

# FORUM

**for the discussion of new trends in education**

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## **This Issue**

**Integration and the Comprehensive School**  
**The Quality of Education**

# Editorial Board

# Contents

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Neville J. Jones	<b>An Integrative Approach to Special Educational Needs</b>	36
Tony Booth	<b>Integration and Participation in Comprehensive Schools</b>	40
Wallace Eyre and Diane E. Hall	<b>Deaf Children in an Ordinary School</b>	43
Mary Brown and Arlene Slater	<b>An Approach to Warnock — Sherard Style</b>	45
Donald J. Ramsden	<b>The Proposed Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education</b>	48
John Turner	<b>Integrated Humanities and the Sixteen Plus</b>	50
Ray Hartley	<b>Careers Education in a Depression</b>	53
Richard Pring	<b>Advancing the Quality of Education</b>	55
<b>Discussion</b>		
Peter Downes and Caroline Benn	<b>More on Giftedness</b>	58
<b>Reviews:</b>		
	Dishonest — or naive?	62
	Guidance Systems	62
	School Management	63
	Disruptive Pupils	63
Joan Simon	<b>Youth Training Service: What Now?</b>	60
Brian Simon	<b>Lawrence Stenhouse</b>	61

## The Next Forum

This number will contain two major articles. One, by Nanette Whitbread, will contain a sharp, critical analysis of government policy relating to teacher education and training. The other, by Joan Simon, focuses on government policy relating to education, the Manpower Services Commission, and the threats to the system as a whole. This takes further her article 'Agenda for Action' in the last number.

A number of other articles are concerned with both initial and (school-based) in-service training, by Dr Pat Ashton, Stephen Rowland, Michael Clarke and others. Maurice Holt contributes a special article 'on vocational courses and the secondary curriculum.'

# Integration — or Privatisation?

It is increasingly clear that a deliberate attempt is now being made, by those in positions of power and authority, to downgrade the whole publicly maintained system of education as part of the present government's policy of privatisation. And not only to downgrade the system, but, as Richard Pring suggests in his article in this issue, to transform it into one having all the features of elementary education, with the focus limited to strictly utilitarian and instrumental ends. In contrast the private system, encouraged and strengthened by a variety of government actions, unaffected by the swingeing cuts to which the public system is exposed, looks forward to a period of expansion and aims significantly to extend its role. It is ironic that, in the late twentieth century, a conservative government thus seeks to recreate Disraeli's Two Nations.

There are many indications of this policy. It is not only that the actual Ministers in control of the system themselves go out of their way to attack and criticise it, encourage parents to take their children out of it, actively deprive it of essential resources and consistently denigrate its achievements; it is also the threats to set up alternative systems under the control of the Manpower Services Commission (as Joan Simon describes it in this issue), the plans to transform the education of the 14 to 16 year olds in the schools to a strictly vocational education focusing on life and work 'skills' (as described by Donald Ramsden in this issue), the talk of introducing the discredited voucher system, and so on and so on. And of course there is the total failure to present any positive and worthwhile perspective for the development of the comprehensive system as a whole.

In this situation what are those who have the interests of education at heart to do? Clearly the objective must be to resist this approach and this policy with the maximum strength and energy; to continue to develop the publicly maintained system of schools in ways consistent with comprehensive ideals, so gaining the support of the parents and public for these objectives. And here an immediate issue is that of integration in both primary and secondary schools, following the Warnock report and the 1981 Education Act, which comes into force in April. This issue, which must involve important changes in the schools in the move to

the resources approach, as outlined both by Neville Jones and Tony Booth in their articles in this number, will now become one of major importance, especially since the move towards integration implies the implementation of comprehensive principles. But here is a contradiction. Is the financial assistance required to make a success of this policy to be made available by a government committed to yet further cuts in educational expenditure? It is useless to claim that they are morally bound to provide this assistance. Only strong pressure from the education service and its allies and supporters will be able to wrest the required resources from them — and this pressure must be applied.

Thus, while at the behest and with the support of this government the publicly maintained system of 'comprehensive' primary and secondary schools braces itself for new responsibilities — and what this involves in professional skill and expertise is very clearly outlined in the articles by Mary Brown, Wallace Eyre, and their two classroom teachers — new escape hatches *from* these schools are being prepared and openly discussed by the very Ministers responsible for the system as a whole. The intention is abundantly clear, and totally in keeping with the objectives of that small section of society that already educates its own children privately and fully intends to strengthen and shore up this system in its own interests. But the policy of integration, to be effectively implemented, implies the full integration of all within the publicly provided system, and the development of genuinely *comprehensive* schools for all. That is why the privatisation plans must be thoroughly opposed by all who have the interests of the publicly provided system of schools at heart. Unless this is the objective, support for integration is no more than hypocrisy.

We intend to revert to this whole issue in a major article in our next number. Events are moving so rapidly that it is difficult for those fully engaged in schools or colleges, concerned to keep the system going in the face of stringent external restraints, to grasp the implications of many current initiatives. It is our intention to provide such analyses in future numbers.

# An Integrative Approach to Special Educational Needs

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## Neville Jones

Neville Jones is Principal Educational Psychologist for Oxfordshire. He has been a member of the Council and Executive Committee of the National Children's Bureau and served on the Consultative Committee of the Schools Council project on disturbed children. He is research co-ordinator of the Banbury Special Needs Project in Oxfordshire.

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The term integration — derived from the Latin word *integrare*, meaning to make whole — refers to the process of enabling children with special educational needs to maximise their opportunities, potential, and personal fulfilment, in their families, school, and the wider community. Set within the principle of 'normalisation'<sup>1</sup> which recently gave rise to a United Nations Bill of Rights for the Handicapped, it is part of the change process in society aimed at 'deinstitutionalising' handicapped persons back into normal society, a process that in America over the past decade has become known as 'mainstreaming'.<sup>2</sup> In educational terms it is not just the opportunity (in Warnock terminology) to be locationally, socially and functionally integrated, all of which is open to very wide interpretation,<sup>3</sup> but a personal right to have as open access to a normal school curriculum as would any other school-age child.

What is described below may be referred to as initiatives, mainly on the part of Oxfordshire Heads of special and ordinary schools, who between 1971 and 1981 sought ways to 'normalise' the educational experience of children who under the present system are streamed out into special education. It was a period that, first, saw the 'recovery' of some 34,000 severely intellectually handicapped children back into education from Health Authorities through the 1970 Education (Handicapped Children) Act; secondly, the reorganisation of local government boundaries bringing together Oxford City, the old County, and part of North Berkshire, to form the new administrative County of Oxfordshire; thirdly, the setting up and report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Handicapped Children and Young People (Warnock, 1978); and finally, the anticipated enactment of provisions related to special education in the 1981 Education Act.

Those working in the field of education are well aware that from myriad discussions, conferences, individual initiatives in education, it is not always possible to decide from whom, and at what point in an innovation, a particular idea has sprung, particularly when for its implementation there are so many levels of decision-making. The purpose of this paper is not to pin-point individual endeavour, or indeed that of a particular school or department of the LEA, but to identify some markers which illustrate developing principle and practice. Very many schools practice integration,<sup>4</sup> sometimes just for an individual child; those mentioned below are a selection to illustrate where

an integration initiative can be seen in practice albeit in some approximate form to the ideal. First some general principles and approaches.

The term integration, and the current debate about it, focuses sharply on those children who are now in Special Schools, and where the intention is to return them at least minimally, to be integrated on the campus of ordinary schools. Where this is being tried the strategy in principle is of two kinds: first, that children will be located in 'units' on the campus of ordinary schools but their educational experience will not be so far from that which obtains when they are in special schools (the 'unit' model is discussed more fully below). This has been referred to as the limpet model of integration whereby children are attached as a group to a school, like a limpet to a ship, in the hope that some of the waves of normality will wash over them.<sup>5</sup> Secure and cosseted in their special educational life belts they float around ordinary schools as observers to the mainstream scene. The second strategy is to persuade ordinary schools to take into mainstream classes a number of handicapped children, sometimes on a promise of extra resourcing. This is known as 'stretching' the system in the hope that schools, in these days of economic siege, will have something to stretch.

There is a third approach: that of starting with the ordinary school and looking at the way the school, and everything that it embraces, is managed. It has to be remembered that ordinary schools are presently structured on the assumption that children with extremes of need, whatever these are, will receive their education elsewhere, in special schools or private schools. To ask ordinary schools to extend their jurisdiction, or simply make the principle of comprehensiveness a reality, is to do more than make a humanitarian appeal: the schools themselves, teacher skills, classroom management, attitudes toward disability, pupil-teacher ratios, styles of curriculum, types of additional support and so forth will need to change. John Sayer, Principal of Banbury School, has drawn attention to this revolution in concept, yet to be realised in practice, when he wrote that 'the Warnock Report has quietly unleashed a revolution which is of much greater consequence to the educational process than all the structural transmogrifications which over the past two decades we have described as comprehensive education'.<sup>6</sup>

The aim in Oxfordshire has been to move away from the polarisation of handicap — those who are handicapped and those who are not. All children, at



some stage in their educational development have potentially a claim to something extra and individual. Warnock has suggested that this might apply to as many as twenty per cent of children in ordinary schools. But few children are handicapped in the same degree of severity, in all areas of growth and development, in all circumstances of every day living. How then can we approximate the management of these educational needs so that we respond to what has been called 'the continuum of need' from minimal to severe, and meet needs at the points where the handicap constitutes an educational problem? How can we avoid educating such children in a totally handicapped environment? The old system of classifying children according to the Department of Education and Science list of recognised disorders did precisely this. The new 1981 Education Act retains the segregated notion, previously special and ordinary, but now 'statemented' and 'non-statemented': a mode of management advocated to overcome some of these difficulties is known as the 'Resources Approach'.

### **The 'Resources' Model**

The 'Resources' model, developed mainly in the United States in the early 1970's, embraces the idea of different 'levels of intervention' in a child's education while it attends ordinary school. There are some lessons where the child with a handicap requires no additional assistance; others where the child could remain in the ordinary class providing some extra support, sometimes a teaching aid, classroom ancillary, or welfare assistant, or even advice for the ordinary class teacher, is made available. A third level is where the child needs to be withdrawn to a 'resource' room, individually or to join a small group, for additional specialised training, to cover a subject not possible to take in the larger mainstream class, or to study some alternative lesson, all of which goes to sustain both an individualised programme of work and in toto a viable education for the child.<sup>7</sup>

A 'Resources' approach begins with ordinary classroom teachers, plus the normal tutor in secondary schools, and extends out according to individual needs. It is an approach being adopted in Oxfordshire in both primary and secondary schools where 'resource' rooms are coming into being staffed by school-based special needs teachers. It is a model that is superceding the 'unit' style of management and is replacing, therefore, procedures where children are classified into groups, often retained for the majority of their education in such groupings, and where the ethos of their educational experience can so easily become handicapping.

The move towards a 'normalised' system of care does not stop with the children and mainstream schools. If the 'institution' of special education is to change in any way, so that fewer and fewer children are removed from a normal school environment, there must be changes wherever the concept of segregated and separate provision operates. A re-organisation of the County Administrative staff in Oxfordshire has taken a big step towards this: all the Area Education Officers, as part of their normal duties, now also cover those aspects of special administration which previously had been covered by an area education officer with special

responsibilities for special education. Where a special administrator was possibly required to administrate a system that was separate, and different from ordinary schooling in its principles of policy and practice, for children attending special schools, this makes little sense once a local authority turns its attention to integrating ordinary children with special needs in ordinary schools. The issues that then arise, for administrators, are not 'special' per se, but all those factors that currently pre-occupy those responsible for the management of ordinary schools.

In the Banbury Special Needs Project, described briefly below, one group of schools, that of Banbury School itself and its primary schools, have opted for a policy of 'normalising' the work of all its support personnel. Falling rolls has partly created the accommodation to achieve this. The specialist teachers work from the ordinary school, some to a specific school while others to the group of schools in the sector group, some across the primary-secondary phase, and the School Counsellor and Educational Psychologist also find their accommodation and rations within the ordinary school, in this case, the comprehensive school. There is, therefore, a close daily link between all members of the support services, Heads, and their staff.

### **Special School initiatives**

The period following the publication of the Warnock Report was a time of consternation for special school Heads with rumour rife that special schools would soon shut down. Some Oxfordshire Heads of special schools came together to look at what a 'Resources' model could mean for their special schools. It was not long before innovations began to take place: these now vary in style and the degree to which an integration programme operates.

One school for maladjusted children, Northern House, unable to retain its children beyond the age of 13 years, places children in ordinary schools, and provides from its own staffing a support teacher to work in the ordinary class on a basis of team teaching. A school for the severely mentally handicapped places children in primary schools with special school staff acting in a consultancy role. Another school, Bishopswood, has placed in an ordinary school its complete reception class together with teachers from the special school. A school for the physically handicapped, the Ormerod, having pioneered last year a scheme for the total integration of a group of physically handicapped adolescents into a comprehensive school, has this year extended its scheme by making links with a local primary school, and for both primary and secondary schools, provides support with teachers from the special school staff.

### **Primary Schools**

Integration in Oxfordshire primary schools may be seen from two angles: the experience of the individual child and the question of overall management and resourcing. The first blends into the second the more handicapped children there are in any given school when the management tolerances of the school become increasingly tested. This does not mean, however, that for any individual child the question cannot be asked as to whether an integrated experience actually pertains: it is, however, necessary to look and see for yourself.

Accounts of integration that do not embrace individual observation of what a child does all day, what he experiences, what real openings there are for learning, come nowhere near to answering the questions that underlie the integration concept as these relate to ordinary schools. It is not that Heads or teachers have wrong perceptions. It is that the concept of integration is a many coloured coat and like all innovations in education capable of being lightly worn; some Heads genuinely believe that what they practice is integration.

The awareness of needs in children is never so far away from those who are not aware that there is more to learn. Oxfordshire has attempted to increase such awareness through its programme of Handicap Awareness Courses for teachers, lasting five consecutive days.<sup>8</sup> What is in question, is how far in-service training that does not take place *within* the school where the teachers work, and arise from day-to-day problems, really does more than sensitise. Teachers willingness to integrate children into their classrooms has been shown to increase with in-service courses,<sup>9</sup> but opportunity to take part in school-based workshops on methods and techniques, to observe children in normal classroom situations, to interact with 'resources' staff, maximises learning and the carry-over into the classrooms.<sup>10</sup>

In a carefully monitored study of a special resources department in an Oxfordshire secondary school Elizabeth Jones found that all teachers needed assistance to (1) identify factors that were handicapping to the child (some other than the handicap itself); (2) to establish realistic goals for learning for the handicapped; and (3) to develop methods and materials to implement and evaluate educational objectives.<sup>11</sup> She concluded that the in-service training for those working with handicapped children needed to relate to *all* aspects of teaching and curriculum in an ordinary school.

Where the primary school is large, and the numbers of children with special needs substantial, a primary resources 'centre' makes sense. At Queensway Primary School in Banbury a whole suite of rooms is used. Set up first as a 'unit' for language delayed children and the partially hearing, the Head and staff quickly moved to a more flexible way of working. The school draws pupils for their particular handicaps from a wide area and returns them when appropriate to their normal catchment schools providing the supportive expertise and consultation. Such a school can make a response on three levels: first, to its own special need children; secondly, to the group of primaries within its sector group; and thirdly, to a group of sectors where it is inappropriate to set up highly specialised provision in each primary school. While the children from Queensway, or other primary schools, are attending the resource centre every effort is made to ensure that they also participate in ordinary lessons in the main school. This work is now being extended to other types of need in such areas as specific learning disabilities and giftedness.

