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index for inclusion

developing play, learning and participation in early years and childcare

Tony Booth, Mel Ainscow and Denise Kingston

CSIE
Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education
an independent education centre
- supporting inclusion
- challenging exclusion

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adapted for early years and childcare
Tony Booth and Denise Kingston

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index for inclusion: developing play, learning and participation in early years and childcare

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part 1
an inclusive approach to developing your setting

Welcome to the *index for inclusion*

The *Index for inclusion: developing play, learning and participation in early years and childcare* is a resource to support the inclusive development of nurseries, playgroups, parent and children's centres, crèches, childminding, homecare, clubs and play schemes. The *Index* can help everyone in these settings to find their own next steps to increase the participation in play and learning of the children and young people in their care. The materials are designed to challenge and help any setting to become more inclusive, however inclusive it is thought to be currently.

Along with this ring binder, there is a six-page *Insert* that provides a quick visual overview of the main contents and purposes of the *Index* and a way to structure the ideas so that they can easily be introduced to others. There is also a CD version of the *Index* to ease the sharing of the materials.

In the *Index*, inclusion is an approach to education and childcare. The *Index* is not an addition to the many activities that take place in these settings but a way of carrying them out according to inclusive values. Inclusion is often associated with children and young people who have impairments or are seen as 'having special educational needs'. However, in the *Index*, inclusion is concerned with increasing the participation of all children as well as all the adults involved in a setting. It involves a detailed look at how to reduce the barriers to play, learning and participation of any child. It is about helping settings to become more responsive to the diversity of children and young people in their communities.

The *Index* is a practical document, which shows what inclusion can mean for all aspects of settings. It provides a supportive process of self-review and development, which builds on the knowledge and views of practitioners, children and young people and parents/carers, other members of the surrounding communities as well as those who manage or advise those working in the setting. This supportive approach to improving a setting offers an alternative to one based on inspection, competition and fear of failure.

The *Index* fosters the development of play, learning, and participation by encouraging the best use of available resources, minimising barriers in the setting itself and building a culture of collaboration. It supports the active involvement of children and young people in their own play and learning, building on the experience and knowledge they bring with them from home. In developing the cultures of settings, and helping to clarify the purpose of activities, the *Index* can contribute to lasting improvements.

Background to the Index

This version of the *Index* is adapted from the version written for schools. The basic structure, much of the content, and the process for working

with the *Index* are the same for both versions. Since every place adapts the materials to suit their purposes many early years and childcare settings have worked successfully with the schools version. However, we tailored these materials for early years and childcare in a number of ways. We have added some indicators and taken some away. We have changed some terms. For example, we use the more general term 'setting' rather than 'school' and refer to 'children' or 'children and young people' rather than 'students'. Those who support settings in steering groups, management committees, education committees and governing bodies are termed 'management committee/governors'. We have used the term 'practitioners' instead of staff, to cover the variety of people, including volunteers, who work in these settings. We have also given a new emphasis to play activities and added material particular to the care of babies. We have taken away those aspects of the materials that refer specifically to practice in secondary schools.

The development of this version built on the work with the many schools and local authorities which contributed to the schools version. It draws, too, on the extensive experience of the East Sussex Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership of working with a wide range of early years and childcare settings using a draft version of the *Index*.

We had written the schools version of the *Index* (in 2000 and revised in 2002) in response to a number of concerns. We felt that the emphasis in education on the results of tests in English, Maths and Science was sometimes at the expense of an effort to build supportive communities for children and staff within schools. We saw that competition between schools could undermine their attempts to strengthen relationships with local communities. We were concerned that a concentration on a narrow range of outcomes of education could deflect attention from the conditions in which teaching and learning flourish.

The building of communities with shared values and the careful attention to the conditions for teaching and learning are as important to the creation of long-term sustained improvement in early years and childcare settings as they are for schools. In addition, the emphasis on play as important for development, in this version of the *Index*, should provide a counterbalance to the growth in assessment and use of attainment targets for very young children. It should also provide a reminder that play is important for development at all ages. This means that play should be valued for its own sake not as something that can be controlled and measured. Education for children should remain responsive and flexible and avoid the narrowing of thinking and expectation that can result from too great a concentration on early assessment.

Introducing the elements of the Index

The *Index* has four main elements:

Key concepts

- to support thinking and discussion about inclusive development.

Planning framework: dimensions and sections

- to structure the approach to review and development.

Review materials: indicators and questions

- to enable a detailed review of all aspects of a setting and help to identify and implement priorities for change.

An inclusive process

- to ensure that the processes of review, planning and implementing change are themselves inclusive.

Key concepts

The key concepts of the *Index*, are 'inclusion', 'barriers to play, learning and participation', 'resources for play, learning and participation', and 'support for diversity'. These ideas help to create a coherent and consistent approach to inclusive development.

Inclusion

Everyone has his or her own view of what inclusion means. We think of it as a principled approach to action in education and society. It encompasses such commitments as the idea that every life and every death are of equal value. However, the materials of the *Index* tie down the meaning of such broad principles to everyday actions and provide a progressively more detailed and practical view. Many people find that their notion of inclusion becomes clearer as they engage with these materials. We have listed a number of ideas that make up the view of inclusion within the *Index* in figure 1. These start with a one-sentence definition, but such a single sentence about a complex idea like inclusion can only capture some of its implications and contains words which themselves require definition. We have extended this first definition with a number of related ideas.

Inclusion in early years and childcare is as much concerned with the participation of practitioners as with the involvement of children and young people. Participation implies playing, learning, and working in collaboration with others. It involves making choices about, and having a say in, what we do. More deeply, it is about being recognised, accepted and valued for ourselves.

Developing inclusion involves reducing all forms of exclusion. In the *Index*, exclusion, just like inclusion, is considered in a broad way. Besides referring to more obvious discrimination, exclusion refers to all those temporary or longer lasting pressures that get in the way of full participation. These might result from: difficulties in relationships between children, between practitioners employed within different services, between children and practitioners or within families; problems with activities which do not engage the children's interests; as well as from feelings of not being valued in the setting. Inclusion is about minimising *all* barriers to play, learning and participation for *all* children.

Inclusion involves a deep recognition of both the differences and similarities between all children and young people. The development of inclusive settings builds on differences in ways that value everyone equally. For example, it involves taking care to avoid placing a higher value on some children because of their progress in physical development or attainment. Recognising that children differ from each other does not mean that they should all be engaged in individual tasks but that we understand the diverse ways in which they respond to shared experiences.

figure 1 **Inclusion in education involves:**

- Increasing the participation of children and young people in, and reducing their exclusion from, the cultures, activities and communities of local settings.
- Restructuring the cultures, policies and practices in settings so that they are responsive to the diversity of children/young people in the locality.
- Valuing equally, all children, young people, parents/carers and practitioners.
- Viewing the differences between children as resources to support play, learning and participation rather than as problems to be overcome.
- Acknowledging the right of children to good quality education and childcare in their locality.
- Making improvements for practitioners as well as for children.
- Reducing barriers to play, learning and participation for all children not only those with impairments or those who are categorised as 'having special educational needs'.
- Learning from attempts to overcome barriers for children whose play, learning and/or participation is a focus of concern, to make changes that benefit children more widely.
- Emphasising the development of community and values, as well as achievements.
- Fostering mutually sustaining relationships between settings and communities.
- Recognising that inclusion in early education and childcare are aspects of inclusion in society.
- Putting inclusive values into action.

To include any child we have to be concerned with the whole person. This can be neglected when inclusion is focused on only one aspect of a child, such as an impairment, or a need to learn English as an additional language. The particular pressures experienced by children may be entirely unrelated to the way we categorise them and we may only find these out as we interact with them and get to know them over time. When we focus on children whose play, learning or participation is of concern to us, we need to recognise that the work done in identifying and reducing the difficulties of one child may benefit many other children who were not a particular focus of concern. This is one way in which differences between children in interests, knowledge, skills, background, home language, attainments or impairment can be resources to support play and learning.

Inclusion is about building communities that encourage and celebrate their achievements. But inclusion is also about building community more widely. Settings can work with other agencies and with surrounding communities to improve educational opportunities and social conditions within their localities.

Above all, inclusion involves thinking about the beliefs and values that we bring to our work and actions, and then relating what we do to inclusive values. We see such values as to do with equity or fairness, honesty and integrity, the importance of participation, building communities and the right to good local provision, compassion, respect for difference, a concern with creating a sustainable future for our children and young people and the encouragement of joyful engagement in play, learning and relationships. Relating our actions to our values can be the most practical step we take in making improvements to our setting. Inclusion may involve profound changes in what goes on in the activities and relationships of the setting and in relationships with parents/carers.

Inclusion involves change. It is an unending *process* of increasing learning and participation for all, an ideal or aspiration that is never fully reached. There is no fully inclusive setting. Excluding pressures are widespread, persistent and may take new forms. But inclusion happens as soon as the process of increasing participation is started. An inclusive setting then may best be described as one that is on the move.

Barriers to play, learning, and participation

We see inclusion as being impeded when children or practitioners encounter barriers to play, learning and participation. These can occur in any aspect of the setting, such as its physical arrangement, its organisation, the relationships between children and adults, and the nature of activities. Such barriers inevitably extend beyond the setting and may be found within communities and in local and national policies. Children encounter difficulties, then, when they experience *barriers to play, learning and participation* which can prevent access to a setting or limit participation within it. The notion of these barriers can be used to direct attention at what needs to be done to improve the experience of any child as well as adults in the setting.

By using the notion of 'barriers to play, learning and participation' to discuss difficulties in education and care and how they can be resolved we avoid using the language of 'special educational needs'. The idea that the difficulties children experience can be resolved by identifying some of them as 'having special educational needs' has considerable limitations. It confers a label that can lead to lowered expectations. It deflects attention from the difficulties experienced by other children without the label, and from sources of difficulty that may occur in relationships, cultures, the nature of activities and resources, the way practitioners support learning and play, and the policies and organisation of settings.

The use of the concept 'barriers to play, learning and participation' for the difficulties that children encounter, and avoidance of the term 'special educational needs', is part of a social model of difficulties in learning and disability. It contrasts with a medical model in which difficulties in education are seen to arise from deficiencies or impairments. Disabilities are barriers to participation for people with impairments or chronic illness. Disabilities may be created in the environment or by the interaction of discriminatory attitudes, actions, cultures, policies and institutional practices with impairments, pain, or chronic illness. Impairment can be defined as a long-term 'limitation of physical, intellectual or sensory

function',[1] though the notion of an intellectual impairment is problematic and may suggest an unwarranted physical basis to difficulties experienced in learning. While there is little that settings can do to overcome impairments, they can considerably reduce the disabilities produced by discriminatory attitudes and actions, and institutional barriers.

Barriers that arise in the way institutions are structured or run are sometimes described as 'institutional discrimination'. The Macpherson Report,[2] following the inquiry into the way the murder of a black teenager, Stephen Lawrence, was handled by the police, focused attention on the 'institutional racism' within police forces and other institutions, including schools, early years and childcare settings and education, health and social services offices. Institutional discrimination is much wider than racism. It includes the ways institutions may disadvantage people because of their age, gender, disability, class, ethnicity, or sexual orientation as well as their educational history and qualifications. It creates barriers to participation and in education may impede learning. Because people are often more familiar with discussion of racism or sexism than disablism, they may be less aware of the involvement of people and institutions in the creation of disability. Institutional discrimination is deeply embedded within cultures and influences the way people are perceived and the responses that are made to them, including the way practitioners are appointed. Racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, ageism and disablism share a common root in intolerance to difference and the way power is abused to create and perpetuate inequalities. The development of inclusion may involve people in a painful process of challenging their own discriminatory practices, attitudes and institutional cultures.

Although the language of 'special educational needs' can be a barrier to inclusive development and may be a feature of institutional discrimination, it remains part of the culture and policy framework of many settings, and influences a variety of practices. It is used in writing 'statements of special educational need', in the identification of a child's difficulties in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice,[3] in the use of Individual Education Plans and the information that settings have to provide in order to account for their expenditure on 'special educational needs'. Although they do not have to use the title by law, most nurseries designate someone as 'a special educational needs co-ordinator' and are encouraged to do so by this Code of Practice. We prefer terms such as 'learning support co-ordinator', 'learning and play development co-ordinator' or 'inclusion co-ordinator', since they imply a stronger connection with inclusive ideas. They encourage a broader notion of support that connects work done with children who experience difficulties, with necessary changes for all children. While we suggest that practitioners avoid the use of the term 'special educational needs', we realise that we have little power to change general usage. Nevertheless it is possible for practitioners to think differently about how educational difficulties arise and to use the notion of barriers to play, learning and participation to help in this process.

The language of the *Index* is echoed in the way that educational difficulties are discussed in some official documents and this can support

1 Adapted from Disabled People's International (1982) Proceedings of the First World Congress, Singapore: Disabled People's International.
2 Macpherson, W. (1999) Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Macpherson Report), Command Paper 4261 vol. 1, London, Stationery Office.
3 Department for Education and Skills (2001) *The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*, London, DfES.

practitioners in making a shift themselves. The concept of 'barriers to learning' is shared with the Curriculum Guidance on the Foundation Stage[4] as well as the inclusion guidance for Ofsted inspectors and head teachers.[5] Practitioners in early years and childcare have to respond to current demands, while ensuring that the language they use is not discriminatory and supports inclusion.

Resources to support play, learning and participation

The minimising of barriers to play, learning and participation involves mobilising resources within the setting and its communities. There are always more resources to support play, learning and participation than are currently used. Resources are not just about money. Like barriers they can be found in any aspect of a setting: in practitioners, management committee/governors, children, parents/carers, communities, and through changes in cultures, policies and practices. Practitioners may have skills that they have not revealed or are not fully used and there may be community members who share a background or an impairment with a child who can help to make them feel at home. The resources in children, in their capacity to direct their own learning and play and to support each other, may be particularly under-utilised, as may the potential for practitioners to support each other's development. There is a wealth of knowledge within a setting about what impedes the play, learning and participation of children, which may not always be used to the full. One of the main purposes of the *Index* is to help settings draw on this knowledge to inform their development.

Figure 2 provides a set of questions that can be used to reflect on what is known about the cultures, policies and practices of a setting.

figure 2 **Addressing barriers and resources**

- What are the barriers to play, learning and participation?
- Who experiences barriers to play, learning and participation?
- How can barriers to play, learning and participation be minimised?
- What resources are used to support play, learning and participation?
- What additional resources can be brought into action to support play, learning and participation?

Support for diversity

When difficulties are thought to arise from the 'special educational needs' of children and young people it can seem natural to think of support as about providing additional people to work with particular individuals. We see support far more broadly as *all activities which increase the capacity of a setting to respond to diversity*.

Providing support to individuals is only one way to increase the participation of children. Support is also provided when practitioners plan activities with all children in mind, recognising their different starting points, experiences, interests and learning styles, or when children help

4 Qualifications and Curriculum Authority/Surestart (2000) *Curriculum guidance on the foundation stage*, London, QCA/Surestart (p. 17.)
5 Office for Standards in Education (2000) *Evaluating educational inclusion*, London, DfEE.

each other. When activities are planned to support the participation of all children, the need for individual support is reduced. Equally, the experience of supporting an individual may lead to an increase in active, independent learning for that child and provide ideas for improving learning for a wider group of children. In settings that have a number of practitioners and many children, such as nursery schools and large playgroups, major responsibility for the co-ordination of support may rest with one person. In such circumstances, those taking on this role should link support for individuals with activities to increase the knowledge and skills of practitioners, so that they can better engage all children and young people in activities.

This shift of view of support is very important. An approach to support that continues to attach assistants to individuals, without an aim to reduce such reliance, remains common. It can create a major barrier to the participation of those individuals and may block the development of a shared responsibility towards all children reflected in the way practitioners collaborate and activities are planned and encouraged.

Planning framework: dimensions and sections

In using the *Index* materials, the possibilities for improving the setting are explored along three interconnected dimensions: creating inclusive cultures, producing inclusive policies and evolving inclusive practices. Experience with the *Index* indicates that these dimensions are seen, very widely, as important ways to structure development. They are described in figure 3 below:

figure 3 The three dimensions of the *Index*

DIMENSION A Creating inclusive cultures

This dimension is about creating a secure, accepting, collaborating, stimulating community, in which everyone is valued. Shared inclusive values are developed and conveyed to all new practitioners, children, management committee/governors and parents/carers. The principles and values in inclusive cultures guide decisions about policies and moment-to-moment practice, so that development becomes a continuous process.

DIMENSION B Producing inclusive policies

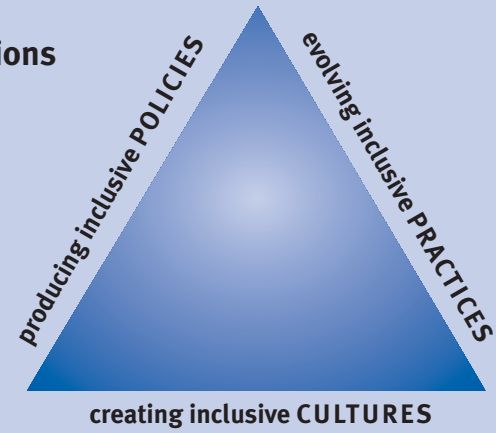
On this dimension inclusion permeates all plans for the setting. Policies encourage the participation of children and practitioners from the moment they join the setting, are concerned with reaching out to all children in the locality and minimise exclusionary pressures. All policies involve clear strategies for inclusive change. Support is considered to be all activities which increase the capacity of a setting to respond to diversity. All forms of support are brought together within a single framework.

DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive practices

This dimension is about developing activities that reflect inclusive cultures and policies. Activities are made responsive to the diversity of children and young people in the setting and in the surrounding community. Children are encouraged to be actively involved, drawing on their knowledge and experience outside of the setting. Practitioners identify material resources and resources within each other, management committee/governors, children and young people, parents/carers, and local communities which can be mobilised to support play, learning and participation.

The dimensions of the *Index* can be shown along the sides of a triangle as in figure 4.

figure 4
The three dimensions of the *Index*



While the three dimensions are all necessary to the development of inclusion, 'creating inclusive cultures' is placed, deliberately, along the base of the triangle. Too little attention has been given in the past to the potential for the cultures of a setting to support or undermine developments. Yet these are at the heart of improvement. The development of shared inclusive values and collaborative relationships may lead to changes in the other dimensions. It is through inclusive cultures that changes in policies and practices can be sustained when new practitioners, children and young people join a setting.

Each dimension is divided into two sections to further focus attention on what needs to be done to increase participation in activities. The dimensions and sections provide *a planning framework* (figure 5) to structure a development plan and can become headings within it. Settings will need to make sure that they are moving forward in all these areas and can use the indicators and questions to help specify what they want to do.

figure 5 **The planning framework**

DIMENSION A Creating inclusive *cultures*	
Building community	Establishing inclusive values
DIMENSION B Producing inclusive *policies*	
Developing the setting for all	Organising support for diversity
DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*	
Orchestrating play and learning	Mobilising resources

The review materials: indicators and questions

Each section contains a set of indicators (see *Insert* page five and pages 47-49 of this folder). These are aspirations about important aspects of the setting and are used to begin a review of the extent of inclusion in it. The meaning of each indicator is clarified by a set of questions (see *Insert* page 6 and pages 50-95 of the *Index*) which invite deeper exploration of the setting. They challenge thinking about the indicator and draw out existing knowledge. They sharpen the investigation of the current situation, provide additional ideas for development activities and serve as criteria for the assessment of progress. Often, it is when people begin to engage with the detail of the questions that they see the practical significance of the *Index*.

