that has compulsorily kept disabled children out of mainstream schools.

Before I start to do that, I need to state that people with learning difficulties are part of the disability movement, we support the Social Model of Disability, and we

would expect our needs to be incorporated for us, alongside the needs of disabled people without learning difficulties.

So what is happening currently with regard to the inclusion of disabled children in mainstream schools? Well, we have what we call the 1981 Education Act. Great piece of legislation in theory, supposed to allow disabled children, including children with learning difficulties, to be able to be assessed on their individual needs and then have their support provided for them by the Local Education Authority, within a mainstream school where the support can be given -where parents actually have for the first time the right to choose where their child goes to school. All well and good, however Baroness Warnock had also said there would always be a place for "Special Schools", "special" places for children with "super-special" educational needs. So therefore, the framework of the 1981 Education Act, the framework itself, didn't encompass real Inclusive Education for disabled children.

We (as disabled people) start from the premise that every child, however severe their impairment/learning difficulty/emotional behavioural difficulty is, has the right to be included in a mainstream school.

So what stops the 1981 Education Act being fully implemented and being able to allow that philosophy to be implemented. Well, Statements (we are all familiar with those, aren't we) -if you are seen to have 'extra educational needs' that your mainstream school cannot provide, you have a stamp on you. That is the first thing. It says "you are disabled". Then, you go through the whole process, which I am sure parents, allies, teachers, organisations are familiar with and you have to try and justify what kind of support your child needs, in order to have the human right to go into a mainstream school. We all know that the Statements are resource-led rather than needs-led. So it is all about what can the Local Authority provide for you" in order for your child to go into a mainstream school and be supported, rather than what the child needs in order for that inclusion to happen. We all know about the delays - 6 months? - we all know that children can learn a lot in 6 months, therefore when the Statement comes into place it is out of date anyway, because children move on. That is, if you are lucky and you do get it within six months. We know some disabled children have to wait two or three years.

One of the things about the Statements is that disabled children should actually have an input. After all, they spend 8 hours a day (approximately) in their school every single day - don't they have something to say about what they would like to see, what kind of support they need, and how that can be supported?

What about the conditions, if you are lucky enough to get your child into a mainstream school? Is it necessary for the child is the first question - that is the first thing you have to prove, is that your disabled child should have the right to be

educated alongside everyone else. Does it affect other children's learning? What does that mean? Who decides that? Often, the Local Education Authority make those decisions without asking the disabled child and their allies, which are the children themselves, what is best for the disabled child. So therefore, Local Authorities often ask professionals about whether these two conditions are being met, rather than the disabled child and their allies, and I keep saying that because they are the ones that can give evidence to support that inclusion does work.

Efficient use of resources - how can we put a price on disabled children being included in mainstream schools? We don't put a price on non-disabled children, so why should we put a price on disabled children being included in mainstream schools? We know that the Government don't support this as a human rights issue. Why wasn't it put into the Disability Discrimination Act. The right for disabled children to be included in mainstream schools was totally ignored, so therefore they don't see this as a human rights issue.

So what are the effects of children being excluded from mainstream schools? Well, as Anne said before, children get sent to Special Schools: - there they learn that segregation is happening all their lives. A lot of children who go to Special Schools go on to sheltered workshops, sheltered day centres, adult training centres, residential homes, psychiatric hospitals, and so on -so it is a life of segregation. That is the main thing that you learn at a "special" school. You learn how to accept not being included in mainstream society, where there is plenty of choice, plenty of freedom, and plenty of opportunity out there if we all work together.

There is no point in just changing the 1981 Education Act for the 1993 Education Act, we need to change also the philosophy of the education system. Things like, competition between schools, examination results being the main priority that schools compete on, how many examinations can children pass or fail? Truancy rates -it doesn't matter whether you manage to keep children who are truanting out of school or get them back into school, the question should be why they do it in the first place. The National Curriculum - it's very much based on academic achievement at every single level - there isn't space and time to do real thinking; where's the time for the development of social relationships, the development of people's individuality. Surely the purpose of education should be how we learn to be together and learn together and support one another, where is that in the National Curriculum? Where is the time to do that?

The education system as it stands now reflects the modern society very much based on the elitism where people on every level are being tested, selected and classified, so that the people at the top go forward and have the most choices and the most rights, and disabled children are right at the bottom. For us to really make a change in the education system it isn't just about changing the legislation, it is also about changing the philosophy of education which is based on the elitist model, and also

about changing the philosophy of society - that we are not here on an individual basis but we are here collectively, and I would like to share that with you.

Finally, I would like to say that we must also remember that the children who are excluded, who are Stamented, are the disabled children themselves, so therefore this is a disabled child's issue. This is an issue that affects disabled children directly, so we need to support them in getting into mainstream education, and also support them in leading the campaign to ensure that all children can be educated together and be part of the Disability Movement.

Thank you very much.

What is Disability Equality?

by Penny German, WECODP

Over the past twenty years the voice of disabled people has begun to influence local and central government, to different degrees. It is recognised that disabled people should be the people who are setting their own agenda, deciding the services we need and representing ourselves. The Disabled Peoples Movement has promoted the full participation of disabled people and the right to self determination. These demands have, however, been widely misunderstood and have resulted in changes which are not what disabled people are asking for but not as obviously unacceptable to an untrained observer. Many of the words that disabled people have used to express our demands now mean something different and something we do not support. This leads to misinformation and misunderstanding which does nothing to progress our aims or to assist service providers, employers, voluntary organisations to make informed decisions. It's important that we are clear about what we are not talking about.

Disability- Equality is NOT...

- Segregated/Separate Provision

Traditionally disabled people have been subjected to segregated provision across all aspects of life; education, employment, social services, community & leisure, voluntary services, transport, housing.

This practice underpins all services to disabled people and is based on what non-disabled people think we need. Disabled people have never been involved in deciding what's best for us. Segregation has prevented disabled people from living as equals alongside non-disabled people at all life stages.

- Integration

This is the term that disabled people use to describe *equal participation* with non-disabled people. However, over time integration has come to mean simply sharing the same space. For example, units of disabled young people on the sites of mainstream schools and youth clubs where the group of disabled people meet at the same time as the mainstream club but there is little participation and little regard given to equal relationships.

There have been numerous examples in youth provision where the non-disabled young people see themselves as 'volunteers' working with disabled people rather than peers sharing an interest or activity. Often a new project is described as 'integrated' which rarely means that it will be relevant to all people (disabled people and non-disabled people) but rather the target group is disabled people and non-disabled people are welcome to join in. The emphasis is on providing a different service to disabled people rather than addressing discriminatory practices in existing provision. Integration also places an emphasis on disabled people to 'blend in' where all difference is ignored rather than addressed.

- Impairment Specific

All disabled people have different access requirements even if they have the same impairment. Meeting people's individual access requirements can only be done by consulting people.

Traditionally disabled people have been separated by impairment; different institutions and different services for people with learning difficulties, people with a visual impairment, deaf people etc. Impairment specific services divide disabled people.

- Special Needs

There is a long tradition of describing disabled people's requirements as 'special needs'. This suggests our requirements are over and above what should be provided. Having something 'special' also suggests that disabled people should be grateful. Who decides when a need is 'special' rather than 'normal'?

- 'People first and disability second'

The traditional view of disability is that it is negative and tragic. There is a current view among many non-disabled people that the emphasis should be 'on the person and not the disability'. When addressing the discrimination disabled people face it is not possible to separate the person from disability. This is like suggesting that we should see women as people first and women second. We are disabled people, our experience is who we are.

Because we define disability as oppression we do not want it to be ignored or put second. It must be at the forefront of people's minds when addressing equal opportunities. We have chosen the term 'disabled people' as a political term to emphasise our inequality.

Suggesting that we should be 'people first' gives the impression that we are all the same. We are not all the same, we are different, we are disabled people. We want our needs addressed as civil rights and we want to be able to get on with our lives.

- Making all disabled people experts in disability equality

All disabled people are experts on their own experience and not necessarily disability equality. Most disabled people have not learned about the social model and equal opportunities and are not given a chance to learn about this perspective. Understanding and implementing disability equality requires specific knowledge and expertise.

Just because we are disabled people it does not mean that we can or want to 'represent' disabled people.

- Setting people up to fail

Disabled people should have relevant experience and expertise to do a job, paid or unpaid, and should have information about disability equality to make informed choices about services. Too often tokenistic gestures are the cause of projects failing and the setting up of inappropriate services.

- Dismissing Disabled people's organisations as 'un-representative'

The Disabled People's Movement, like all other civil rights movements before us, has been attacked from all sides in an effort to discredit a voice which is responsible for placing disability on the political agenda locally and nationally.

The disabled people's organisations are an essential part of disabled people's empowerment. They are not about representing the voice of all disabled people in the area, but many are about representing a disability equality perspective as members of a national and international movement. They are accountable to disabled people and our organisation.

- Only relevant to some disabled people

Disability equality is about addressing the requirements of all disabled people. If it does not then it is not disability equality. For example, there is a view that inclusive education is not appropriate for all disabled people. If this is the case then something is not being done which should be done.

Disability Equality IS ...

- Inclusion

Disabled people choosing to participate as equals at all levels t social, economic and political, where our identity as disabled people is reflected appropriately.

- Self determination

Self determination is about disabled people taking control over our own lives and making our own decisions about our lifestyles. To do this we need information, training and support from other disabled people.

- Collective identity

Disability equality is about recognising our *collective experience* as disabled people. Disability equality is about addressing barriers to all disabled people. To make a service or group accessible and non discriminatory to one disabled person means that it should be open and accessible to all.

Disabled people are all individuals with individual needs, wants and aspirations. What we share is the way we are treated, we all experience discrimination. Disability is therefore a collective concern about addressing discrimination which people with learning difficulties and people with sensory and physical impairments all share.

- Civil and Human Rights

Disability equality is about making sure disabled people's requirements are seen as not 'special needs'. Being denied equality and opportunity across all areas of life throughout our lives cannot be described as 'special'. The quality of life of disabled people and whether we should live at all is the subject of debate among non-disabled people. Our human rights are violated without question. We want our lives to be treated with the same value and celebration as non-disabled people.

- Disabled people

This term reflects our political position in society. We are disabled by the way society is organised. For example, we are not incapable of working, we are prevented from working. We are not incapable of going to school with non-disabled young people, we are prevented. We do not want this to be ignored, we want everyone to recognise this lack of status so that it will be addressed.

- Empowerment

Disabled people, like non-disabled people, are taught to believe we are incapable and have nothing of value to offer and we cannot be expected to live full and equal lives. This negative view leads to negative sense of self, low self-esteem and total lack of confidence. Empowerment comes from 'consciousness raising' by re-evaluating our experience as something imposed on us rather than inevitable. We can therefore begin to challenge our own and others' views and take up positions across social and economic life.

- Self organisation

Essential to empowerment is the right and the need for disabled people to come together on our own terms, to define our agenda, to gain mutual support and to represent our own experience. The right of disabled people to speak for ourselves collectively continues to be challenged rather than accepted as essential.

Disability Equality Training

by Penny German, WECODP

What is it?

Disability Equality Training (DET) has been developed by Disabled people and our organisations to facilitate an exploration of disability as a civil rights, equal opportunities issue. It is an essential part of any strategy towards change and implementing equal opportunities policies.

Traditionally Disabled People have been portrayed as victims of personal tragedy, where the tragedy is our impairments. Our impairments have been the focus of attention and are seen as the reason for Disabled people having 'special needs'.

Disabled people have been challenging this view and through debate, research, exploration, literature within our organisations and by disabled academics, we have developed the Social Model, or disability equality perspective. Disabled people have redefined our experiences as one of institutional discrimination -this means that wherever we turn, whatever we want do, services are designed to exclude us or they are underpinned by stereotypes, assumptions, and prejudice about our wants and needs.

Disability Equality Training is about exploring the history of Disabled people and the way society organises itself in a way which prevents us taking up full Civil Rights. We believe that disability can only be addressed if service providers, planners and policy makers understand the structural and institutional barriers (discrimination) facing Disabled people.

It is also necessary to explore the traditional views and definitions of disability which underpin the way disability is currently addressed.

Disability Equality training provides non disabled people with an opportunity to understand what it means to implement equal opportunities in relation to Disabled people.

DET is designed and delivered by Disabled people who are trained trainers. It is distinct from Disability Awareness Training which has been run by non-disabled people and often includes 'simulation' exercises (participants sit in wheelchairs and put on frosted glasses which is supposed to give an understanding of what it is like to be disabled).

We do not believe that such practices are helpful to disabled people or non disabled people. To understand disability means to understand the discrimination

we face like any other equalities training. To understand the experience of disabled people requires people to listen to us about our collective experience.

Experiencing institutionalised discrimination cannot be simulated. Sitting in a wheelchair or wearing frosted glasses conveys nothing but what it is like to sit in a wheelchair and wear frosted glasses. If it conveys anything else it is usually fear, pity and admiration.

Disabled people, regardless of our impairment (sensory, physical or learning difficulty) have a common experience of discrimination. DET is about action and behaviour which is anti- discriminatory and therefore addresses the barriers disabled people face.

What would a typical programme include?

- Exploration of institutions, systems & structures e.g. education, health, employment, housing and how they are organised
- Definitions of Disability
- Language and terminology
- Legislation
- Images & media representation
- History
- Simultaneous oppression (the experience of Disabled people who are Black, Women, Lesbians and Gay men)
- Exploring links with racism, sexism and heterosexism
- Exploration of specific speech issues through case studies (relevant to the group/organisation buying)
- Action Planning
- Evaluation

What training methods are used?

Like any *good* training programme the design aims *to* reflect a wide range of learning styles and therefore includes large and small group exercises, feedback, case studies, 'brainstorming', video, presentation.

Who Provides Disability Equality Training

At present there is no mechanism for individuals to book on to an existing DET although The Coalition hopes to be able to provide this in the future. DET needs to be bought in by a group or organisation.

Organisations of Disabled People like the WECODP and the WECIL can run courses or you can find a trainer through the Disability Equality Training Network (South West) (See Contacts)

How to find a Trainer through the Network

To find a trainer through the Network you need to write down what you are looking for and how much money is available and invite tenders. Your letter will then be circulated to all trainers who are interested in doing the work will then contact you. It is your job to decide who will do the training.

How much and how long

The cost of training can vary but is a minimum of £350.00 per day although rates can be negotiated according to the type of organisation e.g. Voluntary Sector, local authority.

Two days will provide the group with an opportunity to really consider some of the issues, particularly practical action. Anything less will only provide a basic introduction to the issues.

Notes from Presentations

The Alliance for Inclusive Education

Micheline Mason

Wonderful to see so many people here today. I'm going to start, I may sound as if I'm repeating some of the things that have already been said, but I feel it needs to be spelt out how the Medical Model works within the education system.

One of the things that surprised me greatly when I started doing this work was that people kept saying "but we don't have any disabled children in our schools -we have lots of children with special educational needs, but we don't have disabled children" by which of course they meant no children in wheelchairs as far as I could see. And of course they didn't have any because they couldn't get in! But there was a complete rift between the concept of special educational needs and the concept of disability, and one of the tasks that we have had is to explain to people that they are the same thing in our terms.

The whole special educational needs system has been designed around the definition of special educational needs, which are needs which are not normally met within the mainstream schools, so it starts off by creating the problem. Once they are not normally met you then have to find out what is wrong with the child so that you can meet them, and the whole system is geared to assessment, starting very very early for children in assessment centres and in nursery schools and even in play centres and so on. The professionals come in and start assessing children and labelling them. The point is to find out the name of whatever it is that is wrong with them, and you have to have the name or label because you have to know where to put the child. This is all pretty much fuelled and propelled by the medical profession, far more than any other profession.