### Comprehensive Special Needs Departments

These began to come into being in Oxfordshire in 1969 when a 'unit' for slow learning children opened in Cooper School, Bicester, and quickly moved to a 'Resources' style of working.<sup>12</sup> Some years were to pass before the 'policy' of developing resource departments

in all comprehensive schools was adopted and was to await a Report and Discussion Document prepared as a result of the monitoring programme being carried out at the newly opened Special Resource Department at Carterton Comprehensive School.<sup>13</sup> Here the physical and staffing resources comprised a suite of rooms, three special needs teachers, and two ancillary workers.<sup>14</sup> It was from the Discussion Document, and discussions held with Heads in the County, that the Chief Education Officer decided to promote the Banbury Special Needs Project. In the last two years many secondary Heads have been looking at ways to develop their 'Resource' departments (and in the process the old remedial classes have begun to disappear) catering for a wide range of children with special needs who can be managed in more flexible ways of working.

### The Banbury Special Needs Project

Integration was no new thing to some of the schools in the Banbury community. Banbury Comprehensive School had already taken into its fold a segregated department catering for the mildly mentally handicapped. These children are now part of normal tutor groups and are withdrawn to 'resource' rooms for specialised teaching.

The purpose of the Banbury Project is for a group of schools, primary, secondary and further education, to examine their styles of organisation and to ask what would be necessary for the schools to make an effective response to all children who live in Banbury and its environs irrespective of the severity or nature of their special needs. It is the 'wholeness' concept of education outlined by John Sayer, Principal of Banbury School, in his paper 'Down and up the line to integration'. The rational of the Project is that of the 'Resources' model, initiated through a 'levels of intervention' programme, within a structure of management embracing the notion of sectors (being a comprehensive and its associated primaries) and a management executive representative of all sector Heads, LEA administration, psychology services, and special advising staff.

Banbury was chosen for this Project for a number of reasons: its social mix had been well documented by Margaret Stacey in 1960<sup>15</sup> and again in 1975;<sup>16</sup> the town contained a good cross section of large and small primary and secondary schools, some urban some rural, both Catholic and non-sectarian; the special needs of its children were already well documented following a survey by the County Psychological Service immediately following the publication of the Warnock Report; research projects of this dimension had already been carried out in *The Banbury Enquiry* on mixed ability teaching and other DES research promoted projects; embryo special needs departments already existed in many schools; and most important, the Heads and their staff were enthusiastic about the kind of innovations being proposed.

Once the structure of consultation between schools, and with the LEA administration, had been set up the first task was to look at existing resources in the area and to see how some County input of resources, obtained through a reduced out-County budget of boarding placements but with extra teachers for main-school work, could be best allocated. One sector, that of Banbury School, has opted as policy for maximising the

numbers of its *school-based* support staff. A second stage was to see how a better use could be made of those resources which now lie outside ordinary schools, especially the resource of specialist teachers, and to bring these within the orbit of a 'normalised' style of management. Preliminary discussions are taking place about school-based in-service training and meetings are beginning to be organised. The aim is to implement the Warnock proposals as these affect separate remedial provision and linking salary enhancement with qualifications and experience instead of through special schools allowances.

A Project like this brings to the surface a range of problems which relate to the needs of individual children; how one resolves the tensions when one style of working is changing over to another — the issue of parallel management; the changing role of expectations of Heads of ordinary schools — where do they develop their additional knowledge and expertise; new ways of working for support services such as psychologists; how examination dictated curriculum currently affects the less able; LEA policy and practice — centralised or school-based; how to utilise segregated resources; parent involvement and governor responsibilities; a new style of financing with 'significant discretion at Head and Governor level'; how to attract research funds for initiatives on special education in ordinary schools when this money is tied up for studying 'special' segregated provision. These problems are not unrelated to the fact that we have 'segregated' LEA advisory services, university departments of special education, specialist HMI and a special Branch of the Civil Service, i.e. a Special Educational pyramid that sustains segregation at ordinary school level: so where is the meeting point between all the different pyramids in education? If there is some coming together within a group of schools — from nursery through to adult education, then some progress has been made.

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# Integration and Participation in Comprehensive Schools

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## Tony Booth

Tony Booth has taught in a comprehensive school and has worked as a Senior Educational Psychologist. He is now a Lecturer in Education at the Open University.

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In this article I intend to link integration to the reform of comprehensive education and discuss some of the issues that such an approach entails. I define integration as the process of increasing the participation of children in comprehensive nursery, primary and secondary schools. 'Integration' is most commonly applied to the bringing of handicapped children from segregated special schools into ordinary schools and since they are an excluded group it is appropriate that this should be so. But there are problems associated with such a restricted definition. Firstly it may imply that the job of involving handicapped children in the educational and social life of schools is finished once they are within the ordinary school building. Secondly it may be taken to mean that handicapped children have a greater right to participation and an appropriate education in ordinary schools than other children. Integration can be applied then not only to children thought of as handicapped but to all children who have needs and interests to which schools do not respond. The children who are sent to special schools and classes are there, for the most part, because ordinary schools have not adapted their curricula and forms of organisation to diverse needs, interests and talents. They pose the same challenge to the education system to become truly comprehensive as the amalgamation of grammar, secondary modern and technical schools.

But it has not been customary to link integration with comprehensive education. Circular 10/65 expressed the intention of the Labour Government to establish comprehensive secondary schools 'in which pupils over the whole ability range and with differing interests and backgrounds can be encouraged to mix with each other'. Yet it was issued at a time of unprecedented expansion of segregated provision particularly for children labelled as mildly educationally subnormal or maladjusted. Although the expansion of official segregated special education tailed off at the end of the seventies the decade ended with a dramatic growth in the numbers of children in separate 'disruptive units'.

## The possibility of integration

The growth in segregation did not occur because it was the only possible way in which special education could be organised.<sup>1</sup> The vast majority of children currently segregated could be included within ordinary schools if the principle of integration were put into practice. Not all children would be in the ordinary classroom all of the time and for some a certain degree of centralisation of

provision might be necessary or desirable but there could be few reasons why this centralisation of resources should occur *outside* ordinary schools. I am convinced by arguments that children whose first language is sign language have a need to be with other sign language users though I do not agree with those, including some deaf adults, who argue that this should be in segregated, usually residential, schools. The provision of special education could not require a separated school building unless the isolation of a group of similarly categorised children was seen as an essential feature of the education they were to receive.

While the conceptual arguments against the necessity of segregation are strong we do not have to rely on them. There are numerous examples, within the UK, where children with a wide variety and severity of handicaps are educated within the ordinary school.<sup>2</sup> In South Derbyshire all the mentally handicapped children, including the most profoundly multiple handicapped, attend units attached to ordinary primary and secondary schools. If children with a particular handicap can be successfully educated within an ordinary school in one area it is hard to argue that it would be impossible to do so in another comparable area.

The ease, manner and extent of the inclusion of handicapped children is clearly affected by the organisation and curricula of their ordinary schools. One of the disappointing features of many integration schemes is the persistence of divisions between 'ordinary' and 'special' children within the school. Though the continuation of such divisions will come as no surprise to observers of comprehensive reorganisation. In general changes have not been informed by either a coherent educational philosophy or a vision of ultimate goals which could be used to guide the development of practice.

## The selection philosophy

The emergence of a coherent philosophy for integration or comprehensive education has been impeded by the legacy of a selective secondary education system with its adherents and opponents divided along party political lines. As a symptom of that condition Margaret Thatcher appointed Mary Warnock, the ex-head of an independent, selective, single-sex school, to head the committee of inquiry into special education in 1973. In such circumstance it is hardly surprising that integration and comprehensive education were not linked within the

Warnock report<sup>3</sup> or that, as Mary Warnock put it, the integration issue in that report was 'fudged deliberately'.

There are a number of strands to a selection philosophy and the practice of segregation can be linked to all of them. The grammar schools embodied a desire that the achievement of some children should be encouraged by high status education in high status buildings to which high status staff would be attracted. The existence of low status education for the social class related categories of moderate educational subnormality and maladjustment which forms the bulk of segregated special provision can be seen as the twin pole of such a scheme.<sup>4</sup> But selection, streaming and segregation are also justified by a view that teaching and learning should occur in groups as homogeneous in capacities and interests as possible and this is extended to the notions that children naturally divide into a small number of groups and that a uniform style of education is most efficiently provided for them in distinct buildings.

All the elements of selection can still be seen within many comprehensive secondary and primary schools. But they persist in more overt forms in discussions of special education. The 1959 regulations, still in force until the implementation date for the 1981 education act on 1 April 1983, define as handicapped those children who are unable to cope with the 'normal curriculum' in the schools. The 1981 education act makes a similar assumption in defining children as having special educational needs when they require a form of education different from that 'made generally available for children'. The assumption still is that ordinary schools can only be expected to supply one 'normal' form of education. But if we expect schools to cater routinely for children with diverse needs and interests then our whole approach to the notion of special needs should change. Special needs are those to which schools do not currently respond. The numbers of children with special needs varies from school to school not only because of the characteristics of pupils but because of the organisation and curriculum of the school.

### **A comprehensive philosophy**

Integration and the development of comprehensive education require a fresh starting point for schools rather than the uneasy amalgamation of separate systems. They both involve a client-centred approach to education which starts with the question: 'whose school is it?'. A comprehensive school should be open to all the children (and adults) in a community and the extent of their responsibility towards the education of children should be unaffected by their capacities, background, interests, or handicap. The comprehensive ideal involves the attempt to meet the personal and common interests of children together within the same school. It is grounded in the rights of children to an appropriate education and arguments for the inclusion of the handicapped rest on their rights to participate in their own communities. Integration involves looking at the way schools should be organised if they are to avoid the exclusion of children as well as at ways to bring in children who are currently excluded. The community school tradition has produced examples in the UK where community and pupil participation is high and exclusion

is rare but several coexist with a segregated special education system.

### **Funding integration**

In a comprehensive system the question about how integration should be funded is transformed from 'is it financially viable to include this or that group of children?' to 'what is a just division of a school's resources?' In Italy the law specifies that the education of handicapped children should take place in the ordinary classroom and class sizes are reduced and support teachers made available to classrooms which include handicapped students.<sup>5</sup> Some Italian teachers have argued that the assignment of special funds to children on the basis of their handicap leads to unnecessary categorisation. They have suggested that funds should be distributed solely according to the general needs of the community, with impoverished areas and inner cities getting a larger share. If teachers, and in particular head teachers, in ordinary schools feel an equal responsibility towards all children then perhaps they can be relied upon to distribute resources according to need. But the variation in the way in which cuts are administered in the UK, with some schools cutting their remedial support, suggests that British schools are not yet ready for such a system. It may be necessary to employ a funding formula like that in Norway where ten per cent of the school budget is for adapting the school for children's special needs (though not for grouping by ability) and additional resources can be reclaimed by the school for supporting the education of children with more severe handicaps. Of course much of the teaching and other resources made available for this latter group could come from existing segregated provision. But it is a major defect of the 1981 education act that it did not attempt to preserve special funds for the wider support of children in the ordinary school.

The provision of access to the ordinary school for people with disabilities depends fundamentally on the assumptions with which the funding of integration is approached. The 1981 education act implies that a child will have a learning difficulty if his or her sole problem is one of physical access to the ordinary school and that arranging such access will be regarded as special educational provision. But most of those who are excluded from schools because of lack of access are adults and most often old people. The difficulty that people with disabilities have entering the teaching profession or remaining in it because of a lack of access is a fair measure of the progress we have made towards integration, as is the support such a move currently receives from the teacher unions.

### **Organising teaching and learning**

It is unlikely that education in the UK can be organised so that all children, irrespective of their difficulties, spend all their time in ordinary classrooms or that this is desirable. The participation of children in different groups for different purposes might even become an increasing feature of school life. But in an integrated school the separation of children in bands divided by curriculum and status and the problems of expectation and transfer to which these give rise would be kept to a minimum.

In Norway, where the links between integration and

comprehensive education are strong and explicit, there has been a 7-14 years comprehensive school with compulsory mixed ability grouping since 1920. The school leaving age was raised to 16 in the 1960s and examinations were restricted to the final two years of compulsory schooling. Three years of post-compulsory schooling is available for all those who want it. At present the system is going through a phase of centralised decentralisation. The 'model plan' for the schools specifies that education has to be related to the life of the commune. In theory then Norwegian teachers have had a long history of differentiated teaching although practice is certainly variable with many still class teaching from the blackboard. Yet clearly the opportunity for involving all pupils is there and where children require additional help this is commonly given in the ordinary classroom with teachers working co-operatively.<sup>6</sup>

In Scotland there has recently been a major policy initiative in the development of team teaching which was summarised by the 1978 Scottish HMI report on the 'Progress of pupils with learning difficulties'.<sup>7</sup> The report argued that the major cause of learning difficulties was the inappropriateness of the ordinary school curriculum for up to fifty per cent of pupils and recommended new roles for remedial specialists as co-ordinators of curriculum reforms and in teaching co-operatively with class teachers and subject specialists. Separate remedial classes have been ended, for example, in both Fife and Grampian they are increasing block timetabling in secondary schools as well as the emphasis on project work. Although a critique of Scottish comprehensive education as dominated by selection is implicit in the HMI report they apply the term 'remedial' to pupils rather than schools. If fifty per cent of the pupils are said to require remedial help then perhaps it is needed by all the schools.

The Norwegian and Scottish approaches involve attempts to enable different pupils to share a common education. Sometimes the goal of special education has been seen solely in terms of the provision of an individualised curriculum. In the USA the special education law PL94-142 requires an Individual Educational Program (IEP) to be written for each child identified as having 'exceptional' needs. At its extreme such a scheme can enclose children in a personal

educational space capsule which isolates them from the experience of others in the school almost as effectively as placing them in a special school. Some of the main advocates of such an approach have developed their ideas in segregated special education settings where, paradoxically, children are brought for a 'child-centred' education on the basis of a single shared characteristic.

### The limits to progress

Integration is an unending process. There will always be ways in which the participation of handicapped or non-handicapped children in the social and educational life of their schools can be increased. Integration and the reform of comprehensive education involve a succession of stages along the route to full community participation and control in education. The extent to which such a sharing of power will be achieved is transparently a political matter.

Arguments in favour of integration commonly meet with the response that ordinary schools have to put their own house in order before they should include others. In calling for an initial perfection of the ordinary school system a segregated special educational system can be retained indefinitely. But it is only by adapting to the breadth of needs within a community that schools can begin to become comprehensive.

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# Deaf Children in an Ordinary School

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**Wallace Eyre and Diane Hall**

Now head of Hamilton School, Leicester, Wallace Eyre was head of Gartree High School, Oadby, from 1972 to 1981. Here he gives the background to the setting up of a Partially Hearing Unit at that school and explains why he favours this development. Diane Hall, who is now in charge of this unit, has experience of teaching in both primary and secondary schools. After working with pupils who had impaired hearing for a number of years, she decided to acquire the qualification of the British Association of Teachers for the Deaf.