The CD of the *Index* will help to make the materials more accessible so that it will be easier to explore the questions without a personal copy of the printed materials. At the end of each set of questions there is space to add further questions. It is expected that practitioners in every setting will make their own version of the *Index* by adapting existing questions and adding their own.

The indicators have been carefully chosen to prompt thinking about important areas in a setting. However some very important issues are not represented by their own indicator but permeate the *Index* and are represented by questions under a number of indicators. This is the case for concerns about participation in relation to ethnicity, gender and impairment. When people only use the indicators to get a rough idea of what needs to be done in a setting without going on to explore the issues in detail using the questions, they can miss reflecting on these and other important matters.

Some indicators and/or questions refer to matters for which settings may share responsibility with others such as local authorities or management committee/governors. Examples include physical accessibility of buildings, statements of 'special educational needs' and admissions policies. We hope that practitioners will be able to work constructively with others to produce building plans, procedures for developing statements, and admissions policies, which encourage the participation in the mainstream of all children who live in the locality.

Settings are expected to adjust the materials to their own requirements. However, adaptation should be resisted if it is proposed because an indicator or question poses an uncomfortable challenge. In some places, indicators and questions may not be seen to apply because of the character of the setting. This will be true, in part, because this *Index* covers an age range from babies through children in early years settings and older children in after school clubs and summer play schemes. Questions about the welfare of babies may not apply to older children and vice versa. There are also single-sex settings, many faith-based settings, special schools and special nurseries that do not try to include all children from their locality. Nevertheless practitioners in such settings often do wish to plan inclusively within their limits and may wish to adapt the indicators and questions to suit their purposes. A number of special schools, including special nurseries, have used the *Index* to make significant changes, for

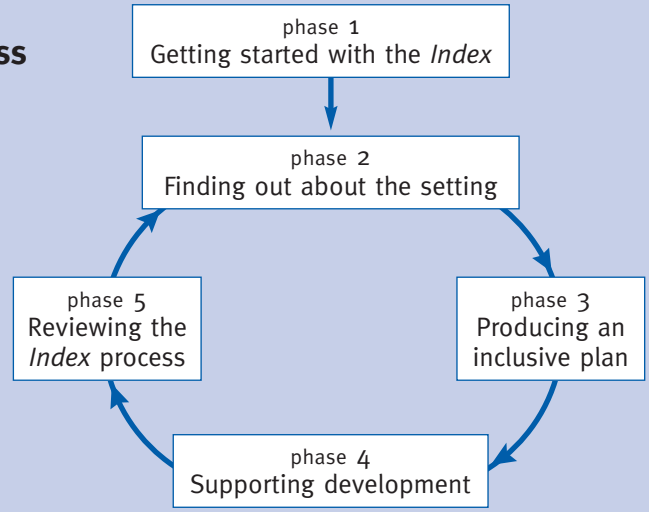
example, in collaboration between staff and between children. However, it should be clear, that we are committed to the view that all children have a right to mainstream participation and we base this commitment on human rights principles.

An inclusive process

The *Index* process itself contributes to the development of inclusion. It involves a detailed self-review which includes everyone connected to the setting and draws on their knowledge and experience. Often this self-review is supported from outside the setting by colleagues within a local authority, a psychology or advisory service. It is not about assessing anyone's competence but about finding ways to support the development of the setting and its practitioners. A version of this process is described in detail in part 2. It can be represented as a development planning cycle, with an additional stage in the first year, 'Getting started with the *Index*', where a planning group become familiar with the materials and how they can be used (see figure 6).

However, development should not be seen as a mechanical process. It arises as much when connections are made between values, emotions, knowledge and actions as from careful reflection, analysis and planning. It is about hearts as much as minds.

figure 6
The *Index* process



The *Index* in use

The schools version of the *Index* has been used in a large number of schools across the UK, and in many overseas countries. In 2000 the then Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) placed the *Index* in all schools and LEAs in England; in 2003 the Welsh Assembly Government did the same for Wales, with some schools receiving it in Welsh or Welsh and English. Versions of the *Index* have been prepared or are being prepared in over 30 languages[6] and English versions are being used in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and the USA. An international team supported by UNESCO has looked at how

6 Albanian, Arabic, Basque & Spanish, Bosnian, Brazilian Portuguese, Bulgarian, Catalan, Chinese for Hong Kong, Croat, Danish, Finnish, Flemish, French, German, Hindi, Hungarian, Japanese, Luganda & Lusoga for Uganda, Maltese, Norwegian, Portuguese, Romanian, Serbian, Spanish for Chile and Spain, Swedish, Urdu, Vietnamese and Welsh.

versions of the *Index* can be developed for the economically poor areas in countries of the South.[7] Such work has led us to conclude that the concepts, planning framework, review materials and process of the *Index* have wide application although more radical modifications need to be made to the review materials in economically poor countries.

A version of the *Index* has also been produced to support the development of all aspects of local authorities, from the fire service to the library service.[8] One local authority has reorganised its inclusion agenda around the dimensions and sections of the *Index* to make it compatible with the work it wishes to support in schools, with the head of inclusion claiming that 'the *Index* is the lead document for this Authority'.

There is no 'right' way of using the *Index*. The huge variety of early years and childcare settings within the state, private, voluntary and independent sectors means that the materials inevitably need to be adapted to particular circumstances. Some places have used the indicators to consider improving working conditions and relationships for practitioners before looking at it more generally. Others have used the *Index* to structure a piece of individual or group research. It has also been used for professional development activities.

Some settings begin working with the *Index* on a small scale, for example, in using the materials to raise awareness about inclusion with practitioners, volunteers, and management committee/governors and then find that this leads on to work in greater depth. Part 2 of these materials contains examples that illustrate a number of different ways of using the *Index*. An analysis[9] of case studies of the use of the schools version of the *Index* has been produced and work is in progress on gathering together its use internationally. Any use is legitimate which promotes reflection about inclusion and leads to greater participation of children and young people in the cultures, activities and communities of their settings.

However, primarily part 2 describes a way of using the *Index* that is integrated into planning for the development of the setting as a whole. Before using the *Index*, many places do not engage in this kind of systematic planning and may use the *Index* to gradually move towards such an approach. Part 2 also describes the *Index* process so that it can be led from within individual settings. Yet, as we have suggested, it is often important for the process to have support from someone with previous knowledge of using it, who is familiar with its approach to review and planning and can be a source of help and advice. This may be particularly necessary in getting started. In some areas, clusters or groups of settings have worked in collaboration with each other and advisory staff from a Local Authority or Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. Many people have found that such arrangements give them added impetus to keep going. Collaborations are particularly important for small settings, for example those involving childminders or crèches.

7 Booth T. and Black-Hawkins K. (2001) *Developing an Index for Inclusion with Countries of the South*, Paris, UNESCO. Now obtainable from EENET at: www.eenet.org.uk/theory_practice/develop_learning_participation.doc

8 McDonald, V. and Olley, D. (2002) *Aspiring to Inclusion, a handbook for councils and other organisations*, Ipswich, Suffolk County Council.

9 Rustemier, S. and Booth T. (2005) *Learning about the Index in use: a study of the use of the Index for inclusion in schools and LEAS in England*, Bristol, CSIE.

What you can hope to achieve

The government has described inclusion as 'the keystone'[10] of its education policies and there are a great number of government policy documents which focus on inclusion. In many there is a particular emphasis on a need for good quality provision for vulnerable children and young people.[11] Some support, at least in part, the broad view of inclusion set out here.[12] The *Index* is recommended specifically in two documents as a way of implementing government policies. The 'Guidance on Inclusive Schooling' echoes the planning framework of the *Index* when it suggests that inclusion is 'a process by which schools, local education authorities and others, develop their cultures, policies and practices'. It describes the *Index* as a means by which 'schools … can … identify and remove the barriers to learning and participation'.[13] Its use is also supported by the government's strategy document 'Removing barriers to achievement'.[14] The *Index* is an acknowledged influence on the guidance for 'Working With Teaching Assistants'[15] and it formed part of the background to 'Inclusive School Design'.[16]

However, the exclusionary pressures in the system remain significant. Children continue to be excluded from mainstream settings because they have an impairment or are seen to 'have learning difficulties'. This should be more difficult following the introduction of the Disability Rights Commission Code of Practice for Schools,[17] the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act,[18] and the Statutory Guidance on Inclusive Schooling associated with the Act.[19] This latter guidance recognises that 'minor reasons have been used to block a child's inclusion' and gives examples of 'how barriers to learning and participation were overcome' (p. 13). This legal guidance is also supported by specific government requirements and advice for early years and childcare.[20] Where parents want it, then, local mainstream settings, together with local education authorities, are obliged to attempt to remove barriers to the attendance and participation of a child with an impairment. However, this falls short of the recognition of the right of a child to a local mainstream school and in practice there has been only a slight decrease in the exclusion of children with impairments from the mainstream which is balanced by increasing use of private provision and provision for children seen as disruptive.[21]

Discrimination on the basis of 'race', ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation is also constrained by law. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000[22] requires action to support 'race equality' which involves removing discrimination on the basis of ethnicity and this is supported by guidance from the Commission for Racial Equality.[23] Discrimination on the basis of gender is prohibited by the 1975 Sex Discrimination Act, section III of which refers specifically to education, employment and the provision of services by any organisation.[24] Finally in 2003 discrimination in employment on the grounds of sexual orientation was outlawed.[25] Many people argue that what is required is comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation which would cover all forms of discrimination including that related to age or appearance. The Equality Act 2006[26] is not such a law, although it does add to requirements for

10 Department for Education and Employment (1998) *Meeting Special Educational Needs; a Programme of Action*, London, DfEE (p.8).
11 Department for Education and Employment (2000) *Bullying: don't suffer in silence*, London, DfEE; Office for Standards in education (2003) *The education of asylum seeker pupils*, London, OFSTED; Social Exclusion Unit (2001) *Preventing social exclusion*, London, SEU; Social Exclusion Unit, (2003) *A better education for children in care*, London, SEU, Department for Education and Skills (2003) *Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Gypsy Traveller Pupils*, London, DfES; Department for Education and Skills (2001) *Promoting Children's Mental Health within Early Years and School Settings*, London, DfES.
12 Qualifications and Curriculum Authority/ Surestart (2000) *Curriculum guidance on the foundation stage*, London, QCA/ Surestart (p. 17); Office for Standards in Education (2000) *Evaluating educational inclusion*, London, DfEE. Surestart (2003) *Birth to three matters*, London, DfES
13 Department for Education and Skills (2001) *Inclusive Schooling, Children with Special Educational Needs*, London, DfES (pp. 2-3).
14 Department for Education and Skills (2004) *Removing barriers to achievement, the government's strategy for SEN*, London, DfES.
15 Department for Education and Employment (2000) *Working With Teaching Assistants*, London, DfEE.
16 Department for Education and Employment (2001) *Inclusive School Design*, London, DfEE.
17 Disability Rights Commission (2002) *Disability Discrimination Act 1995 Part 4: Code of Practice for Schools*, London, DRC; National Children's Bureau (2002) *Early Years and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995*, London, NCB.
18 Department for Education and Skills (2001) *Special Educational Needs and Disability Act*, London DfES.
19 Department for Education and Skills (2001) *Inclusive Schooling, Children with Special Educational Needs*, London, DfES (p.13).
20 Department for Education and Skills and Department for Health (2003) *Together from the Start – Practical guidance for professionals working with disabled children (birth to third birthday) and their families*, London, DfES/DoH; Surestart (2003) *National*

gender equality, avoidance of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and religion. But while compliance to legislation may remove some barriers, children benefit more widely when people relate their actions to deeply held inclusive values.

While it is possible, then, to find laws and government policies which are supportive of the broad view of inclusion adopted here, such documents are written from a number of conflicting perspectives. It is hard to reconcile inclusion as the 'keystone' of government policy with policies which encourage competition between settings and parents to shop around to find a setting they prefer, which may be outside of their immediate area. It may be difficult, too, to square a wish to create high quality early years and childcare provision for everyone with the current piecemeal and fragmented approach to development. We argue that equitable inclusive policies require a national network of good quality early years and childcare settings throughout the countries of the UK, although we do not believe that such a network should replace support for parents who wish to look after their children at home, or arrange provision around home care. Trying to comply equally with all government policies perpetuates confusion and demonstrates why it is important to develop an inclusive framework for ourselves, into which we can fit and adapt the requirements placed upon us.

Yet it is clear that some barriers that arise within government policies or in the environments of children are largely beyond the control of those who work directly with children and young people. The most powerful barriers to the development of play, learning and participation for children remain those associated with poverty and the stresses and other disadvantages it produces. Nevertheless, settings can and do change. They can radically affect the experiences of children and practitioners by developing cultures in which everyone is respected and feels secure, and where policies and practices support the development of play, learning and participation for all children. Many settings, in widely differing circumstances, find the *Index* helpful in allowing them to take a degree of control over their own inclusive development, analysing what they do, determining priorities for change and putting these into practice.

Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding (in addition there are separate standards for sessional day care, full day care, out of school care, crèches), London, DfES, DWP; Qualifications and Curriculum Authority/Surestart (2000) *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*, London, QCA, Surestart.

21 Office for Standards in Education (2004), *Special educational needs and disability; towards inclusive schools*, London, Ofsted.

22 The Home Office (2000) *Race Relations (Amendment) Act*, London, The Stationery Office.

23 Commission for Racial Equality (2002) *Preparing a Race Equality Policy for Schools*, London, CRE; Commission for Racial Equality (2002) *Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality*, London, CRE; Commission for Racial Equality (2002) *The Duty to Promote Race Equality, A Guide for Schools*, London, CRE.

24 The Home Office (1975) *Sex Discrimination Act*, London, The Stationery Office; The Equal Opportunities Commission (2003) *What does the Sex Discrimination Act say?* www.eoc.org.uk.

25 The Home Office (2003) *Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations*, London, The Stationery Office.

26 The Home Office (2006) *Equality Act*, London, The Stationery Office.

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part 2
the *Index* process

An overview

The *Index* process starts from the first engagement with the materials. It builds on the knowledge of all involved and is adapted to its particular circumstances. In this way it encourages everyone to take ownership of the process. The phases of the *Index* process are set out in figure 7.

figure 7 The *Index* process

phase 1 Getting started with the *Index*
- Establishing a planning group
- Reviewing the approach to planning
- Raising awareness about the *Index*
- Exploring existing knowledge guided by key concepts and planning framework
- Deepening enquiry using the indicators and questions
- Preparing to work with others

phase 2 Finding out about the setting
- Exploring the knowledge and ideas of practitioners and management committee/governors
- Exploring the knowledge and ideas of children and young people
- Exploring the knowledge and ideas of parents/carers and members of local communities
- Deciding priorities for development

phase 3 Producing an inclusive plan
- Reviewing priorities using the planning framework
- Putting priorities into the development plan

phase 4 Supporting development
- Putting priorities into action
- Maintaining development

phase 5 Reviewing the *Index* process
- Reviewing and recording progress
- Reviewing work with the *Index*
- Continuing the *Index* process

The *Index* is not only about a carefully planned, step-by-step process of identifying and implementing priorities for change. Development is always more complex and messy than this. The concern of the *Index* with changes in values may prompt practitioners and children and young people to make adaptations to cultures, policies and practices which go

The *Index* in use

'This has been a shared venture between parents/carers, children and practitioners.'

beyond any particular priority. These might involve broad shifts in the way practitioners work with each other or smaller changes in the way a particular practitioner interacts with children.

As the exploration of the cultures, policies and practices of the setting proceeds, opportunities for inclusive development may become apparent that were previously unnoticed. Practitioners may discover that, in some respects, the setting seems less inclusive than they first thought. But the process may also uncover previously unconsidered strengths in existing practice as well as resources to support play, learning and participation, in practitioners, children, parents/carers, management committee/governors and in the surrounding communities.

Time spent on the Index *process*

Because of the very different ways in which the *Index* materials are used it is difficult to set down a time-scale for engaging with them. If the setting adopts a yearly planning cycle running from September to July then the five phases of the *Index* will have to fit in with it. This means that the first phase, which is additional to the planning cycle because it involves the planning group in gaining familiarity with the materials, will have to be completed before September. Rough timings might involve the planning group doing their preparatory work, getting started with the *Index*, ready to start wider consultations and planning from September to December. Implementation and review of progress would then take place from January to July, with the process repeated from the following September.

figure 8 **A way of organising the *Index* process**

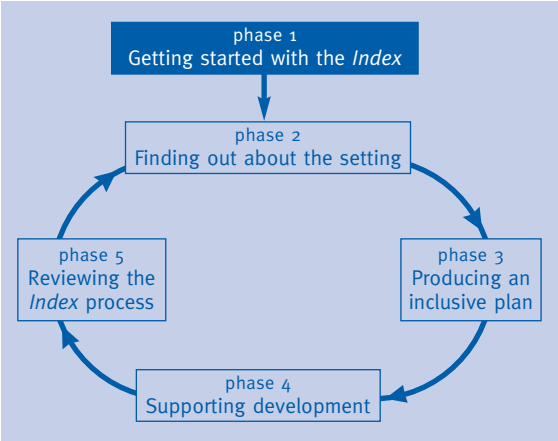
phase 1 Getting started with the *Index*	June–July
phase 2 Finding out about the setting **phase 3 Producing an inclusive plan**	September–December
phase 4 Supporting development **phase 5 Reviewing the *Index* process**	January–July

Working with others

As was mentioned in part 1, settings can work with the *Index* on their own, but many welcome outside support and feel that they need it, particularly in the early stages. A workshop with key people in the setting, led by someone already familiar with the *Index* can help to get things started. Our experience, however, suggests that because of the many different pressures that affect settings, they are most likely to keep going with the *Index* if it has official backing, consistent support and is part of an approach to development in the wider area.

phase 1
Getting started with the *Index*

- Establishing a planning group
- Reviewing the approach to planning
- Raising awareness about the *Index*
- Exploring existing knowledge using the key concepts and planning framework
- Deepening enquiry using the indicators and questions
- Preparing to work with other groups



This first phase of the *Index* starts by bringing together a group of people who will lead the self-review process. Group members raise awareness of the *Index* within the setting, inform themselves about the materials and prepare to use them to carry out a review of the setting with practitioners, management committee/governors, parents/carers and children. This phase might be completed over a couple of months.

Eleven activities are included in this phase to structure and support the work of the planning group. The activities depend on group members reading part 1. Each activity will need to be given a clear time limit and should be carried out in sub-groups of no more than four. They can also be used in workshops by members of the co-ordinating group to familiarise other groups with the materials and help them decide how they are going to use them.

Establishing a planning group

The planning group should be chosen strategically so that it has the best chance of moving practice in an inclusive direction. Its composition will vary depending on the size and nature of the setting. It may involve a number of small settings combining to review each other's development. If this collaboration is not possible then it will be particularly important for practitioners in small settings to work with someone outside the setting who, perhaps, can become a 'critical friend' as described below. In larger places, such as in nursery classes that are part of a primary school, the planning group should always include a senior practitioner and the learning support or inclusion co-ordinator. It is important that the group reflects the ethnic and social composition of the setting and may also include representatives of parents/carers, the local community and the management committee/governors.

The *Index* in use

'Anyone thinking of using the *Index* would be well advised to link up with one or more other places to maintain the momentum for change and enhance the breadth of issues for debate.'

The materials need to be accessible to all members of the planning group and we encourage photocopying of them as necessary and the circulation of the CD. Each member of the group will need to keep his or her own set of materials. As well as the *Index* materials, these might contain additional indicators and questions, analyses of the consultations with others and copies of handouts/overheads for presenting the work on the *Index*.

