

Inclusion in school: a policy, ideology or lived experience? Similar findings in diverse school cultures

PATY PALIOKOSTA and SONIA BLANDFORD

This article summarises three case studies examining the implementation of inclusive practices, which evidence the exclusionary pressures acting in school settings that put the needs, rights and entitlements of vulnerable children and young people at risk. It examines how three very culturally different secondary schools in England interpreted inclusive policies and illuminates the various constraints to the implementation of inclusive practices as experienced by senior leaders, teachers, parents and pupils in these schools. Conceptual unpreparedness towards inclusion versus integration, knowledge and false conceptualisations of special educational needs and difficulties associated with differentiation and time limitations were the main barriers presented. The implications for initial and professional teacher education are posited; it is suggested that inclusion can work by removing the diagnostic paradigm associated with special educational needs and by creating a framework for teachers' lifelong learning focusing on a social justice oriented pedagogy that will empower teachers conceptually and practically.

Key words: barriers to inclusive education, initial teacher training, school culture, social construction, social justice.

Context

Conceptualising inclusion in the context of secondary education is complex. Inclusion has been a dominant ideology underpinning social and educational policy, as politicians stress their commitment to it often in parallel with social justice (Evans and Lunt, 2002). The movement towards inclusive education has been a global phenomenon as demonstrated in the fundamental philosophy and key practice of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 1994, 2005) among many other international social and educational organisations.

Although a series of policy documents were promoted by the British Government during the past decade, which

placed vulnerable groups and their rights at the forefront of the educational and social agenda, the impact on the educational experience of children described as having special educational needs (SEN) has not been either clear or consistent. Sikes *et al.* (2007, p. 357) state succinctly how 'the rhetoric and discourse by which inclusion has been promoted and articulated in governmental policy and publications could be described as somewhat vague'. The experience of teachers is characterised by ongoing tensions and a feeling of inadequacy towards what is and continues to be prescribed by policy.

Part of the difficulty is that terminology around a definition of inclusion is by no means consistent and this leaves the issue open to confusion (Bayliss, 1998; Lunt and Norwich, 1999). Detailed theories have been offered by the proponents of inclusion (among others Booth and Ainscow, 1998; Ainscow, 1999; Clough and Corbett, 2000); according to a broader definition of inclusion (Booth, 1999, p. 164):

'inclusion/exclusion is an unending project, applying to all learners who are vulnerable to exclusion from their local schools and to the construction of an education system that recognises and is responsive to learner diversity within common groups'.

Campbell (2002) describes the key aspects of the inclusion debate as being about a balance between individual needs and the needs of the majority, the active participation of pupils, a state of affairs or an ongoing process and its relation to exclusion. Therefore, inclusion can be conceptualised through an individual or collective lens viewing either participation or exclusion; both influence the research and subsequent analysis in the three case study schools.

The ideational aspect of inclusion is thus recognised but also the fact that this quality can be strategically deployed by those in power, as a 'grand narrative'. The implementation, however, of the idea is subjected to complex and multilayered interactions among ideational and institutional aspects, consent and coercion (Scott, 1990). As the notion of inclusive education is already complex, it becomes even more complex when SEN is introduced into the discussion (Lunt, 2002); besides, inclusion is something much broader than a discussion about SEN (Booth, 1999). However, SEN and most recently learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) are

still categories in policy documentation and, in an effort to describe and analyse policy and its impact the current discourse used in policy and schools' practice will be followed in the context of this article, but not uncritically. Disability, SEN or whichever term we choose to deploy, is highly political, socially constructed and is defined according to society's needs or means. As Hahn (1986, pp. 134–135) has claimed, 'The definition of disability is fundamentally a policy decision' and inclusion, in turn is 'a moral and political project' (Booth, 2009: 127).

The conceptualisation of the ideational basis of inclusion/exclusion relates to social control (Althusser, 1971) and repressive and ideological mechanisms that may stem from it. The repression occurs in that all those who either cannot or will not conform to the norms and discipline of capitalist society are removed from it. One such demonstration is the segregation and oppression of people with any kind of difference or impairment that is turned into a disability, due to the system's lack of capacity. Althusser also strongly emphasised the role of 'ideological state apparatuses' in the production and reproduction of ideologies. School is one of those state apparatuses that generate dominant ideologies. School as an institution can be at the heart of exclusion, as it combines repressive and ideological mechanisms. The curriculum that has been selected as well as the cultural behaviours exhibited can challenge educational equality regarding 'race', gender, special needs, sexual diversity and social class.

