The Concept of Integration

A Conceptual Critique of Issues Relating to Curriculum, Policy, Planning & Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Christine Mary Lloyd
PhD Submission
Goldsmiths College
University of London

ABSTRACT

This thesis sets out to investigate the concept of integration, with a view to identifying to what degree conceptual misunderstandings, and a lack of clarity about the concept itself and those concepts which underpin it, have led to an exacerbation, a continuation and a legitimation of inferior educational opportunities for those pupils identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN), in England and Wales.

The first part of this work is, therefore, devoted to a critical analysis of the key concepts involved; models of disability; entitlement and empowerment; models of curriculum and the concept of integration itself. The second part of the thesis is concerned with a critical review of recent and current educational policy in education, in the light of this conceptual critique. The Warnock Report (DES 1978) and subsequent policy are critically discussed and evaluated, and current policy is addressed in the form of the 1988 Education Act and its wider implications, and the Code of Practice for SEN introduced in the 1993 Education Act. Finally the issue of teacher education, and in particular current policy in that area, is critically discussed with a view to identifying its potential to address some of the issues raised by the preceding discussion.

The underlying rationale for this thesis is that empirical research without a sound conceptual underpinning has proved not only inadequate but often counterproductive in education in general, and in special needs education in particular. Hence the style of the research is largely conceptual, and, while it has been necessary in the critique of current policies and practices to move to a more empirical mode, this has been done to contextualise the discussion by demonstrating the practical inadequacies which have resulted from the lack of conceptual clarity which the research reveals.

The major theme which emerges from the thesis is that problems, inequalities and disadvantage in practice in the area of SEN can be seen to be attributable to a lack of any clear understanding or sound critique of the major concepts which underpin current educational policy in the area.

Content

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE CENTRAL ISSUES

The aim and purpose of this thesis is to explore, critically, some of the concepts central to special educational needs (SEN), such as entitlement, empowerment, disability and in particular integration, in order to identify the extent to which confusion deriving from lack of real understanding of them, has been a major factor in the failure of the school system in England and Wales to cater adequately for disabled pupils. The problematic and complex nature of these concepts has often been ignored or overlooked, giving rise to what can be seen as inappropriate forms of discourse which in some cases are used to legitimise and rationalise the continuation of practice in SEN, which, rather than improving opportunities for disabled pupils, has led to an exacerbation of their inferior circumstances. The style of this thesis is, therefore, conceptual rather than empirical, since it seeks to analyse and criticise the conceptual underpinning of current policy in SEN, in England and Wales, with a view to illuminating some of the contradictions and misunderstandings which currently dominate discussion and debate and characterise discourse in the area.

The processes of critical reflection, analysis and evaluation play a vitally important part in the ongoing development of professional practice. Skrtic

(1991) discusses the crucial importance of engaging in these processes. He identifies this approach as being vitally important as a method of enquiry because it recognises the problematic nature of the issues under investigation and involves a process of ongoing evaluation which questions and confronts assumptions. He sees this approach as particularly relevant in the area of SEN since here there are so many problematic issues and assumptions which remain unchallenged but which nevertheless inform much planning and practice;

> *"As a method of inquiry I use it as a way to look behind special education and to question and thus bring a sense of crisis to the unquestioned assumptions that ground the professional practices and discourses of the field of special education, as well as the discourses and the practices of the fields of general education and educational administration, relative to public education's institutional practice of special education" (Skrtic 1991 p.28)*

For Skrtic there is a strong need to reconceptualize, reorganise and reactualise education which can only be achieved through the process of critical enquiry. He calls for;

> *"... critical practice in the field of public education, a mode of practice that is shaped and continually reshaped by critical discourses". (op. cit. p.29)*

This thesis aims to critically evaluate and appraise key conceptual issues in SEN and to evaluate current policy and practice in the area in the light of these analyses. The aim is therefore to engage and participate in the process of developing critical practice and critical discourse. For Skrtic (following Cherryholmes, 1988) this is the process of critical pragmatism;

> *"Applied to the professions critical pragmatism is both a way of continually evaluating and reappraising what a profession does (critical practice) and a way of continually evaluating and reappraising how it carries out such critical appraisals of its practice (critical discourse) ... it does not seek objective knowledge or monological truth. Rather the goal is education or self formation. It is a pedagogical process of remaking ourselves as we think, act, write,*

> *read and talk more about ourselves and our practices and discourses." (op. cit. p.29)*

Cherryholmes' (1988) own discussion about critical pragmatism adds further light to the importance of engaging in this approach to enquiry in education. For her, critical pragmatism

> *"... does not present a neat approach to education and certainly not a structured one ... Critical pragmatism brings a sense of crisis to considerations of standards and conventions. Critical pragmatism considers not only what we choose to say along with their effects but also what structures these choices ... Critical pragmatism is concerned with evaluating and constructing the communities, educational and otherwise, in which we live and work." (Cherryholmes 1988 p.14)*

It is the intention of this enquiry to engage in these processes of critical analysis with a view to using this critique to assist in clarifying and illuminating understanding about practice in the area. Inevitably to engage in such a critique of SEN involves a consideration of the whole educational system since this thesis will seek to demonstrate that special education only exists as a form of legitimation and rationalisation for the failure of the mainstream of education to meet its goals and to cater adequately for all pupils (Skrtic 1991, Oliver 1992, 1993, 1994).

It is the purpose of this work to question the establishment of SEN as a fair and just response to disability and to confront these issues from a human rights, equal opportunities perspective. Analysis of the concept of integration and critical evaluation of the models of provision which follow from different interpretations of the concept, viewed from the perspective of human rights and equal opportunities, inevitably challenge policy and practice in SEN. Issues such as entitlement and empowerment are immediately raised and the need for radical, fundamental change in the whole education system becomes apparent. In spite of considerable reorganisation of education in recent years, in England and Wales, there has been no attempt to change the way in which education is conceived, assessed or planned. No attempt has been made to challenge what is generally recognised as educational success and achievement and certainly there is no evidence that fundamental attitudes and approaches

towards disability have been considered in its planning and reorganisation. These issues will be discussed further in an attempt to demonstrate that in many ways the failure to address them has resulted in the changes which have taken place exacerbating discrimination and inequality of opportunity for disabled pupils. It is hoped that by engaging in critical analysis of the underlying concepts relating to SEN, which in many cases are not clear or are certainly prone to ambiguous interpretation, it may be possible to assist in establishing a more effective discourse which recognises and is more able to articulate the need for change and development in practice.

Critical reflection and analysis of dominant discourses which structure the organisation and conditions of education can be seen, also, as part of a process of moving towards a greater understanding about the way in which the opportunities of some groups are limited and controlled (Freire 1985, Giroux 1988, Bowers 1987). Giroux (1988) points to the importance of critically examining, and reflecting on, dominant discourses in the wider political contexts in which they are constructed and carried out, in order to reveal and address issues of inequality and discrimination,

> *"... significant would be an analysis of how dominant educational theory and practice are constructed and sustained and circulated outside of schools. For instance radical educators need to do more than just identify the language and values of corporate ideologies as they are manifested in school curricula, they also need to deconstruct the processes through which they are produced and circulated." (Giroux in Sherman & Webb 1988 p.202)*

It is important, then, when considering issues related to equal opportunities, to go beyond critical analysis of the language used in constructing discourse and to recognise the power relationships which are at play;

> *"... the language of critical understanding represents an acknowledgement, not only of the political and pedagogical processes at work in the construction of forms of authorship and voice within different institutional and social spheres, it also represents an attack on the vertical ordering of reality inherent in the unjust practices that are actively at work in the wider society." (op. cit. p.208)*

The above discussion provides important guidance for the task attempted by this thesis, for the issues under examination are central issues in what can be seen as the struggle by disabled people for emancipation. Attention will be given, therefore, in the processes of conceptual analysis and clarification, to the wider educational context and to the crucial issues raised above about power and control operating within those contexts.

Central to the thesis will be an examination and critique of the concept integration and the discourse which surrounds it, since it has come to be seen as the starting point for the improvement of educational opportunities for pupils identified as having SEN. Close examination of the concept and its place in the discourse of SEN is particularly important because it can be seen to be open to a wide variety of interpretations, both in policy and practice, many of which are inconsistent with claims made about it and its original meaning. Indeed, used in educational debate, integration can be seen as a metaphor which has ceased in many ways to be useful and which has strayed far from its dictionary definition;

> *"combination into a whole; completion of an imperfect thing; combination of diverse elements; intermixing of people previously segregated." (Concise Oxford Dictionary 1990)*

Indeed the whole debate about integration can be seen to be studded with metaphors, e.g. compensatory education; remedial education; learning support; individual education plan; resource teacher; and countless others. Many of these terms, although in common usage, are used to mean different things in practice and many are only understood by groups of professionals engaged in working in the specific area, and even amongst these there is little consensus about their interpretation (Taylor 1984). The use of metaphor in educational debate is common and can provide enrichment and add creativity to language and therefore to the debate (Ortony 1879, Aspin in Taylor 1984, Blenkin et al. 1992). It does, however, raise potential problems and can be both misleading and confusing. Denis Lawton (1984 in Taylor) discussing the use of metaphor in educational debate with relation to the curriculum, points

to three uses of metaphor which are dangerous and which are particularly relevant to this discussion about integration. They are;

> *".. first curriculum metaphors which might tend to mislead rather than clarify; second curriculum metaphors which are wrong, dangerously wrong; third curriculum metaphors which are ideologies in disguise and which might influence practice." (Lawton 1984 p.81)*

If the word 'curriculum' is replaced in the quotation above by the word 'integration' some important issues are raised for this investigation. Certainly integration metaphors which mislead rather than clarify the concept can be identified in the wide variety of interpretations of the meaning of integration which abound (Hegarty 1987). There is no doubt, also, that in many cases those metaphors listed above, such as learning support, remedial education etc., can be seen to be inappropriate and inconsistent with the concept of bringing together diverse elements into a whole, as in practice they often lead to further segregation. These then can be seen to fall into Lawton's second category. The third category is perhaps the most important for this thesis, and will provide a central focus for further discussion in later chapters. Integration defined as bringing together or combining or mixing elements into a whole implies that the process is straightforward and relatively simple. There is also the implication that is a neutral process requiring an organisational relocation of pupils. This definition, however, belies and disguises the extremely complex and problematic nature of bringing together unequal groups into a whole and totally ignores the fact that these groups were segregated in the first place because of the failure of the dominant group to cope with the whole. It ignores the power structures operating in the process and fails to recognise that adaptation, remediation and compensation are all measures that ensure that the dominant group maintains the status quo. In fact it totally obscures the underlying deficit ideology of normalisation, on which all the above practices are based.

The issues raised briefly in the above discussion are central to the discussion in this thesis. They highlight the urgent necessity to begin the process of deconstructing current discourse in SEN and reconstructing it within a

different framework. This is being urged and enjoined by disabled people themselves who see this process as a vital step towards the opening of a debate which addresses disability within the framework of equal opportunities and human rights.

Writers, educationalists and professionals in the area of SEN are beginning to recognise the need to critically analyse the concepts which lie beneath policy and practice and to begin the process of redefining them in the light of current thinking about disability (Barton 1988, 1989, 1992, Fulcher 1989, Oliver 1992, 1993, 1994, Slee 1993, Barton & Landerman in Slee 1993, Barton in Arnot & Barton 1992, Branson & Miller in Barton 1989). Others, however, seem to be content to continue to support, and indeed to add to, the dominant discourse without questioning whether the concepts to which they are referring, or about which they are writing, remain relevant or can be seen to be consistent, used in the current context, with the improvement of opportunities for disabled people. Over the last fifteen years or so, for example, there has been a proliferation of writing about integration, together with numerous projects and schemes set up to promote more integration. If one looks into this writing, or into project reports, there is however scant evidence of any real attempt to define what exactly is meant by integration, what implications there may be in practice for integration defined within various different frameworks, or indeed whether integration does in fact improve opportunities for disabled people. (The following represent a few references for work of the sort described above; Booth 1982, 1983, Swan 1983, Hegarty 1987, 1989, Daniels 1990, Ramasut 1989). This trend is also reflected throughout Europe, and indeed in other parts of the world (O'Hanlon 1994, Wade & Moore 1994), where there is wide scale, yet often uncritical, concern to promote integration, in a myriad of interpretations. What seems to be seriously lacking in this writing, and also in much of the debate surrounding integration and its implementation, is real critical analysis of what the concept means in relation to the contexts in which it is being promoted as desirable. A rhetoric has been established which supports integration as the way ahead for pupils with SEN but which fails to raise important questions about the problematic nature of the concept; the underlying ideology informing it; the contexts in which it is being promoted;

and the power relationships between the different groups of people involved in the process. Indeed the debate, such as it is, often centres around peripheral issues connected with resourcing and organising integration.

For the reasons cited above it has been difficult to find sources to support the sort of discussion proposed by this thesis in the area of SEN. Wide reading has led to a great deal of frustration since much of it is concerned with the difficulties of organising and resourcing integration in the current policy framework, rather than with looking critically at the concept or the framework itself (Baker & Bovair 1989, Bell & Cobeck 1989, Bennett & Cass 1989, Beveridge 1993, Booth & Swan 1987, Daniels & Ware 1990, Evans & Varma 1990, Hegarty 1987, Jones (ed) 1990, 1991, Leadbetter & Leadbetter 1993, Norwich in Visser & Upton 1993, Pothlethwaite & Hackney 1988, Solity 1992, Wade & Moore 1992, 1993, Walters 1994, Wolfendale 1994. These represent a small sample of references to writing such as that described above).

Few writers seek to develop a real critique of the underpinning of current educational policy and, in failing to reflect critically upon the concepts which they are discussing, and in concentrating heavily on issues related to making integration work in practice - the roles of professionals in the process; how mainstream schools should adapt to accommodate integration; or how to manage SEN in the mainstream - a large number are contributing to supporting the dominant discourse and to obsfucating the underlying issues of discrimination and inequality, thus perpetuating the status quo in SEN and in the mainstream of education. Rather than being clarified and advanced the debate, discussion and resultant practice are further confused. For these reasons this thesis relies heavily upon the work of those writers in the area who have begun to seek to clarify the concepts involved with a view to moving to new and more useful definitions which may inform future practice (Oliver 1992, 1993, 1994, Barton 1993, 1994, Reiser & Mason 1994, Fulcher 1989, Slee (ed) 1993, Skrtic 1991). It should be noted that much of this work is being done by disabled writers themselves.

It has already been noted that in order to look critically at concepts concerned with SEN it is necessary to reflect on the wider educational context. Here again it is significant to note that comparatively few writers seem to be engaging in attempts to clarify or illuminate educational debate by delving beneath, and into, dominant discourse. Indeed taking the example of the National Curriculum it is possible to find countless publications with titles concerned with organising, managing and generally coping with it effectively in practice. Far fewer publications seek to analyse and question its theoretical underpinning. It seems rather that the aim is to assist practitioners in making the National Curriculum work, irrespective of whether it is an appropriate model; whether it is, indeed, underpinned by a recognisable model; what are the implications of it for pupils and its appropriateness as an entitlement curriculum. Once again the more peripheral issues seem to be central to the debate and a real critical analysis, which might serve to illuminate areas of concern, is left to the few (e.g., Aldrich, Lawton, Chitty, Kelly, White). For this reason once again somewhat heavy reliance on those few writers currently engaged in the process of delving beneath the rhetoric has been necessary.

The above discussion highlights, yet again, the importance of engaging in the investigation proposed by this thesis. The confusion and lack of clarity surrounding many of the concepts central to SEN policy and provision in the current context of educational change, can be seen to be potentially dangerous, indeed possibly disastrous, not just for disabled pupils, but for the whole of education. Educational change and development, based upon confusion and misunderstanding, which fails to recognise or address issues of discrimination and inequality, can only result in impoverishment and failure. Indeed the central theme of this thesis can be seen to be that inadequences and problems in policy, provision and practice in SEN arise from the lack of any clear theoretical understanding of concepts which are central to the whole issue. It is hoped that by seeking to analyse some of these concepts a contribution can be made which may assist in positively addressing this crucially important issue.

The particular concepts which are regarded as having central importance to the discussion in this thesis are; models of disability; entitlement and empowerment; models of curriculum and integration.

A failure to recognise the area of SEN as a disability issue can be seen to have contributed to a great deal of confusion and a number of false assumptions in policy making and practice with regard to education. This thesis will seek to locate the discussion about SEN firmly in the context of disability. To do so, however, requires that the concept of disability itself is defined and critically analysed since it is possible to identify a number of different models which inform and underpin thinking about the issue. Traditionally educational planning with regard to pupils with SEN has been rooted in the assumption that these pupils were in some way different from their peers. They have been singled out, therefore, categorised, labelled and in many cases ostracised on grounds which were often inappropriate and had little to do with education or educational opportunity. Indeed, until fairly recently, some groups of pupils were considered to be ineducable. This justification of different educational provision and the categorisation of some groups as ineducable can be seen to be a denial of a basic human right;

> *"Education is a specifically human activity which is usually seen as a process of promoting those aspects of humanity that are most highly valued. To question a person's educability is to question an aspect of their humanity ... To propose that special education is different in kind from mainstream education is an implicit attack on the full humanity of 'special' students". (Dumbleton 1990 p.16)*

This thesis will seek to analyse models of disability and to locate the discussion within a model which recognises disability as an equal opportunities issue comparable with race and gender.

Issues relating to separate and different educational provision and practice, when viewed from a perspective on disability which is informed by this model, inevitably raise questions about right and entitlement. The entitlement as a right to a full educational opportunity is now enshrined in legislation in the 1988 Education Act but what is lacking in the policy documentation and

practice which have resulted from that legislation, is failure to clarify or define what is meant by that entitlement. In the case of disabled pupils this lack of clarity is further compounded since their rights have traditionally been assessed in relation to the rights and needs of other, 'normal' pupils. Thus entitlement for them is an even more confusing and complicated issue requiring careful analysis in order to determine exactly what entitlement to an equal educational opportunity really means.

The vehicle for the provision of educational entitlement for all proposed by the 1988 Education Act, the National Curriculum, is also an issue, therefore, for critical analysis. The concept of curriculum is complex and problematic and different, often incompatible, views can be identified about what constitutes an educational curriculum; what model of learning and the learner informs curriculum and, most importantly, what purposes and aims of education inform curriculum planning and provision.

The 1988 Education Act proposes that by offering the same curriculum, albeit in modified or adapted form for those pupils in receipt of a Statement of SEN, it is possible to ensure the promised entitlement. The 1988 Education Act and the National Curriculum will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5, but it is important first to define and analyse the different models which can be identified as informing curriculum planning and provision. This issue is not only relevant to pupils identified as having SEN, but is crucial to the education of all pupils. This thesis will, therefore, attempt to analyse and discuss the different models of curriculum in order to demonstrate that a lack of clarity, critical analysis and understanding of the implications of adopting different models has led, and continues to lead, to inequality of educational opportunity for pupils with SEN in particular, but also can be seen to exacerbate and reinforce inequality of opportunity for all pupils. All pupils are now entitled to the National Curriculum. The question here which must be addressed is do *any* of them deserve it?

The above discussion about entitlement raises many questions about the empowerment of disabled people. In order to make a genuine claim for

educational entitlement disabled people need to be empowered so that they are able to demand their rights themselves. This issue links closely with the issues raised above about the sort of curriculum which can enable the process of empowerment. Here again this thesis will seek to show that the National Curriculum can be seen to be an inadequate vehicle as a curriculum for empowerment for all.

Policy and practice in integration can be seen to have achieved little in terms of improving conditions for disabled pupils and therefore the concept of integration itself is central to this thesis. Indeed the discussion will seek to demonstrate that in practice it has become a legitimation for the continuance of segregation in education. This has resulted from a failure to recognise the complex and problematic nature of the concept.

A lack of conceptual clarity about disability, entitlement and the right to a full educational opportunity and the means to secure that entitlement, has contributed to the evolution of integration as a concept open to a range of interpretations but which fundamentally lacks a proper theoretical underpinning. This has resulted in the perpetuation of inadequate policy and practice and has contributed to the failure to address the issue of equal educational opportunity for pupils with SEN adequately.

A clear understanding and definition of the concepts discussed above are crucial to any discussion about pupils with SEN and they will provide the focus for the first part of the analysis. The second part of the work will be devoted to a critical evaluation of recent and current policy and practice in education in the light of the preceding conceptual analysis. Inevitably the 1988 Education Act and it's wider implications will form a large part of this discussion but it will also be necessary to look closely at the contribution made by the Warnock Report (DES 1978) and the powerful influence on provision for SEN which followed. The 1993 Education Act, which introduces a Code of Practice for SEN will also be an important focus.

The role of teacher education and the changes which have taken, and are still taking place in this area, is also seen as crucially important to this discussion because it is here that much initial confusion in the minds of teachers about those concepts identified above as central to the issue has its roots. The changes in the provision and practice of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and In Service Training (INSET) have enormous implications for SEN. Here there is potential also to begin to assist teachers to address some of the issues raised above about confusion and lack of clarity and understanding of key concepts concerning SEN. Through effective teacher education there is the possibility to assist teachers to develop critically reflective attitudes and approaches to the discourses of education and its practice, and to engage in the processes of critical pragmatism, discussed at the beginning of this Introduction. If, as Cherryholmes (1988) and Skrtic (1991) propose, critical pragmatism is concerned with the development of critical communities of professionals engaged in the processes of constructing and reconstructing their practice, then teacher education must be seen as having a crucial role to play.

It is necessary, then, to look critically at the wider educational context in order to identify the contribution made by that context to the confusion and misunderstanding surrounding educational debate about SEN, but also to attempt to identify the possibilities for informing and shaping practice in order to encourage the development of more critically reflective practice. At the beginning of this Introduction the style of the thesis was identified as being largely conceptual. In order to address the issues raised here, however, it will be necessary in the second part of the analysis to move at times to a more empirical approach to support this contextualisation of the discussion and to relate issues raised to practice with a view to identifying some possibilities for genuine change and development in that practice.

CHAPTER 2

KEY CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

Introduction

This section is concerned with an attempt to analyse, critically, those concepts identified in Chapter 1, which are central to, and inform the debate about, educational policy, provision and practice in the area of SEN. The first concept which will be discussed is the fundamental issue of different models of disability. An attempt will be made to identify different models which inform thinking about disability and which in turn inform educational thinking with regard to disabled people.

Leading from this discussion about models of disability, the concepts of entitlement and empowerment will be discussed. They are seen as being inextricably linked with discussions about disability since disabled people have traditionally been viewed as a group for whom decisions must be made by others in order for them to lay claim to educational entitlement.

Considerations about empowerment for disabled people to claim real entitlement lead to the need to ensure the means to that opportunity and here the curriculum must be seen as a key issue. The identification of a model of

curriculum which addresses issues of entitlement and empowerment, adequately, will therefore, form a vitally important part of this discussion. The critical analysis of these concepts will provide the basis for the discussion, in the next chapter, about the concept of integration and the confusion which has resulted from a failure to recognise the problematic nature of the thinking by which it is underpinned.

Models of Disability

The importance of locating the debate about SEN firmly in the context of disability has already been raised in Chapter 1. Disability, and the way it is conceived and understood, is a complex and problematic issue which requires careful and critical analysis and discussion in order to clarify and understand the full implications for educational policy, planning and provision. It is possible to distinguish broadly three models of disability (Barton & Oliver 1992). For the purpose of this discussion they will be referred to as the medical/deficit model; the contextual/curriculum model and the equal opportunities model.

It was clearly the intention of the Warnock Committee to move away from a medical/deficit model of disability and handicap. The point is clearly made in their report that educational handicap is not synonymous with disability;

> *"It is thus impossible to establish precise criteria for defining what constitutes handicap. Yet the idea is deeply ingrained in educational thinking that there are two types of children, the handicapped and the non-handicapped... But the complexities of individual need are far greater than this dichotomy implies. Moreover to describe someone as handicapped conveys nothing of the type of educational help and hence provision that is required." (DES 1978 3:6)*

The Warnock Committee made it clear that they wanted to see a change in understanding about what was meant by handicap. In fact they wished to see the elimination of the distinction between handicap and non-handicap and to move towards a notion of special educational need instead;

> *"seen not in terms of a particular disability which a child may be judged to have, but in relation to everything about him, his abilities as well as his disabilities - indeed all the factors which have a bearing effect on his educational progress." (ibid)*

The traditional, medical, model of disability regards the disability as a personal tragedy, or as personal trouble (Oliver 1986), the disabled person has, or even is, the problem. As a result of their disability disabled persons do not fit into the normal parameters of provision. This view is closely connected with the idea that the disability is a medical condition, a sickness. Naturally such a view leads to notions of caring for, or nursing, the disabled person. Educationally, provision informed by this model is likely to be outside the mainstream, different, segregated, excluded and based on notions of caring and looking after. In terms of any move towards integrating disabled pupils into the mainstream using this model, the concern is to normalise the pupil so that he or she can cope. The pupil must fit into what is considered to be 'normal' provision before he or she can be integrated. Such a model has led to notions of compensatory education designed to enable the disabled pupil to develop strategies for managing.

It can be seen that this model is rooted firmly in the idea that there is an acceptance of certain conditions which may be considered normal and that deviance from that is abnormal. There is, of course, an enormous problem with this in that such decisions are value judgements. What is normal or abnormal is relative and cannot be decided objectively. Thus this model of disability, so long accepted and used to make judgements about provision for disabled persons, is problematic and extremely questionable.

Many writers in this area point to the social construction of the label disability (Tomlinson 1981, Oliver 1990, 1992). Fulcher (1989) points out that disability is a procedural category. She has no problem with the idea of categorisation, as she sees it as a normal part of making sense of our world. What is different about disability as a category is;

> *"it is used to exclude rather than include, and to oppress rather than enable" (Fulcher 1989 p.24)*

She also points out that impairment and disability are not synonymous but that medical, personal tragedy models link them. As the notion of impairment implies loss, the medical model leads to a view of disability as deficit and individualises and personalises it;

> *"Medical discourse individualises disability in the sense that individuals have diseases or problems or incapacities as attributes." (op. cit. p.27)*

This model also leads to the professionalisation of disability;

> *"A theme of professionalism pervades medical discourse and its associated discourses: psychology; social work; occupational therapy; physiotherapy and educational discourse. The phrase 'in the best interests' (of the patient, child etc.) instances this theme." (Ibid)*

This personalisation and individualisation of the issues draws attention away from the role of society in creating disability as a category. In educational terms, and indeed generally, however, it has traditionally been the dominant model.

The Warnock Report claimed to be moving away from this model to a different view but failed in many ways to shift the debate away from the underlying themes of disability as loss, impairment, or deficit. Certainly there was an attempt to move the discussion away from the individual child to other factors, including home and family background, the curriculum, the school. This can be seen as part of an attempt to propose a different model which can be described educationally as a contextual/curriculum model of disability. The central question posed by this model is not 'does the child fit into the school?' but 'is the school (curriculum) suitable to provide for the needs of the child?'.

This model is rooted in the idea that the mainstream of education should be expanded to cater for more pupils. It is a desegregationalist approach concentrating not so much on the individual and his or her impairment, but upon the failure of the normal range of provision provided to cater for the whole range of ability. This model finds expression in the work of writers such as

Tony Dessent (1988) for whom desegregation is not about fitting individuals in, one at a time, but is about the expansion and extension of educational provision to enable all the needs of all the pupils to be catered for. He discusses the merits of positive discrimination, in terms of resourcing of special needs, in order to realise this aim.

This model can be seen to address some of the major inadequacies of the medical model. It acknowledges the responsibility of society, to a certain extent, for the exclusion of certain groups; it also shifts the onus from the individual. What it fails to do, however, is to address adequately the deep rooted attitudes and practices of society which have led to the acceptance of exclusion in the first place. There is still, within this model, a notion that provision for special educational needs is dependent on benevolent acts such as the provision of extra resourcing. There is also again the idea that there is a need to compensate in some way for disability. All these features lead to a continuing idea of disability as difference which is regarded as deficit. Nowhere in these discussions is there a recognition of the idea that difference might provide enrichment and that disabled persons can, given a voice and indeed a choice, add valuable views thus enhancing discussion and debate. Nowhere is there a recognition that variety and difference may have extremely positive effects for *all*.

In answer to the deficiencies of these two models there has been, in recent years, a growing discourse around what can be seen as an equal opportunities, human rights model. This model, supported strongly by disability movements and by disabled people themselves, is rooted in notions of self reliance, independence and consumer wants rather than needs. It is an overtly political model which takes an equal opportunities stance, demanding that the traditional models of disability be rejected totally on the grounds that they lead to discrimination, exclusion and oppression, both socially and educationally. This model questions the role of society in disabling people with impairments by the way in which it responds to them. It rejects absolutely any idea of normalisation or compensation as answers to provision for disabled persons and demands a voice and a place, by right, at all levels of policy making, so

that the views of disabled people can be expressed, and it demands the right for decisions about provision for the disabled to be made by disabled people themselves.

Educationally these views lead to the notion of planning for provision beginning from an inclusive stance. They require involvement of disabled people at all stages of policy making and planning and recognise the value of celebrating and capitalising on the enrichment of difference and diversity rather than impoverishing provision by attempting to fit it to a narrow set of artificially produced concepts of what is normal. The central question here then is 'does education play a role in creating barriers and precluding access and inclusion to individuals on the basis of socially created categories and labels?'

A closer look at the three models clarifies immediately how little has actually been achieved in moving away from the traditionally held views of disability in terms of educational provision. Indeed the statementing procedure, introduced by the 1981 Education Act in answer to the recommendations of the Warnock Report, focuses very strongly on ideas of deficits within the child and resourcing as compensation. The Warnock Committee, with its predominance of professional groups, succeeded only in making a move from deficits to needs, a similar concept implying lack, and once again carrying notions of deficiency. Issues of the curriculum were raised but not discussed or in any way addressed and, as Fulcher (1989) points out, no questions were posed about why so many children fail in school. The emphasis was placed on individual failure rather than on the failure of the system to meet the needs of the pupils effectively, and thus prevent failure. The Warnock Report and the 1981 Act failed then to make any real impact on changing attitudes towards disability and managed simply to reinforce further the model they claimed to be abandoning. In the same way subsequent legislation and policy making concerning SEN has failed to recognise the importance and relevance of the above debate, and can be seen to be influenced by, and indeed rooted in, deficit models of disability.

Different models of disability raise different questions and result in different solutions to the question of educational provision. It is important, therefore,

at this point to look at the concept of integration with relation to these models, and to identify their influence on its definition.

The traditional deficit/medical model of disability with its strong emphasis on treatment and cure, finds expression, in terms of provision in segregated schools or units attached to ordinary schools. The aim here is to normalise the child, as far as possible, so that he or she can 'fit in', possibly only at a social level, with peers. Withdrawal for part or all of the time from the regular curriculum is justified on the ground of the need for extra support and efficient deployment of resourcing; detrimental influence on other pupils; inability to meet targets set by standardised testing procedures; inability to cope with large groups emotionally; and a variety of other factors. There is no recognition in this model of the need to change or reconstruct the curriculum or organisation of the ordinary school, rather it is the child who must be changed or adapted in order to be accepted or tolerated. This approach inevitably perpetuates the notion of difference as deficit and as inferiority.

The contextual/curriculum model, proposed by the Warnock Report (1978), places emphasis on the role played by the context in which the child operates in exacerbating or even creating SEN. Here integration finds expression in the sort of practice proposed by the Code of Practice for SEN (DfE 1994). The subject or class teacher takes responsibility for all the pupils in his or her care, and with in-class support and by modifying and adapting the curriculum on an individual basis, retains children within the ordinary classroom, as far as possible. The Statementing procedure can also be seen to fall within this approach, as here, with the addition of extra resourcing on an individual basis, children with SEN can remain within the mainstream school.

This model can be seen to differ very little from the first in many aspects. Again the issue of integration is about eliminating difference and compensation for difference through extra resourcing. Once again, however, the model can be seen to support and reinforce the idea of difference as deficit or as inferior. Once again the problem, although now shared with the context, is seen as being within the child, and once again the answer is seen to be about adapting and

modifying the ordinary system and its organisation, rather than changing it. Oliver expresses strong views about such approaches and their underlying assumptions;

> *"... it is the existing system that needs to be improved ... I no longer believe that such 'tinkering', however radical, and no matter what motives it is driven by, is enough to remedy the massive failures of special education that we have witnessed in the past hundred years." (Oliver 1994 p.2)*

Both the above models legitimise the continuation of categorisation and, while using different labels than in the past, perpetuate segregated practice. Both can be seen to be rooted in notions of equal opportunity, as described in the previous section, which derive from the Platonic view of different treatment for different categories. This, is inadequate and leads to discriminatory practice as it takes no account of the problematic nature of questions about just treatment or about the basis for allocation to those categories. When this approach is used with a model which sees difference as deficit, it would seem to be unlikely indeed to lead to anything resembling just or equal treatment.

The third model discussed is rooted in a very different view of equal opportunities, that of human rights and social justice for all. It is the model currently being proposed and further refined by disabled people themselves and owes a great deal of its underpinning to the views of civil rights movements campaigning for equal opportunities in relation to race and gender. It refutes, totally, any arguments for segregation, categorisation or paternalisation in terms of humanitarian handouts, or philanthropic gestures in terms of resourcing, and places the issue of integration firmly in the arena of political struggle against oppression and discrimination. For this model, compensatory, normalising approaches are both inappropriate and inadequate and indeed extremely objectionable. An approach is required which;

> *"... fundamentally challenges the traditional approach which regards impairment and disability as marginal or an 'after thought' instead of recognising that impairment and disablement are a common experience of humanity and should be central issues in planning and*

> *delivery of human services such as education." (Reiser & Mason 1994 p.4)*

In terms of educational provision then this model requires a concept of integration which recognises and values difference as enrichment. If this model is to become a reality in practice and to be accepted as legitimate, and since it is being widely sought by disabled people themselves (Oliver 1992, 1993, 1994), it must be recognised as having a powerful case. The concept of integration, as traditionally perceived and articulated is patently inadequate and requires redefinition.

To adopt an equal opportunities model as the underpinning for thinking about disability also requires the recognition of entitlement to full educational opportunity as a basic human right for pupils with SEN; to recognise this entitlement is also to acknowledge the need for pupils to be empowered to claim that right. The next section will seek, therefore, to analyse and define the important concepts of entitlement, right and empowerment, with a view to establishing, more clearly, the implications of adopting an equal opportunities approach to disability.

Entitlement

Entitlement and the associated concepts, rights, equality of opportunity and empowerment, are fundamental principles underlying the concept of democracy. The struggle against oppression and discrimination and for genuine inclusion in society by disabled people, discussed above, can clearly be seen as a demand for rights as citizens to participate fully and responsibly in the processes of democracy.

The 1988 Education Act is the first piece of entitlement legislation for education in this country. For the first time all pupils, irrespective of ability, have the right to a full educational opportunity enshrined in legislation. What is clear, however, is that for many pupils the educational provisions made by the Act, and the subsequent reorganisation of education which has followed hard on the heels of that legislation (to be further discussed in Chapter 5) not only

militate against access to that opportunity but, even for those with access, fail to provide what may be seen as a full educational opportunity. Indeed, for many pupils there are insurmountable barriers to the promised entitlement.

It seems, therefore, relevant at this point to investigate the concept of entitlement to an equal educational opportunity further. One of the chief problems in changing attitudes and through them practice, is difficulty in reaching common understanding about the issues under debate. Discussions about entitlement and equal opportunities are often confused by a lack of any clear definition or understanding about what is being discussed. Rights, needs, equal opportunity, equal access, indeed the concept of equality itself, are highly problematic and controversial notions, open to a variety of interpretations and definitions, and in any discussion about entitlement this must be recognised and tackled.

For Kelly (1995) the entitlement to a full educational opportunity for all citizens in a democratic society must be seen as an obligation and not merely as a philanthropic gesture. It is essential, if the responsibility of government is to be placed in the hands of the populace that citizens should be adequately educated to meet the demands of that responsibility and to participate fully in the preocesses of democracy

> *"it is not enough for an education system in a democratic society to provide an opportunity for all children to have access to whatever is on offer... There is a furthet obligation to ensure that what is on offer is appropriate for all children. And that in turn means that there must be a variety of provision designed to meet a range of different needs - "a broad highway" rather than a narrow set of tramlines." (Kelly 1995 pp. 106-107)*

Entitlement - Rights

The concept of entitlement carries with it the implicit notion of rights. In this case the right of every child to a full educational opportunity. The recognition of children's rights is a relatively new phenomenon and one which is by no means fully understood, accepted or is at all straightforward.

To acknowledge a right is to recognise that the group or individual concerned has a voice which must be heard. This can be a threatening idea, since it implies the handing over of power, and with it control. In terms of children's rights it implies a move away from protective, patronising, caretaking approaches, where decisions are made by one group, in this case parents or professionals, in the best interests of another group. Where children are disabled or have SEN this question of rights may be doubly controversial. Traditionally it has been accepted practice that decisions are made for this group by others, often not even parents.

In a context where we recognise the rights of children, adults who made decisions on behalf of those children must be held accountable and must be able to justify those decisions in terms of the children's rights. In the area of education it is the children's educational opportunities and rights which should form the basis to this decision making and not other irrelevant criteria, as has all too often been the case for children with SEN where medical and social criteria have often been used as grounds for decision making. This has, for some (Oliver 1991, 1993, Skrtic 1991, Branson & Miller in Barton 1989), often resulted in decision making which has directly contravened their rights. In the context of educational rights, Barton and Smith (1989) suggest the need to consult with children, to become involved with them in the struggle for recognition of their rights to a full education which is relevant to their needs. This may well lead to conflict with other groups, professionals, government and in some cases parents, where what is seen by them as relevant may not be acceptable to the children or to other groups.