Including a critical friend

Planning groups have often found it helpful to include a 'critical friend'. This should be someone from outside the setting who knows it reasonably well, is supportive but challenging, and is committed to seeing the process through to completion. He or she needs to have the confidence of the group and others in the setting, and to respect the sensitive nature of some of the discussions in which he/she will be involved. It might be someone who is already familiar with the *Index*, who can help with detailed investigations and the gathering and analysis of views of practitioners, management committee/governors, parents/carers and children. It could be someone professionally involved with the setting or a colleague from another setting, perhaps one that is also working with the *Index*. This might be a place to which, or from which, children frequently transfer. In these ways, the role of critical friend can help in building collaboration.

A critical friend can help to make sure that practitioners do not avoid important issues on which they disagree. But this willingness to address concerns openly also has to spread throughout the group since all members will need to gently challenge each other to produce evidence for their opinions. Critical friendship can become a model for professional relationships.

Taking care to work inclusively

The planning group has to become a model for inclusive practice, operating cooperatively, ensuring that everyone is listened to carefully, irrespective of gender, background or status, so that no one dominates discussions. The group members will need to feel that they can trust each other and that it is possible to speak freely and in confidence. Each member of the group will need to offer their opinions in a way that invites dialogue. Differences in view should be welcomed as a resource to carry the group forward in its thinking.

Reviewing the approach to planning

Work with the *Index* provides an opportunity to review the way planning takes place. Settings differ greatly in their approach to planning. For some, the planning process is relatively systematic and involves a representative planning group who consult widely as in the process described here. Others may have produced a detailed plan without careful consideration of how it encourages the participation of all children/young people and adults. In other settings, a written document may have been produced in response to an impending inspection or to

satisfy conditions attached to a grant and may have involved very few people. In these circumstances plans may be a way of providing the required paperwork rather than part of a careful review of what is going on and how to change it. In some settings, systematic planning may be restricted to the budget. The *Index* can help with a variety of approaches to planning and may lead settings to adopt a more inclusive approach.

We think of a development plan as containing a statement of principles, broad indications of planned changes over the next three to five years and then a detailed account of what is to be accomplished over the next year. Some people call this same document an action plan, although we think of an action plan as a document containing the details of the changes to be accomplished in one area of concern. A development plan might thus contain several action plans. A change is only seen as development when it is carried out according to explicit agreed values. How people refer to planning documents is of no great significance so long as there is agreement that a plan has short, medium and long-term elements, needs to review the setting as a whole and is carried out according to inclusive values.

The members of the planning group might use the questions in activity 1 to structure a review of the approach to development planning.

Activity 1 *Reviewing development planning (suggested timing: 1 hour)*

- What planning is carried out?
- To what extent is planning reactive to pressures or systematically related to principles?
- What is the content of any formal plan?
- How was the plan produced?
- How is the plan implemented?
- What other development activities take place outside of any formal planning process?
- How are development activities co-ordinated?
- How might the planning process and content of the plan be improved?

The *Index*: what I want for my son

'My lovely human funny fascinating son is absolutely fine just as he is. He loves football, painting, playing with cars, laughing with friends just like any other six year old and he happens to have down syndrome. But that's not a problem for him. He does not need to be changed or cured. He needs to participate and be included. That is why the *Index* process is such a gift to me as a parent and ally, because it will help our school to further its examination of what things need to change and be adapted in the school, the curriculum and in our thinking to keep Sonny at the centre where he belongs. We have formed a planning group, consisting of the head teacher and the senior management team, the learning support co-ordinator, the learning support governor and myself as a parent representative. We have chosen an educational psychologist from outside the catchment area as our critical friend.'

Raising awareness about the *Index*

Before any specific planning decisions are made, it is important that others in the setting are informed about the *Index*. An awareness raising session might be led by someone from outside the setting, perhaps a visiting teacher or adviser from the local education authority, who has already worked with the *Index*. Alternatively it might be led by someone in the setting, such as the chair of the planning group, who has familiarised herself/himself with the *Index* materials. Additions to the group might be made as a result of this session.

Exploring existing knowledge using the key concepts and planning framework

Members of the planning group will need to develop a shared view of the *Index* before they introduce it to others. Often those working within, or supporting, settings have many ideas about what needs to be done and how change can be brought about but lack opportunities to express them. The group might start by sharing this knowledge. The group draws on the *Index* key concepts and planning framework in this process. Activities 2, 3 and 4 can help to structure the discussion of existing knowledge at a meeting or series of meetings. The suggested timings we have put by activities may look short but it is important to keep things moving if the group is to complete its tasks. The group should remember that at this stage any ideas for change should be seen as provisional, until all views have been considered and their enquiries have drawn on the detailed promptings of the indicators and questions.

Activity 2 *What is inclusion? (30 mins)*

The planning group should each share their views on inclusion. They should consider:

- To what extent is inclusion seen to be associated with children seen as 'having special educational needs'?
- To what extent is inclusion identified with children whose behaviour is viewed as problematic?

They should then look at figure 1, page 4, 'Inclusion in education' and read the text associated with it. The ideas in figure 1 summarise the approach to inclusion in the *Index* and each element should be discussed briefly, in turn. Experience has taught us that it is not a good idea to dwell on this activity for too long at this stage. Discussions about inclusion often reveal strongly held views. It is unlikely that everyone will agree about every aspect of the view of inclusion in the *Index*. But there does need to be agreement that it is concerned with all children who experience barriers to play, learning and participation for whatever reason, and that it involves making broad changes to cultures, policies and practices. Beyond this broad consensus, resolution of deeper differences may take a considerable time. People using the *Index* have found that they revise and develop their approach to inclusion as they work through it.

Activity 3 *Barriers and resources (20 mins)*

The group should remind themselves of the discussion of barriers and resources in part 1, pages 5-7, and the description of the dimensions and sections in figure 3, page 8. They can then use these headings to structure their thinking about barriers and resources as they respond to the following questions:

- What are the barriers to play, learning and participation in the cultures, policies and practices of the setting?
- Who experiences barriers to play, learning and participation?
- How can barriers to play, learning and participation be minimised?
- What resources support play, learning and participation?
- What additional resources can be brought into action to increase play, learning and participation and develop the cultures, policies and practices of the setting?

Activity 4 *What is support? (20 mins)*

A broad notion of support is introduced in part 1, page 7, as *'all activities which increase the capacity of a setting to respond to diversity'*. The group might consider the following questions:

- What activities count as support?
- What are the implications of the definition of support for the work of practitioners?
- What are the implications of this view for professional development?
- What are the implications of this definition of support for how support is co-ordinated?

Deepening enquiry using the indicators and questions

The group needs to become familiar with the indicators and questions and how they can be used to explore cultures, policies and practices. The use of the indicators and questions builds on what is already known and in encouraging a detailed exploration of the setting, directs attention to issues that may not have been previously considered.

Activity 5 *Using the indicators to identify provisional concerns (30 mins)*

The purpose of this activity is to use the materials to check on previously identified concerns and to raise new ones using the indicators. The list of indicators is printed on pages 47 to 49. These might be examined either by using the indicator questionnaire on pages 98-99 or by using cards with an indicator written on each.

Questionnaires can be answered individually and then the responses compared with those of others in the group so that differences can be discussed. Alternatively the group might sort the cards into four piles according to how well the statement describes the setting. A response is made to each indicator in one of four ways: 'definitely agree', 'agree and

disagree', 'disagree' and 'need more information'. In the sorting task the cards should be put into piles with these same headings. 'Need more information' is chosen when the meaning of an indicator is unclear or insufficient information is available to make a decision. Differences in view can be discussed during the sorting process. The meaning of an indicator can be clarified by finding it in part 3 and looking at the questions related to it.

At the end of the questionnaire there is space to write up to five priorities for development. The questionnaire or the sorting task focuses attention on aspects of the setting *so that priorities can be identified for further investigation*.

If questionnaires are used in the *Index* process it may be important to remember that it is the priorities they help to identify rather than the results of the whole questionnaire that should be collated. The detailed analysis of questionnaires, and the compiling of graphs, bar charts and tables, can be unacceptably time consuming and can delay the start of development work.

This activity, then, also provides an opportunity to think about the value of using questionnaires. All the indicators are written so that agreement with them suggests a positive evaluation of the setting. Many people tend to play down difficulties and there is also a tendency for people generally to agree with statements in questionnaires. This may result in a view of the setting as more inclusive than it is.

In previous versions of the *Index* response options in the questionnaires were 'definitely agree', 'agree to some extent', 'disagree' and 'need more information'. We substituted 'agree and disagree' for the second response because we found that when collating the results of questionnaires, people commonly interpret the response 'agree to some extent' to imply that nothing needs changing. The response 'agree and disagree' means that there are likely to be aspects of the indicator that are not in place in the setting which need careful scrutiny.

Minding collaboration

A childminder looked after five children, girls aged 20 months and two years and boys aged five, six and seven years. As a result of a course on the *Index* she realised that she was treating the older boys and younger girls as very different groups. There was little overlap in their activities except on occasion the five year old would gravitate towards the younger ones when he felt tired or could not 'grasp the complexities of certain board games ...'. The older ones also helped the younger ones with coats and at mealtimes. She decided to plan, over a weekend, activities that would involve all the children, and settled on card making, making and playing with a train set, story telling with puppets and reading books. She introduced a different activity each day after school. She hoped that after playing with the children as a group that they would initiate more group activities on their own. She was 'delighted' that her simple interventions had made a difference: 'The younger children brought books for the older children to read on a regular basis', 'all the children snuggle up on the sofa for group story time', and 'request shared puppet time'.

When they have collated the results of this activity the group should share and discuss their provisional priorities.

Activity 6 *Discussing evidence (20 mins)*

Because people may have reasons for minimising or exaggerating problems the group need to challenge each other gently to provide evidence for their views: what they have read, seen or heard to support their opinions. The group should agree on an indicator where they think the setting is performing well and another where they think there is considerable room for development. In each case they should provide the evidence to support their view.

- What is the extent of agreement on this indicator?
- What evidence is there to support the views about this indicator?
- What evidence is there that other indicators, in the same or different dimensions, reinforce this view?
- What additional information might be useful?

Activity 7 *Connecting indicators and questions: cultures, policies and practices (40 minutes)*

In using the *Index* review materials, indicators should be related to the questions which define their meaning (see page 50 for the start of the questions). In pairs, members of the group should select an indicator for discussion in each dimension where there might be room for development and another where they feel the setting is performing well. This should include the indicators chosen in activity 6. They then explore the questions under the indicators.

Although, for stylistic reasons, questions are written so that they have a yes/no answer, they should be seen as 'to what extent … ' questions. They can be given the same range of answers as were used to respond to the indicators: 'definitely agree', 'agree and disagree', 'disagree' and 'need more information'. These options can be represented by the symbols: +, +/–, –, and ?, respectively. Group members should engage actively with the questions, changing them and adding new ones to make them relevant to their particular circumstances. The selected indicators and their questions should be examined with the following questions in mind:

- What new areas for development do the questions suggest?
- What questions need to be added or taken away to make them relevant to the particular circumstances of the setting?

The results of the discussion should be shared with the whole group.

Activity 8 *Reviewing all the indicators and questions (1 hour)*

This activity might be carried out between meetings. The members of the group should work individually, reading all the indicators and questions. The purpose, at this stage, is to gain familiarity with the materials, not to conduct a full investigation of the setting. They should respond to each question, making notes of issues raised, and suggest fresh questions which direct attention at additional concerns. At a new meeting, they should share what they have learned.

Sometimes questions suggest an aspect of the setting which can be easily changed, other questions may spark off thinking about deep and widespread changes that need to be made.

Activity 9 *Using the planning framework summary sheet (30 mins)*

The group should choose a priority for development taken from one dimension and consider what developments need to take place in other dimensions to support it. A priority might be framed in terms of an indicator or group of indicators, a question or group of questions or an issue that is important to the setting that is not covered within the indicators and questions in the *Index*. For example if increasing collaboration between children and between practitioners are adopted as priorities for development work in dimension A (indicators A.1.2, A.1.3 and A.1.4), then these need to be related to an anti-bullying policy (indicator B.2.9), developing collaborative activities in dimension C (indicator C.1.7) and drawing on children as a resource for each other (indicator C.2.3). The task can be helped by using the planning framework summary sheet in part 4 (page 97) to record the chosen priority and other changes needed to support it, in relation to the following questions:

- What changes would have to take place in other dimensions to ensure that development in the chosen priority is supported?
- How could the questions be used to further investigate the chosen concern?
- How could developments on the indicator be supported?

Activity 10 *Summarising the work of the group (20 mins)*

Members of the group might reflect on the extent to which their examination of the indicators and questions has added to their shared previous knowledge, which they explored in activities 2, 3 and 4. They might do this in relation to the following questions:

- What is being done to overcome barriers to play, learning and participation?
- What needs to be refined?
- What requires further investigation?
- What new priorities need to be addressed?

Activity 11 *Identifying and overcoming barriers to using the* Index *(20 mins)*

After thoroughly reviewing the materials the group may have ideas about how the *Index* can be best introduced and what problems may be encountered. They should consider the following questions:

- What barriers to introducing the *Index* might be encountered?
- How might these barriers be overcome?
- How might the *Index* be best introduced?

Preparing to work with other groups

The group will need to read and discuss the guidance for phases 2, 3, 4 and 5 (pages 26 to 45) before working with other groups.

Using the *Index* in a nursery

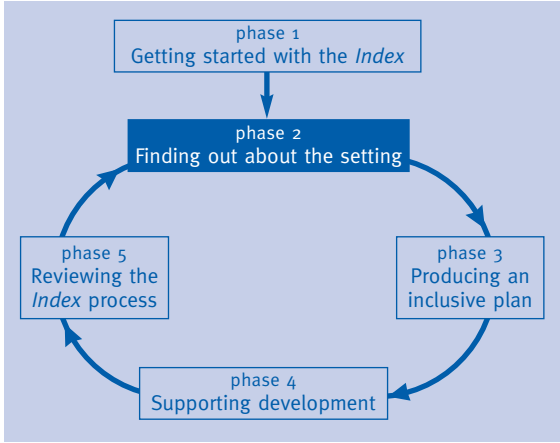
The staff in a day nursery held a meeting to consider the *Index for inclusion* and its use. After discussing the process and looking at the materials, they agreed that they wanted to look at indicator A.1.5, 'Practitioners and parents/carers collaborate', and its questions. Parents/carers were then asked to complete a questionnaire. The replies were analysed and collated with the results displayed on a whiteboard for all the parents/carers and staff to consider. Following further discussion, the following changes were agreed and implemented:

- A new welcome pack for parents/carers and their children was prepared.
- A whiteboard was placed in the entrance hall to display important messages.
- A suggestion box was placed in the entrance hall for staff and parents/carers.
- A parent representative was invited to attend all future committee meetings.
- Parents/carers were invited to drop in to a session if they wished.
- Parents/carers were invited to help with tidying up at the end of sessions on a voluntary basis.
- The names of key workers and the children for whom they had responsibility were displayed in the entrance.
- Important information for practitioners, such as about the allergies of particular children, was produced for practitioners.
- It was agreed that newsletters would be sent to parents/carers, to include ideas and activities which could be done at home, in the topic area chosen for every half term.

As a result of these changes staff noticed improvements in the extent to which parents/carers spoke with them. Staff believed they were seen as more 'approachable' because they had asked parents'/carers' views and comments. The manager of the nursery argued that the *Index* was 'a valuable resource' that they would 'continue to use'. They identified teamwork as a future priority.

phase 2
Finding out about the setting

- Exploring the knowledge and ideas of practitioners and management committee/governors
- Exploring the knowledge and ideas of children and young people
- Exploring the knowledge and ideas of parents/carers and members of local communities
- Deciding priorities for development



The planning group use their knowledge of the *Index* process to work with others in the setting: management committee/governors, parents/carers and other relevant community members. They assess the priorities for development that have emerged and initiate any further investigations necessary to complete their review. They then agree priorities for development with the practitioners.

This phase, as with all other work with the *Index*, will differ considerably from place to place. The planning group is responsible for judging the best way that the process can be carried forward in their particular circumstances.

Exploring the knowledge and ideas of practitioners and management committee/governors

The planning group follows the sequence from phase 1, drawing out existing knowledge using the key concepts and planning framework, and then refining this using the indicators and questions to focus on the identification of priorities for development. The views expressed during the consultations should be used as opportunities for debate and further investigation.

The *Index* in use

'It prompted discussion that would not otherwise have taken place.'

The aim is to encourage maximum participation so a variety of occasions for gathering information may have to be arranged. In this way those who are unable to attend meetings or are reluctant to speak in a large group can have a voice. It is also possible for individual responses to the indicators and questions to be handed in separately.

A development event for practitioners and management committee/governors

A professional development event is one way to start gathering information. It might involve more than one setting working cooperatively, and support from people who have already worked with the *Index*. If it is done well practitioners will feel the benefits of an inclusive experience as well as being fired up to promote inclusion.

An outline of such an event is given in figure 9, echoing the activities in phase 1. The activities might be looked at during one session or spread over a number of sessions. Before the event, activities will need to be selected and adapted. A decision will have to be taken about how to explore the indicators and questions and whether to make copies of the indicator questionnaire. Views expressed by different groups will need to be recorded and summary sheets collected.

The planning group will be able to judge from their own experience of working with the materials, how much time will be needed by others to complete the same tasks. They will need to keep people moving through the activities and focused on them.

Some people feel overwhelmed by the materials as they familiarise themselves with them, thinking that they are expected to change everything at once. It will need to be stressed that the purpose of the review is to select priorities for development, rather than to make wholesale changes at any one time. The materials need to be comprehensive so that important issues arising in any aspect of the setting can be uncovered.

figure 9 **A development event: exploring play, learning and participation**

- **Introducing the *Index*** (led by the planning group)
- **Working with key concepts and the planning framework to share existing knowledge** (see activities 3/4, to be done in small groups)
- **Working with indicators** (see activities 5/6, to be done in small groups)
- **Working with the questions** (see activity 7 and the start of 8, to be done in small groups and continued individually after the event)
- **Sharing ideas about areas for development and further investigation** (see activities 9/10, to be started in small groups, then shared with all practitioners)
- **Next steps in the process** (led by the planning group)

Provisional areas for development and further investigation

Generally, once people have engaged with the indicators and questions they feel able to identify specific areas where they think development should take place. Some areas may be identified where further investigation is required before a decision can be made. There may be issues, on which general agreement is reached, that practitioners wish to take up immediately. However some priorities will only emerge as the

information from different groups is brought together and as the consultation is extended and completed.

Planning next steps

At the end of a professional development event the chair of the planning group should outline what will happen with the information gathered. The group needs to finish collecting and then collating information from practitioners, and management committee/governors. Areas may be identified where more information is needed from children, parents/carers and other community members. The group will need to plan how to gather the views of those unable to attend the event. Effort will need to be made to include them in other group or individual meetings or to encourage individual study of the materials and a response to them.

Making progress on accessibility

'I work for a private nursery. We have made some progress in ensuring access for disabled children and adults but when I discussed the *Index* at a meeting with staff and a visiting parent, people at the meeting wanted to discuss indicator B.1.4: 'The setting is made physically accessible to all people.' Discussion focused on the following questions:

- Are the needs of deaf, partially deaf, blind and partially sighted people, as well as people with physical impairments considered in making the buildings accessible?
- Are staff concerned with the accessibility of all aspects of the setting, including corridors, toilets, gardens, play areas, eating areas and displays?

