

**VOLUME II**

# **APPENDICES**

## **THE PROBLEMATIC OF PARTNERSHIP IN THE ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

**A thesis presented for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy,  
University of Newcastle upon Tyne**

**By**

**Elizabeth S. Todd**

**25<sup>th</sup> September 2000**

**VOLUME II**  
**APPENDICES**

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**IN THE**  
**ASSESSMENT**  
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# **VOLUME II**

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# Appendix 1: Chronological Account of Project Activities

*The different activities of the project are listed below in chronological order to give a sense of the way it evolved.*

September 1994	Initial project steering group meeting Initial and second meeting at Parent Federation Meeting with deputy head of local special school, whose MEd thesis looked at parental views of statementing Meeting with Pre-school panel Draft parent interview schedule Write to local and national voluntary organisations to request information for parents and to seek interest in named persons
October	Meeting with PEP to discuss intended actions Finalise parent interview schedule Start parent interviews Meeting Parent Federation Start work on Folder Continue writing to local and national voluntary organisations to request information for parents and to seek interest in named persons EP staff meeting: discuss letters to parents re statementing
November	Meeting Parent Federation Many parent interviews Initial meeting with regional parent partnership officers Second project steering group meeting
December	Second meeting with regional parent partnership officers Continue parent interviews DFE Symposium Meeting with trainee EP re parent partnership Telephone some local and national voluntary organisations who responded to our request for information
January 1995	Meeting Parent Federation Continue parent interviews Investigate printing of folder

February	<p>2 day training session on parent partnership and the named person, hosted by Newcastle parent partnership scheme and delivered by the Advisory Centre for Education</p> <p>Continue parent interviews</p> <p>Third project steering group meeting</p> <p>Staff training on Code of Practice for LEA support service</p> <p>Staff meeting discussion about the role of the named person</p> <p>Investigate printing of folder</p>
March	<p>LEA training on Code of Practice for teachers</p> <p>Third meeting with regional parent partnership officers</p> <p>Meeting with parents of children who are partially sighted and who have statements</p> <p>Investigate printing of folder at a different printer - first printer fails to deliver</p> <p>City Challenge awards funds to Parent Federation for a full time post for *? years for their own parent partnership project officer</p>
April	<p>Continue parent interviews</p> <p>Attend international special needs conference in Birmingham</p> <p>Attend special needs training day at Ballumbria University</p> <p>Meet potential supplier of volunteer to be named person, a representative of the local council of churches</p>
May	<p>Meeting Parent Federation</p> <p>Investigate printing of folder</p> <p>Meeting with parents of local school for children with severe learning difficulties</p> <p>Meeting with parents of children who are partially hearing and who have statements</p> <p>Start to plan training for named person</p> <p>Extra meeting with regional parent partnership officers from Newcastle to discuss potential for joint training of named persons</p> <p>Meet with two potential volunteers for named persons</p> <p>Meet with worker at LEA advocacy project</p> <p>Telephone local Scope rep, and CSV, to seek volunteers for named person course</p> <p>Meeting with Children Support East to discuss named persons</p>
June	<p>Meeting Parent Federation, in particular to discuss job specification for Parent Federation parent partnership officer</p> <p>Continue planning training for named person and carry out training, on two days, of 12 (?) named persons</p> <p>Fourth meeting with regional parent partnership officers</p> <p>Twilight training session with teachers of local middle school on ways of working with parents</p> <p>Represent EPs at COSA monitoring group</p>

July	<p>Several meetings Parent Federation to appoint their own parent partnership project officer</p> <p>Fourth project steering group meeting</p> <p>Study day organised by the Association of Educational Psychologists into pupil perspective of the Code of Practice</p> <p>EP staff meeting: discussion about use of named persons</p>
August	<p>Meeting with senior educational psychologist and Parent Federation worker about recent statutory panel, and other issues</p> <p>Meeting between parent partnership officers to exchange documents and decide on next project actions</p>

## **APPENDIX 2: Report on Interviews with 24 Parents written for Newby LEA**

### *Newby Parent Partnership Scheme*

#### **Parent Interviews**

##### **Purpose of parent interviews:**

- 1) to help plan the parent partnership project tasks from the views and needs of the parents themselves
- 2) to help find ways to evaluate the project

##### **Scope of Interviews**

Interviews were semi-structured, and asked parents about the following:

- Their initial reaction to an assessment
- Their views of the statementing process
- The extent to which they felt a partner in the process
- Ideas for improving the process, including views about having a named person
- Their views of the outcome of the process

##### **Summary of Results**

- Most parents had known for a long time about their children's special educational needs
- Most said little about what happened during the assessment. Five parents had very little idea of the assessment
- A third felt the letters were OK
- About a half said they felt a partner in the process
- Most parents remembered giving their views of their child
- A quarter felt the level of information given about the assessment was unsatisfactory, and just under half would have liked more information
- Just under half the parents would have liked a named person, and a similar number would have attended a support group
- Two thirds were satisfied with the outcome of the provision, but over half of these still had major reservations about their child's educational provision
- Half the parents felt the assessment had come at the right time, but just less than half felt it should have happened sooner
- Half the parents felt the time taken by the assessment was unsatisfactory, and half felt time taken was satisfactory. Views about time taken bore little correlation to actual

time taken, and seemed to be a more general complaint about it taking a long time for someone to give their child help.

- A third of the parents (8) felt the reports were satisfactory

**Sample**

We wanted to select parents who had been through the formal assessment process, who could remember the process and talk about their views of what had happened. Therefore we wanted a period long enough to provide a sample that was as representative as possible of the total group of parents who have children with statements but short enough for the parents to remember the process.

A random sample of parents whose child had received a statement during the previous eight months was arrived at by selecting every fifth child from a list of children in chronological order of statement, giving a sample size of 41 out of a possible 208 statements for the year. In fact we interviewed 24 parents, 12%, since as the project gathered momentum, other tasks, such as visiting parent groups, assumed more importance, leaving little time for interviewing. After 20 parents had been interviewed, the results seemed to suggest that the full range of views had been elicited. The extent to which views were representative of the total would be impossible to state with accuracy whether we interviewed 24 or 40, and 24 seemed to provide us with enough information to inform discussion of project priorities. Due to time constraints, parents interviewed were those contactable by telephone, omitting those who either did not possess a telephone or those who were ex-directory. It is difficult to say the effect of this on the results.

The children's ages ranged from 5 to 16 and they attended the following types of school:

Type of Provision	Number of pupils
Mainstream plus support:	
Primary	9
Primary plus day tutorial unit	3
Regent Farm Unit for visual impairment	1
Secondary plus support	3
Special school	
Rowan	4
Northview	4

The sample included the following types of assessments:

Assessment Type	Number
5	15
9	4
12	4
Amendment	1
Full reassessments	2
Under 5s	2

The request to interview was made to the parent(s) with whom the child was living. Interviews took place with 20 mothers, 1 with a mother and grandmother, 1 with a father alone, and 2 with both parents.

**Initial Reaction**

No one interviewed said they disagreed with the assessment and only two said it had come as a surprise. Most (14) said they had known their child had special needs since they were very young, either a toddler or in first school or early primary.

Who suggested the assessment?

Parent	EP	Head	Teacher	D/K
5	2	4	5	8

Involvement with the school prior to the assessment was talked about in terms of phone calls, letters, reading sent home and reviews. Most seemed very vague about school involvement.

**Views Of The Statementing Process**

Parents were asked a general open question about what happened during the assessment. Eight said that what had happened had been OK, and seven others mentioned specific visits to a doctor or the EP. They were not asked detailed questions about what they thought about what happened during the assessment because most seemed quite vague about what it had involved. Parents might remember going to a place, say Alport Road, but not who their child saw, or what happened.

Were the letters OK, comprehensible?

Letters were OK	Letters could have been improved	Don't know
8	4	11

Parents said they would give the following advice to a friend going through the assessment:

- Push for everything, don't give up*
- Go to the school yourself. Don't let it go on too long. Try to get help soon.*
- Keep an eye on your child. Keep him close.*
- Grit your teeth and hang on. It's not worth it - hope you get more than we did*
- Get an independent report and ask around*
- Ring my psychologist. I'd tell her what I went to and I'd only give advice if asked*
- Not to worry - they know what they're doing. At the end of the day it's your decision*
- To go along with it - it does help your child*
- In the early stages try to find out as much as you can. Insist on talking to the people involved.*
- Not to worry but to go ahead.*
- Be totally honest about what your child can do and what his needs are*
- Be patient. Work with the professionals. Listen very carefully. Co-operate together.*
- Find out more information about what assessment means*

**The Extent Parents Felt a Partner in the Process**

We wanted to use the word partner in the question since it is used so often that we wanted to see how parent would respond. However, since partnership can mean so many different things, we asked some more specific questions to find out whether and to what extent they were involved.

Question	Yes		No		DK
Did you feel a partner in the process?	11		6		7
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Could this (the extent to which you were a partner) have been better?	4	7	4	1	

Parents were asked whether they were able to give their opinion of their child's needs. 18 remembered being asked for their views, and all 18 referred to the form they had filled in, often with the help of the educational psychologist or a teacher. One parent said the EP had wrote everything down and they had been able to say all they wanted to.

What did you think of the level of information you were given?

Satisfactory	Not satisfactory
6	4

11 said the educational psychologist had explained things to them, and 4 of these had also had the process explained by the teacher or head teacher. 10 parents said they had questions about the process, and 9 of these said the questions were answered. 5 said they had not had any questions. Due to the system used by Newby pupil support, it is likely that an EP had explained the process to all parents. Most parents could not give very

detailed answers about ways the information could have been improved, and to obtain such detailed answers they would probably have needed to have been interviewed during the process of assessment, or soon after its completion.

One parent felt very confident about the system since her husband is in education. She felt they had enough information, and that everything the LEA gave her was enough. The EP was very approachable, explained things and answered questions as it all happened. This parent felt very confident now about her views about her child and her ability to be more equal with the professional. She said that it would have been different if her son had been statemented at the age of three *"when you feel everyone else knows more"*.

**Ideas for improving the process, including views about having a named person**

Parents were asked to suggest improvements in the system. Just under half those interviewed (10) said they would like either more information, or ideas of questions to ask the various professionals. One parent said *"you don't know what to ask half the time - but EP told us everything - if it hadn't been for her I'd have know nothing - always getting letters"*.

Another parent said:  
*"Parents should know before review meetings what decisions are in mind and the extent of problems so that it doesn't come as a shock. Worry was terrible. Reports before as well. There was not a copy for me to take home, no time to digest reports in the meeting. Came home feeling I should have said that."*

**Named Person**

Parents were asked whether they would have liked someone independent from the LEA, such as another parent or someone from a voluntary group, to talk to during the assessment. In other words they were being asked if they would have liked, in retrospect, a named person:

Yes	No	DK
10	11	3

Who would you have liked to offer this support?

Another Parent	Voluntary group volunteer	Other, i.e. aunt, church member
5	3	2

Of those who did not want a named person, 6 said they could talk to their psychologist (or teacher or educational welfare officer), one did not see any point in talking to someone who did not have any influence with the local authority and the remaining parents did not give further explanation of their views. One said a named person would be useful if the child had been more borderline, but there was no doubt that their child needed a school for children with severe learning difficulties.

Just under half the parents interviewed (11) would have gone to a support meeting of parents all starting assessments at the same time, but 4 of these had reservations about



attending such a meeting. Those who would not wish to go to such a meeting, and those who would but with reservations, gave reasons that were to do with maintaining privacy. One felt she would make a fool of herself at a meeting.

**Views of the outcome of the process**

**Provision**

Parents were asked various questions to find their views of the outcome of the assessment.

Were you satisfied with the outcome of the assessment?

Yes	No	DK
16	5	3

However, when questioned further, 9 of those who had said they were satisfied said they still had major reservations about their child's educational provision. Many of the reservations were to do with feeling they did not know how things were going, but others had more specific concerns.

For example, one parent was pleased with their child getting up to 3 hours extra help, but felt hardly informed about progress, and was worried that their child was being sneered at by friends and was being given over simplified work. This parent was also unsure if he was actually getting the help and frightened that if she complain he would be moved to Rowan special school.

Another parent said:

*I don't know how its going. Worried he'll get worse, the kids at the unit are rough*

For a parent whose son has severe learning difficulties and had exceeded predictions about how long he would live, the outcome of the assessment was having what they felt about him and his condition written down on paper. He was already at his school so the assessment did not affect his placement. However, the parent did feel that the statement may have a bearing on what happens when he is 19 years and leaves school.

**Timing of Assessment**

Half the parents (11), thought the assessment had come at the right time for their child, but 9 felt it should have happened sooner. Similarly, 10 parents thought the time taken by the assessment was satisfactory, but 11 though it took too long. One parent was pleased the assessment took a long time since she felt the young age of her child meant that a longer time was needed to assess the child's needs, to give the child time to respond to interventions and to develop. We looked at whether the parents who felt the assessment had taken too long were those whose assessments had taken longer than the 6 months advised and now required by the code of practice. Distribution of the assessment lengths for this sample (excluding amendments) was as follows

Months	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Number		1	1	2	6	2	1	3	2	2		1

5 of the parents who said the assessment had taken too long had official completion times of 6 months or less. Their comments suggested that they were complaining about a general delay in something being done for their child, not simply in the official assessment time, and that they thought of the time from when their child was first identified as having special education needs as the start of the assessment. Indeed I would suggest that many parents had little idea of the official time their child's assessment took. One parent thought they had filled in the parent advice form 2 years ago, but the official completion time was given as 4 mths.

**Reports**

A third of the parents (8) felt the reports were satisfactory. Parents' comments about the reports were pertinent and interesting. One said that the report did not show their child in a bad enough light, but another said that it was very hard looking at bad things written about their child. Another found it hard in the words to find their child, not that the report was inaccurate, but that it did not seem to give a real picture of their child.

**Reviews**

Only 5 parents knew about the reviews, and 4 of these were parents whose children had statements for over a year, and were amendments.

**Concluding Comments**

Many parents in the sample answered the questions relating more to the present, or to the whole time they had worried about their child, and had an unclear idea of the actual assessment period and what it entailed, but five parents seemed to have a particularly unclear understanding of the process.

Five parents could answer either none or very few of the initial questions in the interview, so the questions were abandoned early on. All five knew that their child had extra help in school, and three could answer questions about their views about their child's education. However, none had any clear idea of the assessment process, and could not remember letters and reports or visits. One had a lot to say about how the school was caring for her child, who had severe learning difficulties, and felt the teachers and the doctor did not enough listen to her views - such as the way she should be fed, her need for a calliper, or

that she should use the computer more. Another remembered the EP, and had been pleased he had written her ideas down since she felt it was easier to say what she thought than to write. However, she did not know what a statement was, did not remember the letters or reports. Another could only remember the immediate present, and questions about letters, reports, etc. she related to the past week, not the statement period. However, she felt she had nagged the head teacher and education to get the help she wanted, was satisfied with the outcome, and to this extent did not seem powerless. Another parent had had so many visits from different professionals that she did not read any of the letters and she asked her daughter to deal with it all. A fifth child was living with a foster mother who did not know anything about the child's statement, just that he attended a special school.

**Liz Todd**  
**Jan 1996**

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# Appendix 3

## Samples of Documentary Data from Newby Parent Partnership Scheme

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## Parents' Issues, Problems, or Worries around Statementing

### **INFORMATION**

Amount  
Presentation  
Comprehensible  
Jargon free - glossary needed  
Information needed about right to appeal - but giving this information can lead to problems - scares parents  
Information needed about all professionals - names, how to contact them, what they do  
What does statementing mean?  
Help needed to understand child's development, needs and difficulties  
Should give parents a folder/ portfolio to keep statementing information

### **TIMING**

Why wasn't I told before?  
Why didn't they do something earlier?

### **CHOICES**

What choices do I have?  
How do I get the provision my child needs?  
What are the available schools / provision?  
What choices do I have about seeing professionals  
Can I write letters - how?  
Who do I ring or see, and how?

### **STATEMENTS**

all the same  
jargon  
relief - first time anything written down about my child  
Labelling - positive and negative  
Parents need to know statements are not fixed - reviewed annually

### **EXAMINATION BOARDS**

What special provision can they make?  
Do the boards vary?

### **PROFESSIONALS**

Who are they, their names, and how can I contact them?  
What do they do?  
What is the difference between a psychologist and a psychiatrist  
The EP is seen as the key to open doors of other provisions, ie speech therapy  
He's not mad - why does he have to see the psychologist?

### **EMOTIONAL** side of the process

Expectations of parents  
Some parents have a need to label child  
Grieving - for what?  
Conflict - up against the school - felling that the school is against the child  
"us and them"

### **RESOURCES**

Resources vs child's needs  
How can I get speech therapy/ occupational therapy / transport?

### **FUTURE**

Exams  
College  
Provision post 16  
Careers advice  
What do special schools do for post 16?  
Work experience  
These issues more problematic for mainstream children

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ISSUES**

Gender issues: more boys with statements  
Race issues  
Class issues: more "lower class" children with statements statements

### **ASSESSMENT**

The word assessment is a problem  
What happens?  
What tests?  
The use of tests implies a possibility of failure  
Medical model implied by assessment?  
Parents don't realise they can be present  
Parents complain that child only seen in 1 to 1 context  
Professionals need to explain that child is seen in a variety of contexts

### **WHO PAYS?**

Need information about how SEN provision, statemented and non-statemented, is paid for  
What is the role of governors?

ie parent governors can press for SEN provision in mainstream

# **PARENT PARTNERSHIP PROJECT**

**Practical Guidance for Parents with Children with  
Special Educational Needs**

**Drop in to  
N**

**Federation to talk to  
Area Educational Psychologists.  
Drop in or telephone 257 6060**

**F**

**Liz Todd**

**will be at**

**on:**

**5 June 10 am - 12 noon**

**3 July 10 am - 12 noon**

**to hear any questions, concerns and anxieties from parents  
about children with special educational needs**

**Possible topics for discussion:**

- **statementing process**
- **reading problems**
- **how can a parent help?**
- **integration**
- **friendships**
- **play**
- **homework**
- **support networks for parents**

***We look forward to listening to your concerns***

15/5/95

foster Lij n... since L. 12 yrs.  
par

NDCS volunteer - <sup>one person in NDCS doing a c</sup>  
- interested, in being <sup>in her own</sup> NIP

HT told to pick 1 ch: I'm not a U, I can't decide who to pick

-- hearing loss missed <sup>even</sup> in multi-prof - s.w involved, beh diff

I shouldn't have to fight for what he needs (6 yrs mainstream  
When he went to sch he needed 1 hr - I fought for it <sup>integ Phon</sup> ear

Every year I worry am I going to have to fight  
Stat proc happens sometimes because the school not providing

I didn't even know there was a ~~sp~~ needs t. at U

③ A A - diag 14 mths N - Stat proc 2½ start  
Diff 7 I found it very diff to cope with people coming into  
your home they hadn't seen ~~each~~ her in their life, they get  
off - what ~~Ted~~ said about her.

② Fobbed off. Told A mild cos they felt I had too much to cope  
with (other ch. v. ill) 8 yrs now

④ It's not that bad. They've said. They're prof. They'd tell for the  
(she was profoundly deaf)

② When A at Nur + not working out they asked us to sit with  
± a day - why bother

4 diff per teachers all saying 4 diff things  
Theme of believing prof + ~~ben~~ feeling let down  
You feel they're all going to happen Prof view - conflicts  
they're going to bring it to you on a Not for on the parent  
plate + it doesn't happen

My friend's ~~ch~~ <sup>(part hearing)</sup> has thr a wk v. happy about that  
she shouldn't be - he could do better with more

12.1

19/5/95 Regional Par Part Off Meeting

B. still doing much spec. needs admin. wk.

Spec. needs politically high profile since tables showed 5% completed in time limits

ICL - power flow - computer - now bought - hardware in place - had training - terrible training - lots of errors on comp system  
Started too many new statements in sept without planning  
Moderating group to look at referrals for stat assess -  
in past 1 man's decision - 15 - 3 pre sch 3 EP's  
3 prim 3 spec ed ser.  
3 sec 1 from each on a mod. group

Rec. 1 ref for full assess

1 back to sch for stage 3 again.

could come back again.

also acts as a  
statement panel - decided

All recommendations from panel go to dep director  
Geof to make final decision

Ed Psy Serv N - Ed Psy. all staff. discuss COSA - 9 page quest.  
to be completed by sch/par/ep. Decision stamped by  
Assis ed. off spec needs.

In all cases evidence is needed - when a case is made  
evidence must be presented of what has been done

ST - lots of schs don't know what stages 1-4 are - they  
say they've moved a ch to stage 4. Despite lots of visit.

Also confused about how + when to do an annual review.

Bob telling schs to involve par. in IEPs, not telling them.  
- wk with schs.

Criteria for deciding on a stat assess - is so many  
years behind depending on their problem.

ST. - stat money already in schs.

Stat. Schs need to decide on priorities

Par say 'what's the pt. in a stat'. Stat brings no extra res.  
↓ protects help for the child. Director is reconsidering  
this problem.

Spec sup ser only helps learning diff not beh.



15/5/95

foster Lij n... since L. 12 yrs.  
par

NDCS volunteer - <sup>one person in NDCS doing a c</sup>  
- interested, in being <sup>is</sup> ~~NP~~ = 30 The

HT told to pick 1 ch: I'm not a U, I can't decide who to pick

-- hearing loss missed <sup>even</sup> in multi-prof - s.w involved, beh diff

I shouldn't have to fight for what he needs (6 yrs against stream  
when he went to sch he needed 1 hr - I fought for it <sup>integ Phon ear</sup>  
Every year I worry am I going to have to fight  
Stat proc happens sometimes because the school not providing  
I didn't even know there was a ~~stat~~ sp needs t. at U

A - diag 14 mths N - Stat proc 2½ starts  
Diff 7 I found it very diff to cope with people coming into  
your home they hadn't seen ~~each~~ her in their life, they get i  
off - what ~~the~~ said about her.

2 Fobbed off. Told A mild cos they felt I had too much to cope  
with (other ch. v. ill) 8 yrs now

4 It's not that bad. They've said. They're prof. They'd tell go that  
(she was profoundly deaf)

2 When A at Nur + not working out they asked us to sit with  
± a day - why bother

4 diff - per teachers all saying 4 diff things  
Premise of believing prof + then feeling let down  
You feel they're all going to happen Prof view - conflict  
they're going to bring it to you on a Not fore on the parents  
plate + it doesn't happen

My friend's <sup>(part hearing)</sup> ch has thr a wk v. happy about that  
she shouldn't be - he could do better with more

## Staff Meeting

- M We as EP? do the role as NP, anyway  $\therefore$  need for NP reduced  
(but we should do less) Only need NP at draft stat. Hard to see  
a process for appointing NP before. Could still be non adversarial  
at this time
- me but then par could ask why we didn't have one before
- A What if the NP gives wrong advice + we rec NP? Yes a  
problem - NP indep but trained by L&A + rec - Have to say NP not  
for advice - for supp + listening + facil. Have to allow free
- M We should distance ourselves from NP appoint / matching  
as far as pos. - self post should also be NP + they  
can do match (but then we can't sort out problems)
- me - Many par don't want them F. - Par prefers EP - one per  
too many people
- A Many say, like me to solicitor when buying house - don't want  
about and process just want result - same to EP
- (One goes - some in interview said this, maybe they unhelpful)
- Many par feel v. overawed + confused by process + unhappy  
with aspects of outcome but don't send back b' since had one  
or feel lucky to get what they have or lack confidence
- K 2 'NP' types IPSEA + A have all dominated review/  
tribunal when previously par found it hard but got view at
- me - I feel threatened by volunteers. - so not helping at all.
- A I try not to explain process + to make it as friendly as possible  
for par. (F This is OK if par gets what they want, if not me  
be angry b' rights not explained)
- me - many probs in rel
- M - New Gest. pushing par. part. to stage 3+4 - (not NP)
- If assessing a neg process this <sup>NP</sup> does help?

**NAMED PERSON**

All information is confidential, and is to be used in matching you with a suitable family.

NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE CONTACT
		Work:
		Home:

1. Are you happy for your name to go on The Register? .

now:		Later:	
------	--	--------	--

2. What are you prepared to do as a Named Person? (tick those that apply).

- listen to parents' concerns ☐ find out information ☐ accompany to meetings ☐
- help parents express their views ☐ act as an advocate ☐ help write letters ☐
- act as a befriender ☐ promote partnership with professionals ☐
- resolve conflicts ☐ share knowledge & experience of special educational needs ☐
- (see 3 below)

3. Is there an area of special educational needs that you know about?

4. What do you feel able to offer in terms of time? Are there any constraints on your time or availability?

eg

5. Are you aware of the rights and responsibilities of Named Person?  
any comments:

6. Do you agree with the aims? Yes ☐ No ☐  
any comments:

7. What have you found useful in the Named Person Course?

8. What future training or support would you like?

9. Anything else you would like to say?

# Appendix 4

## Research Diary Samples

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Notes made after second interview with David	xx
Notes after talking with advisor	xxii
Notes on process of analysis	xxiii

## D

What does the process look like to him? Does he know A tries to keep it hidden?

What does he know about the assessment/statement?

What does he feel about getting extra help?

What does he feel about different teachers

school

other pupils?

What does he think A feels about all this, about his school?

Is he different to other children?

What would he most like to happen at school?

How does he feel about himself?

---

**Interview 9/1/96**

**10/1/96**

I essentially wanted to know what D knew of the assess process and how he felt about it, or, what he knew of how T's and others were trying to help him, and what he thought + felt of how he was being helped/what happened at school/how teachers responded to him ....

I was sceptical I'd get anywhere. Last time it had been so hard to talk to him and he'd clammed up very soon, clearly finding the whole thing so painful. This time I prepared well, arming myself with several ideas of ways to try to help him to talk. Indirectly about other children, bought a children's book, story of a child at school, to use as a way in to talking about school. I suggested telling him how many questions I wanted to ask, and writing them down on steps so he could see when we were nearing the end. I thought of taking R to break the ice, but would this be too manipulative, and would it be too hard for me. I thought I'd abandon the tape. In the event it was much easier. I asked him about toys he'd got for Christmas and we played a war station he had, as he explained all the gadgets. He was O.K. about me using the tape. Seemed to quite like holding the mike. I could even ask very explicit questions. The only time he refused to talk and even here he did not clam up, but told me he didn't want to talk about it (when I gave this as an option) - was about his last exclusion. But I was still able to ask questions about exclusion in general.

The interview seemed to have 3 phases:

- 1) General chat - Christmas, playing with his war station.
- 2) Getting into the interview: I'm here to ask you to help me with my book, to ask what you think about how we should help children in school. Asking him about what children feel about getting extra help.
- 3) D then took the interview into a different phase, by making it all relate to him, by telling me he was one of the people who gets help.

Interview - direct questions on help he gets, how he got it, and what he feels about it.

D had little memory of all the people he'd seen.

Little idea of the process.

Little idea what it meant to his mum.

Didn't know if people have meetings.

Said most about the help he gets + about what T's should do with outbursts.

Didn't want to go into his exclusion in detail.

Had had a visit from OT today - but a little unclear as to her role. Some idea of her.  
Didn't ask L. what he feels his main problems to be.

Can I do this on the phone?

Did ask what he's good at + not so good.