Implicit in the notion of rights are empowerment and choice, again controversial ideas open to different interpretation and definition. Human rights movements have generally emerged where there has been oppression, or as part of a struggle for more opportunity. Disabled groups have been struggling; against what they see clearly as oppression; for the right to work; to be involved in policy making; for independent economic stability rather than dependence on charitable handouts; for the creation of a barrier free society in which they can participate fully. Roaf and Bines (1989) point out that American legislation in

this area ensures educational rights irrespective of resource limitations or restraints. Indeed the Americans With Disabilities Act (1990) has been called by some the most far reaching civil rights legislation passed anywhere in the world. Mike Oliver (1994) quotes a disabled activist who was instrumental in bringing about this legislation;

> *"The business of society is empowerment. The legitimate purpose of human rights, of human society and its governments is not simply to generate equal opportunity to pursue the good life. The purpose, the absolute responsibility of society is to empower all of its members actually to produce and to live the good life." (Oliver 1994 p.13)*

The view is also clearly expressed in the work of Paulo Freire, who sees education as the key to the process of empowerment;

> *"Freire sees education as supporting people in becoming more fully human, that is in developing their ability to transform the circumstances in which they live ... He sees education as often being abused by powerful social groups, in order to persuade other groups that they have no real choices and that their situation is beyond their control. This leads to a 'culture of silence' in which the oppressed see themselves as powerless and see powerlessness as a part of the natural order of the world." (Dumbleton 1990 p.17)*

The traditional approach to disabled people has been to disenfranchise them by making choices on their behalf. They have seldom even been consulted about these choices and have certainly not been encouraged to develop a voice in order to be able to speak for themselves. Indeed in educational terms they have been given little or no choice at all and have often been segregated into different, frequently inferior, provision on the grounds that this is in the best interests of the majority of pupils and for their own good and protection. Thus the powerless position of disabled people has been reinforced and their own view of their powerlessness encouraged.

British disability legislation has been hampered at every step by resource issues, or what can be seen as excuses, and by weighing the rights of disabled people against those of other, always more powerful, groups. Thus in education

we had the 1981 Education Act which supported the integration of pupils with SEN, and indeed promoted the idea as very desirable, but only when it is compatible with the efficient education of other pupils and within the constraints of the efficient allocation of resources. The 1988 Education Act in its provisions for the National Curriculum views the issue from a similar perspective. Pupils with SEN are given the right to the same education as other pupils if they can be accommodated, or fitted in. Where they cannot cope with the curriculum, it is to be modified, or watered down for them. Nowhere do we find a real acknowledgement of their rights which would have found expression in a curriculum planned from the onset to include the whole range of ability and to address the needs of all pupils by providing a relevant and full opportunity - a curriculum geared to empower all its pupils, to enable them all to participate and to have a full voice. Deficit models which view rights as relative issues where minority groups have lesser rights than majority groups do not address, in any way, the notion of entitlement, and are indeed incompatible with the concept. As Kelly puts it;

> *"In a democratic society 'entitlement' should mean more than entitlement to access, it should mean entitlement to full and appropriate provision." (Kelly 1994 p.22)*

Entitlement - Needs

The issue of resourcing and framing educational provision to the needs of pupils was raised in the discussion above and the concept of needs was recognised as problematic and open to different interpretation. This is a concept which has been, and continues to be, debated and analysed. Within the scope of this investigation it is important to touch briefly upon it in order to make some relevant points, the discussion does not, however, it is recognised, do full justice to the issue. Any discussion about needs requires that value judgements are made. The term itself may encompass a range of meanings which will differ according to the context and the individual and which, unlike stable issues, such as race and gender, are constantly changing.

The identification and assessment of educational needs is associated with professional judgements about norms in terms of cognitive growth and development and behaviour. It is important to recognise that such judgements can themselves be responsible for the creation of categories of need and indeed special need, by placing particular emphasis on certain aspects of development and by undervaluing others. Norms too are socially constructed (Tomlinson 1982) and restricted views of what constitutes the norm in educational terms may generate, or even create, needs for pupils.

Needs of the individual must also be viewed in the context of the society in which he or she operates. However, it is important to be aware of the balance between the needs of society and those of the individual and to beware of justifying educational planning solely in terms of the needs of society (Kelly 1990). The dangers inherent in a view of education driven by the perceived needs of society and the subsequent impoverishment of educational provision will be further discussed in other sections of this work. Concentration on the needs of society, perceived in instrumental terms, can clearly be seen to have resulted in the restricted view underpinning the National Curriculum and many of the provisions of the 1988 Education Act.

For the purpose of this study it is important to recognise that the concept of need implies deficit and this can, and often does, lead to compensatory approaches in educational provision, which may be inappropriate for pupils with SEN since they reinforce notions of low status, dependency and rights in relation to those of other groups. It also leads to the centring of the debate about integration around resource issues, as discussed above, inadequate and inappropriate criteria for decision making about rights and entitlement. (This issue is discussed further with relation to the Warnock Report in Chapter 4).

Entitlement - Equal Opportunities

The concept of equality is complex, problematic and open, like rights and needs, to a variety of interpretations. Differences in opinion exist about whether it is desirable at all and, where agreement can be reached about its desirability,

further dispute ensues about how it can be achieved. Central to the debate lie the questions:

- What is equality?

and

- What do we mean when we assert that all persons are equal?

The premise that all persons are equal is patently untrue as a descriptive or empirical statement. In fact it is generally used in the context of equal opportunities to make the point that all persons ought to be treated equally or regarded with equal respect. There are in fact few areas where we might want to descriptively state that all persons are equal, except perhaps in bodily needs for survival, and even these may differ in quantity and nature from person to person. Entitlement to equal respect and treatment can more easily be seen to be desirable principles. How then can we ensure that all persons are treated equally? If we define equal treatment as the same treatment can we fulfil the demand?

Many examples immediately spring to mind where the same treatment might well lead to inequality for individuals. A doctor, for example, who prescribed the same treatment for several patients, who, in fact, were suffering from different diseases, would hardly be offering equal chances of recovery (Downey & Kelly 1986) and the results might well be fatal. It may well be more appropriate to offer different treatment, then, to ensure equal opportunities. Here Aristotle's view that it may be as wrong to treat unequals equally as to treat equals unequally is clear. Indeed Plato and Aristotle, in their attempt to define equality of treatment, both suggested that the answer lies in categorisation. The premise here is that there are different categories of people with different roles and responsibilities and that different treatment can be justified within each category. This view has held sway throughout the ages and can be seen to have influenced much thinking about equality and equal opportunity. Nowhere is it more clearly demonstrated than in education, and

particularly in the practice of categorising pupils according to their SEN and making separate special provision for them based upon these categories.

Other views stem from the Christian idea that all persons are equal in the sight of God. Locke took this idea further and equated the state of nature with a state of equality. From this idea grew the belief expressed in the American Declaration of Independence that 'All men are born free and equal in dignity and rights', a view further developed in Utilitarian and current Social Political theories.

Many believe that this search for equality is damaging and can lead to the suppression of the individual's fundamental desire to strive and compete;

> *"Society is a great complex of divergent interests ... people want different things and are competing against each other." (Uttley 1975 p.26)*

The criticism here is that the Utilitarian principle of the greatest happiness to the greatest number of persons inevitably results in inequalities. The search for equality is, then, to find a reasonable accommodation between competing interests. Again the influence of this view can be seen as giving weight to the current drive by government to recognise competition as a driving force in education.

The search for a definition of equality in education is certainly long standing and has resulted in many different definitions. Peters (1966) took the view that the principle of equality is the search for fair and just treatment. He saw the search for positive grounds for treating people equally as futile and proposed instead that there should be a search for justification of different treatment. Thus distinctions should only be made on relevant grounds and the search for these is concerned with justice, fairness and impartiality. Again this view can be seen to be the view which underpins the categorisation approach mentioned earlier. It is an approach which attempts to address the problems associated with the allocation of persons to different categories on relevant grounds. But again issues arise about what we mean by justice, fairness and relevant as

these are all terms open to value judgement and different interpretation. For Peters justice is;

> *"A principle regulating the operation of rules which stipulate the desirability of categories to be made on relevant grounds and the undesirability of exceptions made on irrelevant grounds." (Peters 1966 p.124)*

The justice principle alone, however, is certainly neither adequate nor straightforward as a principle for determining equal treatment. A torturer, for example, can be very fair and just about the treatment meted out to his or her victims. Other principles such as need, desert and right must be considered and weighed in the balance before decisions can be made about equal treatment and, as has already been discussed, these principles are open to debate, discussion and disagreement resulting in conflicting views about provision and practice in equal opportunities. It would seem then that interpretations of equal opportunity in terms of equal treatment give rise to further debate about a variety of important factors including the relevance and the rights and needs of the individual.

This discussion offers some insights into the concept of entitlement to an equal educational opportunity. First of all the principle is clear that equality of educational treatment cannot be ensured by offering all pupils the same diet;

> *"The paradox of equality of education is that it is only when the educational diet of every child is different from that of every other that we can we really hope we are near to achieving it." (Downey & Kelly 1986 p.241)*

To offer the same can only lead to inequality of opportunity since it fails to recognise considerations of relevance, fairness and justice in terms of individual developmental needs. It also clearly fails to recognise the points made earlier about the right of every citizen in a democratic society to an appropriate education which will enable them and empower them to fulfil the responsibilities of full participation in the democratic process.

Categorisation, traditionally used to justify different educational provision and treatment is also problematic. Selection for the categories should, according to the equality principle, be made on relevant educational criteria. In practice it can be seen to be made on a variety of other grounds including medical, geographical, economic and even ethnic and gender. Many of these can be seen to be totally inappropriate in terms of the equality principle as discussed above. Thus the creation of, and allocation to, categories is a value laden and extremely questionable and problematic activity.

Compensatory approaches to removing inequalities are also problematic as they reinforce notions of deficit, which in practice in special education, for example, has led to those children with disabilities coming from underprivileged backgrounds being regarded as inferior. Compensatory approaches are rooted in the idea of standardisation and normalisation and fail to value the importance of diversity. They are, therefore, totally inadequate measures for providing equal treatment.

What seems clear is that any discussion about equal opportunity in education, must centre around the individual and his or her rights to equal access to equal treatment. Downey and Kelly see the guiding principle as;

> *"The equal right to control over one's own life whatever its context and circumstances." (Downey & Kelly 1986 p.241)*

Certainly the entitlement being sought currently by disabled persons, fighting for an equal place in society, can be seen to fit exactly with this definition. In terms of educational provision the principle can only be achieved where the aim and goal is the development of the individual towards autonomy and self determination.

It would seem that the authors of the 1988 Education Act have paid scant attention to the complexities and the problematic nature of the above discussion. In this legislation entitlement is to be guaranteed by;

> *"... ensuring that all pupils, regardless of sex, ethnic origin and geographical location, have access to the same good relevant curriculum." (DES 1987 p.4)*

The National Curriculum which will be discussed further later, can be seen in fact to be elitist and exclusive and to offer little that is relevant to large numbers of pupils. The provisions of the 1988 Education Act pay no heed to concepts of difference or diversity. The assumption is made, nevertheless, that this diet will offer all pupils an equal opportunity. For those experiencing SEN it is considered to be enough simply to break down the units into smaller steps to be taken at a slower pace. Nowhere is there any discussion about the appropriateness of the diet and nowhere is there any recognition that it might be unsuitable, irrelevant and even have the potential to create barriers to access. There is a complete failure to address issues of relevance or need. In fact it seems highly likely that such a rigid, restrictive offer, imposed with little or no consideration of these important issues, can only lead to restriction of rights and extremely unequal educational opportunities for many.

In 1983 HMI expressed the view that in order to provide real educational opportunities for all pupils an entitlement curriculum should guarantee;

> *"... distinctive breadth and depth to which they (all pupils) should be entitled, irrespective of the type of school they attend or the level of ability, or their social circumstances, and that a failure to provide such a curriculum in unacceptable." (DES 1983 pp.26, 27)*

While purporting to offer a broad balanced diet the National Curriculum cannot be said to fulfil the criteria laid down by HMI at all. In fact it is based on a view of education designed to produce suitable citizens. It takes no account of the cultural diversity or of the range of difference in ability, needs and interests that may be found in the pupils for whom it is designed to cater. It is inflexible and because it is based on a model of education as the transmission of content is unlikely to offer many opportunities for the empowerment of pupils. It would seem more likely indeed to reinforce prejudices and to perpetuate inequalities.

The entitlement of the 1988 Education Act seems then to offer little to pupils that is new. The National Curriculum can be seen as offering even less access to a full educational opportunity for some groups. The false assumption has been made that by ensuring that all pupils receive the same diet their rights to a full educational opportunity will be fulfilled. Once again we see the total lack of any sound theoretical analysis or critical evaluation of the ideas underpinning these assumptions. The totally false premise is that equal opportunities = the National Curriculum and that access to that opportunity = more of the same at a slower pace.

Inevitably questions arise from this discussion:

- Can pupils really be said to have an entitlement to something to which they have, at best, partial access and at worst no access at all?

- For those who achieve access does this curriculum fulfil their right to a full educational opportunity?

Entitlement - Empowerment

> *"The entitlement which a democratic structure entails is not an entitlement to have imposed upon one that knowledge and those values which the dominant group is society determines; it is an entitlement to have one's capacities and capabilities developed to the point where one can reach one's decisions and frame one's own values. In a democratic society the entitlement is to individual autonomy and empowerment. (Kelly 1995 p.111)*

The issue of empowerment can be seen then to be vitally important in the discussion about the right to a full educational opportunity. A recognition of rights and entitlement to those rights must lead to consideration about empowerment to demand those rights. A charter for rights which fails to recognise the need for people to be empowered to demand their rights is empty indeed and can be seen to offer very little in the way of entitlement.

The importance of empowerment as part of the process of moving towards real inclusion for disabled people is enormous. It is also, however, a problematic

and controversial issue and involves challenging, radically, existing power relationships, and practices in the whole area associated with SEN, and indeed in the whole of education. For the process of inclusion to become a reality, however, it can be seen to be crucial. Barton and Oliver refer to the struggle for empowerment as the 'politics of personal identity';

> *"Through a growing collective identity, they demand (and have the confidence to demand) that difference must not be merely tolerated and accepted, but positively valued and celebrated. Further in making the demands it is not just a matter of providing a legal framework, but backing that framework with moral fervour and political will to ensure its implementation. Translating such moral commitment into political rights is part of a struggle for empowerment." (Barton & Oliver in Arnot and Barton 1992 p.80)*

The development of self advocacy can be seen as very important in the process of empowerment. Key aspects of this movement are described by Flynn and Ward (1991) in their discussion about self advocacy for people with learning difficulties. They see self advocacy as enabling the processes of;

- self definition,
- questioning power relationships,
- exchanging experiences and aspirations,
- participating,
- initiating self help groups,
- contributing towards evaluation and monitoring services,
- confronting outlawed topics such as personal freedom, real wages, relationships etc.,
- questioning the power advantages of parents and professionals,
- seeking to learn the skills required to be heard.

These features can all be seen to be vital components in the process of empowerment and therefore self advocacy has much to offer disabled people in their struggle. The problematic and controversial nature of self advocacy must also, however, be recognised. Families and professionals hold the balance of power in decision making for the majority of disabled people when it comes to decisions about education, and various strategies can be identified

which these groups may employ to prevent the development of self advocacy and enable them to retain their dominance;

- the suggestion that where such confidence has been developed the persons in question are 'not really mentally handicapped';

- the suggestion that persons seeking self advocacy are manipulated by self seeking others;

- the suggestion that those seeking self advocacy do not understand that decisions made for them are 'in their best interests';

- the suggestion that self advocates cannot be taken seriously because of their 'mentally handicapped' label.

These strategies, together with many other patronising and mystifying approaches, are commonly employed in decision making about children identified as having SEN. All militate against the development of genuine self advocacy and therefore against individual autonomy and empowerment. What families and professionals see as 'in the best interests' of the child may often be in complete contradiction to what the children themselves are demanding and professionals may have vested interests in maintaining the status quo and their role in working with disabled people. They may also be guilty of working with their own definitions of key concepts, such as 'participation', 'integration' and 'inclusion', which may well be totally inconsistent with those being articulated by disabled people themselves;

> *"These are dangerous and defensive practices which betray the fact that self advocacy is an arena of political struggle." (Flynn & Ward 1991 p.132)*

One of the ways in which disadvantaged groups can work towards empowerment and counter these unacceptable practices, is by working collectively. The value of collaborative efforts and of developing interdependency, can be important in working towards having a voice and being heard Disabled people need the support of the wider community in their

struggle towards the development of self advocacy and personal identity and here the role played by education is vital;

> *"What is needed, as far as education is concerned, is a moral commitment to the inclusion of all children into a single education system, as part of a wider commitment to the inclusion of all disabled people into society. Translating this normal commitment into political rights is something which can be achieved by supporting disabled people and the parents of children with special needs as they struggle to empower themselves." (Oliver 1994 p.14)*

Education certainly has the possibility to enable the process of empowerment, but at the same time its potential, as it is currently perceived, to inhibit and prevent that process also needs to be clearly recognised.

Models of Curriculum Planning

Discussion about educational planning and provision resulting from the adoption of different models of disability and about educational entitlement and the empowerment required to enable disabled people to demand it raises many questions about the curriculum itself and the way it is framed and conceived.

The adoption of a medical/deficit model of disability leads, as previously discussed, to notions of normalisation and remediation as guiding principles in determining educational provision. The contextual/curriculum model, while recognising that access to educational provision may require additional compensatory resourcing, like the first model, is rooted in the idea that essentially the curriculum, as it exists, is fine and that for disabled pupils the answer lies in adaptation, modification or possibly dilution in extreme cases. Again these can be seen as measures which are informed by the idea of normalisation. The third model challenges directly any notions of compensation with regard to the curriculum. It requires that the whole planning of educational provision begins from a different starting point, which recognises from the onset the existence of difference and diversity and demands therefore, a model which can include, and be accessible to, the whole range of

ability. It also demands that educational provision and planning centre around a curriculum designed to empower and to give a voice to all.

It is possible to distinguish several different models which inform curriculum planning (Stenhouse 1975, Grundy 1987). Kelly (1989) identifies the three major models which can be seen as having particular influence. These curriculum models are informed by different views of knowledge and aims for education and find expression in different types of educational provision. They are not necessarily mutually exclusive but much confusion in education provision can be directly attributed to misunderstanding and a lack of clarity about their implications.

The first model identified by Kelly is referred to as the 'Content' model. This model is informed by a view of knowledge as content. This content, expressed in the form of subjects, is broken down into small achievable steps in order to provide a structured route through it for the pupils. The teacher is the transmitter of knowledge, and therefore the subject expert, and the pupils is the receiver. Learning is a linear process and progress is checked regularly by testing the amount of knowledge acquired by the pupil at the end of each step. This model can be seen very clearly as being at the base of most traditional curriculum planning.

A second model, which is closely related to the first in that it also regards learning as a linear process, is identified by Kelly as the 'Aims/Objectives' model. Here the aims of the educational process are determined and are broken down into elements called objectives. By achieving these, progressively, pupils come to mastery of subjects being studied. Testing of progress is done in relation to the objectives and is measured in terms of changed behaviour. This model is informed by a view of learning which finds its roots in behaviourist psychology. Kelly points out that these two models are, in practice, often conflated.

Criticisms levelled at these models centre around the view of learning as linear, which many believe it is not, and around the instrumental approach to

education which inevitably results. Both models are informed by a particular view of knowledge - in practice translated into the traditional subjects of the curriculum. Both reduce the process of learning and indeed knowledge itself to a very simplistic form which takes no account of the very complex value judgements which have to be made in selecting appropriate content for the curriculum and in the interpretation of that content. Determining the aims and objectives of the curriculum and ensuring breadth and balance in its content and processes are controversial activities involving value positions and judgements. A lack of recognition of this complexity can lead to the dangerous possibility of reducing curricula to expedience.

A third model is also identified by Kelly. This model is firmly rooted in the view that learning is a question of interaction between the learner, the teacher and challenging ideas and materials. Knowledge is not here interpreted in terms of content divided into simplistic subject areas but is seen as hypothetical, constantly evolving and developing, socially constructed and interdisciplinary. The learning process is not about coming to know 'that' but rather it is about coming to know 'how'. The aims and goals of the process are to enable the development of each child's full potential and capacities. Progress is seen in terms of development and is assessed continuously in order to obtain feedback about directions for future and continuing development. This model, it can be seen, is totally different from the previous models described and is also incompatible with them since it is underpinned by a completely different epistemology. The 'content' and 'aims/objectives' models described above, can clearly be seen to be the dominant traditional influences on curriculum planning and provision in England and Wales. This is reflected in the National Curriculum, which will be discussed in more detail in the light of this analysis in Chapter 5, in the breaking down of content into subjects; the prescribed levels of achievement and Attainment Targets; the simplistic standardised and age related assessment procedures, all of which find their roots in a view of education informed by these models. The goal of education is to prepare pupils for society and indeed to ensure that education produces the type of adult fitted for that society.

In laying emphasis on these instrumental goals, traditional models, and indeed the currently prevailing model, of curriculum planning can be seen to be responsible for actually giving rise to a whole range of difficulties and problems which may be identified as SEN. The result of taking this model as the starting point is that educational planning then begins from an economic, societal, political needs base rather than from an educational standpoint.

Sally Tomlinson (1982, 1989) has written a great deal about the social creation of special educational needs pupils and discusses at great length the fact that the traditional curriculum is often irrelevant, unsuitable and linked to the needs of society, not those of the child. She points out that what is on offer for many pupils is either extremely academic or basic life skills and training. This she says creates a large group of pupils who are;

> *"... unable or unwilling to participate satisfactorily in a system primarily directed towards an academic elite" (Tomlinson 1989 p.261)*

At the same time the life skills/training model of curriculum offered as an alternative to the academic curriculum does not, as it purports to, prepare pupils for the life of work, but instead fits them only for low paid unskilled jobs or unemployment. This sort of curriculum;

> *"... can easily reproduce the pupils as low status, semi skilled or unskilled workers or unemployable." (Tomlinson 1982 p.137)*

The development of this type of curriculum can be identified in many segregated special schools and units and Tomlinson claims that this reflects aspects of deliberate social control;

> *"The overall curriculum aims of preparation for employment in low status work and 'social adjustment' can be interpreted as indicating that special education may not be directed so much at catering for special needs and helping the individual child, as at providing a way in which troublesome children may be socially controlled." (op. cit. p.153)*

Barton and Tomlinson (in Cohen & Cohen 1986) point out, however, that the integration of pupils with special educational needs into the mainstream school does not necessarily mean greater equality of opportunity. They maintain that the mainstream curriculum is;

> *"... narrowly conceived in terms of the cognitive with success via competitive formal examination." (Barton & Tomlinson 1989 p.42)*

Integrating pupils into such a system, therefore, can only have further damaging effects. They quote Hargreaves;

> *"... this very narrow definition of ability grounded in the curricular evaluation of the cognitive/intellectual has its effects on pupils. Ability labels are not seen by pupils as mere descriptions of part of their total set of attributes as human beings; they are seen rather as generalised judgements upon them. Because the mastery of the cognitive/intellectual domain is so essential to success in school, ability labels carry rich connotations of pupils' moral worth." (Hargreaves 1982 p.62)*

Thus the pressures of the mainstream curriculum are clearly seen as instrumental in creating and exacerbating the difficulties of many pupils;

> *"When dignity is damaged one's deepest experience is of being inferior, unable or powerless. My argument is that our secondary schools inflict such damage, in varying degrees, on many of their pupils." (op. cit)*

The dilemma then for integration is that by integrating pupils with special educational needs, who are at present segregated, into the mainstream of education underpinned by traditional models of curriculum, conceived in terms of academic subjects where success and achievement are measured by narrow academic standards, we may be further damaging them. By leaving them in segregated provision, however, we are perpetuating their low status and the mechanisms of control exercised by a watered down curriculum. Of course we must not forget, either, the number of children already in the mainstream for whom the restrictive narrow curriculum can only create and exacerbate difficulties. For Barton and Tomlinson the answer is;

> *"... given the inequalities within society at large and given those dominant assumptions and practices that are firmly established in our school system, particularly at secondary level, if integration is to have any real significance, then the struggle for its realisation must include a coherent concentrated criticism of those unacceptable features of the education system." (Barton & Tomlinson 1986 pp. 50, 51)*

This discussion demonstrates the need for a very different model of curriculum. A curriculum with the same aim for all pupils irrespective of ability, the growth and development of every child to his or her full potential. A curriculum rooted firmly in the notion of empowerment of the individual rather than control; a recognition of entitlement to full inclusion as a right rather than exclusion based on narrow processes of assessment and identification; a belief in the right to equal opportunities for all rather than the development of elite groups; an emphasis on the benefits of interdependence rather than independence, leading to a valuing of the enrichment of diversity rather than the elimination of, or compensation for, difference. In terms of pupils with SEN such a model can be seen to be compatible with, and indeed informed by, a model of disability, described in the previous discussion, as an equal opportunities model. A model which is clearly a necessary prerequisite for planning and provision for the empowerment of disabled people.

The third model of curriculum, described earlier, which takes as the goal of education the development of the individual towards his or her full potential, would seem, in the light of this discussion, to be far more appropriate as the basis for inclusive planning and provision. This model is firmly rooted in notions of education as process (Bruner 1976, Stenhouse 1976, Kelly 1986). Here the purpose of education is to enable the pupil, through carefully managed interaction with challenging experiences, to question, to engage in problem solving, to discover and to develop the ability to be critically reflective about these processes. This approach values as success, far more than the results of simplistic measurements of narrow academic achievement.

The work of Elliot Eisner (1982) is important here for he points to the narrowness of traditional approaches and the need to recognise that;

> *"Cognition is wider than the forms of representation that are common to propositional discourse and simple forms of arithmetic. To apply such solutions to the problems of improving the quality of education is to underestimate seriously the intellectual capacities children possess." (Eisner 1982 p.68)*

He criticises the way we traditionally work with children and assess and measure their abilities;

> *"Children having different aptitudes need to have a range of educational conditions that optimise their learning in school. If school programs provide only a very limited range of conditions, if they disregard certain forms of otherwise valuable human performance, if they restrict scholastic rewards to children who display only verbal or mathematical skills, they provide educationally inequitable opportunities to students whose aptitudes and interests differ from the forms that are salient. Put another way, if the only game in town is chess and there are some very good poker players around, the poker players are culturally handicapped." (op. cit. p.79)*

Eisner highlights the need to expand and broaden our understanding of different modes of representation in order to include, and cater adequately, for the needs and abilities of all children. He also makes clear in the quotation above, the dangers of failing to do this since to take the narrow view and to only value traditional forms of literacy and numeracy can lead to distortion and misunderstanding about achievement and ability. For him it is the responsibility of educators to ensure opportunities for all pupils to experience and engage with the development of all the various modes of representation. At the same time they must recognise the need to develop sensitive and imaginative procedures for evaluating children's capacities.

In a similar and related vein Wilson and Cowell (in Cohen & Cohen 1986) discuss the need to develop new approaches to what we value in education as success and achievement. They point to the fact that over emphasis on academic success and achievement devalues other qualities and impoverishes our approaches to education;

> *"If we could imagine an education regime in which development of character, the handling of emotions and personal interactions were genuinely valued as central, in which plenty of time was devoted to them and in which a serious attempt was made to foster and assess them, then what we count as normal ... would turn out very different from what we do today." (Wilson & Cowell 1986 p.57)*

To adopt Eisner's approach to the curriculum would inevitably lead to more inclusive possibilities for more pupils. By expanding our understanding of cognition and recognising that children's intellectual capacity cannot be adequately measured by simplistic tests of a very small range of what may be considered ability, but may find expression in a wide variety of modes of representation, Eisner is challenging traditional approaches to the whole of learning and teaching. To add to his view an approach where qualities such as those cited by Wilson & Cowell are viewed as important in the development of pupils, requires a totally different underpinning for curriculum planning, a curriculum which relies on and recognises the importance of much more than narrow success and achievement, which includes rather than excludes a wide range of diversity and difference.

Andrew Brennan (1991) searching for an approach to education which can include and value all children, irrespective of ability, reinforces these views. He identifies the need to conceive education and its purposes in a broader way than it is traditionally viewed;

> *"Once we shake ourselves free from the obsession with intellectual rationality and the academic, we can start to see that there are many forms educational enterprise can take, when that enterprise is understood in Dewey's way, as fostering personal growth, not all values are concerned with rationality and there are possibilities of growth outside the academic and intellectual. None of this denies the central importance of intellect and reason within our culture, nor that academic education is itself a perfectly legitimate activity. What it does deny is that the academic model is the right one for all forms of education." (Brennan 1991 p.166)*

Here again the case is made to recognise and value diversity and difference and to expand the dominant, narrow view of education and educational success,

in order that more people may be included. The case is also clearly made that the same diet does not ensure equality of opportunity for all and that a model of curriculum conceived in terms of processes of personal growth and development, rather than narrow academic content, could offer more possibilities for more pupils.

The point was made in the previous discussions about entitlement and models of disability that for disabled pupils access to genuine educational opportunities requires empowerment. This is clearly also the case for other pupils too, but applies even more so to those pupils who have been traditionally excluded and segregated on grounds of disability. There is, therefore, a need to recognise that a model of curriculum which addresses adequately the needs of disabled pupils must place importance on the individual as an agent of his or her own learning and development. For Rogers (1969) the shift of focus from the teacher and teaching to the learner and learning is vital in the process of education for emancipation;

> *"I have said that it is most unfortunate that educators and the public think about, and focus on, teaching. It leads them to a host of questions which are either irrelevant or absurd ... I have said that if we focused on the facilitation of learning how, why and when the student learns and how learning seems and feels from inside - we might be on a much more profitable track." (Rogers 1969 p.125)*

For Rogers, focus on the learner in the process of learning is central to the development of a curriculum for autonomy and freedom, an empowering curriculum. This process can be seen as a vitally important part of enabling pupils to have a voice, to develop their own ideas and opinions and to become critically reflective. It finds expression in the work of Habermas (1972, 1973) who places emphasis on the importance of critical consciousness and in Giroux's (1988) urging of students to become committed, critical, active citizens. For these writers, and indeed for disabled people themselves, the empowerment of pupils in this way enables them to challenge more effectively the failure of education to address issues related to discriminatory and oppressive practices.

The traditional model of curriculum planning can be seen to be totally inadequate to meet the demands of a curriculum for empowerment. Indeed a curriculum framed in terms of instrumental aims determined by the needs of society, with the goal of preparing and producing certain types of adults, is unlikely to challenge dominant practices and discourses which prevail in that society. Indeed it is more likely to contribute to perpetuating oppression and discrimination. Narrowly prescribed content conceived in terms of traditional academic subjects, assessed by standardised tests which lay emphasis on simplistically interpreted literacy and numeracy as measures of success, inevitably leads to views which value conformity rather than diversity. Teaching and learning viewed as the transmission and assimilation of that content leave little space for the sort of critically reflective, problem solving approaches suggested by the work of Rogers (1969), Giroux (1988) , Bruner (1976), Eisner (1982) and Dewey (1926).

Clearly a model of curriculum is required which recognises the need to begin with the child and his or her individual differences and works through processes of active learning towards the fulfilment of full potential and autonomy, in order to enable pupils with SEN to gain access to their entitlement of a full educational opportunity. This approach offers the possibility for the development of inclusive practice in education which capitalises on diversity to expand and enrich the learning environment for all pupils.

Concluding Thoughts

Before moving to the concept of integration, itself, it is important, at this point, to draw together the central issues which have arisen from this attempt to analyse and discuss models of disability, entitlement and empowerment, and models of curriculum. A central theme can be identified as emerging from the analysis which has taken place thus far. Disability defined in terms of equal opportunities requires that entitlement for disabled people to a full educational opportunity is recognised as a right. That right can only be adequately addressed by a curriculum underpinned by a view of education as growth towards full potential, autonomy and self determination, in other words a

curriculum for empowerment. This has enormous implications, not just for those pupils identified as having SEN, but for all pupils, and indeed for the whole curriculum. A curriculum for empowerment, an empowering curriculum, can be seen to require underpinning which is very different from, and indeed incompatible with, the traditional model which has dominated education in England and Wales and which currently informs the National Curriculum.

Inevitably questions arise about the suitability and adequacy, and indeed the desirability, of the dominant curriculum model for pupils with SEN, and, in the light of the comments above, for any pupils, for it would seem that such a model has the potential to exacerbate and indeed to create inequality for pupils rather than to offer the promised entitlement to a full educational opportunity. These issues will be discussed in greater detail with reference to the National Curriculum in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONCEPT OF INTEGRATION

Introduction

The investigation and analysis of entitlement, models of disability and models of curriculum with regard to SEN provides a basis for the central issue of concern of this work, a critique of the concept of integration. Discussion about entitlement to a full educational opportunity inevitably begs the question, through what processes and procedures can that educational entitlement be ensured? Discussion about the different models of disability and of curriculum which can be identified as informing and underpinning thinking in the area has raised further questions about the implications of those different approaches for policy and provision in education. For many the answer to these questions has been seen to be integration of pupils with SEN into the mainstream of education. The concept of integration, however, can take on different meanings and result in different interpretations according to the different models of disability and of curriculum adopted. Different approaches and interpretations, in turn, have important implications for the curriculum and its planning. It can be seen then that before reflecting further upon current policy and planning for SEN it is necessary to attempt a critical analysis of

integration itself and try to find a definition which is clear, coherent and compatible with the notion of equal opportunity as a right for disabled pupils.

The Dominant Perspective on Integration

As stated, the central purpose of this work is to analyse and evaluate the concept of integration in the light of current educational changes, with a view to assessing its influence and relevance in the struggle for more equal opportunities for those pupils identified as having SEN. It would seem that there is fairly widespread confusion and disagreement about the meaning, purposes and aims of integration, and that while this may be recognised by some, for others, including policy makers and planners, it seems to be either ignored or regarded as unproblematic. The result of this is that integration can, in many ways, be seen to have failed totally to improve the educational opportunities of those groups of pupils it purports to serve, and indeed the rhetoric which has grown up around the concept can be seen to have deflected attention from the central issues of concern in this vitally important area. Concentration on the integration/segregation debate has resulted in centring attention on what Oliver (1994) sees as peripheral issues rather than on the very controversial and problematic nature of the discussion;

> *"What is both interesting and unfortunate about the discourse of special education is that it has been dominated by the integration/segregation debate. What has characterised this debate has been the narrowness in terms of its failure to see integration as anything other than a technical issue about the quality of educational provision. Its failure to explicitly develop any connection with other debates about segregation of, for example, disabled people from the public transport system or of blind people from public information, or of the poor from major parts of our cities, has been a major omission."*
> *(Oliver 1994 p.7)*

This failure to recognise the really fundamental issues, and to see the demand for inclusion by disabled people as a fight for human rights and equal opportunities, is reflected clearly in the policy making and official documentation concerning SEN, dating back to the Warnock Report (1978). The failure of the 1981, 1988 and 1993 Education Acts to address these issues

will be further discussed in Chapters 4, 5 & 6. The allocation of resources approach, described by Oliver above, can also be seen to have dominated discussion and decision making in both planning and policy making for SEN. Indeed integration has come to be seen by many as merely a question of changing the location of a group of pupils and the chief difficulties in bringing about this transition are seen as being questions to do with adequate resourcing. This view of integration is clearly inadequate as the basis for real change and development in educational practice and indeed can be seen to have provided excuses and justifications for further segregation, either in separate well resourced segregated provision, or within the mainstream in separate, specially resourced units.

The Warnock Report itself, having made the case for integration and for changing from a concept of handicap to one of SEN placed emphasis on resourcing and provision as central factors. Barton and Landman (in Slee 1993) identify resourcing as the guiding factor in the Warnock Committee's discussion about integration and make the criticism that this view was unrealistic and lacking in any understanding of the fundamental issues underlying the concept;

> *"Such optimism is romantic and reflects an inadequate understanding of the extent and endurance of existing inequalities of social and economic relations in society." (Barton & Landman 1993 p.46)*

They also criticise the Warnock Committee for failing in any way to contextualise its recommendations within the framework of the education system;

> *"The failure of the report to approach the curriculum as central to the question of the purpose of schooling needs to be seen against the background of these more general limitations." (op. cit. p.47)*

Perhaps the greatest failure of the Warnock Report, as is the case with much subsequent debate about integration, is the underlying assumption that the mainstream education system, its curriculum and organisation, is simply in

need of improvement and adaptation. The clear underlying principle is that, with additional resources and support, integration can be effected. This legitimises and perpetuates the existence of segregated provision, for, where resources are not available to improve mainstream provision, the case can be made that it is in the best interests of the pupils to place them in different, often separate, provision where factors such as smaller groups immediately answer the requirement of more support. More importantly, it avoids central issues about the mainstream curriculum and its inadequacies. No attempt is made to address the inequalities which arise from adopting a model of curriculum which is narrowly academic and competitive, nor is there any attempt to address the failure of the mainstream curriculum to cater adequately for the needs of such a large group of pupils. The assumption is clearly made, that if pupils fail to meet the demands of the mainstream curriculum, it is they who must be removed, compensated for, or adapted, rather than the curriculum. Indeed the failure of the Warnock Report (DES 1978) to address this very fundamental issue of the mainstream curriculum and its potential to exacerbate and create SEN, can be seen as one of the major factors contributing to the confusion surrounding integration and its purposes and practice. An opportunity was missed to focus on the important issues raised in the previous chapter about different models of curriculum and their potential to exclude and include.