The study

The discussion in this article stems from data collected in the context of a two-year qualitative research study between November 2003 and March 2005 (Paliokosta, 2008), which explored the interface between theories and policies for inclusion, their interpretation into practice and the consequent experience of the learner. It involved interpretative, ethnographic case studies in three schools chosen by specific contextual features in order to examine how culture affects the interpretation of policy. For the purpose of the study the schools have been named St Patrick's Catholic school, Valley High voluntary aided school and Woodland grammar school. It was important to see how cultures relate to teachers' interpretations in terms of discourse, professionalism and practice.

Following the fundamental principle in qualitative research to examine informants' words and actions in narrative and descriptive ways, emphasis was given to narratives. Using a constructivist qualitative perspective, where the individual and his or her world are co-constituted (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994), the relation between 'appearance' (signifier) to what is signified was examined in a complex set of 'readings' of observations and inferences within phenomena (Atkinson, 1990). Noticing that the big picture of policy making tends to assume homogeneity across individuals (Bayliss, 2004), there was a need for creating 'close-ups' so

that the uniqueness of individuals and school cultures is juxtaposed to that falsely perceived homogeneity.

Data were either collected through direct questions during semi-structured interviews on *barriers and difficulties identified in the implementation of policies* or emerged during the attempt of 43 stakeholders to give their interpretation of inclusive policies in relation to SEN. These were analysed in parallel with 'thick description' (Ryle, 1949) stemming from observation, as well as 'opportunistic' discussions with informants in staffrooms and other contexts. These stakeholders were directly or indirectly involved in the education of particular children that were selected in each school as a focus of analysis because they were placed on the school's SEN register. There was no equivalent of 'inclusion register' in any of the settings.

Findings

The very different case studies illustrate how, irrespective of the different nature of the schools, the same issue was identified; despite the introduction of ongoing policy initiatives, school cultures can remain static in terms of understanding, acceptance and accommodation of difference. This is particularly the case regarding special educational needs due to the specialist connotations the term carries and the conceptual discontinuity created by that. As long as the inflexibility of the National Curriculum prevails and the accountability that follows this becomes an end in itself, it is difficult for practices and discourse around inclusion to be owned by practitioners.

The different factors that have been identified as barriers to change are discussed empirically and lead to a view of levels: barriers occur at the level of the system, for example lack of flexibility of secondary schools and limitations in teacher training (Davies and Garner, 1997; Slee, 1999; Garner, 2000; Mittler, 2000; Booth *et al.*, 2003) which counts for the general population of schools; the sub-system, for example resources, funding, time management, which counts for many schools; and the micro-system, for example lack of communication, which counts for specific schools. The barriers encountered in the contexts investigated do not all operate at the same level, even if they operate at the same time with one complicating the other.

These barriers illustrated areas in which inevitably certain limitations might be correlated with attitudes and micro ideologies that constitute Bourdieu's habitus; in this way a more informed approach to teachers' resistance to inclusive practice can be made without pathologising or demonising it. As Clough (1999) suggested, the dynamics of teachers' resistance are complex, and their occurrence is growing. There was a reconfirmed assumption in the study that inclusion is presented as an ideology, but only remains at the ideational level if the adequate conceptual tools and material support are not given for it to be realised.

It is important to emphasise that, by focusing on barriers to implementation of inclusive policies, there is no intention to challenge the principles of inclusive education or to dismiss all the existing positive practices seen at the settings examined. On the contrary, as the latter often took place independently of their school cultures, it would be useful to identify the obstacles to the creation of inclusive cultures that challenge the systematicity and meaningfulness of such practices. The findings presented in this article are organised thus under the following themes:

- School culture as a barrier or facilitator
- Differentiation as a barrier
- Time limitations as a barrier
- Teachers' knowledge and conceptualisations as a barrier

School culture as a barrier or facilitator

Culture as a 'cohesive behaviour and a basic feature of the human condition' (Holliday, 2002) operates within a particular context and its importance as a source for mediating actions and interpretations in particular situations or contexts has been often emphasised (D'Andrade, 1995; Hutchins, 1995; Bruner, 1996; Cole, 1996; Nelson, 1996, in Agee, 2002). Although the terms *ethos* and *climate* are both commonly and often used interchangeably, 'the term *culture* provides a more accurate and intuitively appealing way to . . . understand . . . school's own unwritten rules, norms and expectations' (Deal and Peterson, 1999, p. 2, emphasis in original); schools are organisations that have some sets of shared beliefs that dignify particular practices and behaviour (Skrtic, 1988). As Popkewitz (2001, p. 166) commented, 'neither policy statements and rhetoric, nor teachers' reflections are "voices" in any simple notion of "authenticity" or "wisdom", but reasoning formed historically'. This reasoning may be falling within rituals that are part of institutions and professional practice. Utterances in the school staffroom, thus, are context specific and related to existing discourses and prevailing views.