In fact a lot of special schools are actually much more like hospitals and treatment centres than they are like centres of education. You send the child to the place where you get the specialists, and you put them all together so you get lots of children who can't speak together, in order to teach them to speak. This is the logic. It leads to working out whether we can be made normal enough to re-enter society. If you make it, you are allowed back in, and if you don't, you just follow the path for the rest of your life to the day centre and wherever that leads you. Society itself does absolutely nothing, except that it is taught that we don't belong. You are actively teaching children by this process that it is normal not to have disabled children with you, and that is a very very powerful message.

The Social Model, which we are working towards, starts from a different place entirely, which is that every child, every human being, is valued. That you define your own strengths and your own needs. Certainly when I was a child my needs were defined as being very fragile, needing lots of protection -whereas if I had been asked what my needs were they would have been to have friends and to get out and have fun, and they were actually worlds apart, they went in opposite directions, and they led to completely opposite solutions. In the Social Model, you wouldn't be thinking about an outcome based on whether or not we can get this child walking, it would be an outcome based on "what kind of life do we want this person to be living when they are 25?", so that you are actually planning a positive future and then working out what you need to be putting in place to enable that future to happen.

This doesn't happen, I want you to know, this does *not* happen within the special educational system. The future is not thought about. Parents are told "Don't think about it. Think about tomorrow". The basis for that is that doctors can't foretell how much better you are going to be when you are 25, so what's the point of thinking about the future, because you don't know what you will be able to do.

This little bit is for the LEA officers in the room. The way the Medical Model is institutionalised in special educational practice is in the concept of the continuum of needs, which starts off with the child getting some help in its ordinary classroom, more help from the special educational needs coordinator, or more help from the local authority putting extra resources into the school. If all that doesn't work then the child is then on the path to being removed from the school, and the whole assessment process is kicked into action. The point of it is that the child is moved to the resources -that is the point. And until we lose and forget and change this concept of the 'continuum of provision' and throw it away and put in a new concept, segregation is always going to happen, because that is where the resources are. The problem, it seems to me, for many people is a complete lack of imagination about how you move the resources from that concept into a new concept, which is what we would call a 'constellation of services'. You first of all ask the parent and the child where they want to go to school, and you find out whose class they are going to be in -then and only then you bring in all the support services. So you ask the question "What do you need as a teacher to enable you to teach this child, and to provide whatever else the child may need?" and then you build a package, far more like we are developing in adult services -it may include physiotherapy, it may include specialist teaching, it may include your grandpa coming in, it may include all kinds of things that will build a package around the child, and you bring the services *to* the child -that is the main difference. You have to be able to do that, you have to be able to release those resources. Currently eight-tenths of the entire special education budget is spent on the children in segregated schools, who are less than 2% of the children that need the resources.

So there is a real issue about resources -it isn't that there aren't any, it is where they are going that is the problem, and how we release them from this 'concrete' model into a 'fluid' model.

It is very useful that we use the words to mean the same thing.

Oppression

'Oppression' isn't just mistreating somebody. Now, I can hit Richard over the head with a stick, and I would be mistreating him but I am not oppressing him, because nothing in society would condone what I had done -if I had hit him hard enough I would have got arrested for it. However, there is mistreatment which is condoned by society, and that is the difference. So oppression is the systematic mistreatment of one group of people by another, which is reinforced by the laws and the institutions of the land.

Segregation

Segregation is a system in which a parent of a child who is disabled, in order to get the educational provision necessary for the child, is compelled and that is the important word, to engage in a legal process in which she or he must give up the right to choose a mainstream school. Once you start the assessment and statementing process, the parent does not choose where the child goes to school, the local authority has to make the final decision. We do not have choice –don't get fooled in this argument that there are disabled people who choose to go to segregated "special" schools. They can't make that choice at the moment, any more than they can make the choice to go to a mainstream school.

Integration

Integration is the word which we used to use, which we are now dropping. Disabled and non-disabled people sharing a common space or activity, usually initiated, designed and controlled by non-disabled people. So we put them on the bus on Monday, and we take them to the nice, mainstream school and they play for two hours with the normal children and then we take them back to the special school, and that is our integration project. And it doesn't work that well because they still seem to stay in separate groups -we don't understand why. Or, well integration is alright for those disabled children that can speak and can follow the curriculum, but it isn't alright for those children that have complex needs where you need specialist teaching, so we have selective integration, still based on the Medical Model and how severely disabled the child is.

Inclusion

The last thing I want to talk about is inclusion, which is a much harder thing to define, and I don't think we as yet can say it is anything more than something we are working towards, because it is actually a much greater thing than talking about

any one group of people. Disabled young people are excluded by law from many mainstream schools, but other children are also excluded by law from other mainstream schools, and we are talking about all of them. What we are actually talking about is a system based on another philosophy, which is basically an 'all for one and one for all' philosophy - if I fail then we have all failed, or if you fail then I fail also - it is certainly not the prevailing philosophy at the moment. This was my attempt to define the word, which is a philosophy which views diversity of strengths, abilities and needs as natural and desirable, bringing to any community the opportunity to respond in ways which lead to learning and growth for the whole community, and giving each and every member a valued role. Inclusion requires the restructuring of schools and communities.

Inclusion is "the intentional building of community". The word intentional is very important, you will not do this without intending to do it and actively changing almost every single thing in your school. It won't happen just because you have brought the children in, because we live in an exclusive culture and our habits are very ingrained and we actually have to decide to do it differently in order for it to happen. It means facing the dragon of fear, facing the fear of change which is in all of us, and not justifying it as many many people do, but admitting it. Nobody minds that we are all scared and don't know what we are doing. What we can't accept is people saying "We're scared and therefore we won't do it", or "I'm not scared, I just don't think that child belongs in my class".

Inclusion involves bringing young people together to solve problems. Young people have the best ideas - they are the most easily won over because most young people see exclusion as the worst form of punishment, which it is in schools. That is how it is used - it is used as the worst form of punishment and that is how they experience it. So anything that they can do together to stop that happening, they will throw themselves behind it as long as you tell them what they are doing, as long as they are given the information to understand it.

Collaboration amongst staff and children has to be the name of the game, not competition. So it is a value-based change that we are looking at.

I think I will hand over to Richard there, who is going to talk a bit more about some of the practical ways forward.

Richard Reiser

Carrying on from Micheline, if we go back to the Social Model/Medical Model as applied to education, the recent legislation in the Disability Discrimination Act, which the government said was dealing with the needs of disabled children, is entirely based on the Medical Model. It is about identifying the needs of the particular child, and as Micheline has said, then slotting them in.

In order to break that, I can say there are many many teachers up and down the country who want to challenge that, and they need the encouragement of the Disability Movement, they need the leadership of the Disability Movement, they need the support of allies -officers and councillors in Education Authorities up and down the country to actually make fundamental changes. Because we aren't going to change this with a change of government. There is no intention by the incoming labour government, if I can call them that, or the government in waiting, to actually change this part of the legislation. If you read what Greg Pope (who is their spokesperson on "special" education) has been saying, he wants to keep all the "special" schools as centres of excellence, so there is a need to really start linking up all those people who want to fight for human rights for children in schools and we need to follow the Social Model.

This is my audit for inclusion - that any school, any institution that wants to start becoming inclusive, any mainstream school, needs to take on.

Checklist for Inclusion

- Access Audit of the School Environment
- Access Audit of the Learning Environment
- Ensure Disability Issues are in the curriculum
- Disabled people are positively portrayed – images
- Diversify the curriculum – variety of approaches
- Develop collaborative learning and peer tutoring
- Effective team approach for learning support and curriculum planning
- British Sign Language taught and used
- Accessible communication in school/to parents
- Be critical of disablist language used
- Challenge impairment derived abuse, name calling and bullying as part of school behaviour policy
- Involve all pupils in developing behaviour policy
- Intentionally build relationships
- Develop whole-school ethos on accepting difference
- Develop empowerment and self-representation of disabled pupils
- Have a school trips policy that includes all
- Have an increasing inclusion ethos in school development plan
- Increase the employment of disabled staff
- Disability Equality Training and ongoing INSET for staff and Governors
- Consultation with and involvement of all parents.

Clearly, first of all we need to look at the access arrangements, and we are helped in this in that SCOPE and the NUT carried out a survey of schools the year before last. It showed the percentage of primary schools across the whole country which

are accessible to wheelchair users. It is quite surprising (although I suppose not really) that 16% of primary schools have no space accessible at all, along with 7% of secondary schools. At the alternative end, having over 75% of their teaching space accessible, there are only 20% of primary schools and 8% of secondary schools. So, there is quite a long way to go there in terms of making schools accessible.

Obviously that is not the only form of access. We need access to learning, we need access to communication, we need other sorts of access. We need access to the curriculum for all. The school libraries - 48% in primary schools are accessible, 41% in secondary. The average cost of making a primary school accessible was £19,613, and a secondary school, which would usually need at least two lifts, £324,000. Altogether coming to just over one billion, seven hundred million pounds. It's not a lot of money spread over ten-years, it is perhaps the price of twenty helicopters that the government think nothing of buying in one procurement round.

So that is one of the things we have got to campaign for and change. Currently there is ten million pounds for the whole country being allocated this year for access. It is a drop in the ocean, and at that rate it will take us 170 years. So I think we have to move a little quicker than that.

We need to audit the learning environment - by that I mean we do have computers in every classroom now, we have to make sure those computers are accessible. Accessible to touch, touch screen programmes so that people with learning difficulties can actually use them. We need to audit the material that we have on those computers. We need to make sure that we have braille access to those computers, that we have speaking attachments. All of these things don't cost very much once you have the basic PC unit in your classroom. More and more schools are now wired up for the whole school from a central place within the school. That means you can actually access programmes in every classroom, to meet each child's learning needs. These things need to be assessed in this way.

Thirdly, we need to make sure that our history, the history that Anne Rae was talking about, is part of the curriculum. We need to make sure that our geography, the geography of impairment, why it is that 850 million people worldwide have impairments and that number is growing - that is part of the geography and history curriculum, it should be there. Our history, as we have been portrayed, in media studies and English needs to be there - those prejudices. This can all fit within the current national curriculum, there is nothing stopping any teacher in this country doing this now. They need pressure to actually do it. I am doing it, other people can do it. It is just a matter of attitude. We need to challenge some of the images that children pick up from the earliest time, for instance this picture here of Hansel and Gretel meeting the witch, of course she is disabled, she is blind, and she eats

children, and what do they do to her in the end, they burn her. Well we teach this to children at about the age of three and all children know this story and there are many many others which rely on these very negative stereotypes, schools do them as plays. Long John Silver - we need to make sure all these classical children's stories are not thrown out, I don't think we're saying that, but are critically evaluated and challenged, the stereotypes to be challenged, in the way that teachers have successfully done on sexism and racism. Not completely, but they have begun to take that on across the whole country. Where is the equal opportunities perspective on the curriculum?

We need to ensure that when we bring charity posters into our schools, well perhaps we shouldn't be bringing them in, but when they are brought in that they are not these type - "She is in the shadow of diabetes". This girl in a row of children, smartly turned out for school, probably never even realised she was in a "shadow" - probably since the age of about seven she had been injecting herself with insulin when she needed it, testing her blood - suddenly people who say they are collecting money for her, put this up all over Britain for four years and it's had a devastating effect on many children.

So we need to challenge the images in our schools, we need to challenge the curriculum content, we need to make sure that disabled people are positively portrayed. We also need to diversify the curriculum. As we know from our own experience, not everyone can pick up what I am saying without sign language interpreting, some people need other means of accessing learning. We need to take what we know as a Disability Movement and take that into the classroom so that a much wider range of ways of presenting materials are put forward.

We need to develop collaborative learning, all the evidence is where inclusive, and I mean Inclusive Education has been started, that there is a benefit to all. Children who have come from segregated environments - their achievement levels on whatever scale you want to measure it have gone up, but the more interesting thing which has now been proved both here and in America is that the non- disabled children's learning goes up. Now that tells us something about the process that is going on. Collaboration, peer tutoring, you all know that if you want to learn something, if you've got to teach it to someone else you are going to learn it a lot better. That is the way that collaborative learning actually works in our schools, and leads to effective and good schools.

I am pleased to say that the education establishment is beginning to shift on some of these points -we need to push them a lot further. We need a team approach, we need time for everybody in the team to actually plan, built into the school day. School starting later so that ancillary and support staff who aren't by their conditions of service required to stay after school can actually be part of that planning process. They are very important people in the classroom. They are the

ones who often give support. And we don't want them supporting just one child, we want them working in collaboration with the teachers, so that means planning, it means building it into the school's development plan.

We want sign language taught and used in all our schools as a long term goal. We certainly want it in the first tranche of mainstream schools now in every LEA, so that we can have the possibility of sign language users feeling they are not being culturally oppressed by being in their school.

We need to communicate with parents and children in accessible formats. How many school letters come home to parents in braille, on tape or in other ways. Very few in very few schools. But as we know, 10% of parents are disabled. So that means there is a huge range of needs - how many registers in schools keep this information so they know whether to do this or not? This could change tomorrow. We need to challenge abuse and name - calling in our schools; work I have done with teachers tends to suggest that more than half the abuse in playgrounds between one child and another is impairment derived ("stupid, cripple, loony, dummy, invalid, idiot, cretin, mutant"). This abuse is often not challenged by teachers. Why not? Because disability equality hasn't been taken on as an equal opportunities issue. We have to make that happen to make our schools livable in for all.

Behaviour policy -we already know that schools where all children are involved in developing the behaviour policy have better behaviour, but also that the attitude and ethos to all the children is much better and that has already been commented on by OFSTED reports. The model is already there. The school where the children are actually making the school rules, where they are deciding that they will accept each other and that they will not accept anyone who is different being made fun of, and where that is enforced by the children themselves are effective and good schools. That is also the way to an inclusive school.

We need to develop a whole school ethos of accepting difference, so it is not just the "special needs teachers" who are involved in this, it means everybody - the non-teaching staff, the caretakers, the dinner people, the drivers, everybody has to be trained for the inclusive ethos. That means money, it means disability equality training for all staff in education, and it means ongoing inset for all on methods of developing inclusion. It can't be done overnight, it can be done in ten years. And I mean it -for a whole LEA it can be done in ten years. We need to develop models for self- empowerment and self-representation for the disabled children in the school. They are not all the same, as some teachers like to say. Just as black people have needed to know their own history and have sometimes needed to meet together, so will disabled children in mainstream schools need to meet together and be facilitated in gaining their own strength. That we can do .+n any school tomorrow if we wanted to.

We need a trips policy that includes all. We shouldn't go to theatres that are inaccessible. After all, the lottery Fund is sitting there with 250 million pounds to make every theatre in this country accessible, and how many theatres have even bothered to put in for it? If all the teachers in all the schools said "we're not buying tickets in your theatre any more, it's not accessible" they would pretty soon put in for those grants. Schools have enormous buying power. Eight and a half million children in the mainstream schools. We need to get this message across to all mainstream schools and then the change will start happening.

We need to include and involve parents - I think we also need to employ teachers who are disabled and support staff who are disabled. A RADAR survey found that 0.1 % of teachers are registered or self-declared disabled. Not just green card, but prepared to even say they are disabled. One in a thousand teachers. Well back in 1978 Baroness Warnock said we should aim to encourage disabled teachers into school and it was only last year that government regulations on that changed, so that when you became disabled during the course of teaching you weren't automatically flung out.

We need to make sure that that is happening, we need to make links between the schools that are accessible in the LEA and the higher education establishments which are training teachers, so that those students who are disabled who get into teacher training are directed into schools which are accessible to do their teaching practise in, and then they will be taken on as staff. We can be pro-active -we can do these things.