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## **Wallace Eyre writes:**

In the pre-Warnock mid '70s, when a Partially Hearing Unit was set up at Gartree High School, it was an 11-14 age range comprehensive school with a roll of around 700 pupils. The school, well equipped and pleasantly situated, was on the same site as its largest contributory primary school and the Upper School, which it 'fed'. Many pupils, therefore, spent all their school lives on the one campus. Teacher liaison between the schools was, aided by the geographical circumstances, good and, generally, pupil transfers, from one school to another, were smooth. Socially, the area was a good middle class one. For example, an incidental indication of this was the fact that, without any particular effort on the part of staff, there was 100 per cent support by parents for the wearing of school uniform. In fact, parents were enormously supportive not only of matters concerning the school's academic curriculum (approximately one in three pupils could be expected to go on to reach university entrance requirements), but also of the many and varied extra curricular activities offered to pupils by the school. These included the provision of an extensive range of sporting activities, outdoor pursuits, and some exceptional opportunities (with, at times, a school orchestra which contained some 70 or 80 members) in music.

Looking back to the time immediately prior to the establishment of the PHU, the school seemed to have so much 'going for it' that there was, I felt, perhaps for both staff and pupils, an ever present danger of acquiring the kind of self-satisfied 'comfortableness', which can so easily lead to complacency. For this reason, I welcomed the news that plans were afoot to establish a PHU for pupils with impaired hearing. Since there was already such a unit in existence at the primary school 'next door', it seemed logical that the first PHU for secondary age pupils, in what was the old County of Leicestershire, should be set up on the same campus. However, in our particular situation, I considered that its introduction could well serve, in various ways, to broaden the school's 'comprehensive' educational aims. In my opinion, we had a lot to offer, given the right 'back-up' resources, pupils who would come into the Unit, and, in turn, I believed their presence would help to provide something invaluable in learning about living for the other pupils in the school.

It was vital, of course, that the teaching staff were kept fully informed of the proposed PHU and that they were well prepared for its introduction. David Harrison,

Senior Teacher for the Deaf in Leicestershire, was tremendously helpful to us in these respects. He talked to, and answered questions from staff on a number of occasions. Techniques teachers would need to employ, when a partially hearing pupil was present in a class they were taking, were outlined. The problems, created by the fact that such a pupil would inevitably be to some considerable extent language deprived, were discussed. Recordings of what the spoken word sounded like to pupils with different levels of hearing loss not only illuminated the enormous difficulties faced by these pupils, but, I believe it helped to deepen the desire of all the teaching staff to play a key part in helping these pupils to cope with their learning and living problems. The specialist teacher to be appointed would be extra to establishment, i.e. she would not count as part of the normal pupil/teacher ratio, and the Unit would take up to 8 pupils. At least twenty per cent of the teacher's time would be occupied by a commitment to class teaching in some area of the school's normal curriculum. The idea behind this was to ensure that the teacher was seen as an integral part of the school staff — and not just a separate teacher for the PHU.

When it was built, with insulated walls and double glazed windows (for sound-proofing), the Unit's carpeting and furnishings ensured that it was aesthetically attractive in a way no conventional classroom could be. This contributed, I am sure, to the fact that teachers and many pupils with normal hearing were more than willing to find an excuse (or seek an invitation) to go into the Unit at breaks or lunchtimes, so assisting the overall aim of social integration.

In my five years experience of the pupils in the Unit, there was one pupil, who had such severe emotional problems that he needed some special type of help, which even the Unit could not provide. However, there were other adverse and very telling factors, apart from his level of hearing loss, which contributed to his overall problem. At the other end of the scale, as it were, one girl from the Unit was the recipient of the school's annual Governors' Award. She was selected in her third year, from several other nominations, as the pupil who, by her personal efforts and example to others, had considerably enriched the life of the school.

Certainly, my experiences of a PHU operating, with appropriate resources, in an ordinary comprehensive school convinced me that such an arrangement for their schooling is in the best interests of pupils with hearing losses; and, certainly in the school concerned, the presence of such pupils provided the *others* with



invaluable opportunities for developing the kinds of inter-personal skills needed by members of a caring society.

### **Diane Hall writes:**

The Units for hearing-impaired children are constituent parts of the Service for Hearing-Impaired Children, but for them to have any value they must be an intrinsic part of the parent school to which they belong. The basic organisation of the Unit at Gartree High School has been to establish the greatest degree of integration possible within the structure of the school, taking into account the individual needs of each child. This enables them to be treated as normal children with specific learning difficulties.

When the Unit was originally opened in 1976 the degree of hearing loss among the group of children varied from moderate to very severe. The last two years have seen a change in the degree of handicap of children admitted to the Unit. Children with moderate losses are no longer considered in need of Unit support. With new improved hearing aids and radio systems, they are now able to attend their own neighbourhood school, with the support of peripatetic teachers of the deaf. Consequently, the Unit now accepts, in addition to the severely hearing impaired children, profoundly deaf pupils, who would previously have attended a residential school for the deaf. This change has affected the teaching role, organisation of the Unit and the degree of integration possible in the main school.

At the present time a group of eleven pupils attend the Unit, with degrees of hearing loss, varying from severe to profoundly deaf. Losses are compensated by the wearing of two post aural hearing aids which are supplemented by a custom designed transmitter/receiver system, which provides direct radio contact between teacher and child. Staff in the main school wear the radio microphone, encourage the pupil to sit near the front of the class and try as far as possible to face the class when speaking to facilitate lip reading. However, even with good amplification the hearing loss will still cause great difficulty in the discrimination of special sounds. The child's level of language attainment is not always proportionate to his degree of hearing loss. The child's ability to cope with his handicap and integrate fully also depends on other factors such as intellectual capacity, personality and parental support. The majority of hearing impaired children in the Unit are linguistically retarded and to a greater or lesser extent under-achieving in subjects which predominantly involve the use of language. Since normal behaviour patterns are linguistically mediated, the hearing impaired child often appears immature and can even show signs of maladjustment. This aspect requires guidance to the children from the Unit teacher to enable them to integrate with their peer group. If the need for guidance is not appreciated then social isolation rather than integration can be the result.

Each child belongs to a form in the main school. This allows the child to be involved in form periods, registration, assembly and social events with his class. All these activities facilitate language, socialisation and integration. Consequently, he will follow his form's timetable, but will be withdrawn to the Unit according to his needs and language ability. At the present time all

the Unit children pursue Design subjects, PE, Music and Science with their form. The total linguistic competence of the individual, determines the remaining time spent in the main school and the type of subjects a pupil will pursue.

Independently of whether the child integrates for some or most of his time, it is the Unit teacher's responsibility to ensure each child receives an adequate and broadly based curriculum. Thus a child will receive lessons both in the Unit and in the main school, which may be supported by the presence of a teacher of the deaf. This latter option is often necessary with Science subjects, because of the specific facilities only available in the main school. By keeping a flexible approach, a balance is maintained between helping the child follow the school syllabus and providing a planned language experience — essential if optimum development is to be achieved. The child's academic progress needs to be monitored through the regular administration of appropriate standardised tests. In addition, the amount of integration appropriate for the individual has to be constantly reviewed.

To facilitate and achieve successful integration the functions of the specialist teacher are diverse:

To promote the linguistic development of the hearing impaired child, by providing extensive auditory experience of natural speech.

To provide specific tutorial help where language difficulties are affecting academic progress and work in the main school.

To liaise with form and subject teachers concerning classroom management and curriculum, for without their helpful co-operation successful integration at any level would not be possible.

To increase the child's confidence and competence in a hearing world.

To maintain close contact with parents through formal and informal meetings both at home and at school to discuss their child's academic and social progress. Pupils come to school by taxi from both city and county areas as far apart as Hinckley and Loughborough. Contact with their own neighbourhood peer group can be minimal. Families are encouraged to help their child make social contact near their home through clubs, sports, etc. Where this happens, there are obvious benefits and integration is more easily achieved at school.

To provide some teaching commitment in the main school. This enables the Unit teacher to see a Unit child in a normal classroom situation and to compare the child's progress with that of his peers, and to encounter the difficulties experienced by other staff.

This year social integration has undoubtedly become more difficult, not only due to the severity of the hearing impairment of the pupils in the Unit, but equally to the increased number of children present. Since most of the children are concentrated in one of two year groups, viz: 1st and 4th year (the school now has a 10-14 age range), they tend to congregate together at break and lunch time. Where children are more isolated or fewer in number, they are forced to make friends with normally hearing children in their own year and do so very successfully. This problem will

*(Continued on page 45)*



# An Approach to Warnock — Sherard Style

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**Mary Brown and Arlene Slater**

Mary Brown is the head of Sherard County primary school, Melton Mowbray. Arlene Slater is an educational psychologist and the teacher appointed to be teacher in charge of the group of children with special educational needs attending the 'special unit' recently opened in Sherard.

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Would the Warnock report be yet another government publication doomed to gather dust on library shelves?

Did the integration of children with special educational needs into 'normal' schools hold any particular relevance for the day to day life of Sherard?

Most primary schools, over a period of time, absorb individual children with a handicap. Sherard has had children with varying degrees of spasticity, epilepsy, hearing and language impairment, hydrocephalus, Down's syndrome, lumbar scoliosis, emotional disturbance, mental retardation. It was always claimed that there was nowhere else these children could go.

The teachers at Sherard do not balk at change or challenge but are prepared to accept and work with children whatever their 'difference'. We congratulated ourselves on the way these children 'coped' within the school and the way we 'coped' with them . . . but then — a small cloud, which contained the possibility that Sherard might be selected as a school for a Warnock unit, appeared on the horizon. It grew bigger as the lengthy process of inspection, consideration and discussion got under way. Finally the decision was made: Sherard was to accommodate those children having special educational needs who lived in a 'wedge' of Leicestershire which contained Melton Mowbray. Our previous complacency was dissipated as we began to examine the reality of integrating up to a maximum of thirty children, who had special educational needs, into Sherard.

## The implications of Warnock

What does Warnock have to say? The simplistic division between the 'handicapped' and the 'non-handicapped' is dismissed. Such meaningless labels say nothing of each child's actual needs. The concept of handicap is broadened to encompass children who may have special

educational needs which are not necessarily associated with a cognitive/intellectual difficulty. The traditional categorisation of children as ESN which tended to engender the 'what can you expect from an ESN child?' syndrome is to be abandoned in favour of a full diagnostic description of each child's difficulty and needs. This idiosyncratic approach towards assessment of difficulties is in line with the philosophical basis of the report and with the current move away from norm-referenced testing towards criterion referenced assessment.

Warnock is concerned to break down the barriers between:

normal and subnormal children

parents and those who educate their children

different educational institutions

school and after school life

and the different professionals dealing with children.

Contrary to the 'dumping ground' function of remedial departments in the past, Warnock demands increased accountability for children with special educational needs from all teachers. This notion of increased accountability is part of the growing trend just as in Bullock (1975) 'every teacher is or should be a teacher of reading'. The existence of Special schools has allowed teachers in mainstream education to work unhampered by children with special needs but should teachers be absolved from this responsibility?

## Integration

One of the early issues in our planning was the siting of the unit. Sherard is a semi-open plan building with rooms opening out on to shared work areas. The building holds potential for flexibility and is acoustically excellent. This allows teachers to plan their day around the educational needs of the children rather than for it be ordered by strict external timetabling. It was initially the suggestion that a separate 'pod' should be built in the courtyard. This would have been centrally positioned but unattached to the main building. The area eventually given over to the unit was an integral part of the school but included a closed interview area. It would have made a nonsense of integration to house these children away from the main building. There must be a reality about integration and not just a name tag. It is important too that it should be an integral part of the 'sort' of school we are and work within our shared philosophy and not just exist as an unabsorbed foreign appendage.

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*(Continued from page 44)*

gradually, although not completely, be ameliorated as the younger children gain confidence in their new social groupings.

Since each child's needs are considered individually the Unit and main school have to be adaptable, providing a variety of learning situations. This is only feasible if the Unit is a fully integrated facility in the school and the Unit teachers regarded as integral members of the main school staff.

## Education

At Sherard we are concerned to 'educate' children and consider an experience educative if it makes a significant contribution to the development of the learner's intellect, personality or social awareness. It is educative if it brings confidence in personal effectiveness and improves the quality of the child's existence. Need this be any different for the 'special' child, the child previously segregated away from 'normal' schools?

All children need to feel confidence in themselves. A child's own achievement is the most effective motivation. If we exploit what a child *can* do rather than constantly focus on the things he cannot do, he gains confidence in his power to learn and to move towards people and experiences openly and easily, tackling the difficulties as he meets them. A child's perception of himself is dependent on environmental influences and it is success rather than failure and weakness which needs to be stressed. This is especially so for the child with special needs if he is to learn to succeed in ordinary situations despite his difficulties. Competitiveness if not carefully managed can be damaging to any child but perhaps even more so for those with special needs and so to focus on the child's idiosyncratic successes without value judgements and inappropriate comparison with others is essential.

Experience of making his own decisions, taking a measure of responsibility for his own learning, opportunity to exercise initiative, make choices, have intentions and carry them out . . .

Is *all* this appropriate to *all* children?

Comment from some of those who have considerable knowledge and experience in the area of special education gives the impression that training in the performance of certain skills and conditioning of certain approved responses formed a large part of the work. Yet the learner can only learn by using his own powers of mental organisation. No matter how carefully teachers may structure learning into small steps and provide seemingly appropriate resources, each child must still find and see the meaning of things for himself, gradually sorting out the experience, seeing the relationships of related things and organising it into his own thinking. The teacher who is working with a child must recognise the limitations imposed by any handicap and progressively refine the help given in making sense of his own experience but — isn't this what teaching should be anyway? It could be that working with 'special' children may demand a greater knowledge, ability to diagnose, patience, persistence, perceptivity, enthusiasm and greater skill and ingenuity, but — it is still the same genre — 'teaching'.

## Relevant literature and research

Whilst we want a fresh response to the challenge, it would be foolish to repeat bad mistakes when the experience of what has gone before is available to us. Visits to other 'units' and special schools and such publications as 'Ways and Means' (Somerset Education Authority 1978) has given valuable insight and certain research findings have relevance to our response.

Hargreaves (1978) discusses the implications of the 'labelling process'. This can be a powerful means of accentuating differences between children and so perpetuate segregation. As teachers we must be aware of

the dangers of using labels, even those which seem harmless. The frequency of usage coupled with the perceived status of the user can lead to a low self esteem on the part of the child and his difficulties be compounded by a 'self fulfilling prophecy' coming into operation. Teachers must assess their own inadequacies and prejudices objectively and the effect they may have on the child's development.

The research of Ravenette (1972) draws attention to the need to consider whether a child is 'disturbed' or 'disturbing'. Our actions must be in the child's best interests rather than our own.

The importance of creating the right sort of emotional climate to maximise the chances for educational success has been stressed by many educationalists e.g. Lawrence (1971) and we see this as being central to our aims.

Children readily imitate specific patterns of aggressive and destructive behaviour as shown by Bandura, Ross and Ross (1961). Fortunately, positive social behaviour can also be modelled from peers and less socially mature children are likely to become more co-operative and less likely to use force in dealing with others if they have the opportunity to play with more socially mature children, Hartup (1970).

An increasing amount of literature on the question of integrating children with special educational needs in the light of Warnock is becoming available. Undoubtedly more interesting research has yet to be carried out.

## Sherard style

Can the education of these children 'Sherard style' provide all that the special school gave and more?