More specifically, at St Patrick's school, the tendency was for the teachers to have a positive stance towards inclusion, but then all the barriers were presented in teachers' more extended narratives.

'Um, because if their only difficulty was having some sort of symptoms of dyslexia that shouldn't limit them really at all . . . because you know they have difficulties with reading and writing well, now more and more they have computers that they can use and they can always have extra time in exams . . . but there's no difficulty at all for dyslexic children, I have my doubt about children who have OTHER learning difficulties being included in the same way' (Science teacher, Y8, St Patrick's school).

In this response a deficit model is used, which results in deskilling (to use Booth's (1999) expression) of teachers, as

they feel inadequate to deal with all forms of learning. This could be seen as one of the reasons why SEN can be seen as an incompatible term with inclusion, as it automatically categorises people and removes the ownership and responsibility on behalf of the class teacher.

The danger mentioned above could be seen to lie behind the following practitioner's utterance:

'in this school environment, well, the child is included in everything, um that's how I would explain it, every subject – every subject the child is doing across the National Curriculum' (Maths Teacher, Y8, St Patrick's school).

Although this could be seen as an illustration of equal treatment throughout the school, it is more a demonstration of uninformed equality where everybody is treated as having the same needs, which cannot be true.

Additionally, there were different tensions in school; there was not any apparent link between the management team's struggle to raise standards and the special educational needs department's practice. The so-called SEN office, with all the connotations that its discourse carried, was working in isolation to a certain extent. There was a culture of hierarchy in the school inhibiting the opportunity of mutual information sharing among staff at least on an everyday basis. The dialogue between teachers and teaching assistants was not evident. The SEN co-ordinator (SENCo) believed that inclusion was not viewed as a priority by the senior management team and, due to that, a lot of personal effort and cost had been required from her for anything the department was trying to achieve:

'have you seen the mobile when that was in use, it was condemned when you came, that was a nice area, but again it took us a long time to get, I mean we did the work ourselves, we actually repaired the floor, um painted and decorated, caretaker put the carpet in, I mean all that in general came from us, Mrs P gave us the curtains you know stuff like that, it wasn't been paid by the school, and I think this office has come about, it took us a long time to have this kind of space here, um, but I suspect that I am going to lose it in September . . . I think I'm going to go elsewhere, cause I think they are going to replace that with a building and some classrooms, although I said I don't want to move . . . um, you know, they may work out for the best, but I don't think it's in the priorities of senior management how to make inclusion better' (SENCo, St Patrick's Catholic school).

The school's SENCo felt her work was undervalued. The so-called 'well-resourced' SEN office, using the deputy head's words, consisted mainly of teaching assistants (TAs), whose value was rarely recognised by others, often leading to a low self-perception as far as professionalism was concerned.

The case of Valley high school was quite different due to the high frequency of behavioural difficulties, reflecting the sensitivities of the geographical area. As the school had acquired a pastoral role, thinking and preparing for children's individual needs was viewed more as a whole school issue. However, there was a tendency in school to retain a normative or benevolent perspective. At the same time, what members of staff – both in the strategic as well as in the operational level – openly talked about was an imbalance in the school system due to the admission of a high number of pupils designated as having special educational needs. As a result, a negative preoccupation was held by the public in the county, due to connotations associated with disadvantage, drug abuse and violence, which were feared to have consequent effects on teaching and learning. Teachers seemed frustrated with inclusion, but in reality they were frustrated with the exclusionary forces that had taken place at a much higher level, enabling parents to divert their children's education towards other settings, such as faith or grammar schools in the area. In this context, stakeholders rarely talked about specific needs related to a medical model; however they chose a medical model to address them, the triggers of which were to a great extent – if not solely – social.