I think you'd notice that apart from the first point I mentioned none of this involves resources – it all involves a change of attitude and challenging prejudice, challenging ignorance and changing the ethos in our schools. Governors, parents, disabled people taking on roles as governors, very important, can make this process happen, but we need to take the teaching profession with us on this – my view, talking to them up and down the country is that they are ripe for change they just need a push from disabled people. Not to go in and berate them but to go in and say there are positive things you can do, this is the way forward and then I think we will begin to see the change we want.

Thank you.

The London Borough of Newham

Linda Jordan, Chair Education Committee

It is really good to be here, it is good to see many old friends and meet new ones. You are here today because Avon County Council is going to be broken up and new local education authorities are going to be created. I am sure that there are many disadvantages to that, and I am sure that a lot of you are going to regret the ending of Avon as a local education authority, but you have got enormous opportunities as well.

There is always something very good about the sense of being able to start from scratch, and I hope that those of you in the room who going to be responsible for creating policies, taking forward policies and making new ones are going to use it as an opportunity to create Inclusive Education systems in your new local education authorities. You have got a big responsibility -I think anyone who is responsible for creating policies in local education authorities, has got a responsibility to end segregation. Before 1981 it was possible to end segregation, but certainly since 1981 the education legislation enables you to end segregation. It is not easy -there are lots of difficulties in the legislation -but you can, and if you want to you can end segregation, and I hope that you will use the new authorities as an opportunity to start the beginning of the end of segregated education.

How did Newham came to begin to work towards Inclusive Education? I am speaking from the perspective of a parent -my own child is disabled and I became involved in politics in a bigger way than I had hoped I ever would have to, when I realised that to get a system to be welcoming to her and all the other children who were labelled as disabled people and parents to be involved in the system. Because clearly without any personal experience people didn't really know how to proceed. So I speak from the perspective of a parent, and as chair of an education committee. I was a member of Newham Council for eight years and chair of the Education Committee for six years, so I am really speaking about how we have tried to change a system from one which was highly segregated to one which now has fairly low levels of segregated provision.

The first important date I think when trying to talk about the recent history of this in Newham is 1972, because it was in 1972 that Newham Council decided to create comprehensive secondary schools. The only problem was that they left out 2% of the school population, and ten years later when the 1981 Education Act became law, that issue began to be addressed because lots of people realised that we didn't have selection for the most able children, but it was necessary to say that the whole system really wasn't comprehensive because 2% of the school population was segregated because of a perceived impairment or other issue. On the whole, doctors had decided that some children had to go to segregated schools.

So in 1983 when the Education Committee looked at what it needed to do in response to the 1981 Act, the Council said yes, we think integration is a good idea and we would like to do something about it. The report that actually went to the education committee at that stage was several pages thick, and, as one of the speakers earlier this morning was saying, it was all about assessments, and categorising children and statementing, and hardly acknowledged the fact that this new Act was very enabling if the Authority wanted to end segregation. But it did at least recognise that there was this thing around, and that the Authority did want to do something to increase integration of children with special educational needs, as the new term became. For three years the Council had consultations, working parties, discussions, and at the end of that process in 1986 an integration policy was adopted. The important thing about the policy is that it was about ending segregation. It didn't promote integration, it was all about ending segregation. I think it was Anne this morning who said that that is actually what is important. That you can write all sorts of good sounding policies about we all believe in integration, but to actually do something means you have got to highlight the segregation, so the policy was about we recognise that segregation is wrong - let's do something about it, let's work towards ending it.

The important thing about having a clear policy was that it gave everybody in the Borough the message that we were going to be closing special schools, and in 1987 (I have put 1987- 1988 because it does take quite a long time to close a special school) the first "special" school closed, and immediately the opportunity arose to start creating a support service for mainstream schools. So, as the first special school closed, a learning support and behaviour support service was developed. Gradually as more schools closed, more resources were released to expand learning support in mainstream schools.

In 1992, we started to describe our aim as "Inclusion", the working towards inclusive education rather than integrated education. Because once we had got well underway with changing the structure, we had closed a number of "special" schools and there was now quite a good support structure in place, we realised that what this was about, eventually, was that every one of our schools (I think we have 90-100 schools) would be inclusive. We recognised that this was still quite a long-term aim, but that was the aim.

It wasn't just about children going into a mainstream school, it was about a school acknowledging that it should be taking every child in the community regardless of whatever needs they may have -that it was their responsibility to take in every child in the community. It was our intention that every school had got to radically change so that it meets the needs of all children. It was also a way of showing that all the equal opportunities policies belonged together, alongside one another, and that while we had different policies on bullying, refugee children, children with

English as a second language, race equality policies and so on, people could say "ooh, all these policies, all these policies". Inclusion was a way of saying that all these policies are all really a part of the same thing. They are about making all schools welcoming to everybody, and that you are there to value everybody as an equally important human being.

We created the pre-school service in 1983, because it was recognised that a certain point you have got to stop sending children to segregated "special" schools. It is very difficult in a transitional period to know what is the best thing to do, but it was clear that you had to start with nursery age children at a certain point and say "right, these children are not going to segregated "special" schools". The pre-school service was very important. We have now in Newham about 850 children going to mainstream schools who ten years ago would definitely have been segregated. A large number of those are children who started at three in their local nursery and have gone through the system knowing nothing else, and a lot of them now are about to go to college. We have got other children who were in "special" schools and have transferred to mainstream schools. Our aim really is that eventually every child will go to the school they would have gone to if they didn't have an impairment.

Barbara Burke,
Assistant Director, Learning Support

I want to add that in Newham we don't feel we have got it perfect, we don't feel we have got it right. What we are looking at is constantly changing and constantly reviewing the direction in which we are going. If you disagree with what we're doing, let me know and we will look at it because it is very difficult at a time of change to know exactly where you are going and what you are aiming at. We have a mission statement which says that the ultimate goal of Newham's inclusive education policy is to make it possible for every child, whatever "special educational needs" they may have, to attend their neighbourhood school and have full access to the national curriculum and to be able to participate in every aspect of mainstream life and achieve their full potential. This is where we want to get to, and there are a number of short term obstacles, such as the fact that we have a number of three-tier Victorian buildings which aren't readily accessible. We therefore have a strategic aim of what we do in the interim before we get to this point.

In the interim, we aim that every child attends a mainstream school. It may not necessarily be the one nearest to them; Newham is a fairly small authority geographically, so it means that every child can attend a fairly local mainstream school. If their nearest school is a three-tier Victorian building, and there is another school nearby that they can attend they may go there. So we have a longer term aim and an immediate aim.

At the moment we have two "special" schools (we did have eight, we've now got two) and the plan is to merge those two schools, then we will have one, and then we will review that one.

We have a number of support services; we have support services for behaviour, for learning, a service to support deaf pupils and a support service for visually impaired pupils. We have schools which have what we call enhanced resources - we have avoided the term units -we don't want children counted as being in a mainstream but in some building across the playground. We want them to be in classes with other children taking part in the same lessons. All the new schools that we build have provision within them that makes them accessible and the new secondary school that we are building will take children which many people consider the hardest to include which are those with profound and multiple learning difficulties.

We are setting up a project called Project Inclusion, and we aim to work with schools primarily to make sure that all schools are inclusive schools, to develop and spread good practice, to develop whole school approaches to inclusive education, to enable schools to develop their own responses and practices, and make sure that schools have development plans for inclusive education over three years.

I think one of the things that we don't get right in Newham, and we are looking at, is the right of children to talk and to be heard. That is another area where it is very difficult to change -we have a system where professionals have always done the talking on behalf of children. We also want to develop and provide a comprehensive programme of training and support for school staff and governors in the principles and practice of inclusive education. Training is fairly key and has to be at all levels. We are not just looking at training teachers, we are looking at training the non- teaching staff, we are looking at head teachers and all staff within schools. We are looking at training for councillors. We are looking not only at delivering training but involving other people in providing training, so it is a two way process. We want training to involve parents, parents groups and voluntary organisations.

We want to welcome all parents and all pupils. One of the difficulties is the well-intentioned school that says to parents "we would love to have your child but we really can't cater for their needs" and parents very quickly pick up the message that the school isn't welcoming. We want schools to make sure they have a "special needs" policy in place, that they have appropriate numbers of staff trained to support pupils, and that they are able to support all the pupils in the school's catchment area. We want curriculum planning which involves a differentiated approach to teaching, so that the needs of all pupils can be met. These are just

some of the ways in which we hope to move inclusion forward in Newham. We want to promote good practice. We want the production of inclusive education development plans, and we want as an LEA to have an inclusive education charter which sets out for pupils and parents the conditions it is hoped to achieve in every school.

Thank you.

(The London Borough of Newham have just published their "Strategy for Inclusive Education 1996-2001" -see Reading List)

Holway Park Community Primary School and the Somerset Inclusion Project

"Inclusion in Practice in Our School"

Paul Upton, Headteacher,
Holway Park Community School

I think quite a lot has been talked already about policy statements and the philosophy and so on. Much of our thinking at Holway Park - we call ourselves a community school - the word community actually does mean something to us. I think we very often have mission statements, we have rosy statements about what we believe in, which then often we choose to ignore. I think at Holway Park we really do keep looking back at some of the principles that informed our early thinking when we opened in September 1993. We keep reflecting back and saying "well are we doing these things? Does the word community still mean something to us?" and I think that constant reflection on what we mean by those words is very important. We were a new school in September 1993, in a new building, so things like access and so on for us have not been a problem. The term 'community school' for us means that if you go into the school (it is a primary school) at 7 o'clock in the evening you will see the car park even more full than it has been during the day, with all sorts of things that are going on at the school.

But I'd like to look at three main areas of what it also means in a day to day sense. The school *as* a community, the school *in* the community, and the community *curriculum*, (and in that sense what I mean by curriculum here is what we intend children to learn).

So thinking of the school *as* a community, as staff in our early days I think we talked a lot about the way in which we as a school value diversity within the school, and I am not just talking about the children, I am talking about the staff and I mean all the staff, not just the teachers, that we value that diversity, we see that as a strength, we see that as a resource in itself, that diversity. We are committed

obviously to providing for a range of needs, and that therefore will need a wide range of provision, and implied in that is what others have talked about, to do with differentiation not just in the curriculum, but in other senses too. To put that notion of the school *as* community in this particular context, it is very interesting to take children's views of what we have done in our relationship with Princess Margaret School, because children too, I think, are more able to talk about individual differences, and they are able to talk more easily about difficulties that they may be having because of those differences. Teachers too are much clearer, I think, perhaps in being able to talk about these issues.

Moving on to the school *in* the community, I think our ideal which we are way away from (well I think to some extent it is certainly my ideal) is that any child who lives in the area of Holway Park, (which is an area between the centre of Taunton and the MS, largely council estate on the southern part of Taunton), all those people who live in our area, all those children when they are born into that area, I feel should have a right to come to our school. And they should grow up thinking that ours is the school they will naturally go to along with all the other children that were born into that area. That is our ideal, and yet we are nowhere near that ideal, because of the children that we have in fact included from Princess Margaret School, some of them don't live in our area, and it was interesting to hear that in the Newham situation that is also the case, that as yet children are not necessarily going to their local school.

The community *curriculum*. In other words, what it is we intend children to learn, so our personal and social education curriculum, our behaviour policy, our bullying policy, our equal opportunities policy, as someone said earlier all these things need to link together, and inform the work that we are doing, in this particular case with children with physical disabilities, but also all children. I will just use an example - our behaviour policy doesn't specifically mention disabled children, but reflects perhaps some of our philosophy - "take care of yourself" and so on - we have the five "take cares". But you will see at the end of the first "take care" (and this behaviour policy by the way is not just for children, it is for everyone) very importantly it means that you have a right to be you, a unique individual. And then the second one "they have a right to be themselves, separate and different from you". So we are reflecting our thinking in all policies.

Carol Bannister,
Support Co-ordinator at Holway Park and two other Somerset schools

We are including disabled children, who in Somerset wouldn't otherwise be at mainstream school, they would have been at "special" schools. All the four children who have moved into Holway Park have joined age-appropriate classes in the mainstream school, and the aim is to maximise their independence and their ability to make informed choices.

We start from the principle that the children do the same work as the rest of the class, and that means on the whole following the national curriculum. If the curriculum needs differentiating that is my responsibility, although support assistants might actually do the differentiation on a day to day basis. Each child has a support assistant available full time. We have a team of six staff who work three staff with two children, for obvious benefits of staff and children being flexible and getting to know a range of people. I have a weekly planned liaison time with each class teacher, and the class teacher is an important person in all this - the disabled children who have joined the school have a class teacher, I am an extra person. We discuss curriculum issues, anything that we need to plan for in the weeks ahead. I also have a weekly meeting with the support assistants, and that is for information sharing, consultation, discussion, and they are part of the planning process, and we do value the support assistants and their work. They are very skilled individuals and it wouldn't work so well without them. They work in the classroom in a variety of ways -they don't just work with disabled young people, they work with small groups or with larger groups -and I know that the support assistants that have joined Holway Park have been invaluable.

The role of the support assistant is important, it is not that of a carer, it is an enabler and a facilitator. Although they do help with personal needs, it is absolutely vital that they know when to stand back and that they do know when it is necessary to intervene.

My role is a bit harder to define perhaps -I am a teacher, and I do teach children sometimes, but not in the way I used to. I take classes, which might allow the class teacher to meet with therapists or parents, and I work with individual children. I am the coordinator of the activities required to support inclusion for the individual children, and I am a focus and a liaison for the child, the parents and the other professionals. I am also a manager of the staff group of support assistants, and I feel part of Holway Park School too. The way I work is really flexible, and it supports what Micheline said earlier, about saying to the class teacher "what do you need to include this young person?" -I have to say it didn't start quite like that, but over the period of 18 months we have all got more confident. I do work in different ways with different teachers, but collaboration is always the important thing, we are always talking about what we need and involving all the children in the process. All the disabled children in the school have physiotherapy, we have Barnardo's physiotherapists that visit the school, the activities are timetabled in discussion with the children and the class teacher, sometimes it is individual, sometimes friends go along and help. Speech and language therapy, if it is needed is also much the same -very flexible, in the classroom or individual. And again I meet regularly with the therapists. We discuss the priorities for young people with them and their parents, and how best we can fit that into the school day so they are part of the school day. What I would really like to say is that it works.

I was really pleased to see Richard's list, because everything that is on there is what is happening at Holway Park School. The children are very happy and enthusiastic about it - all the children. All of the children who've moved from the special school have made progress, in education, socially, in communication, motivation, and most of important of all to them, they've got friends -all the disabled children have got friends who can talk to them, play with them. It works really really well, it is the real world.

Paul Upton

I do think it is very important that I should also stress the benefits to the school, as well as the benefits to the individual children, which are absolutely enormous. The whole presence of the children in the school has affected everybody. It is very interesting, for instance, when we talk to parents who come round the school with a view to bringing their children to the school and we talk about our provision for children with special educational needs, I think they really believe us, they see the evidence of what we are doing and they see a commitment to that which is demonstrated by our work with Barnardo's, which is very important.

The other thing that this has brought to the school is a team of committed and highly skilled staff, who can work with the children, all the children, and that has been of tremendous benefit. The signing, of course, and total communication that has come to the school.

But the real benefits are very very difficult to quantify, because the real benefits are how we are affecting a large group of children and their attitude to *society* generally, which will effect their life in the future. So that they will grow up having different attitudes as adults from the attitudes they would have had otherwise.

Finally, I must stress that we see ourselves very much as being part of a process, and a process in the context of Somerset, the observation has been made that Somerset is perhaps different in some respects from Newham. What is fascinating now, and it links I think to what Micheline said again about you go to a class teacher, and say the child is joining your class -what do you need? Now teachers are taking the initiative on that. They are saying "good -this is what I need" without being asked. And of course one of the things they are saying that they need is time, to spend finding out about things, researching things properly, discussing things with people, and time costs money. And it may be that as we move forward that is one of the factors we are going to have to consider, that we need perhaps to give class teachers more time to work on these issues. And time also, as Richard said, for the 'classroom assistants', or whatever we are calling those people, to do just the

same, because that in my experience is one of the biggest difficulties I have, is being able to pay those people enough money to do their jobs properly.