We have special equipment for blind and partially sighted children. We make sure that we meet the needs of one parent who is partially sighted by enlarging all newsletters for her and ensuring all equipment is in the correct place prior to her visits, so that she can move safely. Our weakest point however is accessibility for wheelchair users. One area of our main activity room is approached via a step and we need a ramp to access play areas. As a result we have written into our expansion plans the provision of ramps and toilets for wheelchair users. We also agreed that we would set aside regular time at our monthly meetings to study the *Index* further.'

Exploring the knowledge and ideas of children and young people

People using the *Index* report that finding out what children and young people think about their setting can be particularly useful in uncovering barriers and resources. All children should have the opportunity to contribute. Even very young children can be very insightful about their interests and worries. Older children can provide detailed ideas about the barriers to, and resources for, development. All participants in the consultations may need to be encouraged to give a considered and honest view rather than one to please either adults or other children.

Generally, information should be gathered by talking, playing and

observing rather than in a more formal way. It is important to try to see the setting from the point of view of the children, and to be interested in carefully observing and listening to them:

- How do they respond to activities?
- What kinds of relationships do they form with other children and with adults?
- How do they respond to changes aimed at increasing their participation in play and learning?

For children, as for adults, prepared questions or questionnaires (see part 4) should only be used as prompts for a conversation with an individual or small group. Practitioners will be able to judge, from conversations with children, when they are able to cope with the language in a questionnaire and when questions need to be read to them by an adult or another child. Those in the setting will know how to engage a child in a relaxed and enjoyable conversation and this may be best carried out with the help of parents/carers. Questionnaire 3 on page 103 gives some ideas for questions which might prompt such explorations of children's views. Photographs, pictures, drawings and puppets might be used to help. Postboxes with a smiley face, sad face and neutral face might support the expression of choices.

The *Index* in use

'The discussion with parents/carers and children on the dimensions and indicators provided the most profound work on the *Index*.'

Learning to listen

'We wanted to find out what our children thought about what we were doing for them. We showed some of our five year olds how to use a digital camera and one at a time, asked them to take pictures of things they liked and things they did not like. One girl came back with a picture of the sensory room [a room where children can control experiences of light, sound and touch]. We were very pleased with that room and so I said "oh that's something that you really like" and she said "no, I don't like it at all". She said it "frightened" her. I learnt my lesson, and was careful, from then on, not to jump to conclusions about what the children thought. We also discussed how we could introduce children to the room so that they could choose the level of interaction with it that they felt comfortable with.'

Common sense at an after school club

The playworkers of an after school club wanted to find out what the children thought of the club and its activities. They used the questions outlined in questionnaire 4 as the basis for individual discussions with the children. Two issues stood out:

- Many of the children were not happy attending the club and said that they would prefer to be at home.
- The children were unsure whether the playworkers liked them.

Most parents/carers used the club while they were at work so the children did not have the choice of staying at home. The playworkers consulted with the children on the improvements that might be made. They discovered that the children wanted a greater choice of activities; they wanted some organised group games, but also some paired activities and some things that they could do by themselves, especially when they were tired following a long day at school. The playworkers reorganised the play space to provide different areas for different activities and encouraged the children to choose activities for themselves.

The staff recognised that they did not tell the children how much they wanted them to be there, how much they liked them and how they valued their company. They agreed to find opportunities to say these things. The benefits of the changes happened very quickly. They found that even those children who had initially been tearful when attending the club seemed happier and this made the staff feel happier about working in the setting too. They reported how one child who was previously particularly unhappy at the club showed annoyance when his father turned up unexpectedly early to collect him.

Exploring the knowledge and ideas of parents/carers and members of local communities

The views of parents/carers and other community members are other sources of information that may not have been fully considered previously. The consultation may itself help to improve communication between settings and homes. Just as for children and young people, a parent questionnaire can be constructed from a shortened list of indicators with any additions necessary for the specific setting. An example of a parents'/carers' questionnaire is provided in part 4, page 100 (questionnaire 2).

A parent/carer questionnaire might be constructed in collaboration with parents/carers, who can also help in organising meetings. Some settings have exchanged translations of questionnaires for consulting with parents/carers whose home language is other than English.

The *Index* in use

'I feel that the staff have more knowledge now about what the parents/carers would like for their children.'

Paying attention to commmunication

In one nursery school, the great majority of the children came from families whose origins were in two villages in Pakistan and whose mother tongue was Urdu. The nursery had assistants who were also fluent in Urdu. A bilingual member of the planning group arranged for an *Index* questionnaire to be translated for those parents/carers who were not fluent in English and acted as an interpreter at a meeting where the issues prompted by the questionnaire were discussed in detail. Following the meeting, several parents/carers commented that they felt involved in the nursery for the first time.

The planning group might consider talking with parents/carers away from the setting if this will increase attendance or improve relationships between practitioners and parents/carers. A variety of opportunities to contribute may need to be arranged to ensure that all parents/carers have opportunities to be involved. A questionnaire might be used as a follow up to a discussion or as a way of gathering information from those unable to attend a meeting.

Discussions might explore the following questions:

- What do you value most about this nursery/playgroup/club etc?
- What could be done to make your child/children happier here?
- What could be done to improve the play, learning and relationships of your child/children?

Views of parents/carers might be drawn together by getting them to list priorities:

- What three things would you most like to change?

As well as working with parents/carers, it may be helpful to find out the views of others in the surrounding communities. The children in the setting may not reflect the diversity of people living in the area, in terms of ethnicity, impairment or class. Finding out the views of community members may help practitioners to make the setting more representative of the communities around it.

Learning how to consult with parents/carers

The practitioners in a playgroup serving many families on very low incomes attempted to consult with parents/carers by handing out an adapted questionnaire. Only those parents/carers who helped out regularly replied. The practitioners invited the others, a few at a time, for a cup of tea after a session, explained the purpose of the questionnaire, and then talked through the main points. With the parents'/carers' agreement they kept a note of opinions expressed. The practitioners realised that many parents/carers did not feel involved in the playgroup and did not read the information that was given out. They decided to pair practitioners with parents/carers and encourage them to stay behind for a while after sessions to build relationships and offer support.

From consultation to action

'We devised our own questionnaire for parents/carers of children in our nursery class based on the indicators questionnaire and the adapted indicators questionnaire. As a result we identified four areas where we needed to make some changes:

- to make sure that all parents/carers felt involved in our nursery;
- to make it clear to parents/carers that all children are equally important to us;
- to make sure that we checked regularly that parents/carers knew what was happening;
- to let parents/carers know more regularly how to help their children at home.'

Deciding priorities for development

What can be changed in cultures, policies and practices to increase play, learning and participation?

Analysing evidence

In order to draw up a list of priorities for development the planning group should analyse the priorities selected by everyone who has been consulted. This analysis may need to be shared, depending on the size of the setting. The critical friend might have been chosen for their ability to help with this process. Since consultations take place over a period of time, it may be possible to collate the views of each group, as they are collected.

Initially, information from children, parents/carers, practitioners and management committee/governors, should be kept separate from each other. In this way differences of perspective can be explored. It may also be important to look at the views of different sub-groups, such as volunteers, or parents/carers of younger children and older children.

Collecting further information

Additional information may need to be collected before priorities can be finalised. During the previous consultations, issues may have been identified which need to be clarified by further investigation. One group may have identified questions that needed to be addressed to other groups. For example, those new to the setting may need to be asked specifically about how well they were supported when they joined it, even if practitioners who have been there for some time feel that the induction process is successful.

The gathering of further information may blend into development work. For example, settling on priorities for improving activities in dimension C might involve practitioners in observing and reflecting on the way activities are planned and carried out. This may itself lead to greater collaboration and improvements in the design of activities.

Listening carefully to suggestions

'Although at our consultation meeting parents/carers were very positive about our day nursery, a parent commented that they would like more information relating to topic work and we thought this is something we could change. The manager and I decided that a week before a topic is due to start (a topic lasts five weeks) an "Activities at home" sheet (see figure 10) would be produced which informs parents/carers of the areas that will be covered, the songs that will be learnt and suggested activities that the parent and child could do at home. The parents/carers could get together things for the child to bring in or encourage the child to find things relating to the topic. We felt that where grandparents dropped the children off at the nursery this would keep parents/carers in touch with what was happening at the nursery. Most parents/carers wanted more daily/weekly information and so I have installed a whiteboard for notices.'

figure 10 **Activities at home**

Nursery name
Logo

Dear parents/carers,

Below is our topic for the period _____to_____

With best wishes,

All the practitioners at Welcome Day Nursery

The areas that will be covered are:

We will be learning the following rhymes and songs:

You might wish to help your child to explore this topic at home or when you are out and about. Our suggested activities are:

The *Index* in use

'Consultations with parents/carers led to us extending the mornings to cover the lunch period and arranging an outing. These consultations have been very worthwhile and we will have them regularly.'

Drawing up a list of priorities

Deciding priorities for development is not simply a matter of including those issues that were most commonly identified during consultations. The group will need to make sure that the opinions of less powerful groups are not lost and the voices of children and parents/carers in particular are reflected in the plan. Selected priorities will vary widely in scale, and in the time and resources required to implement them. A mixture of shorter and longer-term priorities should be retained.

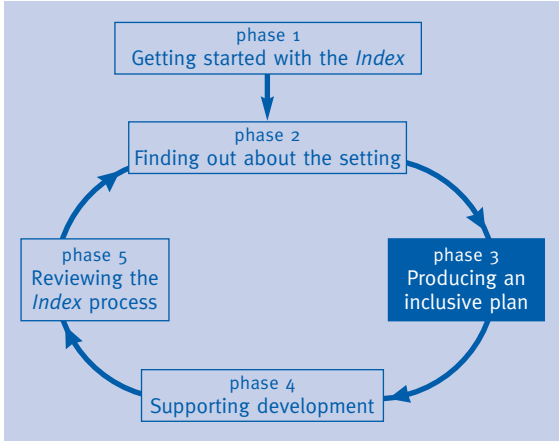
Figure 11 provides some examples of priorities identified when working with the *Index*.

figure 11 Priorities identified during the *Index* process

- Introducing rituals for welcoming new children and practitioners and marking their departure.
- Establishing professional development sessions to make activities more responsive to the different interests and backgrounds of children and young people.
- Introducing clear management and career structures for practitioners.
- Improving access for disabled children and adults.
- Promoting positive views of ethnic diversity in activities and displays.
- Integrating all forms of support.
- Arranging joint training for health, social services and education practitioners.
- Developing collaborative activities for children.
- Developing an anti-bullying strategy.
- Improving the way new children are introduced to, and supported within, the setting.
- Increasing the involvement of children in choosing resources and activities.
- Improving communication between practitioners and parents/carers.
- Improving the reputation of the setting in local communities.

phase 3
Producing an inclusive plan

- Reviewing priorities using the planning framework
- Putting priorities into the development plan



This third phase of the *Index*, which may require a series of tightly focused meetings, involves the planning group in producing a development plan. The *Index* planning framework is used to assess what needs to happen in the cultures, policies and practices of the setting if any particular priority is to be sustained.

Reviewing priorities using the planning framework

The planning framework containing the dimensions and sections is reproduced in the planning framework summary sheet on page 97. With a copy of this sheet in front of each of them, the planning group should examine the priorities identified at the end of phase 2 and consider the implications for a priority identified in one section of one dimension for work in the remaining sections.

The *Index* in use

'Parents/carers talk to us more now. Perhaps they feel we are more approachable as we have involved them by asking for their comments.'

Reviewing existing priorities

The group should examine other priorities already in the plan including those that may have emerged as the result of an inspection. They should consider whether to modify these priorities so that they contribute to the inclusive development of the setting as a whole.

Putting priorities into the development plan

Each priority needs to be analysed in detail looking at time-scales, resources and professional development implications. Progress may be made on some priorities within a few weeks or months. However, others, involving new building or widespread changes in cultures or ways of working, may be staged over a longer period. Short, medium and longer-term goals can keep an ambitious priority on track.

The *Index* in use

'We became aware of a lack in our after school clubs of drawing on community resources concerned with Travellers. We decided to talk to local communities, improve the resources on Travellers available to the clubs and contact the Traveller Education Service.'

Most actions require human and/or material resources, which may or may not be already available. The plan should include a way of assessing success. Criteria for progress should be set, perhaps using the *Index* questions to clarify aims. A member of the planning group should be allocated responsibility for checking the progress of each priority, though, if the process is working well, all members of the setting will share responsibility for putting the plan into action. When the members of the planning group have developed their proposals they should negotiate them with other practitioners and management committee/governors.

For settings that are not used to planning in this way, it may be helpful to seek advice from a visiting professional or a critical friend. East Sussex Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership encourage the use of a simple form for planning. An example of the use of such a form is given in figure 12 connected to the example below. An action sheet of this type might be produced for each priority in the development plan.

Producing an inclusive plan

A playgroup did not have a development plan and decided to produce one with the help of the *Index*. After using the *Index* materials in discussions with staff and parents/carers, the *Index* planning group identified two areas for change: in the way staff worked together and how activities were planned to make sure that all children were actively involved. They produced action sheets showing how they would achieve these priorities, and then decided how long it would take to get there. They broke down their goal into a number of tasks and allocated responsibility for making sure these happened. They worked out costs and other resource implications, and decided on a time scale to review how things were going. They let parents/carers and other interested groups know what they were planning. They put the action sheets up on the staff notice board, and ticked off their achievements. Figure 12 shows an action sheet covering the first few months of the plan in the first of the priorities. Some of the actions were achieved more quickly than they had anticipated but they had to adjust the plan when they realised that joint planning for activities would not happen unless practitioners were paid for their time (see points 2, 3 and 6, 7 on the action sheet).

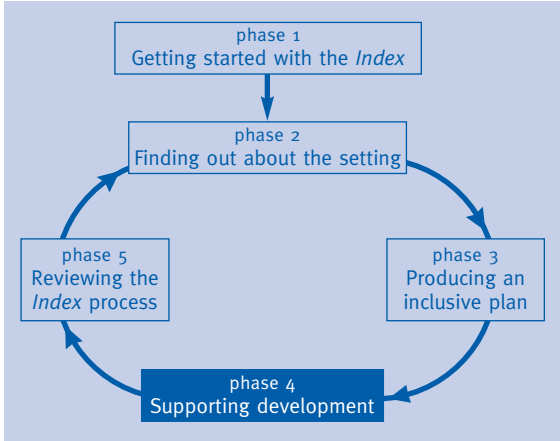
The staff also realised that some of them were more involved in the planning and implementation process than others and discussed ways in which everyone would feel involved. They made sure that everyone was informed of progress. This led to further discussions with parents/carers about what they hoped for their children from the playgroup, and as a result new priorities were established. Staff found the process gave them new enthusiasm for their work.

figure 12 **Action sheet for indicator A.1.3: 'Practitioners work well together'**

What do we want to achieve?	What steps can we take?	Who will do this?	What will it cost?	When will we review this?	What are we looking for?	What happened?
To work better together (plan for September to December)	1. Have a monthly whole staff meeting.	Mary to write up a list of dates. All to try to attend.	1 hour extra hall hire monthly	December	Most staff attending each meeting.	Brilliant attendance, but costs increased with decision to pay for extra hours. This had to go to management committee.
	2. Plan activities in pairs.	All staff to identify one activity per week and plan with a partner.	Nothing	October	Staff running activities jointly.	This didn't get going properly, as no time allocated in original plan. Also, hard to make sure that it was happening, so see 6.
	3. Run activities in pairs.	All staff to identify one activity per week and run it with a partner.	Nothing	October		
	4. Staff stay behind at end of Friday session for coffee.	Jane to buy coffee and nice biscuits. Informal note kept of whether people stay.	Coffee etc.	October then November	Majority of staff to stay.	Staff who do not work Friday missed out, so coffee sessions now on Weds as well.
	5. Staff social event at Xmas.	Jane to ask around and then plan event.	The sky's the limit!!	At the staff meetings	A brilliant night out for the majority if not all.	It was very hard to find something that all could get to, but we did it.
	Adjustment to action sheet					
	6. Staff to plan one activity a week in pairs.	All staff to let Mary know what they are doing for this and when. Mary to keep a record.	1 hour O/T per person per fortnight	November	Record of each weekly planning session.	After a few hiccups this got going. Chance to do proper planning helped everyone.
	7. Staff to run one activity a week in pairs.	All staff to log what they have done in the day book.	1 hour O/T per person per fortnight	November	Log showing sessions and what happened.	Paired activities were not very good at first but got better. Some pairs found it hard.

phase 4
Supporting development

- Putting priorities into action
- Maintaining development



The *Index* in use

'We decided to concentrate on making "special educational needs" policies into inclusion policies. We now have an inclusion co-ordinator rather than a "special educational needs co-ordinator", but more importantly, the job has changed so that the needs of all the children are recognised.'

This fourth phase of the *Index* process involves putting priorities into action and then maintaining development. This may require further investigation and can become a form of action research.

Putting priorities into action

A couple of examples further illustrate the way priorities are put into action.

Nursery school priorities

A private nursery was concerned about a child being 'picked on' because of his unusual appearance. The practitioners decided to use the questions from B.2.9, 'Bullying is minimised', to find out the extent of the problem. They looked at ways to develop the children's sense of respect for each other and appreciation of diversity, by using C.2.3 'Differences between children are used as resources to support play, learning and participation'. They also looked at their own attitudes. As a result, they improved the supervision of unstructured time and included a wider variety of images and examples in activities that allowed issues of difference to arise. They thought about the language they used themselves to describe the differences between children. They looked at positive ways in which they could respond to this child so as to raise his self-esteem and the way he was viewed by others, for example, by making sure that he could take a turn in leading activities.

Welcome to our playgroup

A playgroup began to look at the welcome given to parents/carers using A.1.1 'Everyone is made to feel welcome'. They realised that there was a hierarchy among the parents/carers so that some parents/carers were more valued than others. They considered what impact this might have on the children and invited an area inclusion co-ordinator from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership to talk over these concerns. They discussed the way beliefs about, and actions towards, children can affect the way children think about their own capabilities. They decided to make sure that the key workers took the time to speak warmly to every parent, daily, when the children were being dropped off and picked up. This had an unanticipated benefit of building links between parents/carers as well as with practitioners. As a result of their discussions, they began to look at indicators A.2.2, 'Expectations are high for all children', and C.1.5, 'Activities discourage stereotyping', so that they minimised the effects of low expectations and stereotyping.

One form of action research involves a series of questions very like the *Index* process:

- What is going on?
- How do you make sense of what is going on?
- What should go on?
- How do you put what should go on into action?

The review of the setting using the *Index* may have prompted the planning group and other practitioners to pay closer attention to what is going on than they may have done previously. Observation and description of practice, particularly when it involves an attempt to see the setting from the perspective of children and young people, can itself be a powerful way of initiating change.

Maintaining development

The *Index* in use

'As children arrive at the nursery and are shown to their groups they are now always greeted with a hello, and their name or a wave depending on the age of the children. The group leader then gives them a hug, asking how they are and inviting them to play with the other children and the toys. The play of one child in particular who struggled to settle down has improved after being greeted in this way.'

As priorities are put into action, the commitment of all those involved has to be maintained. Activities to create more inclusive cultures may need to continue over a number of years. But, in turn, such changes may sustain the involvement of practitioners, management committee/governors, children and parents/carers in making detailed changes in policies and practices. In a collaborative setting, practitioners draw on each other's expertise and provide mutual support.

Where priorities challenge deeply held beliefs and values, considerable effort may be required to overcome any resistance. Some practitioners, children or parents/carers may not agree with a particular development. The planning group may

have to encourage the airing of differences and may need to refine developments so that they become relevant to as many people as possible.