In Woodland grammar school practitioners mainly defined inclusion as having pupils in the same environment and supporting them in their learning, being part of the whole and having a sense of belonging, making sure that they could all access the curriculum as well as any other child in the school. It was mentioned that children in the grammar school were more 'tolerant' of SEN and that there were very few behavioural issues in the school. The difficulties encountered by children who attended this grammar school were described as either very mild specific learning difficulties that sometimes did not even need any kind of intervention or differentiation, or sensory difficulties that needed a very specific type of support that was mostly provided by external/specialist services. Achievement was one of the major themes in Woodland, due to its nature as a grammar school; however informants from this setting considered it to be inclusive. It is undeniable that there was some degree of diversity in the school, but the exclusionary implications of just one exam, the 11+, which would allow entry to the top 20% achieving group of the national population could not be understated; this indeed creates incongruities on the grounds of the basic principles of inclusive education.

The different rate and range of special educational needs in the three schools has significant implications for the practitioners' interpretations of inclusion, as people tend to categorise needs and make claims according to the capacity or limitations of their context.

Differentiation as a barrier

One important barrier presented was the difficulty or inability of teachers to differentiate within a classroom setting.

Differentiated teaching and learning, however, is an imperative within the National Curriculum documents (QCA, 1999): 'teachers should teach the knowledge, skills and understanding in ways that suit their pupils' abilities'. Nevertheless, it is significant to point out that differentiation was presented in practitioners' utterances as an important factor for inclusive practice, without necessarily presupposing its effective implementation:

'work should be differentiated sufficiently to be accessed by all pupils but in some subjects this is not so easy, because of the abstract concepts in subjects like history but inclusion should mean that work is sufficiently differentiated, maybe different way of recording the included in class not just writing, because at the moment it's got lack of that, picture recording, recording on the Dictaphone, because generally it's quite hard for teachers to include all these methods' (science teacher, Y8, Valley high school).

Taking into account Gardner's (1993) theory on multiple intelligences, it could be claimed that effective teaching should be tailored according to pupils' needs, so that they can reach their full potential. In these terms, differentiation is about maximising learning for all children respecting their individuality, the way they learn and their particular aptitudes.

Differentiation thus is broader than addressing SEN, more about effective teaching and learning, requiring good subject knowledge on behalf of the teacher. The curriculum can be broad, balanced and relevant for all pupils only if we take into account different learning styles and attempt to meet them through differentiation. However, at Valley high school, differentiation was – as in the case of the other two schools – associated with setting and all children who were streamed in the Learning Centre, which was set up for children described as having special educational needs (of cognitive and behaviour nature) were taught in a lower, broken-down level, something that is summed up in the Learning Centre English teacher's (SENCo for Y7/8) words:

'well, everything is obviously set to low ability, especially for reading they get more time . . . well, for Maths and things, it's different again because it's broken down to the lower levels, you are doing some sort of junior school bits and pieces and English, whereas the others are expected to go up higher with these' (English teacher, Valley high school).

Taking the above data into consideration, which are consistent with further data collected, differentiation is not an established practice. In all three schools, setting mainly took place in the name of differentiation, while there was much less individualised support for children according to needs and most of the time no differentiation. However, it would be unfair to demonise teachers without investigating the facts that underpin their attitudes and practices. According to practitioners, lack of resources and time made differentiation an impossible task.

The above is further illustrated in the SENCo's realisation of lack of differentiation at St Patrick's school:

'I think there are problems with money and I don't think it's the school, I think we need more money, and this idea of inclusion has to be understood to be more than window dressing, it's fine to me that S goes to all his lessons and that he's included, but actually he's not, cause although he is within the lesson the fact that he can't interact with the teacher means that he's excluded from anything valuable that happens, so there's a physical presence of the child enrolled, but in fact there is no educational inclusion taking place [low voice]'.

What the SENCo is articulating is the fact that inclusion is not just about locational integration, but that adaptations have to be made for a child to be effectively included. Great emphasis was given to the interaction with the teacher, who is or should be the significant other in class for all children.

The English teacher from Woodland grammar school explains the resources issue from a different perspective:

'in a way it is contentious because it is when you provide that support; within your lesson? Or is it – because they don't want to be marked out as different – or if it's outside your lesson, it has to be some other time in their timetable and somebody has to accommodate that, um I think what would really help would be someone to help you use the resources and reduce the teacher resources, the physical resources like the photocopying and you know it's the silly things, just producing work in different colours and that sort of thing, well the LSA is very good at that' (English teacher, Woodland grammar school).