Somerset Inclusion Project

Dave Walker, Principal, Barnardo's Princess Margaret School

For many decades disabled children have been taught in separate "special" schools. However, in recent years increasing numbers of parents, disabled people, teachers and young people themselves have preferred that disabled children should have the right to attend ordinary mainstream schools the same as everybody else.

Inclusion of disabled children in mainstream schools; when it is resourced adequately, planned for, and where there is commitment to it; benefits every child. Because "Together we're better".

Benefits

The experience of promoting inclusion in Somerset has shown that:

- No matter how good segregated special education is, it can never be good enough.
- Children and young people gain MORE individual help and support in mainstream than in special schools because resources can be targeted directly toward each individual child.
- Children and young people benefit educationally, socially, emotionally and culturally from being in a mainstream environment.
- The importance of ordinary, everyday experiences, shared with friends, can effect positive changes and benefits for disabled and non-disabled children and young people alike.

The Present

For some years now managers and staff at Princess Margaret School have been working toward ending services which segregate disabled children and young people and working on ways to use the school's resources and expertise to create services to include disabled children in mainstream schools and colleges.

To date our successes are:

- Princess Margaret School will close in July 1996.
- A service, established in partnership with Somerset LEA, has been initiated and is currently working with 18 children and young people in 4 primary schools and 2 secondary schools.
- Independent evaluation of the inclusion service by the University of the West of England is showing the value of inclusion to children/young people, their families and the mainstream schools in which they are included.

- A service is currently being developed which will offer advocacy and inclusion – support to young people aged 16+ attending colleges in Somerset.

The Future

Currently (May 1996), negotiations are taking place with Somerset. LEA over possible long term arrangements for inclusion in Somerset.

Notes from Discussion Groups

Involving Organisations of Disabled People

Local Authorities have, over the last few years, begun to take disabled people's issues increasingly seriously through developing policies and corporate structures for consultation. It is fair to say though, that Local Education Authorities (L.E.A.s) have not tended to embrace the disability equality perspective or related *good practice so readily*. Education Departments rightly deal with race and gender within an equal opportunities framework often with associated Officers, whereas disability is generally treated as an issue of "*special needs*;" *'Expertise* is sought from non-disabled specialists and, if consultation takes place at all, the groups that do become involved in disabled people's education issues tend to be non-representative charities and groups of parents of disabled children. Schools will, if they tackle the issue at all, typically teach *about/Impairment* rather than *disability*, *have charity appeals for disabled children* and often bring in a disabled visitor to talk to the students about themselves and how it is living with their particular impairment.

The purpose: of this presentation is primarily to argue that LEAs and individual schools need to be not just involving but working together with Organisations of Disabled People in order to develop sound policies, a clear anti-discriminatory curriculum and associated teaching practices and to credit and value the experience of disabled adults, many of whom have themselves been disabled children. Furthermore, any work on disability needs to take place within a clear framework of anti-discriminatory practice with an explicit recognition of the simultaneous oppression faced by the majority of disabled people. "

So why isn't it happening now? Whilst disability is understood and dealt with as a medical problem, (an *inevitable* problem of the individual due to the impairment that they happen to have) we cannot expect to see much in the way of change). Equally, whilst the learning and access requirements of this group of children are defined as "special" - too difficult to meet in the mainstream, then a logical consequence is to provide special services run by "specialists". The expertise will consequently lie with such professional specialists, parents, voluntary (impairment-

based) organisations. It is only when the issue is recognised as one of institutionalised discrimination that possibilities for change emerge and with them, the shift towards recognising disabled people as holding the experience and expertise.

For L.E.A.s to work with organisations of disabled people, there will need to be a number of very fundamental changes that need to take place. There will need to be a commitment to the reframing of "special needs" into disability equality. It will mean focusing away from "individual need/problems" and starting to value the collective experience of disabled people, many of whom will have themselves been through the *special education system* and using this experience to shape current and future educational policy and provision.

Working together with organisations of disabled people will mean a movement away from valuing the *expertise of special needs professionals* towards that of disabled people themselves. This is not without its inherent difficulties, on the one hand, many people have built their careers within a special education services and hold a great deal of power in relation to disabled people. Equally, disabled people have been denied access to the knowledge and power to shape educational services. L.E.A.s will need to ensure that they make the process accessible to the disabled people involved and appropriate resources will need to be allocated.

Running parallel to such work, will need to be a whole strategy of positive action to recruit disabled Teachers and Educationalists. This will inevitably involve working with local Teacher Training providers so that they increase their own recruitment of disabled students. Without tackling the employment issue, any work on disability equality can very easily be marginalised and merely seen as *something that the voluntary sector does* and therefore something separate.

There will be challenges too for organisations of disabled people. In a climate of cutbacks within the voluntary sector, They will have to be clear about what they can and can't take on and pace themselves. Organisations will need to gain funding for the work and ensure that they receive training. They will need to take responsibility for equipping themselves with the information necessary to work on education issues and the knowledge of the practicalities of inclusion to be able to move forward. Disabled people are impatient, the campaign against segregation is a long-standing one and has only relatively recently begun to receive any attention other than scorn. Change is unlikely to happen at the pace that disabled people would expect, groups and LEAs will therefore need to work out clear and appropriate timescales together.

Ultimately, if Education Departments take action in relation to the inclusion of disabled children without working together with appropriate organisations, they are merely maintaining the same old patterns of power, expertise and exclusion.

Ian Popperwell

Involving Organisations of Disabled People Discussion Group

Recommendations to Organisations of Disabled People

Try not to take on more than we have funding to do. Develop Inclusive Education policies of our own. Use the term 'Individual Need' for all children, bin 'Special Needs'.

Recommendations to LEA's

1. All Education Officers at all levels must have Disability Equality Training, including Directors of Education.
2. All LEA's must have strategies for ending 'Segregation' and for Inclusive Education.
3. LEA's must value the experience of disabled people. Perhaps LEA's should enable disabled students to meet up, for confidence building.
4. LEA's should provide development workers to go into segregated schools and start to prepare students before they go to college or mainstream schools. Also workers go into colleges to prepare them for inclusion.
5. Ending Segregation should be a community responsibility and not just for LEA's to work on Inclusive Education.
6. Recruit disabled people as staff.
7. Fund Disability Equality Training for everyone involved.
8. Promote and advertise Inclusive Education.
9. Recognise and consult with Organisations of Disabled People, at all stages of planning, policy and practise.

Local Authority Strategies Discussion Group

The workshop began with a brief presentation by the facilitators. The presentation consisted of an overview of the current context for inclusion within the local area. This included a brief sketch of the sort of issues which had been raised by parents who had contacted Avon's Equal Opportunities Unit over the last few months.

Context 1996

Expectations and aspirations from Organisations of Disabled People

- Disability Discrimination Act - although it appears to have a limited impact on schools, an access audit is required and, if schools are used to by people in the wider community, they must be made accessible.

- Consultation is an expectation -whatever consultation mechanisms will be set up in the new authorities, Disabled people will expect to contribute to decisions about service planning in education:
- In the light of a Limited National Access budget from DfEE, what else can LEAs do?
- New perception of boundaries, following Local Government Reorganisation. This is likely to impact on LEA's perception with regards to encouraging local children to attend schools within the authority area.
- Review of equal opportunities. Reviews are likely to take place once EO policies have been agreed, so that services develop consistently with these policies.
- Concerns about funding e.g.: statementing, budget, transport costs.
- Concerns in education generally e.g.: class size, resources, local Management of Schools, league tables.

Issues Raised by Parents (since November 1995)

- My child's nursery is not physically accessible to me...I can't really be a partner in her education.
- I don't understand the information I've been sent, about my child's statement.
- The Education Psychologist said that my daughter would have to get used to being called a "spastic" at school, as all children get called names.
- My child's statement was started months ago. They don't seem to have done much and my child isn't getting to school/thriving at school.
- They say my child can't go to the school that I think she should go to. I've been told that I will have to go to an SEN tribunal as I can't use the usual school appeal system.

Recommendations / Main Points Raised

Participants raised the following issues which should be taken into account by Local Authorities in order to further inclusive education within their area.

- The Disability Discrimination Act will have an impact on schools as it includes provision concerning employment. Governing bodies can be taken to tribunal if they discriminate against Disabled people.
- Governors will need training, including Disability Equality Training, which provides scope for raising the profile of inclusive education.
- The Access to Work fund must be unfrozen. If it isn't, there will be significant barriers mitigating against the employment of Disabled people within education.
- The existence of strong Organisations of Disabled People led to the development of Avon's Disability Equality Policy. This has clearly underpinned

most areas of good practice. Policies in the new local authorities must be developed through consultation. Policy and practice which is consistent with Avon's Disability Equality Policy needs to be taken on.

- The development of inclusive education does not necessarily depend on having a totally accessible building. The most important factor is the commitment of staff and drawing on the expertise of disability equality consultants. The decision-making body and process must also have 'teeth'. Brunei College provides a good example of how a college has developed an inclusive policy - many young people from "special" schools have been integrated into the college.
- These are obstacles to inclusive education which may be encountered in existing segregated schools:
 - (i) the problem of inertia. 'Special' schools are proud of what they do and the ethos they have created.
 - (ii) parents' views must be taken into account; many parents may wish to protect their freedom of choice.
- Newham's approach was commended. It was recognised that considerable confidence, trust and understanding has to be built up and that major change cannot happen immediately. It will be critical to 'sign up' all stakeholders to a mission statement. It will also be important to do something practical in the short term in order to build an instant sense of success.
- Improving physical access within educational establishments will play an important part in facilitating inclusion. Bristol City Council's Access Audit has extended the criteria used by Avon. It was apparent from the audit that there is still considerable ignorance about access in buildings. Bristol City Council does not have one single building which meets part 'M' of Audit Commission Criteria. More information is required to build up long term strategies.
- It will be vital to involve disabled adults in all sub-committees in the four new Councils' structures. Disabled representatives must be co-opted onto every council committee, including Education. This will enable an input at committees, and sustain a presence to remind other members of the human rights issues.
- Closing 'special schools' is a long process. Everyone has to be consulted as part of the legislation procedure. Although the Department for Education and Employment may express concerns about 'rushing', it is vital that the new authorities start with big intentions. Although it may feel that a lot of people are being upset by the change, it is important to remember that there are a lot of disenfranchised disabled people out there. Resistance from parents is a worry for LEA's because of the fear of grant maintained schools. Training should be offered to parents so that their ignorance does not become an obstacle to the rights of children to be educated together. Disabled people who have adopted the social model need to work with parents. Activities could be funded from parent in partnership money.

- An interim inclusive education policy could make a clear commitment to end compulsory segregation and to offer inclusion where it is wanted.
- All teachers involved are likely to feel uncertain about the process of inclusion. These uncertainties could be addressed through training and by mechanisms which promote the sharing of good practice.
- Curriculum projects are needed to bring disability equality into the new national curriculum. This would fit the mission statement, which refers to the need to educate children about diversity in preparation for adult life.
- Inclusive strategies are needed to support pre-school work.
- In Avon, 60% of statemented children are in mainstream schools.
- Parents fears are often based on their close knowledge of their children. This has often been influenced by the information they have received from health/social services professionals.
- Local authority staff have a limited understanding of the social model; When commitment is tested, people prefer notions of diversity to anti-discrimination. There are parallels around issues of race, where anti-racism is seen as too threatening.

Q. If local authorities endorse the idea of inclusive education, would the closure of special schools provide sufficient resources to cover the costs involved?

A. The closure of Princess Margaret Special School in Taunton is liberating large sums of money which is being used to support pupils from the school who have moved into mainstream schools. (The support Barnardo's is now able to provide to these pupils in their new mainstream schools also supports other pupils in these schools). Considerable savings are being made by releasing capital resources tied up in the school and school buildings. Also getting rid of one whole management structure has resulted in better value for money. There is now no need for the management team of Princess Margaret School, as all of the school's ex-pupils are now included under the management of their new schools. Revenue money for staff working at Princess Margaret School has moved with them to support their work in mainstream schools.

- Funding can also be released by closing expensive residential schools which are in effect providing a social service which is subsidised by education.
- The successful development of inclusive education can only happen by consulting with disabled adults who have a clear understanding of Disability Equality principles.
- Positive action employment strategies are needed if the local authorities are serious about employing more disabled staff. There are examples of innovative employment practices in the voluntary sector: e.g. setting up traineeships and

opportunities for work-shadowing and mentoring to support applications from disabled people.

- Education departments and single institutions should set up core steering groups to work on issues of Disability Equality and inclusive education and to develop strategies and targets.
- We need full and comprehensive Anti-Discrimination legislation, and when we get it, considerable work will be needed to enforce it. It will help in the battle for equal rights for disabled children and disabled adults. However, although we don't have civil rights legislation yet, there is nothing stopping Local Education Authorities from ending the compulsory segregation of disabled children and adopting Disability Equality principles now. Education Authorities must work to end 'segregation' now.

Race and Segregated Education

Black Disabled Children and Education

Increasingly, disabled people are examining the issues and putting forward solutions to try and address the educational needs of disabled children. As part of that campaign, black disabled people are arguing that in order to provide an education which is appropriate to black disabled children, there must first be an acknowledgement of the fact that they continue to experience multiple oppression within the educational system. Disabled people are not always a separate and distinctly recognisable group.

Thus the problems of disablism, as serious as they are, can be compounded for black disabled children because of their experience of direct and indirect racial, cultural and even linguistic discrimination in education. Unfortunately, it is still too often the case that educationalists, teachers and others have been slow to address the simultaneous or specific oppression that black disabled children endure. In fact, there is a dearth of research or information on the specific educational needs of these children.

Historically, the question of how to educate 'immigrant' children became an issue the 1960's and the notion of assimilation was mooted. At the time, policy and practice dictated that if all children were treated as if they were white any problems would go away. As a consequence, black disabled children were caught in a double bind. The education system which was already failing white disabled children, was failing black disabled children even more. Writing in 1987, Sivanandan a renowned black writer explained how the setting up of Saturday schools was a way of offsetting the impact of the bussing of black children (introduced in 1966) and the streaming of these children into so-called educationally subnormal (ESN) schools.

Similarly, Bernard Coard's publication in 1971 'How the West Indian Child is made educationally subnormal by the British education system' (republished in 1991) highlighted the specific needs of African-Caribbean children and the issue of their over-representation in special schools and special units within schools. Frequently, African-Caribbean children were placed in 'special units' because they were considered disruptive. There was little acknowledgement of the fact that often the root cause of their 'disruptive' behaviour was the racism they endured both in and out of school. The institutionalised racism of the education system which fosters the teacher's low expectation of their black pupils and perpetuates those students' low achievement persists even today.

Often, the attitudes and expectations of teachers in special schools are no different from their colleagues who work in mainstream education. Given that all black children are likely to meet racist attitudes in a school situation and all disabled children are likely to experience disablism at one time or another, what then is the hope for black disabled children? There is also the widespread belief and practice that cultural issues are not important when the black child is disabled. A combination of all these factors and many others have resulted in a situation wherein black disabled children continue to receive an education which is wholly inadequate to meet their needs.

Mildrette Hill (1996)

Race and Segregated Education Discussion Group

Recommendations / Main Points Raised

1. There needs to be a coordinated effort by people to understand what it means to be a black, disabled person. This must be led by black disabled people.
2. There must be action to challenge segregation, not inclusive policies. We need anti-segregation policies.
3. Schools should not be judged by exam results.

The principles, vision, values of a school need to be addressed. We need to challenge the myth of exams and qualifications as a way of assessing what's important.