Caring for communication

A local authority obtained funding for early years settings-based courses on the *Index*. Towards the end of the first session in one setting, the practitioners went through the *Index* questionnaire and then selected an indicator from each dimension where they felt that the setting should do further work. In relation to Dimension C, several of them had to highlight a concern about the extent to which they were encouraging the children to talk with each other and adults picked out indicator C.1.2 'Activities encourage all children to communicate'. When they looked in detail at the questions associated with the indicator, they felt that there was much to build on in their practice but there were areas in which they could do more. They talked about when it was that children sat and chatted with them and each other during the daily routine (C.1.2g) and also had conversations about what open ended questions were (C.1.2j) and what it meant to encourage the development of language for thinking and learning (C.1.2h).

While all of them were concerned to give the children space to play and learn and relate to others without too much adult interference, there was productive discussion about how adults could foster, and remove barriers to, play, learning and relationships as well as engage in activities with children which extended their ideas and helped them to consider their own and other people's feelings.

Before the next session they did some observations of a day in the setting. They found, that although there was a lot of talk in the playgroup most of the adult talk involved giving directions. They found that some of the children talked to each other while others said very little. At the next session of the course they drew up an action sheet on ways to extend and deepen opportunities for discussion in the setting.

- They decided that they needed some further discussion in encouraging language use and booked a session with the local authority advisers on 'promoting the language and communication environment'.
- They decided to rearrange snack time as they felt that this could provide a good opportunity for relaxed talk. They decided to sit children in smaller groups together with their key worker.
- The group agreed to reflect on the quality of the conversations they had with children as they joined in activities and to share with each other at their weekly meeting how to let children lead communication with adults more frequently.
- They agreed to share occasions when they had stimulated conversations with other children, for children who were shy or reluctant to speak with others.
- They decided use the time they spent with parents to raise the issue of what children liked to talk about at home to try to bridge the gap between home and setting.

At the following session of the course they reported on how things were going.

They found that for some of them it was difficult to get out of the habit of asking questions to which they already knew the answer. They discussed how they could connect their working practices with how they were at home with their own children or other children they knew well and how 'professional' conversation could impede the talk of children. They spoke about how they were identifying more strongly with the

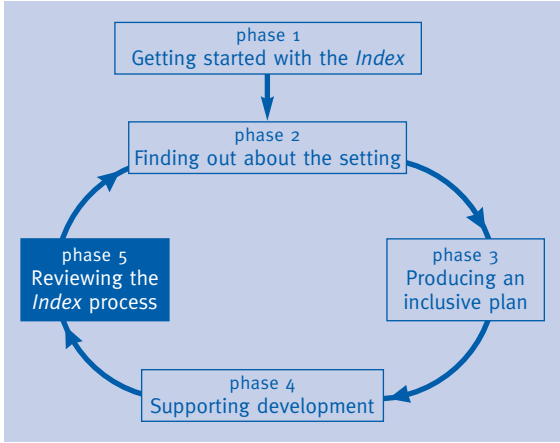
continues

way parents viewed their own children and were finding ways to link activities in the setting to what happened at home through an exploration of indicator A.1.6, 'Practitioners link what happens in the setting to children's lives at home', which they had selected as their indicator from Dimension A. They mentioned examples of when they asked questions of children to which they genuinely wanted an answer and how their engagement in activities with children, as participants, generated more informal talk.

At subsequent sessions, as they began to work in implementing concerns in the other dimensions, they reported that children were more often coming to staff to tell them about their ideas during play and to show them the way they were making a model or building something. Staff were more frequently invited to become part of role play and children spoke more about what had happened at home. As one practitioner put it: 'We feel that we know the children better.' After the extra session on language, a practitioner said: 'We found it useful but we were already doing most of the things suggested in the course, following our work with the *Index* and the way we are taking more opportunities to share our ideas.'

phase 5
Reviewing the *Index* process

- Reviewing and recording progress
- Reviewing work with the *Index*
- Continuing the *Index* process



The group review the overall progress of the plan. They consider any broader progress in changing cultures, policies and practices. They discuss modifications that need to be made to the *Index* process. The indicators and questions, as adapted by a particular setting, are used to review the extent of changes that have occurred and to formulate new priorities for the development plan for the following year.

Phase 5 blends into a return to phase 2, and the continuation of the development planning cycle.

Reviewing and recording progress

The *Index* in use

'I have been pleased with the results of our action plan and feel that the indicator has now been achieved.'

The progress of the development plan should be regularly reviewed against the criteria put in the plan in phase 3. The member of the planning group with overall responsibility for a priority will make sure that progress is checked and recorded and that adjustments are made to the plan. This may involve discussions with practitioners, children, management committee/governors and parents/carers, and the examination of policy documents for the setting, as well as observations of activities. The results of this review should be discussed by the planning group who can then modify the development plan if necessary.

Keeping everyone informed

The planning group should make sure that everyone is kept informed about progress. This can be done through meetings, professional development events, displays, newsletters, circle time activities, notice boards and community organisations. As well as providing information, the group should continue to listen to a range of opinions about how development is progressing.

The *Index* in use

'Seeing the difference it's made to the children really has been the most rewarding part. They feel valued.'

Reviewing work with the *Index*

Work on the *Index* process also requires evaluation. The planning group should review the way they have used the *Index* and decide how the materials can best be used to support development in future years. They should assess how far the *Index* has helped them to adopt a greater commitment to inclusive ways of working. The group will need to consider its membership, how well prepared it was for its tasks, the way it consulted with other groups and its success in sharing responsibilities with others. The critical friend may be valuable in this process, although the success of self-evaluation requires all members of the group to be willing to challenge their own practices. Figure 13 contains questions that might help the group to review their work.

figure 13 Reviewing work with the *Index*

- How well did the planning group function, in terms of its membership, critical friend, consultations with others, the sharing of tasks within the group, and sharing responsibility for development with others?
- To what extent has there been an increasing commitment towards more inclusive ways of working?
- To what extent did the process of working with the *Index* itself contribute to more inclusive ways of working?
- How have the key *Index* concepts (inclusion, barriers to play, learning and participation, resources to support play, learning and participation, and support for diversity) affected the thinking and actions of practitioners and others?
- To what extent has the planning framework of dimensions and sections of the *Index* contributed to structuring a development plan?
- To what extent did the indicators and questions help to identify priorities or details of priorities that had been previously overlooked?
- To what extent was the consultation process inclusive and who else might contribute to it in future years?
- To what extent were priorities for development chosen on the basis of a careful investigation of what needed to be done?
- To what extent was the evaluation of progress of development based on a careful examination of what had actually changed?
- How have developments been maintained and how might this process be improved?

The *Index* in use

'The chairman of our management committee has set up a small group to develop the use of the *Index* further, now that it has proved itself to be so useful.'

Continuing the *Index* process

The planning team will be in the best position to decide on how to re-engage with the *Index* materials and process in the future. In many settings, the majority of practitioners will be familiar with the *Index* at this point, but new practitioners should have the process explained to them as part of their induction. The revisiting of the indicators and questions as part of the progress review may lead on to a further examination of the setting. This in turn may reveal the ways in which an inclusive culture is contributing to change that goes beyond the plan. Where strong inclusive cultures have been developed, children and their parents/carers will carry with them an inclusive approach to play, learning and participation when they move on.

Moving on to a primary school

Before using the *Index*, Hindbreak Primary School had been in 'special measures', perceived as having problems with staff relationships and discipline. Relationships within the school and with governors and parents/carers were poor. The head teacher acknowledged that staff 'assumed they knew' what parents/carers wanted. Staff were 'asked to do things they didn't particularly believe in'. Children were failing to meet the expectations of teachers and their positive achievements were ignored. Relationships with parents/carers, between staff and between staff and children, needed to be improved.

A planning group for the *Index* was established which included governors, parents/carers and staff and was steered by a critical friend, respected within the school and local authority. Consultations were very broad, and the results were 'very challenging'. For example parents/carers recorded their views of staff attitudes to their children: 'They don't care for them', 'They have favourites'.

The significance of good communication was reinforced early on. The head had started by focusing on passing information to parents/carers and governors and assumed teaching and support staff knew what was happening. This was not the case. There were hurt feelings and regular staff meetings were introduced so everyone learned what was happening at roughly the same time. The school brochure was rewritten in plain English and parents/carers were invited to discuss the curriculum and homework and to join in activities with their children.

Joining and leaving the school became seen as 'significant rites of passage'. For example, the induction morning for new children involved parents/carers, teachers, the chair of governors and the chair of the parent-teacher association. It started with a joint assembly and ended with shared lunch. Parents/carers were also invited to the assembly on the next day where the children were presented with a reading folder. At the end of the year, there was a barbecue with live music for school leavers, parents/carers and governors.

The staff introduced further changes following consultation:

- A two-way intercom and CCTV at the entrance in response to parents'/carers' concerns about security.
- Pictures of all staff at the entrance.
- Children to accumulate a portfolio of their best work as they progressed through the school.
- A weekly school newsletter to be produced by the Year 6 Information and Communications Technology Club.
- Greater visibility of the head at the beginning and end of the day.
- Circle time to be introduced as well as noting of good behaviour and work.
- Two teaching assistants to be available as necessary to help children having difficulties at home to get started with activities in the school.

A school council was planned and a 'smile club' with elected students being given assertiveness and conflict management preparation so that they could support other students who were isolated. Staff felt that the *Index* helped the school to put the child 'at the centre of education':

'We have a picture of the child at the centre, with everyone, the dining room supervisors, the kitchen staff, teachers, teaching assistants, caretakers and cleaners in a circle around that child, all with their bit to say. It's about the child learning and having high expectations but it's about the child having a say too, not just being done to, but doing things as well.'

The head felt that using the *Index* was 'pulling us all together in one common focus': 'While I can see the benefits in all schools, I think for schools that have gone through periods of upheaval and disruption, like this one, it actually provides a good way forward.'

part 3
the review materials: indicators and questions

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Dimension A *section A.1* **Building community** • 50
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indicators

DIMENSION A **Creating inclusive *cultures***

A.1 | Building community

INDICATOR **A.1.1** | Everyone is made to feel welcome.

A.1.2 | Children help each other.

A.1.3 | Practitioners work well together.

A.1.4 | Practitioners and children treat one another with respect.

A.1.5 | Practitioners and parents/carers collaborate.

A.1.6 | Practitioners link what happens in the setting to children's lives at home.

A.1.7 | Practitioners and management committee/governors work well together.

A.1.8 | All local communities are involved in the setting.

A.2 | Establishing inclusive values

INDICATOR **A.2.1** | Everyone involved in the setting shares a commitment to inclusion.

A.2.2 | Expectations are high for all children.

A.2.3 | All children are treated as equally important.

A.2.4 | The setting helps children to feel good about themselves.

A.2.5 | The setting helps parents/carers to feel good about themselves.

DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.1 | Developing the setting for all

INDICATOR **B.1.1** | Practitioners are treated fairly in employment and promotion opportunities.

B.1.2 | All new practitioners are helped to settle.

B.1.3 | All children from the area are encouraged to join the setting.

B.1.4 | The setting is made physically accessible to all people.

B.1.5 | All new children are helped to settle.

B.1.6 | Practitioners prepare children well for moving to other settings.

B.2 | Organising support for diversity

INDICATOR **B.2.1** | All forms of support are co-ordinated.

B.2.2 | Professional development activities help practitioners to respond to the diversity of children and young people.

B.2.3 | The 'special educational needs' policy is an inclusion policy.

B.2.4 | The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice[27] is used to reduce barriers to play, learning and participation for all children.

B.2.5 | Support for those who have a home language other than English benefits all children.

B.2.6 | The behaviour policy improves the setting for all children.

B.2.7 | Pressures are reduced to exclude children viewed as disruptive.

B.2.8 | Barriers to attendance are reduced.

B.2.9 | Bullying is minimised.

27 Department for Education and Skills (2001) *The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*, London, DfES.

DIMENSION C **Evolving inclusive *practices***

C.1 | Orchestrating play and learning

INDICATOR C.1.1 | Activities are planned with all children in mind.

C.1.2 | Activities encourage all children to communicate.

C.1.3 | Activities encourage the participation of all children.

C.1.4 | Activities develop an understanding of differences between people.

C.1.5 | Activities discourage stereotyping.

C.1.6 | Children are actively involved in their play and learning.

C.1.7 | Children cooperate in playing and learning.

C.1.8 | Assessments encourage the achievements of all children.

C.1.9 | Practitioners encourage a calm atmosphere based on respectful relationships.

C.1.10 | Practitioners plan, review and engage in activities in partnership.

C.1.11 | Learning support/teaching assistants support the play, learning and participation of all children.

C.1.12 | All children take part when there are special activities.

C.2 | Mobilising resources

INDICATOR C.2.1 | The setting is well arranged to encourage play, learning and participation.

C.2.2 | Resources are distributed fairly.

C.2.3 | Differences between children are used as resources to support play, learning and participation.

C.2.4 | The expertise of practitioners is fully utilised.

C.2.5 | Practitioners develop shared resources to support play, learning and participation.

C.2.6 | Resources in the surroundings of the setting are known and used.

indicators with questions

DIMENSION A **Creating inclusive *cultures***

A.1 | Building community

INDICATOR A.1.1 | *Everyone is made to feel welcome*

a) Is the first contact that people have with the setting friendly and welcoming?

b) Is the environment of the setting uplifting?

c) Are children and their parents/carers always greeted and said goodbye to?

d) Is the setting welcoming to all children, including children with impairments, Travellers and asylum seekers?

e) Is the setting welcoming to all parents/carers and other members of its local communities?

f) Is information about activities and policies provided for all parents/carers?

g) Is information accessible to all, irrespective of home language or impairment (for example, available as necessary in translation, Braille, audiotape, large print)?

h) Are Sign Language and other first language interpreters available when necessary?

i) Does information about the setting state that all children from the surrounding communities are welcome?

j) Are local cultures and communities celebrated in signs and displays?

k) Are there positive rituals for welcoming new children and new practitioners and marking their leaving?

l) Do children/young people feel ownership of the space/s or room/s?

m) Do children, parents/carers, practitioners, management committee/governors and community members all feel ownership of the setting?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION A **Creating inclusive *cultures***

A.1 | Building community

INDICATOR A.1.2 | *Children help each other (see C.1.7)*

a) Do children seek help from, and offer assistance to, each other when it is needed?

b) Are there regular planned opportunities for children to help each other and look after each other?

c) Do displays celebrate collaborative work by children as well as individual achievements?

d) Do children tell a practitioner when they or someone else needs assistance?

e) Are supportive friendships actively encouraged?

f) Do children share rather than compete for friends?

g) Do children avoid racist, sexist, homophobic, disablist and other forms of discriminatory name-calling?

h) Do children understand that different behaviour may be expected from different children?

i) Do children appreciate the achievements of others whose starting points may be different from their own?

j) Do children feel that disputes between them are dealt with fairly and effectively?

k) Can children stick up for others who they feel have been treated unfairly?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION A **Creating inclusive *cultures***

A.1 | Building community

INDICATOR A.1.3 | *Practitioners work well together (see C.1.10)*

a) Do practitioners treat each other as human beings as well as occupants of a role?

b) Do practitioners treat each other with respect irrespective of their role and status?

c) Are significant events, such as birth, birthday or family death, given the same importance irrespective of status?

d) Are volunteers and paid workers equally valued?

e) Do practitioners treat each other with respect irrespective of their gender or sexual orientation?

f) Do practitioners treat each other with respect irrespective of their class or ethnic background?

g) Do practitioners treat each other with respect irrespective of impairment or disability?

h) Are all practitioners invited to staff meetings?

i) Do all practitioners attend meetings?

j) Do all practitioners contribute to discussion in meetings?

k) Are all practitioners involved in planning and review?

l) Is teamwork between practitioners a model for collaboration between children?

m) Do practitioners know who to turn to when they have a problem?

n) Do practitioners feel comfortable about discussing problems in their work?

o) Are temporary staff/volunteers encouraged to be actively involved in the life of the setting?

p) Are all practitioners involved in drawing up priorities for development?

q) Do all practitioners feel ownership of development planning?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION A Creating inclusive *cultures*

A.1 | Building community

INDICATOR A.1.4 | *Practitioners and children treat one another with respect*

a) Do practitioners address all children respectfully, by the name they wish to be called, with the correct pronunciation?

b) Do children treat all practitioners with respect irrespective of their age, appearance, status, gender or background?

c) Are the opinions of children sought about how the setting might be improved?

d) Do the views of children make a difference to what happens?

e) Do all practitioners and children regard each other as both learners and teachers?

f) Do practitioners treat the feeding and changing of babies as opportunities to play, learn and show warmth, rather than as chores to be completed?

g) Is toilet training viewed as a positive experience for a child rather than a burden for practitioners?

h) Do children help practitioners when asked?

i) Do children offer help to practitioners when they see it is needed?

j) Do practitioners involve children in routines such as tidying up and preparing snacks?

k) Do practitioners and children look after the physical environment of the setting?

l) Are toilets and showers kept in good order?

m) Is respect for other cultures indicated by providing a source of water for cleaning oneself after use of a toilet?

n) Are wishes for modesty and bodily privacy respected?

o) Do children know who to speak to when they have a problem?

p) Are children confident that their difficulties will be dealt with effectively?

q) Are significant events, such as births, deaths and illnesses, given the appropriate acknowledgement?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION A Creating inclusive *cultures*

A.1 | Building community

INDICATOR A.1.5 | *Practitioners and parents/carers collaborate*

a) Do parents/carers and practitioners respect each other whatever their status or whether or not they are in paid work?

b) Do practitioners attempt to form strong links with fathers as well as mothers?

c) Is respect shown for all families, including lone parents/carers, same sex parents/carers, dual and multiple heritage families, large and small families?

d) Are particular efforts made to build strong links with the carers of 'looked after children'?

e) Are all parents/carers well informed about policies and activities?

f) Are all parents/carers involved in decisions about the setting?

g) Do all parents/carers feel that their concerns are taken seriously?

h) Are the fears that some parents/carers have about meeting practitioners recognised and steps taken to overcome them?

i) Is there a variety of opportunities for parents/carers to become involved?

j) Are the different contributions that parents/carers can make equally appreciated?

k) Is there a variety of occasions when parents/carers can discuss their children with practitioners, with and without the children present?

l) Do practitioners value the knowledge that parents/carers have about their children?

m) Are there regular opportunities for parents/carers and practitioners to share ideas about how their children communicate, play and learn in the setting and at home?

n) Are there regular opportunities for parents/carers to share ideas about how children's play and learning can be encouraged?

o) Do parents/carers and practitioners have a shared understanding about ways of responding to babies' and children's emotions?

p) Do practitioners inform parents/carers about any significant events occurring for a child or baby during the day?

q) Do practitioners and parents/carers share a home-setting record?

r) Do parents/carers and practitioners collaborate over issues of hygiene, such as head lice, washing and bathing?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION A Creating inclusive *cultures*

A.1 | Building community

INDICATOR A.1.6 | *Practitioners link what happens in the setting to children's lives at home*

a) Do practitioners attempt to avoid conflicts between cultures in the setting and in the homes of children?

b) Is it recognised that everyone, not just members of 'ethnic minorities', has a culture or cultures?

c) Are practitioners aware of each child's home cultures and family circumstances?

d) Do the setting cultures reflect the mix of classes, ethnicities, cultures and life styles amongst children, parents/carers and practitioners?

e) Do practitioners ensure that routines for feeding, changing, toilet training and bathing are developed in negotiation with parents/carers?

f) Do practitioners respect parents'/carers' wishes about access to the television and computer games?

g) Do practitioners find out about, and carry out in the setting, the variety of domestic routines in the homes of children?