18/96

## Diary

Having spoken to A I am more content with my sample. Feel that since I am reflecting on a theoretical issue, looking at one case is OK. I feel I am using a combination of sampling techniques, critical case first of all - looking at the perspective of everyone in the case. The interviewees for this case are those who meet a criteria - involvement in the case. Then I also interviewed 4 others who are not at all involved in the case - using opportunistic / snowball / chain - took advantage of the unexpected in interviewing? met her at W. meeting after mt. A. and sth she said about dd meant head f's being to beased to be NPs caught my interest - gets at the <sup>rean</sup> is of what is a NP, indep/bias. Interviewed A J. + C since F told me various problems in their working relationship (between ea - another + between F - + them) - which led me to feel the confli could throw interesting light on the issue of partnership. Indep for case would be helpful - to see if similar issues arose. Worried I have launched into the int., asking qu. without much reading of meth or theory. Know I speak over interviewee + interrupt lead. Am I asking the most crucial questions? Maybe I can do the analysing after much more reading. Frustrated that I haven't done much reading. Find coding hard - realised I have never done this kind of detailed qual. analysis so already learnt so much. ~~Worried~~ Realised how diff it is to read a transcript + listen to tape. Need to listen to all tapes + make notes on main issues + points that occur to me. It's this I'm missing out on by not having already done this - can't be v. clear about new qu. I want to ask. Although I am doing this - but unsystematically. So asking S about provision before stat - the bugbear of the school.



1/8/96

### Making notes from transcript

Hard to see whole picture.

Hard to know how to decide codes

Can't see wood for the trees.

Do I mark anything that stands out at all, that resonates, then ask myself the reason + make this the code?

Do I pick things on certain themes?

Do I mark things about the rel. between me + interviewee + the 4 of the conversation - since surely this affects the quality of the discussion?

### Making notes from a tape

Much easier. Easier to pick out + summarise issues from what S.O. says. I'm back there in the interview remembering the situation. How I felt. How I got there. What the office was like. Can hear an utterance + summarise in my mind + see how it resonates with the issues in my mind - listening to Mrs R's Head T, just before going to d S. T's, having just written S's questions. I am not used to seeing speech written. It looks odd and it's sometimes hard to infer meaning. Much easier when spoken. We speak + write differently. I wonder how we learn this then stop being aware of it? I prefer to hear poetry than to read it. I find it much harder to understand if it's written. Andy says I write letters strangely times since I write more how I speak.

But what I did get very powerfully from the transcript with Mark was his hesitance with me, my consequent not taking up his hints of saying or saying he could really give an answer then he did - my lack of resp to his cues - obvious on script. My asking him these things again. And less of my tendency to ask leading que + assume agreement.

# Appendix 5

## Samples of Interview Questions: case study of David

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Notes on questions to ask Acting Principal Educational Psychologist	xxv
Notes on questions to ask Senior Clinical Medical Officer	xxvi
Notes on questions to ask Named Person	xxviii

New issues to look into

## Deficit model of parenting

Prof. as a scapegoat, balancer, in an impossible unjust system.

Role of Vol. orgs. + power of LEAs.

View of N.P. - OK., threat, what is her view of the role.

Indep. of NP. Is this imp? Can EP's be NP if not indep.

View of carers fed - what role would you want for them. Effects of their action.

What is/should be the role of their par. par workers? Any diffs with role of F

Haw new act achieved XXX thing improvements - what? Problems?

View of PP Scheme - what has it achieved, problems

View of assess process. • What is service trying to do re process + stat

What have you ach. this yr (C last yr - aim to reduce demand.

Role of par adv, med, Clin P OT in a case.

1993 act part encouraged by words, discount by structure.

Could part disempower parents? Will part lead to more conflict with LEA?

What does it mean to be in part wioth par - is it possible? barriers?

Are you in par with other advice givers? What problems do they give you?

What is the assess about? An obj view of Ch's needs? A negotiation of resources?

What effect of Act (code on your work)

Who has most power in the assess process? What power do you have?

Do you feel more or less powerful in PEP role?

Are there • conflicts/ambiguites in EP role? Who is your client?  
Diff for SEN as PEP? - are you 'contradiction managers' in a  
fundamentally flawed system (i.e. limited resources, par.  
demand increasing - govt hoping you will find a way through.

- What is EP's role in assess.  
Does stat help meet ch's needs  
Tribunals - how many? more? why? What have they been  
about? Your role? EP role? Conflicting interests?  
What do you expect an assess to provide in D's case.  
How did you reach a decision about D?  
(Why a stat of sch could provide 1/2 hr a day)  
Beh or learning diff? Sch + par disag - how do you see the  
problem? Why did you provide for learning diff?  
Sch asks for interim help at start of process due to beh prob  
- what do you say - is it available? (+ help too late)- ever?  
Could help be given in a more natural less legal way?
- What are the stresses in the job - i.e. Mā , F stress, l  
eaving - Need to ask other advice providers about stress.  
Is it a very stressful job?

## Interview with Dr S

Confidentiality. What research is for, Questions 13/8/96

Does CMO perceive same conflicts re resources etc as EP?

Is partnership an issue?

Is inter collats working with prof an issue?

How does she view the assess process?

How does she view parents?

What contact does she have with vol orgs, sch's, other prof?

Is CMO a scapegoat, balancer in in impossible unjust system of contradiction managers?

-----

Have you sat on panel? " ?

What is your ole in stat assess of SEN?

Who is your client in assess?

Do you ever experience divided loyalties in health trust demands/child needs/parent?

Has it changed due to other changes? (How long has she been in post?)

What do you think of the process? Is system fair?

Does it achieve what is needed. Does stat help meet ch's needs?

Could it be better?

Who has most power? - probe for what is power of EP, panel, Clin. med. etc.

Is your role ever ambiguous?

What actually is assess about? i.e. objective assess or prof/need negotiation?

Has EP service actions in assess changed - since code - other times?

How do your view your ole + parents role in the wk. you do in preparing advice?

Partnership with parents is a theme in education. What do you think partnership might mean in assess.

Is it a theme in med work? Are there barriers to partnership with parents? What?

Are there other themes/trends?

What do par feel about assess?

Does assess pose any diff for par or is the process unproblematic?

Do you experience diff in assess process, conflicts, ambiguities in role?

What are the stresses of your job? in assessment.

Are there conflicts/ambiguities in EP role? Do you have any exp of role in tribunals?

Describe pos + neg aspects of working with EP's/teachers? Problems?

Desc. diff issues in working with parents?

Are you aware of a new role in assess - named person? Views of them? Recruitment, Training.

Have any NP/helpers been at meetings/opportunities with you? What has their role been?

Do you know of vol. org. involved with SEN assess? What? Effect?

Do you have any contact with vol org? What? Effect? - Threat? To whom? To you? EPs?

What role might vol org have in SEN assess?

Any knowledge or contact with carers fed/learning dis. adv. centre/A J/C

What? Role in assess? Pos/Neg?

(Deficit model of parenting)

## D 's Case

What do you remember of D 's case?

What was your assess? Who else were involved in his case?

Were all advice writers/parties in agreement about his diff - and needs?

Have views, your or others, changed over the period of assess?

Beh or learning diff was a diff - can you, do you, advise on this.

What outcome did you want for D from panel?

What was the result?

Recent referral to OT - why?

What has your role been at different times in the case?

Seems like stat result emphasises learning - motor diff - what do you think?

Do you have a continuing role? What?

What is your view, if you have one, of the reasons for Γ's problems?

What did the stat process look like to A - A's helper?

Confidentiality. What I'm trying to do. Case - general. Feelings/perspectives

Also - her as an insider with A + I

How would you describe the role you have played with A & L (in D's education? - in his difficulties (do I mention any of these?)) - describe it as if I knew nothing of the system? - in statementing.

When did A first ask you? What was happening then? (How long has she known A & D)

What was Andrea feeling then? Who suggested your involvement?

What was your response?

What did she feel is/was the reason for D's diff. at school? Has it changed over time - your view of the reason.

What diff. things have you done to help?

(Listened, spoken to D, advised A, attended meetings, written letters)

Describe meetings:

What was your role

What happened

How did you feel

What did others say/feel re D

What did you say at meeting/to A later

Was there an outcome of the meeting - if so - what?

Have you had anything to do with the diff. prof? Who are they? What? What's their view?

Did you have any inkling of what others felt about/understood of your role? Was it ambiguous? Did they know what to do with you?

What do you und. happens in statementing?

What is your role in statementing? - What is A? - How much is she aware of statementing?

What do you think of statementing?

Does it achieve what's needed for ch?

Could it be improved?

What is it? Objectives vs "negotiation"?

Who has most power? How much power does Andrea have?

D

You - What kind of power do

Sch each have

EP etc.

What role do each play?

Can be seen as an unjust system+ S.O acting as contradiction manager.

Do you feel fully involved? Side role?

What effect have you had on D's case/ed/stat?

Is conflict a necessary part of partnership?

Have all involved been in agreement with D's needs?

What outcome did you want from the panel?

What did you think of the result?

What was S's rel. with the other prof? - be more specific - could it be called a partnership? with any?

Is partnership possible between parent + others in the system?

Is conflict a necessary part of partnership?

What did other prof feel re D? Ask about each person? Did feelings change?

I feel A had a no compromise view + a compromise view of what she was prepared to accept - no beh label. A D's advocate. D not knowledgeable.

What does D know of all that's happening? What does A feel about this?

Were there changes in diff prof's views of D - what produced those changes?

Did Al try to influence A at diff times - how?  
Did they have diff. in view? (probe for 'you need to change school')  
How did An respond?  
How did Al feel re An's view of D's sit/school.  
What did Al feel of An's attit to school.

Labelling - should D have a label beh  
What does Al feel gifted  
What is An's view? handwriting  
emotional problems?

What has A told you over the time re D at sch - how has he settled  
How do you experience D? Can you see how problems happen at sch - or is it all a puzzle?

Would you have liked any training support as NP?  
What knowledge/qualities did you need/have?

# Appendix 6

## Samples of Coded Transcripts: case study of David

	Page
David's Mother	xxxi
Clinical Psychologist	xxiii
Occupational Therapist	xxxv



\*Interview with / . . . parent  
 \*Date of interview - 20th August 1996  
 \*Interviewer - Liz Todd

GOOD ENOUGH GOAL  
 - wanted  
 - argued  
 - reached  
 - start  
 - with  
 - achieved  
 CHANCE

\*X  
 So the statement is through. I'll talk up. Is that any better? That's right? Sorry. Right, the statement is through, and E . . . has started to receive three hours' a week support. He has been referred to . . . , who is an occupational therapist, who has done an assessment on him, and there has been a couple of sort of statement review meetings, not statement review meetings, but \$ sort of the main things that have happened.

Complex process  
 A. not sure

\*I  
 OK. So, what was the outcome for him?

Levels awareness

GOOD ENOUGH GOAL  
 Reflects her LEVELS of AWARENESS  
 Features  
 No compromise  
 Provision

\*X  
 \$ well, it was sort of a compromise really, I suppose, is the best way of putting it. He is getting the educational support, that is the main thing. He got teacher time, which is what I'd really wanted, \$ and he's been getting a lot of help with his writing, and some of that time has been spent, as well though, on social things.

Theories of Ch. dev.  
 Th. of ch dev  
 No comp.  
 Provision of out

Levels of awareness  
 School-power-finish  
 good enough

\*I  
 \$  
 \*X  
 \$ I think so, I think so. I think as long as he is \$ you know, it seems to be effective. \$

Criteria for good enough go.  
 Th. of Ch. D.

\*I  
 When you say compromise, what do you mean?

2 School-power-  
 3 Interactive process?  
 outcome reflects Adult stance at start  
 3 Ch. dev. Th - Labels  
 4 Partnership

\*X  
 I still think when we went into the statementing procedure, it was still a bit of the school thinking yes, this is social, this is behavioural, and me thinking, no, this is educationally based. It is an educational statement, it is focussing on his learning difficulty, if you like.

Good and Provision on (descriptive) Th. Ch. D.

? Re Power  
 Sch. power = provision  
 Par. power  
 Outcome / prov / stat label  
 Th. Ch. dev.

\*I  
 So it has come out more towards more towards your \$  
 \*X  
 It has, but not necessarily the provision, do you know what I mean?  
 \*I  
 Oh, right. In what way does the statement \$  
 \*X  
 \$ I think it says the statement says that he has specific learning difficulties \$ and the main thing that is the first thing that is tackled is the \$ help so that he can \$ that his \$ work will match his ability, do you know what I mean? Or reflect his ability? But the

Statement outcome distinction differently label provision  
 Th. Ch. Dev.  
 No comp

A feeling left out

School power-  
 school label  
 Provision outcome  
 ? partnership  
 struggle

\*I  
 In what way does it suggest, you know, the opposite to doing what the school think?

\*X  
 That some of time should be spent in, when it's actually been broken down from the original statement, that some of the child should be spent in \$ him to follow adult direction, turn taking in games, and things like that \$ behavioural, yes, yes.

\*I  
 What do you feel about that?

Balance/Fairness

\*X  
 \$ I think as long as the need is being met, you know, there was definitely a need there, there was a problem there, and as long as that is being tackled as well. I know that he needs all of these other things now as well, but they would have been no good in isolation, and they weren't any good in isolation, until they had actually addressed his educational problem. Does that make sense?

Th. Ch. Dev Labels  
 No Comprom  
 Outcome / prov  
 Levels of awareness

Label —

Th. Ch. devel. —

D: — feelings —

Vygotskian Interactive Dyn/ view of learning —

self-esteem FAIRNESS ThCh D FEELINGS —

Feelings —

Fairness —

Labeling —

Accept A. Feeling Commun —

\*I OK. Can you explain that a bit more though? I mean, I do understand it, ..... it's a very interesting way of looking at it.

\*X Right, well, I think for a long time I was seen as a behaviour problem (He was, I mean, there was no two ways about it, he did present problems in the classroom.) But for a long time that was only being tackled from the point of view of his behaviour. It was behavioural techniques with him, if you like.

\*I And what did you feel about that?

\*X Well, just that it wasn't working, and it was just destroying his self esteem, it was just making matters worse. (And I got sucked into that as well) I'm not saying I was, but I did get sucked into it, and that made matters worse.

\*I Right. I remember you saying that you were racking your brains for things that you could do and thinking, but I've done everything.

\*X That's right, yes. And that was very destructive for him, it was very destructive for him, and destructive for us, really. But now that he has been given the, sort of, the tools, and the help to achieve, and there has been an awful lot of work done by his class teacher on boosting his self esteem as well, which has been fabulous, you know. I mean, I really appreciate that, and I can, you know, D. will come home and say that he was allowed to pick the teams for PE, or something, you know, little things like that, but you can tell that they are working on that side of things. And now that that is happening, the other things are things that should be happening in any case. He should be learning to behave and socialise and whatever, it was just, when the heavy hammer was coming down, and it wasn't being, having any effect, because there was something else.

\*I It was in isolation, as you said a couple of minutes ago, that these other things had to happen first.

\*X That's right.

\*I Before

\*X Yes.

\*I the behaviour

\*X That's right, yes.

\*I Well, that's really, that sounds a very reasonable way of looking at it, actually. How were the actual, the actual draft statements made known to you? Was it sent, or

\*X It was sent, yes.

\*I Sent. Did you know when the panel was meeting, and when to expect it, or not? It just kind of arrived and you thought, oh gosh, it's happened now?

\*X No, I think I knew that it was, you know, imminent.

\*I And what did you feel about the other reports? The tone of the reports in

\*Interview with J Clinical Psychologist  
\*Date of interview - 19th February 1996  
\*Interviewer - Liz Todd August

\*Interviewer

..... just introduce yourself again please?

\*X

Yes. J Clinical Psychologist.

\*I

OK. And I'm interviewing J mostly about her role, how she works with other professionals and how she sees her role in statementing, and how she feels about statementing. OK. If I ask you about issues about statementing first, because I don't really have any, you know, this will be new to me to know, is to what your views ..... and what perspective you have of it from the position that you occupy. So what role do you feel you have in statementing?

\*X

Sometimes I feel my role is accidental, and I'm not sure that isn't necessarily a bad thing, at one level. Sometimes I do an assessment of a child which would include not just looking at their emotional state, but looking at their cognitive status as well. And sometimes look at their reading ability, their spelling age, etc. etc. Sometimes if I'm concerned about their profile on the WISK, I might do further neuropsychological testing, which is trail making, ..... and visual attention test, etc. etc. But I, it sometimes concerns me that perhaps that's not being done with the Educational Psychology Department. And I'm not saying I blame them. The teachers have to flag up the children who are having difficulty, and if the school psychologist doesn't know about them, he or she is not going to be able to assess them or deal with them.

\*I

So do you get children that the Ed. Psych might not have seen?

\*X

Yes, and worryingly I wonder why they haven't seen the Ed. Psych. And example this morning of a child who is 12, who is a school refuser. There are lots of problems at home, there is no doubt about that, but when I actually speak to the child, and get, and got her to do a story out of the new reading test, I mean, it was clear that at 12, 13, she's probably got a reading age of 7, if she's lucky. And she's not been picked up by anybody. I can't blame the school psychologist for that, I would blame the school.

\*I

So she's actually not part of the statementing process yet?

\*X

No, she's not, and I'm worried that she never will be, or if she is, it will be too late. And I pick up a lot of children who are presented here with behavioural problems and query psychiatric problems who have difficulties in learning problems often, which have not been picked up, and have led to psychological difficulties. Like, for example, the child who was referred, a young teenager who was threatening self-harm and attempted suicide and she was in a school, bright girl, but with a very, very poor reading age, and unable to cope with all aspects of the curriculum, and couldn't admit to that. And I found it incredible, and that wasn't in this area, it was in a completely different area within the Northern region, I was very surprised.

What do you think of the statementing process?

\*X

I have to admit, I don't pay very much attention to it. I probably should do. It seems to me there's an awful lot of paperwork, and everybody's

\*I

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Statement  
leads to very little  
for child

views involved. I mean, I think that's fair enough. But sometimes I see statements, reams and ream of paper, and at the end of the day, sometimes the child gets very little, even though the recommendations stated something completely different.

\*I

So do you think ..... something that ..... for the child?

\*X

I think it should do, but, I can't think of any examples that would illustrate my concerns, I mean

\*I

..... about, or what you didn't expect in your view that, you know, .....?

\*X

Yes, I can. One very, very complex case, of a child who, she didn't have learning difficulties, if she did, they were probably not significant. Her main problem was behavioural and, and the focus of that seemed to be the relationship between the little girl and her mother. And mum was asking for residential education, and I was concerned that mum wanted rid of the girl, but that at the end of the day probably it was the best thing for her, even though it seemed to be helping mum out. I felt that the important thing was that it helped the little girl out. And a statementing procedure was done on this child, and she is now, fairly recently I got some documentation through and arrangements have been made for her to be within a residential setting, and that achieved a lot, I think, for that little girl, who had been through another psychiatric unit in the region, and had been sent back here, and I felt with very little change, actually. A lot of focus on the child, no change within the family situation, and a referral back to myself and to school psychology. And I really felt ..... what are we going to do here. You know, it can't be more of the same, it has to be something different. And I felt at the end of that the Education Department had really, I suppose, psychological service. I would see it as their responsibility, they had achieved something.

\*I

Do you feel the process has changed much? I know that there was a recent Education Act about ..... statementing and ..... Do you think, are you aware of any changes, has it ..... to you?

\*X

No, I'm not aware of changes, Liz.

\*I

Over the last say, year, .....?

\*X

No.

\*I

Any changes in the way that the psychologists handle procedures, and process, that hasn't .....

\*X

I'm not aware of them. Though that will probably say more about me than them.

\*I

Not necessarily, but that's a, it's helpful for me to, it's not a ..... of you necessarily at all, it's just helpful for me to see how it's perceived by somebody outside, and that's, you know, instructive really. Are there ways that you think the process could actually be improved?

\*X

I think most undoubtedly speeding it up.

\*I

That's the main way?

\*X

Yes.

Analyse view  
of cases +  
approach  
(5) (5) (3)

(3)  
(5) (4)

Not aware of  
code of practice  
or changes in  
N.Y. ie COSA

(5)  
Time  
Process getting  
faster

\*Interview with F. . Occupational Therapist  
\*Date of interview - 21st August 1996  
\*Interviewer - Liz Todd

\*Interviewer

I'm just having a second interview now with F. . I think it's the 21st of August. OK. There are some questions about L. What has been your role in D. 's case?

\*X

D. was referred to me, is it useful for me to go right from the beginning?

\*I

Yes.

\*X

Danny was referred to me - shall I use names?

\*I

Yes, that's fine.

\*X

Clinical Medical Officer, Dr.

\*I

Yes, I've spoken to her, and I've had permission to, you know, speak to all the people concerned.

\*X

Right. In February of this year, by letter, which is the usual way, referring C. and then if you would like me to, I'll just read out the bare bones of the referral, shall I?

\*I

Yes, please do.

\*X

I'd be most grateful for your advice to Mrs L. and school about C. who attends C. Primary School, and is currently undergoing an assessment of his special educational needs. D. is experiencing behaviour and learning difficulties in school. His main problem is with writing, he has very poor fine motor and pencil control. He realises that his ability to write is rather limited, and he gets frustrated and angry. This has created problems with his behaviour at school. I saw D. for his medical assessment, and found him to have poor fine motor control. He was refusing to cooperate at times, and it was clear that he gives up when he cannot perform fine motor tasks. I would be most grateful for your expert advice. Following the referral letter, D. was on a waiting list for a short period of time, because I was working just by myself, and he was then asked to attend E. Clinic on 13th June, so he did have quite a wait.

\*I

When was he referred?

\*X

He was referred in February. And he attended his first assessment appointment on 13th June, here at E. Clinic, with his mum. And I agreed with Dr. . as always, when Mrs. came, I went through some background information to try and get a flavour, I suppose, of the whole range of problems. Because in a way it's not a really typical scenario, in that often the children come and they haven't really got into the behaviour side of things, and obviously I don't really feel that I am expert at all to deal with behaviour. I'm just strictly dealing with the fine motor problems that he is presenting, but obviously it is important to get an idea from Mrs. as to other services involved, and that she understands that I have quite a tight remit, and that I'm not a cure for everything, etc. And to just get an idea about the behaviour side of things.

Story  
D referred by  
CMO Dr S

by letter

Power  
- ref by CMO

Rob  
- how refer

Referred  
Feb, seen  
13 June

She feels uncertain  
re "the behaviour  
side of things"

Rob  
Strict  
remit

And I do remember, naturally it was very difficult to get a lot of information, because I was sitting there, so obviously, you know, we just, actually, I think what I did was, I got on with the assessment with him, so that he got it out of the way, and then because of the big room that we have downstairs, there are quite a few toys, and there's a ball pool, and he went off and played and we managed to have a little bit of a more confidential chat. But it wasn't ideal. But I did gather that the behaviour was at the time, in June, the main concern, and it seemed to be that the fine motor aspects were sort of bubbling along underneath this huge other problem. That's my perception of the situation. I'll talk a little bit about my assessment, shall I?

Couldn't talk in front of D.

1) Sch. main concern - fine motor bubbling underneath

Set as set 5

\*I  
Yes, how you ..... it

\*X

Right. We have a set assessment that we do, and I felt it was appropriate to go through that with D, even though it was mainly to look at fine motor skills, what I personally always do is look at gross motor skills as well. We've talked about that.

\*I

Presumably just in case, I mean, you know, somebody might have said, gross motor is fine, but, you know?

\*X

Yes, just to double check.

\*I

They might have a different idea of what gross motor skills are to you, or whatever?

\*X

Exactly. That's right. And I know that the relationship that I have with the school doctors is that they are quite happy for me to do that, that's not a problem. We always look at body awareness, because obviously with a lot of children that have motor problems, sometimes it comes from a poor appreciation of body scheme, etc, etc, if you're looking along the lines of dyspraxia anyway. And I remember thinking that he didn't have any problems in that area.

\*I

Right. So what kind of things do you test for that?

\*X

Looking at, very basic things, basic picture of a man, which is, yes, left and right, identifying on himself and on a facing person, which he managed to do, and also copying arm postures with his eyes open, easy ones, and then crossed postures, which often is a difficult area. I looked at ..... , which, do you know about .....?

\*I

I did know, but I can't remember.

\*X

It's just the ability to perceive where your body is in space, in an unconscious way. So a very simple way of doing that in children is to just ask them to close their eyes and you would position their arms, and then bring their arms back down, and get them with their eyes open to say where they were. And a lot of children struggle with that. And I think it is a very difficult test to do anyway, especially with children that have some receptive problems, so a lot of children, I would never, ever even attempt to do it. But with D, I decided to do it, and I felt he was fine. He had no problems in that area. Gross motor skills, I thought that his basic skills were OK, and that there were a few slightly difficult skills which were slightly, slightly on the poor side, but not enough to warrant any great concern.

\*I

So, like?

\*X

Part n. 1/2 with another profession 3

D. no problem with body awareness. ∴ no dyspraxia 1

1

1

## **Appendix 7**

### **Samples of 9 Stage Process of Analysis: case study of David**

	Page
Notes on Head Teacher interview, listening to tape	xxxviii
Notes from coded transcript of Head Teacher	xxxix
Notes from coded transcript of David's Mother	xli
Large chart of coding summaries from Acting PEP, Class Teacher, SENCO and EP on the themes of David, Power, Partnership, Role, Assessment, Contradiction Manager, and ?Client	xliv

1/8/96

### Interview Summary Form

Interview

Name Mrs

Responsibilities Head

1st in this school.

Primary

School

Date 10/5/96

Interviewer Liz Todd

1. What were the main issues or themes that struck you in this interview?

Main events D's assess - warned D's beh. problems, 4 informed, process ongoing. D improved - good with A.T., has been v. diff. Not all staff can use different management strategies, D maturing. Agreement on his job - No diff in opinion. Mum - D too bright. Mrs doesn't share this. I accept writing frustrates him. Mum doesn't see 4 prob. ? & do - why does he do this. Sth to do with home Dad walked out. Rel mum + dad very - scared mum. Help in school - couldn't get interim support from A.T. & - scared would lose roll due to D. Grange work. Mrs B arrived Sept - flexible approach to beh - still pending. Whinging on handwriting.

2. Summarize the information you got (or did not get) on the target questions?

Mrs B happier with me than prev head.  
Impact of stat - upset Mrs B - she doesn't want the help label.  
Will it help - only 3 hrs. Won't help his beh at lunch. Resource problem. Would have liked a bit targeted at beh.  
Mrs B's friend at meeting - Mrs B needed this, not helpful for us. She kept saying his not like that here at home, but Mrs B knows what he's like.  
Her role in stat: Main one talking to Mrs B. Telling her of serious incidents - by letter since working, not a pleasant role.  
Not a major role in Stat. C, put papers together. I contacted A.T. at start, talked to +.  
Power greatest - statement panel. Agreed they should have a stat. Not surprised - serious. Doesn't matter what content is - means he's getting 1:1 -> D settle down. EP not really affected at all.  
Impact EP - OK - but she's only seen a scene once. Felt we were very much left alone to depend on our own resources.  
3. Anything else that struck you as interesting or important?  
worried about D with next year's teacher - lack of flexibility - is not informing Mrs B every day.  
Mrs B is supportive - and our need for a stat conflict - fearful, label beh. problems.  
Too much paper-work. V. diff to provide evidence of beh prob - v. subjective - ie previous SEN + had a v. black + white approach.  
What's statementing objectives vs negotiation? A bit of both. Can be obj. if you mean hard evidence. R Ages. V. diff with beh - I look to why.