The 1981 Education Act also lacked any evidence of strong political will to move towards genuine integrated practice. Indeed it further legitimated segregated practice by placing the onus on Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to make the case for children with SEN to be educated in the ordinary school conditional on the provision of sufficient resources and the effective education of other pupils. As, at the same time, no extra resourcing was provided by the Act for this purpose it was weak legislation and demonstrated no clear intention to make more integration a reality in practice. Again a weak case was made for integration contingent upon resource provision rather than on rights and entitlement to a full educational opportunity for all.

The failure of the 1988 Education Act to address issues of integration is clear. While purporting to ensure an entitlement for all to a full educational opportunity, the means to that entitlement, the National Curriculum, can be seen to be exclusive, and for many, inaccessible, and is likely to lead to further segregated practice as a result of its simplistic standardised assessment procedures. The reorganisation of education which has resulted from the 1998 Act can also be seen to be counterproductive to integrated practice. Once again the issue of adequate resource provision is being used to legitimate and justify segregation, either within ordinary schools in terms of units, streaming etc., or in separate provision. The competitive free market model into which education has been firmly pushed, is, by its very nature, selective and exclusive and inevitably must lead to more segregation;

> *"The Education Reform Act places provision for special educational needs within a financial and market context ... Special educational needs provision in schools has to be weighed and justified against other forms of staffing and expenditure. Arguments about good practice have now to be viewed in terms of opportunity costs."*
> *(Gold, Bowe & Ball 1993 p.54)*

The free market is founded on notions of winners and losers, and competition and choice in education will inevitably lead to the valuing of some abilities and achievements over others. The 1993 Education Act with its Code of Practice for SEN comes at a time when this model is beginning to have real consequences for schools, teachers and pupils. Once again there is a failure in the Code of Practice (DfE 1994) to address the issue of integration or to attempt any kind of definition of its aims or purposes in the current context, other than in terms of resourcing. The issues of implementing the suggested five stage model, of developing a Whole School Policy (WSP) for SEN, of encouraging partnerships with parents, the multi-faceted role of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and indeed a number of other areas, are dealt with as unproblematic. The underlying assumption is that, driven by market forces, governing bodies and head teachers will find the time and resourcing to implement the policy effectively. This is an extremely optimistic view and again is firmly rooted in notions of integration as locational and as a resource issue.

The emphasis on retaining pupils in the mainstream school by means of extra support and individual work plans can be seen again to be rooted in compensatory approaches, an important issue, the inadequacy of which, will be discussed later in Chapter 6.

What is clear from the above discussion is that integration has come to be regarded as a matter of provision and the resourcing necessary to make that provision, rather than as a complex, problematic, controversial struggle for equal rights involving the need for fundamental critical re-thinking about the aims and purposes of education, and about its policy, provision, organisation and practice. In the view of many disabled people (Oliver 1992, 1993, 1994, Reiser & Mason 1994) this lack of recognition and simplification of the issues has resulted in what might be called a rhetoric of integration, which serves to obscure the underlying problems about social justice, inequality, power and control, and oppression, and de-politicises the debate;

> *"The rhetoric of integration has given rise to a new kind of educational discourse of which the changing labels of both professionals and children is a part. To put the matter bluntly, children with special needs still get an inferior education to everyone else. Although the rhetoric of integration as process merely serves to obscure or mystify the fact, the reality remains." (Oliver 1992 p.23)*

Barton and Corbett (1990) endorse this view and point to the potential power of the rhetoric to prevent change and exacerbate the problems;

> *"Such simplified forms of discourse are essentially fraudulent. They misrepresent and thereby underestimate the seriousness of the issues involved and the degree of struggle required for the necessary changes to be realised. Thus they are, in and of themselves, part of the disabling process." (Barton & Corbett 1990 Conference, Stockholm)*

The Influence of Professionals

What is extremely worrying, in terms of possibilities for the future, is the role played by professionals themselves in creating and continuing this rhetoric. Oliver (1994) points out that while the integration debate has been in progress

now for some time and the language of special needs has changed, professionals are continuing to do the same things to the same groups of children as they did before. This view is reinforced by Fulcher (1989) who identifies, in the debate about special education, a celebration of the centrality of professional discourse which serves, in her view, to distract from the central issues of social justice and equality.

Certainly the debate about integration can be seen to be beleaguered by, often competing, professional interests (Barton & Oliver 1991). Skrtic points out the dangers of this approach, which he sees as currently increasing;

> *"As more of life comes under the control of specialism and professionalisation, of the professional bureaucracy, the need to solve problems and to engage in discourse diminishes even further. This stunts reflective thought in society and in the professions, which not only undercuts the ability of the public to govern itself democratically but further diminishes the capacity of professionals to see themselves and other practices and discourses critically." (Skrtic 1991 p.231)*

Special education has traditionally been the domain of 'experts' and the whole procedure of identifying, assessing and diagnosing children's SEN is dominated by professionals in the form of educational psychologists, doctors, social workers and teachers, all of whom have great ownership for the specific knowledge and skills associated with the area. These powerful groups have had an enormous influence over the shaping of both policy and practice in special education and it can be clearly seen as in their interests that the status quo in terms of their involvement is maintained. The balance of power can be seen to be squarely with the professionals in terms of promoting the reality of greater opportunities for children with SEN and yet the dilemma is that these professionals have, themselves, very strong vested interests in perpetuating what may be seen as very unequal approaches currently being employed in the area. In fact they are playing a part in what Oliver (1994) refers to as the oppressive and discriminatory practices of special education. For him;

> *"Integration is not a thing which can be delivered by politicians, policy makers or educators, it is a process of struggle that has to be joined." (Oliver 1992 p.143)*

The struggle must first of all, however, be recognised as such, and as the preceding discussion demonstrates it does not seem to be regarded by many of these groups of professionals, at least, as a political struggle for the recognition of human rights and entitlement. Nor, indeed, if Skrtic's premise quoted above is correct, does it seem that it is likely to be the case that professionals will engage sufficiently in critical evaluation of the discourse which would enable them to develop such a view. Freire in his Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1972) recognises one of the major steps in overcoming oppression is for the oppressor to recognise its existence;

> *"The oppressor shows solidarity with the oppressed when he stops regarding the oppressed as an abstract category and sees them as people who have been unjustly dealt with." (Freire 1972 p.26)*

In the world of special education, dominated as it is with notions of philanthropic humanitarianism, where professionals are regarded as people doing wonderful, very demanding work, it is easy to miss the point totally that the groups with whom they are working have few rights and are being oppressed albeit indeed by motives of kindness. To challenge this approach and to bring those professionals to an understanding of themselves as oppressors is clearly indeed a mammoth undertaking.

The concept of integration has come to represent a very different view from the process of struggle proposed by Oliver above. The rhetoric surrounding the integration debate has served to reinforce traditional practice and attitudes and has patently failed to create any significant change in either thinking or practice in education. The rhetoric of the debate has been misplaced in the resources arena rather than located firmly in the context of human rights and entitlement where it certainly belongs, and this rhetoric has been adopted and reinforced by professionals involved and thus legitimised in its continuation.

A New View of Integration

Oliver (1992) identifies the emergence of a 'new' view of integration emanating from disabled people themselves, and contrasts it with what he calls the 'old'

view, which can clearly be seen as holding dominant sway in current policy and practice. In comparing these views he does not identify a dichotomy but rather sees them as poles or extremes of a continuum. For the purpose of this discussion it is interesting to look more closely at his comparison and it may assist in clarifying some of the anomalies and inadequacies inherent in the concept of integration.

Traditional views of integration have led to it being regarded as a state, associated with the location of the child. The 'new' view requires that it is seen clearly as a process, a means to an end rather than an end in itself. To regard it as such, however, requires that questions are raised about that end;

> *"... if integration is a means to an end, what is that end and how might it be achieved? How can integration be achieved in an unequal society? What are the consequences of integrating children into an education system which reflects and reinforces those inequalities? What part will a fragmented school system play in realising or inhibiting integration policies?" (Barton & Oliver 1992 pp. 79-80)*

These questions centre around concerns about current education policy and its effects and influence on the education of children with SEN and raise further questions all of which are problematic and controversial. If this view is taken it is not possible to simplify the matter or to locate integration in the arena of resource provision. It has become accepted wisdom by many in education, and this is certainly reflected in official documentation, that successful integration is simply about adequate supplies of staffing and resourcing and reducing class size. The issues are presented as unproblematic and have therefore ceased to become open to any real criticism or debate, very much as suggested in the quotation from Skrtic given earlier (page 55). This approach is totally inadequate for the 'new' view which demands critical and challenging reappraisal of the issues beginning from the premise that they are all problematic and that they should, in no way, be simplified or trivialised.

The 'new' view also recognises that more than organisational changes are necessary for integration to become reality. There is a need to dig much deeper,

into the whole ethos of the school so that there is a clear recognition of the responsibility of schools to educate *all* children. To this end teachers need real commitment. Again it has become received wisdom that teachers need additional skills and knowledge to cope with the demands of integration. This view can be seen as firmly rooted in compensatory, remedial models of disability. For Oliver it is necessary that in the 'new' view *all* teachers are committed to work with *all* pupils.

Indeed the model of the critically reflective practitioner (Schon 1987) dedicated to the process of professional development with a view to improving his or her own practice, and indeed the role of teacher education in promoting such a model (discussed further in Chapter 7), can be seen as vitally important for the 'new' view proposed here.

The curriculum is also vitally important. The 'old' view is rooted in a traditional content model of curriculum and is dominated by procedures connected with modifying, adapting and individualising that content in order to deliver it effectively in an integrated setting. The 'new' view requires complete deconstruction of the curriculum and the adoption of a very different model, such as that discussed in the previous chapter. Oliver, with other disabled writers, sees much of the content of the curriculum in fact as responsible for reinforcing disablist ideas and perpetuating stereotypical images (Reiser & Mason 1994). The heavy emphasis on content and its differentiation is counterproductive and incompatible with the view of integration as a process. The 'new' view requires a view of curriculum and of the teacher's role as expressed by Goddard;

> *"The curriculum is not like a ready made meal that can be packaged at some distant factory and remain untouched and uncooked until consumed ... The teacher is both the architect and the builder. Curriculum design, teaching and learning are complex dynamic processes which require the active mental, physical and emotional involvement of the teacher." (Goddard 1992 p.80)*

This view, in spite of a certain mixture of metaphors, describes very closely the 'new' view of teacher and curriculum as described by Oliver as necessary for integration.

The 'new' view of integration lays emphasis on the need for the curriculum to address issues of empowerment and liberation (points already made in Chapter 2). There is, also, clearly a need for a curriculum which is framed in terms of growth towards autonomy, and where success is measured in terms of personal development. Dumbleton (1990) presents a view of education which might underpin such a curriculum;

> *"Education can be seen as the process by which people confront their own situation, coming to some understanding of it and developing some control over it ... This view, with its roots firmly in the philosophy of Dewey and the radical pedagogy of Freire, sees education as an activity available to all people, including those with learning difficulties." (Dumbleton 1990 p.18)*

This view requires that teachers are collaborators in the process of learning with their pupil, and that there is space and scope to recognise diversity and difference and to learn to value the enrichment they bring to the experience of education.

The whole issue of difference also requires redefinition for the 'new' view. Difference must be seen, not as a justification for categorisation, normalisation or segregation; not as personal tragedy or deficit; not as something to be merely accepted and tolerated; but as a valuable and enriching factor to be celebrated. To move to this view requires a great deal more in terms of legislation than the deficit education acts which have been commonplace over the past few years. The 1981 and 1988 Education Acts with their 'let out' clauses in terms of SEN and their preoccupation with resourcing issues will not suffice. The 'new' view requires legislation which reflects a moral commitment to empowering disabled people so that they can claim their political rights in society.

Perhaps the most important feature proposed by Oliver's 'new' view is that integration should not be regarded as something which can be delivered by others, but as a something to be struggled for by disabled people themselves. The voice of disabled people must be recognised and heard.

This 'new' view of integration certainly requires a very different definition from the 'old' or traditional view. For Oliver;

> *"... nothing short of a radical deconstruction of special education and the reconstruction of education in totality will be enough, even if the journey takes us another hundred years." (Oliver 1994 p.2)*

He sees the concept of integration as redundant and misleading and as having failed totally to create more educational opportunities for children with SEN. For him we must dismantle the discourse of special education and integration and reconstruct and redefine it in terms of the 'new' view which he prefers to think of as inclusion. This 'new' view of integration as inclusion is clearly informed by and underpinned by an equal opportunities model of disability, by notions of entitlement to a full and equal educational opportunity as a right and by an empowering model of curriculum which enables and facilitates this entitlement.

Deconstructing and Reconstructing the Discourse of Special Education

To move from a concept of integration to one of inclusion, however, requires a great deal more than merely a change in the use of language. There is a need to fundamentally reconstruct the discourse of special education (Oliver 1994) in order to bring about a genuine change in understanding of the concepts involved. It is only in this way that the sort of changes in practice necessary to move to the 'new' view of integration, described previously, can be brought about. The discourse as it exists can be seen to be both misleading and inadequate. Indeed its failure to play any real role in enabling more equal opportunities and its potential to further increase discrimination for children

with SEN are cause for considerable concern. Barton and Landman (1993) point to the complex and controversial nature of educational discourse;

> *"Such discourse is the subject of intense struggles, in that the participants often adhere to competing objectives and operate from unequal power relations. Part of the struggle involves disputes over the meaning of key concepts such as 'partnership', 'standards', 'discipline' and 'integration'." (Barton & Landman 1993 p.41)*

They go on to highlight the importance of recognising that such interpretations are influenced by value positions and are therefore open to a variety of different possibilities in practice;

> *"In relation to integration the perspective provides a possibility for highlighting the nature and intensity of the struggles involved over definition, effective policy and practice." (ibid)*

The deconstruction and reconstruction of educational discourse can be seen, then, as a complex and controversial activity which has, however, a vitally important part to play in bringing about change and development. Kelly (1992) points to the importance of recognising that this process is in fact part of the democratic process. Discourse is constructed and is therefore open to deconstruction and reconstruction. He quotes Cherryholmes on the subject;

> *"... we need to create alternative discursive practices, rhetorical structures that constitute a challenge to existing thought patterns. We need to find a way of thinking/speaking that gives power no place to hide." (Cherryholmes 1987 p.310 in Blenkin, Edwards & Kelly 1992 p.149)*

The important relationship of power with discourse and therefore the facility of dominant discourse to control must, then, be recognised. Only by recognising this feature and by challenging and questioning dominant discourse can we free ourselves from its constraints, and that is a major activity in a democratic society (Kelly 1992, 1994). This point is supported by Denney, in a study of racism in the probation service;

> *"The deconstruction of discourse could provide the beginnings of a process that penetrates dominant discriminatory conventions."*
> *(Denney 1992 p.135)*

At the time of the Warnock Report (1978) the dominant discourse in special education was that of the medical model, discussed earlier. An attempt was made to move from a medical to an educational definition by the introduction of the new language such as 'special educational needs', 'learning difficulty', 'emotional and behavioural difficulty'. The aim was, through the use of more positive terms and language, to move away from the deficit model which was dominant at the time;

> *"It tried and failed for the same reason that the current policy of care in the community is also failing in Britain; there are fundamental incompatibilities between the discourse of care and the discourse of entitlement in the provision of welfare services, in exactly the same way as there are fundamental incompatibilities between the discourse of the special and the ordinary in respect of educational provision. These incompatibilities make both provision and practice contemporaneously difficult and ultimately impossible." (Oliver 1994 p.3)*

The change of label from 'handicapped' to 'special', in failing to address these fundamental incompatibilities, has served only to reinforce notions of difference and to perpetuate segregation on the grounds of that difference. 'Special' carries with it connotations of something out of the ordinary, something which stands apart or is alien in some way. When used in the context of educational needs, contingent for their provision on the availability of extra resourcing, the term 'special' inevitably carries with it connotations of difference as deficit and certainly cannot be seen to be compatible with concepts of entitlement or rights. The label in fact reinforces notions of dependence, adaptation and compensation and of deficit to be made up in order to fit in to the ordinary. In this way 'special' can be seen as yet another negative label, which, far from being useful in the integration debate, has legitimated further segregation practices on grounds of making the extra provisions required.

In practice, where special needs are identified, pupils are immediately set apart either because of the provision of extra support and an individual programme of study, or by withdrawal from the ordinary curriculum for part or even all of the time. These are all practices which can be seen to be discriminatory and stigmatising, yet they are justified as being in the best interests of these 'special' pupils. The rights of the children, or their entitlement, are not used as criteria for such decision making, rather it is made with considerations of the most efficient use of resourcing and the least possible interference to the 'ordinary' pupils as its terms of reference, and is justified by a rhetoric of caring and concern about what is in their best interests, given their 'special' status. For disabled people, then, the fight for inclusion in education, and indeed society, requires a challenge to this dominant discourse of benevolence and to the discrimination perpetuated by what can be seen as the rhetoric of special education and in particular of integration.

To abandon the discourse of SEN, without some attempt to reconstruct it is, however, potentially very dangerous. The notion that all children are special and that they all therefore have special needs is often offered as an answer to some of the criticisms made above. This can lead, however, to the false idea that all children's needs are already being catered for. This approach is very much akin to the idea of being 'colour blind' or 'gender blind' and can lead to equality being interpreted in terms of the same treatment, ignoring the reality of social injustice and inequality, an issue already raised in Chapter 2. This approach can be seen to provide a very inadequate definition in terms of equal opportunities and as having the potential to increase and reinforce inequalities.

It would seem from the above discussion that the concept of difference is central to the debate. Difference interpreted as 'special' or as deviant, deficit or inferior to ordinary, is totally inappropriate and inevitably leads to discrimination and patronising segregative practice in education. Difference interpreted as enriching, valuable and as 'a common experience of humanity' (Reiser & Mason 1994), provides a very much more positive basis for discussion about educational entitlement and the curriculum provision necessary to ensure that right.

A reconstruction of the discourse of special education, then, requires a recognition of the need to conceptualise and articulate real alternatives to the existing discourse. In such a reconstruction separation and segregation cannot be justified on grounds of 'special' or extra care. Integration is not about acceptance, toleration or adaptation or about fitting in to the ordinary, because all these notions are underpinned by deficit models. Reconstruction of the discourse requires a total shift into an equal opportunities model, which recognises the right to a full educational opportunity for all. For Oliver the current discourse,

> *"... must be replaced with a view which challenges the very notion of normality in education and in society generally and argues that it does not exist. Normality is a construct imposed on a reality where there is only difference. This new view is underpinned by an entirely different philosophy, what might be called the politics of personal identity. This demands that difference is not merely to be tolerated and accepted, but that it is positively valued and celebrated." (Oliver 1994 p.11)*

There is, then, a need it seems to reframe the debate in terms of rights, entitlement and social justice and equal opportunity. The curriculum, the organisation of education and teacher education can all be seen as crucial factors which must all be addressed within this 'new' framework. Further chapters will discuss current planning and policy making in all these areas and demonstrate that they are, and have been, rooted in very different and indeed often incompatible assumptions and thinking from those proposed by this 'new' view. The traditional view with difference as deficit to be compensated for and separately provided can be seen to be dominant in the National Curriculum, the reorganisation of education and of teacher education.

The concept of entitlement as proposed by the 1988 Education Act can also be seen to be firmly rooted in a deficit, negative, model rather than being a charter for human rights. By offering the same narrow, academic, exclusive educational diet to all pupils as the means to ensuring the promised entitlement, it can be seen rather as a vehicle for reinforcing and even creating greater inequality of opportunity for many. Set within the political context of the adoption of the free market model for education, the urgency of

reconstructing the discourse of special education into a very different framework, as proposed above can be seen to be great.

This issue, raised earlier in this chapter, about power relationships in the process of reconstructing educational discourse is particularly relevant with regard to special education. As mentioned earlier the deconstruction and reconstruction of social discourse can be seen to be about the struggle for rights and recognition in a democratic society. For disabled people;

> *"The issue of integration is not one to be argued over by academics with abilities, it is part of the terrain over which ideological struggles are being fought by disabled people in order to free themselves from the chains of oppression." (Oliver 1992 p.26)*

In order that the struggle can continue and that real progress can be made, it is important to recognise the need for disabled people to empower themselves;

> *"Full inclusion in society is a matter of profound concern. It is a human rights issue involving participation, choice and empowerment. Issues of social justice and equity are thus central to the question." Barton & Landman 1993 p.48)*

In reconstructing the discourse of special education it is therefore vitally important to recognise the role of disabled people themselves and of their need for empowerment in order to be able to articulate their views and demands and to play a major role in creating a new discourse. Disabled writers (Oliver 1992, 1993, 1994, Reiser & Mason 1994) and others are playing an important part in the development of a new concept of inclusion, but unless there is a recognition of the need for self determination and self advocacy for disabled people very little will be achieved in terms of changing practice so that before long we may find ourselves overwhelmed and controlled by a rhetoric of inclusion which offers little in terms of reality.

The redefinition of the concept of integration, then, can be seen, in the light of the above discussion, to be a vitally important part of the process of reconstructing the discourse of special education. To merely change the

language, and talk about inclusion rather than integration, has the potential to produce a new rhetoric, which like the existing rhetoric of integration, can only lead to increased confusion and must therefore stand in the way of real change and development.

A concept of inclusion is required which is underpinned by a clear recognition that children with SEN are a group who continue to experience discrimination and segregation on grounds which are totally unacceptable, and often totally irrelevant educationally. In terms of policy, planning and provision, a clearly articulated model is required which acknowledges entitlement to full participation as a right, and which values and celebrates difference as an enriching feature of that participation and which has beneficial outcomes for all pupils in the whole of the education system, and indeed for the whole of society.

Such a definition of inclusion requires a model of curriculum planning and provision firmly rooted in developmental processes. A model which is founded on a view of the aims and purposes of education as the growth and development of the child towards autonomy and self determination, a model which can clearly be seen as a prerequisite of education for empowerment, a model which also, by its very nature, values and appreciates the enrichment of difference.

The importance of eradicating what can be seen as the disablist content and practice in the curriculum (Reiser & Mason 1994) also demands mention at this point. Traditional, stereotypical portrayals of disability are perpetuated and reinforced by a model of curriculum based on assumptions about age related stages, leading inevitably to exclusive practice in terms of assessment. Similarly a content based curriculum framed in terms of traditional academic subjects is more likely to reinforce disablism than to challenge it and is unlikely to tackle disability as a subject for all children. Indeed the portrayal of disability as deficit, to be feared and rejected, is to be found in much children's literature and is a classic example of the potential of traditional curriculum content to perpetuate rather than challenge disablism.

A concept of inclusion as a means to enabling children to have real access to their entitlement to a full educational opportunity by right must be recognised as problematic. It requires constant definition and redefinition in the light of current changes and developments in policy making and must be viewed as a part of the wider political struggle to reconstruct education as a whole. There is, then, a vitally important part to be played by teachers, educators and other professionals involved, in working together with disabled people in the development, definition and articulation of inclusion. For Skrtic the successful school of the 21st Century

> *"... will be one that produces liberally educated young people who can work responsibly and interdependently under conditions of uncertainty. It will achieve these things by developing students' capacity for experiential learning through collaborative problem solving and reflective discourse within a community of interests. The successful school in a post-industrial era will be one that achieves excellence and equity simultaneously - indeed one that recognises equity as the way to excellence." (Skrtic 1991 p.233)*

The insertion of the word inclusive, before successful school, in the above quotation provides an excellent guide for practice, totally commensurate with the concept articulated above. Skrtic's emphasis on the importance of collaborative work and the recognition of the value of interdependency are also vitally important. For him;

> *"Educational excellence ... is more than basic numeracy and literacy; it is a capacity for working collaboratively with others and taking responsibility for learning. Moreover educational equity is the precondition for excellence, growth, knowledge and progress ... for collaboration means learning collaboratively with and from varying interests, abilities, skills, and cultural perspectives and taking responsibility for one's own learning and that of others. Ability grouping and tracking have no place in such a system because they reduce children's capacities to learn and collaborate with one another." (op. cit. p.233)*

These very powerful arguments for collaboration and for the development of more responsibility for learning are certainly important and need to be

recognised as valuable and indeed essential in the struggle towards inclusive practice in education.

Positive attitudes and support from teachers are essential to the development of these sorts of approaches in learning and teaching. Support in terms of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and In-Service Training (INSET) to enable teachers to develop themselves professionally in this way is also essential so that they can become confident and committed to developing their practice along the lines suggested above. Unfortunately, current developments in teacher education seem unlikely to promote such an approach, a point which will be further discussed in Chapter 7. Indeed Furlong (1992) identifies the dominant model in teacher education as the 'Technical Rationalist' approach. This model emphasises the utilitarian purposes of education as preparation for the world of work and is narrowly functional, so that teacher education is reduced to that which will be professionally useful. This finds expression in the model of ITT currently being imposed by Government (DfE Circulars 9/92 and 14/93) with its competency, apprenticeship approach.

Thus concerns about the inadequacy of the current models for teacher education are compounded, especially when looked at in relation to the demands on teachers which would be made by Skrtic's view of the successful school of the future. Clearly to promote real inclusive education, teacher education requires a very different model more akin to the approach described by Schon (1983, 1987) as that of the critically reflective professional practitioner and promoted by Freire (1973) and Giroux (1988) as essential for the development of critical professional practice in a democratic society. This model is rooted in a view of the teacher as a critical thinker, constantly reflecting on and evaluating his or her practice with a view to development.

The model of the reflective practitioner finds expression in approaches to professional development through action research. This mode of self reflective enquiry can be seen to be a very valuable form of systematic engagement with the processes criticism and evaluation which can lead to effective change and development in practice (Stenhouse 1980, Elliott 1983, Edwards 1992);

> *ducational action research engages, extends and transforms self understanding of practitioners by involving them in the research process ... Action research involves practitioners directly in theorising their own practice and revising their own theories self critically in the light of practical consequences." (Carr & Kemmis 1986 p.198)*

This approach, then, can be seen to provide yet another vital contribution to the move towards more inclusive practice in education for, at its best, it can create the kind of educational atmosphere conducive to the development of attitudes which are open and enabling rather than restrictive and exclusive. It can also provide the confidence practitioners need to challenge and criticise dominant discourse and its damaging effects on practice. Of course action research approaches do not inevitably result in positive developments and many tensions exist about the interpretation and implementation of these approaches in education (Edwards 1992). Certainly, however, action research has the potential to raise awareness of the central issues and to create therefore more concern and possibly a desire to develop practice;

> *"By its nature educational action research ... is concerned with the question of control of education and it comes out on the side of control of education by self critical communities of researchers, including teachers, students, parents, educational administrators and others, creating the conditions under which these participants can take a collaborative responsibility for the development and reform of education." (Carr & Kemmis 1986 p.211)*

This process of critical reflection about practice is particularly important in the current educational scene where constant change and reform and the imposition of policy can have the effect of distancing, disaffecting and desensitising those working in the field so that the danger is that they become increasingly less critical. Indeed there is a danger that teachers, saturated with the current dominant rhetoric, will become part of the process of reinforcing that rhetoric and cease to be critical at anything more than a superficial level.

In order that the struggle for inclusion continues to make progress, part of the process, then, must be to encourage teachers, pupils, parents and other

involved agencies, to continually reflect on and evaluate, critically, the practice in which they are engaging. It is this sort of activity which will enable inclusion to be viewed as a dynamic, changing and continually developing progress.

One of the major aims of the inclusion process must be to empower and enable the pupils themselves. This cannot be achieved without the development of the sort of genuinely collaborative approaches proposed by Skrtic above. Indeed it is necessary to recognise the power of working with a collective voice and the need to enable that voice to be heard;

> *"The struggle has already begun; do labelling theorists, social constructionalists, pro integrationists and anyone else wish to join that struggle? A start can be made by not talking over our heads about issues that are irrelevant to our needs." (Oliver 1992 p.26)*

In this very powerful invitation Oliver raises a challenge which can only be met by doing as he suggests and working together with disabled people rather than taking it upon ourselves to work on their behalf, thus engaging in and perpetuating patronising attitudes.

Concluding Thoughts

From this examination of the concept of integration some vitally important considerations arise. The first, and perhaps the most important, is its inadequacy as a means to creating greater opportunities or access for children with SEN. The result of a lack of clarity about the concept itself and about its aims and purposes as a process have led to the growth of a rhetoric which far from influencing and changing educational policy and practice with regard to these children, has instead merely reinforced and legitimised traditional attitudes and practices.

The entitlement promised by the 1988 Education Act can be seen as a very clear illustration of this process since it is informed by notions of equality of educational opportunity as being the same treatment for all. It reinforces difference as deficit by instituting modification and compensation as methods

for ensuring equal (the same) treatment and fails totally to address issues about justice or to recognise rights except in relation to those of more powerful groups.

Perhaps the most worrying and contradictory issue arising from the 1988 Education Act is the assumption that educational entitlement for all pupils can be ensured through the National Curriculum. The previous discussion about models of curriculum has clearly shown that entitlement and empowerment are unlikely to be ensured, or even addressed, by models of curriculum planning framed in terms of instrumental objectives and conceived in terms of narrow academic subjects, yet this is the model by which the National Curriculum is informed and underpinned. It would seem then, that far from ensuring the promised entitlement, this curriculum is more likely to create further inequality for many pupils.

To simply cease to recognise integration as useful and to abandon it is a concept is, however, neither productive or helpful, since the danger then arises that in the current educational scene the important issues relating to it may be ignored altogether. Indeed such simplification of those issues and their reduction to the unproblematic business of resource allocation can be seen to have been a major reason for it ceasing to be useful as a term. The need is, then, to reconceptualise and rearticulate the concept. In seeking to achieve such a redefinition it is vitally important, however to avoid the pitfall of simply reconstituting the discourse under a different banner.

The reconstruction of the discourse in terms of rights and entitlement requires fundamental rethinking of a great deal of practice with relation to SEN. No case can be made for segregated provision on the basis of difference as deficit and the development of a curriculum for empowerment is crucial. Difference itself must be regarded as a positive rather than a negative attribute and the contribution of the whole range of ability valued.

In this reconstruction the term inclusion becomes more acceptable than integration since it implies involvement at all levels and in all phases. Inclusion, however, as a term alone is insufficient and will prove just as inadequate as integration if it is not recognised as a dynamic, constantly

changing and developing concept, which needs continuing redefinition through the process of ongoing critical reflection and evaluation. This process of challenging the dominant discourse and bringing about a redistribution of the balance of power also has a vitally important role to play in working towards the elimination of oppressive and discriminative practice in SEN.

The integration of children with SEN into ordinary education is official policy in education throughout Europe, and indeed in a great deal of the world. It is the purpose of this investigation to show, however, that this policy is unlikely to result in providing greater access to equal opportunities or indeed to provide children with SEN with the necessary skills and knowledge needed to enable them to fully participate as equal, valued members in society. It can be seen in fact to have failed to enable or empower them or indeed to include them in any real sense and seems to be more effective in the process of perpetuating segregation in practice.

The integration debate has failed to articulate a strong and powerful critique which demands rights and entitlement to a full educational opportunity for children with SEN, and by failing to address the real issues and to call for the reconstruction of education in inclusive terms, it can be seen to have conspired to exacerbate, and even to create, more inequality for many children. The time has certainly come, it seems, for a redefinition which recognises and addresses the issues as problematic, controversial and requiring constant evaluation, and articulates clearly the responsibilities of education and of the whole of society to work for the inclusion of all its members;

> *"The business of society is empowerment. The legitimate purpose of human society and its government is not simply to guarantee equal opportunities to pursue the good life. The purpose, the absolute responsibility of society is to empower* ***all*** *of its members actually to produce and to live the good life." (My emphasis) (Justin Dart, disabled American Activist in Oliver 1994 p.13)*

CHAPTER 4

THE WARNOCK REPORT AND BEYOND

Introduction

The preceding chapters of this work have sought to clarify and bring greater understanding to the discourse which has developed around the concept of integration. This analysis has led to the conclusion that it is necessary to redefine integration and to reconstruct the discourse surrounding it in a framework of equal opportunities and human rights. Skrtic (1991), Cherryholmes (1988), Freire (1972, 1973), Giroux (1989) and others writing about the process of critical reflection and analysis with a view to developing and changing thinking in education, point to the vital importance of recognising the contexts in which educational discourses are constructed and their contribution. It is, therefore, important, in the scope of this investigation, to look more closely at the effects which have been made on the dominant discourse of SEN, and especially integration, by education policy in the area. This should assist in the process of further clarifying how the discourse developed, and from that point of clearer understanding it should be possible to analyse how effective reconstruction into a different and more appropriate discourse might be achieved.

The next task of this work, therefore, is to examine some of the major contributions to the area of SEN policy and to evaluate them in the light of the discussion about the redefinition of integration and about its underlying concepts in Chapters 2 & 3. The Warnock Report (DES 1978), the 1988 Education Reform Act, the Code of Practice for SEN proposed by the 1993 Education Act, and developments in teacher education will form the focus for this part of the discussion since they have all been responsible for having a major impact on the area of SEN. Each of these will be discussed in the light of the discussion in Chapters 2 & 3 in order to distinguish their contribution to the discourse of SEN and in an attempt to bring further light to the concept of integration and its potential for enabling equal opportunities for pupils with SEN.

It is important first then to look at the Warnock Report and its recommendations in order to evaluate its influence on, and contribution to, the discourse of SEN. The first part of this section will therefore concentrate on discussing the central findings and recommendations of the Report. The second section of this chapter will seek to evaluate these findings and recommendations in the light of the discussion in the previous chapters of this work.

The Beginning of Policy for Integration

There is no doubt that the Warnock Report (1978), and indeed a great deal of the educational thinking of the 1960's and 1970's, led to a renewed interest in, and a determination to ensure, that pupils with disabilities received a fairer educational deal. The 1970 Act ensured, for the first time, that all children, irrespective of handicap, should have the right to an education. The Snowdon Working Party (1978), recommended that disabled people should have the right to participate fully in society and spelled out in detail what it meant by full integration;

> *"Integration for the disabled means a thousand things. It means the absence of segregation. It means social acceptance. It means being able to be treated like everybody else." (Quoted in DES 1978 7:1)*

The 1976 Education Act further affirmed this right in section 10 by stating that all handicapped pupils should be educated in ordinary schools in preference to special schools. The comprehensive movement, child centred approaches of the 1960's and 1970's and the move towards mixed ability teaching all contributed to the growing debate about offering equal educational opportunities for all and assisted in providing the impetus to rethink the place of handicapped pupils in the education system.

It is vital, then, to look a little more closely at the thinking that informed the recommendation of the Warnock Report, later enshrined in the legislation of the 1981 Education Act, that pupils should, where possible, be educated in the mainstream of education and that integration should be an important priority. The concept of integration as envisaged by the Warnock Report is informed by a particular view of education and of the learner and the debate which has followed can only be fully understood in the light of a proper grasp of that view and its implications, not just for pupils with disabilities, but for the whole of education.

The Warnock Committee, set up in 1976, to investigate the education of handicapped children and young people, influenced by all the developments and pressures mentioned above, provided a redefinition of the concept of handicap and disability. A fundamental reinterpretation of the educational provision on offer to pupils was recommended in the light of this redefinition, together with a new approach to thinking and planning. In practice most of the change which has come about as a result of the Warnock Report and the subsequent 1981 Education Act, has remained at the organisational, resourcing level and has therefore, in many cases, effected little real improvement in educational opportunity for the pupils concerned. What has been misunderstood, and indeed misinterpreted, are the full implications of the redefinition of handicap and disability and the resultant need to analyse concepts such as integration, learning difficulty, need and right in the light of this redefinition.

Redefining Handicap

The Warnock Report clearly shifts the term handicap away from the child him or herself. The child, in Warnock's definition, is handicapped by his or her disability with the degree of handicap differing according to the seriousness of the disability. The handicap is not, therefore, rooted within the child, but is the result of barriers created because provision for the child's particular disabilities is not adequate. The social context and environment are seen as factors which may influence the handicapping effects of a child's disabilities and the ever changing nature of all these factors is constantly mentioned. Thus emphasis is placed on the dynamic nature of disability and on the potential for the home and school environment to exacerbate or reduce its handicapping effects on the child. The responsibility of the educational context in this process is highlighted;

> *"Whether a disability or significant difficulty constitutes an educational handicap for an individual child, and if so to what extent, will depend upon a variety of factors. Schools differ, often widely, in outlook, expertise, resources, accommodation, organisation and physical and social surroundings, all of which help to determine the degree to which an individual is educationally handicapped." (op. cit 3:5)*

Thus the responsibility for educational handicapping is placed firmly with factors extrinsic to the child him or herself, a very different view from the traditional medically influenced notion that handicapped children were in need of some sort of treatment in order to remedy or cure their problem, rather than a full education.

The Report also states clearly that in the light of the difficulty of establishing what exactly constitutes an educational handicap, it is unproductive to think of children as fitting into categories of handicapped and non handicapped, the former requiring some sort of special education while the latter receive education in ordinary schools. Instead the concept of Special Educational Need is introduced, to be seen;

> *"... not in terms of a particular disability which a child may be judged to have, but in relation to everything about him, his abilities as well as his disability - indeed all the factors which have a bearing on his educational progress." (op. cit. 33:6)*

Special educational needs, then, are complex and will differ for each child according to his or her disabilities and according to the handicapping factors created by the educational and social context in which he or she operates.