We need to change whole education process -and move away from "results", as this can be used to exclude children not seen as fitting.

4. The curriculum is often not differentiated to meet disabled children's needs so therefore they are excluded from National Curriculum.

5. Teacher training doesn't cover Inclusion. There is a lack of training on race and disability equality and Inclusive Education.
6. Example given of where disabled children were segregated at breaktimes for their own safety!! Disabled children go to a room while the bullies go out and play. Blaming the victim.
7. There is often no Disability Equality policy in schools even in counties like Avon where the local authority has a Disability Equality Policy, so good practise left to good individual teachers - there is no coherent approach.
8. Schools must set context where difference is valued. Must talk about difference -disability, race, sexuality -not talking about it makes it into something that can't be dealt with.
9. Black disabled children face simultaneous oppression. Black families don't have support re disabled children.
10. Children and parents should be supported to learn BSL or other sign together. Example where parents don't speak English and deaf child learns BSL -no communication at home.
11. Can't separate experience, i.e. black disabled child at special school can be treated differently because of race and different culture -at home/in community alienated because disabled.
12. Need to make connections -different forms of oppression, e.g. class.
13. Black disabled children don't get all needs met, often either seen as Black or disabled.

Can't separate out, i.e. more Black than disabled or vice versa -being made to choose is disempowering.

Black disabled child often don't have a 'safe haven' anywhere because they are likely to face disablism at home.
14. All children need a holistic approach to their statement of rights (not based on our current statementing process).
15. Having Black and/or disabled teachers shouldn't be about tolerating them - difference must be celebrated. Same for gay/lesbian teachers.

16. Training for parents to tackle "parents don't want Black/disabled/gay children here". This attitude often covered by protecting their child or their child would be held back. Don't exclude children, provide training for parents.
17. Need to define what schools we want and what values should underpin our education system. We must involve all disabled people in this debate.

Support for Parents

What is this journey that parents take when they make a simple request "I want my child to go to 'X' -the local mainstream school"? I want to talk a little bit about this journey.

At first we parents do not make the request easily. From the beginning our journey as parents we come across numerous professionals -paediatricians, physiotherapists, speech therapists, dieticians, educational psychologists, etc. Nearly all of these professionals make you believe that your child does not fit into the norm and quite often, with good intentions, we are set off on a route which separates our children from the main 'buzz' of society. Often we don't even realise that this is happening. Even our own feelings may be to safeguard our children and protect them from what we know to be a fiercely competitive world. When it comes to schooling, the same ethos follows and we are led to believe that a "special" school, segregated from the mainstream, is the best place for our children. Most parents feel supported within such a structure and choose "special" schools - that is not to say they do not encounter problems there.

But there are other parents, and I include myself in this, who simply want our children to be part of ordinary life as much as possible. And this means belonging to an 'ordinary' mainstream school. But that doesn't mean there are two sets of parents and that we should fight amongst ourselves about what's best, although I know this goes on a lot. What we want is the freedom to make important decisions about our children's future and to decide where our children go to school. I personally believe that schooling that does not segregate our young people is more beneficial but that is another discussion.

So when we as parents make a simple request for a mainstream local school, quite fearfully, it goes completely against what the system generally is, and against what many 'professionals' think. This is why so many parents are locked into bitter conflicts with their local authorities. This is why I'm here. I've been one of those parents and fought for five years to get my daughter Zahrah into a mainstream school. I know there are many parents, some here today, that have been fighting longer than I have.

I want to talk a little bit about who are the people who help you on the difficult journey that some parents take. The first advocacy service I approached was partly funded by the LEA and so I came to realise why it was very limited in what it could do. As you may have seen in the "Old School Ties" BBC2 programmes, it was the power and presence of disabled people supporting us which moved us to a resolution with our LEA. Many parents supported. And lots and lots of people who never knew about the issue before, signed our petitions. Journalists, photographers and the local political party also helped although many needed help in understanding the issue as a human rights issue, which of course it is. Every letter,

every telephone call counted. It was a large group effort and it forced the LEA to change their position.

Every day we are reminded of other ongoing battles. A friend who lives two minutes away but happens to be in another borough has to go through the whole process in her borough. I think we are in an interim period, before the law changes to end the LEA's powers to send our children to special schools against our wishes. This interim period is very hard on all of us and particularly our children which is why support is so crucial. Mainstream education for all children should be a right, not a privilege for which you have to sacrifice all your energy.

Each one of us here has the power, energy and creativity to change things. Let's take this challenge with us from this conference.

Preethi Manuel

Support for Parents Discussion Group

Recommendations/Main Points Raised

1. Parents of children with learning difficulties need to see adults with learning difficulties as important allies.
2. There is lack of publicity about Organisations of Disabled People and People First - so parents might be told about Mencap, Autistic Society -but not about Organisations OF Disabled People. It is particularly important at birth or at an early age, that parents and disabled children have contact with Organisations of Disabled People and the 'Social Model' of disability.
3. Important to have a local alliance for parents of disabled children. To have a forum locally as a meeting place where parents can feel safe to discuss their fears.
4. There should be Disability Equality Training for parents to help people when their children are young.
5. We need Disabled People to give support to other parents of Disabled Children.
6. Nursery schools, primary and secondary schools should welcome Disabled Children -this is very important. Parents can tell straight away if the school wants their child.
7. Some support is needed for parents with disabled children -who are struggling against the whole school system on their own.
8. "Old School Ties" has been an inspiration to a lot of parents. We need more media presentation and the campaign must continue what has been started.
9. We should question that there are not enough people with learning difficulties in key roles in the media and in supportive roles.

Inclusion and Our School Discussion Group

Recommendations / Main Points Raised

1. Suggestions for a list of everyone present today with their phone numbers/addresses for networking.
2. Provided there is a commitment from Head, Teachers and Governors the process of ending Segregated Education must just be got on with. Too much emphasis on what the problems might be by people who aren't even involved, a lot of people who envisage and talk about problems won't even go and look at a school where inclusive education is already happening.
3. Audit of a school's catchment area, find out who has been excluded from the area (from the Town Hall) and use the information as a starting point -visit parents of excluded children.
4. A child's 'membership' status at a school should not change, e.g. occasionally a child may need to be removed from a class for some reason

- for a time, but that child should then be returned to that class because their 'membership status' has not changed.
5. Must be prepared to give up what you might know as 'the best' for something that could be much better. Parents are often told a particular school is 'the best' for their child and so they are unwilling to lose 'the best'.
 6. Must have a 'can do' attitude, but also a willingness to recognise problems and to find solutions based on disability equality principles.
 7. Our understanding of 'inclusion' must be clear before we can review the Education System and work out what needs to be done for change.

Articles

JOSEPH ROWNTREE FOUNDATION "FINDINGS" Social Research Findings No. 21, November 1991

Disabled People and Institutional Discrimination

- Despite legislation to encourage integrated schooling, the number of children in "special" schools in 1989 was less than one per cent lower than it was in 1977
- Disabled people are consistently three times more likely to be out of work, and unemployed for longer periods than non-disabled people according to government figures
- When disabled people do find jobs they are normally poorly paid and low-skilled. Only 12 per cent of the disabled workforce hold professional or managerial positions compared with 21 per cent of non-disabled workers. On average, disabled men in full-time work earned almost a quarter less per week than non-disabled men working the same hours
- Under-the present disability benefit system, people with similar impairments can receive vastly different amounts depending on the cause of their impairment and on their personal history
- Although there are not over four and a quarter million disabled people with mobility-related impairments, there are currently only around 80,000 accessible homes. There is a particular shortage of homes with more than one bedroom for disabled people with families.
- Despite some improvements, most of Britain's public transport and public buildings still present disabled people with major access problems.

Education

Schooling for disabled children is usually segregated, dominated by medical rather than educational criteria. Although it is commonly believed that segregation in education has decreased substantially, in 1989 it was less than one per cent lower than it was in 1977 -the year members of the influential Warnock Committee were finalising their report calling for greater integration.

Government estimates suggest that there are 360,000 disabled children under 16 in Britain. Over a third of those living in private households and nearly two-thirds living in residential homes are educated in segregated environments.

Since 1981, several local authorities have increased the number of children they send to special schools; some by more than twenty-five per cent despite the passage of the Education Act, 1981, with specific measures to encourage integration. The 1982 Act also makes it illegal to place disabled children in special schools unless they have been assessed and given a formal statement of their "special educational needs". However, official figures show that over half the children in special schools have been assessed but have no formal statement and 14 per cent have not been assessed at all.

Disabled students make up only 0.3 per cent of the entire student population in universities and polytechnics.

Employment

Government figures show that disabled people are consistently three times more likely to be out of work than non-disabled people. At every age, disabled workers are unemployed for considerably longer than non-disabled workers.

Unemployment is especially high among disabled school leavers and disabled workers over 50. During the 1980s, three times as many disabled people as non-disabled people were out of work for two years or more.

There is substantial evidence that employers in both the public and private sectors discriminate against disabled people looking for work. For example, a recent survey of the employment policies of 26 health authorities showed that a third openly discriminated against disabled job seekers. In general, disabled applicants are six times more likely to be turned down for a job than non-disabled applicants. When disabled people do find jobs they are normally poorly paid and low-skilled, according to government statistics. Only 12 per cent of the disabled workforce hold professional or managerial positions compared with 21 per cent for non-disabled workers. On average, disabled workers earn much less than non-disabled workers. Disabled men in full-time work earn almost a quarter less per week than non-disabled men. Those in government-run workshops are some of the poorest paid workers in the country averaging around £90 a week (compared with an overall average male wage of £200-£250 a week in 1989/90).

But living costs for disabled people are much higher than those of non-disabled people. Welfare benefits, such as the Disability Working Allowance, cover some of these costs but diminish as income goes up. Disabled people often find that working does not cover their basic living expenses.

The variable standard of accessible housing and the provision of services throughout the country also limits disabled people's ability to move to other areas to find work or to take up promotion.

Negative attitudes towards disabled people's employment are common among employers. Official figures show that only 4 per cent encourage applications from disabled workers, 13 per cent will only employ them for "certain" jobs, 25 per cent might discriminate and 6 per cent will not employ disabled people "under any circumstances".

Disability Benefits

The overwhelming majority (78 per cent) of Britain's disabled people depend on social security benefits; 54 per cent of these people are below retirement age. Because their basic living costs are much higher, they tend to be poorer than non-disabled people. Disabled people may have to spend more on making their homes accessible, on personal and domestic assistance, and on food, clothing and travel. Current benefit levels do not cover the full cost of these expenses. Government figures are thought to underestimate the cost: the official OPCS estimate is £6.10 per week, the Disability Income Group puts the figure at £69.92. The present disability benefit system discriminates between different groups of disabled people. People with similar impairments receive vastly different amounts according to their impairment, work record, age, marital *status* and previous country of residence. For example, an unemployed disabled person on a war pension can get up to four and a half times a week more in benefits than someone with a similar impairment who has never worked and has not lived in the UK for the past 20 years.

Disabled people who have worked and paid national insurance contributions get higher benefits than those who have not. The Invalidity Benefit which replaces earnings lost through impairment currently stands at £52 per week. The equivalent for people who have never worked, the Severe Disablement Allowance, is £31.25. People who have not lived in Britain for 10 of the 20 years before claiming cannot get SDA.

While most disabled people are no longer forced to live in a residential "home", their opportunities to lead an independent lifestyle may be severely restricted. 60 per cent of all disabled adults need some form of personal and/or domestic help. They must often rely on informal unpaid helpers, usually women family members or friends.

Few public documents are accessible to disabled people with visual impairments and information presented through the spoken word remains inaccessible to disabled people with hearing impairments.

The Physical Environment

Although there are now over four and a quarter million disabled people with mobility-related impairments there are currently only around 80,000 accessible homes. Many of these homes are set apart from "normal" houses in clusters of "special needs housing".

Disabled people and their families are twice as likely to live in property owned by local authorities than non-disabled people. This is partly because of the lower incomes of disabled people, and partly because local authorities have a statutory duty to cater for their housing needs. But there is an acute shortage of accessible homes with more than one bedroom. Many disabled people have families; single disabled people often need two bedrooms to accommodate themselves and their personal assistant. Most of Britain's buses, taxis and trains are inaccessible to disabled people. For example, 63 per cent of disabled people in London use buses with difficulty and 20 percent cannot use them at all. Special transport, such as "Dial-a-Ride", is generally segregated; London "Dial-a-Ride" services are so limited that users can only get one return journey every ten and a half weeks. Although British Rail has improved services for disabled people, these are mostly confined to expensive Inter-City trains, rather than local services that people might use daily, for example to go to work.

A wide variety of public and private buildings are inaccessible and disabled people's needs are still overlooked by town planners and architects. Steps, heavy doors, inaccessible toilets, restricted vehicle access to pedestrianised zones continue to prevent disabled people from doing even routine daily tasks like shopping without someone else's help.

Government Policy

Successive British governments have been reluctant to admit the existence of discrimination against disabled people. In contrast, several western countries, as politically diverse as America and Sweden, have acknowledged the extent of institutional discrimination and have introduced anti-discrimination legislation in response. An increasing number of disabled people and their organisations believe that similar legislation is needed in Britain.

About the Study

These findings are based on a variety of sources; objective and subjective, quantitative and qualitative, including data from government departments such as the Office of Populations, Censuses and Surveys, the Department of Education and Science, and The Department of Employment.

Unlike previous research in this area it is the first to be conceived, sponsored and written with the full co-operation of disabled people and their organisations. The project was under the control of an advisory group set up and chaired by The British Council of Organisations of Disabled People (BCODP) with a research supervisor, Professor Michael Oliver, Reader in Disability Studies at Thames Polytechnic, London. The advisory group was controlled by disabled people and all its members had a history of working both professionally and voluntarily with disabled people.

Leisure

Disabled people find many pubs, restaurants, art galleries, theatres, concert halls, cinemas and sports stadia are physically inaccessible.

Management may insist on advanced notice that disabled people intend to visit or limit the numbers of disabled visitors at anyone time. In several concert halls disabled people on their own must be accompanied by a non-disabled steward, some theatres and cinemas do not allow people who use wheelchairs in without a non-disabled companion, and others do not allow them in at all.

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Further Information

The complete research findings are published as a book entitled *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination: A Case for Anti-Discrimination Legislation* by Colin Barnes (1991, Hurst & Co in Association with The British Council of Organisations of Disabled People). See Reading List.

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“A Damaging Experience”

by Angela Smith

Looking back on the events of my childhood, I am able to cite two threads that ran through my experience. They were the concepts of 'institutionalized racism' and 'disablism'.

Institutionalized racism was part of my experience from the day I entered the world. My parents had to deal with white middle class professionals. This relationship may have been intimidating for a couple who had newly arrived into the country. Their chances of being able to make an informed choice about my welfare were fairly minimal.

The other stage of my childhood where institutionalised racism was evident was during my time at boarding school. The policy-makers on the care needs of the pupils, either overlooked the needs of Black Disabled children or chose to ignore them.

'Disablism' as far as my understanding goes refers to the ideology that non disabled people hold about Disabled people. This is, crudely speaking, that Disabled people's lives do not have the same value as theirs. In addition to this, they believe that Disabled people should be encouraged and helped to become as independent/non disabled as possible.

My first boarding school

Initially I was very excited as the prospect of going away to school. I got carried away by the sense of adventure and the fact that I would be escaping the overcrowded conditions at home. Apparently the professionals suggested that I go to boarding school from the age of five, but my mum would not allow it.

I attended my first residential school from the age of 10 to 14. This was called Wilfred Pickles School. It was situated in the Lincolnshire area. We were in a rural environment, over a hundred miles away from my home. The school was funded by the Spastics Society. Like the previous 'special' school that I had attended, the size of this one was small in comparison to a mainstream establishment. There were just under a hundred pupils. The ages ranged from 5 years up to 14.