4. What other information is required or follow up questions are necessary?

Does neg. go on about diff. No. We're getting there now. Labels were put on. How to improve stat? Diff - my 1st one seeing it through. Good - brings lots of people together. What you write has to be shared with par. Ag. labelling. Can't think of bad things - apart from paper work, time. D. - wouldn't take out in R. - so interim help compared with what we wouldn't get it. My perspective - see him as pt of school - whole sch social issue. impact on ch + t's - frightened others. manipulative of ch + t. Fl. - to find out why he's doing it. Needs counselling - not in reality of school.



Mrs. R

essence is assessing her responses

Link with (9) labels

- P1 bels. running out  
couldn't cope in large groups  
Refer to P1 for full description  
P3 mum's view is different

Describes what she was told + what she's found.

D naughty is problem

P2 more of Mrs. R's views, labels

P2 bottom D's need vs school need

P4 Mrs R wanted stat to tackle beh too, and its mostly tackled handwriting

P7 wanted to give her explanation to Mrs B but didn't - is due to family

P8 is D naughty / normal boy / on beh prob?

P10 D needs more help - beh / w help

P11 Mrs R's views of D have changed  
- She knows + understands him  
but more

(8) Child Devel

P2,4 Mrs R's view of cause  
- home

P12 and rationale for D's problems  
- home  
- separation

P11 D has to work, anger - where from, D's eccentric, fright

(5) What's the assess about

P4 top process has upset parent - she doesn't want labels

P4 top It's the only way we could go

P4 mid Rel. of stat to detailed description of D's horrendous beh + their need to police him

P4 mid Alt way to deal with D - more resources, people, a relationship

P5 top Doesn't matter what stat content is - its the time that matters

P8 top New assess - assess means paperwork  
Not having gathered enough evidence

P8/bot. stat both objective + negotiating

P9 top No more negotiating in this case though

P9 top can't say what would improve stat.

Good in stat - bringing people together, par. see reports she's very wary of labelling ch.

Bad re stat - amount of time - needed help at a diff time

STATEMENTING is

OK

Main prob also is equitable allocation of resources in LGAT  
D " ) wouldnt be a prob in another sh.

P11 Only wanted extra help from stat

M3 Getting resources by exclusion

## ② Where is Power

- P3 top use exclusion to make team act
- P6 Harview Panel has power - they agreed we can have the assess for
- P10 D. manipulative of t's. t's say D lazy, disturbed, angry. Shunt power over Dr. Ch. frightened of him I think in favour of him
- P13 getting resources by exclusion
- P10 T
- P14 power with researcher - knowledge  
he wanted to know what Mrs B wants for D  
does she think things are improving

(36) (10)  
Feelings

- P3 top I was scared
- P4 top assess process has upset Mrs B  
- she doesn't want it
- P6 I felt we were v. much alone to depend on  
LONGLY our own resources
- P13 her 1st term here horrendous.

## ④ What's your role

- P3 mid stat. pending  
so could allocate Mrs Br.
- P3 mid She's handled it all better than  
her predecessors
- P5 mid Her role - difficult.
- P2 mid carrier of bad news  
good news when possible  
little role in assess. process -  
she has overseeing role
- P6 to negotiate the flexibility of t's so D has  
so. he can cope with
- P9 heads role - to see D as part of a school
- P10 F role to find out what makes him more angry  
heads role also re impact of Don t's + ch
- P12 tension between D + others - who is her client?
- P14 worried D won't get on with part yrs t.

We as  
sch. needed  
help

## ⑥ Contradiction manager Sch's dilemma on how to get resources.

- P2 bottom
- P3 top use exclusion  
to make them act
- P2 Bottom - D needs  
vs school needs
- P13 Top sch needed help  
early
- P12 Sch vs child needs
- Needs role  
vs f  
H9 P10

Needs role  
vs f  
H9 P10

(7)

... now why has doing it

... measure of ch + t  
Needs counselling not in health of school

15/12/96

①

30/10/96

A

## Case Summary / Interview Main Issues.

① Provision compromise - beh vs ed statement

③ Rather whole statementing didn't happen  
Didn't like school report - negative  
Did like EP report - balanced

④ Has D got emotional diff

Suspension - role in case - for D (day of provision start) - for sch - negotiation

P1 Beh/Ed Labelling  
St. Outcome  
Unsure re proc  
Beh/Ed which com  
fords  
Beh/Ed Which on stat  
Beh/Ed Imp of strategy f.  
- help D

P3 Sch advice: Parents op.  
- in negative  
EP rep - par opinion:  
posture

### Label issues

P11 Ed vs beh.

Giftedness not being sorted PC

Does sch accept he's bright - role of this in case

Beh vs ed statement

ESD rocky road - would teach him at home

Expected reasons

Power EP to give label - awareness raising P25

School has most power P8 but D is hidden/nonconsensually CENTRAL  
P9 A needed a lot of effort to not become powerless - helped by  
clip & liking D. / whole assess.

P - u -> less dichotomy - move a conversation, confident, diff voice

SEN E. balanced view.

J - little power - 1Q view not listened to

Sch - psychiatric problems A - feels powerless, can't take D from  
sch P16  
A is D's advocate

Stat is a process of neg. - P19 - this comes here since power is an issue  
Parent - contradiction manager - 21 in negotiation - not so much in an  
The other 99 - makes the 1 powerless - no importance - sch washes hands of  
objective process  
responsibility

### Label

Why does gifted + beh cause t. problems?

Sch - psychiatric problems - lots of hooks 'dt disagreed bright

A's use of objective tests

A doesn't like beh. charts P7

Doesn't want D to be aware of stat etc P18 D central - not aware.

A wants to choose label -> not beh

I can now  
start to see  
categories

NP → Power-gives A power  
 Trust

②

Partnership

A hates all meetings 15  
 Generated exp of sch 15  
 Powerless ones 16 → power  
 A vs schs und of D 17  
 A - is Dr advocate → power  
 Lack of und of pref roles (MOI) 23  
 EP / don't 24  
 And choice 24  
 hate stat  
 Diff persp. par + pref. 25 - 30  
 feels apart now as group 26  
 feels who has no status (not group) 26  
 All have to be renegotiated with now 26  
 Genuine partnership not possible: power imbalance 27  
 wants a low key sch.  
 Sch can limit part - exclude.  
 - limitations to schs commitment  
 - par don't have same power to limit  
 All part - EP in 4. M3  
 Part = comfortable communication 29  
 Resources to par - diff goals / motivation 30  
Statecrafting

negotiation process - not objective 19  
 ↳ what can possibly be objective about a child 20.  
 ↳ neg - making D ok for sch vs making sch ok for D  
 ↳ power - who has to change  
 ↳ "the other 99" 22  
 Imp of help D getting to change his sch - learning 22  
 if we're right  
 Issues around keeping / maintaining / lifting statements  
 Very traumatic 39  
 stat = odd, different, trouble 40

Parent - contradiction  
 manager 21  
 stat should be abandoned 22 - need schs today. removed  
 Imp of help D getting to change his sch - learning 22  
 if we're right  
 Issues around keeping / maintaining / lifting statements  
 Very traumatic 39  
 stat = odd, different, trouble 40

(3)

## Power

A felt powerless p25

P26 analyse - all has to be renege. with new t. since she has no status >

Dysp label could help A fight exclusion - have D looked at.  
but she's not going to do it differently P37

## Label

<sup>used</sup>  
OT - dyspraxia label 26

A would choose gifted 26

but problems in all labels P37 - not sure other reasons.

Protecting D from Beh label 28 - affects expectations P38 - (part) power

Importance of the HELP he's getting rather than label 28

Wants normality P36 - no prof. no stat.

Tells D little P34

Dyspraxia assoc inv. - didn't want it P37

- but dys label could help fight exclusion - have him looked at differently  
→ Power P37

## Partnership

Wishes all prof would go away 35. will see clin 4

Stat process v. traumatic P39 OT - OK about this P35

Parent vs t role for A - worried re sth she said,  
does it want to be identified as a t P39

④

Exclusion p 30 + 35

Happened day extra support letter

30. Nightmare

Blowup, worry her

He was devastated - felt no self control / power / blow last few mths  
Perm. excl. next time - nightmare placement home ch.

A - and how he felt d. didn't condone

- angry at D putting her through this  
- not angry with Sch

Sch could have handled it diff.  $\approx$  P35

Made A + D look  
at beh side of D

→ Negotiations - v. dangerous moment - <sup>LA</sup> challenged Ed  
(ind. beh) statement

now referred again to this & (outside system) - Jc not "negotiations"

What signif. Ath that happens once?

Highline

A - puzzled - why is D like this - maturity? (self system)

Need to analyse this further

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AVAILABLE**

**Variable print  
quality**





MEMBERSHIP	ROLE	ASSESSMENT	CONTRADICTION MANAGER	? CLIENT
<p>with ass process on P2 a longer term indep. from LEA P4 under (= problem) who articulate P9 easy P10 membership P15 y P15</p> <p>to know place - not give advice P16 parental advice P25 26 on par 27 + prof P28</p>		<p>BUREAUCRATIC, CUMBERSOME INTIMIDATING (bitters) 3 COMPLEX P7 RESOURCES P9 1993 Act achieved nothing P7 about paper. PROTECTION P13 It's not a statement writing process - it's an assessment process P8 Obj? Reports can be drafted P8 uncontaminated view P26 More obj. than a prof describing Should be about intervention, circles P8 Hunch P19 Cult of the individual need Now demands for assess - before stigma of 24 assess</p>	<p>Vol org. P17 - about money P involvement Resource issue - no external help P20 Go with par 1st - then par more likely to go with you - longer term view P23 Case stat older ch. P23 Making decisions to case P23</p>	<p>THE CHILD - and the longer term interests No conflicts in also being LEA officer</p>
<p>re EP advice favourable relation P9 of the people who have + a hunch + give opinions of others has brought of this case - a calm / def void confrontation vice. to not partner, filler</p>		<p>Time P4 not P10 18 months too late Paperwork + everything else you need to do to get some support from outside Problems known about for ages P7 Effects of help too late - problem could have been sorted earlier P11 people preconceived ideas P12 Time - P13 limit Lottery but miss P13 Child loses out P13 Doesn't know process 14 - i.e. who looks at papers</p>	<p>Learning vs behaviour P4 needs help for learn</p>	
<p>adv par. knew I was view of research the way want neg things in it - P4 but can't just dad - write good things it all due to learning diff + frustration it to be learning so not all single par. as length as EP - P10 par. to be positive up role. What the on not sure capt has done he is doing</p>	<p>P2 wk. individually with D. P4 fell in GSA P5 wants assess to provide evidence has a bright ch. P6 pts of review meetings had proposed stat (10/5/96) say for 14 June P7 pivotal role. Cl. E. has diff since has all other ch. to help. She V. experienced P2 her role v. diff. D doesn't work with her he lets himself down not the whole ch. P3 and P4 - the whole ch. P4 came in from - it is a</p>	<p>P3 eager for statement - provision P4 justification for interim help is D's needs - a danger to D, do P5 D's needs P10 EP tests - objective. Cl. E. subjective P13 everything in this assess depends on what you write down. - it's all the panel knows re D. - for code for how to write it for IC knows paper rates her highly stat process better now - faster! GSA -&gt; improvements - new form extended for April. But delay in starting to implement it P2 think it's a</p>	<p>Her role manages the contradictions between labels - and her being an outsider. Link between outside prof + EPs</p>	

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Other  
issue  
take-name  
P1  
P5  
doesn't want  
to say

SENCO

...unimpressive of G...  
likes to be successful, be 1st  
doesn't like to fail  
if fails doesn't like others to  
P4 narrowing charts  
P4 needs help ahead  
P5 what D does

...t. tries to keep...  
member P1  
feels 'going through the motions' P2  
- powerless  
Hit + mess - battery - rules P13

P11 feels remote not partner  
only for amplifier

P1 constant problem... Found out he  
not in her gpr does no writing  
P2 suggested 10 mins assembly -> writing  
? not? a motor thing Has to win  
P3 thoughtful boy Lots of anger  
anger - dad reads well  
retentive child  
P5 his needs are extreme - manipulative  
bc Grrs, mess match output + ability  
Castrol aesthetic? did nothing  
but now does the ruin.  
P8 desc. of D. As soon as starts writing  
talks re Dad.  
P10 not a straight forward  
learning problem  
D. stubborn with writing  
P11 Why is he behaving bad when not  
everyone in his position behaves  
like this?

her role ->  
P9  
EP has power - whether to go ahead  
with usses - or advice whether  
EP's measurements - are  
a concrete way of saying how  
bad a child is - no... - ob. advice  
P10 power not right up for what  
ED has - judgement + experience  
P10 hel? j: got this power  
- to not write  
power seen as neg w/b  
P11 Mum v. unimpressed to D  
writing improves before parents are  
P12 Mum totally for D

SENCO knew already par. knew I was  
talking to her - par view of research that  
P3 Mum doesn't want neg things in  
house school report - P4 but can't just  
P3 anger D. re dad - write good things  
P5 Mum wants it all due to learning  
diff + frustration  
P5 Mum needs it to be learning with this  
her fault. Single par  
P2 on same wave length as EP - P10  
knows D's gpar. - about wants  
P8 (Tia) had an unimp. role. What they  
say in staff room not strictly true  
- they don't accept he's clever - say  
his mum thinks he is clever.  
P9 feels a partner other prof  
- rel. to - who is cynical - sceptical  
of her ideas re D. - but not a problem  
P10 EP attitudes, the most important

P12 wk. individually with D  
P4 fell in GSA  
P5 wants as zero to  
has a bright ch.  
P6 pts of sch  
had proposed stat (10/5)  
P7 pivotal role. Cl. t. d  
all other ch. to help. She V  
P7 her role v. diff - if  
her he lets himself down  
P8 imp. role - staff  
re D.

P9 Come in from out.  
into something  
P11 NP - OK. - P12 6  
sing - diff to sing - diff on

NB  
Mention in methodology  
ch. that F same  
P1 + 2 of P12 mark  
OK fine not. but in OT finds his  
P25 F's view P3  
tape stop  
- worried  
about  
being  
quoted  
what it will  
sound like  
EP  
is stat. really cost  
effective way to  
distribute v. little  
P6  
appeals  
in mid  
sentence  
anything  
else?  
notes  
reminiscent  
? 27  
now outposts one a term not  
3 a day. Come a long way in  
singing - now learns phrases -  
red banner off  
OP not best able get him to  
talk less either. Fear his manipulation  
will get worse

P21 Re: Da - 1st mentioned statement - learning  
on the lines mother wanted. 3rd week l. supp  
ch. in 3 - has responded accordingly well to initiative  
... willing to practice (but) still feel has gaps  
P22 His main problems are peer rel. with  
V. clever boy - who's started away from things  
where he's not clever - fine motor, writing, b. o. e  
Well ahead in word, concepts  
System, outgrows peers intellectually, but not  
had normal easy going peer rel. Agreed his  
perceived as needing help. Mum constantly  
saying don't sifle him out. D was resp  
will to praise + star system - then worked out  
how to beat the system  
Idea of snakes + ladders work get him to make a  
deal with discipline (Link A) NP  
P23 V. sensitive to crit - results - anger  
Mum feels S+L not right - D too clever - she  
preferred referral to Clin V - deal with deep  
stuff not surface. - April - excluded -  
P24 D in a rage with F - had to use distraction  
read a book to him, didn't talk directly re his  
anger

P1 Believes in parent power  
P2 Power between par - par - par  
go along with par. idea  
view of snakes + ladders  
P5 demand for '1:1' comes from the  
effectiveness of mother. ch. rel.  
P5 (SCHOOLS) have the most power - they  
are pushing for assess. - Or could be the  
par pushing if sch. thinks all is OK  
- or pushing parent - powerful par -  
articulate - gets what they want  
P6 GSA took away EP power  
P6 EP still some power in GSA  
write have to have EP report  
Power of veto  
Some of F's rec. turned down  
Panel ultimate power - but  
P4 par. primed to be militant  
+ to be treated with less than  
they deserve

P11 P12 Mum - articulate - v. much for D  
Effect on other par. of D's beh.  
Def P1 - crucial - part with par  
- nature of the involvement crucial  
2 equals - allowing par to be involved  
part. vs involvement P1.  
Def P2 Top.  
P2 part. is a utopian ideal. But do not think  
hel. par. is about ones who reponsate anyone  
P3. ag. a deficit view of par (my mind) - F's  
who are against blame relationships par  
P7 Stat seen in terms of resources diminishing  
diminishes the role of parents. Makes  
trumped answers are with the experts.  
P6 Par being primed to be militant  
gets in the way of par. - a view  
that a statement to resources are the  
only way - a dilemma with  
P6 in conflict with par. of feels what  
par. want to for own prestige not in  
interest of child - is dr. stigmatised - but this  
v. par - conflict with her + par v. rare

Role with Parents - P12 to w.  
the child with the dr. to deal joint in  
the interests of the child  
Def of Par. prof role P12  
P2 Top + mind - Y - knowledge  
things work, ed. process, ho  
- it's an educ. intervention  
P2 Parent role - bond, mu  
EP - rare glimpses  
P24 role for EP to 'blanch  
par by t. - due to stress  
EP role  
Making a fertile ground  
P3/2 "clearing up any of  
things" (a blanch)  
P23 EP role when D anger  
t - "my job then waste  
likely to happen again. be  
P24 my job was to try to  
confidence and to continue to  
ie use of P1 from day 1 with  
P25 Idea of J Clin Clin 4  
get over another person  
P27 sch. with later on to  
which will prove them -  
v. diff. - they had the best  
system could have devised

P25 No amot. diff - he + mum seen fine  
Angry re peers. Ch. held door on him Chid done this  
to them before things. Residual pain or debt -  
to see J C Bin V. Separate pain had + to shpear  
worrying  
P26 W. V. removed upst. re school. He blames  
self + internalises things already. He needs an  
escape clause than he can think later. He also feels  
help done by - treated badly by ch. Doesn't recog. his  
past distress. It's anger to do with missing playtime  
Past. Gidder. knows. No improvement over the term.

st partner,

lottery but miss P13  
child loses out #3  
Doesn't know process 14 - is who looks at papers

par. knew I was  
view of research that

to neg things in  
- P4 but can't just  
write good things

all due to learning  
diff + frustration  
or learning so not all

par. length as EP - P10  
about wanting  
to be positive

role. What they  
st. steadily true  
he's dumber - say  
e's dumber.

other prof  
cynical - sceptical  
not a problem  
most important

to test to min's view  
- much fun  
of D's beh.

part with par  
olvement crucial  
to be involved

ideal. But do not think  
- whole response anyone  
of part (my mind) - is  
relationships par

ns of resources diminish  
a of parents. Makes  
ve with the experts.

ng pruned to be militant  
any of part. - a reason  
t resources are the  
via inst.

with par if feels what  
un prestige not in  
n. Stigmatised - but this  
her + par v. rare

P12 wk. individually with D.

P4 fell in GSA

P5 wants a case to provide evidence  
has a bright ch.

P6 pts of review meetings.

Had proposed stat (10/3/96) say for 14 June

P7 pivotal role. Cl. t. has diff since has

all other ch. to help. She v. experienced

P8 her role v. diff - if D doesn't work with

her he lets himself down not the whole class

P8 imp. role staffroom say what's

re D.

P9 Come in from outside "come straight

into something"

P11 NP - OK - P12 sounds all singing same

sing - diff to sing - diff one.

Role with Parents - P13 to use their know. expert. of

the child with the h. to dev. joint initiatives to operate in

the interests of the child

Def of Par. prof role P14

P2 top + mind - 4 - knowledge ch. dev. the way

things work, ed. process, how to enhance learning

- it's an educ. intervention

P2. Parent role - bond, minute knowledge

EP - rare glimpses

P2. role forces to 'blame' blame' of t by par

par by t. - due to stress

Making a fertile ground for change

P3/2 "clearing up any of these contaminating

things" (a blame)

could have been better if had been here

P23 EP role when angry + violent to ch +

t - "my job then worse say this is v. rare, not

likely to happen again, been doing better.

P24 my job was to try to renew trust (the school)

confidence and to continue to do what they were doing

ie use of P1 from Day 10 mit

P25 Idea of Joan (McKinn) involvement was to

get around another person coming in to school

P27 sch will latch on to every manifestation

which will prove them - minus dfts - makes

v. diff. - they had the best ed. plan anyone in the

system could have devised

P3 eager for statement - provision

P4 justification for interim help is re

D's needs - a danger to D, do

P5 D's needs

P10 EP test - objective. Cl. t. subjective

P13 everything in the assess depends

on what you write down. - it's all the panel

knows re D - for code for how to write it for

I know papers rates her highly

stat process better now - faster!

COSA -> improvements - new form,

extended for app. But delay in

giving promise after 8/1/96

diff to enter for beh. prob.

P3/4 'unnac. logistical procedure to get small

outcomes... deflects attention from doing

sth. with resources. P4 people think stat

needs need, bigger resources is resources

But answers are in terms of attitudes

P3 end stat - red herring.

P4 too much improvement leads to t. losing

job (sup. t.) - so discontinue for provision to

improve child. little time for EP to administer

process - P5 stop - better to not withdraw from cl.

P4 logistical - mystique - no connection

P5 assess + intervention - latter depends on t.

P4 would swap stat

stage 3.

P5 COSA supposed to mean less stat - F said no

it means bureaucracy - that's why I'm leaving

this job

P6 end little variety in stat assess outcome

P8

OBJECTIVE? that's an enormous qu

assess - interaction model - not the ch's

needs, the situational needs. P5 an

assess of the situation. ch. copes in one

sch not another

(Her role manages the contradiction

between labels - and her being an

outsider. Link between outside prof + EP,

## APPENDIX 8

### Frequency count of responses by SENCO on nature of David's situation

**Table showing the number of turns in the interview containing a particular type of response about David by the SENCO**

Response Type	Frequency
hates writing	1
does no writing	2
minimal writing	1
refuses to do anything, avoids	5
improved (writing and behaviour)	1
control	2
class idiot/ clown/ villain	1
anger	6
aggressive to children	4
running away	2
must win	2
feels frustration	1
strong personality, will	1
intelligent	2
knows a lot	1
clever words/ on to what you're saying	2
manipulative	1
mismatch output/ ability	2
reads well	1
retentive	1
thoughtful	1
gentle	1
amusing	2
interesting to talk to	1
conscious of comparisons	1
ok to be out of step with everybody	1
dad - sad, anger	1
needs extreme, individual, unusual	1
not motor problem	1
slight autistic tendency	1

## Appendix 9

# Summary Panels of Raw Utterances from Interviews of Participants in David's Case Study

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## **Summaries of Utterances from Interview Transcripts: on the theme of "Assessment"**

### Acting PEP

p2 ... bureaucratic and cumbersome  
p7 ... not helpful or supportive to the less able, the less articulate p8  
... it's an assessment process which may or may not lead to a statement at the end of it.  
.....psychologists....bring greater objectivity.. as much evidence as you can together in one place at one time about the child, p12 ... children's needs are too complex.....the definition of special needs is so woolly  
p13 parents' rights and code etc, again, detracts from the positive work that you could be doing as an E.P. p13 ..Warnock..the protection of a statement... for a very, very small number

### Summary Frame:

#### ASSESSMENT

What all the participants of the assessment had to say about statementing

### Educational Psychologist

p3 unnecessarily legalistic... small outcomes... deflects attention .... (answers seen as) resources....(rather than) attitudes. p3/4 experts.  
p4 stages....p5 schools working ever harder to do the paperwork ... intensified bureaucratic push  
p6 Not a lot of variety, after all that ...  
p8 interactionist..situational needs.. an assessment of the situation which can best bring about learning

### Clinical Psychologist

role.. accidental....don't pay ..much attention (to statementing) ..lot of paperwork..child gets very little int2 p1  
key people...EP...school..parents.. perhaps the child p3  
objectivity ... some idea of why.. examples p9

### Named Person

p23 supposed to be an assessment of the child's needs.... aims are (objective) .. can be used to let a school off the hook.. their rights, because they have something written in writing p26.....I think it's a label, I think it's a stigma..... even if that statement was there to provide him with the best education.. it's on his head, and it never leave

### Mother

int 2 brought about more of a feeling of partnership because there has been other people involved (p18) int 3 a negotiation process (p19)...should be abandoned (p22) hate (meetings) p14, maddening (time to get help) p32

### SENCO

p5 evidence.. intelligent child ... output ..unmatched abilities ..frustration .. anger. p13 everything depends on what you write down ...tremendous responsibility.. I must have picked up whatever it is, or how to write...it's better now... faster  
p14 Why can't we get on with it? ...Well, it's up to me ..to do the statement work with him

Int 1 p6 What's an assessment?... trying to find out what kind of help I need... p7 ... I don't remember anything [she did] ..I think I quite liked it...p10 Yes, she [Jean] told me that I was.. A hundred in brains..I'm better than nearly everybody she's met.. p11 ... I thought I didn't do a lot of it right...Int2 p15 And ....had blond hair, the others had black hair. ...  
p19 They just decided I should have it, after the tests [no one asked me]...They should ask me

David

### Head Teacher

p4 the only way we could go really  
p8 too much paperwork. ....not having gathered enough (information).. it can be objective... But .. particularly with behaviour, it's very very difficult to be objective  
p9.....It's good that it's bringing lots of people together...what you're writing down has to be shared with parents, and they have to sort of share with you. ...I'm wary about people labelling children, .... where we could have done with extreme help to move him on a little bit, it wasn't there.  
p13 ...what happens next? And there isn't really anything

### Class Teacher

p4 .....you need somebody almost straight away.. paperwork ... a long time to get there.  
p9... if we'd had the help a year ago instead of now.p13 .. a very hit and miss thing.... firm criteria, but all to do with finances at the moment  
p14 reports from all of the people... (3 hours) probably enough at the moment. But a year ago it wouldn't have been enough...It's frustrating, it is frustrating.

### SCMO

p4 20% (SEN)..18%.. not going to be statemented p7 parents' comments (taken)very, very seriously p10 objective and a subjective process..judgment... a group of professionals... specialised in child care ... the child as a whole, and within the context... difficulties that the child has.. needs.. not .. resources.. multidisciplinary and complex.