The third factor in Warnock's redefinition is the need to recognise a 'continuum' of need. Obviously if the context has a bearing on the child's needs, changes in that context may mean that the child's needs will also change. Similarly, if the child's disability is physical, the degree of seriousness may change over a period of time and with it the needs of the child. For other children needs may arise at particular points in their development and then cease to exist;

> *"While the special needs of some pupils will continue for relatively long periods and in some cases permanently, those of other children will, if promptly and effectively met, cease to exist." (op. cit 3:17)*

Thus the changing nature of special needs is given a further dimension. In addition the concept of a 'continuum' of need has yet another aspect. The period during which children and young people may experience special needs covers the whole range from pre school to post compulsory education and into adult life. Thus the changing nature of a child's needs is set firmly in the context of his or her continual growth and development.

It is clear to see from the above discussion, that the view of the child which informed the redefinition of handicap and the shift to individual need is a developmental view. The child is central and his or her individual needs are seen as the starting point for educational provision. There is a firm acknowledgement that those needs will change and develop as the child grows towards maturity and that the quality of the educational and social experience and context will affect that growth and development.

Inevitably a change in the concept from handicapped children to children experiencing special needs casts a new light on the range of children under discussion. The Warnock Report is probably most famous for its assertion that;

> *"... the planning of services for children and young people should be based on the assumption that about 1 in 6 children at any time, and up to 1 in 5 at some time during their school career, will require some form of special educational provision." (op. cit. 3:17)*

In many ways it is unfortunate that much of the resultant thinking and discussion since the publication of the Warnock Report has centred around this sentence. This recognition, while very important, places emphasis on organisational factors and draws attention from the vital redefinition previously discussed. The recognition that as many as 20% of pupils may have special educational needs at any time is alarming enough in itself, but taken in the light of the developmental view of the child, it is given a further dimension often ignored when planning provision. There is failure to understand the implications of the phrases 'at any time' and 'at some time' when planning, and all too often provision is based on the notion that there is a static body of about 20% of pupils in need of special help. This detracts from the idea that any pupil might experience a special need at some during his or her school career, and also draws attention from the fact that the responsibility for many children's special needs lies with the provision itself and the context. The figures were intended purely as an estimate and simply to emphasise the scale of the problem given the redefinition of handicap. In practice they have served to concentrate debate at the level of resourcing and organisation. It is this statement, intended to be read in the context of the whole chapter, which, as discussed, raises many issues, and has led to a misinterpretation of the fundamental change in understanding which the redefinition of handicap requires.

In emphasising the scale of the SEN the figures do not indicate either the range or nature of those needs. As with any official report, however, the most alarming, shocking and sensational pieces of information are the ones which will be plucked out and disseminated. The notion of special provision for 20%

of the school population has therefore become an essential planning factor, in many cases ignoring the whole redefinition which led in the first place to the figures being produced.

In terms of planning and provision for pupils with special needs, the Warnock Report places heavy emphasis on the need for flexibility. It makes sense, of course, if one is prepared to cater for a 'continuum' of pupils' needs, to look at the whole range of provision and to look at pupils' access to that provision. The question of access, as discussed in the Warnock Report, does not just centre around physical access, although that is obviously important too. The importance of looking carefully at access to the curriculum is also stressed, as is the importance of the emotional climate and social structure of the school;

> *"Some children may have particular difficulty in meeting the social and emotional demands and adjusting to the constraints of an educational regime." (op. cit. 3:20)*

The Curriculum

Chapter 11 of the Report is devoted to the curriculum and begins with the statement that the aims of the curriculum are the same for all children and that it should be planned according to the needs of individuals. The vital importance of recognising those needs and their ever changing nature is stressed, as is the need for flexibility and continuous review and assessment of the whole curriculum. In the case of pupils with special educational needs the curriculum may require modification, or a different methodology may be applied in order to provide access to effective learning, but the essential message is that every attempt should be made to see that provision for all pupils, irrespective of ability or disability, should be of the same scope and quality. There is also a re-emphasis of the fact that many learning and behaviour difficulties may actually be created by an inappropriate and irrelevant curriculum and that an area for investigation here should be the prevention of these special needs arising through more committed curriculum development. Indeed the need to engage in curriculum development and innovation at all levels is emphasised strongly, as is the need for in service

training for all teachers, in order to ensure that the ownership of responsibility for special educational needs is propagated.

Warnock's broadening of the concept of special educational need inevitably requires the acceptance by all teachers that they will need to be very efficient at identifying and addressing the needs of pupils in their care. The importance of every teacher recognising the changing nature and range of pupils' needs at whatever phase or stage of education is a recurrent theme throughout the Report.

Teacher Education

Chapter 12 of the report, which deals with Teacher Education and Training makes it clear that every teacher should have the opportunity to attend in-service courses to enhance his or her understanding and that initial training courses should contain components designed to broaden the concept of special needs;

> *"We recommend that the teaching of child development should always take account of the different patterns and rates of individual development, particularly as they affect learning, and should include the effects of common disability and other factors which influence development." (op. cit. 12:6)*

Once again the view of the learner is clear in this statement. The need to recognise that the pace of development may differ for individual children and for provision to be related to those needs is reinforced. The responsibility for pupils with special educational needs does not lie with a select few, it is clearly the task of all teachers to meet the challenge;

> *"The procedures which we have recommended elsewhere in this report for recognising and meeting the needs of children who will require special help will be of no avail unless all teachers have an insight into the special needs which many children have..." (op. cit. 12:85)*

Assessment & Identification of Need

It is perhaps in the chapter on assessment, Chapter 4, that the Warnock Report makes its view of learning and of the learner most clear. Here there is a clear recognition of the importance of ongoing, formative, curriculum based, assessment procedures, involving all agencies associated with the child and indeed the child him or herself. Four main requirements for effective assessment are distinguished (4:29 - 4:32). The importance of involving parents in assessment procedures recognises the need to look at the whole development process of the child in a variety of contexts and from different viewpoints. The need to discover how the child learns, in order to address his or her needs, rather than how he/she performs on a single occasion is again a clear recognition of the developmental model of the learner. The need for specific, specialised, professional investigation is also recognised, as once again is the important influence of the environment and of family circumstances on the child. The fourth area for investigation in the process of assessment is the educational context itself;

> *"Some handicapping conditions, particularly behaviour disorders, may be brought about or accentuated by factors at the school, such as its premises, organisation or staff. In such cases assessment may need to focus on the institution, the classroom setting or the teacher as well as the individual child and his family, if it is to encompass a full consideration of the child's problems and their educational implications." (op. cit. 4:33)*

In order to assist in the elimination of the notion of pupils being handicapped or non handicapped, there is a recommendation that the identification of special needs should be part of a wider system of profiling and record keeping common to all pupils;

> *"... the system will be part of a much wider scheme designed to ensure that the individual needs of all those children ... who require special educational provision at any time during their school career are appropriately met." (op. cit. 3:33)*

This view of assessment, then, is a clear move away from the traditional approach of standardised norm-related testing. A strong case is made, instead, for ongoing, curriculum-related, school based assessment in collaboration with outside agencies and parents. The assessment should be seen as part of the whole development of the child and should identify strengths as well as weaknesses. A better understanding of how children develop and learn, and of the learning process itself, will enhance the ability to identify and address needs effectively. This view then places importance on the interaction between the child, the environment, the social context, the teacher and the curriculum. The effectiveness of the assessment process rests on the recognition of the importance of this interaction. Assessment should inform and encourage a better understanding of the difficulties encountered by the child, should be a continuous process, curriculum-related and take place through a partnership approach.

SEN in the Mainstream

The redefinition of handicap to encompass the much broader notion of special educational need in the Warnock Report requires a different approach to planning of provision. The Report lays great emphasis on the need for mainstream education to recognise its responsibilities and to ensure access to pupils with special needs. Indeed there is a need to recognise that, if Warnock's definition is accepted, there are already a great number of pupils in mainstream education who are experiencing special educational needs and that it is not a static but an ever changing population. The changing nature of children's needs may also require that pupils may benefit from moving from the mainstream to special provision for periods of time and then back again. This requires a flexibility and adaptability of planning for provision which involves all sectors of education working together. Policies of positive resourcing in favour of special needs are also suggested and the provision of an effective support service recommended.

There is a strong recommendation that pupils with special needs should be educated in the mainstream of education and this is a constant theme

throughout the Report. For this integration to occur, however, there is a recognition that mainstream education must be prepared to take on the responsibility. Part of that process must be a recognition that the very curriculum on offer in many mainstream schools may be responsible for creating special needs as a result of its irrelevance and inappropriateness. The assertion that the aims of education are the same for all pupils means that all pupils must be given access to a flexible range of provision designed to answer their needs. There is a recognition that the route to those aims may differ for individuals and a need therefore to provide an education which is adaptable and allows for those differences.

The desirability of integration as proposed by the Warnock Report must be seen in the context of the view of the learner, of learning and of what educational provision should be made, which underpins the Report. The view of the learner, as discussed above, is one of development towards his or her full potential. This development, it is recognised, may take place at different rates and is affected by the social and educational context in which he or she operates. Educational provision should be planned in answer to the needs of the individual child and those needs assessed through observation of, and interaction with, the pupil in the process of learning. The importance of the learner's interactions with the teacher, parents, the environment and the educational context are also vital in the process of identifying his or her needs. The processes of identification must be ongoing because needs may arise, change or disappear at any time in the process of development. The view of learning, then, is one of processes and interactions in the development of the learner towards autonomy. There is no room in this view for the testing of a learner's achievements against end products of the learning experience alone as this approach does not provide the vital ongoing material on which to base further development. Educational provision must be planned in response to the needs of the learner and must be sufficiently flexible and sensitive to allow for modification in the light of the ongoing assessment procedure. Provision must also allow for the process of ongoing assessment to take place. The emphasis must therefore be on the process of learning rather than on the end product.

This, then, is the view of the learner, of learning and of educational provision, which firmly underpins the Warnock Report and on which its recommendations including the desirability of educating pupils with special educational needs in the mainstream are based. It is unfortunate, then, that much of the subsequent discussions about integration have lost their way and become bogged down in the minutiae of organisational issues, entirely missing the point that without a full understanding and acknowledgement of this view of education the recommendations have little meaning. What is certain, but is often not considered, is that in proposing that integration was a desirable aim the Warnock Report was assuming a particular view of what education should be. However, in failing to make that view explicit the Warnock Report itself can be seen to have failed to define integration effectively or sufficiently clearly to provide an adequate or even useful formulation for debate and discussion in this area.

The Warnock Report can be seen in the light of subsequent developments in SEN, in fact, to have failed in many ways to either focus or direct sufficiently, issues which will be further discussed in the next section.

The Failings of the Warnock Report and the 1981 Education Act - an Evaluation

The first part of this chapter has sought to draw out from the Warnock Report the view underpinning its recommendations. In doing so it has dwelt, for the most part, on the positive strengths of the Report and little attention has been paid to its weaknesses. The Report, however, in failing to sufficiently clarify many of the concepts underlying its recommendations, and in neglecting to address many of the problematic issues it raised, can be seen to be responsible for the inadequate provisions for pupils with SEN made by the subsequent 1981 Education Act.

Indeed the 1981 Education Act, rather than legislating for greater educational opportunity for the potentially large number of pupils identified by the Warnock Report as having SEN, concentrated instead on; instituting the Statementing Procedure - an organisational measure designed to protect a very small group

of pupils; modifying the language of SEN - yet failing to recognise the problematic nature of this process; encouraging integration of pupils wherever possible - but only where it would cause no damage to the education of other pupils, thus legitimating and perpetuating deficit approaches towards disability. All these measures can be seen to be firmly rooted in notions of compensation and normalisation, and in approaches which regard disability as deficit. All are concerned with what can be seen as peripheral, organisational issues and all fail to address the fundamental problems raised in the earlier discussion, in Chapters 2 and 3 of this work, about the inappropriate exclusive, dominant model of curriculum planning and provision which informs the education system, and its incompatibility with any notion of integration as an entitlement to inclusion. It can be seen, then, that in failing to sufficiently clarify the principles underlying its recommendations and to provide an explicit direction, the Warnock Report contributed to the weak and inadequate provisions of the legislation for pupils with SEN introduced by the 1981 Education Act.

Possibly the greatest value of the Warnock Report was that it acted as a powerful consciousness raising tool for many and that it focused the debate about special education, which had already been taking place for some time. At the same time, however, it must be remembered that this debate was generated in the sixties and early seventies, at a time of growth and expansion in education, it was now being continued, in the early eighties, when the prevailing atmosphere educationally was one of contracting resources. This was a very important factor which influenced considerably the interpretation and implementation in the 1981 Education Act, of the Report's recommendations.

The Mainstream Curriculum

One of the failings, or omissions, of the Warnock Report, was to address sufficiently the whole area of curriculum in mainstream schools. In asserting that the aims and goals of education should be the same for all the Warnock Report was asserting a right, an entitlement, for all children irrespective of ability. What it failed to do was then to investigate fully the ways in which the

education system itself creates failure and precludes access to some children. Nor, indeed, were issues raised about the way in which a system based on competition and selection gives priority to a certain view of ability and success. Indeed in reviewing the work of the Warnock committee, Mary Warnock herself admitted;

> *"We assumed that a special need would be defined in terms of help a child might have if he was to gain access to the curriculum ... only occasionally did we think that the curriculum must be changed to suit the child." (Warnock 1982 p.56)*

The whole question of access to the curriculum, a key issue in the integration debate, is hardly addressed in the Report. While asserting that many learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties may be created by an inappropriate, irrelevant curriculum, the problem is only cited as an area for investigation to be addressed by encouraging curriculum development and innovation and by providing more in-service training for teachers. The model of curriculum itself is not criticised or held responsible for the creation of barriers to access for children with SEN, or indeed for all children, nor are suggestions made that it should be revised or restructured in any way to address these failings.

Similarly the highlighting of the number of children who might be experiencing special educational needs, Warnock's 20%, does not lead to a recommendation to investigate why so many pupils fail in our schools. Hargreaves points to issues which, while implicit in the findings and recommendations of the Report, are not emphasised or made overt. In talking about mainstream schools and why children fail he points out;

> *"The more profound and disturbing message is that the very concept of ability becomes closely tied to the intellectual and cognitive domain. Intelligence becomes defined as the ability to master cognitive, intellectual aspects of school subjects. Pupils who experience difficulties in doing so are labelled with the euphemism of the 'less able' or even the overtly insulting epithet of the 'thickie'." (Hargreaves 1982 p.60)*

Thus it is the reality of what is on offer in terms of the mainstream curriculum which Warnock fails to address in discussions about the number of children who might be identified as having special educational needs, and indeed the role of the curriculum in creating and constructing special needs;

> *"The 'less able' understand that they lack the very quality on which the school sets most store; a sense of failure tends to permeate leaving a residue of powerlessness and helplessness." (op. cit. p.63)*

The underlying social causes of special educational needs are only hinted at or suggested in the Report and the whole issue of the right to access to a full educational opportunity is not addressed, so that there is no recommendation for curriculum reform or reorganisation, seen by many as the prerequisite for any real attempt at integration.

The Language of SEN

The concept of SEN itself is also open to debate. In many ways the term can be seen as counter productive as it implies helplessness or a lack of something, Barton (1989) and Roaf & Bines (1989), point to the problematic nature of need used as the basis for achieving goals in education. It is a relative, non normative term in that it can be viewed in terms of relativity of needs to the needs of others, a point already raised briefly in Chapter 2. It is a matter of professional value judgement and is influenced by social interest, power and control and the vested interests of the professionals themselves engaged in determining those needs. Needs are also context specific which adds more problems and can lead to inequalities in provision. Needs may also be generated, as has already been discussed above, by valuing some aspects of development more than others (Hargreaves 1960). They may also be constructed by factors which seek to define the nature of people in terms of abilities and behaviours which relate to socially created norms. In these ways the term need can be seen as reinforcing the deficit model of disability which seeks to portray the disabled as powerless and weak, as not fitting in and as dependent on others to provide for them (Barton 1989, Oliver 1992). 'Special' also has connotations which can be seen as negative, implying difference,

outside the normally defined range and as such can be seen to be segregationalist (Barton & Oliver 1992).

The language introduced by Warnock in an attempt to remove old stigmas and labels attached to special education, then, is clearly problematic and not at all straightforward. Indeed it has been seen by some as creating a new label for old practices and as unhelpful in that it concentrates on a compensatory approach rather than initiating a move towards a right, and entitlement approach (Roaf & Bines 1989).

The role of professionals in determining what constitutes need or special needs is also both complex and problematic. Their role is closely tied to the allocation of unstable and often insufficient resourcing. Thus the nature of needs and how they are constructed, perceived and maintained, and the educational and social context, are all vital considerations in the process of identification. The process is about making value judgements which may be influenced by a range of relevant, or indeed irrelevant, factors. The Warnock Report was attempting to move away from a concept of disability as being concerned with defects rooted within the individual, but it can be seen that the introduction of the vague and problematic term SEN carries with it the potential for further confusion and the possibility of a retrenchment into the model from which it had hoped to escape. Mary Warnock in discussing the concept of special educational needs points out;

> *"I see that there was a kind of simplicity in the concept which made it attractive insofar as it at least departed from the medical model based on diagnosis and defects, and turned its attention towards a service model based on delivering goods." (Warnock 1982 p.57)*

She goes on to blame the recession for the problems associated with the term. Perhaps the real reason, however, lies in the word 'simplicity', beguiling enough to mask the problematic nature of the terms involved in the concept and to disguise the possibility of modifying rather than moving away from the medical/deficit model of disability which the Warnock Committee wanted to leave behind.

Tying the identification of special educational needs so closely to the service delivery idea highlights yet another issue, the determination of relevant criteria in the process. Wedell points out,

> *"...careful discrimination has to be exercised in the choice and application of theoretical modes in terms of which children's needs are formulated and the specifications for provision are drawn up." (Wedell 1982 p.29)*

He goes on to point out that the formulation of need should not rely on the availability of resources or facilities as they are invalid criteria in terms of educational need. The dangers inherent in the approach are also pointed out by Barton & Oliver (1992), when they suggest that to tie identification of need too closely to the allocation of resources can lead to the needs being seen as simplistically catered for if resourced.

Roaf & Bines (1989), Barton & Oliver (1992), Barton & Landeman (1993) and indeed many others currently working in this area criticise the Warnock Report for not looking at the issues as a human rights issue. In their view Warnock should have identified entitlement rather than need as the basis for educational provision, giving validity to the claim for extra provision and raising issues about the expansion of concepts of ability and normality to embrace difference and diversity.

Assessment and Identification of Need

Although, as has been pointed out in the previous section, the Warnock Report recommendations on assessment centred around a profiling 'whole picture' approach, the linking of that process closely to the allocation of resources inevitably ties it to a notion of lack or deficiency in the child once again. The assessment procedure focuses on the child and the abilities/disabilities of that child, providing safeguarding in the form of a statement of resources required to compensate for the child. Once again we have a compensatory or 'deficit' model being presented. There are references, discussed previously, in the Report to the need for all schools to develop effective assessment procedures

which focus on identifying the needs of all children, but the main thrust of the recommendations was placed on the assessment of individuals needing protection and extra resourcing to ensure that protection, the resultant procedure being the statementing procedure. This, once again, firmly reinforces the notion of deficit in the child rather than addressing the wider issues of possible deficit in the contexts in which the child operates. It also continues to promote the protective rather than emphasising rights to equal access.

Far from the development of assessment of special educational needs being part of a wider scheme designed to ensure that the needs of all children are appropriately addressed, the resultant procedure, Statementing, laid down by the 1981 Education Act, is concerned with a small minority of the total number identified by the Report as potentially having special needs. The statementing of children has also led to the proliferation of a body of professionals or 'experts' all having vested interests in the process and, of course, creating all the difficulties and problems associated with the idea of judgements being made about what is in the best interests of the child. Again this calls into question the criteria on which those judgements are made, which are potentially, in some cases, quite divorced from the process of education. An additional problem until the 1993 Education Act was that there was no national guidance about this procedure which has also led to great inequality in different parts of the country, which resulted in practices where a child statemented as having special educational need and protected by resourcing for those needs in one area may be experiencing the same difficulty yet remain unstatemented and unprotected in another. The gap between the child's identified needs and the resourcing/provision available may also differ considerably from area to area.

Parents as Partners

The role of parents as part of the assessment procedures, and indeed as partners in the education of the child, is emphasised by the Warnock Report. What is not discussed, however, is the problematic nature of involving parents. It may be very important to involve parents in the procedures of assessment

and to encourage supportive partnerships, but it cannot be assumed that this will always work to the benefit of the child. It is possible that what the parent views as in the best interests of the child might result in additional cause for stress, as in the case where parents have unrealistic ambitions educationally for their child. In some cases stress in the relationships of the home may be at the root of the child's special needs. Other parents are over-protective if they feel their children have special needs and prevent them from developing or becoming independent. The bureaucracy of the statementing procedure can prove to be a nightmare for some, less articulate, parents, while others are able to exploit and manipulate it. The whole structure and concept of family has changed in recent years. Single parents who are unable to spare time to involve themselves as much as they would like in the education of their children, may find the idea of 'parents as partners' can lead to feelings of inadequacy and cause further tension in the home.

While not seeking to devalue the importance of involving parents in the education of their children, it is necessary to be aware that it is not a straightforward issue as the Report seems to suggest, and that it may prove to be extremely problematic in some cases. Again we can see in the issue of parents, as in the other issues raised above, the fundamental failure of the Warnock Report to tackle the underlying social factors and causes governing special needs and the lack of real attention to clarification and explanation of the recommendations.

The Failings of the Legislation

It would be unfair to criticise the Warnock Report alone for the failure to tackle these issues effectively. The 1981 Education Act which followed the Report must shoulder some responsibility. Implemented, as discussed above, in a period of economic restraint, there was no money behind the Act to ensure that its recommendations were carried out. Like most educational legislation in this country it relied on persuasion and encouragement rather than taking a strong entitlement approach (Welton & Evans 1985). It failed to deal effectively with Warnock's three priority areas, post sixteen, pre school and teacher

training; it failed totally to address the one in five issue in any serious way; while imposing the duty on local authorities to educate pupils with special educational needs in ordinary schools it added the rider that this should only be done within the provision of efficient education for other children and the effective use of resources; and it failed to prescribe any national policy, thus leaving interpretation open.

As a result of this weak legislation and the failure of the Warnock Report to tackle effectively the causes of children's special educational needs, the resultant changes were piecemeal and erratic. Indeed a great deal of the ensuing debate has centred around peripheral issues related to resourcing. As Adams points out;

> *"There is every good reason to debate these issues vigorously but in the world of large bureaucracies ... it simply does not normally improve the lot of individual children and families when this general debate surrounds and obfuscates their predicament." (Adams 1986 p.19)*

It can be seen that in failing to recognise the problematic nature of many of its suggestions and recommendations, the Warnock Report was contributing further to the confusion and obfuscation of the fundamental issues it was intending to address. In many ways its attempt to move from the medical/deficit model of disability was prevented by the misinterpretation, and the lack of clarification, of many of its recommendations. The underlying concepts of the learner, learning, assessment and the curriculum, identified in the previous section, have been lost because they were not sufficiently analysed and discussed. The result has been that the debate has centred, and still continues to centre for the most part, around less fundamental organisational issues and arguments.

Entitlement

In spite of the assertion that the aims and goals of education are the same for all children irrespective of ability, the Warnock Report can be seen to have failed completely to address issues of entitlement to access to equal educational

opportunity for disabled children. Indeed by redefining handicap in terms of SEN the Report served only to further reinforce associations of deficit and dependence with these children. In attempting to replace what it saw as stigmatising and discriminatory language with new more positive terms, the Warnock Report failed to realise that the new language was itself rooted in deficit notions. Terms such as 'special' and 'need' can be seen, in fact, to have increased confusion and to have been used to legitimise further deficit practice such as compensatory approaches, rather than establishing a clear mandate for rights.

In discussing the education of disabled pupils in relation to that of other pupils the Warnock Report was proposing a very weak entitlement and failed to recognise access to a full educational opportunity as a right rather than a conditional possibility. Indeed the 1981 Education Act which made law some of the recommendations of the Report, enshrined this deficit notion in legislation by making it clear that for children with SEN, integration into the mainstream of education should be encouraged only when compatible with the effective and efficient education of other pupils. The idea of entitlement as a right is not addressed at all in spite of the rhetoric and statements such as;

> *"The purpose of education for all children is the same; the goals are the same." (DES 1978 1:4)*

and

> *"... education as we conceive it, is a good and a specifically human good, to which all human beings are entitled." (op. cit. 1:7)*

and

> *"... although the difficulties which some children encounter may dictate what they have to be taught, the disabilities of some how they have been taught, the point of their education is the same." (op. cit. 1:10)*

Rather than using these strong starting points to move to a full discussion about how the goals of education might be achieved for all children the Report merely proceeds to justify an approach based on fitting children into existing structures with extra support and resourcing to enable the process. In taking this approach it fails to address or recognise the rights of disabled pupils and assumes that modification and adaptation can address issues of inequality in

the mainstream of education. This demonstrates a clear failure to recognise the vitally important point that segregated provision for disabled pupils has only developed in the first place as a result of the mainstream failure to cater adequately for the whole range of ability and as a means of legitimising that failure (Skrtic 1991). Such methods and approaches can be seen, therefore, to be totally inadequate to the task of ensuring any possibility of equal opportunity.

The approach which underpins the Report is clearly informed by the idea of normalisation. Compensation operates in relation to opinions and concepts of what is considered to be the norm and resources are allocated on the basis of enabling the recipient to operate as normally as possible within the existing structures of the mainstream.

The Warnock Report and the subsequent 1981 Education Act, in failing to determine and define entitlement to an equal educational opportunity for disabled pupils as a right, also failed to address the issue of empowerment. The introduction of the language of SEN to the discourse ensured that empowerment did not become a focus in the discussion or debate. Educational provision and decision making based on needs, as discussed in Chapter 2 and earlier in this chapter, is in no way compatible with the notion of empowerment to demand access to equal opportunity. The major role for parents and professionals in the decision making process can also be seen to be potentially at odds with the development of the process of self advocacy proposed in Chapter 2, since the problematic nature of their involvement is not recognised.

The Warnock Report made a clear effort to move away from the dominant model of disability which had traditionally informed decision making in special education, by recognising the role played in exacerbating, and even creating, barriers for disabled people by the social context in which they operate. Here the Report can be seen to have made a valuable contribution to the development of a different way of conceptualising disability. Having highlighted the handicapping factors operating in society and in education which exacerbate difficulties experienced by disabled people, however, the Report proceeded to

recommend provisions and procedures which totally failed to address the issues of injustice and discrimination which create those handicapping factors.

Models of Disability and Curriculum

Earlier discussion, in Chapter 2, pointed to the fact that the model of disability which underpins the thinking of the Warnock Report, far from actively working to reduce these handicapping factors finds expression in the practice of compensatory approaches. This has already been discussed as merely providing an extension to the dominant traditional model and has its roots in notions of normalisation. Thus the model which informs the Report, and the subsequent 1981 Education Act, can be seen to further reinforce the model of disability as deficit and difference and diversity as problematic issues.

In its recommendations about planning and provision, the Warnock Report can be seen to be full of contradictions and inconsistencies. A great deal of emphasis is placed on the importance of beginning with the needs of the individual child. The goals of education are defined in the Report as;

> *"... first to enlarge a child's knowledge, experience and imaginative understanding, and thus his awareness of moral values and capacity for enjoyment; and secondly to enable him to enter the world after formal education is over as an active participant in society and a responsible contributor to it, capable of achieving as much independence as possible." (DES 1978 1:4)*

These goals can be seen as compatible with those discussed in Chapter 2, which underpin a model of curriculum designed to develop pupils towards their full potential, towards self determination and autonomy, a curriculum for empowerment. However, while defining these goals for all pupils the Report fails to recognise that in practice the model employed to inform mainstream education planning and provision is, in fact, at odds with these goals. The dominant model, rather than beginning with the needs of the individual child, is more centrally concerned with the content of the curriculum and with, what may be seen as, the narrowly prescribed instrumental objectives of society. The model which can be seen as underpinning much of the discussion in the

Warnock Report is clearly rooted in valuing success and achievement in a broader sense than academic ability. Chapter 4 of the Report addresses the issue of assessment as an ongoing developmental process which recognises the importance of starting with what the child *can* do rather than what he or she cannot do. There is a recommendation, based on the 'continuum of need' that these approaches to assessment should be employed by all teachers for all pupils. This is obviously an attempt to address the complex changing nature of children's needs.

These views are closely akin to those which underpin the model of curriculum, described earlier, as a process or developmental model. The Warnock Report, however, while framing much of its discussion in process and developmental language, fails to engage in any discussion about the fact that the dominant model informing mainstream educational provision is clearly very different. In failing to address this issue, while promoting maximum integration of pupils with SEN into the mainstream as desirable, the Report can be seen as responsible for sowing the seeds which resulted in the growth of considerable confusion about the implementation of integration in practice and about its aims and purposes.

Integration

In asserting that integration was the central contemporary issue in special education, the Warnock Report was not introducing a new idea. Indeed, throughout the history of special education in England and Wales, constant reference can be found to the suggestion that the education of pupils with disabilities should take place, where possible, in mainstream schools. The reality, of course, was that at the time of the Warnock Report a flourishing, segregated, special education service was firmly in place, and discussions about the integration of its pupils into the mainstream of education were not greatly in evidence. Warnock's redefinition of handicap placed the responsibility for the vast majority of pupils with special needs firmly on the shoulders of the mainstream of education. The complex nature of disability and of special needs, together with the idea of a 'continuum' of need, added to

the fact that the mainstream curriculum in precluding access to many pupils may be actually creating special needs, make this responsibility many-faceted. In drawing attention to the fact that as many as 20% of pupils may, at any time, be identified as having special needs, the Warnock Report was clearly making the point that many pupils with special needs are already part of the mainstream system. For these pupils the notion of integration as a physical move from a special establishment to a mainstream school is irrelevant, since they are already there. This issue, however, is not addressed in the Report in discussion about integration, and has often been only an afterthought in discussion and debate about integration.

The question which inevitably arises, then, but is seldom adequately addressed, is;

> is the notion of integration for pupils with special educational needs redundant for the majority of pupils as a result of the Warnock Report's redefinition of handicap?

Certainly the concept as fitting people into already existing structures would seem to be of little use if they are already there. To move to a concept of integration as one of uniting different parts into a totality perhaps (Dessent 1989) could be seen in the light of the Warnock Report to be more meaningful and relevant.

The concept of integration which underpins the Warnock Report requires expansion and change in the mainstream of education in order to cater effectively for the needs of all pupils, irrespective of ability. Such expansion must also cater for the 'continuum' of pupils' needs and for their changing nature. At the root of any system designed to cater for pupils' needs there must also be efficient and meaningful systems which are able to identify and constantly monitor and evaluate those needs.

The findings and recommendations of the Warnock Report, then, require a fundamental reassessment and a change in attitude towards pupils with special educational needs, for without such a change there can be no ownership

of responsibility for adapting and modifying provision and certainly there can be no hope of integration, as described above, becoming a reality.

A further requirement is also demanded which is that a move towards integration should be given weight and credibility by the introduction of legislation, supported by the necessary resourcing, to ensure that the required innovation is initiated and completed. The weight of legislation is an important factor in the process of change as it has real influence over the changing of organisational structures which otherwise hinder and impede innovation. Positive legislation can also assist in the process of changing attitudes by making organisational restructuring compulsory. An example of this can be seen in the struggle to encourage the wearing of seat belts. Although the campaign to change attitudes over this issue was fought hard and long, in this country, it was not until the movement was backed by the imposition of legislation that the majority of people actually started wearing them. The suggestion is not that legislation alone is enough to change attitudes or remove deep seated prejudice, but it is an important part of the process of change and certainly, when sufficiently well resourced, it can effect real organisational change which in turn can play a vital role in developing new understanding which will assist in the process of changing attitudes.

Thus it would seem that following from a re-examination of the curriculum and a change in attitudes there is a third area which requires re-thinking in order to come to a concept of integration as envisaged by the Warnock Report, that of organisational change and the resourcing of that process. This concept of integration requires that we begin educational planning and thinking from a different starting point, summed up very well in the following quotation which sees integration as,

> *"...expressed by the terms 'inclusion', 'belonging', 'unity' ... Classrooms and communities are not complete unless all children with all needs and gifts are welcome." (Dr. Marsh Forest - Centre for Integration in Education, Ontario, Canada, 1991)*

In redefining handicap, proposing that the aims and goals of education are the same for all, and emphasising the right of all individuals to participate fully in society, the Warnock Report, it seems, was recognising the need to begin educational planning from an inclusive standpoint. The focus and responsibility was placed firmly on the shoulders of society to change and expand and to acknowledge the right to participate in its fullest sense.

Unfortunately, the failure of the Report to articulate sufficiently clearly, or indeed to define adequately, a model for inclusive education underpinned by genuine notions of entitlement as a right, led instead to the establishment of a confused and muddled view about integration which in practice has, for the most part, served disabled people very poorly.

The 1981 Education Act, which followed the Warnock Report, was, to say the least, a disappointing piece of legislation. It took on board little of the real emphasis of the Warnock Report, concentrating on protecting resourcing, through the statementing process, for only approximately 2% of the potential 20% of pupils identified as having special educational needs. It gave parents the right to be involved in these assessment procedures and made LEAs responsible for carrying them out, but only as far as the efficient use of resource allows. Similarly, integration was encouraged by the Act but again only where compatible with the effective and efficient education of other pupils. The legislation, like the Report, can be seen to promote and support deficit models of disability and does not in any way address the concept of inclusion and participation as a right.

The lack of prescription in the 1981 Act led to a great deal of variety in its implementation;

> *"Because of this variation in provision ... and the different interpretations which can be put on parts of the legislation the changes accomplished have themselves varied." (Croll & Moses 1989 p.26)*

Legislation is certainly an important part of the process of change in education but weak legislation which is open to a wide variety of interpretation and which

is unclear in its direction does not provide sufficient impetus to assist a great deal in that process.

As previously discussed, the Warnock Report made a strong case for a move away from the model of disability and personal tragedy in special education. The question raised by this model when considering the possibilities of integration is; is the child good enough for the system? If the answer is no then a process of remediation is instituted to normalise the child so that he or she may fit into the system. The model proposed by the Warnock Report requires a different approach. As special needs are seen as dynamic, changing and situation specific, here the question which arises when considering integration is; is the system good enough for the child? In order to integrate using this model it is the school which must change and expand to accommodate the pupil. In order to move to a concept of integration as inclusion, as discussed in Chapters 2 & 3, however, there is a need to move even further to include a concept of equal opportunity and entitlement. Here the model is of de-segregation and the questions raised by attempts to integrate are; is the system (school/curriculum) operating a form of social control? and; are special educational needs being created by the exclusive policy and practice of education? For integration to become a reality on this model, a conscious effort must be made to replace segregative practices from the earliest planning stages and thus to begin from the standpoint that all planning should be inclusive.

Resourcing

In education, all too often, decisions to segregate are made on organisational, rather than on educational, grounds. To segregate pupils from the mainstream of education on the grounds that buildings are inaccessible, for example, is totally uneducational, but this has indeed been the case for many pupils. Similarly to segregate pupils on the grounds that there are insufficient resources available can be seen to be equally unsound educationally. An acknowledgement of the right of all children to be included requires an associated positive duty to resource accordingly. Dessent (1987) proposes strategies on positive resourcing for non segregated education. There is a need,

he says, to move away from the idea that resourcing for special educational needs only follows identification of a particular need, to a position where the whole of education is resourced sufficiently;

> *"... resourcing schemes need to be developed at the level of schools or clusters of schools. Such schemes would be based on the explicit principle of positive discrimination in the use and deployment of resources to those children with the greatest perceived needs ... Individual resource approaches would supplement these policies for a small number of pupils with severe disabilities." (Dessent 1987 p.67)*

In fact the system of individual resourcing rather than the broader whole school approach, suggested by Dessent, is the resultant solution.

This process of allocating additional resources to support the very small number of children eligible for a Statement of SEN, can be seen to have its roots in approaches which individualise disability and fail to address issues about the role played by society and the education system itself in creating SEN. The heavy emphasis on the key to successful integration lying with the provision of extra resourcing, resulted in the production of a very powerful, still prevailing, rhetoric which is constantly used to justify segregation, and often to rationalise the failure of integration in practice. This rhetoric justifies the existence of segregated units and the practice of withdrawal groups, on the grounds that they are a better way of providing the extra resourcing necessary for pupils with SEN. It legitimises the growth and expansion of segregated special schools, particularly in the area of emotional and behaviour difficulties, and more recently on the grounds that teachers in mainstream classrooms do not have the time or resources to cope effectively with those children who do not conform to norms of behaviour or reach prescribed attainment levels because of changes in the mainstream of education resulting from the 1988 Education Act. It can be seen, also, to be responsible for the sort of measures which lead to adaptation and modification of the mainstream curriculum, irrespective of its appropriateness for disabled pupils, or indeed any pupils. It may be seen, indeed, to be responsible for ensuring that the mainstream of education is regarded as essentially suitable and effective for the majority of

pupils, thus preventing any real critique and disguising the reality, which is that the mainstream of education can, in fact, be seen to be failing to meet the needs of large numbers of its pupils.