The school was structured into three departments. There was the junior school; the middle school and the senior school. I entered the middle school where I remained until the age of 12. The residential structure was set up so as to provide us with surrogate families. We all lived on site, apart from the few day pupils, in cottages, bungalows, lodges and a mansion house: House parents took the role of guardians. For the most part they tended to be white women between the age of 18-30. There were a few older ones but they tended to carry out a supervisory role over the younger staff. We had male house parents but comparatively fewer than female.

They supervised the all male households usually with a female house parent. Whereas the female pupils were supervised by two female house parents. There were no parents from a Black or any other non-white Minority Ethnic background. The trauma of my separation was exacerbated by three factors. Firstly, my age. I was 10 years old. Although I understood that I would be leaving my family to go to school, I could not understand fully what it would mean.

Secondly, the economic hardship affecting my family meant I wasn't able to go home for the two 'home weekends' that we were allowed per term. This meant that those of us who were not able to take up these opportunities would be away from our families from 14 weeks at a time.

Thirdly, with hindsight, I realize that some of those indescribable feelings that I experienced were the result of being subject to cultural wrench. This affected me academically and socially.

My education was eurocentric. The curriculum consisted of the three 'Rs' plus History, Geography, Science, Biology and Home Economics. These were all taught from a European perspective. All the innovations and revolutions that took place were brought about by white people.

It would have been so easy for me to believe that Black people did not exist before the 18th century African slave trade. This was the closest that I got to learning anything about African diaspora. I remember when we got to this topic how the teacher appeared to be making a special effort to address me. I responded with enthusiasm because I felt starved of knowledge relating to my identity and heritage. While we were learning about the various kings and queens, I often felt a

sense of being disconnected. I would think to myself, where were my ancestors; what were they doing while Henry VIII was collecting the heads of his wives? Due to sheer coincidence, my history teacher had a personal interest in African culture. He had spent a number of years living in Kenya. As a result of this, he was very keen to impart to us his personal experiences of living in such a culture. This helped to fill some of the gaping gaps in the knowledge of my own history. The social consequences of being in a culturally inappropriate environment had a detrimental effect emotionally which was evident at the time. There were about 4 non-white pupils in a school for about 60 or so children. All of the house parents were white. My dietary needs were never considered. It was assumed that I ate English food. I remember that I used to get cravings for some home cooked West Indian cooking.

I needed assistance with my personal care -I needed full care. There were specific hair and skin regimes that I needed to have done. My hair should have been plaited, plus ointment on my scalp, every night and especially after washing. This is because afro hair shrinks once it is wet and when lying down it becomes very tangled. When it gets like this it is very difficult and painful to comb. Also, I needed to have my skin moisturized after my baths. Black skin tends to become very dry and cracked after being in water.

To combat this, we usually rub oil or moisturizing creams over our bodies after bathing. I asked for this to be done for me, but they dismissed it as being too time consuming. In the case of my hair care, the house parents were ignorant as to how to comb and plait my hair. They would wash it and leave it. Each time I returned home I had to spend a day having my hair painfully detangled. My mum tried to overcome this problem by straightening my hair. This involved putting oils in my hair. White people tend to associate greasy hair with being dirty. Consequently, when I returned from home with my hair straightened, my house parents would wrongly assume that my hair was dirty and wash it out.

As I got older, I became increasingly self-conscious of fashion and how I would like to look. My white friends would all have their hair groomed the way they wanted etc. Gradually I began to turn my frustration onto myself. I started to resent being Black. After all, if I was white the house parents would be able to comb my hair and I would not need skin care.

With hindsight, my mother should have demanded that they train or recruit staff with the appropriate skills to cater for the needs of Black pupils. I do not think that she was aware that this could be done.

I developed coping mechanisms to deal with this experience. One, which all of us indulged in, was counting the days until the holidays and wishing the time away.

Second, I fantasised a lot. I would create scenarios in my mind of how I would have lived my life if I wasn't Disabled and separated from my family.

My second boarding school

I left this school at the age of 14 to go on to a second boarding school. This was in Kent. It was called Thomas Delarue School. We were quite close to the town. It was comparatively near to my home. This school also was a Spastics Society establishment.

The move to this school was less traumatic because of my age. I had experience, the best kind of preparation. An additional phenomenon which helped to make this initial move less of an ordeal was that we went as a group. There was about twenty of us that left Lincolnshire to go down to Kent. It was comforting to see familiar faces in unfamiliar surroundings. We were able to support each other while we were settling in and enjoy the novelty of our new found freedom.

At the first boarding school every hour of the day was regimented. Whilst at Delarue, school hours was the only structured time. The rest of the time it was left to us whether and when we did homework. We could stay out until 10pm and if we wanted to stay out later we had to get a pass.

Academically and socially the situation was similar to the situation at Wilfred Pickles. I was in the CSE stream. I am not aware of how or why it was decided that this was the appropriate level of study for me. I remember not really applying myself to studying but simply going through the motions. By the time I was 16 or 17, I began to develop a sense of there being no real purpose for anything that I was doing. I couldn't imagine getting a job or going onto further study. I had no direction: I had no role models for inspiration. I managed to get five CSE average passes. This surprised me because I didn't really exert myself for them. The teachers did not appear to be aware of my disillusionment. I suppose this was because I hid it by doing enough to get by. Homework was in on time. There were other pupils displaying behaviour that gave cause for concern, for different reasons.

Socially I was in a similar situation as at the school before. An all white team of house parents that knew nothing about the hair and skin care needs of African Caribbean children. There was a brief period when there was a African Caribbean student, on placement in the school for term. For obvious reasons she took an interest in myself and another African Caribbean pupil. The first thing she did was to sort out our matted, tangled hair and moisturize our dry cracked skin.

My self-esteem shot up about 110%. I looked good and this made me feel good. Friends and staff would comment on how nice I looked. It puzzled and angered me

that the house parents noticed that there was a distinct difference in how I looked after I returned from home and how I looked the rest of the term. Yet they did not attempt to remedy the situation.

Around this time I began to develop negative feelings about my self and body image. The catalyst for this was my walking. I was very unsteady on my feet and lost my balance easily. There were physiotherapists at my first boarding school but they worked in a totally different way from the ones at my previous day school. For the most part, they came into the classroom and worked with you. We were expected by them to be able to pay attention to having your body prodded, poked, and re-positioned while absorbing the facts from whatever lesson was being taught. This situation did lead to some open confrontations between the physiotherapists and teachers. It made lessons more interesting!

In actual fact, I was left to continue my walking rehabilitation myself while I was at Wilfred Pickles. By the time I got to Delarue, my walking posture had become set. My knees were bent and turned inwards. I walked with my weight all on one leg and the foot turned in. Periodically, I'd develop blisters on the inside of my foot which made walking even more difficult. The amount of effort it took to walk meant I often sweated as if I'd just completed a marathon. What I found most difficult to come to terms with was frequently losing my balance. It became a standing joke amongst both staff and my peers. 'Drunk again,' 'Take more water with it next time!' and so it went on. I use to laugh it off to mask my true feelings which were humiliation and feeling like I was constantly in a side-show. [Deep down I wanted to be able to say that I didn't want to walk because it was such hard work].

There was one friend of mine who I was in awe of for a number of reasons. She was pretty; had only a slight speech impairment, which came and went; she had a lot of attention from male admirers, Disabled and non disabled (which she felt confident to enjoy unlike some of us!); and was in the 'O' level stream. But what captivated me more than these was her confidence to tell the staff that she did not want to carry on struggling to walk on her elbow crutches. They were continuously having this confrontation in the corridors whenever they passed each other. The most dramatic act of defiance came when she allegedly, took her brand new ugly looking pedro boots, £40 a pair, and dumped them in a nearby stream. The rest of us thought this was fantastic.

I stayed on [at Delarue] an " extra 3 years after 16. In part it was to increase the number of CSEs, and I think partly because the careers officer and teachers did not know what to do with me. It was usual for students from Delarue to take one of two paths. Either go to a place called the Star Centre to gain vocational training, or alternatively, we were pointed in the direction of Hereward College of FE, to purpose further academic qualifications.

I often heard the older students mention these establishments when they were about to leave. I wanted to continue studying but more importantly, I desperately wanted to return to my family. I found the thought of being shunted off, yet again, to another part of the country intolerable.

I became aware that I was growing apart from my family. When I returned home on holidays, I felt set apart from my brothers and sisters. This was not because of my disability. It was because I had spent a large proportion of my childhood in a different environment. It was a predominantly white middle class setting. I had a different experience of childhood and adolescence from my brothers and sisters. I wanted to be able to relate to the things that they were interested in. For example, Black youth culture, music clubs, clothes, ideas and jargon. I could not relate to any of it. I had even lost my appetite for some Caribbean dishes. It felt as though I was a stranger to my own culture.

I sincerely hope that the recent Children's Act will ensure that Black Disabled children no longer have to endure such negative experiences. Glancing through the Welfare Principle of the Act, I noticed the inclusion of a number of features that professionals should be sensitive to. For example, a child's physical, emotional and educational needs; the likely effect on him/her of any change in circumstances and her/his age, sex, background and any characteristics of which the court/professionals considers relevant.

This legislation and documented experiences of Black Disabled people has to be a better way forward than leaving our fates to well-meaning professionals who do not have a clue about our experience.

I was lucky to come into contact with individuals who helped me to overcome the effects of these negative experiences. But it should not be a matter of being lucky, should it?

After leaving school and being refused a place at a local mainstream college, Angela eventually continued her education at Hereward College and Exeter University.

This article is an extract from "Damaging Experience: Black Disabled Children and Education and Social Service Provision" published in "Reflections", CCETSW (see Reading List).

A Parent's View

by Sue Thomas

Traditionally we have separated disabled children and their families from the community which has disastrous consequences on both them and the community, we have managed to do this in many different ways, each way is thought to be a solution to the child/family's problem e.g. special education, child development or assessment units, hydro therapy, special transport, etc.

The worst solutions are the ones that separate the disabled child from their family and disempower the parents, this wounding may be malignant to...the parent child relationship and may be prescribed to help the parent who complains of tiredness, inexperience, stress, isolation, ill-health or lack of support.

Many parents religiously put their faith in the professionals, no matter what they are too frightened and too inexperienced to see that the solutions that the professionals advocate become part of their growing problem. The parents feel that they require help and support from the professionals, in reality the professionals need just as much help and support from the parents, they need people to believe in their ways and to be loyal to their institutions.

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is a strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.
SIR GALAHAD: Tennyson

For generations, stories, myths and legends have been passed down, new ones have been invented to give children a feeling, an understanding and a yearning for a world where good conquers over evil, that classic, straightforward uninvolved sort of life where there are easy to understand problems and even easier solutions, the simple rights and wrongs, the clear-cut uncomplicated types of people that exist, and best of all the type of person that we would all like to be. The hero?

In these stories it is easy to tell the goody from the baddy and from the victim, their roles never change, the intentions of the three are set into the stones of tradition. This way of thinking about life is enshrined in our literature and films.

Many families are devastated, shaken to their very core of understanding and experience when they find out their child is disabled. They often feel isolated, inept, unskilled and powerless, they may never have known anyone that is disabled, they may only have dark thoughts, feelings and negative images of

disabled people. To some parents, at first, it may even be like falling into a dark frightening abyss, they feel they have lost control, hope and direction.

The family may turn to the people that have helped them in the past, their extended family and friends, to the church, to other people in the community, but most will be at a loss and will also have this gloomy and dangerous image of disability. The parents find that no one seems to have experience or another perspective, it's as if their child is the first to be born with such a disability, this inexperience and view sends a quiet but strong message to the parents that it must be a very grave and awful mistake to have a disabled baby. They not only feel a growing depth to the isolation, but they start to feel the rejection. They know, and everyone and everything tells them that their baby cannot fit in because their wonderful baby is too different.

This new situation scares them. They don't understand it, they haven't been prepared for it, their previous knowledge and understanding are soon depleted, they feel that they haven't the skills, they need help, they need a saviour, a knight, a rescuer, they turn to the professionals for help, nurses, teachers, social workers, physiotherapists, doctors, midwives.

The knights rally to the parents' lamentable call, the rescuers must do their duty, they assess the parents and the child and since the knights have been conditioned by society and their brotherhood to see life in a particular way they prescribe programmes, treatments, therapies and solutions in the only way they can.

The knights only see what their intuition allows them to see, the disability, the child, the family is the problem. The knights have often heard the same distressed call, their discipline tells them that the parents are hurting only because of the child's differences, that somehow the knights have to step in and sort things out. This can mean they try and treat the child and the family. To help the family they often remove the child. To help the family, they take away slowly but surely small, simple but fundamental necessary things of life that appear to have no comparison with the big thing of the child's disability. They take away the power to change, the power to choose, the power to learn how to communicate their totally new experiences, the power to say no and still get something, the power to learn a different view, the power of friendships, the power of mutual support, the power to teach the professional, the power to dictate and pay for the service which will meet their needs and not the brotherhood's needs etc. The parents are in so much pain they beg the knight to save them quickly, to do anything to relieve the pain as speedily as possible.

At first, the parents feel great, the professionals appear to know what they are talking about, they appear to be able to predict the future, they keep saying that we

must always think of our child's sake, we must always meet the child's needs. Music to our ears.

But soon we feel another message, a whisper at first, were we mistaken to allow strangers to assess, care, prescribe and determine a type of lifestyle for our child and ourselves. We may try and listen harder for more proof of our dread, but everywhere the messages are so soothing, the knights know best, don't worry, they are goodies, they only want what is best for the child, they only want to meet the child's needs.

It becomes so confusing, as we wait for their promises to materialise, if we dare to ask, we feel ashamed when they reply, that there is so many that need help and yet so few resources. We decide that we won't ask again, we have to learn to be patient and more understanding of the knights' problems. So we wait and wait, very little ever comes of their promises and when it does, it doesn't fit in with our family, it sets us apart from other families, from our community. When we ask why, we are reminded that if we were good parents we would be willing to compromise for the sake of our dear child, it is difficult to understand how by us compromising it will make it better for our child but nevertheless we will. How dare we ask, our guilt increases, we feel even more unsure, life seems even more difficult, we become even more loyal to the knights.

The knights have to save the parents so they give them packages of simple solutions, the parents are not given any choice, they are not taught any new skills, they are not given new ways to look at life, they are not introduced to positive images of disability, they are not told how disabled people are oppressed and not allowed to live lives that are full and rich and with us.

The goody does what he has been trained to do, what his employers expect him to do, what his brotherhood has traditionally done for years. If ever the parents appear a bit confused and start to ask questions, he will explain that he is doing it for the sake of the child. The experts are expert at justifying their actions.

So the path that the brotherhoods put the child and the parents on is preordained, the cycle is completed. There is a reason why the parents had no experience of disabled people, it was because as a child, they were separated from disabled children or children with learning difficulties, they never learnt that disabled people and people with learning disabilities have gifts and their friendships are just as loyal and loving as non-disabled people's friendships. By continuing the separation the circle is complete.

A knight needs to help, so that he feels needed, so that he feels power surging through his body, a solution, he has to give solutions even though the solution may well be part of the problem! He has to be quick, he can't bear what the parents are

saying, he hardly listens, he doesn't encourage the parents to become more articulate and clear thinking, as it will show him a more complicated and chaotic world, a world that isn't like the stories, where problems, ailments, disabilities cannot be fixed, where life is so difficult to predict.

He has to soothe them, he has to rescue them, he has to give them something so that they feel better so that he feels better so that they will always need him or someone like him. He doesn't realise what he is doing and only a few parents that have awoken from their spell can see the pattern of damage.