### OT

Int1 p9 ....written advice...bog standard comment .. need p11 ...confusing .. jargon up ..very difficult... legally binding..levels and stages.. a protracted period of assessment.. a long term thing. p12 ...EP the main manager... initially assessing the child and working with school.. bringing in other agencies as deemed necessary... changes p17 ... through negotiation then you have responsibility..everybody's contribution... p18 .. as objective as you're going to get  
Int2 p2 ... We have a set assessment

### Acting Principal Educational Psychologist

p2 ...the assessment process is inevitably bureaucratic and cumbersome  
p7 ... it is not helpful or supportive to the less able, the less articulate, the more disadvantaged members of society... I think the Act was ... an attempt almost at face saving, to say, oh yes, we are concerned about children with special needs in the government, here is the legislation to prove it, riding on the back of the 1988 Education Act which said, schools are businesses, select your customers, chuck out the rejects  
p8 ... everybody does seem to have fallen into the way of describing it as the statementing process, which is not what it is, it's an assessment process which may or may not lead to a statement at the end of it.  
... psychologists ... bring greater objectivity, and making sure that you've got as many, as much evidence as you can together in one place at one time about the child, it's certainly far superior to, well, you know, two professionals chewing the cud in the corner of a staffroom saying, well, I think perhaps we'll just send him off to special school, shall we  
p12 ... And the only way we could control it would be if there were an LEA policy ... to say, this level of need ... and unless you go above that, no, you don't get anything. And yet as E.P.s we would know that you couldn't possibly set those criteria, because children's needs are too complex...And the actual, the words, the definition of special needs is so woolly anyway  
p13 this sort of notion of parents' rights and code etc, again, detracts from the positive work that you could be doing as an E.P. That you just start from the baseline of, it is an imperfect world. You could throw all the money in the world at any particular problem and it won't be solved ... what can we best do to help that child in the little ways that they could be helped to progress p13 ...Warnock... the protection of a statement ... think we do have to reconsider, again, all but for a very, very small number

### Clinical Psychologist

Interview 1 p8 I'm often asked if I will give permission for my report to be included in a statementing procedure, and I always say yes. ... But I am often not very sure how much use it actually is, or how much it actually contributes.  
p11 ... what I'd want to know was if this was sufficient for him... was it working.  
Interview 2 p1 ...Sometimes I feel my role is accidental, ... that isn't necessarily a bad thing, at one level. Sometimes I do an assessment of a child... not just looking at their emotional state, ... cognitive status as well ...sometimes ... their reading ability, their spelling age, etc, etc...if I'm concerned about their profile on the WISC, I might do further neuro-psychological testing ... I have to admit, I don't pay very much attention to it...an awful lot of paperwork, and everybody's (p2) views involved...at the end of the day, sometimes the child gets very little... it(statementing) helped the little girl out...No, I'm not aware of changes (in the statementing process), ...I think most undoubtedly speeding it up (would improve it).  
p3...the key people are obviously the educational psychologist, the school itself, the parents, perhaps the child, if he or she is able to make some kind of statement. And the school medical officer. I think they're the key people. I'm not aware of anybody else who would be, sort of, mandatory...I really don't know...it would be nice to know how that process is arrived at.  
p8 ... Ideally ... an objective assessment, but I was reading a school report on a child this morning, and my feeling was it was probably very subjective... some teachers find it very difficult to say anything positive about a child at all... and you wonder where the evidence is... and there was only one little line which gave some sort of recognition for the fact that maybe he had problems at home.  
p9 ... Maybe (objectivity is...) some idea of why the child why may be behaving the way they do, at ten, and that's asking for them to be something that they're not, isn't it... It's about formulating problems, in a way that makes sense and is helpful, with the intent of trying to help the child. I think the school psychologists ... they are usually providing examples of things that they are describing....  
p22 ... I don't think you can protect the needs of the child unless the assessment is objective. Because you'll not know what the needs are...

### Named Person

p18 I think she got all that she thought that she would get. I don't think that she was under any illusion that she would get anything, I think she still feels that, he, I was saying before that I don't agree with labels, and I think A (David's mother) deep down doesn't either, but I think she's still hoping for a label so that they can look at that specific thing. If it was dyspraxia, for example, if he was labelled as having dyspraxia, then you could focus on what you needed to sort of help him through that  
...Well, then it would look at his behaviour, it would look at how to deal with the behaviour, rather than, in my view, looking at the reasons for the behaviour, in terms of education. I think it would be easier if he had a behavioural statement, to say well, it's his home life, it's the distress of di-de-di-de, rather than saying, well, this is his intelligence level, and this is what he needs, and this is what he isn't getting.  
p19 In my view, in my opinion, I think the behavioural statement was kind of, bolting the stable door when the horse had bolted, rather than thinking, right, let's look at the education, he's got difficulties with his education, whatever his behaviour is, so it could be that his behaviour is because of his educational difficulties  
p23 Well, obviously it's supposed to be an assessment of the child's needs...The aims are (objective)...I think it's set up to be that, but I think it's used for something completely different, or it can be  
...it can be used to let a school off the hook, in terms of, if a child is too difficult for it to deal with, then they are quite within their rights, because they have something written in writing  
p26...I think it's a label, I think it's a stigma... even if that statement was there to provide him with the best education, I think the fact that it's on his head, and it never leaves, right throughout their education

## "ASSESSMENT"

### Head Teacher

p4 I think it has upset A (David's mother) because she doesn't want this, she doesn't want this label 'statemented child', or 'behaviour problem child'... but I mean, it's the only way we could go really ... at Newby, in the good old days when you had classes of 18 and spare people about, and there was always somebody who built up a relationship with these people and it would never have got that far in a school like that. A lot of it is to do with resources and people.  
p8 (re stage3/4) Well, I think basically there is still too much paperwork. And the gathering of information, and not having gathered enough. I mean, I think it is very important, particularly in behaviour problems as well, where you only have written evidence where teachers  
... it can be objective, particularly when you are talking about hard evidence and academic work and reading ages and that sort of thing. But at other times, particularly with behaviour, it's very very difficult to be objective, isn't it, because what one person accepts, I mean, I think all of us would agree you don't go around punching other children and things, but you see, then I look, and other people look as well, to why he punched another child, and you know, children can wind him up and be very cruel, as well. It happens. You know, this, when you're looking at both sides of the case, sometimes I wish I was more black and white, because it would be easier, you know.  
p9.....It's good that it's bringing lots of people together, and I mean, I like the fact that what you're writing down has to be shared with parents, and they have to sort of share with you. I think, you know,  
I'm very sort of wary about people labelling children, and it's quite a good thing for teachers to remember. But, no, I can't necessarily think of any bad things, apart from the amount of time taken, I suppose. Quite often, which I suppose is a good thing, but the child is better, or more manageable, and that's certainly the case in David's case, but at the same time where we could have done with extreme help to move him on a little bit, it wasn't there.  
...Of course, because that's very objective as well. - I mean, David would not stick out somewhere like Newby, you know, seriously, he wouldn't.  
p12 (what we wanted from the assessment was) ... Just support, just extra help, basically (and we got this)  
p13 It has to be said that he has this statement, but I wish there was a little bit more flexibility, some sort of central resourcing of auxiliary services. but suppose he was to riot again, and this statement, this extra sort of time didn't work, I said, what happens next. And there isn't really anything, again. Because I'm sure there are far, far worse children, as I've said before, who need these places in other places.

### Educational Psychologist

p3 it's an unnecessarily legalistic procedure to get very small outcomes, and in some ways it deflects attention from actually settling down to do something with the resources and the world that we live in. ... They begin to see the answers to problems in terms of resources. Whereas I feel that answers to problems are in terms of attitudes.  
p3/4 Using the resources that are available to the best outcomes. Whereas, if it's all to do with, here's a teacher, here's some hours, here's a computer, that'll sort it, it actually diminishes the role of parents. And it makes them feel that the answers are all with the experts.  
p4 And there is a feeling that they've got to go through all these stages to get the answer, this statement, when in a way if there wasn't such a thing we'd all, perhaps more profitably, get on with the here and now.  
... I think the sorts of monitoring and assessment that come at the earlier stages and the involvement of psychologists at stage 3 is often a most useful for the child.  
p5 I see signs of schools working ever harder to do the paperwork and to make better cases, and to have more reviews.. it's just intensified bureaucratic push  
p6 Which are, like, up to three hours of teacher time to support in a mainstream school, sharing a unit support with mainstream school for behavioural difficulties, and then one of the three or four special schools that are there. Not a lot of variety, after all that ...  
p8 (Is an objective assessment possible?) That's an enormous question about what anybody needs or what a child needs, and it all depends so much on circumstances, and particular circumstances of a particular school, particular teacher. It's an interactionist model which is going to vary very much from school to school ... So it's not actually the child's needs, it's, it's not the child, like a medical model, it's the situational needs that alter... It's an assessment of the situation which can best bring about learning



### Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

p5 I hope it might provide evidence which I think is necessary that he is a very intelligent child. That ...output..unmatched abilities... frustration ... coming through in the anger.

...conflict...mother...difficult (for her to) ... accept behaviour aspect

p13 everything depends on what you write down, on that blue form, that's all that the panel knows about the child. So it's a tremendous responsibility

I don't know what you ever need to worry about, she said (an ed psych), if they look and see your name at the bottom of something they accept it, which was very nice for me. So I must have picked up whatever it is, or how to write

I think it's better now (statementing). It's faster now

(stage3/4 has) improved as well, because this new form to fill in, it only gets extended for the Appendix D, you don't have to do it all out again

p14 When everything's been ready to go. I'm ready to go. Why can't we get on with it? I know the mother's approved of it, why should something take so long?

behaviour difficulties are far more difficult to tackle than learning difficulties... because it's not something that you can just do for an hour, three hours a week ...

Why is he behaving like this when not every child who has his difficulties does behave as badly, or as, badly is perhaps a bit judgmental, but it is bad behaviour, it is unacceptable behaviour.

(will the statement tackle his behaviour) Well, it's up to me to try and help it to do so, because I'm going to do the statement work with him. We thought that was a good idea. I mean, that was the idea, because he and I get on well ...

### Senior Clinical Medical Officer

p4 I think in the past they used to look at all the children and pick them out and review them indiscriminately. And there were no stages followed, and the teachers always had to continuously do the process of assessment and reporting on all the children who had the slightest difficulty. But now they are picking out those 20% of children who have got special educational needs, and they are also seeing to the needs of those 18% who are not going to be statemented at the end of the day, and that is, I think that is the crunch of it. Those 18% of children who have got special educational needs but do not end up with a statement are also benefiting from the whole process of assessment input, reassessment.

I think it has in the main, yes(achieve what is sets out to achieve) . Certainly in Newby.

p7 (re the panel) I thought that they'd have a look at the child's abilities, and they slot the child into the system, whereby the child can manage to fulfil their utmost potential. I never thought that they look at the social aspects of things, medical aspects of things, altogether they take the parents' comments very, very seriously, they have a lot of respect for that.

p10 I think it's a combination of everything. I think it is both an objective and a subjective process, in that in any process that people and their judgment is involved, it has to have some degree of subjectivity. And what I see of it is that a group of professionals, who have specialised in child care, whether it is educational or health or otherwise, get together, have a look at the child as a whole, and within the context of its environment, family and school, and decide on the difficulties that the child has, first and foremost, it's very important to pinpoint what the difficulties are, and then it is up to the panel, I think, to find the best way to meet the child's difficulties. And one thing I have seen in Newby is that everybody concentrates on the child's needs, first and foremost. They do not say, these are the resources we have, these are his needs. They always say, these are this child's needs, and these are the available resources. Which one would best meet this child's needs, considering that the parent doesn't want him on this or is happy about that.

.....it is so multidisciplinary and complex.

p10 They (EPs since the CODE) seem to be a lot more deeply involved with children who are on the special needs register, with that 20%, a lot more involvement with that, especially with that 18% who had special needs in the past, but were not actually worked on.

.....Before, I think they had some involvement, but it was in an advisory sort of manner and not an assessment, a full procedure.

.....Yes, that 18%, I can see that the new Education Act has actually highlighted those 18% and has attached great importance to those 18% and is concentrating a lot more on them, whereas previously they weren't really

## "ASSESSMENT"

### Class Teacher

p4 ... you need somebody almost straight away, and all of the paperwork and everything else that you have to do, to get some support from outside, and all of the people that have to come and see him and give their opinions, do help in the end, but it takes a long time to get there.

... at the moment, really, he needs someone to help him with his academic work.

p5... It's taken a, well, it's taken a while for that to emerge, but, you see, initially I think it was mainly looked upon as a behaviour problem.

... He still does have a behaviour problem, you know. He still has a problem of, although he's a lot better, and he has certainly improved, both academically and behaviourally

p7 Well, the school ... I think they saw that he had an academic problem, but his behaviour was so bad that it overshadowed everything else. And his behaviour has improved, and obviously as his behaviour has improved

p8... the academic problem comes more to the fore, because you've got more time to concentrate on the things that you should be concentrating on.

p9... It's not to say that he still doesn't need help, but it might have been more productive if we'd had the help a year ago instead of now. I mean, I always think that the sooner you see the problem and do something about it, the quicker you can overcome it ... someone to be with him for part of the time in the class.

p13 (stage 3/4) So you have to do all of this before you actually get the chance to say that you need something extra ... it's half a year when they're still struggling.

... it is a very hit and miss thing... I think there's firm criteria, but it just depends on, it's all to do with finances at the moment, unfortunately, I think.

p14 Well, it would depend on all of the reports from all of the people, but I think at the time that the, I don't know who actually looks at these things when it comes to the crunch

It's (the 3 hours statemented help) probably enough at the moment. But a year ago it wouldn't have been enough ... It's frustrating, it is frustrating

### Occupational Therapist

Interview 1 p9 ...we will have been involved with for quite a while . and from that we will be asked to submit some written advice. Which is obviously from the medical ... The only bit that we put on the bottom is what the need is ... I tend to put a bog standard comment in there, I must admit. Something like, this child requires ongoing occupational therapy assessment and review. And I don't put any more details in ... my bosses always say ... you've got to be really sure that you're putting down what the need is, and not what your service can provide.

p11 ... in an ideal set up what should happen is that for every child that we write in should get some sort of OT... a regular six months, and followed by, you know, and be really precise.

... I think it's (statementing) a really confusing area. As a health person ... reading what lands on my desk and that sort of thing, I've picked the jargon up... God knows how a parent must feel. I think it's very difficult.

... I understand it (statementing) to be a legal process that parents enter into to assess the needs of their child from an educational point of view, so that the child will be provided with the sort of support and education that they need to meet those individual needs, and that it is a legally binding arrangement. And it consists of a number of different levels and stages, and it is a protracted period of assessment, and it's a long term thing.

p12 ... the educational psychologist is the main manager, I think, of the whole procedure, and is sort of like a case manager, I suppose, in terms of initially assessing the child and working with school, initially, and then bringing in other agencies as deemed necessary... I'm aware that there has been changes in the Code of Practice in that it's not so much now the educational psychologist, but the onus is much more on the school ...

p13 ... ultimately the educational psychologist has always got their finger on the pulse much better than the school

p17 ... the educational psychologist's report, for me, is the lynch pin of the whole thing... I always implicitly trust their opinion

... they put these EPRs together for children, IPRs. What are they called?... that's negotiated at the meeting, you know... There has to be negotiation because, I mean, through negotiation then you have responsibility then, because you've been part of the decision ... I suppose only through looking at all, everybody's contribution ...

p18 everybody being happy with what everybody else has said, and I think as a group, if you can agree that this information is correct and appropriate and they haven't missed anything out, or whatever, then that is as objective as you're going to get, isn't it? ...I don't really like standardised assessments. Do you?

Interview 2 p2 ... We have a set assessment that we do...(we) look at fine motor skills... at gross motor skills... at body awareness

## **Summaries of Utterances from Interview Transcripts: on the theme of "David"**

### Acting PEP

p18 .. He's bright, and there are behaviour problems as well, but he's also got motor difficulties, specific learning problems... what we would tend to do, is say, if there is a learning difficulty, an academic learning difficulty, then the first port of call would be to say, let's try and do something about that and see whether helping with that will ameliorate the behaviour problems

### Summary Frame: DAVID

What all the participants of the assessment had to say about David, and the nature of his difficulties

### Educational Psychologist

p22 His main problems are peer relations, with peers..... You do have a very clever, clever boy, who has steered away from things where he isn't clever, which involves fine coordination, particularly in writing. ....p24/5 there's an imbalance between what the head can do and what this faulty little hand can do. p26...feels that other children are treating him badly

### Clinical Psychologist

very bright (int1 p5). WISC... full scale score of 135 (p6)  
odd looking.. organic component  
separation anxiety  
an interaction of physical, psychological and environmental factors p6 he'd blown up.... a perfectly normal response to the situation he was in...made to feel stupid (ie by school) p14

### Named Person

p3 a very active kid p10 ..... I've got no idea (for the reason for David's difficulties), David is a very bright child, and quick, very, very quick....he's bored..... he's done that, he wants to move on. p11 He's a gorgeous kid, he's very sociable. He's got the most sensitive nature....his needs have always come first p12 He reasons with them, you see...p17 .....He needs to stop being so aggressive.. quite often he's the victim as well.

### Mother

a gifted child with fine motor problems who needs some help around his writing and spelling (p16 int 2)

I don't want him labelled a behaviour problem (p26 int3)

### SENCO

p2 very conscious of his writing... still extremely aggressive completely unprovoked..... winning p3 .. a thoughtful boy... very retentive...He reads quite well, with a lot of expression and a lot of understanding  
p5 his needs are extreme, and individual and unusual. .. so manipulative... very intelligent child. ....p10 it's not a straightforward learning problem..he can just say no p6 class clown

Int1 p4 ... I wasn't behaving well and I was kicking and fighting with people and punching people... p3 excellent reader. Int 2 p3 So writing is hard for me to do ..Maths [is what I'm good at] ... [I feel ] Quite good [about getting this help] p14 ...Yes [I'm quite good at listening], quite good. p18 ... You're not allowed to write short ones (stories), you have to write quite long ones, especially now that I'm in the third last class. p20...Yes, [I'm] a wee bit happier [about things]

### David

### Class Teacher

p2 a lot of the time he is fine, and then for no reason he goes berserk....not really a learning difficulty...more of a coordination, physical problem with his writing...he's got a good general knowledge  
p3 it is very difficult to get him to do anything...prefers anything that's easy  
p5 quite manipulative

### Head Teacher

p1 I was told.. warned.. he had behaviour problems.. very serious incidents of him throwing chairs, damaging other children, running out  
p3 its not necessarily learning difficulties, its motor skills, its the writing...very good orally..can manipulate teachers  
p10 psychological help rather than learning help p11 he's very eccentric

### Senior Clinical Medical Officer

18 concentration..learning difficulties.. and... motor learning difficulties. But his, the difficulties in the behavioural and emotional areas .... were related to his learning difficulties

### OT

p3 fine motor skills...there were definite problems there.. main problem ..he was extremely easily defeated. ...  
p4 confused about what might be causing that problem.... the mechanical aspect of his writing was there ... p5... these behaviour problems are as a result of frustration at not being able to perform some of these tasks, but his response seems to be out of proportion  
p12 it's a mixture of things. There are other things going on in his life....

### Acting Principal Educational Psychologist

p18 It was for learning support, wasn't it, I think, yes?

... He's bright, and there are behaviour problems as well, but he's also got motor difficulties, specific learning problems.

... in a sense that's not really that complex, because it's not that unusual that you get a child with that combination of difficulties coming up at a statement panel

...That's right. So what we would tend to do, is say, if there is a learning difficulty, an academic learning difficulty, then the first port of call would be to say, let's try and do something about that and see whether helping with that will ameliorate the behaviour problems

### Clinical Psychologist

Interview 1 p4 ... an interaction between difficulties at school and difficulties at home... and from my point of view it was a good psychology referral...

p5 ... a very bright little boy, from the assessment. ...school..making assumptions that perhaps he wasn't very bright...an IQ in the high 120s. And it gave me great pleasure to tell mum that, and I think it gave mum great pleasure when we told the school that.

p5 . she was worried that he would be excluded. And she thought they wanted rid of him

... his family circumstances and his dad... he was no longer around, and David felt very let down and alone... a very, very small extended family, and there was only him and mum and gran... there weren't many people in the family to take the strain, and to diffuse it a bit... an active little boy... no male figure to whom he could relate....

p6 ... a rather odd looking little boy at times... a pixie face, sometimes, he would screw his eyes up, screw his face up. Very distractible and fidgety. He talked about feeling very angry. He said he liked being at home with his mum, and he agreed with me that his bad behaviour at school was partly to achieve this, to be at home with his mum, because they sent him home when he behaved badly. ... I couldn't help feeling that there was an organic component to it all...there were difficulties within David that just couldn't be explained, either by what was happening in school or at home, or in his past, in his family. ... emotionally labile ... a sort of hyperactive quality to him at times, although he certainly wouldn't fit the hyperactive criteria, I'm sure. And his IQ certainly wouldn't be consistent with that...

...On the revised version of the WISC (an IQ test), he obtained a full scale score of 135, with a verbal score of 143 and a performance score of 118... there have been occasions when he has behaved badly in a situation where his skills were shown to be wanting in comparison with the peer group...(p7) a real knock to his confidence, which presumably been given a bit of a body blow by dad leaving. Emotionally I felt he presented as a very sensitive little boy, displayed signs of separation anxiety. His emotional attachment to his mother still very much at an Oedipal level... I do not think that all of David's difficulties are entirely environmental, and I suspect they result from an interaction of physical, psychological and environmental factors. Mrs Bell would like greater recognition to be taken of David's abilities as well as his deficits, and I think he would benefit from a full statementing procedure for a number of reasons. ... a very vulnerable little boy, and could be helped to achieve his potential within the right environment, given that a high IQ is seen as a protective factor.

p13 ... I'd be suspicious that the school have just been waiting for David to explode. ... fulfilling the prophecy. p14 ... you could understand why he'd blown up. It was a perfectly normal response to the situation he was in. And sometimes he responded badly when he was made to feel poor about his work, or made to feel stupid

### Named Person

p3 a very active kid, both physically and mentally, he always has been, from a toddler ...he wouldn't settle, he was quite disruptive... could do with his eyes closed..But put a pen in his hand, and instruct him in a specific way, like, write your name, then this wall just came up and he rebelled ...And I've seen him do many, many things. He has a room that is just to the ceiling with toys, games, book...And he can spend hours at one activity p7 I did point out that no-one had mentioned any of David's positives. He's got millions.

p10 ... I've got no idea (for the reason for David's difficulties), David is a very bright child, and quick, very, very quick. ...he's bored... he's done that, he wants to move on.

p11 He's a gorgeous kid, he's very sociable. He's got the most sensitive nature ...he's not spoiled at all...his needs have always come first

p12 He reasons with them, you see... and I think the school, quite often are frightened of kids who they don't come across every day... how are we going to respond to this

p15 He liked the lessons, but he didn't like being singled out.

p17 before she did anything, she said to David, look Davie, I've read about this, what about if we try, and David's always wanted to try everything (to improve things at school)

...He needs to stop being so aggressive... they praised him because he'd been in a situation with other kids, or other kids had bullied him, and he'd restrained himself from attacking them, and he was so proud of himself, he really was... And he actually knew, he'd said to Andrea, I didn't, I wanted to do it, but I didn't.

... he's always the perpetrator, and that's not true, because quite often he's the victim as well.

p22 I think exclusion for David wouldn't be a bad thing, from Davie's point of view. He'd love to be at home with Andrea 24 hours a day

### "DAVID"

### Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

p1 constant source of aggravation, worry, and everything at playtimes. He'd been running away ... hated writing ... He's straight on to what you're about.

p2 Very, very angry if you asked him to do anything his writing improved spectacularly...I was surprised, because I would have thought that it was because of a motor control thing

p2 he was very pleased, and everyone was very pleased. And his behaviour made great improvements

Still not doing very much in the class... i

But he is still extremely aggressive completely unprovoked...This winning even in such a trivial thing, seems to be so important to him.

p3 ...he's such a thoughtful boy...very retentive

He reads quite well, with a lot of expression and a lot of understanding

p5 his needs are extreme, and individual and unusual. So meeting his needs in a class, in a group, even individually, is very difficult because he is so manipulative, very manipulative.... using his intellectual and verbal skills to outwit anybody at any possible stage. He just likes winning, he just likes controlling. That's oversimplifying it, and that isn't all of it

he is a very intelligent child. ... the output that we are getting from him is totally unmatched to his abilities, totally, and (that) the frustration that he is feeling is coming through in the anger.

p6 slight autistic tendency... strong character... class idiot..class clown..class villain

p8 extremely amusing and interesting to talk to. He knows an awful lot....a gentle boy

p10 it's not a straightforward learning problem, it's not a straightforward behaviour problem .. he can just say no

p2 very very conscious of his writing...

p6 It wouldn't bother him to be out of step with everybody else.

### Educational Psychologist

p21/22 He has, actually, responded incredibly well to initiatives really, from not wanting to approach things that are hard for him, like writing, he is willing to practice, and he likes the idea that practice makes perfect, and he will do it in school. He'll still, he'll still feel that he is above things, that he doesn't have to do certain things, or if he is partnered with somebody else, on the computer, which we thought was a good idea, he'll rubbish this person's ideas.

p22 His main problems are peer relations, with peers... You do have a very clever, clever boy, who has steered away from things where he isn't clever, which involves fine coordination, particularly in writing... And in some ways he's outgrown his peers in terms of intellectual things, and yet he hasn't had normal, easy going peer relations. He himself feels very aggrieved that he is perceived as needing help, because really, he doesn't, in terms of intellect...

p23 there was a tremendous flare up. ... whatever happened, he ended up really hurting that child. ... Physically. So really they had a case of a child badly hurt, and a teacher badly hurt

p24/5 there's an imbalance between what the head can do and what this faulty little hand can do.

p25 there is not apparently, any great difficulties in the family, because there is no peers involved. And the two can be, mother and son can be actually quite respectful equals...I'm sure there must be some pain there somewhere (about David's father)

p26 He was very, very remorseful. Very, very, very upset about school. ... he needs some way, escape clause. So by changing the subject and some affirmation, he can, later on, he can think about it. He certainly does feel hard done by...He feels that other children are treating him badly, and doesn't seem to perceive that he may have been doing something to them. ...He had a good spell this year when he claimed, he named a person as a friend, and that allowed him to have proper playtimes. But I think these flare ups this term that have happened...I think it was to do with missing playtime.

p27... And he had that attitude (to turn off) towards anything that he found difficult

**Class Teacher**

p1 If anything upset him, he used to run away  
 p2 And a lot of the time he is fine, and then for no reason at all he goes berserk.  
 ...There's not really a learning difficulty, well, it's a, it's more of a coordination, physical problem with his writing.  
 ...No, he's got a good general knowledge. He's always able to think about things and consider them, and give you carefully calculated answers...He is quite bright, yes.  
 p3 It can be hard for teachers...Well, he can take whatever you say and twist it round to suit him, almost on every occasion. He doesn't do it all of the time  
 ...He's difficult to teach, because it's difficult to get him motivated. You know, he's fine with practical activities, but obviously, when it comes to writing, which he used to find a great problem. It was very difficult to get him to do anything. Now that has improved, because he's been having support. He comes in in the morning, we put him into a group of children to come to the support teacher. Not that he needs any of the work that they are doing, really. Just, almost,  
 ...he prefers to do anything that's easy. He likes to be successful. ...I think he doesn't like to fail, yes. You know, he likes to be first at everything.  
 p5 I think that he finds it frustrating, and he gets very frustrated... I can't write, I won't do that. But now at least he makes an attempt.... He's all right if he's got a little friend, or he's got something that he likes to do in the class, but other times, he can be very irritating, you know, poking people.  
 ...I think he's quite manipulative, you know.  
 p6 ... the disappearance of his father, yes. And I think, probably his mum has treat him in a different  
 p7...way to what you would normally expect a child to. That's just, I think his mum has talked to him too much like an adult, and not enough like a child. Which has caused problems here for him, because some of the things that you say to him, and some of the things that you want him to do, he doesn't agree with because he can see further....

