Camden and Frank Barnes School Conference
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EFFECTIVE INCLUSION FOR DEAF CHILDREN

Dr Steve Powers
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High achievers

Jessica

year 12 local mainstream school

studying AS Levels in Biology, Chemistry, Geography, Sports Studies

gained 9 A*-C grades at GCSE

born deaf

hearing loss 106dB

interested in doing medicine
George

year 13 local mainstream school

studying A Levels in Business Studies, Media Studies, Psychology, General Studies

gained 8 A*-C grades at GCSE

born deaf

hearing loss 100dB

plays on the local cricket team

did the Duke of Edinburgh Award at school

has a part-time job at Tesco

says, ‘I’d like to be a management consultant. Apparently there’s loads of money in it!’
Nicole

year 10 in mainstream school with a resource base on the Able and Talented register
gained grade B in GCSE French two years early
born deaf
hearing loss 111dB
taught through SSE
has full time communication support
has two tutorial lessons a week
hopes in the future to do something with fashion and art
‘It is not Government policy to close special schools’

‘The Government has made clear that special schools have an important continuing role to play within the overall pattern of provision…’

‘… Government policy is to promote a continuum of provision’
Ofsted report ‘Does it Matter Where Pupils are Taught?’ 2006

‘..mainstream schools with additionally resourced provision were particularly successful in achieving high outcomes’

‘Pupils in mainstream schools where support from teaching assistants was the main type of provision were less likely to make good academic progress than those who had access to specialist teaching in those schools’
Co-location as a model of inclusion

Burnaby School, British Columbia

• head of school for the deaf co-principal of the combined school

• purpose built accommodation – wider corridors; public address system through TV monitors interpreted and captioned; rounded corners; noise reduction; etc
My brief

• overview of research
• factors promoting inclusion of deaf children
• barriers to inclusion of deaf children
Research literature is disappointing

- eg DEI (2006) 8, 2: special issue on inclusion
- articles about philosophy and policy, pupil attitudes
- nothing in recent journals on strategies for effective inclusion
- nothing on the co-location of a primary school for deaf children
- research is more on secondary aged deaf pupils
Some relevant texts

2. NDCS (2001) My School in Scotland
4. NDCS (2001) Deaf Friendly Schools
5. NDCS (2009) Deaf Friendly Teaching
7. BATOD Magazine – most issues
Index for Inclusion (2002)

- circa 2000 - Birmingham Standards for Inclusion, Manchester Inclusion Standard etc

- 2009 The Welcome Workbook

Problems with these lists:

- size
- it’s something imposed
- ‘no accusatory finger is being raised’!
- ‘lists are guaranteed to lead to disappointment’
- lead us to focus on peripheral issues rather than deeper aspects
Review of Good Practice in Deaf Education (Powers et al, 1999)

Support in mainstream schools:

• two contrasting approaches to support
• aspects of direct support
• joint planning
• involving pupils in decisions
• INSET
• possible dangers with support
Two contrasting approaches

1. emphasis on direct support to pupils by ToDs
2. ToDs had an almost purely advisory role

- *direct* support vs *indirect* support from the ToD
- changing role of ToDs – ToD as a resource to be used by others
- evaluate how well we enable families and schools to do this
Aspects of direct support

- ToDs exercise considerable autonomy
- arrangements are flexible – constantly under review
- widespread use of reverse integration
Joint planning

• ‘We can’t carry out our work without liaison time’

• need regular, positive meetings to plan the role the ToD/TA will play

• planning for non-curricular and social events

• timetabled sessions for regular liaison

• concern about time needed

• some ‘payback’ to mainstream teachers
Involving pupils in decisions about support arrangements

- pupils had negotiated the level and type of support they received
- ‘support’ as one of their curricular options
Some possible dangers of support

- habits of dependency
- a ‘learning behaviour’ section in each pupil’s individual education plan
**My School in Scotland: A Review of Deaf Pupils' Experiences at Mainstream Schools**
(NDCS, 2001)

- mainstream teachers lack deaf awareness
- support staff sit too close
- embarrassed by support staff who have limited signing skills
- want a space for deaf pupils to meet
**Inclusion: What deaf pupils think**
(RNID, 2002)

- not involved in planning how their needs should be met
- tendency for TAs to over-explain things, to be there even when not needed
- noise a recurring theme
- lack of support in some lessons made them hard to follow.
- reasons for liking a subject linked to teacher’s way of teaching
- social inclusion the topic pupils wanted to talk about most
- supply teachers lacked deaf awareness
Some key issues

- Attitudes
- Parents
- Getting the communication right
- Involving pupils
Attitudes

- attitudes are paramount
- key factor is attitude of the specialist teacher
- harnessing the powerful voice of pupils
- internet resources
- attitudes towards ToDs
- attitudes of hearing pupils
Parents

- supportive and encouraging; a positive affective relationship
- give lots of individual attention
- work on language on the early years
- determined
- have high expectations
- 'adaptation to deafness' (acceptance of the deaf child – a positive orientation to the Deaf community).

(Bodner-Johnson, 1986); (Schlesinger, 1992); (Ritter-Brinton, 1993); (Powers, 2006)
‘I think parents are number one, I really do. I think without good parental support and involvement many deaf children underachieve. … When I was told my baby was deaf, I thought it was the end of the world and if somebody had said to me twenty years down the line she’ll be at university doing her degree and the most fantastic young person that I’m so proud of, you know it would have been lovely to have had that crystal ball. But you don’t because the whole life just flashes in front of you when your child’s diagnosed. … I think it’s knowing what I know as a professional and a parent - your child can achieve, can do well.’

*(Jack’s ToD, Powers, 2006)*
‘In my experience *the crucial factor* is parental self-esteem and belief in their own ability to have control over their lives – more important than SES, parents’ educational level or other variables.

*(Luterman, 1999)*
Why do some parents not get involved?

‘The greatest barrier was parents’ views of their role as a teacher and their degree of comfort in communicating with teachers – influenced by their own education experience… and different views on the attribution of responsibility for education – parents had different views on what it was important or even permissible for them to do.’

……continued
...continued

‘Second, parents felt they often did not have the right language to use in discussions with teachers; some felt they lacked social networks and skills, felt they were less well equipped to engage.’

(DCSF Research Report, 2007)
Getting the communication right

An effective communication environment:
• reliance on re-teaching in tutorial settings
• missing out on other pupils’ contributions
• signing skills of staff

Deaf pupils asking for clarification, repetition
Involving pupils

George - ‘I’m allowed to choose what I want’

Dan - ‘She knew exactly what I wanted’

Jack - had problems with his support teacher…‘for about one year I was feeling really depressed… But then I sorted it out – she said she’d back off’

Jodie - ‘In primary school I had an LSA who was by my side for everything. I didn’t need all of that help…To be honest I think she got in the way a bit’
• How to engage younger pupils?

• How to get honest views?
Final remarks