Parents need to gain real control, they need to be given real options, they need real knowledge of the past, the present and they must be able to discuss the future, not to plan for it but to try and understand that what happens to us today can have repercussions in the future. Parents have to change and learn. Professionals can help but first they have to be in touch with their own needs and life and they have to give up control and power.

Sue Thomas is the parent of a disabled child, and a founder member of Passport, a parents' support group.

CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION: IF IT WASN'T SO SAD IT WOULD BE FUNNY

by Mike Oliver, Professor Disability Studies, University of Greenwich

The current fashion for conductive education has created a furore in the world of education. If it wasn't so sad, it would be funny. We have seen the creation of three new organisations aimed at furthering it, television programmes extolling its virtues, demonstrations at the House of Commons, picketing of the Spastics Society and the alleged poaching of conductors. To understand why all this is sad rather than funny, it is necessary to look at what conductive education claims to be and some of the wider issues that it raises.

So what is this conductive education that the furore is all about? Well, it isn't a medical treatment and it does not claim to cure the "motor impaired" as its recipients are usually insensitively called. Rather it claims to be a method of enabling the motor impaired "to function in society without requiring special apparatus such as wheelchairs, ramps or other artificial aids". Well yes, but don't we all use artificial aids of one kind or another; try eating your dinner without a knife and fork or going to Australia without an aeroplane.

Its claims are built upon two underpinnings, one theoretical and one practical. Its theoretical underpinning is that under the right conditions "the central nervous system will restructure itself. Its practical underpinning is "orthofunction", a teaching method which involves the whole person physically and mentally and which instills "the ability to function as members of society, to participate in normal social settings appropriate to their age". The word "normal" crops up a lot in the writings of Dr Mari Hari, the leading proponent of conductive education, and her ever growing band of disciples.

Unfortunately for them, the theory remains unproven for there is no evidence that the central nervous system of any human being has ever restructured itself in the manner suggested. But does that really matter if orthofunction as practical activity actually works? The evidence here is, perhaps, stronger; published studies indicate significant improvements in functioning in many motor impaired children, as do personal accounts provided by the ever increasing number of visitors to the Peto Institute in Hungary.

But, as any competent undergraduate social scientist will tell you, correlation does not prove causation. In other words, the relationship between the application of orthofunction and functional improvements may not be a causal one. It may well be that factors other than orthofunction are producing these improvements; factors such as better resourcing, a purposeful environment, the amount of time spent in active learning each day, or the one-to-one relationship with conductors, may be equally or more important than the specific application of the technique of orthofunction itself.

So, not only is conductive education theoretically unproven but also practically unsubstantiated. I would go further and suggest that it is also ideologically unsound. Its constant, uncritical use of the concept of "normality" and its insistence on adapting individuals rather than environment flies in the face of much social scientific and educational wisdom, and more importantly, the expressed wishes of many disabled people who want society to change, not themselves.

Unsound ideology can quickly turn into oppression and Dr Hari's views are certainly oppressive to a large number of disabled people. In one example, she endorses orthofunction as a way of teaching people with a spinal injury to walk and adds that "teaching must restore the will of the individual to do so". As a person with a spinal injury, this view is oppressive to me, and other people with a spinal injury, in two ways. First, how dare she assume that our main goal is to walk, without consulting us in the first place. And secondly, how dare she imply that those hundreds of thousands of people with a spinal injury throughout the world are not walking because they lack the will to do so.

It is also interesting to note that Dr Andrew Sutton, Director of the recently established Foundation for Conductive Education, can endorse these remarks as "endearingly characteristic". They are grossly offensive to me and many other disabled people, and it is symptomatic of the gap that usually exists between the consciousness of the able-bodied staff of many disability organisations and the disabled people they are supposed to serve.

Given that conductive education is theoretically unproven, practically unsubstantiated and ideologically unsound, why are we currently seeing many local education authorities and, indeed, the Spastics Society itself, besieged by angry parents demanding the provision of conductive education almost overnight? To begin with, conductive education does offer a positive approach to a clear set of goals, whether you agree with them or not. That is something that special educators have, so far, lamentably failed to offer disabled children and their families. For far too long disabled children have been put away in special schools and been made to feel that there is something wrong with them, their disabilities are a burden and a thing of shame. Whilst conductive education does offer an alternative vision, it is unfortunate that this vision implies the removal of burden and shame through the achievement of normality.

In addition, conductive education does offer higher expectations than those¹⁰ which special education has aspired. Thus'- Andrew Sutton can comment that conductive education can produce results "which seem quite beyond the expectations of children growing up with cerebral palsy and spina bifida elsewhere". Given that the expectations of professionals about what disabled people can actually achieve has always been pathetically low, almost any intervention system which raises expectations is likely to produce similar results.

Throughout human history, disabled people have constantly confounded the low expectations of others, and how much better it would be for special educators to raise the expectations of disabled children and their families by giving them an understanding of this, by helping them to accept their disabled identities with pride, by helping them to understand their place in the world and their rights as well as giving them the practical skills to deal with these issues. Of course, in order to do this, special educators would need to understand these issues themselves.

Finally, it is sad but understandable that the parents of disabled children should clutch at the straw of conductive education as a means of resolving their own problems. To have a handicapped child in a society which has developed a fetishism for normality and which fails to even acknowledge the needs of these parents, let alone make any provision to meet them is clearly a profoundly disturbing experience. But accepting the fetishism of normality can never even address these problems, let alone resolve them.

Those of use who were privileged to hear Paddy Ladd's moving account of the struggles and pride of the deaf community at last year's International Conference in Bristol, England, will long remember his response to a challenge from the floor that many parents regarded the birth of their deaf children as tragedies. He said that he understood this and was sorry, but could only add that the deaf community regarded the birth of each and every deaf child as a precious gift. We, as a society, could learn from that, and, if we regarded the birth of every disabled child as a precious gift...and were prepared to provide the necessary resources to the children and their parents to allow these gifts to develop, then perhaps we would be spared the distressing sight of individual and groups of parents pursuing the latest fashionable cure for their child's blindness, deafness or other impairment at whatever cost to themselves, their families and friends.

So, to what kind of a world does conductive education envisage we are moving? One in which we are all exhorted to approximate to the walkie-talkie model of living, where physical and social environments remain unchanged and unchanging. I have an alternative vision where difference is not just tolerated, but valued and even celebrated and where physical and social environments are constantly changing to accommodate and welcome these differences. What's more, I think my vision is an achievable dream, that of conductive education an unachievable nightmare.

My dream is achievable because all we have to do is stop doing some of the things we are already doing: stop using the protective forces we have developed to create disabilities through warfare, environmental pollution and industrial accidents; stop creating disabilities through poverty by using our vast wealth not in pursuit of capital accumulation and profit, but in ensuring- that we all have the necessities to sustain material life; and stop judging and treating people on the basis of the contribution they can or cannot make to the development and operation of these productive forces.

The nightmare of conductive education is unachievable because nowhere in human history have the different been turned into the normal and neither medical science nor other rehabilitative techniques or educational interventions can assist in this process. The reason is simple; normality does not exist. Someone else, not very long ago, had a vision of normality associated with blond hair and blue eyes, and look where such a vision got him.

Disability, Handicap and Society, Vol. 4, No.2, 1989

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This is a complete copy of a document written by Penny Germon and produced by the West of England Coalition of Disabled People. It provides a practical guide to developing a disability equality policy and implementation strategy. It has been written with voluntary and community groups in mind, although it will be useful to any organisation concerned to develop good practice. Schools will find it a useful document, although there are specific areas which need to be developed further through consultation.

West of England Coalition of Disabled People

Disability Equality and the Full Participation of Disabled People

This paper provides general guidance on developing anti-discriminatory practise. it is not intended to be used in isolation but in consultation with Disabled people's organisations.

Copies of the document are available from The Coalition.

1. Why do we need policies?

Community groups, voluntary, private and statutory organisations all need to have a Disability Equality Policy as part of their overall Equal Opportunities Policy. Policies are important because they provide a framework for all members, workers and volunteers, to work within and tells disabled people what they can expect from the group or organisation.

Policies are important but they are only as good as the people who implement them. The writing of a policy should be developed by the whole organisation through a working group where management, staff, members and volunteers are represented. Seek advice from Organisations of Disabled People.

A policy written by one person or copied from another organisation will mean nothing to the people who need to implement it. Ownership and understanding of policies is essential if they are to make any difference to the organisation. Too many policies sit on a shelf collecting dust and are only there to satisfy funding criteria. Most people acknowledge that 'structural change' (change in the way we do things, our assumptions and the way our institutions work) will not take place over night. There are, however, many things that can be done to move towards Disabled people's equality.

An implementation or Action Plan identifies how you intend to put the policy into practice. An Action Plan is as important as the Policy. It should describe achievable targets which are monitored.

2. Changing attitudes or taking action?

Many people believe that equal opportunities is a matter of changing people's attitudes and raising awareness of the struggles disabled people and other groups face.

If change is dependent on changing people's attitudes we will be waiting a long time. It is widely recognised that human and civil rights cannot be and should not be dependent on changing attitudes. Policies make statements of commitment and determine a framework of *action* and *behaviour*. Members of staff, volunteers, management all have a responsibility to implement equal opportunities policies irrespective of their personal attitudes.

3. Training

Before developing a written policy it is important to understand the 'social model' of disability. The social model defines disability as the problems caused by the social barriers which prevent Disabled people from participating in social, economic and political life.

This is different to what we all learn about Disabled people. The dominant view is that our problems are caused by our impairment. This means that our impairments are the focus of 'cure' or 'care'

Disability Equality is about addressing the structural, institutional, physical and attitudinal barriers, the focus is therefore on 'mending' the way society operates at all levels.

Disability Equality Training is designed and delivered by Disabled people. It provides an introduction to disability as an equal opportunities issue by exploring the institutionalised discrimination Disabled people experience. Training includes exploring the impact of language and terminology used by and about disabled people, media portrayal of disability and dominant images of disability, the role of charities, Disabled people's history, the organisation of our institution. Training also provides the opportunity to explore specific situations through case studies. Every course should have an opportunity for *Action Planning*. That is deciding things that the individual, group or organisation will do, making a list of all the things that need to happen to achieve the target, identifying any possible barriers, how to overcome them and identifying timescales for achieving targets.

Training on disability has traditionally been run by non-disabled people and has focused on 'awareness raising' about disabled people's experiences. As part of our demand for civil rights and for our struggle to be seen as a matter of equal

opportunities Disabled people have developed our own training which is a model recognised by the national Disabled People's Movement.

The emphasis is on the changes that can be made in the way services are provided, policies are made and the how organisations can work towards greater, equal participation of Disabled people at all levels.

This training is all about impairment or simulating impairment, for example, people being blind folded or sitting in a wheelchair. We do not believe this helps anyone it only increases the assumptions people make and also prevents Disabled people from being listened to. (See list of useful contacts for training providers).

4. Consultation

When developing policies, seeking greater participation of Disabled people or developing services which will be used by disabled people consultation is an important part of getting it right.

It is important to distinguish between organisations run by Disabled people for Disabled people and those run by non-disabled people. Organisations run by non-disabled people for Disabled people cannot and do not represent the views or aspirations of Disabled people.

It is also important to recognise that not all Disabled people are experts in Disability Equality. When consulting Disabled people it is essential to identify you are consulting and who you want to consult. For example, the views and experiences of people receiving a service are important if you want to make sure your service is effective.

However, the way the organisation operates and the way services are provided needs to come from a disability equality perspective. To achieve this you will need to consult Disabled people who have experience and knowledge of disability equality.

5. Developing a Disability Equality Policy

A policy needs to set out the perspective, commitment and intentions of the organisation. Headings will need to include:

- a. Definition of Disability
- b. Terminology
- c. Information
- d. Service provision
- e. Employment

- f. Equal opportunities
- g. Volunteering
- h. Management committee
- i. Consultation
- j. Training
- k. Complaints procedure
- l. Harassment
- m. Access

a. Definition of Disability

A disability equality (equal opportunities) perspective recognises the collective experience of discrimination.

Disabled people are a group in society because of the way society discriminates against people with physical and sensory impairments, people with learning difficulties and people with emotional/mental distress. *(There are many survivors of the psychiatric system/people with emotional/mental distress who define themselves as disabled people, others do not. Specific consultation needs to take place with self-organised survivor groups, e.g. Survivors Network).*

What we have in common is the way we are treated; we are all denied employment, education, access to information, access to mainstream services, housing etc.

Traditionally we have been separated by our impairment, the assumption being that people with the same impairment have the same needs. This is not the case and cannot be assumed. It has also been assumed that non-disabled people need to know what our impairment is in order to address our needs. Again, this is not the case. The label or name of our impairment is irrelevant to disability equality. We are concerned with creating an environment where all Disabled people can fully participate at all levels of an organisation and can fully utilise services. This means that organisations need to create a framework where disabled people can determine our own requirements and make sure they are addressed.

b. Terminology

Like all other oppressed groups, language about disability has largely negative connotations and are often terms of insult and abuse. The terminology you use will reflect the values and principles of your organisation.

The term 'Disabled People' has been used by disabled people's organisations since 1980. It is a term which reflects the political position of disabled people -(we are

disabled by the attitudinal institutional and environmental barriers which determine every aspect of our lives).

A note of caution -learning the right language is pointless if employees, management and volunteers do not understand why some terminology is offensive or why some terminology is preferred. Ruling certain words in or out without training, debate or context is destructive for all concerned.

6. Disability Equality Strategy

A strategy states how you are going to implement your policy. A strategy towards anti- discriminatory practice needs to reflect all sections in the policy. The questions and suggestions which follow are not comprehensive but should enable you to make a good start.

a. *Management Committee/Group*

How many disabled people are part of the management?
How can you increase the number of disabled people?
How do people find out about becoming members?
Do you provide training?
How much do the present management committee understand disability equality? Oppressive behaviour is a barrier to participation.
How do you conduct business, does it assume everyone is in the know?
Where do you hold meetings?

b. *Information and Publicity*

Is your information available in Braille, audio tape, plain language, pictures and symbols, sign language video and community languages other than English?
Where do you target your information?
Target publicity and information at places where Disabled people go, e.g. daycentres and to organisations of Disabled people who produce newsletters.
What images are presented?
Most images of Disabled people are negative or we are not portrayed at all.
Does your information reflect a commitment to and understanding of Disability Equality?
Does your information/publicity give details of access arrangements, e.g. wheelchair accessible venues, personal assistance, induction loop?

c. *Employment*

How many Disabled staff are part of the team?

Is there anything in the job descriptions/person specification which may exclude Disabled people unnecessarily? -e.g. compulsory driving licence, qualification bar?

Many Disabled people are excluded from education establishments but may have all the relevant experience and skills.

Is the office base in accessible premises?

What needs to be done to make it accessible?

Where do you advertise your posts?

You need to target disabled people's groups at a local and national level and state on the advert that you welcome applications from disabled people.

Where do you hold interviews?

Do you offer access requirements at interviews, e.g. BSL interpreter?

Would you know where to go to get an application pack produced in Braille?

Have all other members of staff had Disability Equality Training?

Do you have information about the services available to disabled people in employment?

What support is available from other disabled people?

Do Disabled people have the same working conditions?

d. Service Provision

Do Disabled people use your service?

Do you provide services which are relevant to Disabled people?

How do you know the service you provide is wanted?

Is Disability Equality integral to the service you provide?

Have you consulted Disabled people about your service?

What opportunities exist-for evaluation and feedback?

e. Meetings/Activities

Where do you hold your meetings/activities? Are the premises accessible?

How do you know it is accessible?

How do people find out about your organisation?

Do you provide sign language interpreters, personal assistants, travel expenses, child care expenses?

What materials do you use, how do you structure what you do?

Do you stick to the start and finishing times of meetings?

Do you provide refreshments and allow for regular breaks?

What kind of images of Disabled people are present in the work place?