**Occupational Therapist**

Interview 2 p1 David was referred to me... Clinical Medical Officer...In February this year.  
 p2 naturally it was very difficult to get a lot of information, because David was sitting there... it seemed to be that the fine motor aspects were sort of bubbling along underneath this huge other problem. That's my perception of the situation.  
 p2 ... Gross motor skills, I thought that his basic skills were OK...  
 p3 ... But then moving on to the fine motor skills, I remember thinking that, yes, there were definite problems there, and that his main problem did seem to be that he was extremely easily defeated. ...  
 P4 ... I wouldn't say that he was typical of a child who I might want to go on to say, is this child dyspraxic or not. I felt a bit confused about what might be causing that problem.... I think the mechanical aspect of his writing was there, I felt. In that there was nothing grip wise or posture wise, and control wise  
 ... But what often holds children back is speed and fluency, and that sort of thing. And that would tie in with perhaps some difficulty with some of these gross skills, the planning element.  
 P5... But I did recognise that there seemed to be two different things going on, and one hypothesis, from my little field, might be that these behaviour problems are as a result of frustration at not being able to perform some of these tasks, but his response seems to be out of proportion, in my opinion, to what I've seen with other children of his age with that level of difficulty  
 p8 ... I wanted to know a little bit more about her perception of his problems, and the frustration that he experiences. ... I think, that she mentioned that she had experienced some frustration in getting proper understanding for his needs with school  
 p9 ... if it was deemed that this boy has got a mechanical problem, then I can't believe that somehow it hasn't been better managed from the early point of identifying. He must have had problems right from the start of school, in that instance. And it all seems, I can't think of the right word, but it's, it's propelled itself out of control  
 p10 ... I think what I saw was pretty much how he is.. And I remember that she (David's mother) said yes, that that seemed to be a fair reflection of him. And I think he had a short, a quite short frustration level, concentration, all linked in. I don't remember seeing any behaviour problem, or anything like that. And he played and kept himself busy for ten minutes or so  
 p12 ... . And as soon as people start to mention behaviour, then that, it's got out of hand, hasn't it, again. I just think it's quite sad if that's the case, actually, he's been let down badly. That at the age of 7, nearly 8, he comes to OT, and at 8 he gets a bit of extra help in school. That's really sad... My gut feeling is, it's a mixture of things. There are other things going on in his life....

**Head Teacher**

p1 I was told, or warned, that he had behaviour problems, and he would take to running out of assembly, running out of the school yard, running away, and that has gone on for quite a while.  
 ... He has matured, and he's done very well with (his class teacher), I feel, who is quite laid back, sort of, in Year 2. And we've had some very serious incidents of him throwing chairs, damaging other children, running out, the odd climbing over the wall onto Main Road, teacher falling when she was chasing him, but it seems to have calmed down. We've tried some behavioural strategies. But, to be honest, not all staff are able to do that.  
 p2 ...No, I don't share that (view of problems due to not being stretched enough) at all. And I don't think any of his teachers do. I mean, he is bright, and there could be times when he is bored, because he is a very practical boy, and has shown in practical situations or technology situations that he is not going to behave badly. Writing does frustrate him, I accept that.  
 Just sort of where did this come from, and why is he so frustrated, so angry and such an upset little boy, you know.  
 I think it's something to do with home  
 p3 it's always been both (learning and behaviour). It's not necessarily learning difficulties, it's motor skills, it's the writing, it's that sort of thing. He's very good orally  
 p4 she's only three hours a week with him, in writing, which may improve his self esteem, which may improve his behaviour, but it isn't actually tackling behaviour. We have nobody sort of with him in P.E. or in the yard. We don't have him to stay at lunchtimes, you see, we're just beginning to reintroduce that.  
 p9 I'm sometimes in his classroom, but you know, he's usually quite good verbally  
 p10 Because he's hit them, children have been frightened of him. I think he has a silent power over children, he's quite manipulative, David, he can manipulate teachers,  
 p10 (what does he need?) I think psychological help, rather than sort of learning help. There are still problems as to how he will mature as a teenager, which could possibly, if he can get rid of this anger and frustration, could certainly be helped. Counselling, I don't know what it is.  
 p11 I think I can understand him a little bit better, sort of, as to where he's coming from and where his anger is coming from. I still don't know what causes it, I mean, he's very eccentric. He has to win, it has to be about him, but I can see other people going in to that class, coming out and saying he's a very bright boy, and really all this talk about David, but he's good in the classroom and things. Which I haven't necessarily had from permanent staff, you see, who have grown up with him.

**Senior Clinical Medical Officer**

p18 David went through the (...) system (for the school to request a statutory assessment), and it was a, he was identified as having special educational needs. Then he had difficulties with concentration, and he had learning difficulties, basically. Concentration was part of it, and also some motor learning difficulties. And he was referred to me because they felt that he needed extra support in school. Not because the teachers felt that he had specific problems, as his mother thinks, actually, but because they felt that his, he had learning difficulties. A lot less than a moderate sort of level, but nevertheless established learning difficulties.  
 p19 I found it very difficult, because mum is a teacher at XXX School, I found it very difficult to tell her that the child's dyspraxic problems are only a little part of his wider learning difficulties... I can refer him to occupational therapy for his motor learning difficulties, but his concentration will not improve with this, and there are other methods of helping improve concentration.. and that is by giving the child extra attention and being there for the child. And she agreed with me towards the end of it, but I have a feeling that now she is absolutely completely focussing on his motor learning difficulties.  
 But his, the difficulties in the behavioural and emotional areas were not severe enough for me to think, perhaps, of getting a child psychiatrist or psychologist involved. I felt that they were related to his learning difficulties, and if we resolved his learning difficulties by giving him extra help, he may calm down, and he may be happier. The other thing is that all his difficulties are compounded by the fact that his dad left, you see. That doesn't help either, and no magic wand from the education department is going to resolve that problem, and child psychiatrists are not going to be able to resolve that difficulty either. There is a process that he has to go through, and with his mum being so supportive and so knowledgeable, I felt that, again, there was no need to get outside agencies involved.  
 ...He said that he thought that he couldn't do his work, and he was getting fed up because of that. And I asked him, what do you think might help you? And he said well, one of my teachers can help me a lot, maybe that teacher can teach me a lot more during the day, more or less saying that I need extra help one to one. And the other thing he said was that he forgets things, meaning that he can't concentrate for very long, that's what he really meant.  
 p20 I have become even more convinced that David certainly has got emotional difficulties, emotional behavioural difficulties  
 .. He does realise that he has got some problems, but he isn't differentiating in which area... He knows that he can't write very well, and he forgets things... And that could be why he has got emotional and behavioural difficulties to some extent. He's not happy about it.

## **Appendix 9**

### **Summaries of Utterances from Interview Transcripts: on the theme of "Partnership"**



### Clinical Psychologist

Int1 p4 ... easier to work with psychologists ....a sort of understanding  
p8 .... maybe we all needed to work harder to try and find out that (reason) was...an obligation to discuss cases within the team...p10 ... you don't get builders who are addressing a building problem being composed of plumbers and hairdressers, you know.  
p16 ... me as not being part of the system  
Int 2 p10 .... I think two heads are better than one, is valid. But beyond that, it becomes silly. p18... the informant  
p19 ....I'd probably not use it (the word partner) ...very difficult to work with parents as partners p22 ... teams and why they don't often work, because they're set up as equals whereas in fact they're not equals at all.

### Acting PEP

p15.....partnership might involve some healthy tensions at times.... that's what partnership should be, working together to help the child.  
p16 ... if an individual advice giver has too clear a view in their mind about what they think is right for the child, and that then may contaminate how they give their advice. p26 happier with parental advice that is a little more emotionally loaded  
p27 professionals operate within the system... the idea of the parents' rights thing is a barrier to a genuine

### Educational Psychologist

p1 ....without involving the parents there isn't any way I believe you would get any change....p2.....It's not a matter of equality or expertise, it's a matter of mutual respect... It's about becoming involved together, and honouring what each other can give. ...different contributions.. a fairly utopian ideal.. it's about one's whole response to anybody. p4 getting in the way of parent partnership.. to be militant...p22 ...I tried very hard to say, as long as people polarise, we're not going to help David

### Named Person

p8 doesn't exist  
p9 parents .. teaching staff .. they should be, one is as important as the other.. people just pay lip service to it.  
p13 them and us p14 two steps forward and five steps back.  
p28 conflict needs to be part of it..... people have different views, and all views need to be acknowledged, discussed. We none of us hold the answers, and I think a little bit of everybody's input might work a little bit better.

### Mother

int3 having open and honest communication and feeling comfortable in communicating.... I felt more in partnership with the psychologist p29 the way I think of David's interests and the way school think of him, there's like, an ocean apart p30

### David

### SENCO

p3/4 ..started.. a home to school report to his mum. She doesn't want any negative comments..p7 the EP.. we're on the same wavelength .. about wanting to be positive about him..  
p9 I feel I have a partnership role...  
p12 we're in conflict here... talked about what David's needs are...Now how we do that is more open for debate... an academic debate, not an emotional debate

### Head Teacher

p2 mum doesn't particularly agree with us. p3...Chris ...flexible approach.. (David's mother).. pleased with that. ... more pleased with my handling of the situation than my predecessors  
p4 she brought a friend along ... it was difficult.  
p6 we wanted her (EP) to see how bad it was at one stage. And I felt we were very much left alone  
p7....(mum) has sort of apologised for that. ... is totally understanding ..... you've got to be very, very (p8) tactful in what you say  
p14 we need to spend some time with (the EP) to sit round a table and talk about approaches to David

### Class Teacher

p7 I think she's (mum) changed her mind slightly now p8 people have seen that there have been two sides two the problem p9 he wouldn't take it(the home report book) home.....And the usual EPs play ...No confrontation p12 you feel quite remote ..I think they do listen to you,but .. it's already been decided what is going to happen, before your input gets put in.

### Senior Clinical Medical Officer

p3 tell them (parents) what I really, sincerely think about the child. p5 ..parents are quite happy...I'm not quite sure that I agree with the parents that are complaining...p6 a multidisciplinary kind of "needs".. I have a very important role.. work closest with the SENCOs, first of all. Secondly the parent and child. p7 ... the panel, it becomes a multidisciplinary sort of decision making...p23 It (partnership) can work against parents. It works for the child.

### Summary Frame:

#### PARTNERSHIP

What the participants of the assessment had to say about partnership with parents and other professionals

### OT

p6 .. I'm viewed as being a professional.. barriers  
p14 .. education and health don't really talk to each other very much  
Interview 2 P5 ... obviously somebody more expert, like a psychologist  
p10 I'm totally isolated on this. p19 ...it's very much got to be a team approach, the parents, me and school working on this together.. supporting what I'm doing p21 .. I'm the leader of the situation

## "PARTNERSHIP"

### Class Teacher

p4 Like, I don't know, I think the favourite line (from educational psychologists) is no confrontation, you know. Which is very easy to say, but it's not very easy to do. But I don't know, I think perhaps I don't get too worried about some of the things that he does

p7 Well his mum thinks it's, thought it was, I think she's changed her mind slightly now, thought it was a purely academic problem with his handwriting and his frustration through that, you know.

... But I still think she believes that the main cause of the problem is frustration with his writing, really.

p8 I think it's (the perspectives of other professions) been helpful in this particular case, because it's brought, not opposing ideas, but it's, the people have seen that there have been two sides two the problem, an academic one and the behavioural problem.

p9 Taking, well, he used to have a book to take home, and if it said anything good he would take it home, and if it didn't say anything good, he wouldn't take it home. And I used to say, have you got your book, no, I've left it at home. And his mum used to say, where's your book, I've left it at school. Because he knew what you were putting down. So that didn't really help. But now that he is more able, I think he would be quite happier to do that now, because a lot of the time it would say, and even though you're trying to be positive, if he's beaten somebody up or something like that, you know, you've got to, you have to put some of the negative things in, because you have got to let her know. So I don't think that really worked... And the usual educational psychologist's ploy

...No confrontation, try to avoid confrontation, which is what they always say

p12 I think you feel quite, apart from filling in forms, you feel quite remote.

...I think they do listen to you, but as with everything, people have preconceived ideas... I think that sometimes it's already been decided what is going to happen, before your input gets put in.

### Occupational Therapist

Interview 1 p5 ... I really try and sell them the idea that it's a partnership thing, in that what they do with their child is just as important as what we do.. this isn't going to go away ... I really give them an awful lot of ideas and work sheets... parents who come who I know are finding it really difficult... I obviously just tiptoe around a lot of things and just play it down ..., gently persuasive about, if you just do x, y and z once a week, that will really help.

p6 ... it's just astounding that they come and they really have no idea, but never ask either...(I'm) getting used to the idea that I'm viewed as being a professional, and perhaps not easy to talk to sometimes, because of those barriers and things So I always try and be very, very casual ... I actually, what I actually do is usually show them the actual letter of referral ...

p8 ... they (the physios) have really supported the need for OT there, because they are so fed up with being pushed into corners to do what are not their things...

... most people are really, really grateful to get anything from OT because ... we've had a huge waiting list

p9 ... about two years ago ... somebody else had written in, this child needs OT for 30 minutes once a week, and the school said, come on then, where are you.... We kicked up a huge stink, and it hasn't happened since... I'm sure I read it in the actual statement. And it was amended, quite rightly...

p13 I'm thinking of one tricky case where ... the head teacher backed out...(the EP) better trained to do it, and confident, and knew life outside that school existed and was OK, and that there was good options for that child, and could have been much more into discussing it on a wider issue

p14 ... I view it as being a very educational thing, but I do recognise that up here somewhere, education and health don't really talk to each other very much, and wouldn't it be great if... funded by education... And then we could all be hands on...

p16 ... nobody's asking me for any OT at the moment, but I'm getting all of this information through on this child. Is it relevant to me to get that information?

Interview 2 p5 ... obviously somebody more expert, like a psychologist, get involved and then click in at a later date... p6 I don't know whether at some point Dr.S (SCMO) will get back to me for another report...

p10 I'm totally isolated on this, and that I need to get a lot more information, which I will get, before stepping back in.

p11.... all I did was copy the report to a number of people, and the activity programme. So it went to Mrs B (David's mother), the class teacher, the head teacher, the educational psychologist I've got down for him, and the GP.

p19 ... I think they have a really important role. Just as important a role as me, although they probably wouldn't see it that way. You know, I think that parents who need help for their child, very much need to put trust and faith in outside agencies... it's very much got to be a team approach, the parents, me and school working on this together. ... I would see them as almost carrying out my advice, supporting my advice and supporting what I'm doing. That's when they're here for their therapy, for a six week block say... Yes, because I'm trusting them and giving them a lot of responsibility ... I would like to perceive the situation as partnership p20 I wouldn't see them as a consumer, no, I don't like that.. supporter, partner

p21 ... I'm the leader of the situation, very much so. ... Well, the basic one (barrier to partnership) is cooperating, isn't it, attending... Not establishing a good relationship by being haphazard in their approach... I look at it as an extra bonus if they actually manage to say they've done some things with their child...

### Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

p2 I suggested (to the class teacher) that he would come, just for say ten minutes before school

And his mum said that he'd realised what he had committed himself to and didn't want to do it.

p3/4 I've started to do a home to school report to his mum. She doesn't want any negative comments... But I can't just write good things, because it's devaluing praise. And I mean this week he has done absolutely nothing.

he's said, what are you writing, I haven't done anything. I said, well, that's what I'm writing, you've done absolutely nothing this week. I mean, it's in his time, but again, I said to him, we have decided that you need the practice, you decided that you need the practice, and I'm only trying to help you. He said, well, you don't have to, he said, just stop helping me, get off, make my day.

p4 (no possibility of interim help, resources, from LEA)

p5 (mum wants) that all of his behaviour difficulties come from the fact that he is frustrated and angry about that ... she didn't want behaviour even mentioned.

it's very much a criticism of him, and indirectly to her, which I think perhaps she finds hard... But if it's something else that he's got, something that he's got, then it's not her fault,

p7 talking to the ed. psych, as well, to S., who is sort of, we're on the same wavelength about helping him, about wanting to be positive about him, which is far more difficult, when all you're dealing with is this "won't" business every day.

p9 I feel I have a partnership role...

p12 Mrs B (David's mother) .. is articulate and she knows quite a lot... defends her child...

talked about what David's needs are... Now how we do that is more open for debate... an academic debate, not an emotional debate

### Educational Psychologist

p1 ...without involving the parents there isn't any way I believe you would get any change... Maybe sometimes too engaged.... Very few parents, in my experience, have been cold, rejecting, type of parents with whom you couldn't really forge a partnership in the interests of the child... If it's just information giving, or telling, or telling what we're doing from the point of authority, then I don't see that it really works very well.

p2... It's not a matter of equality or expertise, it's a matter of mutual respect. You know, I don't think we should pretend we are all on a level, that kind of partnership. Or that we have equal parts to play. It's about becoming involved together, and honouring what each other can give. And they'll be different contributions ... Well, I, as a psychologist, I suppose that the knowledge that one has of general child development, and the way things can work and change, and the educative processes, things that enhance learning, things that get in its way ... The parents would obviously bring their bonds with their own children, their own concerns. Their minute knowledge of how things work from morn till night, the whole history of development, and going through a day with a parent you can learn much, much more than a minute observation ... I think it's probably a fairly utopian ideal, the word partnership, but I think it's about one's whole response to anybody.

p4 So it's somewhat getting in the way of parent partnership if the parents are being primed (by pressure groups) to be militant... to feel that they are being treated with less than they deserve.

p7 I, yes... conflict with parents. Where I feel that they perhaps don't put first the interests of the child. If their wanting particular things is really for their own prestige.

p22 ... I tried very hard to say, as long as people polarise, we're not going to help David, and as long as mother says, it's just a learning difficulty, and as long as the school says, it's only a behavioural problem, then we can't, because there is a definite interaction.



### Senior Clinical Medical Officer

p3 (if par view differs from her view) I try my very best to talk to them about it and consider their different view. And examine it, and then tell them what I really, sincerely think about the child.

p5 (any problems in the process?) Not from my point of view, no. It's so much better and so much more efficient and focussed now, that I can't see a problem...I think the parents are quite happy, they're very happy. Especially people who've had children through the system before, and now have children going through the system now, they see the difference... I'm not quite sure that I agree with the parents that are complaining, actually...Quite a lot of them are people who do not believe that there is anything wrong with the child, and that the child is limited, and this is what the child is going to achieve at the end of the day, no matter what you do. There is a limit to how much a child can achieve. A child's potential is limited, they don't agree with that.

p6 It is, it gets ambiguous and it gets very difficult, because sometimes the SENCO is phoning me and saying, we have difficulty with this particular parent, I know you have a good relationship with them, this is the situation, is it possible for you to explain this as well, and make it slightly clearer... I feel that a child with special needs has got sort of a multidisciplinary kind of "needs", and unless you approach it in a multidisciplinary manner, you will not be able to meet the child's needs effectively... I feel, I have a very important role, extremely important role. ...I work closest with the SENCOs, first of all. Secondly the parent and child. I always involve the children as well, from the word go, all the discussions, and I ask them to ask me if they can't understand anything, and they do, and I explain everything thoroughly to them in a simple manner. Children have helped me an awful lot by telling me what they think is wrong with them and what they want, you know. That is so important I think. I always leave 20 minutes at the end for the child, always... (do you feel a partner?) Very much so.

p7 ... Again, this is a sort of a, interagency cooperation and collaboration, and also, when I go to the panel, it becomes a multidisciplinary sort of decision making...Yes, and I have learnt as well, about the whole process. I didn't know that it was so thoroughly examined, and everybody's view was taken into account and given serious consideration.

p11...They have a lot of confidence (in doctors), that's right. And that's where my role as a counselling, sort of, person, comes into it also. That is why it's so important for me to be very closely involved with the SENCOs, teachers, and ed. psychs, with my education colleagues.

p23 It (partnership) can work against parents. It works for the child. It works for the child, but against the parents, in fact. I think when they deal with so many different professionals who are saying the same thing, anybody would have to think, you know, they are made to think about the whole thing, and would perhaps doubt themselves...

p24 Maybe against parental feelings, not against parents, but against parental feelings.

### Named Person

p4 But it's a kind of, just talk about partnership with parents

p5 it was an informal meeting, but ... She was so stressed, so distressed,

... Andrea said she wanted to be sympathetic to the profession, she understood as a teaching staff what they needed to do, but also she was, as a mother she was horrified to think that that was her child that they were talking about.

p7 this is the information, he's done this and he's done that and he's done the other, what are we going to do about it? There was kind of, no acknowledgement, or no reassurance that, they weren't blaming Angela, I mean, she needed to be told that, because she'd been told previously that it probably was her fault. But then by the second meeting things had changed, and they were supportive.

p8 I think it doesn't exist, to be honest

p9 Well, the parents know basically everything there is to know about a child's character and personality, and teaching staff are trained to teach children, so therefore, to my mind, they should be, one is as important as the other.

And I think where it is seen, or where it is, I think people just pay lip service to it. I really do.

p13 I felt as though it was a kind of them and us

p14 one of the positives I felt was that they were actually trying to move on, they weren't saying all the meeting, well, he's done this, he's done this... They did that, and then the game appeared. Sort of, kind of, two steps forward and five steps back.

p28 I think conflict needs to be part of it... people have different views, and all views need to be acknowledged, discussed. We none of us hold the answers, and I think a little bit of everybody's input might work a little bit better.

### "PARTNERSHIP"

#### Acting Principal Educational Psychologist

p4 I have a concern that there are some people who perhaps view...supporting the parents is to do with fighting the local authority, as opposed to something that we would see more akin to partnership

p9 ...the Code... does appear to give parents a lot of rights, only some parents will be articulate enough to use those

p10 One of the easiest things in the whole process is appealing.

p15...partnership might involve some healthy tensions at times... you could have would be ways of working that could genuinely help more parents to be more fully engaged and fully understanding about the assessment process and helping their child... And I think that's what partnership should be, working together to help the child.

p16 ... if an individual advice giver has too clear a view in their mind about what they think is right for the child, and that then may contaminate how they give their advice. It may also again lead to comments being made to parents, and also directly to the child or young person, which can be very unhelpful...

p21 ... if you've got a situation that is ambiguous ...going along with... giving in sort of way, but at least trying to carry the parent with you in saying, well, OK we've tried this, look we've still got these problems, now, let's start and address those.

p26 fact sometimes the parental advice that worries me the most is the one that is written as if it's a professional writing it And I think, what's the real relationship like between this parent and child. It just feels, I feel much happier with parental advice that is a little more emotionally loaded, because I think yes, so it should be.

p27 I think, I mean, one of the barriers will always be that the professionals operate within the system, know it, understand it, and however good you think you are at explaining it, you are into the jargon before you've drawn your second breath ... I think from the parental side, there is the barrier of not understanding ... grappling with a system in which they were not very successful themselves ... the barrier that's created by expectations ... Yes, the idea of the parents' rights thing is a barrier to a genuine (p28) partnership, starting from, you know, this is an imperfect world

#### Head Teacher

p2 His mum doesn't particularly agree with us. She sees him as an extremely bright boy, which he is orally, there is no doubt about it, and at one time, I mean, I think she liked to think his problems were because he is too intelligent and wasn't stretched enough in the classroom ...

... No, I don't share that at all. And I don't think any of his teachers do. ... But she has not always seen that he has psychological problems, which he certainly has.

p3..... C ..... does have a very flexible approach, and basically she has worked very well with him, and Mrs B (David's mother) herself was very pleased with that. I think, to be honest, as well, Mrs B (David's mother) is probably more pleased with my handling of the situation than my predecessors

p4 Yes, there was one particular review meeting where she brought a friend along ... who brought out all the issues like, he wasn't like this at home, and, you know, they couldn't really quite understand what was going on, so yes, it was difficult.

p5 ....She was very supportive to her. She obviously needed that... p13 ... but they (named persons) still have a very valid point of view

p6 (impact of the EP) I must admit, she was in one day last week and David was having a scenario, and I actually asked if she would go out and talk to him to sort of find out, he was very angry about something, it had upset him, and she did, but that was basically, although she has spoken to him in the classroom and at home and that, but that was the, she was grateful because it was the first time she'd seen a scene like that... I'm not saying she should sort out the problems, because she shouldn't, but we wanted her to see how bad it was at one stage. And I felt we were very much left alone, you know, to depend on our own resources. p9 (feel views listened to and works as partner with educational psychologist)

p7... at the same time, I mean, I know from times in Newby, we are being advised by educational psychologists not to restrain children. If you didn't restrain David, he would seriously hurt somebody on some occasions.

... (David's mother) she's coming and saying he doesn't have behaviour problems, and then something happens and she realises he does, and sort of, you know, has sort of apologised for that. And I think the fact that she is a teacher and sort of works in a special school, I mean, she realises the implications of the things. And she is totally understanding about the resources within our own school and how it was very difficult to support

... you've got to be very, very (p8) tactful in what you say, but saying that a lot of it may arise from his writing problems, which still could be the truth. He's got self esteem problems.

p12 (differences resolved) ...Just through talking, just through the review meetings... and it hasn't happened for a long time, and Mrs B (David's mother) coming in and talking to me,

p14 I don't know, I think we need to spend some time with S. to sit round a table and talk about approaches to David

...what does she want for him, what are?... Can you just say whether she thinks things are improving with him?

## **Appendix 9**

### **Summaries of Utterances from Interview Transcripts: on the theme of "Role"**

### Acting PEP

p14 Definitely the child (is the client) p15 a quite heavy LEA officer role.. high status. ....the ambiguity of the dual role.. What can I do to get a better deal for this child out of it. p22 performance indicators ..allocating resources to as cost effectively as possible... management side. .... quality assessments, not assessments that are driven by the statutory assessment process ..some mechanism for ceasing statements.. to target a fairly scarce resource at the children who need it p26....to try and provide an individual picture of the child that won't be coloured in the way that if you're a parent...p28.. defensive working p29 an enormous staff to manage and budgetary responsibilities

### Summary Frame:

#### ROLE

What all the participants of the assessment had to do the nature of their role

### Educational Psychologist

p1 my role..with parents is to use their knowledge and expertise of the child, with the child and to develop joint initiatives so that we can operate in the interests of the child p3 .. bleaching the arena from blame ....making a fertile ground for change and for movement... clearing up any of these contaminating things. p7 conflicts of role.. we are local LEA officials... p8 .. the client, who has the problem, or who sees the problem, first..very easy to put the child in the centre. p22 .. set up .. strategies to implement the statement p23 pour oil on the troubled waters and make people feel that he wasn't a danger. p27 mediation

### Clinical Psychologist

p5 int1 a full assessment  
p16 I didn't feel I was part of the system p17 When the chips are down, it's definitely the child.....I would see the patient as the, probably the family  
int 2 p1 accidental p7 it's not my job to provide resources, its my job to provide an opinion p9 a psychologist

### Named Person

p2 Supportive, yet not totally involved.....a back seat and just listened...p3 a different perspective on DavidP6... in case anything was said that she just missed p8 I'm not that emotionally involved. I care about David.. p20 I didn't feel not welcome p21 .. I said that I worked for Social Services, and things changed then. p26 .. keeping her in the real world... not advising her, but just reminding her what her options are. p27 an honest relationship .... It's reciprocal. p28 prepared to actually offer some input.

### Mother

interview 3  
I've never used the word statement with him p5 effort not to become powerless  
p8 persuading people there was .. an educational problem p13  
David's advocate p18

### Child

### SENCO

p3 when we get the statement.. to encourage him to read to find information  
p7 it's a pivotal role..you've got to write it all down (for the statement), you've got to ask everybody how they see it  
p8 (yes, an important role) particularly with David, because everyone (teachers) seemed to be negative about him. p9 I feel I have a partnership role... his class teacher.. quite prepared to go along with anything that might help.