Concluding Comments

Critical analysis of the concepts which underpin the Warnock Report and its recommendations, demonstrates then, that far from clarifying the issue of the right of disabled pupils to a fair and equal educational opportunity, it was responsible for contributing to the establishment of a rhetoric of integration which failed totally to set the agenda for ensuring that the aims and goals of education were the same for all children irrespective of ability. Indeed it failed to articulate, or even to recognise the need to articulate, a clear conceptual underpinning for the achievement of these ends. The influence of this rhetoric cannot be ignored or underestimated. For it has become commonly accepted that the integration of pupils into the mainstream of education is desirable and that the chief stumbling block to its success is inadequate resourcing in terms of materials and staff time, a theme which will be discussed further in relation to more recent policy and legislation.

CHAPTER 5

THE 1988 EDUCATION ACT IMPLICATIONS FOR PUPILS WITH SEN

Introduction

The purpose of the previous sections of this work has been to provide a framework for a detailed investigation of and discussion about the concept of integration in the current educational scene. It has been important to view the issues from a perspective which takes account of what has, or indeed what has not, taken place in the area of SEN over the past twenty years or so, in terms of the development of opinions and attitudes as well as in terms of organisational change in the education system. It is indeed vital to any process of critical analysis to provide a context in order that the complexities of the discussion and of the arguments can be fully comprehended and so that a proper evaluation of the issues can be made.

The period since 1988 has seen a large number of rapid changes in education. Many of these changes have already been seen to have been made too quickly and without sufficient care or consideration for the views of those directly involved with their implementation. What is perhaps most alarming from the educational point of view is that many of these changes have taken place with

little or no real attempt to create the opportunity for any genuine informed debate, and with little or no consultation with educational professionals. Most worrying of all is the scant regard for, and lack of recognition of, the importance of sound educational theoretical underpinning to justify the changes. Many educational writers are deeply concerned (Kelly 1990, Lawton 1988, Chitty 1988) and express a profound dissatisfaction with the lack of any real critical evaluation of the planning and the implementation of the provisions of the 1988 Education Act.

Since 1988, as a result of the Education Reform Act, we have been subjected, in education, to a series of hastily implemented innovations, many of which ignore years of valuable research and experience, many of which seem to have been deliberately aimed at reducing and impoverishing provision and all of which seem to be inspired by political and economic expedience, rather than sound educational reasoning.

For children with SEN the Education Reform Act raises many vitally important issues. The National Curriculum; devolved budgets; opting out; the demise of the Local Education Authorities; all these have important ramifications for the educational opportunities of all children, but especially for the group identified as having SEN, in particular, by presupposing and imposing a model of curriculum which has been shown to be incompatible with any notion of integration as inclusive. The curriculum itself with its associated assessment requirements, the introduction of league tables and competition as motivation for the development of 'good' schools and 'good' teaching practice, changes in initial teacher training, changes in the arrangements for funding education, indeed the whole review of education and its purposes and practices, directly contradict many of the developments which had been taking place in the theory and practice of education for pupils with SEN.

> *"Thus no account has been taken either of the changed concept of educational need which has emerged as a result of the Warnock Report or of the changes in educational practice and provision for pupils with special needs to which that concept has led ... we have a set of policies which not only ignore but also fly in the face of available evidence,*

> *which place political interest before practical wisdom, and whose effect will be to set back those advances which have been made in recent years in both the principle and the practice of education for pupils with SEN. And so again we note the intellectual and/or morally questionable ideology of the new policies." (Kelly 1990 p.102)*

That a great deal of progress had been made in the practice of SEN before the 1988 Education Act is debatable, as previous chapters of this work have argued. What is certain, however, is that a great deal of genuine debate in the area of SEN and, in particular, about integration had been taking place since the Warnock Report and indeed began some time before it. In planning and implementing the policy of the 1988 Education Act little of this seems to have been recognised. Indeed the first reaction to the legislation from those working in the area was, in many cases, considerable alarm that SEN had apparently been forgotten, or at best only considered as an afterthought.

Subsequent reactions to the Act have provoked a great deal of debate from professionals as well as from parents and other associated bodies which has resulted in the production of some literature about how to adapt the National Curriculum and its procedures for pupils with SEN, and in 1993 we had yet another Education Act concerned this time, for the most part, with redefining the provisions of the 1981 Education Act, with regard to the Statementing procedure, in the light of current practice. The 1993 Act also, more importantly, recommends a national code of practice for SEN which may well serve to redress some of the deficits of the 1988 Education Act with regard to pupils with SEN.

While not seeking to undermine the importance and relevance of this Act, which will be discussed in more detail later, it is interesting to note that the issues do not seem to have been on the agenda at the planning stages of policy making but to have come about as a result of the recognition that the whole area of SEN had been omitted, in any real sense, from the original blueprint. It is, of course, unfair to imply that pupils with SEN had been completely forgotten as indeed sections 19 to 22 of the 1988 Education Act are concerned solely with the provisions for suspending and modifying the National Curriculum for

pupils identified as having SEN by means of a Statement, accounting for about 2% of the 20% identified by the Warnock Report as experiencing SEN. Provision is also included for temporary arrangements where the need arises due to medical or emotional crisis. Once again, however, the large number of pupils, Warnock's 18%, experiencing SEN seem to have been well and truly forgotten as these arrangements concern, for the most part, that very small percentage, less than 2% possessing a Statement.

Paradoxically, it is important to recognise the 1988 Education Act as the first piece of really positive legislation for all pupils. There is an entitlement enshrined in it for all. All pupils, irrespective of ability, are entitled to a broad balanced differentiated curriculum, including the National Curriculum. What is not recognised in this entitlement, however, is that the model of curriculum provided in the National Curriculum, which is driven by a very narrow view of assessment, depends upon motivation through competition, is a traditional transmission model based on knowledge as facts to be acquired and is exclusive and indeed inaccessible to many pupils. Entitlement without access can be seen as a very hollow right.

Cynics might be inclined to note, at this point, that the inclusion in the 1988 Education Act of provisions for modification and exemption from the National Curriculum in fact implies that it was recognised from the beginning that entitlement was used as a relative term, and that far from being positive legislation the 'let out' clauses for pupils with SEN make it once again 'deficit'. What is abundantly clear, however, is that planning, such as it was, never began from an inclusive point of view and that, as in previous legislation, pupils with SEN were regarded as a group to be accommodated, fitted in and normalised rather than the educational provision being expanded and developed to provide in any real sense an educational entitlement for all. No discussion or debate was engendered about the appropriateness of the model of curriculum which underpins the National Curriculum and its potential to exacerbate and create SEN was never recognised or acknowledged.

The integration of pupils with SEN is now, therefore, beset with many further complications and difficulties. The 1993 Education Act firmly states, as did other legislation before it, that it is both desirable and to be striven for, but is this realistic, or indeed desirable in the light of previous discussion, in the current educational scene? In order to investigate this question fully it will be necessary to consider in more detail some of the issues raised by the 1988 Education Act and indeed the 1993 Education Act. In addition to examining the implications of these major innovations it will also be important to look at and review some of the wider changes which have been taking place in education and in educational thinking. The reorganisation and redefinition of initial teacher training; the changes in funding for education; the re-emphasis of the importance of vocational issues in education; the rights of parents are all influencing factors. Of course, none of these issues can be evaluated without acknowledging the political context in which they have arisen. The 'back to basics' campaign waged by the Government and the shifting of responsibility from the state to the individual are important influences on educational change. Together with the underlying promotion of competition as a motivating factor and the development of the model of the 'free market' in education, these pressures have had enormous implications for SEN and for disability. No debate about, or attempt to define and articulate, integration can take place without careful consideration of the implications of this context. Indeed the inadequacy and failure of current education policy and provision to address the needs of pupils with SEN demonstrates clearly the urgent need for a redefinition and reconstruction of the concept of integration which may clearly and urgently inform future policy and provision.

The National Curriculum

Possibly the most familiar and obviously influential part of the 1988 Education Act concerns the establishment of the National Curriculum. In fact the Act was also concerned with more wide ranging changes in the organisation of education, the enormous implications of which we have only just begun to experience in practice (at the time of writing). Some of these will be discussed further at a later point, but it is important first to look at the fundamental

changes to the curriculum and to analyse and discuss their impact on pupils with SEN.

The call for a common curriculum is not new. Indeed it has been a central focus for educational debate and discussion for many years (Aldrich 1988, White 1988, Lawton 1983). In the 1970's and the early 1980's Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) published a series of documents concerned with the curriculum (HMSO 1977, 1978, 1981, 1983). These papers suggested that there was a need for a common curriculum for all pupils, in order to ensure a more equal educational opportunity. Clyde Chitty (1988) traces the development of the ideas which emanated from HMI in their concern to generate debate and discussion in the area of curriculum development and reform. He points out that they, as a body, clearly disassociated themselves from the growing suspicion that the Government, also concerned with the development of a whole curriculum, was in fact principally inspired by notions of centralised control over the curriculum and indeed education. He quotes from Curriculum 11-16 (DES 1977);

> *"These papers have been overtaken by events, and it is important that neither their content or purpose should be misunderstood ... There is no intention anywhere in the papers which follow, of advocating a centrally controlled or dictated curriculum ... The group of HM Inspectors who wrote these papers felt that the case for a common curriculum, as it is presented here, deserves careful attention and that such a curriculum, worked out in the ways suggested, would help to ameliorate the ... irrationalities which at present exist without entailing any kind of centralised control." (DES 1977 p.6)*

The papers referred to suggest a redefinition and reshaping of the curriculum with eight areas of experience to be used as the basis for that development. They also go on to present a model interpreted in terms of traditional school subjects, but point out very clearly that it would only be acceptable when it expressed a full understanding of the underlying aims of the curriculum;

> *"Any framework to be constructed for the curriculum must be able to accommodate shifts of purpose, content and method in subjects and of emphasis between subjects. In other words, it is not proposed that*

> *schools should plan and construct a common curriculum in terms of subject labels only ... Rather it is necessary to look through the subject or discipline to the areas of experience or knowledge to which it may provide access and to the skills and attitudes which it may assist to develop." (ibid)*

Fundamental issues raised are those of entitlement and balance in the curriculum and of the need to provide a range of experiences and skills, academic, technical and vocational, in order to achieve this balance.

Certainly, in their documentation, HMI provide a rationale for a whole curriculum which strives to address the needs of all pupils and which recognises the demands of a rapidly changing and developing society. Their discussions and arguments highlight many important issues about how balance might be achieved in the curriculum, about the purposes and aims of the curriculum, about the possibilities and dangers of control, and about the associated changes and developments necessary. In general the discussion is firmly rooted in educational arguments and professional approaches. The guiding motivation for change is clearly a desire to promote more equality of opportunity and indeed to ensure and promote quality in education through the curriculum. Emphasis is laid throughout the documentation on the educational experiences of the pupils and their value.

Running alongside this debate, however, it is possible to identify the growing development of a very differently inspired call for a common curriculum. For Chitty (1988) this finds expression in what he refers to as the Department of Education & Science (DES) concept of a Core Curriculum. This model is firmly rooted in a notion of core and option and is conceived in terms of traditional subject areas. It is possible to trace this model back through the history of the past hundred years or so of education in this country and to identify it pretty much as the model in operation in most secondary education (Aldrich 1988, Kelly 1990).

The idea of a core curriculum was mooted in Callaghan's, now famous, Ruskin College speech (1976), and was taken up after the speech, very soon finding its way into official documents (HMSO 1977, 1978).

The idea continued to be developed in the DES and gradually emerged in a series of papers published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO) during the period. What emerged was an argument for a core curriculum consisting of English, Mathematics and Science, with a possible modern language, and that in addition there should be foundation subjects. What became very clear in the debate was the growing desire for central government to have control over the curriculum, its content and organisation, in order to ensure that 'standards' in education were raised (DES 1987).

Discussion about a common curriculum and its advantages and problems can be seen, then, to be long standing. Many have contributed to the debate and certainly a strongly persuasive argument has been made for its possibilities in offering more equal opportunities for all pupils. However, the above discussion shows very clearly that it is possible for a common curriculum to take extremely different forms in its expression, organisation and delivery. Different, conflicting lines of argument result in different proposals in terms of the model of curriculum, as discussed in earlier chapters of this work, and it can be seen very clearly that the view of education, and its aims and purposes, taken will inevitably influence the resulting curriculum model. Kelly (1990) distinguishes broadly two approaches towards, or views about, the goals and purposes of education;

> the purpose of education is to turn children into certain kinds of adults, the purpose of education is to support and enable the personal development of the individual

The former approach takes the view that education is about initiating children into the norms, values and customs of society, in order to produce the sort of citizens required by that society. Thus education is a process of socialisation. In the second approach education is the development of individual capacities and is concerned with broadening horizons and enriching life. Education is a process of development and aims to enable children to develop their full potential so that they may become self determining and autonomous; education can also be seen here as a process which aims to empower pupils.

Clearly these views and approaches with their totally different aims and goals for education will lead to very different expressions in terms of educational provision,

> *"...different views of education will lead to quite different forms of educational provision - different kinds of content, different school subjects, even to different views of the place of school subjects in education and perhaps also to different kinds of structure to our education systems." (Kelly 1990 p.29)*

It takes very little imagination to envisage the curriculum model which might have emerged from the approach promoted by HMI in the early 1980's. Here we are presented with a view which is very much in tune with the second approach described above. The emphasis on the importance and quality of pupils' experiences, together with the desire to provide wider access to a broad and, above all, balanced curriculum sits very comfortably with notions of developing children's potential. The DES approach, on the other hand, is very much in tune with the first approach and the model which has emerged as the National Curriculum certainly finds its origins here.

While the origins of the National Curriculum can certainly be traced to the arguments presented above, its justification, in terms of documentation, can be criticised severely for its lack of underpinning (Kelly 1990). There is no recognition of the need to make any attempt to articulate the underlying view of education which informs the model or indeed to offer any plausible educational argument for its implementation. Kelly makes the point that nowhere in the documentation or in the statements made about the National Curriculum do we find a clear exposition of the underlying rationale. Indeed, he goes on to point out that many of the statements are ambiguous and fail to recognise that they are dealing with extremely problematic issues, often involving controversial value judgement. As an example he cites the frequently stated aim of the National Curriculum to raise standards,

> *"... yet at no stage is any attempt made to define these 'standards' with which the National Curriculum is to be compared." (op. cit. p.54)*

He concludes;

> *"In attempting ... analysis we come to the conclusion first that its [the National Curriculum] documentation lacks both conceptual clarity and conceptual coherence, that it appears to offer a rhetoric which is both at odds with the reality and inconsistent with itself." (op. cit. p.67)*

John White is even more scathing in his criticism;

> *"If the secretaries of state had taken a broader view, had seen that national curriculum planning must begin with the aims and then work outwards to their manifold realisation, they would not have been left with this intellectually impoverished jumble of documented ideas hyperbolized as the 'National Curriculum'." (White 1988 p.8)*

The National Curriculum can be seen, then, to be severely flawed in that it fails to articulate a clear rationale or to identify the ideology which underpins it and that as a result it makes no statement about its educational goals and purposes. What is clear, however, is that it is underpinned by strong views and opinions and it is from these that the model of planning and provision is derived. The whole long-standing debate about what should or might constitute a common curriculum and its justification seems to have been largely ignored as has the discussion about breadth and balance in the curriculum. In fact there has been scant attention, if any, paid to sound educational debate about curriculum and curriculum development. The model which has emerged lacks a clear rationale but is nevertheless influenced strongly by a very instrumental view of the purposes of education. It is informed by an approach which centres around preparation of children for adult life, the life of work. It is heavily vocational and stresses the importance of preparation for citizenship. The process of education is very definitely seen as socialisation into a prescribed set of norms and values. The model is narrow and prescriptive and makes no secret of the fact that it is centrally controlled and dictated.

Nowhere in the National Curriculum do we find emphasis on the value of individual development towards autonomy. Nor is there any recognition that

curricula can be expressed in other than traditional subject areas. The areas of experience recommended by HMI have been lost and the core + foundation subjects model very firmly adopted.

The Political Context

Reference was made at the beginning of this section to the need to look at the emergence of the National Curriculum, and its implications, within the political context, in order to provide a full picture before moving to the issue of integration and the situation for pupils with SEN. It has been clearly shown that far from engaging in genuine educational debate and discussion about a common curriculum and its form in practice, the planners simply continued in the direction already determined in the papers which emerged from the DES in the 1970's and 1980's. Spurred on by Callaghan's Ruskin speech (1976), the so called Great Debate in education continued to emphasise the connections between education and the world of work, economic survival, competition, the efficiency of trade and industry. Conclusions were drawn about the need to centralise control over education to ensure that these issues were effectively addressed. Lawton (1983) cites as evidence of the growing desire for centralisation of control over the curriculum and educational planning by the Government, the abolition of the Schools Council in 1982. This professionally representative advisory body was replaced by two advisory bodies, one for curriculum and one for examinations, with members nominated by the Secretary for State himself. Lawton goes on to point out Sir Keith Joseph's (then Secretary for State for Education) public declaration in 1982 that schools should teach the moral virtue of profit as an indication of a developing desire to steer education and the curriculum centrally towards the development of free enterprise and market economy, the prevailing political ideology of the 1980's.

While recognising that education was ripe for change during this period Lawton makes the point;

> *"There would certainly have been some kind of control over the curriculum. But what in fact happened after 1979 was a mixture of*

> *bureaucratic centralism and New Right ideology combined with reducing public expenditure ... restricting the powers of bureaucrats and the LEAs (Local Education Authorities) and introducing market competition into education by means of consumerist - rhetoric about parental choice." (Lawton 1989 p.60)*

There is no doubt that the prevailing instrumentalist conservatism in political thinking of the period in which the National Curriculum was being developed is reflected in its provisions (Kelly 1990). A central concern about what education is 'for' rather than with what it 'is' is clear. The aim of education is seen as being,

> *"... to secure for all pupils in maintained schools a curriculum which equips them with the knowledge and skills and understanding that they need for adult life and employment." (DES 1987 p.3)*

This is a narrow view indeed, again rooted in the notion that the purposes of education are to prepare for work in society and for adulthood rather than being planned according to the developmental needs of the child. Kelly (1990) points out that the narrow, instrumental, simplistic view of vocationalism reflected in these aims is inappropriate for the rapidly changing world in which we find ourselves where adaptability, flexibility and the ability to collaborate and to be creative might be more relevant qualities to strive for. He concludes,

> *".. the newly devised National Curriculum in the UK emphasises an instrumental view of schooling, exercises tight control of the content of the curriculum and repeats what, as long as 20 years ago, was dubbed the 'vocational fallacy'." (Kelly 1990 p.48)*

Yet another political influence which must be recognised is the growth of commercialism, reflected in the language and imagery of education (Kelly 1992). Schools are portrayed as factories with teachers responsible for delivering a curriculum assessed in terms of quality control and productivity;

> *"That the commercial metaphor reflects the values and attitudes of the architects of current policies is clear from those policies themselves. We have only to note the emphasis that recent years have seen on*

> *school management as opposed to curriculum management - and on the training of head teachers as managers." (Kelly 1992 p.29)*

These very strong political influences on the curriculum have important implications for the resultant provision and its development and organisation and indeed for all those engaged in it at all levels. The implications for that particular group identified as having SEN are in many ways extremely worrying.

> *"The emphasis on economic productivity and competitive commercialism reflects a move away from the social service function of education towards a view that educational provision is justified mainly, if not entirely, as a 'national investment'. For economic productivity will not be served by the expenditure of relatively scarce resources on pupils who demonstrate that they have little to contribute to it ... Properly competitive farmers do not feed up the runts of any litter, they certainly do not offer the same level of care and provision they give to the sturdy products ... The concept of equality of treatment is not compatible with that of competition." (Kelly 1990 p.51)*

The National Curriculum and Pupils with SEN

Having looked at the National Curriculum, its origins and underpinning, it is important to evaluate that exploration in the light of the analysis of central concepts in Chapter 2.

An attempt was made earlier to discuss the issue of integrating pupils with SEN into the mainstream of education from the perspective of models of disability. The case was made that in order to facilitate any form of educational integration we need to move away from the traditional deficit, medical model of disability, rooted in the notion that deficit is within the child. Here, in order to integrate the child, the deficit must be made up, the child must be normalised in order that he or she is made fit for the mainstream education system.

In some ways thinking, and even practice, in SEN has begun to move away from this model towards a contextual model, Here it is the education system itself which is under scrutiny and which is seen as being in need of change. The context of the mainstream of education is seen as precluding possibilities

for integration, and indeed is often seen as responsible for creating segregation by its practices, organisation and provision.

The third model discussed, described as the equal opportunities model, recognises the fundamental right to a full educational opportunity for all, irrespective of ability. This model is underpinned by a notion of inclusion rather than an integration or desegregation approach which are both seen as deficit approaches. This requires that the mainstream of education is expanded and developed in order to provide access to all, to value wider notions of success and achievement, to celebrate difference rather than to try to eliminate it. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, this model is, of course, as yet, barely recognised and is indeed only just beginning to have any kind of impact on thinking in society at all. Recent attempts to pass non discriminative disability legislation through Parliament (The Civil Rights [Disabled Persons] Bill, October 1994) demonstrate just how little this approach to disability is even considered. Indeed debate and discussion about disability in general, and certainly with regard to educational practice, seems to have moved very little from the first model.

The National Curriculum, with its narrow content base, its emphasis on traditional academic subjects, its instrumental bureaucratic aims, its age-related testing procedures (which will be discussed more fully later) and its notions of economic accountability seems to have little to offer in terms of the sort of curriculum expansion required to make integration, let alone inclusion, any kind of possibility.

As discussed previously in this chapter, the model informing the National Curriculum, a view of education as initiation into the norms, values and customs of society in order to produce certain types of citizens, can only serve to perpetuate the status quo. Work in the area of SEN (Tomlinson 1982, Barton 1988) highlights the very worrying idea that society is guilty of deliberately setting up norms in order to exclude certain groups, the social creation of SEN referred to previously in Chapter 4. What hope is there then for the development of positive, non discriminatory attitudes towards disability

through a curriculum designed to socialise its pupils into the narrow instrumental view of society?

A curriculum informed by an alternative view of education as supporting and enabling personal development towards autonomy, informed by notions of education as growth towards achievement of full potential, through experience, interaction and problem solving, offers real potential, expanding and enhancing education to include and provide genuine access for all children. A move away from the rigid stratification of the curriculum into traditional content areas, expressed as subjects, to a broader approach, for example the areas of experience suggested by HMI (DES 1977), might possibly have opened the way to a much wider range of possibilities. A curriculum framed in terms of the quality of processes rather than concentrated on the end products might have offered some possibilities for the removal of some of the stumbling blocks which stand in the way of integrating pupils with SEN. Indeed an approach to curriculum centred around learning processes and the development of learners might enable the redefinition, and even the total removal of, the stigma attached to the label SEN. Such an approach carries with it implicitly the idea that children inevitably progress at different rates and in different ways, and places value on the enrichment of difference and diversity in education rather than viewing them as problems to be eliminated at all costs.

As we have seen, however, the National Curriculum, in spite of professing that it is a curriculum for all, contains none of these features. It is founded on the view that the content and not the pupils, is the central focus, the role of teachers is one of delivery and of quality control through product testing, and the aim is to produce adults who will fit into rather than develop and enhance society. There is a heavy emphasis on the academic content of subjects and on literacy and numeracy as the means for expressing, and testing, achievement. Already reviews have taken place as a result of the unwieldy nature of this content base (SCAA 1993), but little has been achieved in this process in terms of redefinition of the curriculum. Certainly there has been some slimming down of content, some reduction of Attainment Targets, some simplification of testing procedures and some reduction of the prescriptive elements of the National

Curriculum. None of this review process has addressed the issues discussed above about the inappropriateness of the underlying model. The assumption now seems to be that discussion and evaluation of curriculum begins with the National Curriculum. There is little recognition in the debate, by teachers, parents, educational organisations or politicians, that there might be a need to find a totally different approach, indeed a different model.

The National Curriculum is not just narrow and exclusive for those pupils with SEN, it offers little in terms of variety or diversity for any pupils. The narrow academic base can be seen to be geared towards a very limited vocationalism, that is towards the professions. Little is included which can be termed widely vocational in the sense used by our neighbours in Europe. Indeed colleagues working in schools are finding it increasingly difficult to present it in an interesting and relevant form to many of their pupils and find a great deal of disaffection at the heavy academic emphasis.

For pupils with SEN the National Curriculum can be seen to present a double edged problem. On the one hand its elitist academic emphasis has the potential to reinforce and increase their difficulties, in addition to limiting their life opportunities. On the other hand it offers little possibility for the expansion of notions of success or for the recognition of other than academic achievement. It is by its very nature an exclusive model. At the same time the political influences, expressed in terms of productivity, competition and commercialism, leave little room for those pupils described by Kelly (1990 p.51) as the 'runts of the litter'.

Assessment

While it is somewhat artificial to divorce the topic of assessment from the discussion about curriculum models, planning and provision, for the purpose of this investigation it is important for the sake of clarity to examine it in some detail as a separate issue. This is particularly relevant in view of the discussion in Chapters 2 and 3 about the implications for disabled pupils of the way in which we regard educational success and achievement. It is in fact definitely

in the interests of all those engaged, currently, in implementing, teaching the National Curriculum, and indeed those at the receiving end of the process, the pupils and parents, to look very closely at the model of assessment which underpins it, in order to understand the implications for the whole of education.

The National Curriculum is clearly driven by a particular view of assessment, its procedures and its purposes. A statement of the perceived importance of assessment and the role of teachers in the process can be found in the National Curriculum 5-16 (DES 1978),

> *"... at the heart of the assessment process there will be nationally prescribed tests done by all pupils to supplement the individual teachers' assessment. Teachers will administer and mark these, but their marking and assessments overall will be externally moderated." (DES 1978, Para 29)*

Indeed it has become very clear that testing is at the heart of the National Curriculum assessment policy. During the last few years we have become familiar with the idea, promoted at every opportunity by the Government, that testing is closely linked with raising standards in education, their professed and much publicised aim. The rhetoric is that, through a national programme of standardised tests, with published results, schools will be driven to compete and thus to achieve higher standards. The contention is that competition will lead to raising levels of achievement and that we must, therefore, have a straightforward system of standardised tests which enables results to be quickly and easily compared.

Whether testing does in fact raise educational standards is, however, a very controversial, problematic and debatable issue. Research in the area is ongoing and seems to have reached no conclusions. What is certain is that published lists of test results provide very useful statistical information, which can be used, or indeed misused, to identify 'good' and 'bad' schools and of course 'good' and 'bad' teachers, and can be used as a yardstick for accountability.

These simplistic, rather illogical, conclusions are, without doubt, extremely misleading and have become a subject for a great deal of discussion and debate. Research indicates that the usefulness of simplistic testing as a measure of ability is variable. Standardised tests linked to chronological stages are inevitably questionable in the light of the work of the developmental psychologists such as Piaget and Bruner. The linking of test results to competition and comparison between schools is therefore extremely worrying.

> *"Most people who work in or with education are fully cognisant of the danger of assessment. They will know too that successful teaching requires careful diagnosis of where the particular learner is at that stage of the enterprise. Such diagnosis, even for the very young children, will of course mean carefully recorded evaluation. Eventually such evaluation may form part of a profile of the child or of her development. But the danger of the 'tail wagging the dog' is real enough. Testing and certificates can often pervert the goals of education." (Gammage 1992 p.5)*

The above comments from a paper given by Philip Gammage at the University of Nottingham raise important concerns about the purposes of assessment and its nature. The Task Group for Testing and Assessment (TGAT) set up to advise upon and devise a national testing system, made it clear that assessment should include formative elements so that,

> *"... the positive achievements of a pupil may be recognised and discussed and appropriate next steps planned." (DES 1988 Para 23)*

Diagnostic testing should also be a part of any assessment package,

> *"... through which learning difficulties may be scrutinised and classified so that appropriate remedial help and guidance can be provided." (ibid)*

While the idea of remediation does not sit comfortably with the previous discussions in this work about integration, inclusion and moves towards equal opportunity approaches in SEN, the intention to devise a full assessment system using all the different methods of assessing pupils' achievements and

progress in a very positive way is clear. The TGAT Report placed heavy emphasis also on the fact that summative assessment should also be used, but at the age of 16+ and then,

> *"... for the recording of the overall achievement of a pupil in a systematic way." (ibid)*

The role of the teacher was stressed in the Report as being of paramount importance in the processes of assessment. Emphasis was placed on the need to recognise effort as well as achievement and to increase pupils' awareness of their own abilities, strengths and weaknesses through self assessment.

One might have expected that these recommendations would have led to a system of national assessment more akin to the positive profiling approach described by Philip Gammage. What resulted, however, was the unwieldy, very time consuming Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs) which were greeted with utter dismay by teachers, who for some considerable time were in conflict about their implementation. The problem resulting from this conflict is, however, that the slimming down of the tests into short, sharp, pencil and paper, summative tests, which a cynic might suggest was always the intended aim, may result in the fact that pupils' achievements will not be in any way fairly or comprehensively reported or recorded. On the other hand, reporting of all the formative and diagnostic processes, which are already assessed implicitly as part of 'good' teaching practice, is an unwieldy and bureaucratic time-consuming exercise.

In spite of the importance of the issues raised by the above discussion the route which we seem to be taking is the former, reduction of assessment to short, sharp, paper and pencil, tests. This is indeed a depressing prospect, which will not, as Gammage puts it,

> *"... defend children from the gross and improper view that comparisons with others (and possibly the associated notion of failure) are important elements in any worthwhile curriculum. ... At the close of the 20th Century we seem obsessed by qualifications, by hurdles jumped, honours amassed, certificates gained, skills achieved. This attitude does enormous damage to the process of being educated,*

since it puts emphasis on crudely measured outputs rather than emphasising the constant worth of what is going on. It is by its very nature designed to produce gradings, lists, stratifications of the population, so that whilst there may be joyful winners, there are innumerable losers; and these latter may be turned off the really educative possibilities for them for the rest of their lives."(Gammage 1992 p.5)

The assessment procedures of the National Curriculum seem to be designed indeed to set up hurdles for pupils to jump. The tests are geared to finding out what pupils cannot do rather than what they can do and offer little opportunity for acknowledging success and achievement, however small, outside the narrow academic prescribed subject base.

What then does this mean for pupils with SEN, Gammage's 'innumerable losers'? When considering the implications of assessment procedures for pupils with SEN it is possible to develop two themes;

- the role they play in exacerbating and even creating SEN;
- their exclusive nature which militates against inclusion for pupils with SEN.

Because the testing procedures are standardised and take no account of a number of vitally important extenuating factors, large numbers of pupils will inevitably fail to reach the prescribed levels at the prescribed times and will therefore be identified as failures;

"The whole idea of standardised testing, tied to chronological stages has questionable value if we take into account the large body of research available in the area of child development. The whole question of the influence of home, social and economic factors must also be raised. Many children have impoverished and deprived early experience, materially and in terms of social development and relationships ... For some children there is just not enough time to provide the vitally important opportunities to experience, to play, to develop social skills before they are plunged into the formal assessment procedures." (Lloyd 1994 p.187)

Discussions with colleagues in schools, working with children, many of whom are already identified as having SEN, highlight grave worries and concerns about the pressure being put on the time available to enrich pupils' experience, to encourage play, to enable the development of interactive language and social skills. They also point to the inappropriateness of the levels of attainment and of the activities suggested for those levels. Some feel that pupils are often unable to interpret or understand, without a great deal of help, what is being asked of them by the test questions. These views are endorsed by the findings of the National Curriculum Council's (NCC) review of SEN (DES 1993) where the teachers interviewed reported that;

> *"Links between Key Stages and chronological age are ... unrealistic for this group of pupils ... priorities such as speech therapy, extra time on reading and mathematics and life skills means that time available for the National Curriculum is reduced." (DES 1993 p.5)*

These comments raise doubts about the value of the testing procedures for a large group of pupils, particularly when we recall the estimate of the Warnock Report (1978) that as many as 20% of children at any time may be experiencing SEN. It would seem that the setting up of hurdles of testing, at 7, 11, 14 and 16, has the potential to create a whole new group of pupils with SEN. One wonders also about the motivation of the child who having failed to reach the prescribed levels of attainment at the age of 7 has to face the even higher hurdle at 11, 14 and so on. In the not too distant past we experienced the often damaging, disaffecting, results of those pupils who failed to jump the 11+ hurdle, what then are the implications for the fallers at 7?

If we turn to the second theme, the exclusive nature of the testing procedures, an even more worrying picture emerges for pupils with SEN. The linking of test results to competition and comparison between schools creates real problems. To keep pupils who are struggling, or who have already been identified as having SEN, within a system where they are subject to the testing procedures, may lower and distort results. Teachers need to devote extra time to those pupils with disabilities or learning difficulties, which may be seen to disadvantage other pupils. Testing is time consuming and daunting enough

in the case of those pupils who seem to be making average, or above average, progress, in rerlation to the others it becomes for many teachers a total nightmare.

There is some growing concern about the number of pupils being statemented as having Emotional and Behaviour Difficulties (EBD), (BBC TV Public Eye, May 1991). This may be attributed to many causes and factors, but it would certainly seem possible that some of those causes might be attributed to the issues discussed above.

Another indicator of the exclusive nature of the approach to assessment taken by the National Curriculum is the narrow view it takes of achievement. The work of Bruner and Eisner has been cited earlier (Chapter 2) as pointing to the enormous value to be gained, for all pupils, from expanding and extending our understanding and the value that we place on achievement beyond those expressed in the traditional forms of literacy and numeracy. Work currently taking place in schools in America (Gardner 1991) points to the value to be gained for pupils from recognising that literacy and numeracy are not the only modes through which we are able to express our abilities and to the need to place more emphasis in the curriculum on music, drama, oracy etc. as means of expression.

Certainly if we are to move towards the possibility of inclusive education and to providing wider access to educational opportunities for more pupils we should be broadening our concepts of the assessment of achievement and not narrowing them.

> *"In the current educational climate with its constant emphasis on testing and raising academic standards there is a real danger that other qualities will be excluded, or at least undervalued. The narrow view being promoted of assessment as standardised testing of children's abilities to read, write and cope with numbers, is potentially a process for expanding the number of children we brand as failures, or as having SEN. By developing more sensitive, responsive teacher-led assessment procedures, it is possible to credit more children with more success. It is possible to see that while a child may be struggling with the formal processes of reading or writing, he or she may be at an advanced stage of creative development. The careful*

> *nurturing of self-esteem through the process of achievement and success can reduce a child's special needs considerably. At the same time by widening the concept of what we mean by success, by valuing diversity and difference, we can make a very real reduction in the number of children we regard as having SEN." (Lloyd 1994 p.192)*

The heavy emphasis of the National Curriculum and its associated assessment procedures on academic achievement can be seen to be very exclusive and certainly elitist. For pupils with SEN there is little on offer and indeed the above discussions leads to the conclusion that there is the potential for the creation of an increasing number of SEN for more pupils. The 1988 Education Act, however, purports to provide an entitlement for all pupils to a full educational opportunity.

In the light of the previous discussions about models of curriculum planning appropriate to support integration, conceived as inclusion and as a process aimed at ensuring genuine entitlement for disabled pupils to equal educational opportunities, the National Curriculum can be seen to be, at best, woefully inadequate, and at worst totally incompatible. Indeed there would seem to be little, or no, attempt to address issues related to inclusion, as discussed in Chapter 3, at all. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the National Curriculum is rooted in a narrow, instrumental model of curriculum planning, based on content and conceived in terms of traditional, narrow, academic subjects. Its assessment procedures are informed by notions of competition, and survival of the fittest, and the political context in which this curriculum has been developed is one of the free market. These are all factors geared towards exclusive practice, and indeed with the potential to create more SEN, and there is little place, if any, for valuing the whole range of differing ability as enrichment. Indeed, the measurement of educational success against narrow academic criteria in order to 'weed out' failures, can be seen as commensurate with encouraging pupils to strive towards conformity rather than celebrating diversity.

The whole model is inappropriate for the encouragement of inclusive practice and indeed it can be seen as having the potential to address educational

entitlement to an equal opportunity for only a very small minority of pupils. It is a model which places emphasis and value on a very narrow concept of success and achievement, and which, therefore, fails to recognise abilities which children may have. It is firmly rooted in a model of disability as deficit, to be compensated for, which fails totally, because of its assessment procedures, to make any genuine attempt to include. It can be seen to be, in fact, the antithesis of a curriculum for empowerment for all but the very few who manage to survive its exclusive assessment procedures.

The 1988 Education Reform Act was not only, however, concerned with the introduction of the National Curriculum. Other important changes were made and the re-organisation of education which it also began must also be considered with regard to implications for integration and educational opportunity for pupils with SEN. The next part of this chapter is devoted, therefore, to the wider implications of the Act.

The Wider Implications of the Education Reform Act for Children with SEN

The 1988 Education Act has as its title the Education Reform Act. The idea of reform carries with it the notion of change from something less good to something better. Implicit in the word reform is an idea of improvement. As the preceding discussion with relation to that part of the Act concerning the establishment of the National Curriculum clearly shows, the changes brought about may not be seen to ensure an improvement in educational opportunity for all, or indeed many, children. Kelly (1994) claims that the notion of reform applied to this piece of legislation is in fact a form of rhetoric devised deliberately, in his view, as part of a power coercive strategy to bring about rapid and radical change in education, its provision and organisation, with a minimum of dissent. He argues at length (1992) that reform is itself a concept requiring a great deal of definition and discussion in order to understand the full implications of its complexity and that in the context of the Education Reform Act it is not, as the planners and policy makers would have us accept, self evidently beneficial.