Although the above teacher works in a well-resourced school, she reports difficulties with planning and preparing the differentiated material required for the visually impaired pupil in her class. Resources' limitations, thus, are not only related to financial issues, but also to the way adults liaise with each other in the school. Ineffective communication between adults can be a serious barrier to the development of inclusive cultures and practices and seemed to be a problematic area in all settings as it has serious implications for the notion of responsibility. The maths teacher in St Patrick's school considered the use of individual education plans (IEPs) to be administered by the special educational needs office:

'I haven't read anything. It's my responsibility to get them to work to their maximum potential, that's my aim, obviously, which should be every teacher's aim, but I think the special educational needs office deals with the use of individual educational plans and things like that. I had in the past in other schools to do IEPs for children that I teach, but I don't have to do it here' (maths teacher, St Patrick's school).

This can be regarded as an indication of the fact that IEPs constructed for children on the SEN register were not

actively taken into consideration and they may be consulted only when they are constructed and reviewed. Although the teachers should be in charge of the whole class, they do not take up an active role in the creation and consistent use of the IEPs to inform their planning.

A possibly detached attitude was also held by the maths teacher at Woodland grammar school:

'my responsibility is to know about everything, I mean it's both really, there's a need for discussion, it's not them telling me what I'm going to do in my class and how to deal with them, but there is definitely a liaison' (maths teacher, Woodland grammar school).

Teachers tended to respond in a way that revealed power and hierarchy issues instead of answering the question of 'who actually meets the pupils' needs'. There were clearly issues regarding ownership and responsibility in the above teacher's words.

Time limitations as a barrier

In terms of a discrepancy between theory and reality, time was presented as a serious barrier to inclusive policy implementation, which was a constraint to the implementation of the SEN Code of Practice from the early days of its implementation (Garner *et al.*, 1995). The science teacher below explains in a quite practical way the logistics of the process of differentiation and how according to his experience meeting all pupils' needs would not be feasible:

'well in terms of what I see, the children I see in my groups, who despite having TAs they still may avoid doing a lot of work and if . . . again if you have a class of 30 children and there are let's say 5 children with specific learning need and then not responding, who's finding the time to actually do something with them? I mean ideally for 30 children in a class we should have 30 different activities for them to do, but in reality, it's not possible, concerning that I'm meeting about 200 children a week, and some classes I see four times a week. Logistically it's not possible to design a hundred of activities in every lesson, so there is educational theory behind what we should do . . . and there's the reality, there's the practical reality' (science teacher, St Patrick's school).

The same attitude was held by an individual support tutor (IST) in the same school:

'well, . . . I don't think teachers have enough time to differentiate work within a lesson, I think that is a problem and time yes and I think it's very difficult cause you often have children who have other difficulties, so they have to be dealt with it as well, so it's very difficult to make it more individualised for the child with dyslexia for example' (IST, St Patrick's school).

Teachers' knowledge and conceptualisations as a barrier

Findings from this study are thus consistent with the literature on the fact that teachers struggle to address pupils' needs in using categories and narrow diagnostic models, which do not provide the appropriate information to inform educational practice and support inclusive policies (Dockrell and Lindsay, 2000). At the same time, confusion and lack of knowledge and exposure to different kinds of special educational needs are likely to affect both how the teacher works with a particular child and the ways in which teachers collaborate with other professionals (Gammel-Crosby and Hanzlik, 1994). This often forces many educators to function under the traditional medical paradigm that treats impairment as a disease and difference as a social deviance. The focus is put on the inadequacies and the negative characteristics rather than the strengths and abilities of the person and the impact is not only negative on the teaching process itself, but also risks the transformation of education into mere training and skills practice. Taking into consideration that 'one of the main arenas for the promotion of social justice' is education (Troyna and Vincent, 1995, p. 152) the above practices can be seen as discriminating and as the first step to future social exclusion.

In addition, the Government's document *Removing Barriers to Achievement* (DfES, 2004, p. 25), affirms that:

'Inclusion is about much more than the type of school that children attend: it is about the quality of their experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the school'.

Although emphasis should be placed on the well-being of children and their belonging to the community, the role of schools still appears to be an induction into the dominant culture through the instruction of set curricula rather than the meeting of students' needs as learners (Carrington, 1999). In addition, as Clough (1999) suggests, it is not difficult for a teacher in England to acquire a tendency to exclude; besides, unless teachers opt during their initial training to teach children with learning difficulties, they are not expected to do so. This can be a great barrier to inclusive practices. Teachers do not seem to have the conceptual preparation that enables them to understand difference and cater for it. This also relates to the way children are prepared and familiarised with difference in order to accept it, live and learn harmonically with it.

All the above parameters constitute part of teachers' everyday reality on the scale of their professional life as relating with issues at intermediate levels. This reality interacts dynamically with their ideologies that inevitably link to larger-scale issues. The question that remains though is whether differentiation as such is a very difficult task to achieve or the conceptual and ideological unpreparedness creates a culture that does not facilitate its effective implementation.