### Class Teacher

p4.. I don't get too worried about some of the things that he does... best to just talk to him quietly. And most of the time he accepts it, now ..we've actually tried to press for something more to happen p11.. you can just influence him in small ways..He doesn't, sort of, make very much of coming to talk to you or things like that

### Occupational Therapist

Interview 1 p2 (My client is ) .. very much the child p3 a set assessment that we do p4 OTs .. looking at the whole child.  
p8(with parents) an educating role...as pigs in the middle int2 p1 ..don't really feel that I am expert at all to deal with behaviour. ..strictly dealing with the fine motor problems p6 I haven't actually been asked to contribute to the statement p9 she looked at the OT bit as.. confirming what I think was her opinion..tiptoeing around things ..I'll just provide some advice, and backing off p17 I'm very much seen as ultimately a professional person p22 (I) have complete faith in what I'm doing p23 I've always seen some progress.. I have to sell them that idea, that it's a joint thing.

### Head Teacher

p2 more flexibility p3 considering exclusion, to actually make them act p5 telling her about serious incidents.. I feel that my role has been not quite a pleasant one all the time.. Not (a) major (role in the statementing process). ..I was the one before the statement wrote to XX (SEN Officer) p9 ... to see him as part of a school p10 mine is a whole school social issue .. And the impact he's having on the teachers as well..... or the other children

### SCMO

p1 They all know me..every single school... the SENCO knows me p2 The child. ....Always the child.  
p3.... my role has changed .. I see the 20% of children who have ..SEN  
p7 ..I've been on the panel  
p13..explaining everything to them (SENCOs) simply..p19 ..a full medical assessment.. from head to toe basically, p22.. I've told them you can directly contact me yourself.  
p20 I did have to counsel mum quite a bit.

### Acting principal educational psychologist

p14 The child... Definitely the child (is the client)

p15 a quite heavy LEA officer role, but on the other hand, in terms of how we are regarded within the LEA, we've got high status. ...the ambiguity of the dual role. But I think even if you take out the LEA officer role... you would still as the E.P. be having to negotiate with parents and teachers... What can I do to get a better deal for this child out of it.

p22 performance indicators which are to do with how many assessments are completed within the prescribed time, the eighteen weeks. You know; somebody fires a gun, you're off... ..allocating resources to as cost effectively as possible... management side. ... quality assessments, not assessments that are driven by the statutory assessment process.

...we've got to find some mechanism for ceasing statements so that you can continue to target a fairly scarce resource at the children who need it

p26...in advice writing, and as part of the assessment process, I think the E.P. is there to try and provide an individual picture of the child that won't be coloured in the way that if you're a parent, inevitably ...it should be coloured, because it's an emotional relationship

...I think there is a risk that we tend to play down our skills as psychologists and the insights that standardised

p28 I think the, I think perhaps the biggest stress is again, the way that the whole system has been driven. It's not longer good enough to think, you do as a professional do your best. You have to think of worst case scenarios, going to tribunals, litigation, so we're into this awful business of, if you like, defensive working. What matters is that you reply to the letter on time...

p29 The whole thing about having such an enormous staff to manage and budgetary responsibilities, which a traditional P.E.P. role never encompassed at all

...in this particular authority the P.E.P. is also the Manager of Pupil Support, that decision was driven purely by financial expedience..... one of the stresses is that you have very little time to be an E.P.

### Clinical Psychologist

Interview 1 p5 ... My role, once I had seen, what I did with David was a full assessment of him

p11 ... what I'd want to know was if this was sufficient for him. In other words, was it working

p14 ... David's mother and I met a few times after things had settled down with David

p16 ... I didn't feel I was part of the system. I began to empathise with David's mother, I suppose.

p17 ... When the chips are down, it's definitely the child...I would see the patient as the, probably the family, actually. I think (David's mother) needs a lot of support.

Interview 2 p1 Sometimes I feel my role is accidental, and I'm not sure that isn't necessarily a bad thing, at one level.

p7 ... it's not my job to provide resources, it's my job to provide an opinion. And then if the resources aren't there, that's the responsibility of the people who provide that, not me. Whereas if I write a report that is slanted towards the lack of resources, or whatever, in social services, I'm not doing the child any favours at all. I'm actually colluding with the system.

p9 ... And of course everybody thinks they're a psychologist, don't they?

p16 ... Ironically, I think the only thing the psychiatrist can do that I can't do is to provide a prescription if necessary, and have the authority to make a diagnosis.

### Named Person

p2 Supportive, yet not totally involved...a back seat and just listened... I'm not a mother, I don't work for the education system, and I haven't had that experience, so

p3 a different perspective on David, initially

p6...And she also wanted me there in case anything was said that she just missed

p8 I can take a couple of steps back, because I'm not that emotionally involved. I care about David... There is no support for (David' mother) within the school environment.

p9 I kept passing these on to (David' mother) to say, look, you're not the only person

p20 I didn't feel not welcome, but it was a kind of, why does she need somebody here with her?

p21 ... (the head teacher) made a comment that I wasn't really, I wasn't qualified to actually differentiate between the statements, the educational and the behavioural statement. ... I said that I worked for Social Services, and things changed then.

p26 I think nothing directly for David, except, I mean, I never, I never disagree with (David' mother) in front of Dave

... keeping her in the real world, because, because she's so distressed about it all, she can, her mind just, and she gets into this cloud cuckoo land of being a bad parent and all this crap, and I just sort of bring her back down to earth

... not advising her, but just reminding her what her options are. ....she's very strong.

p27 But we have got an honest relationship ... It's reciprocal.

p28 (NO training for named persons) no, I don't think so, because then it would kind of cloud my input, I think, in some way... just a friend who knows him in his home environment and has known him for a lot of years. I know his character, I don't know anything about his education.

I think also, you would have to be prepared to actually offer some input.

p32... You're not the most important here, David's the most important, you know, we are not here to meet your needs of 'woe is me'

## "ROLE"

### Class Teacher

p4.. I think perhaps I don't get too worried about some of the things that he does.

...Sometimes there are things that he does that you have to, you know, really go at him about, but I find that if you do that, most of the time it just causes more problems, so it's best to just talk to him quietly. And most of the time he accepts it, now....

But really it's just been this year that we've actually tried to press for something more to happen. And the problem with the process is that it takes so long to go through.

p11...I mean, there are occasions when he does, you know, he's a boy, and he gets into trouble, and that's fine as long as he just gets into trouble, and it doesn't escalate any more than that. And I think really, that's what I, overall, with his behaviour, that's what I try to do.

.....I think, well, I wouldn't like to say he uses me as a, to somebody he sees in certain situations, but I think if he sees you react in a certain way, then perhaps he'll react in that way as well, rather than, you know, let it become too big for him.

... he's very independent in the way he thinks, and I think you can just influence him in small ways, rather than have a big influence on him. He doesn't, sort of, make very much of coming to talk to you or things like that, you know.

### Occupational Therapist

Interview 1 p1 ... criteria for referral to this service is very tight, so it's children who are described as dyspraxic, or presenting with fine or gross motor coordination problems in the absence of a neurological problem deficit

p2 (My client is ) Any child ..any age up to 18. ...It's very much the child... an individual assessment...p3 ... a set assessment that we do... We do have a standardised assessment... a lot of children that are referred who really are at the mild end of things... they're usually gone through one or two years of schooling .. few that are inappropriate (referrals)....

p4 ... OTs are much more into looking at the whole child. Physios would recognise that they are much more gross motor skills, and they wouldn't look at anything else. ...

p5...a once a week basis, for an hour, for the half term block... I always see them at school through term time, because then I know that I'm guaranteed of seeing them, and I compromise the quality of what I do, often, because I'm, you know, like everybody else, I'm in broom cupboard often...

p7 ... because of the wide range of skills that OTs possibly have... then I could be doing some very diverse things. From splinting hands to doing developmental work here... And I suppose then that's a lot more ambiguous for people, isn't it.

p8 ... there are a lot of very needing, mainly mothers.. I'm beginning to see now that I have an educating role... a sort of supporting person. ... used as.. as pigs in the middle, in quite a lot of tricky situations... a problem that might be dissatisfaction with another agency... awkward position...

Interview 2 p1 ... get a flavour, I suppose, of the whole range of problems... I don't really feel that I am expert at all to deal with behaviour. I'm just strictly dealing with the fine motor problems ...

p6 ... better to have a clean slate, isn't it, and not have any preconceived ideas...Now another, I think, interesting issue is that I haven't actually been asked to contribute to the statement, I've just been asked to see him anyway.

p9 ... she looked at the OT bit as, kind of, in a way, confirming what I think was her opinion, was that he's got some problem causing this huge behaviour problem now, and it's all got out of hand... And I remember kind of just tiptoeing around things a little bit, thinking, there's a lot going on here, and at some point I'll have access to the information, hopefully, through the psychologist involvement ...I'll just provide some advice, and backing off..

p10 ... I've never worked with a child that's been excluded from school, and that sort of thing...I've never been happy with the medical model of labelling behaviour, with a big B ... I think it's a negative word to use, because there's always a reason

p17 it really, really brought it home, again, to me, that I'm very much seen as ultimately a professional person, and no matter how pleasant I try and be and helpful I try and be, ultimately there seems to be this barrier that, well you still belong to the health service

p22 But one of the big things... is to have complete faith in what I'm doing, and when I see something, some positive change, then I've got to really, really pull that out and make sure that I tell that to the teachers... p23... I can honestly look at all the children I've worked with and, it might be small, but I've always seen some progress, and I always say that it's not because I did anything magic or wonderful, it's just that I was part of a new approach with that child, because mum and dad were doing some stuff, the school were on board, and that's why we saw change.... I have to sell them that idea, that it's a joint thing.

## Head Teacher

p2 And I try to bring a bit more flexibility

p3 At one stage I was on the point of considering exclusion, to actually make them act, but fortunately it didn't come to that... This Christmas. He slapped another child because he had won a prize that he'd wanted, or something. And I actually spoke to David and spoke to his mother the night we broke up and said, you know, the next time he did that he would be out

...I think, to be honest, as well, (David's mother) is probably more pleased with my handling of the situation than my predecessors...

when the statement got near ...she seemed to be the ideal person to ask to continue that, rather than get somebody new in.

p5 It's really quite a difficult one (role), because I've pulled ideas together, and I think I've mainly been the one who has talked to (David's mother) on occasions. I've had the role, unfortunately, of telling her about serious incidents, and that usually has to be by letter because she's working.

... I feel that my role has been not quite a pleasant one all the time

I do try to be the carrier of good news as well when it's happened, but yes.

... Not (a) major (role in the statementing process). I mean, (the SENCO) has put all the paperwork together, sort of, in discussion with me, in discussion with (the class teacher). Just sort of overseeing what went out. I was the one before the statement wrote to (the SEN Officer) and have talked about him to various people. Special needs officer and the authority... (the EP talks) quite a lot at the moment to (the SENCO), to be honest, because, you know, with my job, sort of other things keep pulling you (p6) away and she reports back, but I usually do get involved in the discussions.

p7... you've got to be very, very (p8) tactful in what you say

p9 My perspective... to see him as part of a school and (p10) to worry about the non social things. ...he's had real tantrums and things like that, that basically he can't cope with. So mine is a whole school social issue, rather than, and (the educational psychologist) is more to find out what is making him so angry and upset I feel.

...Yes. And the impact he's having on the teachers as well .. or the other children in the class, which is a worry to me, that you're going to lose children, which it was at one stage. Because he's hit them, children have been frightened of him.

p10 So mine is a whole school social issue, rather than, and (the educational psychologist) is more to find out what is making him so angry and upset I feel... I don't know whether (the class teacher) has talked about this, but basically he has certainly noticed ... (the class teacher) has certainly talked about it

p13 but suppose he was to riot again, and this statement, this extra sort of time didn't work, I said, what happens next. And there isn't really anything

## Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

p3 what I'm hoping to do when we get the statement is to encourage him to read to find information

p7 it's a pivotal role

You have a better chance, maybe to see what's behind it, and maybe to have some ideas, you know of how to help. Partly because I've been around a long time, and come across a lot of things... I have been teaching 30 years. You've got to write it all down, you've got to ask everybody how they see it, the class teacher, the people who've had him, and you've got the access to everything that everybody has said. We don't seem to have any records of what happened to him previous to him coming here, there don't seem to be any written records p8 (yes, an important role) particularly with David, because everything seemed to be negative about him. I mean, even now, sometimes in the staff room, the things that people say, aren't strictly true about him. You know, they tend to say he's, how do they say it, they

I think they find it difficult to accept the fact that he's as clever as I'm sure that he is.

p9 I feel I have a partnership role, and as it happens, this is the first sort of thing that we've done together, I mean, I only came in October...

...I think his class teacher has probably found it, probably looked on it a little bit cynically, but quite prepared to go along with anything that might help.

...having very recently been a class teacher, perhaps that helps ... it certainly hasn't been a problem, being felt that I was coming in and batting my head against a brick wall or anything like that.

## "ROLE"

### Senior Clinical Medical Officer

p1 They all know me, they all do. ...Yes. Every year round about September time I go into every single school, speak to the special educational needs coordinator, and the SENCO knows me, and I tell them that I would like to know about all the children who have got special needs from Stage 2 reviews onwards.

p2 Children that I see are children who are, say, have been noticed to have something special about them which isn't right, from Stage 2, or children who are coming up for (stage 3)... p2 I look at their concentration, and also coordination. Coordination is very important... if you do not test the child specifically for that, sometimes mild forms of motor learning difficulty go amiss, until the child is about 13, 14, and that is late... The child... Always the child. And children who are of a certain age, certainly from about six onwards, I always talk directly to them, and I always involve (p3) them in this process as well, so this parent professional partnership extends to the child when I am concerned. And I have gained a lot by getting the children involved directly. p3... my role has changed in that I see the 20% of children who have got special educational needs, not just 2% who are having the Section 5 assessment, I get involved with the other 18, 17 - 18% as well. p4 .. But I'm always there, yes, to provide information and to get feedback from the SENCOs

p7 Well, in Newby we have started something very special, which is fairly new, it's about a year old, and that is, we have a doctor representative at the panel. ... I contact every single doctor who has been involved with the child and who has done the statement, and who has written the medical advice, and I talk to them in depth and detail about the child... I've been on the panel for seven months now... p8 ... Since I've been on the panel, I've explained to every single parent what happens. I didn't before, because I really didn't know what was going on

p13... (stresses of her job) Basically, not enough time to do the things the way I want to do them. I don't like scratching over the surface. I think we work in, as individuals we work in isolation... I spend ten minutes, fifteen minutes explaining everything to them (SENCOs) simply, from the neurological aspect of the thing to the developmental one, and once they understand what the difficulty is, that is resolved ... And it's a two way thing, because sometimes they phone me and they say, I disagree with you... We have that sort of relationship with each other.

p19 I asked mum about his full medical history, family history, social history, developmental history, immunisations, everything. Then I asked David what he thought the difficulties were... ...Easy. With David, it was easy. Of course, we talked about other things like football, and everything else initially for about five minutes, and he got into gear, and he felt comfortable, and he relaxed. And then I asked mum what she thought about the child's difficulties, and how she felt that these difficulties could be met. And then when I did that, I said to her that I'll need to do a full medical assessment, and by that I looked at him from head to toe basically, and did some measurements of his hearing, vision, height and weight, growth, everything, and concentrated

p22...No, they can, anytime. They don't have to go through another agency either, I've told them you can directly contact me yourself. p20 I did have to counsel mum quite a bit. About David's difficulties. Because she had a different opinion, yes. I understand why, she deals with profoundly handicapped children... it's difficult to be very objective when it, first of all when it comes to your own child...

### Educational Psychologist

p1 I think my role as a psychologist with parents is to use their knowledge and expertise of the child, with the child and to develop joint initiatives so that we can operate in the interests of the child

p3 ... bleaching the arena from blame ... it's about making a fertile ground for change and for movement, for the child, and nothing will change as long as people hold set views which are blaming ... clearing up any of these contaminating things.

p7 I think in Newby there are conflicts of role, because we are local LEA officials...

p8 ... In some respects that would determine who is the client, who has the problem, or who sees the problem, first. But personally, I have always found it very easy to put the child in the centre...

p22 ...everything I had set up with the support teacher, all kinds of strategies to implement the statement p23 (incident David hit child and SENCO) So my job then was to say, this is very rare, .. And try and pour oil on the troubled waters and make people feel that he wasn't a danger.

p24 So we, (David's mother) phoned me and said would I come with her to a meeting when he was to be returned, ... So my job was really to try and renew their confidence and to continue to do what they were doing... So my suggestion was to pacify people, in some ways, was to reinvolve (the clinical psychologist) which mum much preferred, for whatever reason...

p24/25 I've gone in when he's just had a real outburst and the school have thought, I think, come on, let's see if you can, because I'd never seen him like that, and they said would you just talk to David.

p27 it's (the educational psychologist's role), obviously much more curtailed than one could wish, by time constraints, but it has been in this mediation, really, between polarising views

## **Appendix 9**

### **Summaries of Utterances from Interview Transcripts: on the theme of "Power"**



### Clinical Psychologist

Int1 p4 ... easier to work with psychologists ....a sort of understanding

p8 .... maybe we all needed to work harder to try and find out that (reason) was...an obligation to discuss cases within the team...p10 ... you don't get builders who are addressing a building problem being composed of plumbers and hairdressers, you know.

p16 ... me as not being part of the system

Int 2 p10 .... I think two heads are better than one, is valid. But beyond that, it becomes silly. p18... the informant

p19 ....I'd probably not use it (the word partner) ...very difficult to work with parents as partners p22 ... teams and why they don't often work, because they're set up as equals whereas in fact they're not equals at all.

### Acting PEP

p15.....partnership might involve some healthy tensions at times.... that's what partnership should be, working together to help the child.

p16 ... if an individual advice giver has too clear a view in their mind about what they think is right for the child, and that then may contaminate how they give their advice. p26 happier with parental advice that is a little more emotionally loaded

p27 professionals operate within the system... the idea of the parents' rights thing is a barrier to a genuine

### Educational Psychologist

p1 ...without involving the parents there isn't any way I believe you would get any change....p2.....It's not a matter of equality or expertise, it's a matter of mutual respect... It's about becoming involved together, and honouring what each other can give.

..different contributions.. a fairly utopian ideal.. it's about one's whole response to anybody. p4 getting in the way of parent partnership.. to be militant...p22 ..I tried very hard to say, as long as people polarise, we're not going to help David

### Named Person

p8 doesn't exist

p9 parents .. teaching staff .. they should be, one is as important as the other.. people just pay lip service to it.

p13 them and us p14 two steps forward and five steps back.

p28 conflict needs to be part of it..... people have different views, and all views need to be acknowledged, discussed. We none of us hold the answers, and I think a little bit of everybody's input might work a little bit better.

### Mother

int3 having open and honest communication and feeling comfortable in communicating.... I felt more in partnership with the psychologist p29 the way I think of David's interests and the way school think of him, there's like, an ocean apart p30

### David

### SENCO

p3/4 ..started.. a home to school report to his mum. She doesn't want any negative comments..p7 the EP.. we're on the same wavelength .. about wanting to be positive about him..

p9 I feel I have a partnership role...

p12 we're in conflict here... talked about what David's needs are...Now how we do that is more open for debate... an academic debate, not an emotional debate

### Head Teacher

p2 mum doesn't particularly agree with us. p3...Chris ...flexible approach.. (David's mother).. pleased with that. ... more

pleased with my handling of the situation than my predecessors p4 she brought a friend along ... it was difficult.

p6 we wanted her (EP) to see how bad it was at one stage. And I felt we were very much left alone

p7....(mum) has sort of apologised for that. ... is totally understanding

..... you've got to be very, very (p8) tactful in what you say

p14 we need to spend some time with (the EP) to sit round a table and talk about approaches to David

### Class Teacher

p7 I think she's (mum) changed her mind slightly now p8 people have seen that there have been two sides two the problem p9 he wouldn't take it(the home report book) home.....And the usual EPs play ...No confrontation p12 you feel quite remote ..I think they do listen to you,but .. it's already been decided what is going to happen, before your input gets put in.

### Senior Clinical Medical Officer

p3 tell them (parents) what I really, sincerely think about the child. p5 ..parents are quite happy...I'm not quite sure that I agree with the parents that are complaining...p6 a multidisciplinary kind of "needs".. I have a very important role.. work closest with the SENCOs, first of all. Secondly the parent and child. p7 ... the panel, it becomes a multidisciplinary sort of decision making...p23 It (partnership) can work against parents. It works for the child.

### Summary Frame:

#### PARTNERSHIP

What the participants of the assessment had to say about partnership with parents and other professionals

### OT

p6 .. I'm viewed as being a professional.. barriers p14 .. education and health don't really talk to each other very much Interview 2 P5 ... obviously somebody more expert, like a psychologist p10 I'm totally isolated on this. p19 ...it's very much got to be a team approach, the parents, me and school working on this together.. supporting what I'm doing p21 .. I'm the leader of the situation

### Educational Psychologist

p1 So I really do believe in parent power, because they are more obviously engaged with their children than any professional could be.

p2 (power imbalances in partnership) has the effect of parents being over reverential, parents thinking that they can't go against something you suggest, maybe. That's why it has to be a mutual plan

p5 I suppose the schools have the most power, because they're the ones who are pushing, generally. Then, in those cases where the schools feel that everything is all right, it would be the parents pushing. So I suppose it would be the person who feels most strongly that there has got to be a statement. And certainly in this authority, parents who have pushed are generally quite accommodated..... So what happens is the most powerful parent, the most articulate parents, end up with more resources.

p6 I'm sure we have had traditionally the most power, but that, part of (stage 4) and everything has been to take that power away..... That is, means that the E.P. is no longer the gatekeeper for resources. .... a school or a parent, couldn't put forward a request that didn't have a psychological report backing it. So there's power there.

It (not backing the schools request for an assessment) hasn't happened. It's happened the other way round, for me, that cases that I have actually recommended strongly in my own reports have not gone through.

p6 I suppose the panel is not seen by anybody as having a face. I don't think people know quite who the panel is. But clearly they have the ultimate power to decide. But their decisions are circumscribed by dwindling resources, and we're down to a very few outcomes now.

p 21 in terms of the statementing process, he (David) did get a statement which was on the lines that mother wanted, which was for learning support

### Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

p9 the Ed. Psych has... because they make the decision as to whether to go ahead with it, or they advise you whether to do ahead with it

p10 things like measurements that they make through their batteries of tests ....a concrete way of saying how bad the child is.

her (EP) experience and her judgment so power's perhaps not...

it has backed up what I have thought, and hasn't always been the case in other cases with other Ed. Psychs (our EP was very good)..about defusing it, not talking about learning and behaviour but talking about David (David) he's got a great deal. Certainly, we're all having to bend over backwards to try and keep David going with... he's got this power that he can just say no

p11(Mum) his work visibly improved a couple of weeks before parents night, when he knew I was going to see her. I don't think it's a question of having rewards and things

(teaching staff) we're going to devise a thing and take him back...We're not quite sure how we're going to do it, but that's how we're going to get round her knowing, particularly about the negatives.

(named person) a friend of hers who came to one of the review meetings to sort of back her up, ... and said, I can't believe we're talking about the same child. She said, I've seen David, I've seen him at parties, I've seen him playing with other children, I have never seen anything like this happen at all.....I think that's only fair, really, isn't it? (to bring a named person) ....

p12 just one person against half a dozen, even though we didn't have it in for her

p7 (SENCO) pivotal role

p13 I was told...if they look and see your name at the bottom of something they accept it .. if I think a child needs help, they're going to get it, which is all you're after, isn't it? You're not after individual kudos.....I haven't ever put in an Appendix D and had help refused.....I've had (one stage 4 report) turned back...I was surprised

### Acting Principal Educational Psychologist

p3 She (a parent) doesn't want these bits of paper. They are, written material is intimidating in itself for her.

p12 Anecdotally I'm sure that school's feel that the E.P.s report carries a lot of weight, but from sitting on the statement panel, equally the education advice, where it's a thorough and properly completed report, does carry a lot of weight.

... I suppose I just don't see the whole thing as a system of power. You know, it, all right, the statement panel makes the decision, but I actually think the statement panel has very little power.

... Because although we make the decisions, there are a limited range of options anyway that you can offer. If a case has been made, we haven't got the power just to say, well, we don't feel like allocating any more money this month because the budget's gone through the roof, because the regulations say that, if these needs are identified, then something's got to be done about them.....because it's the needs led.

p15 if you were an LEA officer, special needs was one of the little lifeboats that you could climb on to, because that wasn't going to be delegated

p21 at least trying to carry the parent with you in saying, well, OK we've tried this, look we've still got these problems, now, let's start and address those

p26 there is a huge amount of information that a properly conducted series of standard assessments could produce

### "POWER"

#### Head Teacher

p2 Yes, David needed the help, but we as a school needed the help and support, and I did try G (LEA Special Needs Officer) before the statement for interim support when he was at his worst, but you know that wasn't possible.

p3 Because basically the case didn't either seem serious enough, or there wasn't enough money. At one stage I was on the point of considering exclusion, to actually make them act, but fortunately it didn't come to that...

... I actually spoke to David and spoke to his mother the night we broke up and said, you know, the next time he did that he would be out, because I was actually scared

p4 It may do (be enough), we've got here to see how it works. I mean, she's only three hours a week with him, in writing, which may improve his self esteem, which may improve his behaviour, but it isn't actually tackling behaviour. We have nobody sort of with him in P.E. or in the yard.

...at Newby, in the good old days when you had classes of 18 and spare people about, and there was always somebody who built up a relationship with these people and it would never have got that far in a school like that. A lot of it is to do with resources and people.

I think Mrs B's (David's mother) resistance, I think (meant statement not dealing with behaviour)

.....Yes, there was one particular review meeting where she brought a friend along who had known David since he was a baby.. who brought out all the issues like, he wasn't like this at home, and, you know, they couldn't really quite understand what was going on, so yes, it was difficult.

p6 (who has the most power?) The panel, yes, they have agreed that we can have this statement

No, not really, I think it (the statement content) was what we were going to expect...Well, OK, I mean, it doesn't matter what the content is, it means David is given more one to one, which, you know, I think he needs. And there have been times when he has really settled down. Not so much this week. So it doesn't really matter what that says. You know, he's getting a little bit extra time, and we'll just see how that goes.

p10 which is a worry to me, that you're going to lose children...Because he's hit them children have been frightened of him. I think he has a silent power over children, he's quite manipulative, David, he can manipulate teachers, actually.

p13 this time last year, my first term here, we had a teacher... off... so I was in there, it was horrendous, my first term, sort of, and awful lot of the time, there was nobody ... suppose he was to riot again, and this statement, this extra sort of time didn't work, I said, what happens next. And there isn't really anything, again. Because I'm sure there are far, far worse children, as I've said before, who need these places in other places

#### Senior Clinical Medical Officer

p8 ...(on the statementing panel) everybody, every professional's comments are taken very seriously and respected very highly. I didn't realise that.

... Yes, I thought that there was only one person, who is the most senior person, who looked at the papers and tells other people what to do and what he thinks is the best of the child, or she thinks is the best for the child.

p8/9 Since I've been on the panel, I've explained to every single parent

p9 I'm not sure, because they attach a lot of weight to everybody else's ideas and assessment results. I don't think that the question of who is the most powerful one comes to it at all, I can't see it that way. Because, also, it is a group decision. I mean, if one person, for instance, the ed. psych who is heading the panel, disagrees with everybody, the decision still is based on the majority.