Certainly the 1988 Education Act has led to the virtual reconstruction of education. Whether or not that reconstruction has resulted in a better, more effective, more equal opportunity for pupils, particularly those with SEN, as claimed, remains a very debatable and controversial issue. The rhetoric is clearly established, however, (Barton 1993, Kelly 1990, 1992, 1994) and what is certain is that education has undergone, and continues to undergo, a massive reorganisation, the results of which we will be unable to evaluate effectively until some time in the next century.

The view informing that reorganisation has clearly been the dominant political ideology of the 1980's, that of the free market. There has been an overt determination to impose upon education the Thatcherite values of self-help, value for money, survival of the fittest, and competition as motivation for economic productivity. The imposition of this policy on education has been legitimised through rhetoric used to denigrate previous policy and to reconstruct educational discourse in such a way as to preclude any real debate or discussion other than within the newly established rhetorical discourse (Kelly 1990, 1992, 1994).

> *"A dominant power may legitimise itself by promoting beliefs and values congenial to it; naturalising and universalising such beliefs so as to render them self evident and apparently inevitable, denigrating ideas which might challenge it, excluding rival forms of thought." (Eagleton 1991 pp. 4-5)*

This approach to change inevitably raises questions about power, control and democracy, none of which are addressed within the documentation of the Act or in resulting documents, nor indeed is there a recognition that these issues are important and open to debate - a debate which might genuinely contribute to and enrich and enable the processes of change and development in education and its practice;

> *"A democratic society ... should offer scope for and indeed seek to create a climate for free and open debate on all issues, in order to provide a context in which such debate can lead to genuine forms of change, forms of change which result from wide ranging debate to*

> *which all who are affected have ample opportunity to contribute, rather than forms which are generated by one, dominant section of society, with merely a facade of consultation, imposed by the use of rhetorical devices of all kinds." (Kelly 1992 p.145)*

The results of the changes brought about by the Act have, however, been extremely rapid and have paid no heed to the approach suggested above. In a relatively short space of time it is possible to identify,

> *"... a major change in the way we think about and talk about schools. This has been achieved through the application of a market approach to education ... Increasingly the language of performance indicators, targets, cost effectiveness, appraisal, accountability, have become part of everyday speech." (Barton 1993 p.35)*

Barton goes on,

> *"Changes, including the Local Management of Schools, opting out, open enrolment, the publication of examination results and the demise of the LEA are all part of radical reconstruction of the structure, values and purposes of schools. We are both observing and playing a part in the creation of a highly competitive, diversified and hierarchically structured form of schooling." (op. cit. p.36)*

In such a period of radical change, when so many assumptions are being made and legitimised by policy makers it becomes increasingly important to examine and discuss those changes being made in relation to the claims they make, and the effects they have for pupils. For that reason it is necessary to explore, to some extent, some of the wider reaching effects of the 1988 legislation and its associated policy. The context in which the debate with regard to pupils with SEN and their integration is currently being carried on has been changed considerably by this legislation, and continues to change. Inevitably this will have implications for the concept of integration itself and therefore for the pupils themselves.

Local Management of Schools (LMS)

One of the most dramatic changes in the organisation of education since the 1988 Education Act has been the delegation of the major part of LEA budgets to schools. The devolution process has had many implications for all pupils and particularly for those identified as having SEN, and, coupled with policy for open enrolment and seen in the context of the professed intention to reduce the role of the LEAs, has important and wide reaching ramifications for the education system as a whole, and indeed for integration within that system.

LMS has been seen by many as a positive and enabling process for schools and has become popular in practice with many head teachers. A recent report commissioned by the National Association of Head Teachers (Thomas and Bullock 1994) in which Hywel Thomas and Alison Bullock, research students at the University of Birmingham, surveyed 800 schools, highlights that while head teachers generally prefer the system of LMS there are some areas of grave concern. They identified a need for further training for head teachers, managers and governors in order to improve standards of LMS. Their report also points to concerns about staffing issues including an increased number of staff employed on fixed contracts, increased pupil/teacher ratios, and an increasing number of hours spent by highly qualified staff on administrative tasks, all directly attributed to LMS. The report cites all these factors as causing concern and leading to demotivation and stress. The main beneficiaries in terms of the greater flexibility, particularly in the area of salary enhancement, were identified in the survey as head teachers and senior staff.

Although the majority of head teachers interviewed for this survey were not looking for a return to pre-LMS arrangements for funding, they were very concerned about the demise of the LEAs and the consequent loss of expertise and strategic planning. Few saw the support of governing bodies as a substitute for the LEA, citing the urgent need for more training for governors. The report does not conclude that LMS is inappropriate but certainly points to deficiencies and inadequacies in the way in which it is working in practice.

The concerns raised above are not the only ones relating to LMS, in particular with regard to its effects on pupils with SEN. One of the chief concerns for these pupils is the way in which the formula for funding is determined. Circular 7/88 states that formula allocation for SEN,

> *"... must be clear simple and predictable ... so that governors, head teachers, parents and the community can understand how it operates and why it yields the results it does." (DES 1988 Para 104)*

The search for simplicity in reaching a formula however, has led to the practice by many LEAs of funding non-statemented pupils according to the crude criteria of free school meals (FSM). This practice has been severely criticised (Walters 1994 p.52) for 'simplicity at the expense of equity, as it equates SEN with social deprivation and poverty. The HMI report on LMS in 1993 (DES 1993) makes it clear that although the practice of using FSM as a criterion for funding is widely used it is very unsatisfactory. The report points out the discrepancies in actual take up of FSM and entitlement, due to the stigma attached, and points to resulting confusion in terms of the effects on funding SEN under LMS.

Other deficiencies in LMS pointed to by the report include difficulties with regard to staffing. Where schools were determined to continue to allocate staffing and resourcing for pupils with SEN they found many tensions, especially where there had been reductions in the education budget to particular LEAs, due to rate capping and opting out. Allocation of centrally, LEA-funded staffing was also causing problems as, where staff were provided to work with named children, they were now being used solely for that purpose for fear of losing them, whereas in the past they had been used to support in more integrated, whole school ways found to be more effective. Problems were also arising from an inability to make long term planning for SEN provision and support, as centrally provided staff and indeed school based staff might need to be allocated elsewhere at any time. The reduction in centrally provided resources was found to have had a serious effect on the provision of in-service training (INSET) in the area of SEN. This was seen as particularly worrying as

schools did not seem to be responding adequately to the needs of staff in this area themselves. This whole area will be discussed further in Chapter 7.

The extension of LMS to special schools (LMSS), recommended by the Touche Ross Report (HMSO 1991), has further implications. The formula for funding in these schools is based on school places rather than pupil numbers, and while this addresses some of the concerns about resourcing it has led to worries about the attractiveness of segregated provision in comparison with that in the mainstream and to the spectre of increased segregation and a drift away from integration. Brian Walters points out;

> *"LMS and LMSS developments raise a number of crucial issues for special needs management. It is essential that there is an agreed formula for special needs funding across all sectors, with common currency, and clear criteria of levels of need and thresholds for statementing ... There are increasing demands for children to be statemented to provide extra resourcing. Some schools may well reject children who are not protected by a statement." (Walters 1994 p.71)*

This is a very worrying possibility since it has the potential to lead to the exclusion of more pupils from the mainstream of education and to strengthen segregated provision and practice.

The devolution of funding to schools has also had a profound effect, already mentioned, on the centrally provided support services traditionally the responsibility of the LEAs. Many LEAs have reduced these considerably, as a result of the new funding arrangements, and those that remain are being turned into commercial enterprises. Services can be bought by schools but in open competition with other providers. For small schools there are considerable problems here in extending budgets to cover the support provision they identify as necessary. Issues also arise of quality control in terms of what is on offer in this open market and about what can be afforded. The range of provision and the expertise available to schools is also in danger of being reduced, or even lost altogether, especially in areas of particular specialisation.

Accountability of schools for the way in which they use their delegated budget for SEN is a further concern;

> *"Anyone dealing at the sharp end of crisis management in an ordinary school will agree that when staff are away, when priorities are being tabled, as competition between schools begins to take effect, then something has to give and often the most vulnerable area is special needs provision." (op. cit. p.61)*

This highlights the problems which arise when little is left in terms of central control in the area of monitoring quality. Dissipation of scarce resources, loss of expertise, danger of loss of quality in education, concerns about the formula by which funding is determined and effective training for head teachers and governors, are all areas of grave concern. The implications for education and the effects on the learning experience of the pupils cannot really be effectively gauged at the time of writing as they have not yet been in implementation for a sufficient period of time.

If we set this new organisation with all its ramifications alongside the changes in the curriculum, already discussed, a worrying picture emerges for pupils with SEN. Further there is pressure for schools to compete, not just within a single system, but within a dually funded system, for alongside the development of LMS we also have the pressure to encourage schools to opt out totally from LEA control and to take Grant Maintained Status (GMS) and with a different organisation of funding. The pressure to survive within such a complex structure is great, to thrive and to provide a full educational opportunity and experience for all pupils seems to be virtually impossible.

Discussions with head teachers, colleagues working in LEA maintained primary schools formerly dedicated to integrated practice for children with SEN indicated just how greatly those pressure are affecting their decision making. When you are in a position where you need to recruit pupils and market your school, because funding depends on pupil numbers, it is unlikely that a group of pupils with SEN, who may require extra staff time and attention, may display a diversity of behaviour and may in test results reduce your school's scores,

will be viewed as an enhancing or attractive factor Bowe et al sum up the dilemma faced by many head teachers;

> *"Do they promote SEN provision to attract statemented students with 'high' worth and then risk getting an 'image' locally as a low ability school or try to attract high ability students who will stay on and enhance the school's reputation academically? And what about those students who fall into the less well funded eighteen per cent?" (Bowe, Ball & Gold 1992 p.134)*

Of course there is also the possibility of increasing funding by obtaining a statement for pupils. The statementing procedure, however, can itself be very exhaustive of staff time, could lead to requests for segregated provision by parents, especially in the light of more favourable LMSS funding, and is counter productive in many ways to notions of integration and inclusion - an issue discussed earlier.

LMS has been greeted by many head teachers and governing bodies as a means for more control over the management of their schools. In a system subject to a totally prescribed and imposed curriculum this is patently anomalous. The assessment of school standards by league tables, comparing simplistically the results of inadequate testing procedures, restricts notions of school autonomy further. LMS can clearly be seen as part of a process being used to drive education into the model of the free market and commercialism (Kelly 1990). The rhetoric is firmly established in the language of LMS, schools are providers, delivering the curriculum and society is the consumer of the end product. Market forces must drive the system;

> *better results = more pupils*
> *more pupils = more resourcing.*

This is the basic premise on which funding is distributed and competition is the means by which optimum funding can be secured.

Little account is taken in the above system of individual differences or of the highly problematic issue of provision in response to pupils' needs.

Accountability is reduced to observable outcomes in terms of published test results with no regard for the different contexts and conditions in which schools might operate. The model, then, seems to be incompatible with, and indeed inappropriate for, promoting equal opportunities or entitlement to a full education for all. GMS and the whole issue of parental choice, involvement and responsibility are also important factors to consider.

Grant Maintained Status (GMS)

Provision is made in the 1988 Education Act for governing bodies to opt their school out of the supervision and control of the local authorities and to receive funding directly from the Secretary of State. This process has been further encouraged and refined by the 1993 Education Act which sets up the Funding Agency for Schools (FAS) to operate alongside LEAs when 10% of their pupils are in Grant Maintained (GM) schools and to take over when that figure reaches 75%.

The 1993 Act also reduces the procedures for the creation of GM schools so that it becomes easier to opt out. Small schools will now be able to opt out in clusters, a move clearly intended to encourage primary schools to opt out. A second ballot for opting out is no longer needed and governing bodies are to be requested to discuss each year whether or not to hold a ballot to opt out. LEA spending on information about opting out is to be restricted and governing bodies must receive an equal amount of money to publicise their own views about a proposal.

The expressed intention of the government is to encourage the majority of schools to opt out, although a considerable reluctance being displayed by schools to do so has forced them to reduce their targets considerably at the time of writing. Extra cash incentives have been offered to schools to encourage the process, which may be seen as divisive and controversial, creating a danger that schools which remain within LEA control, where there is an increasingly small budget, will become second rate schools, or will certainly be seen as such.

Neil Gill, Director of Education for Barnet, where large numbers of schools opted for GMS, was quoted in an article in the Education Guardian in June 1993 as saying;

> *"The grant maintained legislation was the most potentially divisive legislation I've come across. It sets heads against governors, governors against parents, parents against parents and parents against teachers."*

Indeed there has been a vast amount of controversy surrounding the implementation of this second major strand in the reorganisation and reconstruction of the funding of education.

Within the free market model the conflict and division described above are seen, of course, to be compatible and necessary in order to bring about change. Competition is a vital component of the process of identifying 'good' and 'bad' schools. GMS is clearly a mechanism for ensuring the reduction of the role of the LEAs, which, according to John Major in his speech to the Conservative Party Conference in October 1993, have failed in their job of providing effective education and have therefore reached an end in the usefulness.

In spite of the reduction in their role, the LEAs are to retain responsibility for the provisions of the 1981 Education Act with regard to statemented pupils and the statementing procedure. The result of opting out, also extended to special schools, will put LEAs in the very strange position, it seems of being customers of their own schools and of the GM schools in their areas, in terms of finding provision for their statemented pupils. It can easily be imagined that this may give rise to a conflict of interest since LEAs will only have jurisdiction over the quality of provision in GM schools for those children with statements. This raises questions about the fragmentation of provision. GM schools also have the right to refuse pupils if they wish which leads to concerns about finding appropriate provision for pupils with SEN. Again the question comes to mind - what about the eighteen per cent?

The establishment of GMS for schools has raised the spectre for many of a return to selective practice. Len Barton points out,

> *"... what is becoming clearer is that the commitment to diversity of provision involves more specialisation and this is leading to more selection both within schools and in relation to pupil intake. Schools in a free market should be able to choose their customers. Particular pupils will not be welcome at particular schools because they will be viewed, for example, as unsuitable material, not fitting in with the priorities attached to pupil characteristics and thus ultimately damaging the status of the school." (Barton 193 p.36)*

Inevitably, as Barton goes on to point out, this sort of selection can only lead to forms of exclusive practice and seems to be at odds with notions of access or entitlement for all.

A further provision of the 1988 Education Act allows for setting up of City Technology Colleges (CTCs). These schools are only in part funded by the government and for the rest seek sponsorship from industry and commerce. This option seems, at the time of writing, to have gained little support in spite of attempts to encourage interest. This option can also be seen as part of the process of specialisation mentioned by Barton and is certainly another piece of the move towards privatisation in education,

> *"... the privatisation of all the major utilities in society is matched in education by those opportunities for opting out and the invitation to establish commercially funded city technology colleges ... just as attempts are being made to replace large segments of the National Health Service with private medical schemes. Privatisation is a current watchword, and there is a clear conceptual link between privatisation and commercialism. It is far from self-evident however that commercial competition is either appropriate to a profession such as education, or medicine, or conducive to increased quality of provision in fields of this kind." (Kelly 1990 p.49)*

Certainly for pupils with SEN, GMS seems to present a further narrowing of possibilities for access to the entitlement promised by the 1988 Act. Competition inevitably leads to the creation of winners and losers. GMS has

led to the creation in many LEAs of more losers, where fewer resources are available for schools choosing to remain within their remit. The introduction of selection procedures for admission, a growing phenomenon, is again creating losers who fail to gain admittance. Differently funded provision creates divisive practice and the victims seem to be the pupils. The leader in the Times newspaper on 29th of July 1992 offered some strong perspectives on opting out and on the new FAS,

> *"... the bonds which tie schools to their communities through local democracy ... are long standing and a source of great pride ... The Government has not thought through its search for diversity, parental choice, specialisation and standards, in the school system. After 1944 an attempt was made to make the choice of school at eleven as far as possible by testing aptitude objectively and allocating children to different types of school each enjoying parity of esteem ... Mr Patten (then Secretary of State for Education) ... is merely pretending that every school will have equality of esteem and that nobody will feel rejected ... an educational underclass is now emerging of disappointed parents and rejected children."*

This system, introduced to fulfil the Government's commitment to diversity of provision and choice for parents, seems to be riddled with contradictions and, like many other aspects of the legislation, informed by false promises and flawed argument. The whole question of choice, parents' rights and responsibilities, and the role of parents in education are problematic issues demanding discussion and debate. Again the assumption seems to be made that they are not open to question and that, with little or no evidence available to support the assertion, the changes being made in these areas will result in creating more choice and diversity, higher standards and better educational opportunities for children. It would seem, in fact, from the above discussion that they may become responsible, in some cases, for narrowing opportunities and even precluding some children, especially those with SEN from any possibility of access to choice or diversity.

Parents and Choice

The role of parents in the education of their children is an issue which has long been a topic for debate. During the 1960's and 1970's a growing desire to involve parents in the education of their children and to encourage them to participate in taking responsibility for their children's education was evident. This development finds expression in the idea of parents as partners in Chapter 9 of the Warnock Report (DES 1978) which opens with the statement;

> *"We have insisted throughout this report that the successful education of children with special educational needs is dependent on the full involvement of their parents. Indeed unless parents are seen as equal partners in the education process the purpose of our report will be frustrated." (DES 1978 9:1)*

The Report goes on to point out the need for dialogue with parents, the need to support them and offer advice, to consult with them thoroughly, and to provide them with very full information on all aspects of their children's education.

What the Warnock Report, and indeed much subsequent literature on the topic, seems to have omitted to recognise is the very problematic nature of partnership with parents and especially with those parents of children with SEN. Partnership implies an equal relationship based on two way exchange of ideas and equal access. In terms of education this is not always possible, and indeed may not always be desirable or in the interests of the children themselves. Parents find, all too often, that access to real understanding of their children's education is impeded by the professional use of what might be termed educational jargon. A situation not improved, in spite of claims by the Government to have provided greater access, by the complex language of Attainment Targets, programmes of study etc., introduced in the National Curriculum. Often they find themselves intimidated and patronised in a situation where, for many of them, the period of time between being a pupil themselves and becoming a parent may be very short. Past, negative,

experiences of school and teachers may influence their attitudes and intimidate them.

Teachers too may feel threatened by the idea of parents having total access to their classrooms and practice. In the area of SEN the ownership of expertise can exacerbate all this as here there is a mystique traditionally attached to the expertise of special education, often promoted by teachers in special schools who feel under threat in the current scene. All these factors can contribute to making parents feel intimidated and to teachers feeling threatened and can lead to ideas of partnership being rather a myth.

Implicit in the notion of parents as partners is also the idea that parents are willing, able and indeed suitable to take on that responsibility. Many are patently not and see education as the responsibility of the professionals. These are the parents, however, who are often at great pains to blame schools and teachers for any failings identified in their children. Some parents are unable to be partners in their children's education because they are themselves disabled or have SEN, some do not have access, because of lack of language, where they are not native speakers, some are divorced and may have problems resulting from this in being successful partners, others are single parents who are unable to give the necessary time because they have the responsibility to earn an income to support their children. The notion of parents as partners has many problematic aspects and seems in general to be geared around the idea of a standard middle class, white, family unit which is no longer necessarily the norm in our modern society.

In spite of the difficulties posed by the problematic nature of the idea of parents as partners in their children's education, there has been a definite acceptance of the rights of parents to participate and collaborate, and indeed to take responsibility for the education of their children. The problems in working towards partnerships may be many but generally the move has proved to be beneficial where it has been made.

In the 1980's, however, this idea was taken up by Government and policy makers and the emphasis was changed so that parent choice and parents as consumers became the issues. Now parents are enjoined to recognise their rights in terms of their children's education and to claim and demand them. The Parents' Charter (DES 1991) lists these rights as, the right to:-

- know
- a free school place for your child
- say which school you prefer
- a place in the school you want, unless it is full to capacity with students who have a stronger claim
- an education which meets the SEN of your child
- a proper education for your child, and to know what he or she is being taught at school
- vote for parent governors and to stand for election as a parent governor yourself
- vote for your child's school to become GM

It is interesting to note, in the light of previous discussions about the National Curriculum, LMS and GMS, that for many parents these rights are likely in the current system to be somewhat restricted and that there may be a lot less access to them than this document would have parents believe. The right to know, the Charter suggests, will be fulfilled by more access to information about children for parents, particularly through published results of the performance tables by schools. The deficiencies and dangers of the use of the performance tables as indicators of children's achievements have already been highlighted. For parents of children with SEN there is a plethora of information available about their education and provisions for them under the 1981, 1988 and 1993 Education Acts. It is difficult to find teachers who are sufficiently informed about this area, or who understand fully the complicated provisions

themselves, and so it seems unlikely that many parents will find themselves any better informed of their rights. Peter Mitler points out;

> *"Despite a great deal of rhetoric about partnership with parents it is clear that many parents are still not given anything like all the information they need concerning the 1981 or 1988 Education Acts." (Mitler 1993 p.17)*

Now we have the 1993 Education Act to further complicate the issue. On the issue of parental choice, Lawton (1992) points out that;

> *"Many parents are not in a position to know what is on offer or how to judge its quality nor to pay for what they would like. Given that situation, to talk about a free market is either naive or hypocritical. It can also be argued that what parents want may not always be in the best interests of either the child or the country as a whole." (Lawton 1992 p.86)*

This raises another important factor for consideration in the discussion about rights, already touched upon earlier, that of the potential conflict between the rights and interests of the child and those of parents or other adults, or groups in society. Where children with SEN are concerned it is particularly important to consider this issue carefully. What a parent may demand might well preclude access for the child to a full educational opportunity, when the parent is either over ambitious for the child or, equally problematic, where the parent may be over protective of the child. This may prevent the child from developing his or her full potential. The choice of school made by parents may well be totally inappropriate to address the educational needs of the child and may result in impairing the educational experience for the child considerably, even leading to the creation of additional SEN. There is also the possible scenario that pressure from parents of one type or another can be the chief cause of the child's SEN.

The whole issue of the child's right to a voice in the decision making process is important to consider. Lawton (op. cit.) goes on to suggest that the only way in which we can hope to ensure the child's rights and indeed those of the

parents is to establish real partnerships and to adopt collaborative attitudes to decision making about choice, with parents, children and teachers all working together in the process. There is no doubt that if we are to recognise children's rights we will need to involve them more and consult more with them in making educational choices.

Of course the whole issue of choice itself presents problems and becomes even more controversial when set in the context of current educational policy and change. There is no doubt that parental choice is seen by the policy makers to be a cornerstone of the reconstructed education system. That the demands of parents will create the motivation for schools to compete with each other and thus educational standards will be raised is the underlying premise. This thinking is not, however, accepted by all nor is the automatic assumption that the process will result in higher educational standards. Once again, however, parental choice and its benefits are presented in the documentation as self evidently desirable. These assumptions provoke several questions:-

> Are all kinds of choice desirable?
>
> Does choice automatically lead to improvement in quality?
>
> How can choices be made without full or, at least, very good information?
>
> How can there be said to be real choices when there is no access?

Lawton believes that for many parents this choice will lead to very little, if any, advantage for them or their children;

> *"The logic of John Major's emphasis on parental choice is that it leads to minimalism ... Choice will provide better for those who can pay and for parents who choose wisely and have their choices met." (op. cit. p.81)*

Certainly there seems to be no evidence to support the notion that competition leads to better quality in education. David (in Arnot & Barton 1992) in a very

thorough review of research into the issue of parental choice over the past forty or fifty years, points to the fact that there is no evidence of parents being able to discriminate effectively between 'good' and 'bad' schools, or indeed to choose appropriate schools for their children. Recent research findings by the OECD (HMSO 1994) in a survey of six member countries draw the same conclusion.

> *"Parents and children rarely choose on the basis of well informed comparisons of educational policy." (Hirsch, [author of OECD report] 1994 [in the TES 6/5/94])*

This report also highlights the fact that the main impact of choice is to create more fragmentation and to make system-wide policy more difficult to implement and to monitor.

Yet another result of parental choice identified was a general conservitism in education since competition between schools to secure parental approval and to meet parental demands leads to marketing the safe and well tried and tested, the known and the uniform rather than creative innovative ideas. A further finding in Britain was a close link between social class and parental choice leading to further effects on school marketing and on school admission policies. The dangers here have already been discussed in the section on LMS and GMS.

The value of choice in a situation where full information may not be available, and where, even when it is, or is at least fairly good, what is on offer is limited, must also be seen as highly problematic. Competition inevitably leads to the creation of elites and to scarcity. The popularity of one school in an area may lead to the demise of another in the current system, and thus to less choice on offer for some. David (in Arnot & Barton 1992) points out that for the articulate, the advantaged and the influential, choice can be beneficial. They are able to press effectively for their demands to be met. For the less articulate, the disadvantaged, for non native speakers and for those with disabilities, choices are inevitably likely to be fewer and to become increasingly restricted in the world of competition, where survival of the fittest is the principle;

> *"By the year 2000 if these policy developments persist there is unlikely to be a system of state education but rather an array of what might be considered familial schools, catering for religious, ethnic minority and social communities. Some children from poor family circumstances may not receive any schooling at all." (David 1992 pp. 16-17)*

The scenario presented is dire indeed and may seem rather extreme but the consequences of continuing these policies seem more likely to lead to this type of narrowing of choice than the broadening promised in the rhetoric of documentation currently promoting parental choice.

The policy of creating different types of schools, differently resourced, is intended to create greater choice and diversity. In reality the policy seems to be extremely divisive for while for some there may be choices, they are at best limited and at worst non existent. What is certain is that for some groups there are increasingly fewer choices.

LMS, GMS, CTCs and parental choice are all parts of the market strategy, intended to promote greater social responsibility and more efficiency and thus make education more cost effective. Lawton points to what he sees as the fundamental fallacy which underlies this thinking;

> *"... parents and industrialists are not the consumers of education - the whole of society should have the right to participate in the education debate. Education should not be regarded as a consumer commodity to be bought and sold in the market-place, but as a social service. The question is not to increase choice but to improve the whole service." (Lawton 1992 p.81)*

Certainly, if education is viewed according to these principles, it is not compatible with competition, leading to the narrowing of provision and to selection procedures, advantageous to some groups in society and not to others. For children with SEN this ethos of competition, selection and the free market in education can only be seen as even more worrying.

> *"The biggest single threat to pupils with special educational needs in ordinary schools is the new ethos of open competition between schools. In such a climate children with special needs may not be wanted and may well be singled out for exclusion and removal to segregated provision for their own good." (Mitler 1993 p.27)*

Indeed in a world where education is valued as a means to economic productivity and stability and where the purpose of education is seen as preparation for employment through which the individual may achieve self esteem, where hard work, will power, individual effort, self help and survival of the fittest are considered to be the essential qualities, the possibilities for those pupils with disabilities and SEN seem to be extremely limited. Yet these are the values firmly enshrined in the documentation of educational policy and in the rhetoric of the policy makers and planners who are responsible for its generation.

These values are, however, at odds with the reality since we do not live in times of stability, nor is there any possibility, in a period of slowing economic productivity, of full employment. Far from addressing the needs of the rapidly changing and developing society in which we live they are in fact in conflict and seem totally inadequate to the task of preparing young people for life in the real world;

> *"... this has led to an increase in conflict and competition with individuals being increasingly concerned with their own interests. Such a competitive society most often advocates the survival of the fittest with the weak going to the wall and there is little sympathy currently for steps that might increase the economic comparative advantage of the special needs population." (Walters 1994 p.18)*

In April 1994 a government spokesman on education crystallised the policy when he said;

> *"Schooling is about educating youngsters about the world outside - where the winners do well and the losers do badly." (Quoted in the Guardian Weekend 'That Was the Year ...' 31/12/94)*

A competition is no place for those, who, because of the rules, do not qualify for the race. For those who just manage to struggle onto the starting blocks or who fall along the way or who fail to finish, the experience is equally distressing and damaging. What the above statement fails to take into account is the number of 'losers' the education system might be held responsible for creating, as a result of its policies, along the way.

The Early Years

The early years of education have long been recognised as having crucial importance, particularly for children identified as having SEN. Effective education in this formative phase has a vital role to play both in assessing and identifying the SEN of pupils and in beginning the process of addressing those needs. Successive secretaries of state have committed themselves to the improvement of this all important phase in education and this has culminated recently in John Major's 'cast iron' commitment to provide a nursery place for every four year old. This commitment by the Prime Minister has led to the production of a paper entitled Educational Provision for the Under Five's (HMSO 1994-5) by the House of Commons Education Committee which makes recommendation for extending provision by 25% and for that provision to be of the highest quality.

For those children with SEN opportunities, well resourced, effective, sensitive early education can result in addressing and even answering SEN, it can also provide the means for ensuring, through proper identification and assessment procedures, that needs are appropriately addressed, leading to greater educational opportunities. The vital importance of early years education is clearly recognised in the Warnock Report;

> *"The period between birth and four years of age is generally accepted to be that of the fastest intellectual development, while the years between one and three to four normally see a rapid development in language. Thereafter the rate of intellectual development progressively diminishes and the learning of language becomes increasingly difficult. Education during the first four years of life is then of crucial importance." (DES 1978 5:1)*

The legislation of the 1988 Education Act and its subsequent consequences have affected this vitally important phase of education considerably. Having stressed the importance of early years education for pupils with SEN it will be important in the scope of this study, therefore, to look more closely at these consequences and their implications. In exploring the effects of the National Curriculum on the early years Blenkin and Kelly (1994) conclude;

> *"... from every angle from which we have sought to view the National Curriculum, whether from that of the major subjects it requires us to teach, or from the point of view of particular groups of children, especially those who may be felt to be especially vulnerable, such as non native speakers of English and those deemed as having special educational needs, from every one of those viewpoints the National Curriculum has revealed itself as inadequate as a recipe for education in the early years." (Blenkin & Kelly 1994 p.196)*

Their concerns will no doubt be compounded by the news that guidelines for the curriculum of early years education currently, at the time of writing, being produced by OFSTED (the Office For Standards in Education) together with SCAA (the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority) seem likely to recommend that the under five's curriculum should provide links to Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum and should be seen as preparation for and the foundation for statutory school age with many activities leading into programmes of study for that phase (reported in the TES 16/12/94).

It is possible to identify two major themes emerging in terms of the effects of changes in the education system with reference to the early years of education and pupils with SEN (Lloyd 1994);

- the actual provisions of the legislation and their effect on identifying, assessing and addressing SEN;

- the way in which these provisions may be seen as being directly responsible for exacerbating and even creating SEN.

The first theme centres chiefly around the way in which the changes in the education system add pressure on early years education which is inappropriate

for the majority of children and which is doubly so for those who may be experiencing difficulties;

> *"Britain seems to have misread the signs and sticks obstinately to its newly defined curriculum and its avowal that assessment is central to it. What frightens me even more than the delusion that a centrally defined curriculum can be imposed on children is the new and rather dangerous tendency to let that curriculum press down upon the provision for even the youngest of children ... It is here that many anxieties really begin to develop. Basically the argument beginning to be heard from the politicians is that since they are becoming more convinced that early education matters then it should be a version of that which they deem appropriate for older children." (Gammage 1992 p.3)*

The fears expressed by Philip Gammage above are shared by many working in the area. Colleagues are finding it increasingly difficult to retain the child centred, developmental approaches which they feel are appropriate and indeed vitally important for this phase in children's education, with the current pressures to conform to and prepare for the very different approach of the National Curriculum. Its narrow restrictive subject base being pressed further and further down is exerting growing pressures on them and on the whole of early years education. The notion that learning is linear and that children's progress can be measured effectively and accurately according to age related stages is clearly at odds with the developmental approaches used by most early years educators. Here there is a recognition that children progress at different rates and paces and that there is little uniformity in that progress. Indeed there is a firm belief amongst experienced colleagues working in this area that the assessment procedures of the National Curriculum, if imposed at this very early stage, could potentially prove to be damaging to the development of children and are therefore extremely inappropriate. Sensitive, ongoing, formative assessment as part of a process of recording and reporting on the child's whole development is what is needed at this stage.

Unfortunately the effects of the National Curriculum assessment procedures and of the pressure to judge schools by published results are already having an effect on the early years. Primary schools anxious to cover themselves and

to demonstrate how much progress has been made by pupils when they are tested at 7 are calling for the introduction of testing at 5. For children experiencing difficulties this is indeed a frightening possibility, for here is the spectre of categorisation or even exclusion at an extremely early age.

The implications of LMS have already been considered at length. Many schools have been forced to raise class size and to make staffing decisions non-conducive to supporting pupils with SEN. The loss of support services and of the INSET formerly provided by the LEAs has implications for early years education also. As far back as 1978 the Warnock Report made clear the importance of effective support and professional development as vital factors in improving opportunities for children with SEN in the early years;

> *"We ... recommend that reinforcement and skilled support should be provided for ... children with disabilities or significant difficulties in the early years." (DES 1978 5:31)*

This they believed would enable children with SEN, and their parents, to have greater access to a better educational opportunity. The Report also recommends;

> *"... there should be a comprehensive peripatetic service which would cater ... exclusively for children with disabilities or significant difficulties, below school age." (op. cit. 5:37)*

Effective INSET is also seen as vital;

> *"The procedures which we have recommended elsewhere in this report for recognising and meeting the needs of children who require special educational help will be of no value unless all teachers have an insight into the special needs which many children have, and unless teachers with defined responsibility for such children have the specialist expertise required to meet those needs." (op. cit. 12:85)*

Clearly the demise of the LEAs and the increasing loss of those opportunities which they provided for professional development and support in terms of

specialist expertise in SEN will have enormous implications for early years education, as indeed for other phases.

GMS may also play its part in influencing this important period of education. The establishment of independently organised nursery provision already gives rise to considerable concern in terms of its quality (Hurst 1994). Without the safeguard of LEA monitoring this particularly vulnerable and vitally important area may be open to even greater variety of standard in quality.

The second theme identified, that current policy and practice might be responsible for exacerbation and even for creating SEN in the early years is closely connected with the discussion above and the point made earlier. The dangers of imposing inappropriate approaches to teaching and learning at an early stage are obvious;

> *"Children need time to play, to develop, to explore, to interact, to enquire and to experience. Certainly, then, there is a real danger that the prescriptive curriculum, being imposed at present, will at least exacerbate difficulties being experienced by children with special needs, if not create a range of special needs." (Lloyd 1994 p.190)*

As previously mentioned, the BBC television programme Public Eye (May 1991) highlighted another possible cause for concern, the increasing number of children being statemented as having Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) at a very early age. There may be many factors responsible for this but it certainly seems possible that disaffection with what is being offered in terms of curriculum might be one of them.

The assessment procedures, discussed at great length earlier, also give cause for alarm in considering their potential to exacerbate and indeed create SEN.

> *"It seems impossible that after such a short time the lessons about branding children as failures, made so clear by the 11 plus examination should have been forgotten ... What will happen to children who repeatedly fail these tests? ... Indeed what will happen if testing at five is introduced, to those children who are labelled at*

> *that tender and very formative age with the tag 'failure'?" (op. cit. p.191)*

The wider effects of the reorganisation of education into the model of the free market may also be seen to be responsible for exacerbating and creating SEN in the early years. The dilemma for schools is clear, to compete effectively in the market place it is necessary to promote an image which will be attractive to prospective parents. Extra support for children with SEN is expensive, many parents are impressed by the traditional values of academic success, a quiet orderly atmosphere, a trouble free environment. For those schools that have in the past worked hard to include and to integrate children with EBD, for example, it is becoming increasingly difficult to continue in the current scene.

The early years of education, recognised as vitally important in the establishment of good foundations for learning, are, it would seem, in danger of being influenced quite dramatically by the changes in policy and organisation resulting from the recent legislation. Blenkin and Kelly identify a worrying disregard of research evidence in the area with regard to discussions about the future of early years education. They identify,

> *"... a failure of those responsible ... to take any account of what has been learnt about the school curriculum and, especially an appropriate curriculum for the early years of schooling, from the inter-related research and practice of half a century or more ... It is crass to be planning a curriculum for the twenty first century, on what is (proudly even) described as a back to basics policy, to be imposing on the school system a curriculum which is fundamentally Victorian in both style and content." (Blenkin & Kelly 1994 pp 196 - 197)*

Research, in fact, indicates that early childhood education is of inestimable value, but only when the quality is high and the teachers are properly trained. For Philip Gammage;

> *"Early childhood education needs to be resistant to claims that it should simply provide a watered down version of elementary education ... Practice should be based on thorough appreciation of child*

> *development; the balance of process and content properly monitored to match the needs of children." (Gammage 1992 p.10)*

The discussion above leads to further questions about the entitlement promised by the 1988 Education Act. Effectively early years education can have an important role to play in providing access to education. It is clear, however, that the reverse is also true. Insensitive, poorly provided, inappropriate early education can prevent and hinder and even preclude that access. In discussions about SEN and in particular those which centre around integration, the quality of early years educational experience and its role in providing access can be seen, then, to be vitally important and highly influential factors.

Conclusions

What conclusions, then, can be drawn about the effects of the Education Reform Act on children with SEN? Investigation reveals a number of worrying inconsistencies and inherent contradictions in the policy informing the change and reorganisation of education which may have a number of serious implications for this group and indeed for the process of integration.