Obviously there will be wide differences in the way integration into normal schools is interpreted and already there are signs that some may put 'special' children altogether in a 'special' unit with a minimum of contact with the rest of the school. There may be a greater difference between individuals in such a group than between them and the children in the rest of the school. Surely it is more bizarre to group together children with widely differing difficulties and treat them as if they are a homogenous group than to cater for them in an environment which all other children share? Whilst accepting that total segregation of a particular child as a temporary measure on first admission may be in the child's best interests, this will never be seen as an end in itself. The plan is to include each child on the register of a class in their appropriate age group and that they will work within this class for much of the day. The 'unit' teacher will give the support and help necessary for the individual teachers concerned to cope with the increased demands made upon them. For some of the time each child will be in a one-one relationship with the 'unit teacher' in a situation which is completely geared to his individual needs. At other times, the child will be within the unit area together with groups of mainstream children perhaps working at some especially pleasurable or coveted activity. We hope that all the children will develop a positive view of all that is associated with the unit area. Support for this idea comes from the research of Graubard *et al* (1974) in which mainstream children give those receiving special education increased sociometric status, following

implementation of such a scheme.

Is our dream naive? Is an approach unencumbered by preconceived notions about 'what should be' better able to envisage 'what could be'? On the other hand — fools rush in . . . !

## Finance

What of the financial aspect? The all too familiar question at present is 'What expenditure is involved?' There has been some well directed administrative effort to provide suitable accommodation, a one to ten pupil ratio, ancillary help and an initial stocking allowance, but the knowledge, training and attitude of staff and their concept of the process is the most vital element. Are these people around? Do they need to be more highly trained? Sifting through the pile of applications for the post at Sherard there were many which conveyed an intense and well-meaning concern and who had had considerable success in the past with, for example, 'slow readers' but this is not sufficient. Will the government provide sufficient finance for suitable training?

Warnock's recommendations may present a threat to some teachers who are at present working in special schools but a new future rôle for them might be that of advisory support teachers attached to mainstream schools which are integrating children who have special educational needs.

Whilst the education services do seem to be getting into gear to cope with the implementation of Warnock there is as yet only limited access to the necessary support services. The children can still attend local clinics for speech therapy, language sessions, physiotherapy and other necessary treatment but if local authorities really intend to implement Warnock then the educationalists must be prepared to liaise with the support services and make provision for these various agencies to work within the schools. At present cost-effectiveness exerts a strong influence on the lack of provision. The need for multi-disciplinary co-operation in the matter of children's education needs greater recognition and such facilities made readily accessible.

## The Future

We know that we must be entirely honest about integration. We are approaching the implementation of the Warnock recommendations in an open, flexible and practical way. We are prepared to accept that there will be problems and mistakes and that we have to live with an uncertainty about the outcome. We shall constantly question what we are doing and why, regularly review and analyse the situation to check that 'what we say we do' and 'what we do' coincide as closely as possible, and discuss its efficacy in each individual case.

Thus as the work of the 'unit' grows and develops we will all learn from our action based experience of integrating the children with special educational needs into Sherard. In facing a challenge there is always a dream and a reality. We have great faith that our dream can become a reality in spite of our present limited experience.

Perhaps in time we will be able to report the success we envisage in achieving the integration of children with special educational needs into our large urban primary school just as Tuckwell (1982) has done in a small rural school.

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# The Proposed Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education

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**D.J. Ramsden**

Formerly a teacher in a grammar school and a college of further education, Donald Ramsden has been Secretary to the East Midlands Regional Examinations Board since 1971. He has also acted as joint secretary to the GCE and CSE Boards' Joint Council for 16+ National Criteria since its inception in 1980. In this article he submits the government's proposals for the new 17+ to a searching examination.

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The Government's initiative to bring some order to the 17+ examination and assessment jungle is to be warmly welcomed. It is, nevertheless, regrettable that it appears to have been taken as a result of the desperate unemployment situation rather than for the educational reasons which have been advocated by many for more than a decade. The development towards a common system of examining at 16+ might have been different if the problems of those 17+ students who are not destined for 'A' level and higher education had been acknowledged at an earlier stage. It was in July 1970 that the Schools Council decided, in principle, that there should be some form of advanced level CSE and in 1972 two CSE Boards offered Certificate of Extended Education Feasibility Studies for the first time. A decade later, thousands of seventeen year olds throughout the country have taken examinations for the CEE which has never received official approval. The major reason for this has been that neither the CSE nor the GCE Boards have been able to persuade the Government that there was a substantial gap in the provision of courses and examinations for seventeen year olds, who were not of 'A' level calibre but who wished to continue their full-time general education. Since 1970, the problem has become more acute and the situation more complex and confusing. The school-leaving age has been raised, open sixth forms have been developed widely, the size of the age group has increased and the employment prospects for the school-leaver are as bleak as they have ever been.

In addition to the CEE, many other new examinations have been introduced by organisations such as the Further Education Regional Examining Bodies (Certificate of Further Education), the City and Guilds of London Institute (Foundation Courses), the Business Education Council (BEC) and the Royal Society of Arts. The situation for seventeen year olds is now as complicated and unhelpful as it was for fifteen year olds before the CSE was introduced almost twenty years ago. The Government's proposals as set out in '17+ A New Qualification' published in May 1982 are little more than a statement of intent; some of the propositions are tentative and the decisions on administrative and curricular matters have been referred to a consortium which has yet to be established. The Government's general intention is, however, reasonably clear and is likely to have a considerable impact on the curriculum not only for the post 16+ students but for a substantial number of 14-16 year olds, too.

In the opening paragraph of the 17+ document, it is

clearly stated that, in the view of the Government, the education service is falling some way short of meeting its obligations to a growing number of young people who continue full-time education beyond the age of sixteen. There are criticisms, too, of the single-subject approach to teaching and assessment and of the lack of preparedness of many school leavers for working and adult life. It is, therefore, significant to read that the Government considers that the CPVE syllabuses will need to be related to the work done in the final years of compulsory education and that 'the Secretaries of State see a strong case for a greater practical component in the curriculum for all of those aged 14-16'.

There is no doubt that the nature of examination syllabuses have a profound influence on what is taught in the fourth and fifth year of secondary schools and there is little doubt that the nature of the associated schemes of assessment have put too great an emphasis on the ability to recall learned facts and opinions and to write them out in continuous prose, which is still widely regarded as the 'academic' approach. There is too much concern with the preparation for 'A' level and too little attention paid to the wide range of other end-on courses taken up by sixteen year olds. The practical element for which the Secretaries of State see a strong case should be a feature of all syllabuses and schemes of assessment irrespective of the subject and should not be interpreted as 'Woodwork for all'. In the drafting of national subject criteria for the proposed common system of examining at 16+ — with which the writer has been closely associated — the terms of reference were drafted in such a way that those responsible had to ask the question: 'What should students at various levels of ability be able to do at the end of the course?' The intention was to produce a more practical slant to all subjects because it is the application of what has been learned which is then emphasised. The exercise is not yet completed and much hard work remains to be done but the signs are encouraging and, in terms of the relationship with 17+, they would have been more encouraging still had not the Secretary of State insisted on the target group being the top sixty per cent.

There is, however, a fundamental difference between the courses and examinations at 17+ provided by the GCE and CSE Boards and what the Government intends. The CEE courses offered by both GCE and CSE Boards are almost all single subject syllabuses and examinations. The Government's proposals are much more in line with the kind of provision made by the further education examining bodies in that they call for

a curriculum framework in which the courses will be grouped or integrated. This approach will create new challenges for teachers who may have to adapt to new teaching patterns. Before it is decided what the courses should consist of and at what level they should be aimed, it is necessary to consider for whom they are to be designed. In this respect the Government has not been able to define the target group positively and it has to be deduced from the Government's statements about those for whom it is not intended. Included in that list are those who will be able to cope with two or more 'A' levels, those who have a clear vocational objective, those who need remedial teaching in the basic subjects and those who have left full-time education. In terms of ability the range is enormous but in terms of numbers it is likely to be small. The Government's estimate of 80,000 initially may prove to be optimistic in view of the introduction of the Manpower Services Commission's New Training Initiative which guarantees all unemployed school-leavers a period of training and financial support — a somewhat ironic twist in view of the Government's declared intention of rationalising education and training provision for the seventeen year olds.

The long-term success of the CPVE will depend, largely, on the extent to which those with the qualifications are successful in obtaining employment as a result of having achieved it. One cannot help thinking that the CPVE young people will be at a disadvantage compared with their NTI colleagues, if only because of the difference in their work experience.

With so wide a target group as that indicated above, it is clear that the course provision will have to be flexible and that the certification will have to be considered very carefully if it is to be of any value to students throughout the ability range.

The strategy and curriculum framework outlined in the Government's paper clearly owes much to the work done by the Further Education Unit and, in particular, its publication: 'A Basis for Choice'. This was produced, however, for a target group somewhat different from, though overlapping, what the original architects of the CEE had in mind and certainly different from that indicated in the Government's document. There must, therefore, be some doubt about the suitability of the suggested curriculum package for the whole of the target range.

The aims of the courses leading to the CPVE should, according to the Government, offer a broad programme of general education with emphasis on various types of employment, develop personal attributes such as self-motivation, adaptability, self-reliance, a sense of responsibility and an ability to work with others, and help each student to discover what kind of job he or she might tackle with success. The curriculum framework will include a common core accounting for sixty per cent of the time plus one of three optional courses each accounting for 40 per cent of the time. The common core will include written and spoken English, Mathematics, aspects of science and technology and their application in the modern world and studies designed to give a broad understanding of citizenship and its responsibilities, the way the country earns its living and the nature of our institutions.

It has to be said that there does not appear to be much that is new about that list and it is highly probable that

most of the young people will have had some experience of all the areas mentioned. It is widely recognised that 'repeat' courses usually fail to motivate the students with the result that they rarely do any better than they had done the first time round. Simply bundling all the elements into a common core will not in itself bring about any improvement in motivation. Careful thought will have to be given to providing quite different English and Mathematics courses from those which they have been following for at least the two previous years. Will it be possible, given the relatively small numbers, for schools to devise courses which will be appropriate for students of widely differing abilities? How can the Mathematics be made more stimulating for children who are following the course because they have not made any career choice? Should all students be obliged to study Mathematics for yet another year when they have probably already been demoralised by the subject? Why should it be considered to be such an essential subject for those who have already amply demonstrated their inability to cope with it? Might not some relatively brief but systematic revision of very basic numeracy be much more suitable for many?

Similar questions must be asked in relation to the other subject areas if the common core element is to be made stimulating and be seen to be useful by the prospective students.

The optional courses are based on the assumption that there will be three types of student — those who 'have not formed a provisional view about the kind of job they wish to have', those who are interested in technical work in the manufacturing and service industries and those who are looking towards clerical occupations in business and to the distributive trades. On those teachers and lecturers who are responsible for Option 1 falls the onus of giving students more confidence in their ability to earn a living and a better understanding of what jobs they might be capable of tackling with enjoyment and success. Syllabuses based on this option might, according to the Government, cover aspects of the following subjects, amongst others: Craft, Design and Technology, Technical Drawing and Illustration and Design, Social Studies, Geography, Home Economics and Health Education. No advice is given about the content of the other two options.

When the common core and the subjects in Option 1 are put together, the curriculum package is disappointing. It lacks the innovative aspects which one could reasonably have expected to find in view of the criticisms in the Government's document of the current provision. The curriculum has been described in subject terms when it would have seemed more appropriate to have stated it in terms of objectives to be achieved. The inspiration seems to owe much to 'A Basis for Choice' but the execution seems to have departed some way from it. The nature of the Mathematics or English, for example, in the common core would have been more easily identified if there had been a clear indication of what the students will be expected to be able to do at the end of the course.

There is a danger, therefore, that an integrated course approach, based on clearly defined objectives, in which the subject matter is the vehicle by which the objectives are achieved rather than an end in itself, might not be introduced. This could have been (and still could be) the major contribution that this initiative made to the

# Integrated Humanities and the Sixteen Plus

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They exist under many different titles and they come in several shapes and sizes. They may be called Social Studies, Community Studies, World Studies, Environmental Studies, Social Science or even Integrated Humanities. They may contain elements of Sociology, Geography, History, Economics, Politics, RE and Moral education and, in a few cases, English. But underlying this proliferation of nomenclatures and content areas, these courses are related in both origins and purpose. They reflect a desire on the part of teachers to develop new styles of teaching and learning and as a consequence have evolved new methods of assessment. As a group such courses can be called 'Integrated Humanities'. In this paper, the term 'Integrated Humanities' is used to refer to integrated courses in the Humanities curriculum area of schools, where the central aim is one of exploring and studying human issues, frequently of a large and complex nature.

My intention in this short paper is to try to explain what is distinctive about Integrated Humanities, and to provide a possible starting point for discussion as to the place of Integrated Humanities in the last two years of compulsory education, particularly in relation to the proposed new system of public examinations at 16+. This is a very important consideration for those schools which have developed integrated courses of this nature, particularly where they form part of the compulsory core curriculum. Such courses have never fitted

comfortably within the public examination system, and their distinctive style and important contribution to the Humanities curriculum may therefore be overlooked in the restructuring which is currently under way.

It is not possible here to go into great depth about the history of the development of Integrated Humanities, but a brief overview is necessary for an understanding of the essential characteristics which define it, and distinguish it from other Humanities subjects. The origins of the present courses can be traced back to the curriculum reform movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Alongside the steady transformation of secondary education into a comprehensive system, and preparations for the raising of the school leaving age, there were many calls for curriculum changes in order to prepare students more successfully for their life in a complex, fast-moving, technological age than was being done at the time. Reforms in science and mathematics teaching were followed by re-thinking in the Humanities area both in terms of changes in existing single subjects such as Geography and History, and of introducing new ones such as Sociology, and in terms of a multi-disciplinary, cross-subject approach to Humanities teaching.

Considerable effort was put into getting 'O' Level and CSE Sociology on to the curriculum. This was justified by the argument that Social Science methodology and the sociological perspective would be both relevant to young people, and would give them the tools and insight they needed to understand the world they lived in. Sociology at 'O' Level tended to displace British Constitution and challenged Economics as *the* social science in secondary education at 'O' Level, while at CSE level it gradually (very gradually) began to displace the old citizenship, civics, 'preparation for work' ethos of social education courses for the less able.

The growth of Sociology/Social Studies in the curriculum played a crucial part in the development of Integrated Humanities even while establishing itself as a distinct part of the curriculum separate from Integrated Humanities. For it introduced topics into the curriculum which had rarely found a place before such as the family, class, education and even crime and employment. Yet it failed to live up to the expectations of many of its earlier practitioners who had hoped that social science concepts and understanding of society would work to improve the motivation and involvement of students. The central problem facing most teachers, then, as now, was how to get the majority of teenagers at school to be interested and involved in their work.

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*(Continued from page 49)*

design of courses and methods of assessment in schools and colleges.

The Government intends to introduce the CPVE for first certification in 1985. So far no announcement has been made about the composition of the national co-ordinating body which has, amongst other things, to decide the title of the qualification, to establish criteria for the production of syllabuses, to provide guidance on how the necessary knowledge, skills and personal qualities can best be developed through the assessment of performance, the nature and value of the certification.

There is no doubt that there is an urgent need for proper courses and assessment procedures for the young people at 17+. The Government's declared intention to do something about it has been widely and warmly admired but so was the Emperor's suit of clothes. Judgement must be reserved until rather more work has been done on putting the proposals into practice.