h) Do practitioners draw on familiar words of endearment, stories, songs and rhymes in a child's home language?

i) Is it acknowledged that children can feel severe discomfort when their cultures and identities are not understood and respected?

j) Is the possible discomfort recognised of those who have moved home and are away from friends and family?

k) Are the severe feelings of cultural dislocation of many refugees and asylum seekers acknowledged?

l) Are cultural norms respected about modesty?

m) Do practitioners ensure that children have access to clubs and events local to their homes, even if their setting is out of their home area?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION A Creating inclusive *cultures*

A.1 | Building community

INDICATOR A.1.7 | *Practitioners and management committee/governors work well together*

a) Do practitioners understand the roles and responsibilities of management committee/governors?

b) Do management committee/governors understand the organisational structure of the setting and the various responsibilities of the practitioners?

c) Are management committee/governors welcome to contribute to the work of the setting at any time?

d) Are the skills and knowledge of management committee/governors known and valued?

e) Does the composition of the management committee/ governing body reflect the setting's local communities?

f) Are management committee/governors fully informed about the policies of the setting?

g) Do management committee/governors and practitioners agree about what they can contribute to the setting?

h) Do management committee/governors feel that their contribution is valued irrespective of their status?

i) Do management committee/governors share in-service education opportunities with practitioners?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION A Creating inclusive *cultures*

A.1 | Building community

INDICATOR A.1.8 | *All local communities are involved in the setting*

a) Are all local communities, such as elderly people, the variety of ethnic groups, men and women, and disabled people, involved in activities in the setting?

b) Is the setting involved in activities in the local communities?

c) Do members of the local communities share facilities with practitioners and children such as the library, hall and canteen?

d) Do communities participate equally in the setting, irrespective of their class, religious or ethnic background?

e) Are all sections of local communities seen as a resource for the setting?

f) Do practitioners and management committee/governors seek the views of local community members about the setting?

g) Do the views of members of local communities affect policies in the setting?

h) Is there a positive view of the setting within local communities?

i) Does the setting encourage applications for work from people in local communities?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION A Creating inclusive *cultures*

A.2 | Establishing inclusive values

INDICATOR A.2.1 | *Everyone involved in the setting shares a commitment to inclusion*

a) Is the building of a supportive community in the setting seen to be as important as progress in learning?

b) Is the fostering of collaboration seen to be as important as encouraging independence?

c) Is there an emphasis on celebrating difference rather than conforming to a single 'normality'?

d) Is diversity seen as a rich resource to support play, learning and participation rather than as a problem?

e) Is there a shared resolve to minimise inequalities of opportunity in the setting?

f) Is there a shared wish to accept children from local communities, irrespective of background, attainments and impairment?

g) Are barriers to play, learning and participation seen to result from interactions between children, activities, other people and the physical environment?

h) Is disability seen as created when people with impairments encounter negative attitudes and institutional barriers?

i) Do practitioners, parents/carers and children avoid seeing barriers to play, learning and participation as produced by an impairment in a child or adult?

j) Is it understood that the exclusion of children with severe impairments reflects limitations in attitudes and policies more than practical difficulties?

k) Is exclusion understood as a process, which can start when the participation of children is not supported or valued and may end in separation from the setting?

l) Is there recognition of the existence of institutional discrimination and the need to minimise all forms of it?

m) Do practitioners and children understand the origins of discrimination in intolerance to difference?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION A Creating inclusive *cultures*

A.2 | Establishing inclusive values

INDICATOR A.2.2 | *Expectations are high for all children*

a) Are all children and young people treated as if there is no ceiling to their learning and development?

b) Are all children encouraged to have high expectations for developing learning, relationships and participation?

c) Do practitioners recognise the effort that must be made to counter low expectations of particular groups of children such as 'looked after children', Travellers, children learning English as an additional language and children from very poor areas?

d) Do practitioners avoid using notions of 'ability' to describe children's skills and knowledge?

e) Do practitioners avoid viewing children as having a fixed 'ability' based on their current achievements?

f) Are the achievements of children valued in relation to their own possibilities rather than the achievements of others?

g) Do practitioners avoid creating a sense of failure in children and their families when children do not keep up with a perceived 'normal development'?

h) Do practitioners focus on what children can do now and with help, rather than what they cannot yet do?

i) Are all children encouraged to take pride in their own achievements?

j) Are all children encouraged to appreciate the achievements of others?

k) Do practitioners attempt to counter the use of negative labels for children who are keen and enthusiastic and/or skilled in particular activities?

l) Do practitioners attempt to counter negative views of children who find activities difficult?

m) Do practitioners attempt to counter the derogatory use of labels of low achievement?

n) Is the fear of failure of some children recognised and addressed?

o) Do practitioners avoid linking the potential achievement of one child to those of a brother or sister or any other child?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION A Creating inclusive *cultures*

A.2 | Establishing inclusive values

INDICATOR A.2.3 | *All children are treated as equally important*

a) Is a variety of home languages and backgrounds seen to make a positive contribution to the setting and the wider society?

b) Are regional accents and dialects seen to enrich the setting and society?

c) Are differences in family structure acknowledged and celebrated?

d) Do practitioners avoid valuing middle class above working class backgrounds and interests?

e) Are gay and lesbian people valued by the setting as part of human diversity?

f) Are unhappy or angry children valued as highly as apparently placid, contented or easy to please children?

g) Are shy and fearful children valued as highly as extrovert and sociable children?

h) Are children with impairments as welcome as those without impairments?

i) Are children who differ in their attainments or maturity valued equally?

j) Are children's interests equally valued?

k) Are children valued equally whether or not they are toilet trained?

l) Do all children produce or bring things that are displayed?

m) Does the reporting of achievements and experiences within and beyond the setting include all children?

n) Are the achievements of boys and girls and children of different ethnic and class backgrounds given equal appreciation and prominence?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION A Creating inclusive *cultures*

A.2 | Establishing inclusive values

INDICATOR A.2.4 | *The setting helps children to feel good about themselves*

a) Are all children certain of regular sustained interaction with practitioners, individually or in small groups?

b) Do all children feel that practitioners like them?

c) Is play seen as important for its own sake rather than as a means to particular learning goals?

d) Is self-esteem recognised as vital to a child's well-being and cultivated in all activities and relationships?

e) Do practitioners recognise the importance of respect for children's identities and cultures, including dual and multiple heritages?

f) Can children be supported to acknowledge they are hurt, depressed or angry on a particular day?

g) Do practitioners respond sympathetically to tiredness in babies, children and each other?

h) Do practitioners let children know that they are understood when they are hungry, tired, happy, sad or lonely?

i) Are practitioners sensitive to the different ways children want to be comforted when distressed, for example by a cuddle or simply with the presence of an adult?

j) Are all children entitled to some private space and time?

k) Do practitioners recognise the contribution of singing and music to the well-being of children?

l) Is the importance of comfort objects recognised?

m) Do practitioners ensure that children are given any medicines they need?

n) Is any food that is provided for children in the setting part of a healthy diet?

o) Does the setting avoid constant assessment of children's progress?

p) Do children engage in activities outdoors as well as indoors?

q) Does the setting contribute to children's understanding of who they can trust and how to protect themselves?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION A Creating inclusive *cultures*

A.2 | Establishing inclusive values

INDICATOR A.2.5 | *The setting helps parents/carers to feel good about themselves*

a) Is there a shared understanding that an involvement in bringing up children is one of the most important tasks that anyone ever does?

b) Are practitioners sensitive to the wishes of parents/carers to witness the accomplishments of their children, for example when they first smile, utter a word or phrase, begin to crawl, stand or walk?

c) Are practitioners aware that some parents/carers may need support to feel confident in their parenting?

d) Are opportunities provided for friendships to develop between parents/carers?

e) Are mothers supported who wish to breastfeed their babies?

f) Do practitioners recognise the importance of reassuring some parents/carers not to be undermined by their children's relationships with other adults?

g) Are practitioners aware that some parents/carers have concerns over their babies and young children getting 'too attached' to other adults?

h) Do practitioners recognise a need to discuss with parents/carers that children's capacities for emotional attachments are not limited?

i) Is there a key practitioner for parents/carers to present their baby to, and receive their baby from at the start and end of a session?

j) Are parents/carers encouraged to settle their babies and children, establishing a routine of 'goodbye'?

k) Are parents/carers given confidence in the ability of practitioners to settle children/babies in their absence?

l) Are practitioners equally supportive of male and female parents/carers?

m) Are parents/carers who are separated both kept informed about the setting?

n) Do practitioners ensure that they are informed about sensitive matters such as custody arrangements and restraining orders?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.1 | Developing the setting for all

INDICATOR B.1.1 | *Practitioners are treated fairly in employment and promotion opportunities*

a) Are opportunities for promotion seen to be open to all who are eligible, inside and outside the setting?

b) Do promoted posts reflect the balance of genders and backgrounds of practitioners in the setting?

c) Do practitioners reflect the communities in the locality: male and female, disabled and non-disabled, differing ages and ethnic and class backgrounds?

d) Is there a clear strategy for removing barriers to the appointment of practitioners with impairments?

e) Do posts of a higher status disproportionately favour particular sections of the community?

f) Are there opportunities for practitioners to discuss unfair treatment and favouritism?

g) Are there opportunities for practitioners to discuss the difficulties produced for themselves or colleagues by being on low pay?

h) Are there active attempts to recruit those under-represented in the setting in terms of gender, ethnicity and disability?

i) Is the valuing of diversity in children an essential criterion for the appointment of practitioners?

j) Are the same arrangements made for finding replacements to cover practitioners' absence irrespective of their status?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.1 | Developing the setting for all

INDICATOR B.1.2 | *All new practitioners are helped to settle*

a) Is there an agreed policy for introducing new practitioners to, and supporting them in, the setting?

b) Are the difficulties recognised that new practitioners may have in settling into a new job in what may be a new locality?

c) Do longer serving practitioners avoid making new practitioners feel outsiders, for example by the use of 'we' or 'us', which excludes them?

d) Does every new practitioner have a mentor who is genuinely interested in helping him or her to settle in?

e) Are there opportunities for all practitioners, including new practitioners, to share their knowledge and expertise?

f) Are new practitioners provided with the basic information they need about the setting?

g) Are new practitioners asked about what additional information they need, and is it provided?

h) Are observations about the setting of new practitioners, and students on placement, sought and valued for the fresh insights that they may contain?

i) Are the observations of practitioners who are leaving sought and valued for the insights that they may contain?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.1 | Developing the setting for all

INDICATOR B.1.3 | *All children from the area are encouraged to join the setting*

a) Are all children from the locality encouraged to join, irrespective of attainments or impairment?

b) Is the inclusion of all children from the local communities publicised as the setting's policy?

c) Do practitioners seek to overcome any barriers to participation for the variety of ethnic groups in the locality?

d) Are Travellers, young children who visit the area, and children of asylum seekers and refugees actively encouraged to join the setting?

e) Are children from the local community, currently in special schools/provisions, actively encouraged to join the setting?

f) Is membership of the setting no more conditional for some children, such as those with disabilities, than for others?

g) Is there an increase in the proportion of children from the locality included within the setting?

h) Is there an increase in the diversity of children included within the setting from the local area?

i) Does the setting make sure that fees are not a barrier to the attendance of local children?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.1 | Developing the setting for all

INDICATOR B.1.4 | *The setting is made physically accessible to all people*

a) Is there a plan to increase the physical accessibility of the setting?

b) Are practitioners aware of their obligations to make their setting physically accessible under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001?[29]

c) Where the use of buildings is shared do practitioners collaborate with other users in making the buildings physically accessible?

d) Are the needs of deaf, partially deaf, blind and partially sighted people, as well as people with physical impairments considered in making the buildings accessible, for example with lines in corridors and auditory loops?

e) Are practitioners concerned with the accessibility of all aspects of the setting including: corridors, toilets, gardens, play areas, eating areas and displays?

f) Are disabled people consulted about the accessibility of the setting?

g) Is accessibility seen as about including disabled practitioners, management committee/governors and parents/carers, as well as children?

h) Is it understood how inaccessible buildings are barriers for many old people?

i) Is it recognised that environments that are accessible for disabled adults and children also benefit all parents with young children?

j) Is there adequate space at the beginning and end of sessions for children to be brought into the setting and picked up safely?

k) Does the physical space allow parents to manoeuvre pushchairs, double buggies and prams?

l) Do practitioners consider what needs to be at child height and adult height and arrange materials and facilities so that they are accessible to children and adults of differing heights?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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29 Department for Education and Skills (2001) *Special Educational Needs and Disability Act*, London, The Stationery Office; Disability Rights Commission (2002) *Disability Discrimination Act 1995 Part 4: Code of Practice for Schools*, London, DRC; National Children's Bureau (2002) *Early Years and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995*, London, NCB.

DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.1 | Developing the setting for all

INDICATOR B.1.5 | *All new children are helped to settle*

a) Is there an agreed induction policy for children?[30]

b) Does the induction programme work well for children and their families whether they join at the start of the year or at some other time?

c) Is information available for new parents/carers on the organisation of local education, health and social services as well as about the setting?

d) Does the induction programme take into account differences in the attainments and home language of children?

e) Are children prepared for joining the setting by being given something from the setting to take home?

f) Are steps taken to familiarise children with the setting before they start?

g) When they join the setting are children invited to bring some things from home?

h) Do practitioners recognise that babies/young children, new to the setting, may require particular attention when parents/carers leave?

i) Are new children paired with more experienced children when they first join the setting?

j) Are steps taken after a few weeks to find out the extent to which new children feel at home?

k) Is there support for children who have difficulty memorising the building layout, particularly when they first join the setting?

l) Are new children clear about who to see if they experience difficulties?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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30 An induction policy or programme sets out how children will be helped to feel at home and to participate when they first join the setting.

DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.1 | Developing the setting for all

INDICATOR B.1.6 | *Practitioners prepare children well for moving to other settings*

a) Do practitioners understand the importance of planning for new settings?

b) When children are due to move from one setting to another do practitioners in each setting collaborate to ease the change?

c) Are babies and young children familiarised with a new setting through visits and photographs of people and places they will encounter?

d) Are babies and young children given a quiet time to explore a new setting with a supportive adult?

e) Are routines of a new setting practised before transfer?

f) Do practitioners avoid allowing their feelings of loss, or needs for esteem, get in the way of supporting successful transfer?

g) Do practitioners explicitly favour mainstream settings for disabled children and others who experience barriers to play, learning and participation?

h) Are parents/carers of children with statements of 'special educational needs' supported to find a welcoming local mainstream alternative when they leave the setting?

i) Are practitioners well informed about the options for parents when they leave the setting?

j) Do practitioners offer written reports and practical expertise to support the development of play, learning and participation in a new setting?

k) Is it recognised that children who have experienced many moves may find it harder to move to a new situation and leave a trusted adult behind?

l) Are transitions minimised for 'looked after children' so that continuity in their education is encouraged?

m) If children attend more than one setting is there a key person in each setting to welcome them on arrival?

n) If children attend more than one setting is communication maintained between settings?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.2 | Organising support for diversity

INDICATOR B.2.1 | *All forms of support are co-ordinated*

a) Is support seen as about developing inclusive cultures, policies, activities and relationships as well as giving help to individuals?

b) Is the co-ordination of support given a high status and led by a senior practitioner?

c) Is support to overcome barriers to play, learning and participation experienced by children seen as a responsibility of all practitioners?

d) Are support plans and policies directed at preventing barriers to play, learning and participation for all children?

e) Is the setting's inclusive support policy made clear to those who visit from external support services?

f) Is there a plan for the way external support services can contribute to the inclusive development of cultures, policies and practices?

g) Are practitioners aware of all the external services that can support the development of play, learning and participation?

h) Do practitioners generally consult parents before contacting outside agencies when there are concerns about children's health, development or welfare?

i) Do practitioners have an agreed procedure to follow if there is a concern over child protection, that is sensitive to the well-being of children and parents/carers?

j) Are support policies guided by what is best for children rather than the maintenance of professional territories and/or business constraints?

k) Do practitioners have people to turn to when they feel overwhelmed by advice or are given conflicting advice?

l) Is there respectful collaboration between health, social services and education practitioners connected to the setting?

m) Do practitioners keep records of visits by outside agencies, together with agreed actions?

n) Are practitioners aware of the procedures they can go through if they are unsatisfied with the support offered?

o) Are those offering support or bringing an initiative to the setting asked to co-ordinate their efforts with other overlapping activities or initiatives?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.2 | Organising support for diversity

INDICATOR B.2.2 | *Professional development activities help practitioners to respond to the diversity of children and young people*

a) Are support, advice and education on inclusion readily available to the setting?

b) Does the planning of activities address the participation of children differing in background, experience, attainment or impairment?

c) Does the planning of activities address the reduction of barriers to play, learning and participation?

d) Do professional development activities support practitioners in working effectively together?

e) Is partnership teaching, followed by shared review, used to support practitioners to respond to children's diversity?

f) Do practitioners observe activities in order to reflect on the perspectives of children?

g) Do practitioners receive training in devising and managing collaborative learning activities?

h) Are there shared opportunities for practitioners to develop more effective collaboration?

i) Are there opportunities for practitioners and children to learn about peer tutoring?

j) Do practitioners learn about using technology to support learning, such as cameras, video, tape recorders and computers?

k) Do practitioners explore ways of reducing disaffection by increasing the engagement of children in activities?

l) Do all practitioners learn how to counter bullying, including disablism, racism, sexism and homophobia?

m) Do practitioners and management committee/governors take responsibility for assessing their own learning needs?

n) Are practitioners given opportunities to discuss their feelings, for example about parenting, security, belonging and independence?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.2 | Organising support for diversity

INDICATOR B.2.3 | *The 'special educational needs' policy is an inclusion policy*

a) Is the 'special educational needs' policy aimed at developing play, learning and participation for all and minimising exclusion?

b) Is there an understanding of the way categorisation of some children as 'having special educational needs' can lead to their devaluation and separation?

c) Is there an attempt to minimise the categorisation of children as 'having special educational needs'?

d) Is the disproportionate categorisation of boys as 'having special educational needs' avoided?

e) Does the setting avoid the disproportionate categorisation of those from particular ethnic groups as 'having special educational needs'?

f) Are children, categorised as 'having special educational needs', seen as having differing interests, knowledge and skills rather than as a homogeneous group?

g) Does the setting call its co-ordinator of support a 'play and learning support' or 'inclusion' co-ordinator rather than a 'special educational needs' co-ordinator or 'SENCo'?

h) Do practitioners avoid contrasting mainstream with 'special needs' or 'inclusion' children?

i) Is support interpreted in the policy in a broad way?

j) Is support seen as an entitlement for those children who need it rather than as a special addition to their education?

k) Are the details of an entitlement to support made public to children and parents/carers and included within information about the setting?

l) Is there recognition that knowledge about a child's impairments makes only a limited contribution to planning education for that child?

m) Are attempts to remove barriers to play, learning and participation of one child seen as opportunities to improve the experience of all children?

n) Where possible is support provided without recourse to formal assessment procedures?

o) Are children, mainly based in separate 'special' settings, who attend the setting part-time, encouraged to attend full-time?

p) Is there an attempt to minimise the withdrawal of children from the main activities of the setting?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.2 | Organising support for diversity

INDICATOR B.2.4 | *The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice is used to reduce barriers to play, learning and participation for all children*

a) Is the use of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice co-ordinated with the Disability Discrimination Act Code of Practice for Schools?

b) Is the use of both codes of practice integrated into an overall inclusion policy?

c) Is the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice seen as primarily about support rather than assessment and categorisation?

d) Is support for teaching diverse groups seen as an alternative to categorisation and the provision of individual support?