In the first place the Act can be seen to be responsible for a developing number of inconsistencies in the education system. Centralisation of control over the curriculum, the narrow prescriptive nature of that curriculum underpinned by 'Victorian', nationalistic values, has undertones of a move towards the nationalisation of education. On the other hand the establishment of GMS and of CTCs is a clear indication of a move towards privatisation.

Devolution of funding through LMS can be seen as a move to place more power and control in the hands of people most closely connected with the provision of education, but set against the privatisation of schools and the loss of local democracy through the diminishing in role of the LEAs and the establishment of the FAS (Funding Authority for Schools) can be seen to offer, if anything, less power and control.

More choice for parents and through it more power, set in the context of competition and privatisation can also be seen to be a somewhat contradictory notion. Accountability for education devolved to schools, and through them to teachers, for a centrally imposed curriculum is an equally uncomfortable idea.

Perhaps the most inconsistent notion in the whole 'reformed' education policy is that of entitlement. The right to a full educational opportunity set against a curriculum to which, for many children, there is little or no access, and which fails to address, or even to recognise, their needs, seems to offer a poor entitlement indeed. The reorganisation of provision based on competition, leading to selection and inevitably to exclusive practice, seems at the very least to be paradoxical.

There is no doubt that, in an education system geared towards the needs of society, expressed in terms of economic productivity, full employment, national growth and independence, the needs of individuals, especially SEN, may well be in conflict.

Earlier discussion made reference to the role being played currently by political rhetoric in changing educational policy and practice. The legitimation of policy change by this form of discourse is an issue now being openly debated and recognised by many (Kelly 1990, 1992, 1994, Ball 1992, Eagleton 1992, Lawton 1992). The poverty of thinking and lack of any legitimate educational underpinning, the incoherence and deliberate denigration of years of genuine and valid research in the area and the insidious use of popularist propaganda, are all familiar devices now in the change and reorganisation of education. Kelly sums it up,

> *"... it has emerged very clearly that current policies, and especially the devices which have been employed to implement them, leave a lot to be desired in a society which claims to be democratic, that the non-(even anti-) democratic methods one can detect in current practices have implications for the development of education and for curriculum change, and, finally that they also have a crucial significance for continued intellectual advance and for the continued development of democratic forms of living." (Kelly 1992 p.150)*

This is worrying indeed, and there would seem to be evidence that in many ways these warnings are already finding expression. The language of education has moved firmly into the market place. The practice of marketing schools and promoting school image is rife. There is a general acceptance that the National Curriculum is here to stay. Discussion and debate amongst teachers centres around issues about time to implement it and rarely, if ever, touches on its appropriateness or its value as an educational curriculum. It has become commonly accepted that educationalists are untrustworthy and are intent on sabotaging children's educational opportunities by the introduction of progressive innovations and that they have in fact been responsible for all that is now declared to be poor in education. The relevance of educational theory has been derided and the emphasis on 'back to basics' at all levels of the education system seen as the motto for future development in education, a concept anomalous in itself. Kelly quotes Richard Hoggart in attempting to explain the way in which we have been so rapidly moved to reject the values we held dear formerly;

> *"You would not yield to explicit directions or bullying (although heavens knows we have seen enough of both in modern times) and they are rarely used. You do begin instinctively to evade issues, opinions, positions, not acceptable to those above or the body of those out there. All this is largely practised in totalitarian states, but like persistent bad drains it also haunts open societies." [Kelly quoting Hoggart 1992 pp 260-261]*

There is no doubt that many have succumbed to the prevalent attitudes and values being expressed by politicians and educational policy makers. There is little or no recognition, any longer, that there may be alternatives to the provisions being made which are more appropriate. Practitioners, on the whole, have become dedicated to making the most of things under the circumstances as they prevail. For the whole area of SEN this is potentially alarming. It has already been pointed out that thinking and practice in the area of integration has been slow to develop and has centred around peripheral issues such as resourcing, rather than delving below the superficial barriers to fundamental issues about attitudes, power, control, oppression etc., all of which will be discussed in more detail later. In a world dedicated to delivering

the curriculum, irrespective of its appropriateness, and to common sense as a guiding principle in decision making, it seems unlikely that these extremely problematic and controversial issues will be opened up for debate and discussion.

Open debate and discussion, however, are fundamental tools in a democratic society, for development and growth, both in ideas and practice. The expressed purpose of this investigation is to further the development of ideas about integration and inclusion by a thorough analysis of their relevance in the current educational context. In the light of the changes discussed in this and the previous section, it seems even more relevant and important to continue with that analysis, and indeed to enjoin others to participate, since it is only by recognising that there are issues about values and principles here that need open debate and discussion because of their problematic nature, that there can be any possibility of developing any genuine change in attitudes and thinking.

CHAPTER 6

A CODE OF PRACTICE FOR SEN

Implications of the 1993 Education Act for Pupils with SEN

Over the years there has been a great deal of criticism about the failure of the 1981 Education Act to lay down a national policy for SEN. The introduction of a code of practice for SEN has been sought for some time by many working in the area and therefore the 1993 Education Act, which makes provision for just such a code, was greeted as a very important and welcome innovation. There is no doubt that the legislation of the intervening twelve years has failed to address the issue of SEN in any way adequately, and at times, for example in the initial introduction of the 1988 Education Act, SEN seems to have been forgotten altogether, or simply dealt with as an afterthought. Baroness Blatch, Minister of State for Education at the time of the implementation of the 1993 Education Act, stated during the passage of the Education Bill through the House of Lords in April 1993 that one of the principles of the Code of Practice would be to address,

> *"... the needs of both the 2% ... with statements and the 18% without statements of SEN." (Quoted in Peters, TES 15/4/94)*

At last, it would seem that there was to be official recognition of the need to address the educational provisions of the larger number of children identified by the Warnock Report as having SEN, and for so long omitted in any real sense from planning.

The introduction of a Code of Practice for SEN has been pressed for constantly as a means of reducing some of the tensions and difficulties encountered by parents, teachers, and indeed pupils, in terms of the variety of provision and practice available. The provisions of the 1988 Education Act further compounded these difficulties and gave LEAs considerable problems with clarifying their roles and responsibilities with regard to children identified as having SEN. The provisions of the 1981 Education Act, not revoked by the 1988 Act, were certainly in need of revision in the light of the subsequent changes in policy. Some national guidelines for SEN were certainly long overdue.

For the large number of children with SEN already in the mainstream of education, Warnock's 18%, and even for those in segregated special schools, the establishment of a code of practice would seem to be an extremely important and enabling part of the process of moving towards greater integration. It is vital, then, for this investigation, to look very closely at the principles and procedures laid down in this Code in order to evaluate their implications for practice, both in integration and in education for SEN as a whole.

The Code of Practice took effect from 1/9/94. It was immediately disappointing since its provisions were not, as had been anticipated, mandatory, but instead merely advisory. Its stated purpose is to,

> *"... seek to help schools and LEAs to obtain the best value from the considerable financial resources and expertise they devote to the education of children with SEN." (DfE 1994 Para 1)*

This also is very disappointing since, as in much previous provision for SEN, it locates the issue firmly in the area of resources, and implies that provision for SEN is chiefly about the efficient and economic deployment of materials.

Indeed the Code of Practice includes no discussion about the underlying issues in the debate about SEN and integration. No attempt is made to define integration, no reference is made to the model of disability which informs and underpins the authors' views and indeed the documentation is rife with the sort of assumptions and mis-conceptions about these issues which have dominated discussion and debate about SEN and integration for many years. The document plunges into a series of, what may be seen as, strategies for coping with the SEN of pupils, without any attempt to discuss the difficulties which schools and teachers may meet trying to implement them and without any recognition of the complex and problematic nature of some of the strategies recommended. The remit of the Code is made clear however;

> *"All those to whom the Code applies have a statutory duty to have regard to it; they must not ignore it. That means that from the 1st September 1994, whenever schools and LEAs decide what they should do for children with special educational needs, and whenever health services and social services help schools and LEAs take action on behalf of such children, those bodies should consider what the Code says." (op. cit. Para 6)*

The Code is, then, a matter of guidance which must be considered. It will be monitored by OFSTED (Office For Standards in Education) inspectors who will look closely at schools' policy and practice in SEN in the light of the Code. LEAs will maintain responsibility for monitoring the provision and practice for those pupils with statements of SEN, under the provisions of the 1981 Education Act.

Immediately it is possible to identify some tensions here which require further discussion later in this chapter. What is most obviously disappointing at first acquaintance with the Code of Practice, however, is that it can once again be seen as weak legislation which fails to recognise the rights and entitlement of disabled pupils to an equal educational opportunity. It fails, also, to acknowledge, or recognise, any deficiency in the educational provision in the mainstream of education, and, as in previous legislation, makes the assumption that adaptation and compensation are all that is needed in order for pupils with SEN to be adequately served. Moreover, there is a complete

lack of recognition in the documentation of the range and variety of understanding, attitudes and practice in the area of SEN which may be found, and the inevitably problematic nature therefore of implementing a national policy. The chief mechanisms proposed by the Code for ensuring this national policy - Whole School Policies (WSPs), Special Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs), a staged model of assessment and identification, the establishment of partnerships with parents and other professionals - are all difficult and often controversial areas, open to a wide variety of interpretation in practice. In addition to the lack of any attempt to recognise the problematic nature of these areas there is no account taken of the difficulties, discussed at greater length in Chapter 5, about the reorganisation of education into a free market model. In order to evaluate the possible influence and effects of the Code of Practice it will be useful to look at each of the areas identified by the Code as being important for effective practice in SEN and to identify some of the difficulties presented by them.

Whole School Policies

The move towards whole school approaches to SEN, informed by the Warnock's Report redefinition of SEN and recommendations that practice should be seen as forming a continuum, has been making slow progress (Dessent 1987). Many schools, in particular in the primary sector, have found it important, and indeed necessary, to develop this approach to identifying, assessing and addressing the needs of their pupils more effectively, particularly in the light of the increased pressures to integrate more pupils with SEN. The Code of Practice lays down some guidelines for a WSP on SEN and makes it very clear that the development of such policy is the responsibility of governing bodies of schools which will now be responsible under the Act, for providing information bout their school's policy on SEN; the numbers of children identified as having SEN, including those who are not statemented; the arrangements for assessment and identification of SEN; criteria for evaluating the schools' SEN policies; partnership arrangements with parents; links with other agencies and other responsible bodies; arrangements for transfer to other schools or to work; and in service training (INSET) and professional development for staff. They will be

required to report annually on the success of the WSP for SEN and on any changes in policy in addition to the allocation of resources. For many governing bodies, already hard pressed by the demands of their increased responsibilities over the recent years and concerned about their need for further training in many areas, this may be seen as a tall order indeed.

A great deal has been written about the development of WSPs (Wolfendale 1982, Dessent 1987, Bines 1994, Walters 1994) and experience in the area has shown that it is a slow and often very painful business, resulting in differing degrees of success and effectiveness. There are questions of ownership of the policy to be addressed. It is not sufficient for the policy to be written by one, or even two, members of staf. If it is to have any genuine influence on working practice it must be generated in such a way that all concerned, including ancillary staff and other outside agencies and bodies connected with the school, have a commitment to making it work in practice. This sort of ownership only comes about when the development of policy is seen as a process. This is not easy, and time and patience are required to constantly review and evaluate in the light of practice. There is no doubt that where WSPs in SEN are developed and established effectively, there can be enormous benefits for the school which can result in bringing about changes in attitudes and genuine development in practice, and in particular in the development of more inclusive practice (Dessent 1987).

It is important to recognise, however, that the process of developing a whole school approach to SEN is not necessarily well established in all schools, nor can it be said that where such policy exists or is being developed it is of the highest quality (Bines 1994). Where policy does exist, schools will need to review it in the light of the Code of Practice, and where it doesn't exist it will need to be developed. Such development is not easy, will take time and if it is to be effective will require resourcing. The question of ownership is extremely problematic and must be recognised as such. Governing bodies are responsible, under the Act, for reporting on the WSP for SEN and will therefore need to feel some ownership for that policy, but at the same time they will need to recognise that unless teaching staff, ancillary workers, parents and other

associated bodies also feel some ownership for the policy it will fail to be effective, or indeed to have any influence on practice.

The scope of WSPs, as laid down by the Code of Practice, is extremely wide ranging. Questions therefore also arise about INSET and professional development in the areas covered for all concerned. Here again problems about time and resourcing arise. However, unless these issues are addressed there will again be no possibility of the development of an effective policy for SEN within a school.

The underlying assumption of the Code of Practice that WSP on SEN is in place, or that if it is not it can be developed and established simply by following guidelines about what it should include, is clearly false. It is equally false to assume that by holding governing bodies accountable for a WSP in their schools on SEN that policy will automatically be implemented effectively. The simplistic notion of accountability driving the development of practice in such a problematic and controversial area can be seen to be totally inadequate. It is, however, consistent with the policy documentation which accompanied the implementation of the 1988 Education Act, discussed in Chapter 5, that the Code of Practice takes no account of these problems.

Having looked at the practice and the practical implications which arise from the problematic nature of WSPs, it is also important to relate the issue to the conceptual issues discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. The idea of a whole school approach presupposes that there is some consensus of agreement among the staff of the school, or at least that some consensus can be achieved, about the way in which disability is conceived and understood, about the aims and purposes of education, about what is meant by entitlement to a full educational opportunity, and indeed about a whole range of vitally important topics. Earlier analysis has shown, however, that the area of disability, for example, is informed by different models, which can lead to different approaches in attitudes, educational provision and organisation. The same case can indeed be made for the other issues cited above. Since traditional, dominant, models which inform thinking in the area can be seen to be medical/deficit models, as

discussed in Chapter 2, WSPs on SEN can be seen to be potentially, as vehicles for reinforcing and legitimising what have been shown to be counterproductive attitudes towards disability, which far from encouraging inclusive practice, are more likely to lead to further segregation for pupils with SEN.

There is also a great deal of tension between WSP approaches to SEN and the model of curriculum which informs current educational provision. This model, as discussed in Chapters 2 and 5, is competitive and places heavy emphasis on narrow academic achievement and success. As such, it can be seen as exclusive and elitist, and therefore incompatible with notions which underpin WSPs about working towards more inclusive approaches.

WSPs on SEN are seen as the vehicle for the promotion of integrated practice, in current policy making. They can be seen, however, as contributing to yet another part of the rhetoric of SEN, since, given current educational thinking, policy and provision, which is firmly rooted in, and underpinned by, models of disability and of curriculum, which are clearly incompatible with inclusion, there is little possibility that they will achieve a great deal other than reinforcing and reaffirming those models.

The Special Needs Co-ordinator [SENCO]

One of the chief problems for SENCOs operating in mainstream schools has been to define, for their colleagues and for themselves, what exactly are the responsibilities of their role. Alan Dyson (1993) quotes Lucy, a SENCO;

> *"The big thing is that within this school special needs is the catch all for everything. Anything that doesn't seem to fit - 'Oh well Lucy will do it' .... I feel pretty powerless in some things. You know I just feel sometimes I've been banging my head against a brick wall, because some of these things are contingent on what SEN staff they will give me and I'm not getting that support." (Dyson 1993 p.98)*

Lucy's complaints highlight many of the problems which SENCOs face on a daily basis; a lack of role definition; low status; poor resourcing; no definition of what constitutes SEN; and to this list can be added a whole range of other

difficulties identified by colleagues currently working in this role: - a lack of time; resistant attitudes of colleagues towards integrating pupils with SEN; pressures of the National Curriculum and its associated assessment arrangements; difficulties in establishing collaborative working relationships with colleagues; and, in addition to all these, insufficient opportunities for INSET and professional development. A very long list indeed but one which makes very clear the complexities and difficulties of the role. The Code of Practice makes it clear that every school should have a person with designated responsibility for co-ordination of SEN. In a small school it may be one person, the Deputy or even the Head teacher, in larger schools it may be a team. The amount of time necessary to carry out the responsibilities is to be determined by the governing body and the Head teacher, and it is recognised that this will be affected by available resources. The Code lays down the duties of the SENCO as;

- the day to day operation of the school's SEN policy,
- liaising with, and advising, fellow teachers,
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEN,
- maintaining the school's SEN register and the records of all pupils with SEN,
- liaising with parents of children with SEN,
- contributing to staff INSET,
- liaising with external agencies including educational psychologists, support agencies, medical and social services and voluntary organisations. (DfE 1994 2:14)

Many SENCOs will no doubt welcome this clarification of their roles and responsibilities in the school. For many the Code will provide the support they need in explaining exactly what can reasonably be expected of them. There is also a clarification of their role as an advisor to other teachers rather than as

support for the child, reinforcing the notion that the class/subject teacher is, in the first place, responsible for the education of all pupils in his or her care. Clearly SENCOs are expected to liaise, to co-ordinate, to provide support, to act as enablers in the process of provision for pupils with SEN. They are to be responsible in addition for ensuring and maintaining efficient and effective records for those pupils. What the Code fails to address is the questions raised in the list of SENCOs' concerns given above, about the time and resourcing necessary to do the job efficiently. It is not possible, for example, to offer in-class support to colleagues when you have a full teaching time-table yourself, as is the case for many SENCOs in primary schools. Similarly the maintaining of efficient records, liaison with parents and other agencies and provision of INSET all require a great deal of time and effort.

The Code fails to recognise the enormous variety of practice which can be found in different schools with regard to the amount of time allowed for SEN support. Differences in location of schools also affect these issues. In the previous chapters the effects of LMS and GMS on funding availability and the priority given to SEN have already been mentioned.

Perhaps the most worrying issue which the Code seems to overlook is that of professional development and INSET, for SENCOs and for all staff. Many SENCOs, working very efficiently and effectively, given the limits on their time and resourcing constraints, feel themselves to be inadequate to the task of identifying, assessing and most importantly addressing pupils' SEN. Many find themselves to be poorly informed about changes in educational policy and their effects on pupils with SEN. Many feel at a loss now that the centrally provided LEA support services are being reduced or even withdrawn. Given all these difficulties SENCOs are expected to provide INSET and professional development and support for colleagues. The whole area of INSET and professional development will be addressed more fully in Chapter 7, but it is important to recognise at this point that the Code of Practice fails to address the very problematic nature of placing responsibility for such an onerous task where there is little support or resourcing and certainly a lack of confidence in the SENCOs themselves about the very issues on which they are expected to

advise. In fact, the Code of Practice places responsibility for INSET on the school's development plan and suggests that consulting with other schools and seeking economy of scale by sharing expertise will prove useful. However, these measures seem unlikely to address adequately an area which is so controversial and in which such a wide range of understanding and practice may be found.

For SENCOs the responsibility is enormous for it requires a deep understanding of the problematic nature of the underlying issues, and the sensitivity and personal qualities necessary to work effectively to change and develop attitudes and practice and to liaise and work together with a very wide range of colleagues and other interested persons. Without a recognition of the professional development needs of the SENCOs themselves there is unlikely to be a great deal of progress in the development of this multi-faceted role within schools. The SENCO is, however, a vitally important pivot around which the other strategies proposed by the Code revolve. Again there is no recognition in the documentation of the demands or of the difficulties surrounding the role.

It is also possible to see that, in addition to the constraints and difficulties mentioned above in terms of practice, the role of the SENCO and the duties and responsibilities outlined in the Code of Practice are underpinned by compensatory models of disability. Once again the emphasis is on modifying and adapting current curricula. Once again the vehicle for entitlement to a full educational opportunity is seen as being the mainstream curriculum, with the role of the SENCO viewed as being to ensure that maximum access to it is provided. If this proves too difficult, the role of the SENCO is to set in motion the procedure necessary to arrange alternative provision or possibly segregation. The SENCO, then, can be seen as having an important role to play in ensuring that the status quo is maintained, with the least possible disruption, with regard to pupils in general, and in particular for pupils with SEN.

The Five Stage Model

The Warnock Report suggested a model of good practice for the identification and assessment of SEN which is reaffirmed by the Code of Practice. The intention of the model is to develop and improve inclusive practice by placing responsibility for pupils with SEN firmly on the shoulders of the class/subject teacher. At stage one, in the process of effective classroom practice, the teacher is responsible for identifying, assessing, addressing, monitoring and recording the needs of all pupils. Where early intervention is deemed necessary the SENCO is called in to work with the teacher to develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for the pupil. This is stage two and work now progresses to address the needs of the pupil within the class/subject area and to monitor and review progress. Stage three is reached when all attempts at stage two have failed to address the difficulty and here the Head teacher is consulted and outside support agencies may be brought in. Parents should be informed and consulted at all stages. Stages one to three are the responsibility of the school and while the LEA may be involved in sharing responsibility it is not until stages four and five, when statutory assessment begins, that they are expected to become fully involved. The Code makes it clear that five stages are not essential but that there will need to be clear differentiation between stages used and that stages will need to demonstrate full processes of monitoring progress and of review. The intention is that the child's needs should be more effectively identified, assessed and addressed and that fewer children should then move into stages leading to statutory assessment.

This model is very much based on sound learning and teaching practice. The process of ongoing assessment is used diagnostically and formatively to provide sound information about pupils' needs and to assist in the making of appropriate decisions about how to address them. Through feedback further information is gathered to continue the process. Such a model should indeed lead to more inclusive practice since responsibility is placed on the class/subject teacher to address the needs of the pupils within his or her normal teaching.

Unfortunately the Code again fails to recognise the many pressures currently militating against this sort of approach to learning and teaching practice. There is inevitably a great deal of tension between these proposals, practice and the approach of the National Curriculum statutory assessment procedures, for example, centring as they do around age-related standardised tests.

Teachers are struggling currently with the enormous workload imposed on them by the dramatic changes which have resulted from the 1988 Act. The National Curriculum with its heavy subject emphasis has exerted great pressure on their practice and for many the additional implementation of the five stage model is horrendous.

Some of the issues already discussed in relation to the role of the SENCO apply here also. In-class support, monitoring, liaison and review are all problematic, as indeed is the issue of working effectively in partnership with colleagues, especially when those colleagues are hard pressed for time, working under great pressure, and in some cases totally resistant to the idea that they have any responsibility at all for pupils with SEN. The ability of teachers and SENCOs to address the SEN of their pupils even when they have been identified is not always as great as it may need to be to meet the demands. Here, of course, support and outside expertise may be sought but, as previously discussed, may not always be available due to funding changes.

INSET and professional development can be seen once again to be essential priorities and may be a possible route to relieving some of these problems. Again the question of resourcing available to provide this arises and indeed the availability of appropriate courses to meet the demand is an issue. Under LMS there has been a move to more school based INSET, often in the form of whole day inputs on a relevant topic. While this approach may go some way towards heightening awareness and is certainly an economic use of resources, it is seldom sufficient to provide the sort of INSET necessary to support the development of WSP, the introduction of the five stage model, establishing partnership teaching or identifying and assessing SEN. The Code once again, then, fails to recognise the problems associated with its introduction or to take

account of the range and variety of understanding and practice which may be found in the area.

In redefining the Statementing procedures, the Code of Practice addresses some of the issues identified by HMI as being of concern (DES 1989). At last there are national guidelines, including time restrictions for the different parts of the procedure. Issues about resourcing the procedure will still be dependent upon allocations by individual LEAs and may lead to continuing discrepancies between what constitutes reason for Statementing or not. Effective implementation of the five stage model may assist in reducing this problem but not unless some of the issues raised above are recognised and addressed.

It is important to recognise, too, that underlying the five stage model approach is once again the notion that the educational practice and provision in the mainstream of education are good and that for some children, only, there will be a need to adapt or modify it, or provide some additional or compensatory support, in order that they may have access to it. Once again the whole idea can be seen to be rooted in deficit ideas about disability and once more the traditional dominant model of curriculum remains unchallenged. What is more, integration is about fitting pupils into existing structures, where possible, and about segregating them out where they do not fit, or cannot be made to fit. The five stage model has, therefore, the potential to contribute to the process of segregation and separation of pupils on the grounds that their differences cannot be sufficiently normalised.

The Role of Parents

One of the most important features of the Code of Practice is the constant reference it makes, in every aspect of practice addressed, to the need to inform and consult with parents. While recognising the problematic nature of working in this way with parents, discussed at length in Chapter 5, this must be seen as an important and very positive feature. The references to the involvement of the children themselves at all stages must be seen as even more positive. Again to recognise the right of children to a voice is problematic (see Chapter

2) and may involve great difficulty but there is no doubt that they have an important role to play in the decision making processes with regard to their education. The recognition of the importance of involving them and consulting with them is particularly emphasised in the section of the Code of Practice relating to statemented pupils reaching the first review after their fourteenth birthday. The whole plan for transition from school places emphasis on the need to discuss, consult with and inform the young person, as well as his or her family. Dealt with sensitively the Transition Plan (DfE 1994 6:45) can be seen as an enabling vehicle for empowering young disabled people towards self determination.

Unfortunately the problematic nature of developing self advocacy and of empowering young people, discussed in Chapter 2, is not recognised or addressed in the document. The potential for conflict to arise between what parents perceive as the rights and entitlement of their children and what the children themselves perceive them to be is not addressed. As a result of this failure to address the problematic nature of the issues which underpin the development of empowerment, including the necessary curriculum to support its development, the Code of Practice can be seen to be simply contributing to more of the rhetoric of SEN.

The SEN Tribunal

The 1993 Education Act makes provision for the establishment of a new SEN Tribunal. This body is intended to extend parents' rights by providing regionally based bodies to which parents can take their claims, complaints and concerns with regard to SEN provision. They will have the power to advise, make decisions and monitor the operation of the Code of Practice. It is unclear, at the time of writing, how these bodies will operate, but it seems likely that tensions may arise in the area of remit for SEN between LEAs, still responsible for SEN provision under the 1981 Education Act, and the SEN Tribunals. They will also be in a very weak position since the Code of Practice is not mandatory.

Conclusions

The Code of Practice can be seen to fall very short of expectation in a number of ways. In the first place it totally fails to address the issue of entitlement for pupils with SEN. Nowhere is the right of disabled pupils to a full educational opportunity discussed in the documentation. Instead it reaffirms the definition of SEN as laid down by the 1981 Education Act, so that SEN are to continue to be measured in relation to age related norms and the provisions already on offer in the mainstream of education. The definition of SEN is,

> *"... significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age ... a disability which prevents or hinders the child from making use of the education facilities of the kind provided for children of the same age." (DfE 1994 2:1)*

This definition clearly fails to recognise difference and diversity and simply reaffirms the notion that SEN should be measured and provided for in relation to the needs and requirements of other children, a very weak position which doesn't address the concept of entitlement as a right in any way, and is clearly underpinned by a deficit model of disability.

Real doubts arise from close examination about the potential of the Code of Practice to affect practice in the area of SEN in any real way, since, in spite of being promoted as national policy, it is not mandatory and schools are only urged to,

> *"use their best endeavours to make provision for pupils with special educational needs." (op. cit. Introduction 5)*

and

> *"... to have regard to it." (op. cit. Introduction 6)*

No provisions are made to compel its use. OFSTED inspections will monitor school practice with regard to the Code of Practice when considering SEN issues

but the effectiveness of this monitoring will depend greatly upon the knowledge and experience of inspectors in the area, which may vary considerably.

Margaret Peters, reviewing the Code as a Charter for Ways and Means in the TES 15/4/94 points out;

> *"Eric Forth referred to five means of checking on the Code's operation; the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED); the new SEN Tribunal; LEAs; governing bodies and parents. The last two are unlikely to be fierce watchdogs; the other two have fewer teeth than expected. The idea that defective schools can be called to account and publicly pilloried by the new Tribunal is a flawed one according to some lawyers. The Tribunal will not be able to compel schools to follow the Code. So far as OFSTED goes, effective monitoring will depend on whether or not inspectors have the right experience and are able to allocate sufficient time to assess practice under the Code."*

Once again as with the 1981 Education Act, the provisions of this Act seem likely to be open to a variety of interpretation because of the weakness of the legislation. The Code of Practice can be seen, then, as yet another weak link in a chain of provisions for pupils with SEN, which fails totally to recognise a positive right to full inclusion in, and access to, education.

An important positive feature, however, is the emphasis throughout the Code of Practice on the importance of involving the child in all the processes of assessing and addressing his or her needs. The benefits of this are recognised as,

> *"practical - children have important and relevant information. Their support is crucial to the effective implementation of any individual programme principle - children have a right to be heard. They should be encouraged to participate in decision making about provision to meet their special educational needs." (DfE 1994 2:35)*

This vitally important statement is the first recognition in educational policy in SEN in England and Wales of the need to give a voice to disabled pupils themselves. It is consistent with the approaches discussed in Chapter 2 of

developing self advocacy and acknowledges the need for empowerment. It must, therefore, be seen as extremely positive. There is also an important message in the Code of Practice, that this is not something which can happen automatically;

> *"Positive pupil involvement is unlikely to happen spontaneously. Careful attention, guidance and encouragement will be required to help pupils respond relevantly and fully." (op. cit. 2:36)*

In terms of entitlement, however, the Code of Practice is inconsistent and conceptually incoherent in its provisions. By reaffirming the definition of SEN and the practices of assessment, particularly the Statementing procedure, instituted by the 1981 Education Act, it is reinforcing a weak view of entitlement determined in relation to, and dependent upon, provisions for others and narrowly conceived norms rather than individual rights. By firmly stating the importance of involving pupils with SEN in the processes of decision making about their own education, on the other hand, it is affirming the right to be included and to have a voice. The contradictory nature of these ideas is not recognised in the Code of Practice, however, and it can therefore be seen as further supporting and contributing to a rhetoric which is merely paying lip service to notions of inclusion and entitlement rather than addressing them as serious issues. This view is given further weight when the Code of Practice is evaluated in terms of its underlying models of disability and curriculum.

The model of disability which informs the Code of Practice, while in no way made explicit in the documentation, can be seen to be rooted in the model proposed by the Warnock Report. Again the model is one of compensation through extra resourcing and support for difference in ability. The underlying notion is that disabled pupils need to be normalised in order to fit into the mainstream of education. Again there is heavy emphasis on the issue of resourcing, thus centring the debate around what can be seen as superficial rather than fundamental issues. Again there is no attempt made to address the inequalities which lead to discrimination in the education system.

The mainstream curriculum is regarded, as in previous policy, as requiring minor modification and adaptation in order to ensure access for pupils with SEN. Nowhere is its appropriateness discussed, nor are issues about its narrow academic base or the exclusiveness of its assessment procedures raised.

Another serious omission is the failure to seriously address the need to provide a curriculum for empowerment. To talk about the importance of involving children in decision making and to recognise that this doesn't happen spontaneously, but to fail to discuss the necessary curriculum to enable these processes is fine rhetoric indeed. Schools are urged to consider the problem of encouraging pupils to speak for themselves but the adequacy of the mainstream curriculum to enable pupils in the processes of self advocacy and autonomous decision making is not discussed. Earlier discussion, in Chapter 2, has pointed to the fact that curriculum planning which takes as the aims of education narrow instrumental goals, is unlikely to promote or develop these abilities in children. Analysis of the National Curriculum has shown that it is underpinned by a model of curriculum which is inconsistent with the development of children towards self determination and autonomy. Thus the Code of Practice can again be seen to be incoherent and inconsistent. Indeed it would seem that, as with much policy making for SEN in recent years, the very important issue of a model of curriculum which enables genuine opportunities for pupils is ignored.

Problems associated with the context in which the Code of Practice is intended to operate and the prevailing political climate are also given scant attention in the documentation. School budgets are influenced by a number of external factors, already discussed in detail, and there are many important areas competing for the resources available. The authors of the Code of Practice appear to take no account of the context in which it is to be implemented. The pressures imposed by the National Curriculum and its associated assessment procedures are certainly exerting a great deal of stress on teachers and schools.

In addition to this the model of curriculum planning is itself incompatible with the approaches required to implement the Code of Practice effectively. The heavy emphasis on academic subjects and standardised testing inevitably places pressure on teachers to reorientate their priorities away from developmental, child centred approaches, where children are encouraged to work at their own pace and success and achievement are measured in relation to their own growth. In order to effectively assess and identify children's needs, sensitive diagnostic, formative assessment of all aspects of development is required. Opportunities to observe the child in a variety of different learning contexts are important and having identified pupils' needs it is crucial that teachers are able to construct appropriate, flexible curricula to address those needs. This approach is certainly at odds with the rigidity of the National Curriculum with its narrow testing used to establish which children are failing to reach the designated bench marks.

As already discussed at some lenght in Chapter 5, the wider context of educational change and reorganisation has also, it seems, been ignored. LMS, GMS, competition, shrinking centrally provided support, are all geared towards exclusive practice in terms of SEN. The Code of Practice, however, is clearly intended to ensure that pupils with SEN remain within the mainstream as far as possible. This clash of policy, inevitably gives rise to concern and again demonstrates the lack of any consistent or coherent underpinning to current educational planning. It would seem that yet another piece of education policy making can be summed up as rhetoric bearing little relation to reality.

The integration of pupils with SEN is once again seen as an organisational procedure rather than as a complex, problematic process contingent upon consistent and clear understanding of a number of important underlying issues. The Code of Practice perpetuates the notion that it is simply a question of fitting pupils into, or retaining them within existing structures. There is no attempt to define integration as inclusion. Nor is there any discussion of the enriching possibilities of including difference and diversity rather than eliminating and excluding them. The prevailing language is that of problems, difficulties, help, guidance, thus reinforcing deficit notions rather than

emphasising the value to all children, and of course their teachers, of including the whole range of differing abilities.

Seen in terms of its potential to improve educational opportunities for disabled pupils, the Code of Practice seems to have little to offer. Like the Warnock Report, it fails to define its underlying theoretical base in any way and, as has been shown, is responsible for perpetuating a number of assumptions which, when questioned, raise considerable doubts about its real value to pupils with SEN. The key concept of integration is not defined, or even discussed, nor is the model of curriculum and, there is no attempt either to examine the model of disability upon which assumptions are made about measuring and assessing pupils' SEN. Issues addressed are those which centre around organisation and what can be seen as other superficial considerations. The Code of Practice offers little, then, in terms of any potential to change or develop practice in the area of SEN. Certainly it is unlikely to make any contribution to the process of deconstructing and reconstructing the discourse of SEN in terms of the right to full inclusion and participation as discussed in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 7

TEACHER EDUCATION

Implications for Integration and Special Educational Needs

> *"Schools need to be viewed as democratic public spheres, as places where students learn the skills and knowledge to live in, and fight for a democratic society. As such, they will have to be characterised by a pedagogy that demonstrates commitment to engaging the views and problems that deeply concern students in their everyday life. Equally important is the need for schools to cultivate a spirit of critique and a respect for human dignity that is capable of linking personal and social issues around the pedagogical project of helping students to become active and critical citizens." (Giroux 1988 p.208)*

The school and the form of curriculum described by Giroux, above, has the potential to address many of the issues raised as crucial to the empowerment of disabled pupils and to their struggle to find access to more equal educational opportunity. This description arises from a discussion about the need for teachers to develop a radical pedagogy in order to become effective and committed agents of change and development in education. For Giroux this approach is vitally necessary and can only be developed by engaging in forms of enquiry which challenge and question political and social structures and their effects on educational practice. Teachers need to become, in his view,

"... knowledgeable and committed actors in the world." (op. cit. p.208)

Giroux is greatly concerned about the failure of many forms of critical enquiry and research in education to engage in constructing a model which can bring about real change. He sees, therefore, the need for teachers themselves to engage in directly challenging dominant discourses in education with a view to deconstructing and reconstructing them in, and through, practice.

To work in the way described above is to recognise the fact that educational enquiry is centrally concerned with criticising, questioning and making political decisions, for both teachers and pupils. Previous discussion, in Chapter 2, laid emphasis on the centrality of these processes to empowerment. For Freire also the process of engaging in what he refers to as the process of critical dialogue is crucial for empowerment;

> *"The Freirian pedagogy which tries to develop this critical consciousness is student centred dialogue which postulises generative themes from everyday life as well as topical issues from society and academic subject matter from specific disciplines ... This critical pedagogy is based in classroom and community research by the teacher it also expects students to be researchers inquiring into problems posed about daily experience, society, and academic material ... The classroom itself is active and interactive ... The critical dialogue also seeks action outcomes from the inquiry wherever feasible." (Shor 1993 pp.33-34)*

Freire saw these approaches as vital to the processes of empowerment and emancipation for oppressed groups. As discussed earlier, this approach is certainly central for disabled people. The reconstruction of the concept of integration as entitlement to full inclusion and participation in education requires a redefinition of the curriculum and of the learning and teaching processes guided by the sort of pedagogical principles discussed above. The teacher has a central and crucial role to play here, and therefore for the purposes of this work it is important to look more closely at teacher education, and in particular recent policy and change in the area, with a view to evaluating the implications for pupils with SEN and their integration.

In devoting a whole chapter to teacher education and training the Warnock Report (1978) recognised the vitally important role played by both Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and In-service Training (INSET) in the area of SEN;

> *"It is imperative that every teacher should appreciate that up to one child in every five is likely to require some form of special educational help at some time during his school career ... The procedures which we have proposed for identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children who require special educational provision will demand insight on the part of all teachers into the special needs which many children have. They must also be aware of the importance of working closely with parents and with other professionals and non professionals ... The positive attitudes required of teachers in recognising and securing help for children with special educational needs and the necessary skills must be acquired in the course of training."*
> *(DES 1978 12:1 Italics my emphasis)*

The issues of concern for teachers - identifying, assessing and addressing children's needs effectively; building partnerships with parents and professionals - raised in the opening paragraph of Chapter 12 of the Report, have been recognised and discussed throughout this work. Discussion has shown that they are all extremely problematic and often highly controversial issues demanding a great deal of insight, sensitivity, skill and understanding, amongst other qualities, of the teacher.