The most able were rarely a problem but the broad majority were often uninterested, occasionally hostile, especially to subjects like those in the humanities area which seemed to be lacking in direct relevance and value to their lives and future employment prospects. The hope that Sociology would somehow open their eyes and turn them on was in most cases forlorn. For the majority of students the concepts of sociology appeared to be either abstruse or obvious common sense, while on another level, students often failed to agree with their Sociology teachers that kinship patterns and cultural deprivation were on a higher plane than the functions of Black Rod or how to claim Social Security benefits. Many teachers (and not only sociologists) who felt that single-subject discipline-based approaches were not apparently working any better than those courses they had replaced, turned instead to an integrated approach involving either a broad mix of social science concepts, or more radically an issue-based or thematic approach, or a mix of the two.

Another underlying motivation that drew many teachers towards Integrated Humanities was the belief that the dominant style of pedagogy employed in teaching was inappropriate to the kinds of educational process they wished to see taking place. They felt out of sympathy with an approach which, in their view, almost exclusively involved the teacher in transmitting information, aided by textbooks, to students who learned the facts necessary to pass examinations. It was argued by many of these teachers that the emphasis should be moved from the *content* of learning to the *process* of learning, from teacher-controlled to student-directed learning, from factual recall to the use of learning resources. The teacher's role would have to change too; from expert to collaborator, from disseminator to enabler. This approach implied that learning could proceed from the students' interests, through negotiations with teachers and with the help of a variety of resources, to a truer understanding of the world than was possible through more traditional methods. It was also believed that the students would experience this style of education as more worthwhile, meaningful and interesting, because it would enable them to investigate and discuss real issues of importance to them, rather than ideas and concepts which others had determined.

The ideas of others, and the tools and concepts of the subject disciplines had an important place in this approach as means to achieving the goals negotiated by students and teachers, rather than as ends in themselves. In some quarters the method was all-important, the actual content was regarded as almost irrelevant. In other quarters teachers still felt that they had important things to say to young people and so wanted to maintain control over the areas of enquiry the students followed. Thus different courses portrayed differences of emphasis between open-ended enquiry and content-boundedness, and the tension between these two features has played a significant role in the development of many Integrated Humanities courses since then.

It is probably true to say that, in the last few years, the balance of courses has tipped strongly towards those which do define content more clearly. This reflects the declining fortunes of progressive styles of learning since the 1970s in the curriculum as a whole. Nowadays the usual form adopted is to structure the course through a

number of core elements which all students take, each one leading to a variety of student choices of follow-up work. Core-elements which commonly appear in such courses include, for example, law and order, adolescence and youth culture, the mass media and communications, work and industrial relations, prejudice and persecution, war and conflict, world poverty. Nevertheless, Integrated Humanities courses continue to be characterised by a wide variation in content covered, and in varied approaches to teaching that content not only as between schools, but often within them where different teams of teachers have developed different styles of working.

The practitioners of Integrated Humanities found that the existing examination structure of externally set and assessed syllabuses terminating in written examination papers did not suit their purpose. They tended to be single-subject syllabuses which defined content in terms of the organising concepts and apparently arbitrary content areas of each subject discipline. This was clearly incompatible with an approach that crossed subject boundaries and used the concepts and content only where it was felt to be appropriate. Furthermore, the examination papers tended to put a premium on recall of information over a very wide area of content. This would require teacher-directed transmission as the dominant style within the classroom which these teachers believed to be of limited value since it did not allow for student choice and enquiry-learning. Indeed the examination papers were not designed to assess those objectives which teachers of Integrated Humanities set for themselves: the development of skills involving not only recall of knowledge but also the ability to undertake independent research, to select relevant information, to analyse and interpret it, to organise it and to evaluate it and finally present it in a clear way for others to read or hear.

In order to obtain the assessment style required, teachers often developed their own Mode III syllabuses. In many cases the integrated approach was restricted to CSE syllabuses. But there were strong incentives in some schools to offer such courses at 'O' Level as well so that they might be available to all students and enjoy a higher status within the curriculum. In a few cases (usually in newly established comprehensive schools that adopted a broadly 'progressive' approach to the curriculum) Integrated Humanities became a core subject. In these cases it was usually regarded as imperative that students had the chance of taking either an 'O' Level or a CSE at the end of the course.

The de-emphasis of transmission learning and the commitment to the more egalitarian approach implied by student-directed resource-based learning frequently meant that Integrated Humanities classes were mixed ability. This meant in turn that students in the same classroom might enter for CSE or 'O' Level. The separation of CSE and 'O' Level Boards, their different geographical boundaries and their different ways of working, frequently caused difficulties. It tended to be easier to develop Mode IIIs for CSE than for GCE but in the early 1970s a number of special syllabuses were developed and operated at 'O' Level, particularly by the AEB. This enabled the teachers to match the syllabus requirements at both levels and to teach their students, for the major part of the course at least, in an undifferentiated way.

Most Mode III courses reduced the proportion of marks going to the terminal examination papers, usually to fifty per cent. The rest of the marks were derived from 'continuous assessment' of coursework and project work. The marks awarded in the examination tended to reward recall, whereas skills of research, organisation and presentation were assessed in the coursework element.

In the early days there were certain problems with these syllabuses. Firstly, they required a tremendous amount of work from the teachers involved: the devising of courses, production of resources, setting of examinations, marking of them, and careful continuous assessment through the course; in addition to the daily round, were sometimes too much. One often saw pale-faced Humanities teachers poring over computer sheets and working into the late hours while the Mathematics Department played tennis or slipped away to the pub, secure in the knowledge that the fates of their own students were beyond their control. There were also problems of ensuring that teachers all gave similar marks to similar kinds of work. Finally, for the students, the amount of work they had to do to pass the Mode III was usually more more than for Mode Is: not only did they have the terminal examination, but an extended project, and often every piece of work assessed for examination.

Since those early days however, there have been significant improvements as teachers have gained experience in assessment. It is more common now to find samples of students' work entered for the examination and chosen to fulfil specified examination objectives. Examination papers are written with more skill and understanding, often now involving data handling and interpretive skills on unseen stimulus material, which makes the examination paper more consistent with the other elements of assessment. In some cases the terminal examination has been excluded altogether, to be replaced by a variety of tests and essays, projects and shorter analyses throughout the course and designed to test the specified objectives.

It is certainly the case that teaching a Mode III course still involves additional work, but most of those involved are usually more than willing to do it because of the advantages it offers in allowing them to teach in what they believe to be the best way. There also appears to be a significant commitment on the part of students who take these courses. They see them as different from other subjects, more flexible and often more rewarding, in the sense that they have the chance to get deeply involved in issues they are interested in rather than always being moved from one topic to the next. This is not to argue that it works in this way for all students. There are many for whom Humanities is as boring as everything else, and many for whom projects involve little more than the re-assembly of the contents of library books.

But at its best Integrated Humanities today remains true to the principles behind its development: wide-ranging inter-disciplinary enquiry and an emphasis upon skills-learning as process rather than as product. At its best Integrated Humanities presents students with a challenging set of problems and questions which they are encouraged to pursue towards gaining *their* answers. Integrated Humanities offers, in a way that other subjects rarely can, the chance for young people to

consider complex and controversial issues which they already meet in their lives, and will have to make decisions about as adults. There are frequently calls from outside bodies — from industry, from higher education — for the education system to produce young people who are confident, flexible and able to work on their own and take initiative. Such attitudes and skills are central to Integrated Humanities. Students must to some degree learn how to control their own learning, if they are to learn how to control wider aspects of their lives. There are calls for the education system to improve the ways in which young people communicate. Again the emphasis on selected, organised and effective presentation of ideas within Integrated Humanities helps to foster such skills.

The flexibility of the Mode III courses allows constant review and up-dating of content and assessment elements. Since teachers are involved in both the development of the curriculum and the means of its assessment, there are both the incentives and the readily-available mechanisms for innovation and evaluation of classroom practice and assessment techniques. Departments involved in Integrated Humanities work are typically characterised by team planning, co-operative production of resources, and the constructive criticism of the work of fellow teachers through coursework assessment and internal moderation. Such features help to encourage professional development and improvement and to prevent rigidity.

Teachers of Integrated Humanities are concerned and anxious about the future. They have only been able to develop their courses and ideas by stepping out of the mainstream of the examining system at 16+. They are therefore understandably uncertain as to whether a place will be made for them in the new system when it is introduced. Much of the discussion and syllabus development by the examination boards in preparation for 16+ has been about single subjects. The potential of integrated work appears to have been overlooked.

Humanities teachers are looking for a constructive dialogue with the new consortia. They accept that they still have much to learn about assessing their own work and that of their students and that as long as public examinations at 16+ retain their crucial role in determining opportunities and social position in society, examining boards will continue to have a clear responsibility to ensure that the work of candidates is assessed in a reliable and valid way, and that the work of different centres can be compared. But the teachers also feel that they have worked hard to develop teaching strategies, content areas and methods of assessment which have encouraged good educational practice and have gained a central place in the curriculum in many schools. They therefore hope that many of these elements can be incorporated into a new system. They would hope to discuss ways of working in partnership with the new examinations consortia to develop syllabuses which encourage the best practice within Integrated Humanities, and retain the flexibility and room for creative potential which have been key features of the approach throughout the 1970s. At the same time they recognise that the achievements of students in the subject must be publicly assessed in a valid and reliable way that gains acceptance in the wider community.



# Careers Education in a Depression

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**Ray Hartley**

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It is perhaps ironic that during a period of large scale cyclical and structural unemployment, of diminished and diminishing employment opportunities for young people and of reductions in the resources made available to the maintained sector of our schools that successive governments, in recent times, have sought to encourage a more efficient liaison between education and industry. One important aspect of the relationship between schools and the world of work that has grown rapidly in the last few years has been the interest shown in the role of careers guidance for young people. It is difficult to date exactly when the status and prestige of the careers staff in schools began to improve, indeed in some institutions no doubt it has not, but in general there seems to be a greater enthusiasm for careers education now than was the case even ten years ago.<sup>1</sup> The irony is, of course, that as careers education in particular, and school/industry links in general have been encouraged, the possibilities of gainful employment for young people appear to be dwindling.<sup>2</sup>

If there appears to be a contradiction between the development of careers education programmes in schools and the demise of employment prospects in the contemporary UK economy then, as educationists, we must try to go some way towards reconciling such a conflict. As teachers it is difficult to see how we may exert influence on those who have power to define and elaborate a macro policy for employment and the utilisation of manpower. However, it may be possible to go some way towards providing some ideas concerning the nature and relevance of careers education in a depression.

An examination and critique of the validity of contemporary careers education requires some brief understanding of its history and development including some analysis of its theoretical rationale, a rationale deeply embedded in psychology and its associated sub-disciplines.

Daws<sup>3</sup> firmly locates the origins of vocational guidance in the growth of psychology, and particularly industrial psychology, in the USA and Europe in the early decades of the twentieth century. The impetus for guidance came from the need for industry to secure a satisfactory workforce efficiently selected on the basis of the growing science of psychometry. It appears that for half a century, until the 1950s and 1960s, vocational guidance, as it was applied to the world of work, approximated to little more than 'talent matching' in its scope and application.

As far as careers education in schools in particular is

concerned it hardly appears to have had much prominence until the early 1970s.<sup>4</sup> However, the concept of guidance generally in the 1960s and early 1970s began to emerge in a much more elaborated form and many of its developing tenets were ready for transplanting into the curricular and pastoral life of many schools in the optimism which surrounded the expansion of comprehensive education. Daws<sup>5</sup> viewed an enhanced vocational guidance programme as embracing five vital elements: (a) vocational development — advice on curriculum choice and career planning, (b) counselling — recognition of emotions and feelings as they affect guidance, (c) needs and values — understanding that guidance is incomplete if restricted to considerations of ability and aptitude to the detriment of the affective domain, (d) After Care — involvement with the longitudinal adjustment to the world of work, (e) guidance teams — that guidance become the province of a co-ordinated team of specialists.

Thus, historically, guidance has been seen in the context of personal development, its dominant perspectives have been mainly those derived from psychology, emphasising self-assessment and the need to match individual skills, talents and desires to available work opportunities and conventional career channels. Therefore, whether in the field of curriculum content and development or personalised advice, careers work in schools has, in the main, been viewed as a neutral process removed from those crucial questions of power and ideology which circumscribe the structures of work and non-work for which our young people are, in the main, destined. School leavers have traditionally been advised and guided about decisions and prospects in a context devoid of analysis of wider relationships of control and domination which are a necessary imperative for the continued maintenance and reproduction of the structural features of the UK economy.

Such an approach may well have suited the relatively optimistic period of Keynesian consensus and full employment which characterised the western world until the mid 1970s and which rendered choice of career a major problem. However, the growing crisis in the capitalist economies post 1973 and the persistently upward trend in youth unemployment has created a need to re-assess the relevance of traditional careers education in schools. It is my argument that if careers education is to remain relevant to the needs of young people in the future then it needs to look more towards the disciplines of economics, sociology and politics and

less to its former concerns with a psychology which was always haphazard in effect and increasingly diversionary in approach.<sup>6</sup>

I believe that it is possible to suggest a more relevant form of careers education by making a critique of the ideological underpinnings of recent developments in the general area of the relationship between schools and the world of work. I want to argue that while some new work in the field of careers education may be useful the general approach is diversionary and fails to equip young people with the intellectual means by which they can understand and cope with the problems of unemployment.

Firstly careers education needs to challenge the currently dominant view that education is but the handmaiden of industry and that it should forsake its traditional concern with the narcissistic pursuit of knowledge for a closer matching of its curricula to the needs of 'wealth creation'. In this context it is possible to view careers lessons as forums for the open discussion of two significantly ideological matters. In the first instance it is necessary to present the role of education in society as a matter for debate uninhibited by merely utilitarian concerns with manpower planning. If careers education is to remain valid and worthwhile it must stimulate a healthy scepticism of the received orthodoxy of the moment which decries the liberating tendencies of the social sciences and humanities and promotes a dull, mechanistic conformity to the needs of industry. I would argue that it is vital for careers teachers to attempt to redress the balance of current thinking which apports much of the blame for the demise of the UK economy to the failings of the educational system. If careers education is to be concerned with the relationship of school to work then it must do so in an open and unblinkered manner and not subordinate itself to arguments relating to 'economic needs' as perceived by a minority of those with political and industrial power.

Similarly, when discussing the role of industry in our society those concerned with careers education need to be critically aware of the terms of analysis within which the current debate is continued. As teachers we are encouraged to discuss industry in apparently neutral concepts of e.g. 'wealth creation', 'competitive efficiency', 'the world of work', yet our economic organisations are constituted by a myriad of relationships which themselves embody crucial principles of power and control, domination and subordination, and it is these very relationships which are ignored or neglected in the face of contemporary clichés regarding the transition of young people from school to work. I would argue that if our young people are fully to understand the nature of the social and economic institutions which will confront them on leaving school then careers education, particularly during the present period of crisis, needs to address itself to a discussion of four crucial problems of contemporary industrial society: (a) the purpose of production — private accumulation versus public benefit; the responsibilities of the state in the economy, (b) the distribution of the wealth and income created in the process of production; the origins and functions of profit, (c) nature of work and personal fulfilment; democracy at the work place, the role of the trade unions, (d) unemployment as economic inevitability or

instrument of social control.

Apart from attempting to re-define the general parameters of careers education I would argue that it is also crucial to examine the day to day context of careers work. In recent years much of the curriculum development in this area has been concerned with the introduction of 'life' and 'social skills' programmes.<sup>7</sup> The origins of this approach reflect a continuing pre-occupation with psychological paradigms geared to occupational guidance and personal maturation. Now there is little doubt that careers teachers need to remain aware of this traditional aspect of their work. However the changed nature of career expectations requires much more than an understanding and response at the level of the individual.