Conclusions

Certain issues stem from the above data as well as from many more that could not be included in this article. All would fall under the umbrella of huge practical complexities between the rhetoric and reality of inclusion in schools. This illustrates Armstrong's point that 'while social policy is dominated by the rhetoric of inclusion, the reality for many remains one of exclusion and the panacea of "inclusion" masks many sins' (Croll and Moses, 2005, p. 2).

First, there is a tendency for inclusion to become tautologised with integration; although people use the term 'inclusion', they still function in the context of a medical model and see the deficit within the child. For somebody to be included in the mainstream educational experience the need for extra adult support is highlighted in all contexts as a prerequisite; however, different interpretations exist regarding the purpose of the support provided by additional adults in the school: is the support provided perceived to be targeted at the child's needs or the teacher's? Taking into consideration that disapproving of inclusion would go against a politically correct attitude, it was interesting to note some discrepancy found between practitioners' statements about inclusion and their more extended narratives. This revealed in a way the imposition of prevailing discourses on people's attitudes without always representing existing ideologies.

Barriers and concerns keep being brought forward while inclusion and integration are used interchangeably in teachers' discourses, which may indicate that there is a mismatch between their perception of capacity and expectations of policy (Ellis and Tod, 2005). Teachers often have perceptions that policies are changing non-stop, so there could be a pragmatic 'minimalism' in practitioners, knowing that change rarely results in lasting new structures. This had different demonstrations in every setting according to the affordances of the situation.

It is interesting that although the three schools have significant structural and cultural differences, the issue of the dependence of successful inclusion on the nature and rate of needs was presented in all settings.

Next steps

The message that stems from this investigation is not pessimistic towards inclusion. Inclusion can work as a process, but some changes – not necessarily initiatives – need to take place. After the shift in the leadership level towards a shared belief in the value of inclusion, changes need to take place in terms of a framework. Teachers resist change that leaves them with more questions than answers. If idiosyncratic changes keep taking place in policy making, which create enormous leaps into different ideologies and educational

pedagogies, without appropriate preparation at all levels, change will be slow if it happens at all.

Taking the voices of different contexts in different scales and specifically at the point of implementation, policy makers have to reconsider the way ideologies are transmitted and funding is allocated. In such a fast-moving society where the imperative is to find what works, perhaps policy makers should take the time to base their recommendations on sound conceptual frameworks which respect the individuals that will receive them and the professionals that will deliver them.

A redirection to social justice should be made with a parallel effort to tackle hierarchy that on its own creates exclusionary practices. Every Child Matters (DfES, 2004) has paved the way to the promotion of 'personalised learning', extended school developments and initiatives such as the Inclusion Development Programme (2008) and Achievement for All project that has been piloted since 2009. All these could be tools for bringing about positive changes in the system, if they are used with a vision rather than as a checklist exercise. A need for general guidance and direction is required in order for local authorities and schools to be confident in dealing with every child's and young person's needs in a fair and democratic way.

The redirection to social justice has to be entrenched in the so-called initial teacher training and most importantly in the continuous professional development of teachers; it is only through practice, exposure and knowledge in the sense of a theoretical and political understanding that practitioners can develop inclusive thinking. Having a feeling of ownership and capacity within their role, teachers will gradually acquire confidence and improved self-perception. If pedagogies are reformed in such a way that there is space for everybody, and teachers learn how to problematise difference and its consequences, they will be more prepared to reflect on and develop positive attitudes to social justice and entitlement of all children to experience meaningful education. They will also be more ready to challenge their views about what their children can do and this is a process that requires time and demands partnership and ability to share ideas and practices with colleagues (Ainscow *et al.*, 2004). In this way teachers will develop capacity and awareness of the wider educational needs of the children without being constrained by narrow models of difficulty and service provision (Rose, 2002). To do that they will need to show flexibility as far as the boundaries of their expertise are concerned (Edwards and Mutton, 2007).

Voices should be given the appropriate attention so that focused assistance, guidance and support are provided by higher levels, and that exclusionary pragmatism associated with difficulties in implementation is handled appropriately for the development of positive attitudes to fair education. There is no need for more rhetoric, but rather sustainable practices developed through education, including that of adults, and rewarding experiences for all.

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Correspondence

Dr Paty Paliokosta
School of Education
Kingston University
Kingston Hill Campus
Kingston upon Thames
KT2 7LP
Email: p.paliokosta@kingston.ac.uk



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