...It's not on, based on one person's feelings or decision.

...No, I thought that the head person on the panel has got the most power and makes the final decision. And certainly people, parents that I had met in the past, had said, named the person who has made that decision, and I always thought that that was true, but it isn't so.

...A lot of, yes, a lot of weight is given to the parents' wishes. Appropriately. I mean, they do not sacrifice a child's welfare for what the parents want, but if parents want some sort of extra certain things, once the child's needs are met, they try their best to meet those as well.



### Clinical Psychologist

Interview 1 p3 ... And I have tried very hard to maintain my own referrals... and I will go back to the BPS guidelines and talk about my responsibility as the referred person, as the patient, the person to whom I've been, who has been referred to... I have to have some control over that.

p7 ... I would have hoped that the impact my involvement had would be to highlight the extent of David's difficulties and the need for the education department to give David the best that he could

p15 . He can give me advice, which I can refuse to take. ...Because he's not my boss...Well, he could (prescribe for him), only if David is referred to him.

Interview 2 P3 ...requests from school doctors ... asking permission for my report or my views to be incorporated in theirs. ...I feel concerned ... I'm not sure what could be taken out, out of context, I guess...I wouldn't be unhappy with the school psychologist incorporating bits of my report, I think ...

p5...My view ... (EPs) would see themselves as the lynch pin of the whole thing, and the most important there, as far as. I mean, they are, at the end of the day they are the ones who have the authority to sign the statement and to give it, credibility ... it's going to be quicker, or I don't want the school to know, I will say, well, yes, I will test your child, but if I can't let the school know, I can't help. And some parents think that I can do all sorts of things. And I say, I can't, the educational psychologist is the person who will be able to get them what they want, and not be.

p7 ... Actually, I think who should have the most power is probably the educational psychologist. I think who does have the most power is probably the Education Department, who don't provide the resources. And I suspect, although I don't know, that the educational psychologist sometimes finds him or herself very frustrated, because they know what they would like to recommend, and the resources may not be there... I think that the parent probably does have a lot of power, but I don't think parents always realise they do... if the parent is unhappy with an outcome, he should apply to the Secretary of State, is that right?... only a very, very small percentage would push it.

p14 ...He said I want to order the little psychological test for everybody in the team to use. And I said, what test is that, and he said, it's the one with the little boxes. It's a bit like me saying I'd like to a prescription for those little pink pills, I can't remember what they're called... He said, but I'm only wanting it to give to the team members to help them talk to children. And you can score them, (clinical psychologist). And I said, I mean, it's a classic, isn't it? A classic... I don't want to be scoring everything that's administered by anybody else.

### Named Person

p5 I think she feels a stigma... because she's a single parent who has a child who is having difficulty with his education

p6 we just went as a right

p7 He made a comment .....that no seven year old child or no six year old child was going to get the better of him

p15 I think they were grasping at straws, and I think, to be fair, the school tried to use anything..... if another child is attacked, of course it has to be acknowledged, and of course the problems have to be, you know, resolved.

.....Well, personally I didn't think that the school trip should be used in that way, it was a different thing. I thought they could have looked for something else. p17 I don't think he (David) fully understands the implications of it (statementing)

p19 and if the child questions, and if the child, staff aren't used to that and it's quite scary.

p22 I think he would have had a behavioural, definitely. Definitely. And then I think that would have given the school a kind of lever to say, right, we're here to educate him, we're not here to do his behaviour

.....I think it would have been proposed that a school that dealt with kids with behavioural difficulties would have been approached

p23..... the head still has the last say at the end of the day. The power of exclusion.....rather than the statement

p24 the only power that (David's mother) would have, well, she wouldn't even have, I was going to say to keep Dave away from the school altogether, but then no, she wouldn't.

... I think people have relevant input, but if you're talking about actual power, and this feeling of like, you know, no, I don't think so.....I don't think he (David) has any power at all

### "POWER"

#### Class Teacher

p9 I would think the local authority, in the end.

...Because they are the ones that ultimately say whether you're going to get any help with him or not. ...I think there was a possibility that they might have said no, but even if they'd said yes, it's eighteen months too late.

...That's the main problem. It's very difficult to get somebody in when you realise that there's a problem and it's a big problem. The problem was obviously larger then, a year ago.

p11 (who has the most influence on his situation?) obviously the most contact with him, so his mum.

...Well, his mum and his teacher.

...And the support teacher who sees him every morning.

... I think you try to, what's the word, to instil a sort of confidence in him, you know, so that he can accept various situations in a better frame of mind than he used to be able to accept ... I wouldn't like to say he uses me as a, to somebody he sees in certain situations, but I think if he sees you react in a certain way, then perhaps he'll react in that way as well, rather than, you know, let it become too big for him.

... I think you can just influence him in small ways, rather than have a big influence on him. He doesn't, sort of, make very much of coming to talk to you or things like that, you know.

p12 I think you feel quite, apart from filling in forms, you feel quite remote.

...I think that sometimes it's already been decided what is going to happen, before your input gets put in.

...You know, I think sometimes you just feel as though you are going through the motions.

...I think you feel you have to do this anyway.

...I think it's probably because it's such a long drawn out process, and it's, the actual, the decision to even ask for somebody took a long time.

#### Heather Younger: occupational therapist

Interview 1

p10 A personal issue about that is that if my management was saying other things, I would still always write in what I think the child should get.

p13 You know, I've never really thought of it like that (in terms of power).

p14 ... think it's a really useful, a useful way to look at it. Because, we would all like to sit here and say that the parents had, I mean, in terms of power, it's about decisions, isn't it? So, wouldn't it be ideal if the parents, ultimately, were the ones presented with all the facts, and they made the decision. I mean, I know it's an obvious, I mean, the most powerful person is obviously the Director of Education, isn't it? I mean, that's where the decision is made? Am I right? .. there are a lot of children around that I know where parents have been given options, and I do know that they've said, wherever you're happiest sending your child, that's fine, and we'll accept that, and that's worked really well. So that's really encouraging, I suppose, thinking about it. There are an awful lot of parents, perhaps more, who get really angry and frustrated and feel they know what their child wants and then they don't get what they need.

... they (children) come and get what they need anyway, whether they've got a statement or not. So, I mean, so it (statementing) doesn't influence what we do at all. Or what we offer at all. .. It's (statementing) not important. I don't look at it as being very important at all. But I wish it was.

p15 ... I can write in what the hell I like, but it won't make any difference, and nobody will really care that much, because I'm just a health person... I write it up and I send it off. ... I'm not accountable to them at all, and why should I be, I'm not.....So it's just a bit of a farce really, the health part of it, of statementing.. , if it was really important, then it would be written in to the legally binding bit....

Interview 2

p7 ...Because I have to rely on (the SCMO) to make the decision, and she will, I mean, they always do at some point get back, if they know you're involved. But I think it's just interesting, that, the referral could happen anyway

p8 ... I can't even remember the last time we talked about statementing..

... we're contributing to something that has no power over us, and we are not accountable to it, so, your commitment to it, you .. education can't expect certain things from us, or what they want from us. You know, we're just part of a different body, completely, aren't we, bureaucracy. And ultimately, if you, you know, as health people, then I should be employed by education, shouldn't I? ..

p20 ...At different times, possibly, looking at it very carefully. In the period of treatment, then I have more power (in comparison with parents). I suppose, effectively, perhaps power is the wrong word, but you know what I mean. It's like, it's all happening, and there's a lot invested from my end. And hopefully from their end a little bit as well. But then over, once the six week block is finished, and I set a review date, which might be a term ahead, then I'm trusting that they will continue, and then they have the (power) not to do it, or to do it.

....while they're on my case load, as it were, I'm the leader of the situation, very much so.

## **Appendix 9**

### **Summaries of Utterances from Transcripts of Interviews with David's Mother on all Themes**

## David's Mother talking about David, her views of his needs and difficulties and the effects of the statutory assessment process for him

### Interview 2

p1 He didn't settle particularly well at Nursery school but I wasn't terribly concerned about that... if he was having problems at school it was because of the break up of my marriage... as things became more settled in our lives ... It just didn't seem to fit.. fairly quickly. Quite aggressive behaviour in the playground and things like that.

p3 ...His own class teacher wasn't too bad. The headmaster at that school was terrible. He said he needed a short sharp shock and that he'd shown him this belt and it was well needed and he was horrible... I'm not prepared to get any firmer with this little boy. He had a regular bed time, he had a routine, he wasn't allowed to, I mean he didn't have an unstructured life...

... The teacher ... she thought that he had a very, that his fine motor skills were a lot worse than the other children in the class.

p4 They said ... he had the potential... a clever boy if he would work hard... some lovely sides to him, he could be very loving.

...he was suspended from school...For a few days ...I think he kicked a teacher in the dinner queue...Totally devastated...(I was) Angry about what had happened ...p5 ... a four and a half year old boy can be suspended, it was like what is the point of that. It didn't mean anything to him and I didn't really want it to mean that much to him...Right, yes and it just was horrendous for me. It was like I could see the point of suspending a child of a parent who needed to be made to realise

p6 I think there has been differences of opinion. I think it was seen very much from the, by the school as purely a behavioural problem.

p7 ... People would say, he just won't work or he's an intelligent boy but terrible at writing, he won't write. Initially ... a special educational needs teacher at the time said no it's his behaviour that's affecting his work. ... by this point in time he was hating school, absolutely hating school, crying in the mornings not wanting to go.

p8 a bad period, he was, we got into a terrible cycle of him behaving very badly in school. Having to send him home and David being pleased to be home, really and me feeling that I had to start making home not so pleasant for him and that was awful. It was all horrible and (clinical psychologist) helped to break that cycle... Then we started a home/school book going back and forward and it was then that I started to notice the connections between maybe writing and the behaviour problem. Not always, I'm not saying always but quite often..

p9... I gradually and quite strongly was starting to believe no this does not make sense, because by this time we were in a nice settled time. ... he would get so far into term and I could see the physical change in him. He would be so stressed, he would be white, he would be ashen when he would come in from school... once his IQ was assessed ... (the clinical psychologist) started to say look this is a highly intelligent child who is not achieving and he can see that other children in his class who aren't as bright as him are and he's angry about that... eventually she said this isn't an emotional problem or primarily a behavioural problem or family problem it's, I feel it's educational and (the EP) should take it on. I can't really remember how it started that he actually started to get help. It was only when the new special educational needs teacher came to the school.

p10 ... it's really just this year that there's been the big improvement.

...Let's see so September, the beginning of September term things came to a head then. That's when I was talking about when there was a conversation between me and his class teacher and it very much at that point was people digging their heels ... (the clinical psychologist) said there may be cross laterality. His special educational teacher, the previous one had said there may be a slight fine motor problem there although she had that that wasn't what was causing his major problem. It was all a bit confused actually....they started to give him some help with his writing in the morning...I think they recognised that he'd fallen behind drastically but I think the reason for that was still...

p11 Well if he's had the doctors report ... it was then identified at the medical that there was quite a severe specific fine motor problem and she picked that up straight away with the tests that she did and has referred him for occupational therapy. I've told the special educational needs teacher that so he can't think that it doesn't exist now.

...The argument that I always heard was he can do it if he tries and I mean I've talked to (the EP) about this as well and (the EP) said yes he can do it if he tries but it's like climbing a mountain for him and you can climb a mountain once a week... And I hadn't seen any evidence, looking at his books over the years that he, over a year that he could it. It wasn't a kid who was doing wonderful sheets of writing one day and nothing the next. But I know what they mean by that, he can physically form the letters if he really tries, or if the pressure is really on. And yes his attitude towards it all was bad by this time because he wasn't doing as well as he wanted to do...

p16 (from the assessment) I'm hoping for an acknowledgement that he is a gifted child with fine motor problems who needs some help around his writing and spelling and things like that... no I would like teacher time for him...(would not like ) a behavioural statement... In a way I'd be relieved (if they decided not to give a statement) because, but in another way ... if the help stops when he is average he is still going to be frustrated because he's not of average intellect. I suspect that problems might set off again then.

### Interview 3

p2...Right, well, I think for a long time, David was seen as a behaviour problem. He was, I mean, there was no two ways about it, he did present problems in the classroom. But for a long time that was only being tackled from the point of view of his behaviour. It was behavioural techniques with him, if you like... And that was very destructive for him, it was very destructive for him, and destructive for us, really. But now that he has been given the, sort of, the tools, and the help to achieve, and there has been an awful lot of work done by his class teacher on boosting his self esteem as well, which has been fabulous, you know. I mean, I really appreciate that, and I can, you know, David will come home and say that he was allowed to pick the teams for PE, or something, you know, little things like that, but you can tell that they are working on that side of things. And now that that is happening, the other things are things that should be happening in any case. He should be learning to behave and socialise and whatever, it was just, when the heavy hammer was coming down, and it wasn't being, having any effect, because there was something else.

p4 ...I don't know (whether he really does have emotional difficulties), I honestly don't know, I really don't. ...I don't think it's helpful, in any case, to say that, I think it's just like what, what measures can be taken to help him best, really.

p5 (David's understanding was...) That he was going to get three hours a week extra help with (the SENCO)? ... And that some of that would be alone with her, and some of it would be in the classroom. He was particularly worried about it in the class, and that this was what we'd been hoping for, and that it was good, you know. And it was what he needed, and it would make a big difference...

p6... I think he's really quite enjoyed it, and there has been a session where the special educational needs teacher has been in the class, and he came in and he said, you were right mum, they just said, there is another teacher working in the class today, but she worked mostly on our table and helped us mostly, so he knew what the score was. But the rest of the class didn't.

... No, I'm not, I'm still not comfortable with it (the behavioural contract), but I'll, I'm, I know that his behaviour does have to be tackled, if you know what I mean ... Well, what I'd hoped, and what has to a large extent proved to be the case, is as the frustration lessens, that his behaviour will improve, and that has definitely happened. But there are still bits of him that's just bloody minded, and also, because I suppose he's got into the habit now of solving his problems with blow ups, that that is still there, there is still the residue of that. ... I'm not sure how much his high ability is being addressed. And I don't know that there is much that I can do about that.

p7 ...I don't think they understand what a problem it (high ability) can be. I think they see it as a sort of a, as a symptom, almost another way to say he's naughty, because he's clever but he's not working...

p16 Well, she started giving him five minutes a morning, every morning. ... David's changed, and attitudes towards him have changed.

p35... I think it (the blow-up when the 3 hours started) could have been avoided. I think if he hadn't been traipsed round signing this blooming contract, and then missed his playtime, and then been told...Yes, I think if there'd been a teacher in the class, I think it wouldn't have happened. I think it was an unfortunate set of circumstances.

## David's Mother Talking about Partnership, part 1

### Interview 2

p14 I think I've been involved. I've been involved because initially it was all getting passed back to me by the school when they were sending him home and whatever. So I was involved in that way, in a sort of negative way.

p17 God that's hard. I think it's been different at different times and I think say school for instance, they've tried to involve me and have involved me but it's been in, well a lot of the time it was involving me in sort of behavioural programmes with him.

### Interview 3

p1 well, it (the statement) was sort of a compromise really

p3 ... class sizes the way they are at the minute, I'm expecting a lot of a class teacher to pick up on one child

p10 ... And (the EP) says, you know, we're getting back into this black and white, you know, yes it's just the behaviour problems, it's just a learning difficulty, you know, let's hit the middle, you know, there's complicated factors involved here...

...recently meetings we've been having, ... there's been conversations going on among all of us, rather than the school and me....it's felt much more partnership thing

... But she's (the SENCO) always spoken nicely about him. And his class teacher has been smashing... it started off a terrible relationship between me and him,

... I said, well, you know, he has got a problem, and. (He said) no he hasn't got a problem, and I'm saying, he's not just being bloody minded. Yes, he is just being bloody minded. And I thought, oh God, here we go again, ... And now.. they are recognising his needs.

p12 ...they (the school) were at the end of their tether, to be fair. And I think they wanted some sort of package that would solve the problem (school wanted from clinical psychologist) ... A sort of name put on it...

p13 (effect of named person) Well, it's just made such a difference, really... Just to have somebody in there with you...

...she's really impressed with what is happening at the minute in school, as well... as opposed to the first meeting, where she came out saying, get him out of there...

...I think it's opened the whole thing up a bit.... it's sort of become a, more of a dialogue

p14 (did she and named person talk about what she would do in the meeting?) No ... you've almost got to be beyond the stage of saying, well, you say that, but don't say that, you know...she's a residential social worker,... she's been to quite a few meetings like that.

... I think that (meeting) was before the statementing. It was still a case of, of persuading people that there was a problem there, that there was an educational problem... And there was something said about his IQ, about him being very intelligent or something... the teacher then, the class teacher had said, well, I disagree with that. And that's when I said, well, really, it isn't, it's not somebody's personal opinion, it's like, an objective test that's been done...

p16 ... she (the named person) just felt... that he'd made his mind ... about him

p16 she (the SENCO) says to me, mind, that it isn't just that that's the problem... that he's got attitudes that could do with changing Which I don't disagree with. But certainly from sort of her input, things have changed. David's changed, and attitudes towards him have changed.

p17 (at the statement agreement meeting) they were just very positive, they were very organised, and had a strategy... what they were going to do and what he needed and how they were going to work with him.

... And there comes a point when you've just got to hand over and, you really want to hand over. As long as you feel that what is happening is in his best interests, and with his... That's their job, they know what they're doing, they know more about him educationally than I do...

p20 ... The question is, what is best going to help. ...

I suppose, the negotiation has been, sort of, the negotiation of the difference between making David OK for school and making school OK for David... it's been a bit of give and take on both sides really

## David's Mother on Partnership, part 2

p22 what I hear is, well we have to think about the other 99 children at the school,... the other 99 kids in the school but not mine. Or the other 99 kids in the school until they have a problem. ... But no, that's not fair... I do honestly think they genuinely care about him, and... have done an awful lot to help him... Yes, (the head is) just very reasonable and helpful and, you know, you are always aware that she's thinking of her school as a whole. Which is fair enough, it's her job.

p23 ...I didn't ... know why there was a doctor...

p24 ... She was really nice with him. ...I was a bit...suspicious... I suppose you always have it in the back of your head, oh, do these people think I'm looking after him properly, you know...

p24 Well, I didn't really know what Joan would do. And I didn't really know what (the educational psychologist) would do. ...I didn't like the bit clinical, ... medical, ill, something like that.. mentally ill..

p26 (do you feel a partner?) Recently yes, now I do. Now that it's sort of all over, I do...

...he's getting a new teacher next year, and it all has to be sort of renegotiated again...

p27 No, I don't think it, I don't think it's possible (partnership) from any side really. I mean, there is the power imbalance...

p28 ... you don't have enough time together to build up partnership or to work in partnership, you know.

...I'd dearly love to just, the only contact I would have with the school would be at parents' night and selling the jam at the summer fair, that would be my ideal relationship with the school. ... as a parent you don't want to be in this position in the first place... You don't want to have a child who is, you don't want your child to be experiencing difficulties,

...you overcome it, and you do your utmost to work alongside and with the school.... what I found was, I was doing that too much, and I had to step back from that and partner myself alongside David, realign myself with David... I was too much partnering the school, if you like... Supporting the school. Which is what you think a good parent does ..

p29 ...it (partnership) should be possible, shouldn't it? It's got to do with, I think, as a parent you've got to have a lot of confidence and a lot of self esteem. ...I think you need support with that, either through your named person or the ed. psych, or whoever. ... Because otherwise you go in either too defensive or too submissive And that's no good. But the bottom line is, especially with somebody like David, that there is still a power imbalance. At the end of the day, the schools can still say, right, we're no longer prepared to have your child here. ...You know, that isn't true partnership, really. It's a limit, it puts a limitation on the partnership.

...Yes. I felt more in partnership with the psychologists. ...But now I feel more, I do, with Mrs.S. I did (the SENCO). Yes, I did, yes ... I think that's how I'm defining it (partnership), of having open and honest communication and feeling comfortable in communicating. I think.

p30 Different motivations (is one barrier to partnership)... If you're not working towards the same goal.... they say we're all on the same side and it's only David's interests that we're thinking of, but the way I think of David's interests and the way school think of him, there's like, an ocean apart, isn't there? .. I mean, the way you feel about a child as a parent, you

... I want what's right for him exclusively. They want what's right for him in a context...Yes. I think that's a barrier. And the power imbalance... And time. Time. And then personalities, sometimes... Attitudes.

p35 ...I wish they'd all go away, really. You know?

...I wish we could all just sort of settle back down to normality. I suppose we'll be seeing (the clinical psychologist) for a while. I don't know whether I'll see the ed. psych, or not.

...Yes. The OTs going to be coming to school to see David.

p36 ... He just seems to accept it.(the OT coming)... And of course, there's school, the teachers and school. But I hope, really, within a year, hopefully, to get it back down to just, school, and us, again.

## David's Mother on the Emotional Impact of the Statutory Assessment Process

p4 And I can't, I'm finding it difficult, I know this is terrible, I should have had this sort of organised in my mind, but I'm finding it difficult to remember what happened first.

p14 I hate them all (meetings). I think there's something, it's got something to do with schools and teachers, and headmistresses, and even if you're a teacher yourself

p32 I really get angry at him when I'm put in those positions. I mean, I really resent it, I really resent having to sit there and, like, be the naughty parent, type of thing, you know. But never mind. I mean, we didn't dwell on that, we just went. And that was when she said, if it happened again, he'd have to be expelled...It was fair. It's fair. It is. I mean, not what I want, but there's no way you can argue against it. It is fair. If he is going to attack people like that, it is fair. There's, it's not fair in the broader sense, it's not fair that he ever got to this stage or, but, the black and white, you know, she's not really left with any other choice.

...He was nervous. He wanted to change schools. Could I find him another school? Did I think that that was the best school?

...But what's maddening is that it's taken this length of time to get him any help, and that it could all be lost. I mean, I don't know what getting expelled... (p33) implies. I don't know what happens then. But I mean, to somebody like me, your kid being expelled is like a nightmare, it really is.

p33 (idea of him having to go to PRU etc) Well, over my dead body, because I'd pack in work and teach him myself. You know, no way, no how, suppose we've got to live on the State and whatever, but no way would that happen. There's no way.

## David's Mother talking about Labels

### David's Mother on Assessment

Interview 2 p18 I think the assessment process has really to be fair brought about more of a feeling of partnership because there has been other people involved p21 ...it should be a much more natural thing. It shouldn't be such a legally feeling thing, it should ... something that is just there. Yes you may need to have a clinical psychologist's report and educational psychologist's report, whatever but it shouldn't all have to be tied up and packaged and then this thing put on the child. You know this label put on a child, this child has a statement. It shouldn't be such, I mean I think just the fact that you know different times in your life you need help from different people is enough for a child to understand and know.

... I don't know. No it's not totally objective, because I mean if it was totally objective there would be some sort of, there would be something totally different available for Davie, I mean there would be something available for all gifted kids wouldn't there first of all? And then there would be something within that for gifted kids with fine motor problems and there's not and you know that and you accept that as fact because we don't live in an ideal world and no his needs aren't going to be met in the best possible way, I know that..

Interview 3

p3 Actually, the report was changed, I think ...Actually it wasn't the report that went for the statementing that upset me, it was the one that went for the referral... But, I mean.... the educational psychologist's report, I thought was smashing....I think it was balanced... it put equal emphasis, I suppose, but it put more emphasis than had been put by the school and whatever on the educational things.

...When I got it (the statement) I thought, oh, I remember sort of reading it and thinking, right, right, oh, OK then. You know, sort of, all right then, yes.

p7 I don't know, I honestly don't know (who is on the panel). I should, shouldn't I?

p19 He's central to us, but (... )we're hidden from him ... He'd understand it all, but why should he, why should he have to, you know.

p19 Definitely a negotiation process... There is some objectivity within the negotiation... what can possibly be (p20) objective about a child, you know?

p20... this situation that David is in is chicken and egg, really, isn't it? I mean, I see that, totally. That's been the argument, what came first, the chicken or the egg, all the way through...And I suppose the bottom line is, it doesn't really matter. The question is, what is best going to help.

p22 It (statementing) should be abandoned...(p23) if you had reasonable sized classes and properly resourced schools and somebody on site to help, you wouldn't need three extra hours and little Joey made to go out of the...

Interview 2

p10 ... I also got a nice leaflet from the National Association of Gifted Children about gifted children with fine motor problems which I'd given to the teacher and at this point his class teacher was saying he hasn't got a fine motor problem, he can draw, there's nothing wrong, he's just being bloody minded and I was saying no he is not you know there's more to it than that...

p15 Definitely, yes and that is not as a mother that's as a, you know inside information. And I think that's a rocky road, well that's that but it's sort of something that would escalate the problem and become, he would become a behavioural problem.

Interview 3

p9...Labelling, children being labelled as behaviour problems, and being seen only in terms of their behaviour, like being expected to be badly behaved. Having their behaviour focussed on, rather than any other part of their education. And I think often, ineptly handled as well.

p25 ...I thought (educational psychologist) would be able to like pinpoint exactly, you know, stick some name on and find out if he was dyspraxic or dyslexic or, and she kept saying, parents want a diagnosis and want the label, and it's not really important...Well, I knew exactly what she meant, and totally agreed with her, a bit like you, you know. As a professional, I totally agree with her, but as a parent, yes, I did, I wanted a name, I wanted, you know. I

p25 I thought I needed it, for a start, to stop him getting another name, because you say no labelling, but there is a label, there is going to be a label on a child who is causing problems, and it's just a case of what is the more comfortable label. And if there is going to be label in any case, I wanted the right one, thanks, not naughty, or wicked, or emotionally behaviourally disturbed, or, you know.

p26 No. No, I haven't. I mean, he's not dyslexic, I know he's not dyslexic now. I still think he's dyspraxic. The occupational therapist used the word dyspraxic. I think it's a possibility that he may be mildly dyspraxic...No, if I was to choose a label, I'd choose gifted...It's less important, but it's still important to guard against one label being stuck on. I still feel as if I've got that job to do, to make sure that it doesn't slip to being, David is a behaviour problem.

... I don't object to them saying that he misbehaves, but I don't want him labelled a behaviour problem. Do you know what I mean?...And it's not as important, it's not as important to have the label, as long as, as long as he's getting the help. You know, as long as he's getting the help that he's getting, that's fine. It doesn't matter.

p36 ...Well, I did have a contact, I did, yes, meet the woman from the Dyspraxia Association (p37)...Oh, about eighteen months ago, maybe...Yes. But I haven't since then. I think I, I mean, I shy off labels as well, you know. I do, I mean, for all I was saying before, yes, I want a, if there's going to be a label, I want it to be the right one. I'm not really into associations. I mean, I think there's dangers, isn't there, in becoming gifted or dyspraxic. I mean, I dabbled with them both, but he's him, you know, he's not. ... I waver about going for like a full, getting a proper sort of diagnosis, in that I think it could be ammunition, if you like...If he was expelled. It could then, not to fight the expulsion, but to have him looked at in a different light. Do you know what I mean?

...I mean, when I went and saw her, and she was the first person who had ever said to me, well, look, this is what it sounds like ... I could see the attraction of, you know, just, like,

... I think your education makes you aware of the fragility of labels of any description in any case. I think you've got to be wary of sticking a label like (p38) dyspraxic or dyslexic or whatever on a child, because then expectations go down, and whatever, as well.

p38 ... I think what you've made me realise is that I haven't really got my head together on it (labels) yet. I think what, I think if I'd thought that being involved with them, with the Dyspraxia Association, would help or protect David, I would, but I don't think it will.