The phenomenon of youth unemployment is a product, by and large, of political, technological and economic decisions which reveal the values and priorities of those who possess power in these particularly crucial structures of our society. At present decisions within the complex of politics, economics and technology have resulted in a diminished number of opportunities for school leavers. At the same time the dominant ideology of the moment reduces unemployment either to an act of nature which governments and others in positions of real power cannot affect, or the logical outcome of a long period of indulgence and indolence on the part of the working population. Within such an ideological construct the major response of educationists concerned with careers teaching has been to emphasise the need to develop in young people certain 'skills' which will help them to manage their precarious existential position more efficiently.

The stress of such work, perhaps most notably developed by Hopson and Scally<sup>8</sup> revolves around the need for the individual to cope with the accelerating nature of change within the life cycle. In *Lifeskills Teaching Programme No.1* much of the work is oriented towards dealing with such problems as 'making effective transitions', 'communicating effectively', 'managing time', 'managing relationships and negative emotions', 'how to be positive' and last but not least, 'how to find a job'.

As symptomatic of the new directions in careers guidance and skills teaching it is probably true to say that Hayes and Hopson lead the way. While there is undoubtedly something of value to the individual in their response to the crisis faced by the youth of today what I want to argue is that any approach which emphasises teaching skills at the expense of offering a serious consideration of the political and economic nature of unemployment in the long run does a disservice to school leavers. In effect the 'lifeskills' approach deals only with the symptoms of a deeper malaise and substitutes 'hints' for real analysis and knowledge. There is nothing wrong in teaching young people how to fill in application forms and present themselves for interview but if the skills approach is allowed to dominate a careers programme then deeper concerns with the structural causation of unemployment lose their significance.

As careers education begins to gain more and more acceptance in our schools and as the chronic problem of mass unemployment fails to be meaningfully confronted at the level of the state so must the

preparation of our young people for adult life become more geared to the enhanced demands being made upon it. If young people are to fully understand the present and future nature of adult life then we must become more concerned with communicating knowledge of those structural forces which so strongly influence individual development. Careers education increasingly needs to turn more to the disciplines of the social sciences for its basic paradigms of approach if adequate programmes of preparation for the world of work are to be achieved. Responses at the level of skills teaching do not, in the main, refer themselves to presenting an analysis of unemployment, etc., which would provide the student with a sound structural awareness of his or her individual predicament. The long term preparation of young people for adult life no doubt requires advice on matters of social skill and personal development but if they are to play an active part in shaping their future life then it is necessary that they understand the nature of the macro social relationships which dominate our society. I would argue that careers education needs to draw far more from sociology, economics and politics and rather less from positivist psychology. Exercises in self awareness and occupational choice are not enough

to ensure that young people, faced with the most appalling career prospects, at least know the reasons why.

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# Advancing the Quality of Education

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## Richard Pring

Professor of Education at the University of Exeter, Richard Pring warned against certain contemporary educational developments in his Presidential address to the Confederation for the Advancement of State Education last autumn. Here he develops this theme.

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The editorial to a recent issue of *Parents and Schools* was entitled 'a vision betrayed'. The occasion for the editorial was the death of Lord Butler and the consequent reflection upon the extent to which the principles of his 1944 Education Act were being eroded — partly through the declining level of resources, but partly because of the disappearance of the vision itself (of equal opportunities and of a genuinely secondary education for all).

This, too, was the theme of my address to the annual general conference of CASE held in Bath in April 1982. When I entered the education service in the 1960s, first as a civil servant at the DES, then as a school teacher for ILEA, there was a mood of confidence in what the developing school system could and would provide. This mood was shared by politician, civil servant, and teacher alike. With it went a confidence in the *professionalism* of teachers, if only they could receive inservice opportunities and the necessary support for curriculum development. The establishment of the Schools Council in 1964 and the promise in the 1972 White Paper of further expansion, which would include three per cent of teachers receiving inservice at any one time, demonstrate that confidence. Furthermore, these

developments took place within Conservative administrations that shared the principles enshrined within Butler's education act.

All that has now changed. The maintained sector of education is publicly criticised by the very Ministers of State who are given responsibility for it. Indeed the predecessor of the present Secretary of State for Education has now declared that it is the *duty* of parents who have the money to send their children to fee paying schools. Essential resources are being taken away at the very time when subsidies to the private sector are being increased. The one area of rapid expansion — namely, the pre-vocational 16+ training programme — is being financed and controlled, not by the education services either national or local, but by a quango within the Department of Employment. The closure of the Schools Council reflects a distrust in the professional capacity of the teaching body to sort our curriculum problems.

The question therefore that we felt it necessary to address ourselves to at the CASE Conference was: how can we ensure continuing improvement in the quality of the maintained sector when so much was conspiring to undermine it and indeed to betray that vision which had sustained it? To answer that question, three areas were

picked out for detailed consideration.

### **1. Changing attitudes towards the maintained sector and towards the provision of resources**

The results of financial cuts on the maintained sector has now been well documented nationally by HMI in two reports, *The effects of local expenditure policies on the education service*, 1980 and 1981. It is however difficult at the local level to quantify either the cuts or their effect because the system of financing, and the allocation of resources, are complicated, and because the base line from which one might ascertain the extent of cuts is rarely made clear. Nonetheless, the HMI reports, though giving a national picture, do suggest the kind of questions that one ought to be asking at the local level and indeed in individual schools. And I have given a suggested list of questions, relating to the detailed points made in those reports, in the summer 1982 issue of *Parents and Schools*. For example, although it is the case nationally that the staff-pupil ratio is being preserved in line with falling rolls, this is being achieved at the expense of inadequate remedial help, inappropriately qualified staff, an impoverished curriculum, and less practical work. In the concluding pages of the 1981 report, HMI declared

'To put it in a nutshell, many LEAs and schools are surviving financially by doing less; but they are often obliged to take the less in the form that comes easily to hand rather than shaping it to match educational priorities.'

It would, however, be mistaken if those who care for the quality of education should limit their concern, and their active response to that concern, simply to the cuts in resources. The evidence is accumulating that these cuts are but one aspect of the growing disillusionment with state-financed education and of the increased support being given to the private sector. It is not possible to go into the details of this here — privatisation takes place in many subtle ways (both using public funds to purchase places in private education and using parental funds to purchase services in the public sector). But there is now no doubt of government support for private at the expense of the public education. Furthermore, the increased 'privatisation' of schooling might be linked with a return to an elementary school tradition within the non-privatised sector. There are various aspects of this elementary school tradition, but two I wish to pick out for special attention; namely (1) that the schools were, by and large, run by a relatively privileged group of people for others', but not their own, children, and (2) that the schools had in consequence a rather narrow curriculum that stressed the socially useful and the practical but discouraged critical reflection and acquaintance with wider cultural values.

Therefore the betrayal of the vision that I mentioned at the beginning must not be seen to lie in the cuts alone. The cuts are symptomatic of more significant developments and reflect an attitude towards the maintained sector more dangerous than one arising solely out of the need to save money. Furthermore such an attitude is widely shared by so many within the 'business' of educating our children. According to a report in the *Sunday Times* (April 1982) 35 heads of comprehensives out of a total number interviewed of

176 educated their children privately. My children have been taught by teachers who refused to send their children to the maintained system they earn their money in; they have gone to schools 'governed' by people who send their children elsewhere to the private sector; and they come under the administration of officers who show their faith in the system they are responsible for by ensuring their own children do not attend it. Furthermore, a very large number of those responsible for preparing teachers for the maintained sector (for example, those in my own School of Education) demonstrate their faith in their products by sending their own children to private schools.

Above all, however, we must link the significance of the cuts to the attitude of the central administration to the quality of education resulting from those cuts. The HMI have demonstrated that the cuts in resources *are* affecting the quality of education. In many cases these resources are seen as less than satisfactory — where 'satisfactory' means (with implicit reference to Section 8 of the 1944 Education Act) a level, range, and balance of resources which HMI consider adequate for pupils to be taught according to their ages, abilities, and aptitudes. But where the Secretary of State has been provided with evidence of unsatisfactory provision (as in the case of Northampton parents and governors who, in January 1981, wrote to the Secretary of State about severe inadequacies in three schools), the reply has been that he is not satisfied, without there being any enquiry into the facts or into the cause of the complaint, that the LEA is in breach of its duty. Commenting upon this, the Select Committee in *The Secondary School Curriculum and Examination* (1981) said (para 8.3)

'If the Department's interpretation is correct . . . the consequences are profoundly disturbing. There is, first, the clear implication in Mr Ulrich's evidence that the curriculum of a school would have to reach a point of near collapse before the Department would advise the Secretary of State that he may use the powers allocated to him'.

### **2. Curriculum and Examination**

The quality of education must, of course, depend upon the kind of curriculum offered — although this, in turn, will depend upon the resources provided and the teachers available. But changes are taking place in the curriculum which those who care for the quality of education must watch with care. Effects of expenditure policy upon the curriculum might be summarised as follows:

- a. a limitation of necessary materials and equipment in the practical areas and in the arts;
- b. a narrowing of the subjects and of the experience offered — in, for example, music, design and technology, and in field studies of different kinds;
- c. restriction of desirable curriculum developments, especially with the 4th and 5th year low achieving group in secondary schools;
- d. less remedial help;
- e. a mismatch between curriculum needs and the qualifications of teachers.

This again, however, can be interpreted as something more than the unfortunate effect of cuts. Rather might it be seen as an important shift in educational thinking. First, in the increasingly influential role of the central administration upon the curriculum, low priority is

given to the arts and to the humanities. In the DES (1980) *A framework for the school curriculum* these get grudging mention in those additions to the core curriculum (English, mathematics, science, modern languages, religious education, physical education) which come under the heading 'preparation for adult and working life'. They get no mention under 'specific areas of the curriculum' in the later DES (1981) *The School Curriculum*. The arts and the humane studies, giving access as they do to wider cultural values and to the tools for critical reflection, are the most vulnerable parts of the curriculum in an increasingly utilitarian climate which stresses the importance of practical skills and relevance to the world of work. Secondly, however, such a curriculum shift, affecting all but the academic few, will but underline the divide between the able pupils and the rest — further evidence of that receding vision of secondary education for all. There is little evidence, in the proposals for a balanced curriculum put to the Headmasters Conference, of useful skills or relevance to the world of work.

On the other hand, there is a paradox here, for with good reason those who support the comprehensive ideal might criticise the disdain with which the practical and the useful have been viewed within the traditional secondary school curriculum. In examining critically the quality of the curriculum offered one might willingly endorse the evidence of the RSA to the Select Committee (Vol.III p.626):

'We consider that there exists in its own right a culture which is concerned with doing, making and organising. This culture emphasises craftsmanship and the making of useful artifacts; the design, manufacture and marketing of goods and services, specialist occupations with an active mode of work; the creative arts; and the day to day management of affairs'.

But this requires a shift in educational philosophy throughout the social and the ability range and proper support for the development of the practical arts and craftsmanship.

The dangers I speak of are particularly apparent in the age group 16 to 19 where the academically able will remain within the responsibility of education authorities and pursue a relatively narrow subject based and theoretical set of studies, but where the 'middle ground' will increasingly become the province of MSC initiated and controlled courses concentrating upon training rather than education, upon skills rather than knowledge, upon practice rather than theory. Already we see this development in the rather trivial social and life skills courses in which pupils are trained to perform socially but not educated to question the social values underpinning that social training.

### 3. Accountability

The surface context, of course, for these threats to the quality of education is that of shortage of public money, and a rather simplistic concern for standards. There is no evidence that standards are falling or indeed that teachers are, by and large, any less professionally efficient than any other professionals. On the contrary, one could argue that, insofar as they are measurable, the performance of pupils in a range of curriculum areas demonstrates an all round improvement in standards. Nonetheless, the cost effectiveness of the maintained

sector (i.e. whether or not we get value for money) and the concern for standards are powerful forces for making the work of schools more accountable.

This must be a matter of anxiety to those who are concerned with the improvement of quality, and it needs to be monitored carefully at both national and local levels. For experience shows, particularly in the United States, that if you get your mode of accounting wrong it will have a harmful effect upon the quality of schooling. Test scores, insensitive to the complex reality being tested, especially to the different kinds of pupils within different schools, will increasingly do an injustice to individual schools in the comparisons that will be based on those test scores. Furthermore, they can so easily lead to a narrowing of the curriculum.

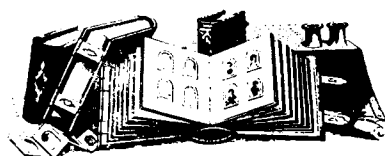
Equally significant, however, is the audience — those for whom the accounts are designed and who, if properly aware of the pitfalls of rendering an account, can protect the schools against the worst excesses. As the Select Committee already referred to explain,

'We are convinced that the involvement of the local community, and especially parents, is the most effective means of ensuring not simply a satisfactory curriculum provision, but also of securing continuities between the values and practices of the schools, the family, and the world of employment'.

One vehicle through which this might be done is the newly reformed governing bodies, and priority should be given by local CASE groups to ensuring that these become effective, well informed bodies, making cruder forms of accountability unnecessary.

### Conclusion

The quality of state financed education is indeed being threatened, not mainly by lack of resources (though that is serious enough), but by the withdrawal of support, the failure of confidence (however misplaced), the determined pursuit of privatisation. Cuts are but symptomatic of this more significant development, and must be seen as such if the steady improvement in the quality of education is not to be reversed. Those, therefore, who are concerned with advancing the quality of education within the maintained sector need to monitor these developments carefully — the cuts, privatisation, curriculum change, provision for the 16-19, local testing — and to protest loudly because soon it may be too late.



# More on Giftedness

## 'Giftedness' — Myth or Reality?

### A response to Caroline Benn

In her articles 'The Myth of Giftedness' (*Forum*, spring and summer, 1982), Caroline Benn argues that the concept of 'giftedness' has been developed since 1966 as a reaction against the trend to comprehensive education. Her thesis is that middle-class parents, indoctrinated by the Right-wing press, have found in giftedness a respectable excuse for sending their children to private schools; or for demanding extra attention, express classes, streaming and extra resources in a comprehensive school. Giftedness, which cannot actually exist since no one can define it precisely, she maintains, is simply a covert way of returning to the discredited system of selection by intelligence tests at 11+. Worse, indeed, since the 11+ was at least objective and fair whereas the new form of educational advantage is gained by the know-how of the pushy parent, manipulating the system of parental choice and armed by the educational psychologist's evidence that their child is 'gifted'.

It is a salutary experience for anyone who has been involved in the work of an organisation like the National Association for Gifted Children to read Caroline Benn's article. It makes you realise how it is possible for a highly intelligent (I might have said 'gifted' but the word apparently has no meaning) person to look in on your activities from the outside and twist what you are doing to fit in to a politically-motivated picture of the educational world. One has to concede that some of the extracts from which she quotes depict NAGC in an unfavourable light and we have failed to project our purposes clearly enough. There can also be no doubt that the motives of our members are mixed: there are perhaps some who do seek to gain a personal advantage for their own child, who want to dress these geese up as swans, who do want to impress the neighbours, who do get vicarious satisfaction from the labelled achievements of their rather ordinary children; no doubt there are others who are genuinely worried about the suitability of the education offered in their local comprehensive school; no doubt there are many differing political and philosophical attitudes among the membership of NAGC but after all, even long-established political parties have not found it easy in the last two years to maintain unity of outlook.