Perhaps the most demanding issue raised by the above quotation is that teachers need to have positive attitudes in order to effectively address the many aspects of coping with the SEN of their pupils. The section in this thesis on Models of Disability raised vitally important questions about the importance of changing and developing attitudes in order to make more integrated, or even inclusive, practice for children with SEN a reality. For teachers working at the cutting edge, with real possibilities of bringing about such a change in educational practice, the development of positive attitudes can be seen to be crucial. In order to develop these attitudes it is important, first, to have a full awareness and understanding of the issues involved. It is also important, having gained these understandings and developed positive attitudes, to

engage in effective practice in the areas identified above; recognising, assessing, diagnosing and addressing children's needs; developing collaborative partnerships with colleagues, parents and other professionals; and above all communicating, through that practice, positive attitudes to others.

There is no doubt, therefore, that teacher education, from ITT through to continuing professional development, has a vitally important role to play in the process of supporting and enabling teachers to recognise, understand and address the needs of all their pupils. The Warnock Report recommended that all ITT should contain a 'special education element' (DES 1978 12:4). That element should provide:-

- practical skills in observing and perceiving pupils' needs and interpreting their behaviour, recognising the effects of the context and home background;

- understanding and awareness of child development in *all* its aspects, and of the role of parents in the process;

- some understanding of practical steps which can be made to address pupils' needs, including awareness of the role of curriculum, class management etc. in exacerbating SEN;

- awareness and understanding of other special services and their possible role;

- awareness of a range of further professional development in the area of SEN.

Emphasis should be laid on developing a clear recognition that, whatever age group or whichever level of education they work in, teachers are likely to encounter pupils who have SEN and that it is their responsibility to cater for those needs within the scope of their work as a class or subject teacher. There is also a clear recognition that ITT alone can never hope to address all these issues effectively and that it is essential to develop this awareness in teachers so that they acknowledge the need for continuing professional development, including the possibility of specialist study in particular areas of SEN. The

recommendations make it clear that special educational training is for all teachers, not just a few. Indeed the whole of teacher education must address issues related to SEN.

In Chapter 4, the Warnock Report was criticised for making these recommendations without recognising the scope and difficulty of implementing them. Certainly in the area of teacher education, while there is a recognition of the importance of 'a special education element' in ITT, and there are a number of INSET courses available which address many of the important issues mentioned above, there are many problems and difficulties associated with ensuring that the element and those courses really address the needs of teachers effectively. While, for the most part, the approach recommended by the Warnock Report has been adopted, teacher education has been, at the same time, radically affected by the large scale changes in education policy and organisation which have taken place in the intervening years. Indeed the issue of keeping up with those changes is in itself an important factor, since it is easy in such a period of rapid change for courses to become outdated in extremely short spaces of time. Robson et al. (1988) identify just this problem;

> *"The traditions of staff training which we have inherited have served us badly and are largely irrelevant for the future. Staff training simply has not kept up with the changing needs of the clients with whom we work nor with the emerging patterns of service delivery ... Many people working at first hand with people with special needs are largely unaware of new developments." (Robson et al. 1988 p.3)*

They go on to point out that there seems to be no national plan for professional development in the area of SEN and that, where there is provision this often fails to address current needs of practitioners. They also express concerns about just how far teacher education has actually moved into a permeation model of SEN training and how effective and able the trainers are themselves in meeting the demands of such a model at a time when there have been many staff reductions in teacher training institutions and the staff are in any case often ill equipped to supply the sort of courses necessary;

"Even with a small but powerful team real progress in influencing the initial training of teachers can only come about through total infiltration and permeation of the mainstream teacher training curriculum for both primary and secondary subject specialists; it remains to be seen whether this requirement can be implemented in the absence of enough suitably qualified and experienced staff in the training institutions." (ibid)

They make the point that in general the provision is woefully inadequate to address this model;

> *"Such special needs training as exists in higher education in Britain is carried out by a very small number of staff - sometimes by a single token special educator with no training or experience in the field." (op. cit. p.7)*

An additional problem is that many special education trainers have a background in segregated special schools and that few have experience in both mainstream and special education. The danger here is that segregated practice will inevitably be perpetuated and that attitudes and assumptions concerning education for children with SEN will fail, as a result, to change or develop towards integration and inclusion. Robson et al. conclude that to reach all areas of ITT with a special education element is probably too great a task;

> *"The reappraisal of the initial teacher training curriculum that this involves is so radical and fundamental that it is difficult to see how it can be achieved within the present restrictions on teacher training. On the other hand, continuing to present special needs courses as self contained capsules of instruction is to perpetuate the very segregation which we wish to end." (ibid)*

Personal experience, as a senior lecturer responsible for SEN in a teacher training institution, confirms many of the above assertions. Certainly as the only member of staff with experience in both special and mainstream education in the establishment, it is impossible to provide more than token inputs about SEN to the various courses on offer. It is, of course, also possible to make contributions to the planning and development of courses and to provide a range of INSET courses which attempt to address a variety of pertinent issues.

The degree to which any of this actually influences, or makes any real impact on, developing awareness and understanding in teachers, or indeed in preparing them for the SEN they may encounter in practice, is inevitably limited. It is possible to collaborate with colleagues in schools and with advisory and other support services in making provisions, but nevertheless the immensity of the task is extremely daunting, if not totally overwhelming at times.

It is important to note, at this point, that in moving towards a notion that SEN are the responsibility of all teachers, we have moved away from the idea, still dominant in many of our European neighbour countries, that we need specialised special education training for teachers. While it is commensurate with integration policy to adopt a permeation approach to teacher education, the dichotomy which has arisen as a result of this practice is the loss of status for SEN as an important area in its own right in teacher education and, following from this, the loss of expertise and experience. Certainly many teacher training institutions have reduced, or disbanded, SEN departments in the desire to move towards integrated practice themselves, but in doing so seem to have failed to provide adequately the necessary training in this all important area.

The rapid and far reaching changes brought about by the 1981, 1988 and 1993 Education Acts raise many more issues for teacher education and especially in the area of SEN. In ITT there have been fundamental changes to both policy and practice and in the area of INSET changes to the funding arrangements for education have also resulted in radical reorganisation of provision. Influencing all developments is the ongoing debate about higher education, its role, function and organisation. There are serious concerns about the perception in current policy making of higher education and its role in the area of teacher education (Kelly 1993, Barber 1993). A great deal has already been discussed earlier about the role played by rhetoric in bringing about the recent move of education into the model of the free market. A major part of that rhetoric has been concerned with the attempt to divorce the theory of education from practice and to create a persuasive argument for the removal of theory

altogether from teacher training. Kelly (1993) sees this as a clear attempt to gain total control over education by deintellectualising and deprofessionalising teachers;

> *"For those who wish to manipulate the education system for their own ends, the most undesirable development would be the emergence of a genuinely reflective teaching force." (Kelly 1993 p.136)*

It would seem then that within the context of this attempt to analyse, evaluate and redefine the concept of integration, ITT, INSET, the role of higher education and educational theory in teacher education all require further investigation.

Initial Teacher Training

The reorganisation of ITT has been seen by government as fundamental to raising standards in education and to bringing about their desired changes in education policy. It has been greeted by teachers, teacher training institutions and indeed by other professionals, however, with some serious reservations and in some cases great dismay. The lack of any definition of the standards to be raised has already been mentioned and in the same vein the lack of any underlying educational rationale for the desired changes in policy has also been identified. Changes in ITT can be seen to follow a very similar pattern. Government has expressed a clear intention to remove educational theory from teacher training and to move to an apprenticeship model, with training taking place at what might be described as 'the chalk face', in the classroom. The role of higher education is to be reduced to validation only and the chief responsibility for training is to reside with the schools. The model is again clearly in line with the free market ideology with the aim of producing a more efficient, less expensive workforce.

Michael Barber, at the time Head of Education and Equal Opportunities Department of the National Union of Teachers, in an article in the TES (28/5/93) points to the problematic and very worrying issues raised by moving to such a model for training. He suggests that the adoption of the market model

can only lead to undermining the quality of the teaching profession and makes a case for the continuing involvement of higher education;

> *"Higher education should be involved, not just to validate, but also because it makes a contribution which schools cannot. Knowledge of and involvement in debates about the latest research are important for trainee teachers. The breadth and healthy scepticism of higher education work on teaching and learning cannot easily be replicated. Furthermore students benefit from direct access to research and to opportunities to participate in research projects." (Barber 1993)*

Kelly (1993) makes further important points about the vitally important role higher education has to play in teacher education, for it is through the study of education theory that teachers are enabled and assisted with the processes of critical reflection and evaluation, crucial aspects of genuine personal and professional development;

> *"... teachers cannot be prepared to fulfil adequately their role in a democratic society without being required to engage in properly intellectual study of the activity they are engaged in, since it is not possible to practice that activity effectively without learning at the same time to reflect critically on that practice." (Kelly 1993 p.135)*

The shift in emphasis from the theoretical study of education to teaching as a practical skill has been a strong theme throughout official documentation for some period of time. Kelly points out that the CATE (Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education) criteria for 1989 (DES) lay heavy emphasis on methodological study. They cover the academic subject study, issues about how to teach and the subject application. This emphasis is reaffirmed by Alexander et al. (DfE 1992) in the discussion paper, Curriculum Organisation and Classroom Practice in Primary Schools;

> *"Primary teachers must have a firm understanding of the subject knowledge which the National Curriculum Orders require, they must understand how children learn and they must be able to deploy a range of organisational strategies and teaching techniques." (DfE 1992 p.5)*

The emphasis is clearly on practical strategies and this is reaffirmed in the two circulars 9/92, for secondary education, and 14/93 for primary education, which introduce the new criteria for ITT. The model is competence based and focuses on those areas of competence considered necessary for effective understanding, delivery, assessment and monitoring of the National Curriculum. The practical classroom management and organisational skills, together with the subject knowledge and understanding are firmly stressed and the aim of ITT is stated as;

> *"All newly qualified teachers ... should have the necessary personal qualities for teaching children and should have achieved the levels of subject knowledge and understanding and standards of professional competence necessary to maintain and improve the standards of schools." (DfE 1993 1:1)*

This aim can be seen to be totally utilitarian and technicist and once again, as in much recent official documentation, full of assumptions about a number of issues which require debate and clarification. The pattern continues, however, and the breathtaking assumption is made that, if teachers can be judged to have demonstrated the competencies listed in the circulars, this aim will have been achieved and that many then may be regarded as qualified teachers. At the time of writing wide ranging debate continues about satisfactory methods of assessing competence; about the reduction of teacher education to such a simplistic set of competencies; about the emphasis throughout the documentation on the National Curriculum as a guide for the content of ITT in terms of subject knowledge and application. All these, and many other issues, continue to be discussed and, as yet, remain unresolved, but nevertheless implementation of the model has been imposed already. Michael Barber comments rather cynically;

> *"If recent form is a good guide, some time in 1994 the pilot studies will be declared a success and extended across the system, at which point the process will be complete ... reminiscent of Thomas Cromwell's famous note during the dissolution of the monasteries; 'Abbots of Reading and Glastonbury to be tried and executed'." (Barber 1993)*

The circulars also lay down criteria for the second, and perhaps even more dramatic, part of the reorganisation of ITT, the move to school based training. The major part of ITT is to take place in the schools. The role of higher education is to work in partnership with schools but with the larger part of student time spent in the classroom. The model can be extended further with schools themselves becoming teacher training institutions and receiving direct funding, initially from government and from the new Teacher Training Agency, in a move clearly reminiscent of the GMS approach previously discussed.

At the time of writing, partnership schemes with higher education and independent school consortia are emerging with varying degrees of success and are all encountering a wide range of difficulties and problems. Higher education establishments are finding many difficulties in redefining their role, as indeed are schools. Issues are arising about weight and responsibility for monitoring and supporting trainee teachers and of course about the time and resourcing necessary. Some schools are unhappy with the arrangements and find themselves, in spite of all efforts, unable to cope with the new demands. The following is taken from a letter sent by one such school to their partner higher education institution;

> *"Governors cannot accept the release of their best teachers from their primary task of teaching and the disruption caused by the scheme over the past two years is difficult to justify to parents. Do parents wish 30 per cent of their children's teaching to be in the hands of students in up to five subjects? Do they want their children to be interviewed, observed or shadowed? Space is so limited in the Staff room that accommodating five or more students has been a problem and providing them each with a workspace an impossibility. We greatly regret withdrawing from the partnership scheme as currently proposed, but feel we must do to safeguard the interests of our pupils and to avoid totally unreasonable demands on our staff." (Guardian Education 17/5/94)*

The quality of experience of the trainee teacher is another issue of grave concern, and in particular the time to develop critical and reflective skills, to stand back from the practice situation and think about the process. As demonstrated clearly by the letter quoted above, teachers already hard pressed by the demands of their role, find this just another burden, which inevitably

affects the atmosphere in which the trainees and, of course, the pupils are working.

Other school based schemes, the Licensed and Articled teachers schemes, have also emerged and been greeted in the same way with extremely mixed reactions from teachers, parents, teacher trainers and the trainees themselves. There is common criticism of the speed of implementation of all the schemes, that they are ill thought out and under resourced, that they place an unmanageable burden on schools and, most worrying of all, that the consequences for the professional status of teachers and for the future of education have not been assessed or even recognised.

The far reaching consequences of these changes cannot be fully evaluated as yet, but nevertheless some very important issues and concerns can be seen with regard to pupils with SEN, even at this very early stage. Earlier the point was made that for pupils' SEN to be effectively identified, assessed and addressed, these areas must be dealt with for all teachers during ITT. The point was also made that little progress has been made to date in this all important area and that permeation training models leave much to be desired. There are many concerns about the abilities of teachers to cater adequately for pupils' needs; about the number of children being identified as having SEN; about the numbers of children identified as underachieving and indeed about a wide range of other associated issues. The introduction of the Code of Practice for SEN (DfE 1994) is clearly an attempt to address some of these concerns more effectively and to enable the process of more integration. Responses to the Code from teachers show concern about their abilities to meet its requirements and to deal with what they perceive as a growing area. To place responsibility for ITT on the shoulders of schools and teachers is a great enough enterprise in itself, but to place responsibility for SEN training on those teachers, many of whom feel themselves inadequate to the task of meeting the demands of pupils with SEN themselves, would seem to be extremely dangerous, if not impossible. Concerns immediately arise about the potential for the pooling of ignorance, about reinforcing and entrenching attitudes and assumptions about roles and responsibilities for SEN. There is also a further

possibility, of course, that a teacher burdened with the additional responsibility of supporting and training a new teacher, might, however well experienced he or she may be, be placed in the position of exacerbating or even creating SEN for his or her pupils as a result of lack of time to attend effectively to the learning and teaching process in the classroom.

Emphasis in the new arrangements for ITT on subject knowledge and application are also very worrying for the area of SEN and integration. The shift away from the study of child development and of how children learn towards the subject area and the content of the curriculum as the central focus inevitably gives rise to concerns about increased lack of understanding and awareness of the needs and difficulties of the pupils. There is a danger that trainee teachers will see themselves first and foremost as teachers of the subject, or even worse as deliverers of the National Curriculum, rather than enablers of the child. This can only lead to a narrowing of perception with regard to the processes of learning and teaching and it again reinforces a model of curriculum which, as discussed in Chapter 2, can be seen as counterproductive to the development of practice, leading to more integration and inclusion. Similarly the emphasis in the competencies on ensuring that all teachers are able to assess pupils' performance against the standard expected of their age and by the National Curriculum statements of attainment (DfE 1992 2.5.2) reinforces a narrow and restricted view of assessment, already discussed as inadequate and inappropriate for inclusive practice.

For pupils with SEN and for the progress of their integration into the mainstream of education, the reorganisation of ITT seems to present a rather bleak prospect. A school based, competence orientated model of ITT, divorced from sound theoretical underpinning provided by relevant and rigorous professional study of education (Kelly 1993) seems unlikely to prepare or equip teachers for addressing the SEN of pupils they come across in their practice. Indeed it would seem sadly inadequate to prepare teachers for addressing the needs of any of their pupils. What is perhaps more worrying is that it would seem to be a woefully inadequate model for developing critically reflective professionals of the sort required to develop and change practice in the area of

SEN and to create more inclusive approaches to education. Rather it would seem to be a model designed to reinforce, reaffirm and perpetuate traditional approaches to practice.

In Service Training

At a time when education is undergoing great change in its policy and organisation the notion of continuing professional development is extremely important. Once again to return to the recommendations of the Warnock Report there is the clear recognition of the importance of INSET for the area of SEN in the advice that all serving teachers should be given the opportunity to follow a course on SEN, that there should be a range of INSET provision available including full time as well as part time courses, and that all teachers should be encouraged, or preferably required, to attend (DES 1978 Chapter 12).

Graham Upton (1991) discussing the demands on teachers being made by the rapid changes in policy, especially with regard to SEN, makes the point that;

> *"There is now a growing recognition that every teacher both deserves and needs a positive plan for professional development, and that the school itself must in future play a more active role in mobilising the resources needed to provide this." (Upton 1991 p.8)*

He makes the point that professional development has a vitally important role to play in the process of bringing about change in educational practice with regard to SEN, and in particular in the development of WSP for SEN. The Code of Practice for SEN (DfE 1994) emphasises the same point and makes clear the need for all staff, including support and ancillary staff, to be included in staff development programmes, laying heavy stress on the schools' responsibility to arrange and provide for this. The SENCO, in particular, is recognised as needing ongoing professional development as he or she is seen as an agent for the provision of INSET to other members of the school staff, a very complex and demanding aspect of this role.

The role of school based INSET has become increasingly of importance for a variety of reasons, in addition to those above. In some aspects this approach can be seen to be extremely effective and very valuable. Gerda Hanko points out that school based INSET can provide very relevant and appropriate support for staff;

> *"It taps this untapped potential not by advising or telling teachers how they might do their job differently - the most customary way of 'advising' which frequently mainly amounts to offering one's own solution to another person's difficulty - but by using in the context in which the difficulties are experienced, these insights generating professional skills which assist a participant in the exploration to find their own workable solution." (Hanko 1991 p.86)*

While there is no doubt that this approach has great value and indeed reflects, in practice, that model described in the section on ITT as the self critical reflective practitioner, there is an enormous assumption made in the quotation above about the ability of teachers to engage in these processes effectively. For many there are problems about what they see as additional demands being made on their time when they are asked to engage in these action research based approaches to their own professional development. For many the concept is unfamiliar and they will require support in the form of the sort of Diploma and Masters level professional development courses being offered at many higher education institutions, and these are not always accessible to them as a result of funding difficulties, and, again, time constraints. There is no doubt that, at its best, the model of school based professional development has much to offer all teachers. The idea of engaging in problem solving with other colleagues with a view to developing and changing practice is both highly desirable and very necessary, particularly if the area of SEN is to be addressed appropriately and relevantly in practice. Working in collaboration with colleagues in this way is motivating and beneficial for personal development and for the whole school and produces the perfect environment for the development of WSP. This can also be seen as consistent with the development of approaches to pedagogy described by Giroux and Freire at the beginning of this section as vital for real change and development in education.

It must be recognised, however, that school based INSET does not always meet the very exacting criteria of the model described above. In the current scene where resources for INSET may be only a small part, and often a shrinking part, of the school's budget, an approach is emerging which is firmly based on the idea of getting the best value for money by reaching the maximum number of staff with an input for the minimum amount of money. For many schools this amounts to bringing the whole staff together for a short intensive input on a topic prioritised as being important, and therefore often related at the present time to the National Curriculum. Issues arise here about conflicting priorities and about the value of short sharp input approaches. Priorities for senior management, for example, such as OFSTED inspection, may have less relevance to individual staff members. The dominant theme of National Curriculum changes again places emphasis on issues which may not address some of the more fundamental problem solving and investigation proposed in the model described previously.

The intensive input, often from a guest speaker, followed by a range of activities which may or may not be effectively directed, may be economically attractive, but can produce a great deal of disaffection and be very demotivating for teachers forced to attend. Indeed this approach can be seen to leave a great deal to be desired in terms of professional development.

Another danger of school based approaches is the potential to reinforce and entrench attitudes and practices which may be counterproductive to change and development and may result in the pooling of ignorance. In terms of professional development such an inward looking approach can also be very inadequate since it tends to centre around specific experiences in one particular context and has therefore a tendency to become anecdotal and even incestuous. Transfer to another context may then prove to be extremely difficult and to create a whole range of new problems. This approach also fails to challenge the wider social context in which educational structures are constructed because it particularises and creates problems and difficulties and is therefore unlikely to result in making any real impact on changing attitudes and practice with regard to SEN.

There would seem to be a need for a variety of experience in any professional development plan, including some well managed and supported school based INSET together with some individual work provided in a wider context and designed to address more general issues. The role of the LEAs and of higher education is vitally important here. The new funding arrangements for education, however, which place the responsibility for INSET in the schools has inevitably had an effect on the capability of both to provide adequately for professional development. The reduction of finances held centrally by LEAs has, as already discussed, led to the disbanding or commercialisation of advisory and support services which in the past offered courses to support professional development. Central funding for course fees and individual study leave are no longer available to provide assistance to those teachers wishing to continue with professional development in higher education. Higher education, as a consequence of reduced numbers of students, has been forced to cut back on courses and this has seriously affected the provision of INSET in the area of SEN. The market model of supply and demand makes planning for provision a nightmare in a world of shrinking resources and rapid change where market demand means that courses often centre around issues which have commercial viability, like the National Curriculum, and those which address other more fundamental and often more important areas may be cancelled because they are perceived as being less 'useful'.

It is important to find a ray of light in the apparent darkness here and to point out that some higher education institutes facing this pressure have begun to develop a much more flexible and responsive approach to provision. The pressures have also led to more co-operation between LEAs and higher education and they in turn have begun to appreciate the value of working more closely in partnership with schools to provide school based courses. This has had some considerable impact on the development of school based approaches and has led in some cases to approaches more like those described earlier by Gerda Hanko. These developments are, however, by no means the norm and in no way do they adequately compensate for the difficulties being encountered by teachers who recognise their need for professional development, want to engage in the process, but find a lack of appropriate opportunity to do so.

Kelly points out that in fact INSET, in spite of past promises of expansion, has severely contracted and that,

> *"... the most prevalent form of in service education currently available to most teachers is not the kind of theoretical study envisaged by James [James Report 1972 DES], not the kind of critical, analytical study advocated here, but a form of advanced methodology designed to improve teaching effectiveness rather than reflective analysis." (Kelly 1993 p.137)*

He goes on to make the point that, in his view, there has been a deliberate policy to adjust the balance of control of funding in the area of INSET so that it is removed from higher education. He holds higher education institutions responsible for compromising with the new market model, and for providing just the sort of training courses designed to perpetuate the idea of teaching as merely methodological skills and reducing teachers to a technicist approach.

Conclusions

For the area of SEN the issues discussed above raise many questions and give rise to grave concerns. The development of critically reflective practitioners, engaged in the process of continuing professional development can be seen as crucial to bring about change in attitudes and practice in the area of SEN. All teachers need to become aware of, and really informed about, the issues in order to recognise and fully understand their roles and responsibilities with regard to pupils with SEN. For more inclusive practice to become a reality there needs to be a clear recognition of the responsibility of all teachers working in all phases and stages of education for all children and all their needs.
Earlier discussion has also shown the need for teachers to recognise their own role in questioning, challenging, extending and expanding understanding of the central concepts underlying integration. For integration to be conceived and understood as a right to a full inclusion, teachers must themselves fully appreciate their role in empowering pupils with disabilities. They need to engage in the pedagogical processes described earlier, proposed by Giroux and Freire and to challenge and question assumptions and practices through active critical enquiry;

> *"If we can be critically pragmatic in the construction, deconstruction, construction ... of how we live and together build communities, using our best visions of what is beautiful, good and true, then the unreflective reproduction of what we find around us, including some of its injustices, might be tamed and changed a bit." (Cherryholmes 1988 p.186)*

For Cherryholmes it is the responsibility of professionals to engage actively in critical reflection about what they say and do in order to ensure that change and development in practice continues.

ITT and INSET have a crucial role to play in assisting teachers to develop the sort of critically reflective attitudes to their practice necessary to engage in this ongoing process of deconstruction and reconstruction. Current developments in teacher education, however, seem unlikely to support teachers in developing these approaches for the emphasis is clearly on the development of skills required to become effective deliverers of the prescribed curriculum.

With regard to integration this approach can be seen to perpetuate the dominant notion that integrating pupils with SEN is about modifying and adapting that curriculum. Certainly it does not encourage challenges to the appropriateness of the curriculum or to the model on which it is based. Current preoccupation in teacher education with academic subject areas is also counterproductive to integration and inclusion since it reinforces traditional narrow attitudes about what is considered valuable in terms of learning and in terms of achieving educational success. Indeed current policy with regard to teacher education seems to be geared towards reinforcing traditional views about the curriculum, disability, entitlement and integration, rather than providing the base for critical reflection of these issues with a view to real change and development.

The new funding arrangements and the move to apprenticeship models of training have the potential to narrow teachers' sphere of critical consciousness and awareness to local activity and particular situations creating fewer possibilities for reflection on education, its processes and practices in the wider

social context. This in turn is likely to produce more introspective inward looking approaches which are unlikely to promote or encourage change or development towards more inclusive practice.

CHAPTER 8

ISSUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The central purpose of this thesis has been to investigate and explore the issue of integration with a view to illuminating some of the misunderstandings and contradictions which currently dominate thinking in this area of SEN, the result of which can be seen to be a failure of the school system to cater adequately for disabled pupils. A rhetoric has grown up around the concept of integration which has led to a great deal of confusion about its aims and purposes and which has served to disguise the fact that, in reality, pupils with SEN continue to receive a poor educational opportunity which is incompatible with notions of educational entitlement and empowerment. Indeed, because of the confusion and lack of understanding which surrounds the concepts the result has been the development of a rhetoric, surrounding the notion of integration which can be seen to be responsible, in practice, for legitimising further segregation and for perpetuating unequal and inadequate educational provision and practice.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the rhetoric of integration as desirable and as a means to securing educational entitlement was established by the Warnock Report (DES 1978). This view was further reinforced by the 1988 and 1993 Education Acts. It has become, as a result, accepted that integration is good

and desirable and to be striven for. The rhetoric also contributes to the notion that successful integration is largely dependent upon the provision of extra resourcing in terms of staffing, materials and time. Relocation of pupils from special schools and units into mainstream schools, or units attached to them, is seen as the process of integrating pupils, and extra resourcing and relocation are determined in relation to what are assessed as the needs of the individual child and are measured according to a sliding scale. Successful integration is also seen as being dependent on the 'good will' of teachers, other pupils and parents in the mainstream of education and as being impossible where this does not exist. It can be clearly seen that integration perceived in these terms has little in common with a notion of inclusion as a right to an educational entitlement, as discussed in Chapter 2.

This thesis has sought to show that this rhetoric, which pervades, and contributes to, the dominant discourse of SEN, is totally inappropriate, misleading and misconceived and that these misconceptions and misunderstandings arise from a lack of clear conceptual understanding of the very complex and problematic issues which underpin the debate. As a result of this lack of conceptual clarity a variety of problems have arisen in policy making, provision and practice which can be seen to have resulted in exacerbating inequality, rather than reducing it, for disabled people.

Investigation of the concepts which underpin the discourse of SEN has led to a greater understanding of some of the major problems and issues which need to be addressed. Certainly the way in which disability itself is conceived and the model which underpins thinking about it is a crucial and central issue to be addressed. The traditional dominant model of disability as personal tragedy (Oliver 1992), the deficit/medical model, has led, in educational terms, to the idea that the goal for children identified as having SEN is that they should be normalised or that there should be compensation for their deficits. This has led to the notion that difference and disability are to be tolerated rather than valued as enriching;

> *"... those who are different have to be accepted and tolerated, for after all they themselves have come to accept and tolerate their difference;*

> *so why should not everyone else? This view is underpinned by personal tragedy theory in terms of disability and deficit theory in educational terms." (Oliver 1992 p.25)*

Attempts have been made to move to a different model, supported by the Warnock Report's proposals (DES 1978), described in Chapter 2 as a curriculum/contextual model, which takes account of the context in which the disabled person operates and of the way in which that context can increase or diminish handicapping effects for disabled people. This model, however, has also been shown to result in deficit approaches educationally and to be underpinned by notions of normalisation and compensation. Again difference is regarded as deviance.

Neither of these models addresses the fundamental human right of pupils, irrespective of ability, to a full educational opportunity and thus a third model has been shown to be emerging, supported by disabled people themselves, which locates the issue firmly in the equal opportunities arena. Disability underpinned by this model is seen as a social construct which has led to oppression and discriminatory practice in education (Barton & Oliver 1992). For disabled people the issue here is that;

> *"... the difficulties of participating in society are not due to personal limitations, but arise from the prejudices, discriminatory policies and practices and social restrictions of an inadequate society." (Barton & Oliver 1992 p.70)*

Underpinned by this model of disability, educational policy, practice and provision and the issue of integration must be seen from a very different perspective from the dominant view. Normalisation, adaptation and modification and compensation are plainly inadequate and can only lead to the perpetuation of inequality and prejudice. This model of disability requires and demands a totally different approach which begins from the premise that there are different people with a wide range of differing abilities all of whom have a right and are entitled to full inclusion and participation in the educational process. Notions of integration as fitting people into existing structures can be seen then to be inappropriate and, indeed, as having the potential to lead

to further discriminatory practice rather than addressing equality of opportunity.

Discussions about entitlement to a full educational opportunity, underpinned by this model of disability, inevitably lead to considerations about the curriculum and the model which underpins its planning. This discussion, in turn, raises questions about what can be seen as a central theme in this thesis. Full inclusion and participation of disabled pupils as a right, requires a curriculum model which recognises the value and richness of diversity and difference, which acknowledges the importance of development and growth as measures of success and achievement and which is underpinned by a view of education as a process of empowerment leading to self determination and autonomy.

In practice the dominant curriculum model, which has been shown to underpin the National Curriculum, can be seen, as discussed throughout this work, to be informed by a very different view of education and its purposes from that described above. It reinforces and re-emphasises narrow academic achievement as success, its assessment procedures encourage competition and exclusion, and it is instrumental and elitist in its objectives. This model has been shown to be totally inconsistent with an equal opportunities model, of disability and in fact can be seen to have the potential to further exacerbate, and even create, the sort of discriminatory practice described by Barton & Oliver (1992), discussed earlier.

The entitlement promised by the 1988 Education Act can be seen, then, on the one hand to be an entitlement without access for many pupils because of the narrow, academic, elitist model which underpins the National Curriculum, and on the other hand to be an entitlement to the perpetuation of inequality for those who succeed in finding access, as a result of the narrowly conceived view of the aims and purposes of education which inform the National Curriculum.

The curriculum is, then, a key issue in the debate, since it is clear that a model underpinned by an equal opportunities model of disability, and a view of

entitlement as a right, is a very different model from the current underpinning of the National Curriculum which has been shown to be informed by deficit notions of disability and related views of entitlement.

The heavily prescribed content base and the competitive standardised assessment procedures of the National Curriculum are also incompatible with notions of an empowerment curriculum, except for the few who manage to win through to the end. These approaches reinforce the model of the learner as a receiver of information and place scant emphasis on the development of critically reflective autonomous individuals, able to make their own decisions and speak for themselves. Ira Shor (1993) discusses this with relation to the critical pedagogy required by Paulo Freire for the emancipation and liberation of pupils through the education process;

> *"Students do not simply memorise academic information ... but rather face problems from their own lives and society through the special lens offered by academic discipline. This reflective posture is what Freire calls 'epistemological relationships to reality', that is, being a critical examiner of your experience, questioning and interpreting your life and education rather than walking through them. In contrast, traditional education invents its themes, language and materials from the top down rather than the bottom up ... students become cultural deficits dependent on the teacher as a delivery system for skills, and ideas to teach them how to speak, think, and act like the dominant elite whose ways of doing things are the only ones acceptable." (Shor 1993 p.31)*

The National Curriculum has been shown to be informed by the traditional model described here and to have little, if anything, in common with Freire's approach and can therefore be seen to have little to offer in terms of empowerment for its pupils, especially those with SEN.

The model of the teacher is also important here, since the National Curriculum is clearly underpinned by the view of the teacher as a deliverer of the curriculum, a technicist model. This is unlikely to promote, or lead to the development of more inclusive practice in education. The heavily prescriptive academic content of the curriculum is also incompatible with the process model described above. The measurement of teachers ability and success, in terms

of the results of standardised tests is another factor which is unlikely to contribute to the sort of curriculum seen as crucial for empowerment by Freire. Again the dominant model is counterproductive to the development of more equal opportunities for pupils with SEN and is totally consistent with perpetuating the status quo. This model is far from being underpinned by the critical pedagogy proposed by Giroux (1988) as essential for the construction of a model of education which addresses issues of empowerment, emancipation and oppression of groups such as pupils with SEN. Giroux places responsibility squarely on the shoulders of teachers, for the development of educational thinking;

> *"... it is through the mediation and action of teacher voice that the very nature of the schooling process is often either sustained or challenged. That is, the power to shape schooling according to the logic of emancipatory interests is inextricably related, not only to a high degree of self understanding, but also to the possibility for radical education to join together in a collective voice as part of a social movement dedicated to reconstructing the ideological and material conditions that work both inside and outside of schooling." (Giroux 1988 p.207)*

Current policy and practice with regard to ITT and INSET have been shown to be underpinned by a very different view of the teacher and of teaching. There is no emphasis on the need for teachers to develop critically reflective approaches to their work, or to see themselves as agents of change in schools or in the curriculum. Rather, the model of the teacher which underpins current policy and practice, is that of the subject specialist, who's role is to transmit pertinent information about the subject to pupils. Teaching skills are seen as centring around the ability to transmit this content with a success measured by the results of standardised, national tests. The ability to modify and manage pupils' behaviour sufficiently to allow for this transmission of material to take place in an orderly and effective manner is also seen as crucial. The ability to adapt and modify material to allow maximum access for the majority of pupils is another important skill.

This model is clearly illustrated by the Code of Practice for SEN (DfE 1994) which demands that teachers become highly skilled at identifying, assessing

and addressing pupils needs in relation to the subject area(s) they teach in the National Curriculum. There is no emphasis on the centrality of the learning process to effective teaching. The view of the teacher which underpins current development is clearly instrumental and technicist with ITT seen as effectively addressed through an apprenticeship model of training. There is no importance placed upon the development of a critical pedagogy such as that described by Freire and Giroux;

> *"To be a critical empowering educator is a choice to be what Henry Giroux has called a 'transformative intellectual'. Giroux's notions of 'civic courage' and 'a pedagogy of possibility' invite teachers to become agents in school and society, for critical thought and action for democracy, equality, ecology and peace, against, domination, manipulation and waste of human and natural resources." (Shor 1993 p.34)*

This inquiry has clearly raised a number of important issues for further research and development. In seeking to investigate and deconstruct the dominant discourse in the area of SEN through a process of conceptual analysis, a number of important questions have been raised which demand further investigation in an attempt to address them.

The whole issue of disability and the way in which it is conceived requires a great deal of critical evaluation. This cannot be effectively addressed, except by working together with disabled people themselves. For disabled people to be recognised as having an entitlement to a full educational opportunity by right, it is necessary to address issues related to giving disabled people a genuine voice in the debate and to promoting self advocacy and to providing the empowerment to achieve it. These are all very complex and problematic issues requiring much research, together with disabled people themselves.

There is also a clear need to further analyse and define the concept of integration itself. The case has been made by this thesis for a redefinition of integration, reconstructed in terms of inclusion and underpinned by a model of disability which recognises entitlement as a right to a full participation. Here there is also much work to be done.

A central theme of this work has been the analysis of the curriculum model which underpins current policy, provision and practice in education, and its role with regard to integration. Here too there is a need for further investigation. The dominant model has been shown to be exclusive and incompatible with notions of inclusion described above. It has also been shown to have the potential to exacerbate and create further inequality, more SEN and further segregative practice and its legitimation. There is much work to be done in the area of critical reflection about and evaluation of the curriculum, its aims and purposes and about the implications of adopting different models, for the learner, for learning, and for society.

The role of the teacher has also been discussed as crucially important. This thesis has highlighted the central role of teachers in deconstructing and reconstructing the discourses of education and its practices, with a view to developing, and shaping a critical theory of education. It is vitally important that teacher education reflects the importance of this role and assists teachers in developing as critically reflective practitioners, engaged in a process of ongoing evaluation of educational theory and practice, with a view to development. Here too, there is an urgent need for research and investigation and for the development of critical pragmatism, as discussed and defined in Chapter 1, as a tool for development of those processes of enquiry.

As a process of deconstructing and reconstructing the discourse of SEN conceptual analysis must also continue. The concepts which underpin educational policy and planning are of crucial importance to provision and practice. Empirical research founded on confused and misconceived understandings of these concepts can only lead to more problems and is unlikely to develop the necessary clarity to inform the future development of educational provision in the area of SEN. The process of continuing critical analysis of the concepts underpinning educational discourses is a vitally important part of ensuring that greater understanding and clarity inform future development and that we do not fall into the trap of simply developing new, and equally misleading, rhetoric.

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