e) Do external support services contribute to the planning of activities to reduce barriers to play, learning and participation?

f) Are 'individual education plans' about providing access to, and supporting participation within, common activities?

g) Do 'individual education plans' for some children improve the learning arrangements for all children?

h) Are the views of parents/carers and children and young people respected during the statementing process?

i) Do parents/carers feel confident that their child will not be viewed less favourably if he or she has a statement of 'special educational needs'?

j) Do practitioners respect wishes for confidentiality of all parents/carers, including those with a child who has a statement of 'special educational needs'?

k) Do statements of 'special educational needs' emphasise the strengths of children rather than 'deficiencies'?

l) Do statements of 'special educational needs' describe changes in the activities and organisation of the setting required to increase play, learning and participation?

m) Do statements of 'special educational needs' describe the changes in learning arrangements required to maximise participation in the mainstream?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.2 | Organising support for diversity

INDICATOR B.2.5 | *Support for those who have a home language other than English benefits all children*

a) Is support for children learning English as an additional language seen to be the responsibility of all practitioners?

b) Are all languages seen as equally valuable?

c) Are assumptions avoided about the fluency in English of children from ethnic minorities?

d) Are assumptions avoided about parents'/carers' or grandparents' country of origin based on limited knowledge of ethnic groups in the area?

e) Do practitioners understand the shyness that can result from being in a small minority who speak a different language from the majority in the setting?

f) Is it recognised that all children share the need for warmth, security and belonging, regardless of their fluency in English?

g) Do all children benefit from the range of languages known and being learnt by children and adults in the setting?

h) Are opportunities taken to integrate home languages into songs, stories and rhymes?

i) Does support focus on overcoming barriers to play, learning and participation, rather than making a distinction between 'having a difficulty in an additional language' and 'having a learning difficulty'?

j) Are interpreters of Sign Language and other first languages available to support those who need them?

k) Is support sometimes available from someone who shares a cultural background with children?

l) Are steps taken to increase communication with parents/carers who are learning English as an additional language by, for example, asking for help with signs and displays in a child's home language?

m) Is it recognised that a home language may not have a direct written form?

n) Are the effects of moving country and culture recognised as possible barriers to play, learning and participation?

o) Does support for children learning English as an additional language address barriers in all aspects of the setting's activities and organisation?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.2 | Organising support for diversity

INDICATOR B.2.6 | *The behaviour policy improves the setting for all children*

a) Do practitioners continue to attempt to increase participation in play, learning and relationships even when they feel that the behaviour of a child is causing concern?

b) Are difficulties with behaviour related to strategies for improving activities, relationships and the organisation and cultures of the setting?

c) Are rules for the setting clear and minimal?

d) Are children and their parents/carers involved in formulating rules?

e) Do behaviour policies encourage settings to review ways in which conflicts are triggered so that such occasions are reduced?

f) Are children taught ways of resolving conflicts which avoid recourse to aggressive behaviour?

g) Do practitioners model a calm response to difficulties?

h) Does support for overcoming conflict for one child involve reflection on ways to improve play, learning and participation for all children?

i) Do all practitioners learn how to reduce disaffection and disruption?

j) Do practitioners regard the difficulties that one colleague has with a particular child as a shared problem to be resolved jointly?

k) Are there attempts to raise the feelings of self-worth of children with low self-esteem?

l) Is the knowledge of parents/carers and children used in overcoming concerns about disaffection and disruption?

m) Do all children contribute to overcoming disaffection and disruption?

n) Do behaviour support policies address the well-being of children who are quietly troubled?

o) Are steps taken to respond to any tendency for more boys than girls to have low attainments and to express disaffection?

p) Are there attempts to counter a view of masculinity in boys as necessarily involving aggressive behaviour?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.2 | Organising support for diversity

INDICATOR B.2.7 | *Pressures are reduced to exclude children viewed as disruptive*

a) Is exclusion seen as a process that may be reduced by support for play, learning and relationships and changes in activities?

b) Are there meetings involving practitioners, children, parents/carers and others that attempt to deal with problems flexibly before they escalate?

c) Are all children treated with compassion however 'difficult' they are seen to be?

d) Do practitioners share responsibility to find solutions when one of them is experiencing difficulties with a child?

e) Are the connections recognised between the devaluing of children, and disaffection and disruption?

f) Do practitioners address feelings of devaluation when they arise in ethnic minority or social class groups?

g) Are there attempts to reduce conflict between ethnic or social class groups?

h) Do practitioners avoid creating pools of disaffection by grouping children according to their behaviour or attainments?

i) Are there clear positive plans for re-introducing children who have been excluded from the setting for disciplinary reasons?

j) Is there an intention to minimise all forms of disciplinary exclusion, whether temporary or permanent, formal or informal?

k) Is the aim of reducing disciplinary exclusion shared between practitioners?

l) Are clear records kept about informal as well as formal disciplinary exclusions?

m) Are regular reports on disciplinary exclusion provided for the management committee/governors?

n) Are formal and informal disciplinary exclusions being reduced?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.2 | Organising support for diversity

INDICATOR B.2.8 | *Barriers to attendance are reduced*

a) Are all barriers to attendance explored within the cultures, policies and practices of the setting as well as in children's and their parents'/carers' attitudes and homes?

b) Do practitioners offer support to parents/carers who want their child to attend the setting but have difficulty in arranging it?

c) Do practitioners and parents/carers collaborate in resolving the concerns of children about attending the setting?

d) Do practitioners support the return to full participation of children who have had a bereavement, a chronic illness, or a short or long-term absence?

e) Is there advice on extended leave to another country that has been negotiated between parents/carers, practitioners and the management committee/governors of the setting?

f) Do the experiences of children who have been away for extended periods inform the activities of the setting?

g) Are the effects on attendance recognised of bullying and a lack of supportive friendships?

h) Is there an efficient system for reporting and recording attendance and discovering reasons for absence?

i) Are barriers to the attendance of children being reduced?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

B.2 | Organising support for diversity

INDICATOR B.2.9 | *Bullying is minimised*

a) Do practitioners, parents/carers, management committee/ governors and children share a view of what counts as bullying?

b) Do children's ideas of what makes them feel uncomfortable, such as 'eye-balling' or 'lifting people up when you don't like it', help to develop the view of bullying in the setting?

c) Is bullying seen as a potential part of all power relationships?

d) Is bullying seen to be concerned with verbal and emotional hurt as well as physical assault?

e) Is the threat of the withdrawal of friendship understood as bullying?

f) Is bullying seen as potentially occurring between anyone: practitioners, practitioners and children, practitioners and parents/carers, and between children?

g) Are racist, sexist, disablist and homophobic comments and behaviour seen as aspects of bullying?

h) Is there a written statement about bullying that sets out in detail what behaviour is acceptable and unacceptable?

i) Can everyone understand the way the anti-bullying policy is written?

j) Can both boys and girls discuss problems about bullying and feel supported?

k) Do children know who they can turn to if they experience bullying?

l) Are there people inside and outside the setting to whom practitioners can turn if they are being bullied?

m) Are children involved in creating strategies to prevent and minimise bullying?

n) Are clear records kept about bullying incidents?

o) Is bullying being reduced?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.1 | Orchestrating play and learning

INDICATOR C.1.1 | *Activities are planned with all children in mind*

a) Are activities planned to support learning rather than to deliver a curriculum?

b) Are activities planned to extend the learning of all children?

c) In planning how to group children is attention paid to friendships and the presence of others who speak the same language?

d) Is there an attempt to avoid the organisation of groups according to levels of attainment, so-called 'ability', impairment and 'special educational needs'?

e) Are groups rearranged, at times, so as to promote social cohesion for example between ethnic groups?

f) Do activities reflect the experiences, interests and backgrounds of all children, irrespective of attainments, language, gender, impairment, class, ethnicity, culture and religious belief?

g) Do activities regularly start from a shared experience that can be developed in a variety of ways?

h) Do practitioners avoid making stereotypical assumptions about what will appeal to particular groups, such as boys and girls?

i) Does planning attempt to minimise barriers to play, learning and participation for children who are unsettled?

j) Do practitioners plan to reduce the need for individual support of children?

k) Do practitioners plan for the additional time required by some children with impairments to use equipment in practical activities?

l) Do activities allow for the differences in the way children learn?

m) Are children able to participate fully in activities in clothes appropriate to their religious beliefs?

n) Are adaptations made to activities, such as art and music, where there are reservations about participation because of a family's religious beliefs?

o) Are there activities that can be done individually, in pairs, in small groups and by the whole group?

p) Do activities involve variety, using talking, listening, clapping, reading, singing, drawing, drama and puppets, problem solving, moving, making, cooking and use of library, audio/visual materials and computers?

q) Do practitioners plan alternative activities for more and less active children, such as when some babies and young children are asleep?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.1 | Orchestrating play and learning

INDICATOR C.1.2 | *Activities encourage all children to communicate*

a) Do practitioners speak clearly using words that are understood by the children?

b) Are practitioners aware of the use of gesture and facial expression for communication?

c) Does everyone in the setting learn how to gain the attention of others by a name or light touch before communicating with them?

d) Is everyone given proper attention when they try to communicate?

e) Do settings develop a culturally varied repertoire of songs and rhymes?

f) Are children helped to learn the names of other children and important people in their lives through rhymes and games?

g) Do activities encourage talk between practitioners and children as well as between the children themselves?

h) Do activities encourage the development of a language for thinking and talking about play and learning?

i) Are children supported to take their turn in conveying messages even when they find it difficult?

j) Is language extended and encouraged through the use of open-ended questions?

k) Do children have a variety of opportunities to communicate using letters, telephones and e-mail?

l) Do practitioners and children talk freely with babies and others who do not express themselves through spoken language?

m) Do practitioners make time to respond to the variety of sounds babies and young children produce, echoing and giving meaning to them?

n) Do practitioners encourage playfulness and turn taking with babies using games and rhymes?

o) Are interpreters available for deaf children or others for whom English is an additional language?

p) Are there opportunities for children who learn English as an additional language, or who use Sign Language to communicate freely in their first language?

q) Do practitioners use Sign Language in songs and rhymes?

r) Are children with severe communication difficulties encouraged to use non-verbal ways of making contact?

s) Do practitioners supplement voice with touch, gesture and facial expression for those who need it, including children with hearing impairments?

t) Do practitioners compensate for the facial expressions and body language that may be missed by children with visual impairments?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C **Evolving inclusive *practices***

C.1 | Orchestrating play and learning

INDICATOR C.1.3 | *Activities encourage the participation of all children*

a) Do activities involve children emotionally and convey excitement and fun in learning?

b) Is self-expression encouraged through art, music and dance as well as through language?

c) Are puppets, dolls and photographs used to explore particular situations and emotions?

d) Is use made of photo-diaries to record and share activities in and away from the setting?

e) Do practitioners extend the range of stories, songs, games and rhymes from the familiar, drawing on other cultures and languages?

f) Do activities build on language and literacy experiences which children have outside the setting?

g) Do activities build on differences in children's previous knowledge and experience?

h) Do practitioners recognise that the process of making something or attempting an activity can be more important than the end product?

i) Do practitioners always respond positively to children's artistic and creative attempts?

j) Do practitioners maintain contact with children by getting down physically to their level?

k) Do practitioners ensure that babies and young children are aware that an activity is about to start, for example by registering presence before picking them up, caring for, or feeding them?

l) Do practitioners recognise the physical or mental effort required by some children with impairments or chronic illness to complete activities, for example if lip-reading or low vision aids are used?

m) Do practitioners provide alternative ways of giving access to experiences or understanding for children who cannot engage in particular activities, for example, because of a visual impairment?

n) Are children with severe communication difficulties encouraged to feel that their responses to activities are valued?

o) Do practitioners provide children who communicate non-verbally with a range of opportunities to make choices using pictures, photographs and objects?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.1 | Orchestrating play and learning

INDICATOR C.1.4 | *Activities develop an understanding of differences between people*

a) Do stories, songs, rhymes, conversations, visits and visitors encourage children to explore backgrounds and views which are different from their own?

b) Are opportunities provided for children to learn and play with others who are different from themselves in terms of background, ethnicity, impairment and gender?

c) Do activities develop an understanding of differences of background, culture, ethnicity, gender, impairment, sexual orientation and religion?

d) Do children have opportunities to spend time with a variety of adults, including men and women, disabled people, people with a range of ages and differing ethnic backgrounds?

e) Are meal times made culturally relevant for all children?

f) Do practitioners avoid classist, sexist, racist, disablist, homophobic and other discriminatory remarks?

g) Do practitioners show that they respect and value a variety of views and life styles?

h) Are children made aware of cultural influences on the words we use, the food we eat, the plants we see, the games we play, the clothes we wear and the numbers we learn?

i) Do children have opportunities to learn about children and young people in other parts of the world and communicate with them?

j) Do activities give an understanding of how some people are oppressed or live in extreme poverty?

k) Do practitioners provide dressing up clothes and materials that help children to imagine what it feels like to be someone else?

l) Is it conveyed to children that it is great to be different?

m) Do activities encourage an exploration of self-identity and a positive valuing of it, for example in self-description or self-portrait?

n) Do resources and activities reflect and teach about a range of languages especially those spoken by parents/carers and children?

o) Do practitioners understand that there are a variety of ways of expressing concentration besides sitting still and working at a table?

p) Do practitioners intervene to encourage acceptance of disabled children or to counter negative comments about children who are physically or culturally distinctive?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.1 | Orchestrating play and learning

INDICATOR C.1.5 | *Activities discourage stereotyping*

a) Is it recognised that all cultures and religions encompass a range of views and degrees of observance?

b) Do practitioners discourage the making of assumptions about cultural heritage on the basis of skin colour?

c) Are the dual or multiple heritages of children recognised?

d) Are stereotypical views of bodily perfection challenged?

e) Are stereotypical attitudes towards people with impairments countered, for example when they are seen as objects of pity, or heroic battlers against adversity?

f) Do practitioners avoid stereotypical roles for children in plays, for example according to appearance, hair type or skin colour?

g) Do books, pictures, dolls and puppets portray black and minority ethnic people in non-stereotypical ways and in everyday situations?

h) Do materials portray disabled people in non-stereotypical ways and everyday situations?

i) Is gender stereotyping avoided in expectations about achievements, future roles and occupations or in who helps with particular tasks?

j) Do practitioners draw children's attention to books, pictures, dolls and displays that show men, women, boys and girls in non-stereotypical roles?

k) Do resources and activities reflect women and men doing a range of tasks in the home?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.1 | Orchestrating play and learning

INDICATOR C.1.6 | *Children are actively involved in their play and learning*

a) Do practitioners present options so that children really can make choices about activities?

b) Are the interests, knowledge and skills acquired independently by children valued and drawn upon in activities?

c) Do practitioners follow the lead of children in their play and explorations, observing, joining in the fun, supporting and extending play where appropriate?

d) Do practitioners themselves appear to be active learners, exercising their own interests, for example in making things, drawing, painting and reading?

e) Where appropriate is clear information provided about what is expected within an activity?

f) Are resources accessible and organised to encourage independent learning?

g) Is the support given to children arranged to help them to move on in their learning while drawing on the knowledge and skills they already possess?

h) Are children helped to organise themselves?

i) Are children encouraged to summarise or reflect on what they have done?

j) Are children consulted about the support that they need?

k) Are children consulted about what activities they enjoy?

l) Are formulaic activities avoided, which involve a product designed to please parents rather than engage children, such as uniform Easter or Christmas cards?

m) Are children encouraged to become independent in self-care, such as feeding themselves at meal times?

n) Are children helped to accept the choices made by other children and adults even when this limits their own choice?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.1 | Orchestrating play and learning

INDICATOR C.1.7 | *Children cooperate in playing and learning (see A.1.2)*

a) Are there accepted rules about taking turns in speaking, listening, requesting information and asking for help?

b) Are there times when babies/children of different ages are brought together to play with their key practitioner?

c) Do children ask for help from each other?

d) Do children willingly share their knowledge and skills?

e) Do children refuse help politely when they do not need it?

f) Do group activities allow children to divide up tasks and pool what they have learnt?

g) Do children learn how to compile a joint report from the different contributions of members of a group?

h) Do children recognise that every child should have their share of attention?

i) Do children share responsibility for helping to overcome the difficulties experienced by some children in some activities?

j) Do practitioners help babies to get used to a range of adults and other children?

k) Do practitioners encourage an understanding that babies and young children differ in what they understand about sharing?

l) Do practitioners and children understand that, at times, children may choose to play and learn in parallel?

m) Do practitioners play alongside children on the edge of a group to help them to feel that they belong?

n) Are groups of children discouraged from monopolising the space in the play area for particular activities such as football?

o) Are children taught a repertoire of indoor and outdoor games that can include children with a range of skills?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C **Evolving inclusive *practices***

C.1 | Orchestrating play and learning

INDICATOR C.1.8 | *Assessments encourage the achievements of all children*

a) Is written assessment kept to a minimum?

b) Do practitioners take responsibility for the play and learning of all children in their sessions?

c) Are children involved in commenting on their own play and learning?

d) Are parents/carers involved in commenting on their children's play and learning?

e) Where records of achievements are kept, do they reflect all the skills and knowledge of children, such as additional languages, other communication systems, hobbies and interests?

f) Are judgements on children respectful?

g) Are judgements of what children can do next with support based on detailed observations?

h) Are assessments directed at what is important to learn not what it is easy to measure?

i) Are assessments always formative, so that they develop the play, learning and participation of children?

j) In any written record do practitioners personalise assessment and avoid stock phrases?

k) Do practitioners avoid using notions of 'ability' in discussing or writing about children?

l) Do assessments of the learning of children lead to modification in activities?

m) Are assessments used that allow all children to display their skills?

n) Is the learning of groups of children considered (boys/girls/ethnic minority children/children with impairments) so that difficulties for a particular group can be addressed?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.1 | Orchestrating play and learning

INDICATOR C.1.9 | *Practitioners encourage a calm atmosphere based on respectful relationships*

a) Are children/young people encouraged to develop self-discipline?

b) Do practitioners avoid placing reliance on the control of children by rewards and punishments?

c) Do practitioners support each other and children/young people to be assertive without being aggressive?

d) Do practitioners share their concerns and pool their knowledge and skills in overcoming disaffection and disruption?

e) Is it accepted that in order to overcome negative personal feelings about children practitioners may need to express them in private?

f) Do practitioners avoid demonising particular children and labelling them as troublesome?

g) When others are troubled do children help to calm them down rather than wind them up?

h) Are children consulted on how to improve the atmosphere of the setting?

i) Do children feel that they, and others, are treated fairly?

j) If there is more than one adult in the room, do they share responsibilities for the smooth running of activities?

k) Is it recognised by practitioners and children that it is unfair for either boys or girls to receive more attention from practitioners?

l) Are disagreements between children seen as opportunities for learning about feelings, relationships and the consequences of actions?

m) Are decisions explained which stop children from engaging in particular actions?

n) Do practitioners encourage children to resolve disputes themselves?

o) Do practitioners and parents/carers work together to overcome challenging behaviour, such as scratching and biting?

p) Are there procedures, understood by children and practitioners, for responding to extremes of challenging behaviour?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.1 | Orchestrating play and learning

INDICATOR C.1.10 | *Practitioners plan, review and engage in activities in partnership (see A.1.3)*

a) Do practitioners share the planning of activities?

b) Do practitioners share ideas and materials for activities?

c) Do practitioners work together to support activities?

d) Are activities planned so as to make full use of all adults in the setting?

e) After engaging in activities together, do practitioners share reflections on the play, learning and participation of children?