It is less acceptable to find that Caroline Benn has chosen her extracts to give a deliberately distorted picture of the work of those involved in the 'gifted movement'. Although she quotes Lord James, formerly High Master of Manchester Grammar School, arguing for certain highly academic schools to be retained as centres of

excellence, she does not quote another well-known Headmaster of a public school, (John Rae of Westminster School) when he wrote in the *Guardian*: 'It is nonsense to suggest that a private school is by definition the right place to send a bright child. There are private schools as well as maintained ones that cannot develop the potential of their most able pupils'. Although she refers to the work of Joan Freeman to substantiate her point that 'gifted children' are really only a product of the middle-class parental dream, she overlooks that fact that the same writer specifically condemned the Assisted Places scheme in her *Guardian* article of July 1979. She alleges that the Assisted Places scheme is another machiavellian product of the 'gifted movement' but does not mention that an article published in the *Journal of the Gifted Child*, winter 1980 argued the case very strongly against the scheme and that the NAGC Council never gave its approval to the scheme, preferring to retain its position of neutrality on this issue and to continue to argue for proper provision in both the maintained and private sectors.

Enough quibbling! Let me now try to state as clearly and precisely as possible what a lot of members of the 'gifted movement' actually believe and want to see happen. We believe that children are not all the same; for reasons both of heredity and environment, some have handicaps and some have talents which others do not have; we believe that it is our professional responsibility to provide for them all an education 'appropriate to their age, ability and aptitude'. We believe that the best context for a child's education is in the local primary school and the local secondary school near his home, where he can be part of the friendship groups of his free time.

We would go on to express the wish that the education given within those schools should be appropriate. Much valuable work has been done in studying the needs of those who have learning difficulties and great strides made in helping the handicapped. We would not wish to see that work reduced, nor would we imply that the needs of the very able are as acute. We would however go on to say that, if schools are to fulfil their proper obligation to all pupils, further research and attention need to be paid to the education of the most able.

Our approach would have three main objectives:

a. to increase the awareness among teachers of the differing ways in which talent and ability can be detected in young people; to train them to be more perceptive, to look beyond the stereotype of the 'neat, hard-working, pleasant-looking child of middle-class parents' and to encourage whatever talent they can find in all children.

b. to create the individualised teaching materials which may be necessary to develop specific talent to the full and to train teachers in how to teach to the individual rather than the group. Creation of teaching materials is a highly time-consuming task, beyond the imagination and capacity of many teachers fully engaged by the normal routine of their work; some secondment of teachers to do this work would bring rich returns in terms of curriculum development at a relatively low cost.

c. to stimulate discussion about the best ways of structuring the school so as to allow maximum flexibility for children with special needs and abilities. Mrs Benn's assertion that

'streaming = privilege for the gifted and is bad' whereas 'mixed-ability = true comprehensive schooling and is good' is a gross oversimplification. What is needed is wide-ranging experimentation in flexible grouping (e.g. withdrawal of a group for part of a lesson, individuals working alone instead of in a class, differential acceleration for pupils talented in specific areas).

Research and in-service training along these lines would certainly cost some money but it would be money very well spent, not only for the able children but for all pupils. It is frequently found by advisers and others engaged in in-service training that the discipline of focusing attention on one type of child increases teachers' general awareness of the needs of all their pupils. Programmes and activities devised for the very able may indeed be applicable to a wide range of children, as Mrs Benn hopes, but unless we do the necessary groundwork on the very able, we may never find out.

Much work of this kind is going on and Mrs Benn pays scant attention to the breadth of activities of those working through the NAGC and through LEA and University schemes. Far from being obsessed, as she suggests, with narrow subject-specialism, much is being done to develop inter-disciplinary skills, problem-solving techniques, creative and artistic talents, social and inter-personal gifts. It is happening in school time and outside; on Saturdays at Explorer Clubs, in holiday-courses and in a wide variety of settings. NAGC activities in particular are not restricted to the comfortable Surrey suburbs but special support is given in the East End of London, in Birmingham, Newcastle and Liverpool, for example.

All this is being done, not to create a master-race of super-intellectuals to run our country (although some of the statements of NAGC people could regrettably be interpreted in that way by those with a mind to do so), but to enrich the experience of those children who, through no fault of their own, have been born with unusual gifts in one or a number of fields. Society will ultimately benefit from their skills and the creation of a sense of wider social responsibility is very much to the fore in what NAGC tries to do. Of course we would agree with Mrs Benn that democracy depends not on a highly educated élite but on a well-educated population as a whole. Only in that way can society be protected from the slogan-mongering demagogues of both Left and Right.

Perhaps the saddest effect of Caroline Benn's article is to polarise education even more strongly on party political lines. The formula 'Conservatives = protection of the privileged = elitism = private education' and 'Labour = protection of the masses = comprehensive education = mixed-ability teaching' is unworthy and unfair to educationalists on both ends of the political spectrum. The more often this polarisation is reinforced by views like those of Caroline Benn, the more apparent it becomes that the space between the two extremes, a position of genuine commitment to the best education for all, must be filled. Who could do that, I wonder?

Peter Downes  
Headmaster, Hinchbrook School,  
Huntingdon

## Caroline Benn replies:

Peter Downes' comment is largely taken up with his own views on giftedness rather than with answering the criticism made in my two articles, namely, that the British giftedness movement allows giftedness to be used to perpetuate both overt and covert academic selection within the formal education system. Consequently, he does not discuss the problems this use poses for comprehensive education.

Let me summarise our argument, therefore, by saying that there are two, if not three, classical definitions of giftedness, not just one. The first assumes that practically all of us have one or more special talents, and that one of the jobs of formal education is to be aware of the *variety* of gifts children can have, and seek to develop these. The second definition presupposes that only a few of us have special talent and that education's job is to *select* those who have it, and seek to develop it.

The first definition is manifestly more compatible with comprehensive education than the second. Yet the British giftedness movement deals with both types as if they were one and the same, and does not acknowledge therefore, the contradictions which arise, including those which come from having to 'square' giftedness practice based on the second definition, with comprehensive education.

Some of those 'squaring' problems are illustrated when Peter Downes speaks of the comprehensive school's 'obligation . . . for all pupils' in the very same sentence as he speaks of the necessity to give 'further attention' to the 'most able'.

1. Most 'able' in what?

a) sport, expressive art, social skill, craftwork, or academic subjects which will eventually be examined by the GCE boards?

b) if more than GCE, how can the practice of selection for giftedness programmes in formal education by likelihood of GCE success or IQ alone, be justified?

c) if only GCE subjects, who so limited?

2. How many is 'most able'?

a) All those in GCE classes (or likely to be)?

b) If larger, how much larger a group?

c) If smaller, how much smaller?

3. What 'further education' is it that the gifted require in the formal education system to realise their gifts?

(a) extra curricular work? (b) extra work in unstreamed groups? (c) separation in top sets? (d) or in a top stream? (e) or in an express stream? (f) or in grammar or specialist schools alongside comprehensives? (g) or in private schools through schemes like assisted places? (h) or in private schools without such schemes?

4. Within — or without — comprehensive education, who decides who and how many the 'most able' are to be, and what methods are to be used for selecting, organising, paying for, and teaching them?

5. How are these methods to be assessed both on behalf of those designated gifted and those not so selected?

Giftedness programmes in formal education at secondary level in Britain are

almost invariably about giftedness of the kind which only a 'few' have. The field is almost always limited to academic subjects in the GCE curriculum. Pupils are almost always selected by likely good performance in GCE or by IQ tests. Cut-off points for programmes differ dramatically. The 11+, assisted places, streaming, private schooling, and express streaming are all regularly and widely advocated — by members of the giftedness movement as well as by others — as necessary for the survival of giftedness programmes.

Questions raised by this de facto situation include whether giftedness used to justify the 11+ or assisted places or private schooling are not sometimes arguments to preserve these practices or institutions rather than arguments for giftedness? Whether giftedness programmes pre-set to select 0.5 per cent of the age group as against twenty per cent can really be talking about the same talent, and might not be adjusting the definition of giftedness in ways that are convenient for other reasons? Whether we can always be sure that resources, including teacher time, materials and expenditure for separated schooling — but also for certain forms of separation inside comprehensive schools — might not divert resources from the majority who are not designated as gifted, in a way that deprives this majority of rightful attention or choice in their own education?

Unfortunately, it is much easier to avoid discussion of such questions by suggesting questioners read the views of a public school headmaster who denounces private-education-with-assisted-places in favour of private education without them. Or by implying that giftedness campaigners are always neutral, have no political opinions, and are always purely educational in their interest, while those who pose questions to them are twisters, politically motivated, and hardly likely to have a genuine interest in education. Or, when a researcher's work is cited showing that the majority of gifted children on the UK gifted books are drawn from professional class homes, suggesting we read what this person had to say on another matter in another publication. As if, somehow, this answered the question of why, so often, gifted children turn out to be disproportionately white, middle class and male, and what implications this has for giftedness programmes in comprehensive education.

My two articles raised real questions, which, to judge from the correspondence and comment I have received — including from HMIs and members of the giftedness movement itself — many believe have long needed raising. It simply is not good enough to side step almost every one by asking me to answer arguments I never made, or alternatively, chiding me for failing to make arguments the giftedness movement would prefer me to have made instead.

It is not good enough either for giftedness campaigners to deplore in the pages of *Forum* the way giftedness can be misused for racist ends. They need to stand up and be counted in the columns and on the screens of the mass media when and where such arguments are being put.

Nothing is easier than to say giftedness must be forwarded in formal education. We will all agree wholeheartedly. But in practice it is often the case that giftedness education turns out to be the old familiar 11+ or one of its newer substitutes, and even where it is

forwarded — as we would all want it to be — within the comprehensive context, it is often very difficult to give that 'further attention . . . to the most able' (even if we could agree who they are, which we cannot) without depriving the majority of attention they have an equal right to have.

How to do justice to each child's talents in ways that do not draw unwanted, or unintended, results, is always a problem for comprehensive education. I've not the least doubt that in practice Peter Downes wants to solve it as much as anyone else, and I wish him success in his efforts. But the giftedness movement, which he also chooses to defend, cannot go on forever without recognising the contradictions within itself, and allowing the necessary debate to surface between those who want to use the movement as a recruiting sergeant for selection, and possibly also privilege, and those who recognise that giftedness-for-the-few poses real problems for comprehensive education which need to be fully admitted and discussed, and in so doing, perhaps to press much more fully the claims of giftedness programmes based on the first definition which assumes we could all have some gift, and exploring what these would mean for the possible benefit of **all** pupils, not just the few.





# Youth Training Service: What Now?

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Joan Simon here updates her article 'Agenda for Action', on the Manpower Services Commission, in the last number of **Forum**.

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From the New Training Initiative, launched in the better days of the Manpower Services Commission, a misshapen offspring is emerging — the Youth Training Service (YTS) bearing the mark of Norman Tebbit, Employment Secretary.

The outlines of his scheme daily become clearer. Already the declared aim is to drive all school leavers without HE or FE places across 'a permanent bridge between school and work' placing them at the disposal of employers to whom funds are directly channelled by MSC leaving education on the sidelines as humble servicer of the plans of others.

To this end destruction of positive aspects of training continues. The decline in recruitment to apprenticeship, with its hardwon standards, accelerates. UVP schemes suffer severely from abolition of Industrial Training Boards whose loss also greatly impoverishes the work of the Careers Service.

Small wonder that explanation of what is going on has been lacking, as careers teachers in schools complain.

A new central Youth Training Board is in being, appointed with minimum consultation, shorn of outspoken critics, presided over by MSC chairman George Young, Tebbit's poodle. As for the expert educational advisory body promised, it is headed by a personnel officer. Why not? Since the MSC is not going to lay down any prescriptive rules to safeguard the educational content of training!

According to an ousted critic, representing Youthaid, most of the £1 billion trumpeted as generous aid to education will be soaked up by trainee allowances (effectively a transfer from the unemployment account) so the move to dock the meagre £25 allowance will doubtless be revived — as an integral aspect of the general attack on wages.

As the project of an administration devoted to rolling back the frontiers of the state, and expenditure of public money, the scheme cries out for criticism. Employers are simply to be handed £1,850 for each school leaver taken on, with the sole requirement to pay over the scheduled allowance and allow 13 weeks off work for training. Indeed so desperate is the search for sponsors that five full allowances are offered for every three leavers taken on, to pay for normal recruits as well.

On the other hand there are no plans to channel back the value of goods and services youngsters produce, e.g. into a training fund. Who, then, profits?

And what, meanwhile, have the education ministers been about? Just whistling in the dark, one extolling vouchers, the other the virtue of hitting children with canes.

## POSTSCRIPT — November 1982

Clandestine activity by the Secretary of State for Education and Science, in collusion with the MSC chairman but to the exclusion of the local authorities if not also his own civil servants, came to light on 12 November. By this means a toe was at last inserted in the door of the latest MSC plan. 'A new imperialist drive downwards into the secondary school', in the words of a *TES* leading article, this requires provision of 10,000 full-time places from age 14 in ten selected areas by September 1983 when the YTS scheme is also scheduled to start.

A manifestly stagemanaged launch, of plans long under consideration, was veiled by a veneer of parliamentarianism. A question put to the prime minister, by van Straubenzee, asked if she were satisfied with technical and vocational education — predictably the answer was 'no' — and 'if she will make a statement'. Thatcher's carefully formulated reply was that she had asked the MSC chairman and the Secretaries of State concerned 'to develop a pilot scheme . . . for new institutional arrangements . . . for 14-18 year olds, within existing financial resources' and 'where possible' — an unveiled threat direct from the Tebbit stable — 'in association with Local Education Authorities'.

If Keith Joseph had staved off unbridled imperialism — which envisaged the MSC going it alone and still does should LEAs not deliver the required goods — he had nothing to offer angry chairmen of local authority associations but a meeting to listen to MSC dictates. Acceptable projects must aim to 'attract young people from a wide range of ability', be interconnected with projects for 'the least academic pupils', YTS and so on, and relate to 'prospective labour market opportunities'; including those in the 'local labour market', a proviso likely to evoke some hollow laughter. In each area housing a project a steering team — representing industry, commerce, education, the local community — will be established, also a local management body. Funding will be worked out by a national management team. The personnel of the national steering group of this New Technical Training Initiative presided over by the MSC chairman will be appointed by December, LEA projects are due in by Christmas, ten will be selected before the end of January, local administration will be appointed by February and funding allotted by March.

As for objections to the way of launching the plan, any other would have taken too long. Meanwhile 'every year that passes brings still more young people unprepared for the world of work on to the job market' — a statement which, in all the present circumstances, seems as much out of touch with the realities of life as the comments of the most absent minded academic. What, then, lies behind the surface words?

Some LEAs have proposed boycotting a plan, held to contravene legislation and lack parliamentary authority, suspecting an intention to introduce 14+ selection of a kind for separate 'training' and 'educational'

(Continued on page 61)



# OBITUARY

## Lawrence Stenhouse

With the premature death of Lawrence Stenhouse, in September last year, the world of education has lost one of the most creative thinkers and actors who have operated in this field in recent years. Lawrence was, in fact, at the very height of his powers when cancer struck him roughly a year earlier, but even over the last year up to about a month before the end he was lecturing abroad and all over this country; for instance he gave the main lecture at the Goldsmith's College March education conference — an annual event. This was a fascinating talk, since published, built around 'one of my heroes, Hartvig Nissen', a Norwegian educational reformer who, according to Lawrence, 'founded the Norwegian comprehensive school by turning the primary school comprehensive in 1860'.