Are Disabled people equal participants?

f. Office Base

Is the office accessible?

Do you have a minicom?

How do people contact you?

Is it a non smoking environment?

What kind of images are there of Disabled people?

What are the parking facilities?

g. Monitoring

Do you monitor job applicants, employees, service users, members?

Is the monitoring confidential and based on self definition?

When you provide information of this nature to funders are you going on assumption, what you see or guess work?

Disabled people must have the right to self-define themselves as Disabled people. It is not appropriate for you to make that judgement.

Monitoring is only worthwhile if you are going to use the information to improve your practice. Monitoring information should always be confidential and handled with care.

h. Equal Opportunities

Have you got an overall Equal Opportunities Policy?

Have you got an Equal Opportunities Strategy?

Have you got a complaints procedure?

How is the disability equality action plan going to address the requirements of disabled people who are; women from black and other minority ethnic groups, gay or lesbian?

i. Harassment

Do you have a mechanism for addressing harassment?

Would you be able to recognise harassment of Disabled people?

Are you confident that a complaint of harassment would be taken seriously?

Reading and Resources

Disability Equality

"Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination - A Case for Anti-Discrimination Legislation" by Colin Barnes. ISBN 1 85065 127 2

This book includes a chapter on education. Available from book shops or by sending £5.75 which includes postage and packing to: BCODP, Litchurch Plaza, Litchurch Lane, Derby DE24 8AA. Tel (01332) 295551 Fax (01332)295580 I

"Understanding Disability from Theory to Practice"

by Mike Oliver. Published by Macmillan 1996. (*Chapter 6 looks at Education*)

"Disabling Barriers, Enabling Environments" Editors J Swain, V Finkelstein, S French and M Oliver. Published by Sage Publications/Open University 1992

"Pride against Prejudice" by Jenny Morris. Published by London Women's Press 1991. ISBN 0 70434 286 3

"On Our Own Behalf" by Martin Pagel, Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People 1990. Available from GMCODP, Carisbrooke, Wenlock Way, Gorton, Manchester M12 5LF: £3 inc p&p

"Reflections -Views of Black Disabled People on their Lives and Community Care"

Paper 32.3. Edited by Nasa Begum, Mildrette Hill, and Andy Stevens. Published by the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW). 1994. £12 from CCETSW, Derbyshire House, St Chads Street, London WC1 H 8AD

"The Politics of Disablement" by Mike Oliver. Published by Macmillan 1990

"Beyond Samosas and Reggae" by Nasa Begum. Published by Living Options Partnership and Kings Fund Centre, ISBN 1 85717 095 4. (*Guidelines for developing services for Black Disabled People*)

"Disabling Imagery and The Media" by Colin Barnes. Published by BCODP and Ryburn. ISBN 1 85331 042 5. £4.50

"Disability" C4 Booklet which accompanied the 'OUT' series. *The booklet looks at issues from the viewpoint of disabled lesbians and gay men. Copies are available/ can be borrowed from The West of England Coalition of Disabled People*

"A Voice of Our Own" by People First (1992), 207-215 Kings Cross Road, London WC1X 9DB "The Politics of Special Educational Needs" by Len Barton. Falmer Press 1989 £14

"Encounters with Strangers" a collection of articles edited by Jenny Morris. The Women's Press. ISBN 0 70434 400 9

Education

"Inclusive Education" A booklet by the Education Group of Avon Disability Equality Forum 1995. Copies available from WECODP. The Yard, 6 Sommerville Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 9AA. Tel (0117) 942 0721 voice and minicom

"Altogether Better- From Special Needs to Equality in Education" (1994). A video and booklet training pack for teachers and governors. Price £7.50 including postage and packing. Available from: Charity Projects, 1st Floor, 74 Oxford Street, London WC1A 1 EF

"Disability Equality in the Classroom" A handbook for teachers by Richard Reiser and Micheline Mason (1990/1992). £16.00 including postage and packing. Available from: Disability Equality in Education, 78 Mildmay Grove, London N1 4PJ

"Segregation and Inclusion -English LEA Statistics 1988-1992" £5 including postage and packing. Available from: Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE), 1 Redland Close, Elm Lane, Redland, Bristol BS6 6UE

"Developing an Inclusive Education Policy for Your School" a CSIE guide (1996) £4.50 inc p&p from the address above

"Getting In On The Act, Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs: The National Picture" June 1992. £8.50 and

"The Act Moves On: Progress in Special Educational Needs" Nov 1994 £6.00 Both published by The Audit Commission and available from HMSO Bookshops, or directly from HMSO Publications Centre, PO Box 276, London SW8 SOT. Enquiries (0171) 873 0011

London Borough of Newham "Strategy for Inclusive Education 1996-2001 " £8 inc p&p. Available from Peter Aylmer, Education Dept, Broadway House, 322 High Street, London E15 1 AJ

"Taking Action" (1996) A guide to special education and the law for parents, teachers, advocates and advice workers, produced by IPSEA. The Questions Publishing Co. ISBN 1 898149380

Periodicals/Newsletters

"WECODP Newsletter" West of England Coalition of Disabled People, The Yard, 6 Sommerville Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS79AA. Tel & Minicom (0117) 942 0721 .

"Update" (BCODP Newsletter)
The British Council of Disabled People, Litchurch Plaza, Litchurch Lane, Derby DE24 8AA. Tel (01332) 295551, Fax (01332) 295580, Minicom (01332) 295581

"People First Newsletter"
People First, Instrument House, 207-215 Kings Cross Road, London WC1X 9DB.
Tel (0171) 713 6400

"Coalition" (GMCDP Newsletter)
Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People, Carisbrooke, Wenlock Way, Manchester, M 12 5LF:
Tel (0161) 273 5155, Minicom (0161) 2734279

"Disability and Society" A quarterly collection of articles, edited by Len Barton.
Available from: Carfax Publishing Company, PO Box 25, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 3UE

Contacts

West of England Coalition of Disabled People
The Yard, 6 Sommerville Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 9AA. Tel (0117) 942 0721 (voice and minicom) An organisation run and controlled by disabled people working on issues of Disability Equality, Including education

WECIL (West of England Centre for Integrated Living).
Leinster Avenue, Knowle, Bristol BS4 1 AR. Tel (0117) 983 9839 voice and minicom.
Provides a range of services to disabled people, based on Disability Equality Principles

BCODP (British Council of Disabled People):
Litchurch Plaza, Litchurch Lane, Derby DE24 8M.
Tel (01332) 295552, Fax (01332) 295580, Minicom (01332) 295581

BCODP is a national organisation of disabled people and organisations run by disabled people. They can put you in touch with local organisations of disabled people and can tell you how to contact disabled people who run disability equality training

South West Disability Equality Trainers Network: c/o The West of England Centre for Integrated Living, Courtlands, Leinster Avenue, Bristol BS4 1 AR. Tel (0117) 983 9839 (voice and minicom)

The Black Spectrum (a national organisation of Black Disabled trainers and consultants): 3 Romsey House, Hampshire Street, Huddersfield HO5 90R

People First, Bristol and District: Unit 35 Easton Business Centre, Felix Road, Bristol BS5 OHE

People First: 207-215 Kings Cross Road, London WC1X 90B Centre for Deaf People: 16-18 Kings Square, Bristol BS2 8JL

British Deaf Association: 38 Victoria Place, Carlisle, CA1 1HU

The Alliance for Inclusive Education (formerly The Integration Alliance):
70 South Lambeth Road, Vauxhall, London SW8. Tel (0171) 735 5277
A national organisation of disabled people, parents and allies campaigning for Inclusive Education and for an end to the compulsory segregation of disabled children in education

Disability Equality in Education:
78 Mildmay Grove, London N1 4PJ. Tel & Fax (0171) 254 3197 *Training, consultancy and publications*

Skill, National Bureau of Students with Disabilities:
336 Brixton Road, London SW9 7 AA. Tel & Fax (0171) 978 9890

Association of Blind and Partially Sighted Teachers and Students:
6 Borey House, Carlton Road, Redhill, Surrey RH1 2B1: Tel (01737) 761610

Education Department, London Borough of Newham: Broadway House, 322 High Street, London E15 1 AJ

Somerset Inclusion Project:
Princess Margaret School, 53 Middleway, Taunton, Somerset TA 1 30N

Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE);
1 Redland Close, Elm Lane, Redland, Bristol BS6 6UE. Tel (0117) 923 8450

CSIE is an independent education charity and national centre giving information and advice about Inclusive Education '

Parents in Partnership: 70 South Lambeth Road, Vauxhall, London SW8. Tel (0171) 735 7735 *An organisation of parents of disabled children who promote the Social Model of Disability*

Network 81: 1-7 Woodfield Terrace, Stanstead, Essex CM24 8AJ. Tel (0171) 8436061 *A national network of parents' support groups*

Independent Panel for Special Education Advice (IPSEA):
22 Warren Hill Road, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 40U. Tel (01394) 382 814
Provides an advice line. Can provide free independent advice on LEA's legal duties towards children with special educational needs

Advisory Centre on Education (ACE):
1b Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London N5 2EA. Tel (0171) 354 8321
Offers free advice on all aspects of state education

Inclusive Education Seminar Participants

Novvy Allan	Community Education Coordinator, South Gloucestershire
Simone Aspis	(Speaker) "People First
John Ashton	Councillor. Chair Education Committee Bristol
Joan Avery	Primary Teacher/SENCO
Carol Bannister	(Speaker) Teacher Coordinator - Barnardo's/Somerset Inclusion Project
Daphne Branchflower	Disability Advisor, Bristol City Council
Pam Brown	Primary Teacher
Barbara Burke	(Speaker) Assistant Director Education, Newham
Anne Bush	Education Psychologist, Avon County Council
Geoff Butterfield	Parent
Dennis Casling	Disability Equality Consultant
Mike Coulson	ADEF; South Gloucestershire
Ruth Davis	Councillor, South Gloucestershire
Pat Duffield	Parent
Jo Forrest	Councillor North Somerset
Yvonne Friel	West of England Coalition of Disabled People
Penny Germon	(Chair) West of England Coalition of Disabled People. Co-Chair ADEF
Phil Gregory	Councillor, Bristol City Council. Bristol School Governer
Fazilet Hadi	Policy and Equalities Officer, Lewisham Council
Neil Halsall	Councillor, South Gloucestershire
Vanessa Harvey-Samuel	Assistant Director Education, Bristol
Elke Hein	Parent
Lee Hennessy	Parent Governer
Mildrette Hill	(Speaker) Disability Equality Trainer and Consultant
Pat Hogg	Councillor, Bath and North East Somerset
Tony Hurley	West of England Coalition of Disabled People. Disability Adviser, Bristol City Council
Anne Johnson	Supportive Parents for Special Children
Anne Jones	Avon Disability Equality Forum
Linda Jordan	(Speaker) Former Chair, Education Committee, London Borough of Newham
John Kenworthy	Psychologist and North West Action
Victoria Kilroy	Councillor, Bath and North East Somerset
Claire King	Disability Equality Officer, Avon County Council
Dot Lee	Teacher
Robina Mallett	Supportive Parents for Special Children
Preethi Manuel	(Speaker) Parent, Teacher and Writer
Ray Martin	Councillor, North Somerset
Micheline Mason	(Speaker) Alliance for Inclusive Education (formerly Integration Alliance)
Geralyn Meehan	(Panel Member) Bath and North East Somerset (Avon Equal Opportunities Unit)
Mary Montgomery	West of England Coalition of Disabled People
Saadia Neilson	(Speaker) Disability Equality Trainer and Consultant, Way Ahead North
Anne O'Bryan	Parent Governer
Hazel Peasley	Southampton Centre for Independent Living
G T Perry	Avon Disability Equality Forum
Ruth Pickersgill	(Panel Member) West of England Centre for Integrated Living
Krysia Piotrowska	Governer Training Officer, Avon County Council
Ian Popperwell	(Speaker) Disability Equality Officer, Avon Social Services

Ann Pugh	(Panel Member) Seminar Organiser. West of England Coalition of Disabled People
Anne Rae	(Speaker) Gen Sec, British Council of Disabled People
Sue Rickell	(Speaker) Disability Equality Trainer and Consultant
Richard Rieser	(Speaker) Disability Equality in Education. Alliance for Inclusive Education
Ben Rogers	Avon Disability Equality Forum
Pat Rose	Avon Disability Equality Forum
Simon Scandrett	Community Youth Worker, Centre for Deaf People
Barry Scrase	West of England Coalition of Disabled People
Saroj Shah	Community Education Officer, Central and East Bristol
Inder Singh	South Gloucestershire Social Services
Elisabeth Standen	Bristol City Council
Michael Stevens	Kingswood and District Council for Disabled People
Jon Stevenson	Primary Teacher
Nella Stokes	Brunei College of Arts and Technology
Eleanor Stone	Parent. The Children's Society
Jane Taylor	Community Education Coordinator, South Bristol
Prue Taylor	Vice Principal, South Bristol College,
Vivian Upton	Vice Principal, PM School/Somerset Inclusion Project
Paul Upton	(Speaker) Headteacher, Holway Park Community Primary School, Taunton
Will Waghorn	BBC Radio Bristol
Dave Walker	(Panel Member) Principal -Princess Margaret School, Taunton/Somerset Inclusion Project
Judy Watson	Teacher
Mark Williams	West of England Coalition of Disabled People
Chris Willmore	Councillor, South Gloucestershire
Chris Wilson	Parent
Jim Winter	Bath and North East Somerset Education Officer
Joe Whittaker	Bolton Institute and North West Action
Deborah Yamanaka	Councillor, Vice-Chair, North Somerset Education Committee

“Post-it” Comments and Suggestions

- Celebrate achievements!
- Brilliant day
- Work with all four unitary authorities in
- Inclusive Education and Disability Equality in Education
- Confront policy review processes and use them to make a declaration of intent to all segregated education
- Keep contact with the Alliance for Inclusive Education (formerly the Integration Alliance) who are the national umbrella
- Recommendations need to be made to Department for Education re Teacher Training -more disabled teaching students need to be recruited and Disability Equality Training needs to be part of Teacher Training
- Great day! Other follow up conferences would be good also
- It's better that all groups work together rather than compete
- Involve People with Learning Difficulties!
- I feel enthused and excited... We must learn to live inclusively, valuing each other in our day to day lives, amongst all the other things
- Set up Inclusive Education working groups in the new local authorities which includes disabled representatives and reps from all sectors of education, e.g. community education, further education, youth service
- Remember funding for development work by Disabled People's organisations for these, issues to progress
- More days like today?
- Make links with 'special schools' at an early stage to avoid, if possible, the creation of an 'us and them' conflict
- Push for funding for Disability Equality
- Training for all concerned, Parents, Governors, Staff, Officers, Councillors etc
- Total inclusion is "EVERYTHING"!
- Make Disability Equality Policy part of the Director for Education's job descriptions, i.e. if he/she fails them then he/she is SACKED
- DIALOGUE
- Each new unitary authority must review inclusive education
- Great Day, now let's make sure all *the* political parties are committed irrevocably to Inclusive Education
- Our school, Batheaston Primary, wants inclusion but Bath and NorthEast Somerset do need to come out in favour of Inclusion
- List of. phone numbers and contacts, organisations please
- Had a good day, and will carry views forward at every opportunity
- Looking forward to Bath and North East Somerset instigating an Inclusion Policy so that small schools like ours can benefit
- Make ways of figuring out what each child needs, inclusive, positive and make them possible!

- Work out costs for average school for inclusive education and savings to be made from closing 'special' schools
- Make sure that as early as possible parents and children are introduced to adults with similar impairments to set models of what CAN be done
- Working with parents of disabled children can never start too soon - need to look at joint projects between social services, education, carers, employers, etc etc etc
- Include Organisations of Disabled People in all stages of planning, policy and practice
- Thanks to everyone who participated and made it a successful day