f) Do practitioners welcome comments from colleagues on, for example, the accessibility of their language and the participation of children in activities?

g) Do practitioners modify their approach to activities in response to feedback from colleagues?

h) Do practitioners support and step in for each other during times of stress?

i) Do practitioners engage in joint problem solving sessions to discuss barriers to play, learning and participation experienced by children?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.1 | Orchestrating play and learning

INDICATOR C.1.11 | *Learning support/teaching assistants support the play, learning and participation of all children*

a) Are assistants involved in planning and reviewing activities?

b) Are assistants attached to a group rather than to particular children?

c) Is space arranged so that assistants can mix with groups as well as individuals?

d) Are assistants concerned to increase the participation of all children?

e) Do assistants aim to maximise independence of children from their direct support?

f) Do assistants encourage peer support of children who experience difficulties?

g) Are assistants careful to avoid getting in the way of children's relationships with other children and practitioners?

h) Are the views of assistants sought about the nature of their main tasks?

i) Are the main tasks of assistants agreed to ensure that they are not expected to take responsibilities for which they are not paid?

j) Are assistants paid for all the tasks they undertake, such as attendance at meetings, preparation of materials and for training?

k) Are all practitioners aware of the range of responsibilities in the job description for assistants?

l) Is it recognised that some children with impairments may need the support of a personal assistant, rather than a learning support/teaching assistant?

m) Are children with impairments asked about the support they might need and the characteristics of the person who might provide it?

n) Is it recognised that assistants may need to act as advocates for some children?

o) Are attempts made to recruit male as well as female assistants?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.1 | Orchestrating play and learning

INDICATOR C.1.12 | *All children take part when there are special activities*

a) Are special events and trips made accessible to all children irrespective of their skills, attainments, impairments or family income?

b) Are parents/carers encouraged to join in special events?

c) Are activities prepared for parents/carers so that they can be fully involved in trips and visits?

d) Are all children given opportunities to take part in activities which benefit local communities?

e) Are special activities, clubs and outings arranged so that they appeal to all children?

f) Is transport available if it is necessary to include a child in an activity?

g) Are all children encouraged to take part in optional activities such as music, drama and physical education?

h) Do children who are chosen to represent the setting in plays or games reflect the diversity of children in the setting?

i) Do physical activities encourage sport and fitness for all?

j) Do sports days include activities in which everyone can take part, irrespective of skill level or impairment?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.2 | Mobilising resources

INDICATOR C.2.1 | *The setting is well arranged to encourage play, learning and participation*

a) Is the setting arranged so that children can make choices and play independently?

b) Is the setting clean and comfortable?

c) Is there space for children to move around from activity to activity?

d) Are the areas where children sit on the floor carpeted or cushioned?

e) Is there a range of areas to support group and independent play?

f) Do practitioners and children help to keep the setting organised throughout the sessions to support play, learning and participation?

g) Are areas clearly marked with symbols so that they can be linked to discussion of choices?

h) Are there areas where children can sit and chat with friends?

i) Is a comfortable place available for parents/carers, practitioners and babies/children/young people to sit together to discuss the day?

j) Is there a comfortable place where babies and young children can rest or sleep when they want to?

k) Is there a quiet place so that children can temporarily escape attention when they feel the need?

l) Do practitioners make sure that the setting is both safe and encourages independence?

m) Are sessions arranged so that children can spend time outdoors as well as inside?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.2 | Mobilising resources

INDICATOR C.2.2 | *Resources are distributed fairly*

a) Are practitioners and parents/carers aware of the financial resources available and how they are distributed?

b) Are resources assigned fairly to support children?

c) Are groups treated fairly in the use of facilities, location of rooms, allocation of practitioners and cover for practitioners' absence?

d) Are resources assigned fairly to support the work of practitioners?

e) Are practitioners aware of what resources are delegated to the setting to support children categorised as 'having special educational needs'?

f) Are resources which are delegated to meet 'special educational needs' used to increase the responsiveness of the setting to the diversity of children/young people?

g) Are resources directed at preventing barriers to play, learning and participation through planning and professional development?

h) Do practitioners use resources flexibly so that they can be distributed differently when there are changes in the children, staff and the setting?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.2 | Mobilising resources

INDICATOR C.2.3 | *Differences between children are used as resources to support play, learning and participation*

a) Are children encouraged to pool their knowledge and experience, for example, of families or of different countries, regions and areas of towns?

b) Is the capacity for children to give emotional support recognised and used sensitively?

c) Do children with greater knowledge or skill in particular activities sometimes help those with less?

d) Are there opportunities for children of different ages to support each other?

e) Is a wide variety of children chosen to help others?

f) Is everyone, irrespective of skills, attainments or impairment seen to have important contributions to make to the learning of others?

g) Is the variety of languages spoken by children drawn on in activities as a resource for the development of language?

h) Do children who have overcome a particular problem pass on the benefits of their experience?

i) Are discriminatory remarks used as opportunities for learning about feelings?

j) Are the barriers experienced by some children, for example in access to a part of the building or participation in an activity, used as problem solving tasks?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.2 | Mobilising resources

INDICATOR C.2.4 | *The expertise of practitioners is fully utilised*

a) Are all the skills and knowledge of practitioners known, not just those implied by their title or given in their job description?

b) Are practitioners encouraged to gain confidence in using all their skills?

c) Are practitioners encouraged to draw on and share all their skills and knowledge with children and with each other?

d) Are practitioners encouraged to develop their knowledge and skills?

e) Is the variety of languages spoken by practitioners used as a resource for children?

f) Do practitioners understand that as fellow human beings they have the capacities to work with any family irrespective of their background, culture and language?

g) Do practitioners with particular skills and knowledge offer their help to others?

h) Are the differences in culture and background of practitioners drawn upon in activities?

i) Are there formal as well as informal opportunities for practitioners to resolve concerns over children by drawing on each other's expertise?

j) Do practitioners offer alternative perspectives on concerns about children?

k) Are advisers and management committee/governors involved in sharing their expertise with practitioners?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.2 | Mobilising resources

INDICATOR C.2.5 | *Practitioners develop shared resources to support play, learning and participation*

a) Do practitioners develop shared, re-usable resources to support play and learning?

b) Is it recognised that a setting can be richly resourced without expensive toys and equipment?

c) Is full use made of recycled and second-hand materials?

d) Are there familiar objects and photographs in the setting from the homes of babies/young children?

e) Do all practitioners know of the resources available to support play and learning?

f) Is there a range of age-appropriate stories and factual books for all learners in the variety of languages used by children/young people?

g) Is there a range of songbooks, CDs and musical instruments?

h) Are appropriately adapted materials, for example in large print, audiotape or Braille, available for children with impairments?

i) Does a library support independent learning for all?

j) Do practitioners share useful internet sites and information?

k) Is there a well-organised video library?

l) Is the use of computers integrated into activities?

m) Are useful television programmes recorded?

n) Are cassette recorders used for story tapes and to support language development?

o) Are new technological opportunities exploited when they become available and can be afforded, for example, voice recognition programmes to connect voice with writing?

p) Is the independent general play and role-play of children supported with everyday objects that can be used flexibly, for indoor and outdoor play?

q) Are puppets, dolls and photographs available to explore particular situations and emotions?

r) Is there a collection of materials representing familiar and unfamiliar worlds such as animals, people, trees and farmyards?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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DIMENSION C Evolving inclusive *practices*

C.2 | Mobilising resources

INDICATOR C.2.6 | *Resources in the surroundings of the setting are known and used*

a) Is there a regularly updated record of resources in the locality that can support teaching and learning? This might include:

libraries	city and rural farms
museums and art galleries	water, river, canal authorities
local artists	heritage/ancient buildings authorities
theatres/theatre groups	religious centres
cinemas	community organisations
dance centres/dance groups	charities
street entertainers	citizens advice bureaux
singing groups	unions
sports clubs and sports centres	politicians/political parties
swimming pools	parish, town, city and county councils
hobby clubs	train stations, bus stations, airports, ports
local shops and other businesses	homes for the elderly/day centres
telephone companies	police service, fire service, hospitals, ambulance service
Royal Mail centres	health visitors
environmental groups	child birth organisations
recycling services and centres	schools, further and higher education
parks and gardens	
garden centres	
allotments	
countryside authorities	
National Trust	

b) Do members of the local communities contribute to activities?

c) Are parents/carers and other community members used as a source of support?

d) Are disabled adults involved in supporting children?

e) Do people working in the area act as mentors to support children experiencing difficulties?

f) Are the resources available to some homes (such as reference materials, special skills and knowledge, computers) available, at times, to support all children?

g) Are other local early years/childcare/school settings seen as sources of instructive practice, experience and support?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

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part 4
planning framework summary sheet and questionnaires

Planning framework summary sheet: priorities for development • 97

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planning framework summary sheet
priorities for development

Please tick the box or boxes below to indicate your relationship to the setting:

- ☐ Practitioner
- ☐ Volunteer
- ☐ Management committee/governor
- ☐ Child/young person
- ☐ Parent/carer
- ☐ Other (specify)

Please write your priorities for the development of your setting under the section headings below. These might be based on an indicator or group of indicators or a question or group of questions. You should consider the implications of a priority in one section of one dimension for changes that need to be made in other dimensions and sections.

DIMENSION A **Creating inclusive *cultures***

Building community

Establishing inclusive values

DIMENSION B **Producing inclusive *policies***

Developing the setting for all

Organising support for diversity

DIMENSION C **Evolving inclusive *practices***

Orchestrating play and learning

Mobilising resources

questionnaire 1
indicators

Please tick the box or boxes below to indicate your relationship to the setting:

- ☐ Practitioner
- ☐ Management committee/governor
- ☐ Parent/carer
- ☐ Volunteer
- ☐ Child/young person
- ☐ Other (specify)

How well do the sentences below describe your setting?
Please tick a box for each sentence.

		definitely agree	*agree and disagree*	*disagree*	*need more information*
DIMENSION A	**Creating inclusive *cultures***				
A.1.1	Everyone is made to feel welcome.				
A.1.2	Children help each other.				
A.1.3	Practitioners work well together.				
A.1.4	Practitioners and children treat one another with respect.				
A.1.5	Practitioners and parents/carers collaborate.				
A.1.6	Practitioners link what happens in the setting to children's lives at home.				
A.1.7	Practitioners and management committee/governors work well together.				
A.1.8	All local communities are involved in the setting.				
A.2.1	Everyone involved in the setting shares a commitment to inclusion.				
A.2.2	Expectations are high for all children.				
A.2.3	All children are treated as equally important.				
A.2.4	The setting helps children to feel good about themselves.				
A.2.5	The setting helps parents/carers to feel good about themselves.				
DIMENSION B	**Producing inclusive *policies***				
B.1.1	Practitioners are treated fairly in employment and promotion opportunities.				
B.1.2	All new practitioners are helped to settle.				
B.1.3	All children from the area are encouraged to join the setting.				
B.1.4	The setting is made physically accessible to all people.				
B.1.5	All new children are helped to settle.				
B.1.6	Practitioners prepare children well for moving to other settings.				
B.2.1	All forms of support are co-ordinated.				
B.2.2	Professional development activities help practitioners to respond to the diversity of children and young people.				

continues

		definitely agree	agree and disagree	disagree	need more information
B.2.3	The 'special educational needs' policy is an inclusion policy.				
B.2.4	The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice is used to reduce barriers to play, learning and participation for all children.				
B.2.5	Support for those who have a home language other than English benefits all children.				
B.2.6	The behaviour policy improves the setting for all children.				
B.2.7	Pressures to exclude children viewed as disruptive are reduced.				
B.2.8	Barriers to attendance are reduced.				
B.2.9	Bullying is minimised.				
DIMENSION C	**Evolving inclusive *practices***				
C.1.1	Activities are planned with all children in mind.				
C.1.2	Activities encourage all children to communicate.				
C.1.3	Activities encourage the participation of all children.				
C.1.4	Activities develop an understanding of differences between people.				
C.1.5	Activities discourage stereotyping.				
C.1.6	Children are actively involved in their play and learning.				
C.1.7	Children cooperate in playing and learning.				
C.1.8	Assessments encourage the achievements of all children.				
C.1.9	Practitioners encourage a calm atmosphere based on respectful relationships.				
C.1.10	Practitioners plan, review and engage in activities in partnership.				
C.1.11	Learning support/teaching assistants support the play, learning and participation of all children.				
C.1.12	All children take part when there are special activities.				
C.2.1	The setting is well arranged to encourage play, learning and participation.				
C.2.2	Resources are distributed fairly.				
C.2.3	Differences between children are used as resources to support play, learning and participation.				
C.2.4	The expertise of practitioners is fully utilised.				
C.2.5	Practitioners develop shared resources to support play, learning and participation.				
C.2.6	Resources in the surroundings of the setting are known and used.				

What would you like to change about the setting?

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

questionnaire 2
for parents/carers

This questionnaire can be adapted for use by a particular setting.

How old are any children of yours who attend this setting? ☐ ☐ ☐

How long has each child attended this setting? ☐ ☐ ☐

How well do these sentences describe the setting? Please give your opinion by putting a tick in one of the boxes next to each sentence.	*definitely agree*	*agree and disagree*	*disagree*	*need more information*
1 Everyone is made to feel welcome when they first come to the setting.				
2 There is a joyful atmosphere in the setting.				
3 I received excellent information about this setting before my child started.				
4 Any local child whatever their background or disability is welcome to come to the setting.				
5 There is easy access for all children and adults including those with disabilities and parents with double buggies.				
6 Local communities are involved in the setting.				
7 Of all the local settings I wanted my child to come to this one.				
8 Practitioners and children treat each other with respect.				
9 The practitioners think all the children are equally important.				
10 The practitioners help children to get along well with each other.				
11 My child is making friends in the setting.				
12 My child learns to mix with children and adults of a variety of backgrounds.				
13 My child likes coming to the setting.				
14 My child feels safe in the setting.				
15 There is a healthy approach to food.				
16 The practitioners treat parents and carers as equals.				
17 The practitioners think well of parents/carers whether or not they help with activities.				
18 If I am worried about my child/children, I know who to talk to.				
19 If I talk to practitioners about a concern I know it will be taken seriously.				

continues

questionnaire 2

		definitely agree	agree and disagree	disagree	need more information
20	I am kept well informed about what happens in the setting.				
21	Practitioners ask for parents'/carers' views before making changes.				
22	Practitioners are interested in learning what I know about my child/children.				
23	There are opportunities to discuss how my child/children can be best supported in the setting and at home.				
24	Practitioners and other children help new children to feel at home in the setting.				
25	Practitioners help parents/carers to become familiar with the setting.				
26	Practitioners prepare children well when they move to other settings.				
27	When children have missed a session practitioners are interested to know why.				
28	Practitioners help children and their parents/carers if they have difficulties in attending regularly.				
29	The practitioners work hard to help children to settle down when they are having difficulties.				
30	The practitioners work hard to avoid asking any child to leave the setting.				
31	Bullying is rare.				
32	Practitioners work well together.				
33	There are plenty of activities to interest my child.				
34	Children learn about similarities and differences between people and ways of life.				
35	The variety of languages spoken in the setting benefits all children.				
36	Practitioners link activities in the setting to children's lives at home.				
37	Practitioners make sure that all children take part in activities.				
38	Practitioners often spend time playing, talking and working with children.				
39	Children are encouraged to make choices in their play and learning.				
40	Children collaborate in playing and learning.				

continues

questionnaire 2

		definitely agree	agree and disagree	disagree	need more information
41	The setting is clean and tidy.				
42	The setting is well arranged to support play and learning.				
43	Children are able to play outdoors as well as indoors.				

What changes would you like to see in the setting?

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

What other comments would you like to make about the setting?

_____

_____

_____

questionnaire 3
for young children

There is a discussion about gathering the views of young children in part 2 on page 28 which emphasises careful observation and imaginative ways of engaging children rather than more formal methods. Below are some sentences which might prompt interactions with young children and help children to feel actively involved in improving the setting for themselves and others.

1. I like to come to this place.
2. I like to play with my friends here.
3. My friends like to play with me here.
4. My teachers like to listen to me.
5. My teachers like to help me.
6. I like to help my teachers when they have jobs to do.
7. Some children call other children unkind names.
8. Sometimes children are not very nice to me.
9. When I feel unhappy there is always an adult to look after me.
10. When children have a quarrel, the teacher is good at sorting it out.
11. I feel pleased when I have made something.
12. My teachers like me to tell them about what I do at home.
13. My family think this is a good place.

It might be possible to get answers to direct questions such as:

- What do you like best about this place?
- What are your favourite things to play with here?
- Is there anything you do not like about this place?
- What are the things you do not like?

Alternatively matters might be approached more indirectly, possibly using puppets to represent a child's voice:

- What I like best about this place is ...
- My favourite things to play with are ...
- What I don't like about this place is ...

Photographs or drawings of activities in the setting can be used to prompt choices. A child can be asked to point at, or colour in, a smiley, neutral or sad face to indicate his or her opinion.

questionnaire 4

my club

Practitioners using this questionnaire may wish to add questions of their own. They will need to make sure that the response options are clearly understood by the children/young people completing it.

I am a girl ☐ *I am a boy* ☐

I am in group _____

I am _____ *years old*

Please put a tick in the box that indicates your opinion about the statements below

		definitely agree	*agree and disagree*	*disagree*
1	Everyone is welcome at this club.			
2	When I started coming to the club the adults and children helped me to feel at home.			
3	I think this is the best club in the area.			
4	My family is happy with this club.			
5	The adult helpers like to listen to my ideas.			
6	The adults at the club are friendly to me.			
7	I know the adults by name.			
8	The helpers at the club like all the children the same amount.			
9	When I have a problem there is always an adult to help me.			
10	When there is an argument between children the adults sort it out in a fair way.			
11	The adult helpers get on well together.			
12	I have some good friends at this club.			
13	There is a good mixture of children at this club.			
14	I feel safe at this club.			
15	Some children call others by unkind names.			
16	I have been bullied at this club.			
17	There are plenty of things that I like to do at this club.			

continues

questionnaire 4

		definitely agree	*agree and disagree*	*disagree*
18	No-one gets left out of activities.			
19	Adults talk to you and join in activities with you.			
20	I get to choose what I want to do.			
21	Helpers are interested in the changes children would like at the club.			
22	If I miss a session an adult/helper is interested to know why I couldn't come.			
23	I think the rules are fair at this club.			
24	We all help to keep the place clean and tidy.			
25	There is a place that I can go to when I want to play quietly or be by myself.			

The three things I like best about my club are:

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

The three things I don't really like about my club are:

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

part 5
further reading

further reading

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index for inclusion

developing play, learning and participation in early years and childcare

This version of the Index for Inclusion is especially designed to support the inclusive development of play and learning in early years, childcare and out of school settings. Besides a detailed set of printed materials it contains a CD so that materials can be shared easily within a setting and an insert which summarises the purpose and contents of this file. Inclusion is seen broadly, in the Index, as an approach to developing all aspects of a setting so that all babies, children, young people, their families, as well as staff can feel welcomed, involved and valued. The Index is therefore integrated into an ordinary planning process. It provides a way to develop the setting as a whole and is not focused on a particular group of children.

The use of the Index involves a detailed review of all activities, the way the setting is organised and the materials available to support play and learning. It encourages the involvement in this process of all staff and volunteers, governors and managers, children, young people, parents and carers. In this way the views that people already have about what needs to be done, and how this can be achieved, can be shared and examined. The Index helps practitioners to use all this information to provide a list of priorities for development, produce a development plan and put it into action, drawing on additional help as needed.

The Index aims to build an inclusive culture within settings that is understood by everyone involved and is developed year on year through repeated self-review.

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