Lawrence's writings, in the field of curriculum in particular, are well known and legion. The *Times Educational Supplement* recently carried a review of his *Teaching about Race Relations* by Peter Newsam, published a couple of weeks after his death. Newsam finishes his review by saying that 'the thoughtfulness of (his) approach reminds us how much he will be missed'. 'Like anything else to which Lawrence Stenhouse put

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(Continued from page 60)

institutions — so relegating local authority responsibilities to the 3-13 age range. Others are readily producing plans. On the other hand the whole hotch-potch has been ruled aside by the Scottish Education Minister, Alex Fletcher, who combines responsibility for both industry and education in one portfolio and has plans to ensure that new third and fourth year school courses lead in at appropriate levels to all available routes outside and inside schools. A pointer here to the relevance of combining education and training in a single ministry in England as proposed by Labour.

Most informed critics would prefer the many existing courses carefully designed for the 14+ age group to 'a national initiative very much shaped by political and bureaucratic ambitions', observed an editorial in the *Times Higher Education Supplement* — under the heading 'Mr Tebbit's worker-pupils' (19.11.82) — and take leave to doubt that the latter would foster professional and technical cadres as intended. What new technologies alert us to is the need for flexibility and adaptability and these depend on a sound general education, even if a significant technical component is desirable. Mr Tebbit's 14 year olds would be offered an 'impoverished education' inadequate to ensure either 'the social autonomy that is their right as citizens' or 'the economic adaptability that is their duty, and safeguard, as workers'.

his hand, the book has a reflective air about it. The argument stops, examines itself, goes scrupulously into detail, becomes a little confused, admits it, then moves in its leisurely way'.

This catches Lawrence's approach very closely. And not only in his writing but in his relations with people, and especially in his teaching. For several years now I have had the opportunity of regularly visiting the Centre for Applied Research in Education at the University of East Anglia. Housed in a couple of temporary Nissen type huts (until this year), the group that Lawrence headed (including Jean Rudduck, Barry Macdonald, and originally John Elliott — the only full-time staff), as well as carrying out a mass of research of a new type, taught groups of practising teachers on a specially designed and certainly pioneering school and classroom based MA course; one where the students were encouraged to study and research their own schools or institutions. It is difficult to convey the warm sense of relationships that permeates CARE; the atmosphere of shared exploration into new territories; the careful encouragement in building the students own confidence in their independent research and judgement; the degree of involvement of staff with students, and of respect on both sides. Lawrence in particular was concerned to develop a high sense of professionalism, and especially to promote the idea of the reflective teacher, examining his or her own experience, capable of utilising appropriate research techniques — particularly but not exclusively of the case study variety. But overall it is the high level of seriousness (which did not exclude a lot of fun) with which educational issues were tackled, together with the warmth of relationships, that remains most clearly in my mind. At CARE, Lawrence, Jean Rudduck and their colleagues — primarily a research unit — created a remarkable, and certainly unique, institution; one that was educational in the full sense of the word. The specific character of this work is now so well known and established, and in so many ways now disseminated elsewhere, that there is no doubt that Lawrence's pioneering work and approach will be developed by many in the years to come.

Lawrence once spoke at a **Forum** conference, several years ago, in London. I remember being somewhat concerned, as people tramped in, as to whether he would get there in time (from Scotland). He did, explaining that he had batted down the M1 at 80 mph and apparently turned over, but had come to no harm. This, I came to realise, was characteristic of him. Lawrence had an immense appetite for life, packing an enormous amount in. A few years ago he was very seriously ill with heart trouble; but after he recovered if anything he redoubled his energies and activities. When he died he had a whole number of projects under way — yet others in the pipeline. There are plans to complete some of his unfinished works, and to produce material relating to Lawrence's life and work. So his influence is bound to be increasingly felt in the years ahead.

This is as it should be. In the present climate it is of the utmost importance that Lawrence's questioning and reflective approach should fertilise the world of schools and education. This would be the best counter to the current Philistinism now so aggressively striving for dominance.

Brian Simon

# Reviews



## Dishonest — or naive?

**Tony Crosland** by Susan Crosland. Jonathan Cape (1982), £10.95 hardback.

Interesting light is thrown on Tony Crosland's period as Secretary of State for Education by Susan Crosland's recently-published and much-acclaimed biography of her late husband.

Tony Crosland moved to the Department of Education and Science in January 1965 — becoming at forty six the youngest member of the Cabinet — after a brief spell as George Brown's No.2 at the Department of Economic Affairs. 'If it's the last thing I do, I'm going to destroy every fucking grammar school in England', he exclaimed to his new wife late one evening. 'And Wales. And Northern Ireland'. Admittedly, a rather bombastic approach to one of the great and sensitive issues of the day but understandable, perhaps, in the light of the obtuseness of those who persistently argued that the continued existence of grammar schools did not affect comprehensives.

Yet the instrument chosen to achieve Crosland's great objective proved to be singularly clumsy and inept. The Labour Government made the early decision not to legislate on the issue of secondary-school reorganisation. This was partly because the Government had such a small majority; partly because of a general feeling that most local authorities would reorganise if simply given the chance to do so. Tony Crosland inherited a draft circular from Michael Stewart, his predecessor at the DES, which formed the basis of Circular 10/65, notable, in Susan Crosland's words, 'for its realism and flexibility' — though not, one might add, for its swaying power with recalcitrant authorities.

Crosland had to decide whether to 'require' or 'request' education authorities to go comprehensive. Interestingly, his Minister of State, Reg Prentice, wanted to go for the tougher word — 'require'. Crosland finally opted for 'request'.

As with comprehensive reorganisation, so with the future of the public schools. Three years earlier Crosland had written in *The Conservative Enemy* that a Labour Government must give high priority to the reform of the public schools. Once in office, he told a young journalist brought along by friends for an after-dinner drink one weekend: 'I'm not frightfully interested in the public schools'. Quite simply, he could not see how to reform the public schools in 1965,

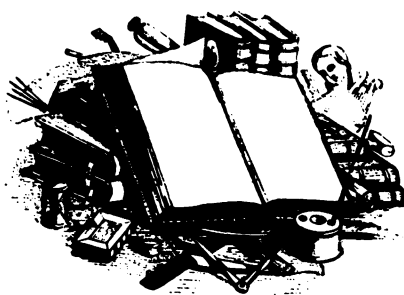
so he set up the Public Schools Commission 'to advise on the best way of integrating the public schools with the state system of education'.

Susan Crosland candidly admits that her husband alienated many of those who had read his books and admired his analysis. They wanted to rally round, but he didn't present himself to be 'rallied round'. He fastened on whatever long-existing social problem had just been discovered by the left-wing intelligentsia and he mocked them for over-simplifying the cure.

Experience of high office made Crosland very much aware of all the problems facing a reforming government. He cultivated a veneer of world-weary cynicism to cope with his own sense of frustration or impotence. He tried to persuade his followers that the state sector could be strengthened so that it could match all but the most prestigious fee-paying establishments. 'Once the state system is strong enough to compete, if parents want to send their children to some inferior fee-paying school for purely snobbish reasons, that's their affair. Why should they be denied the freedom to spend their money buttressing their egos if that's what they want?'

To make such a statement in 1965, one would have to be either intellectually dishonest or incredibly naive. Tony Crosland wasn't naive.

CLYDE CHITTY



## Guidance systems

**Planned Pastoral Care: A guide for teachers** by J.B. McGuiness. McGraw-Hill (1982), £5.25 paperback.

Schools are responsible for the social, emotional and academic development of children across the full ability range. The school context makes it impossible for academic and socio-emotional objectives to be pursued separately. The term 'guidance' refers to a stated intention and developed strategy to help each child maximise his academic, vocational, social and emotional talents to the full. The single most influential factor in a child's school performance is the home. These are the assumptions made by the author of this small, easily read book on pastoral care.

Many of the problems which occur in school which eventually require 'remedial' responses from the school can be pre-empted, and guidance therefore needs to be preventative rather than remedial. Teachers need to have a full understanding of adolescents and to prepare a curriculum across the whole adolescent potential, not simply in the area of academic skill. Pastoral care in school stands or falls on the care with which the curriculum is constructed and monitored and thus we need to examine the content of courses, teaching methods and structures within which the teaching occurs and the organisation and administration which facilitates the teaching activity.

Despite the argument that pastoral care is most effective when it focuses on problem prevention, some pupils will have difficulties coping with school life. A vital part of any guidance system must be a capacity for individualising pupils, and in large organisations this must be planned if it is to happen.

The keeping of records is important as an aid to individualising pupils and permitting intelligent decision-making on their behalf. The author gives some practical ideas about record-keeping and raises by case studies some important issues.

Counselling has an important role to play in school guidance. It is a highly skilled activity and teachers need to develop their counselling skills beyond the provision of mere 'support' strategies. However pupils should not become dependent on counselling but learn to take full responsibility for themselves: counselling should prepare them to take decisions. Decision making skills ought to be at the heart of our educational efforts. Awareness of decision making, analysis of the process and practice of it, are

essential ingredients in training children.

Evaluation must take place if pastoral care is to merit the status it has been accorded in recent education surveys. The author suggests ten key issues which need to be evaluated and maps out in detail the procedures for doing this.

The Inspectorate stated in 'Curriculum 11-16' that no pastoral system can function satisfactorily divorced from the working life of the school: An analysis of the curriculum in the eighties must involve a consideration of the needs of the pupils if they are to survive and prosper as adults. In that context pastoral provision must infuse the whole school and underpin its curricular thinking.

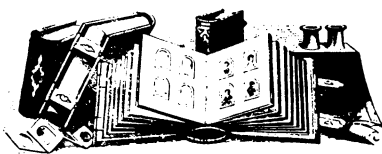
ANN G. HEAPS  
*Earl Shilton Community College*

11-18 comprehensive school situated in inner Liverpool which illustrates two of the major issues facing the education system in the 1980s: falling rolls and youth unemployment.

The excellent set book which accompanies the blocks (which was not reviewed in *Forum* when it first appeared in 1980) is *Approaches to School Management*, edited by T. Bush, R. Glatter, J. Goodey and C. Riches, and published by Harper and Row in association with The Open University Press.

The address to write to for the purchase of Open University materials is: Open University Educational Enterprises Ltd., 12 Cofferidge Close, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes, MK11 1BY.

CLYDE CHITTY



## School Management

*Management and the School*, The Open University E323 Blocks 1-8 (1981).

Some of the most impressive educational books and documents around at the moment are those produced by the Open University. Among these, one particular set of booklets, recently published, deserves special mention: the eight blocks of main texts produced for course E323 under the general title 'Management and the School'.

From all sides we hear nowadays of the importance of good management for the successful operation of educational institutions. The title of Cyril Poster's latest book, for example (to be reviewed in the next issue of *Forum*) is *Community Education: its Development and Management*.

Yet, too often, there has been a tendency to divorce theory and concept from what really happens in the day-to-day running of schools. Some would even welcome the application of the principles of scientific management to school administration along lines pioneered in the USA where educational questions are often subordinated to business considerations.

One of the most attractive features of the Open University material is that the writers have avoided placing theory and practice in separate compartments; rather, the aim has been to fuse them at every point. Having introduced readers to the basic concepts and processes of educational management, the booklets move on to apply these to real situations in primary and secondary schools. The learning process is not forgotten while different aspects of 'management theory' are being discussed.

The issues covered by the blocks include: processes of leadership, decision-making, communication and evaluation; the management of curricular and pastoral provision; the role of the head and deputy head(s) as the senior managers in schools; and the management of teaching and non-teaching staff. Block 7 is a particularly interesting case-study of a split-site, mixed

## An extreme act?

*Disruptive Pupils in Schools and Units* by Delwyn Tattum. John Wiley and Sons (1982), £13.95.

Delwyn Tattum focuses attention on topics which are of inevitable concern to all those involved in the education of young people, whether they be teachers or policymakers. The book is well organised, containing clear definitions, analysis of the present situation and valuable recommendations.

The beginning of the book is dense and quite theoretical but an important prelude in that his approach and its justification are explained and definitions of other possible standpoints are given with reasons for rejection. Tattum works within the tradition of symbolic interactionism. Used as a tool for analysis of the disruptive pupil in his/her social context, this approach is appropriate and fruitful. He focuses on the role the observer has in the definition of a disruptive pupil and shows how this definition is a social label, which can vary not only from school to school but from teacher to teacher.

The author makes use of recent research to show that the number of pupils who create disruption for teachers is small and asks whether there has been an over-reaction to the actual figures, particularly in the creation of a new educational category which the setting up of units necessarily implies. He is keen to impress on the reader that though this may be the case, it does not detract from the fact that confrontations which do develop are real enough and while not wishing to minimise the difficulties faced by teachers, takes a positive attitude and looks for solutions and makes recommendations. He also appreciates the difficult position of schools in a pluralistic society.

In the chapter headed *Vocabulary of Motives*, Tattum pursues the useful line of looking at the disruptive's interpretation of the school scenario, and shows how pupils

generally explain their behaviour as a response to a problem situation. He argues that the disruptive pupil tends to define his actions within the terms used by those in authority in the school. He does not perhaps place enough emphasis on the fact that some of these pupils, while understanding the dominant culture of the school, have an alternative value system outside the school, even though they may not be very articulate about it. The fact that these pupils are at the negative pole of a continuum of indiscipline is a point all in the profession would do well to remember. The importance of Tattum's discussion of rules cannot be stressed enough for any teacher working in the comprehensive system.

In his thought-provoking analysis of the origins, purpose and workings of rules in the comprehensive, he explores the problems which can arise when rules are created for the smooth running of an institution, and how this can be de-personalising for those who are part of it. He recommends that all who make up a community should have an opportunity to take part in the rule-making process, if they are to have a stake in it. He also looks at the disciplinary nature of many pastoral care systems.

The position of units is discussed. Tattum regards their creation as 'an extreme act' by LEA's. He argues that because they have usually been set up in an ad hoc fashion, there is no national policy or consensus of function. He believes that their existence reinforces the position many schools adopt in publicly stigmatising the non-conforming pupil and absolving themselves of responsibility for their part in the development of 'deviant careers'. This is particularly the case with off-site units because of their isolation and the frequent finality of referrals.

In his account of an on-site unit, Tattum shows how the school thus takes responsibility for its disruptive pupils. The full involvement of the staff occurred and problems were commonly resolved. Referral meetings were a useful forum for general discussion of disruption and teachers' approaches to it.

Discussing off-site units, the author indicates how the referral system prevents pupils' successes being highlighted. He also focuses on the vitally important topics of the isolation experienced by off-site unit teachers, the multiple demands placed on them, the poor career structure and frequent lack of resources.

He shows how while he saw little of a radical nature in approaches, units were not experiencing problems with pupil attendance and discipline such as those of the main schools. He could have perhaps explored in more depth how units deal with discipline from day to day, though he does discuss the value of the continuity of relationships and the frequent ability of unit teachers to listen to pupils. Here they are given the opportunity to grow as responsible people.

Tattum suggests there is much happening in units which can be of value to teachers in the mainstream school in the attempt which must be made to take responsibility for and look for solutions to a nationwide problem which the very creation of these units is only serving to mask.

CLAUDIA BEAMISH  
*Oxfordshire*

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