## David's Mother talking about Power

### Interview 2

p13 ... on your own as a parent... it's very hard to argue it, it's very hard to say no my child isn't naughty he has a problem... it's a very dangerous sticky wicket and you feel very isolated ... it's only when other professionals are involved that can look at it objectively perhaps. ... I could say he had a fine motor problem and it was causing his behaviour problems, or some of them until I was blue in the face but until the doctor had tested him and said yes it is an actual thing, I was powerless really. ... It's the actual help with Mrs (SENCO) first thing in the morning that I think's made the difference. I think the other things (the actual formal assessment) have helped to change attitudes...

p14 ... I'm a single parent and feel vulnerable and what are these people looking at, am I a good enough mam.

one of the forms had already gone off and then I was shown it and I wasn't awfully happy about that... A lot of things had been included in that that I didn't think were particularly relevant and that were being picked up on because there had been a problem identified

...p15 Urinating in the yard, sticking his willy out, and it was all down there making him look like some sort of strange child ... I think in a way because of my background, because I have got some educational insight and I suppose years of being involved in meetings about children and things like that I was quite, compared to some parents I was more powerful, is that the right word but more able to put my point of view across. But even then I felt very depowered and very, very, I found it very difficult.

... Yes, until the final meeting, the last meeting we had where I did take a friend along ... and said you're not describing the boy that I've known, you know.

p15 Really the process snowballed. ... It started off with like we need to talk to you about David and then all of a sudden he was on this conveyor belt, sort of rolling process and jumped up the stages and scales before I realised we were heading towards statementing. I never wanted him to be statemented

### Interview 3

p8 I could write a three thousand page essay on that (on who has the most power). Well, it's difficult, isn't it, because there's a limit of decisions available, for a start, isn't there?

... I think the school has the most power... They are the people who actually start the process off, whether you like it or not. And I think, I don't think I was powerless in the situation, and I mean, I think, but there were times when I felt totally powerless, and there was, I think, I had to put an awful lot of effort in not to become powerless.

...you're on the defensive, you're in the wrong. If you know what I mean, to start with.

p9 (to not become powerless I...) Gather(ed) information... Well, from (the clinical psychologist), initially... Well, for a start she liked him, that was the first thing... Yes. She said, what a lovely little boy. Because he, you're picking up that everybody thinks that you've got this horrendous child, you know, that he's a horrible child. ... the IQ test, yes, that did give a bit of clout, it did ... the mismatch of his IQ, that was the thing... there is a reason, you know.

p10...since David's educational problem has been addressed and focussed on, the improvement has been phenomenal

... Well, for a start, she (the EP, empowers me by) sort of bangs our heads together every now and again, me and the school... we're getting back into this black and white, you know, yes it's just the behaviour problems, it's just a learning difficulty, you know, let's hit the middle, you know, there's complicated factors involved here. ...

...Oh yes. I mean, his special educational needs teacher has always been lovely about him. Not pulling any punches about him, which I can take. I do see his faults. I'll only deny them when they're all that's being presented of him.

p11 I don't think (the clinical psychologist) had a lot of power. I don't think anybody listened to her, to tell you the truth... No. I mean, I think (the EP) did, but I don't think the school did.

p16 I didn't feel as though I was in a position to be able to just take David out of school and send him to another school... it would all have to be done again, for one thing... stability was the thing I was aiming for for him. That was of overwhelming importance.

p24 ...At the end of the day, the schools can still say, right, we're no longer prepared to have your child here (also quoted in partnership)..

p34 When he was suspended, you see, there was also, well, it was, oh God. That was a dangerous point, because there was all sorts of talk about getting a behavioural team in for him, and changing the statement... pushing towards behaviour and this that and the other, and that's when (the EP) suggested (the clinical psychologist), at the same point.. That was the bottom line. ... But I think it's not going to be a case of, like, going along there tomorrow and the answers will be there, you know, I think it's just a case of gradually

p36 ...I think I have worries about getting it lifted (ie the statement ceased)...

## David's Mother on Role

Interview 2 p14 Oh yes, yes, yes because it got to the point where like regardless if I was a bad mam and if it was all my fault I just wanted to know to get it put right really because it was just so you know things were difficult, things were very difficult for Davie. David was so distressed ... some input and some help, give us it you know let's get it resolved.

### Interview 3.

p5 I've never used the word statement with him, because I won't, I don't think it's right. I don't think it's right for him.

p8 I had to put an awful lot of effort in not to become powerless.

p9 ...I think just knowing that (...) the EBD road, is just so rocky and so, not what I wanted for, definitely not what I wanted for David, and not what I thought would be a solution for him.

p13 I think that was before the statementing. It was still a case of, of persuading people that there was a problem... an educational problem.

p17 I make a point of not being too much of a teacher with him at home in any case, and we do other things... But as a person, I understand him better, I think. I hope.

p18 I would say I was David's advocate in it, really. I've tried to be (in the statementing process)

p21 I think that's what a parent is about. I think that's what you're doing, what your major motivation is, if you like, to like, to like get the most out of that the system), to get the best out of that ... a fantasy would be, like, having some specially designed curriculum for a child like David, for a child who has this high ability, that's going to challenge him. He can use, learn to use a word processor, to pot if he never learns to write or spell, and he can be academically challenged and totally content and happy to be at school.

p24 ... what will David think when he grows up and he finds out I've taken him to all these people. ... I didn't have any choice...

p25 ...I didn't ask for the clinical psychologist, what did I ask for? Just somebody to, some psychological help, I suppose... Or counselling, or something. I didn't know what he needed, you know. Because of what had happened at school. I think school had written to my G.P. as well...

p26 I think it's a possibility that he may be mildly dyspraxic... No, if I was to choose a label, I'd choose gifted... It's less important, but it's still important to guard against one label being stuck on. I still feel as if I've got that job to do, to make sure that it doesn't slip to being, David is a behaviour problem... I don't mind, I don't object to them saying that he misbehaves, but I don't want him labelled a behaviour problem... as long as he's getting the help that he's getting, that's fine. It doesn't matter.

p34 ...And I mean, again, I've just sort of mentioned it (to David), before we went away to Disneyland, we're going to go and see (the clinical psychologist), and this time we're going to talk about your anger, right? Do you want marmite on your toast? I tend to do that.

## **Appendix 9**

### **Summaries of Utterances from Transcripts of Interviews with David**

## The Child, David Selected Quotes

### Behaviour - what teachers do - what happened... Part 1

#### Interview 1

p1 Shall I tell you what my teachers called? ...Mr Linton p2... But, and I haven't got a problem anymore...  
p4 ... I wasn't behaving well and I was kicking and fighting with people and punching people... It seemed to go on and on for ever but it, but eventually it stopped. Don't know [what made it stop] it just seemed to come to a halt sometime this term.

#### Interview 2

p1 They [teachers] boss them [children] around a bit and tell them what to do and stuff.  
...Well, my old teacher used to go, do this, do that [and hand movements indicating teacher prodding him]  
p6 ...[to help children who really lose their temper every now and again?] I think just try to make them calm down...No [teachers aren't any good at coping with kids who lose their temper once or twice like that], they make a big fuss of it.  
...Well, afterwards, when they've [children] missed their playtime, they feel sad. ...When they're doing it, they probably feel mad.  
...Sometimes stop themselves, but once they've [children] started to do it, their brain gets locked into doing it and it's like they have to do it. ...It's really hard to stop.  
...There's a person in my class today, one was called Timothy Jones, and he told on a person called Bobby for no reason, and Bobby got really upset about it and then my teacher asked for him to come outside and have a chat with her, and Bobby threw a pencil at the window and said, oh, I don't believe this, and pushed a person called Alice out of his way, and then  
...Well, he got a good telling off, and when he was outside you could hear him scream... Someone had a look through the door and saw him kicking the teacher...Our teacher.  
p7 ...Well, then she told him to tell her what happened, and he did, then she brought Timothy in and he told a totally different story that Bobby had been calling him names and stuff, so Thomas just complained, and she didn't know who to believe...She didn't know, she didn't know who was telling who was telling the truth, then someone stood up and said, Thomas has been telling on Bobby for no reason when they didn't see, so she just took them both down to lose their playtimes, because, at the end, when she came back in from helping another teacher, they were having a fight... Well, there's a lot of children in the school. It does happen a lot.  
... Yes [it has happened to me] A few times when I was in Year 2.  
...No [it hasn't happened this year] This year hasn't been very long...it ...[...] happened before Christmas.  
...I would mind telling you about it...  
...They could do things better. If they'd just tried to calm me down instead of drag you about and drag you to the head teacher and stuff like that...  
p8 ...Yes. And afterwards, when I lost, well, when they're not so angry, you can just tell them that they've missed a break, or something like that. Instead of being dragged about the place.  
...Yes. And sometimes when you do it more than that, and sometimes when you've done it a lot of times they send you out of school for a while. ...No [its not a strategy that works] ...It just, because, you just lose time when you should be being taught. I'd rather be caned than be expelled.

### What is easy, what is hard...

Interview 1 p3 No I'm an excellent reader.

Interview 2 p5 ...Well, I enjoy some things, find some things interesting, think some things are boring.  
...Sort of like, writing English and stuff like that [is boring]. Any time that I write ...English I find it boring. ...Sort of like stories and stuff.  
...It would be a bit better [to write it on a computer]...But, it would take me a long time to find out where the keys are and stuff...I'm not used to any [computer]. I mean, I do use the computer a lot, but you see, they're not in alphabetical order... I just scan the board and find out where the keys are.  
p12 ...Well, Andrew's good at Maths and I'm good at Maths. ...Well, he's a wee bit better than me.  
p13 ... Well, he's good at, he's pretty good at running, actually.  
...Well, in the playground, I'm good at a game called British Bulldog...Yes, and they've got to try to stop you, and if you're, and if they grab you ... But I like being on as well, I catch nearly everyone out. ...No, I don't like writing...Especially English.  
...Well, he [my friend] doesn't really like any, he doesn't really like work...Not very many people like work in this, in our school...Yes, most people just don't like it.  
p14 ...Yes [I'm quite good at listening], quite good. When I'm listening, when I want to listen to people...Sometimes I'm like, falling asleep, not listening to anything.

### Behaviour - what teachers do - what happened... Part 2

...Because when you're expelled for a period, your mums play hell with you...They [your mums] just think, oh we can teach him a thing or two... Yes. Some kids would rather be at home than at school. ...So if you're expelled, even for a few days, then you're giving them what they want, which is they're not going to school.  
...No [being excluded so I can't go to school is not what I want]. It does apply to one kid in Year 5/6 who skived off school once...Yes, they expelled him for a little while.  
...I always think they're going to, they're always really strict, and I just, prefer ...  
...They'll expel you permanently, actually [that's the worst they can do].  
...Yes. Because, I mean, your mum would have to stay home and look after you, not doing her job.  
p10 ...Oh, she's [my new teacher] quite a nice person.  
...Well, she's just strict if you're naughty, and nice if you're nice. But my old one seems to be strict all round.  
...Yes, and sometimes, you know, that prodding thing, she usually does that before she talks to you. Once, when someone wasn't listening and paying no attention to her at all, she picked up this book and slapped it in front of him and really scared him and said, do you see, that could have been a bolt from heaven and everyone could have run away apart from you and you would have been dead.  
...It was a pity I was sitting next to him, it hurt my eardrums as well as his ...Yes. At least it wasn't right in front of me ...Yes, [she was strict] with all of them.  
...Pretty happy [that I don't have her this term]. Apart from one thing, she was a good art teacher.  
p11 ...Well, I, the teacher before Miss Littler, took everything for a laugh, he was a really funny one.[year before last] ...Yes. He just made school a laugh.  
...He was quite a funny teacher. Shall I tell you one thing about life at school?  
As soon as you're starting to get used to a new teacher, to your teacher, you have to change your teacher.  
...[I prefer ]The second one [SEN teacher].  
...And guess what? Before the teacher I had now, she's called Mrs Philpot, guess who the head teacher was called? Mr Linley.  
...No. Mum, isn't everyone called, have Lin in their name in our school?  
p19 ...Well, when it gets to the very worst, I think they could exclude children.  
...I don't know what the very worst is, actually. I mean, when they've been really, really, really bad.  
...Yes, I don't think I should have been excluded for the things that I've done.  
p20 ... Yes [there are times when I've kind of wanted to lose my temper but I've actually been able to control it]  
...Yes, [I'm] a wee bit happier [about things] ...Well, it's got to be more towards the happy end [how I feel now about school]  
...Yes [when I saw you before] I was exactly at the end of the unhappy end ...Yes, I had only started to get help then.  
p21 ... Much better to be a funny teacher.



## People you see about getting help at school, Part 1

### Interview 1

p6 ...What's an assessment?

...Yes, she [i.e. the EP] gave me quite a lot of help... She's trying to find out what kind of help I need... She's trying to find out what kind of help I need...

p7 ... I don't remember anything [she did] Yes I think I quite liked it... Yes [she came to school and I came out of the class]... She borrowed some school equipment... Like books, I'm starting to remember a bit... Reading.

...No [she didn't have a box with all kinds of files and things in it] that was a person who was before, what was she called again mummy?

p8 ...I go to hospitals for Jean... She's kind of a doctor which finds out things... I don't, I don't know [why I saw her]... They [the puzzles] were simple... A kind of, I can remember little bits of it and I've told you there are bits I didn't remember.

p10 ...Yes, she [Jean] told me that I was, when was it round about, when was it round about mummy?... A hundred in brains... I'm about, I did a hundred of those tests right... That ...I'm better than nearly everybody she's met...[I felt] Quite proud...

p11 ...I felt as if I wasn't doing enough of it...

...The work that they gave me... I thought I didn't do a lot of it right.

[Researcher: I can see how it puzzles you, I know the test that she meant and there designed so that everybody fails at some stage but the fact is that you probably got further than any child your age would be expected to get.]

...Why are they designed so that everybody fails them at some time?

...She said I had got into a different ages group.

### Interview 2

p3[To get the help] ... Well, I did get tested a bit, by a person called Jean. Quite a lot.

p4 ...Well, some people did give me extra help, not at school.

[Not able to recount any other meetings with any other professionals]

...Lots of people [give me help] [or is this a 'don't ask me' comment?]

p14 ...No [no one apart from Joan gave me tests] They always just gave me extra help.

p15 ...Well, Joan was the only one who had red hair. And ... had blond hair, the others had black hair.

...Well, sometimes I went to see them, sometimes they came to see me.

...I just remember her [Joan] giving me all these tests.

...[Going to her was] Pretty good. Especially when I have to go to the place I see her in school time... And I'm not on the sick, then I'm not, and I'm not skiving off school, they just let me, I'm not late for school, they just let me pop out.

...[I've also seen] One of the black haired ones.

...Oh, today there was someone called Heather with black hair.

...Well, she comes to practice work with my fingers, like fitting beads on things and stuff.

...Yes And guess what?

## People you see about getting help at school, Part 2

p16 She told me that one of her friends, for a joke, calls her helicopter.

She didn't tell me anything about what I could do and what I couldn't do, she just timed me and - there it was.

...I had the impression I was doing all right with it.

[...She's trying] To get my hand movement a bit, ...

p17 ...No [she's not a teacher]. She's a bit like a physiotherapist, but not with, but not with speech, with hand movement.

...Well, she works in loads of schools. And she also works in some hospitals and stuff like that.

...Yes, I am [happy for her to come].

...as long as she doesn't come in the classroom.

...I don't know if I've seen one [an educational psychologist]. I don't know what they are. I might have seen one before, but I don't know what they are.

p17 ...I don't really know [what its been like for my mum me getting extra help].

...Yes, I'd rather I got it than not got it.

...I don't know [if she had anything to do with me having extra help].

...I don't know [if she asked for me to have it].

p18 ... I think it [getting extra help] does help them.

...Sort of, like, easier work and stuff like that [would make school better].

...I mean, just, it's a bit on the difficult side for me at the minute?

...The writing bit.

...Yes. So you don't have to write so long stories, and sort of

... You're not allowed to write short ones, you have to write quite long ones, especially now that I'm in the third last class.

p19 ... They just decided I should have it, after the tests [no one asked me].

...They should ask me.

...Yes [it would be a good idea to ask children].

...I'd rather they [people I see] told me a bit more about what they do...

...They've told me, and it was a bit confusing, and I've forgot...It's more likely to be that than they never told me in the first place.

## Getting extra help at school...

### Interview 1

p5 ...Well there was a person called Mrs Sadler and there was me. We did some work in the mornings with me... It's because I've missed quite a bit of work at school... Quite a bit of writing... I didn't enjoy it [writing] when I was naughty but I do enjoy it now

### Interview 2

p2 ...Well, they do like that happening [going out to get extra help], because it's much easier than normal school work...It's supposed to be easier than what they usually do...Well, sometimes [its help] with writing, sometimes practising skills of moving your hands about, sometimes of listening and sometimes of reading. Well [it happens], about, quite a lot, actually...Not every day, but quite a few times a week. Well, [they miss out on] some things in the classroom. ... No, it doesn't [get embarrassing, missing things]...No, I don't mind [leaving the class to work with the special teacher].

p3 ... Yes, it is [a good thing to have extra help]. By the way, I have extra help as well... Sort of like practising skills with my fingers, I'm ... Holding a pencil is quite hard for me to do, a bit, as well. So writing is hard for me to do...Yes [its the hardest thing I have to do].

...Maths [is what I'm good at] No-one can be perfect at everything.

... [I feel] Quite good [about getting this help]

p4 ...Yes, it [getting extra help] has made me feel a bit better about it [school].

...Well, it [school] used to be [a really difficult place for me]...I'm much better at school now...I think it was because of that special help I have been getting.

p5 ...It's all right [getting extra help] ...No, it doesn't [make me feel different].

p13 ...[I'll have this extra help form a teacher for] Quite a long time. Not when I'm an adult though, not forever. I'd would like it to stop sometime...Yes [I would want it for the rest of the year]...No [I don't mind going out of the classroom]

...No, I wouldn't [prefer it if that teacher came into the classroom to work with me]

p14 ... I wouldn't, I don't like doing a different work to everybody else in the class.

...Making me feel a bit like the odd one out, stuff like that.

...Well, there's one called Coren [who also gets extra help] ....., and his is with reading. And there's one called Suzanne, and she's not very good at, believe it or not, listening.

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## **Appendix 10**

### **Questionnaire to Interviewees: Case study of David**

**Participation in Case Study Research on Statementing**

1. Please write your views on my interpretations of the case, as discussed in the paper, "Powerlessness in Professional and Parent Partnerships" by Todd and Higgins

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2. What are your views of the problems in confidentiality in this kind of research, case study research?

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3. Do you have any other comments?

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*Please return to Liz Todd, Department of Education, Joseph Cowen House,  
University of Newcastle, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU  
Thank You.*

**Appendix 11**

**Selected notes on Educational Psychology Service staff meetings and items from minutes, relevant to Parent Partnership Scheme**

5th September	COSA discussed, likely to stay in its present form, PEP and SE Adviser consider forms from schools and EPs making a case for a child to be formally assessed
19th September	<p>New standard letters which are needed under the new education act, 1993, were considered and a few amendments agreed.</p> <p>"Discussion identified problems in interpreting the Code of Practice where it describes parents rights of appeal if the LEA decides not to carry out a statutory assessment. The Code appears unclear whether parents who have "formally requested" an assessment have different rights to those who have made no such formal request".</p> <p>"Much discussion around the issue of the opportunity provided for parents to express a preference for their child to attend a particular school. This occurs at the stage of the proposed statement. Worries were expressed about how parents would interpret the require blank Part 4 of a proposed statement. How far can the LEA go in "suggesting" possible schools or "guiding" parents towards a preference?</p> <p>Further discussion within the team and within the LEA will be necessary. This issue highlights the tension between EPs roles as caseworker and officer of the LEA"</p>

3rd October	<p>My notes following a discussion on the service level agreements, saying that service to schools is to the child not the school. It is not predictable but is demand led. Therefore it is not possible to say for any school how much EP time is needed</p> <p>PEP "has checked with the legal department, who confirm that, as written, paragraph 3.96 of the Code of Practice seems to give rights of appeal to parents who have "formally requested" an assessment, presumably not giving those rights to parents who have agreed to an assessment in the normal development of casework.</p> <p>It was agreed PEP would pursue this issue via the DFE and IPSEA.</p> <p>It was also agreed that ( ) practice would "deem" any parent who agrees to an assessment to have asked for one, thus ensuring a right of appeal if the LEA decides not to assess. Some modification of the COSA form may help to clarify this.</p> <p>There was also a lengthy debate about the role of caseworker EPs in appeals about assessments which provided a sharp manifestation of the tension between EP as caseworker and as officer of the LEA: professional duty to provide objective advice which we judge to be in the child's best interests, EPs employment position in LEAs, our qualified aim to promote the policies of the Council. (more in meeting notes)</p>
17th October	<p>PPOs outlines the work carried out so far with the parent partnership scheme: "this has included a constructive series of meetings with Parent Federation members, discussion of a user friendly folder for parents to use during an assessment, the devising of an interview schedule for a random group of 40 parents who have been involved in statutory assessment and contact with various voluntary groups.</p>
October 31st	<p>A training for teachers day plParent Federation Directord for 22nd Nov on the Code of Practice would have "Working with Parents" as one of its themes, the others being, "Collection and feedback of early responses to the Code of Practice documentation", and "Setting Targets"</p>

November 28th	A large part of the meeting was given to a discussion of the impact of the Education Act 1993 and the Code of Practice (and the associated COSA and changes in assessment procedures). Many EPs were finding that the assessment system had changed in a way that made casework frustrating. For me, most of my casework involved collecting or helping schools to collect information for COSAs, and often the COSA led to a refusal to assess. We were to see this as part of a larger picture, to make criteria for assessment more equitable across the LEA, to encourage schools to think more about the way they catered for children with SEN, and ultimately to enable EPs to have more scope in their work for an interventionist, child centred role, rather than assessment processes. There were other stresses on EP work, such as the requirement to have service level agreements with each school, and changes in EP patches.
January 16th	Discussed and agreed a format for statement agreement meetings, a meeting that happens between the proposed and final statement as a way of dealing with the new statutory duty to consult with school about statements.
30th January	PPOs discussed with other EPs the idea for a folder. Discussed folder cover and agreed that we would devise a draft version for presentation to the team before any bulk order was made. We were looking at spending £170 on 200 folders.
13th February	<p>Discussion about COSA, the underlying reasons for this system (budget crisis, Code of Practice - clear guidance about consistency of practice in LEA judgements). Discussed features of a good COSA (one which might be accepted) and a bad COSA (one which would not lead to a formal assessment). This mostly involved the relationship between ourselves and schools, for example, the need to make sure schools include our report in a COSA, and for us to indicate whether or not we agree with a recommendation for a formal assessment. Agreed that COSA would determine and record the necessary "reason to proceed" in statutory assessments, so the casework EP no longer need to do this.</p> <p>Discussed Code of Practice Training Days for teachers, SENCOs, in March. This day would have as one of its aims to "explore issues surrounding parental participation in the COSA system. What expectations should parents be given? How can documentation best be presented to them?" In my experience it was extremely difficult to explain the COSA stage to an assessment, an assessment to decide whether to carry out an assessment.</p>

27th February	<p>PPOs presented a paper, written by me, briefly setting out issues based on our accumulate knowledge from the project so far, about the named person (APPENDIX?), and a list of project activities so far. There was a useful discussion of project activities and of role of named person. In the minutes the following was written about this discussion:</p> <p>"At this stage it seems unlikely to be appropriate to recruit and train large numbers of "independent" Named Persons. Experience so far with the new assessment system has indicated no requests for "independent Named Persons. However, it was agreed that parents could be asked about their wishes in this respect without stating that the casework EP will fulfil this role by default. Contacts with other LEAs suggested that Newby's system was currently as successful as any in promoting partnership with parents."</p> <p>(ISSUES: NAMED PERSONS ARE NO MORE INDEPENDENT THAN LEA OFFICERS? RETICENCE TO PROMOTE NON LEA NAMED PERSONS?)</p>
27th March	<p>PPOs discussed with the team their plans to run training sessions in June for 12-15 potential named persons or potential contacts with named persons. It was noted in the minutes that it would then be necessary to clarify how any such trained persons are then involved in the assessments of individual pupils.</p> <p>Discussion of leaflets describing EP role and assessment activities Decided not to make any changes in leaflets but to find ways to encourage their use by teachers and parents.</p> <p>Further discussion of the COSA, prompted by a perception in some schools that COSA provided a bureaucratic barrier to the assessment process and a plea that efforts be made to amalgamate the school COSA report with their advice for a formal assessment. The PEP agreed to consider possible rationalisation but warned against moves which seemed to pre-judge the LEAs decision, to further confuse the process for parents or to encourage an expansion of unsuitable demand by schools. There was, as there had been in earlier meetings, agreement that the LEA should pursue effective criteria to help schools judge what level of SEN they are expected to meet from their own resources.</p> <p>The administration of COSA within the service was discussed</p>
24th April	<p>TES March 31st was distributed showing the LEA had one of the highest % in the country (and the highest by far in the region) of statements completed in 6 months.</p>

1st May	<p>Discussion of the drop in, about the need for careful handling of any issues raised, and that PPOs would encourage parents to contact their casework EP. Drop in sessions would not be advertised in schools as this may cause confusion with the usual referral routes. Outlets in various voluntary agencies would be used.</p> <p>Outline plans for the named persons training days would be distributed to EPs</p> <p>Difficulties in finding a reliable graphic artist and printer for the folder were noted.</p> <p>Further discussion took place about the COSA, such as whether parents should give their report at this stage and how to administer COSA for a child who already had a statement, and how to rationalise report forms for schools (continuing debate in a previous meeting). The complexities of the letters and report forms for parents was discussed. There seemed to be a view that the letters and forms enable the law to be fulfilled, and these were made accessible by being delivered by EPs who would spend time discussing what they meant with parents. The issue of parent advice for COSA was deferred to a future meeting.</p>
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15th May	<p>PPOs described the format and content of the plParent Federation Directord training for the Named Person.</p> <p>"There ill be activities relevant to attitudes towards the role, "professional" and "objective" advice, the skills required in the role , etc. There could be a theme running through designed to allow individuals to decide whether the role is appropriate for them.</p> <p>The contrast between potential roles as "befriender" or "advocate" will be central, with the aim of helping individuals towards understanding the distinction. The role of promoting "partnership" will be underlined."</p> <p>EPs were encouraged to suggest names of interested parents to the PPOs. It was flagged that the new City Challenge funded post attached to the Carers Federation may be a relevant source of future involvement.</p> <p>"The team agreed that the approach seemed very positive." It was agreed that the issue of personal liability insurance be checked with the LEA solicitor.</p> <p>"It was agreed that copies of reports should not be sent to named persons unless parents requested it. Communication should be through the parents."</p> <p>Contact with Family Link was discussed and their leaflets distributed.</p> <p>It was agreed that COSA for children who already had statements would not be necessary unless parties amongst parents, school, EP, health etc disagreed about whether a re-assessment was required.</p> <p>The PEP greed to consider ways the COSA form for schools and the school advice form could be re-drafted to minimise duplication.</p>
5th June	<p>Discussion took place of the teams initial experience of one tribunal. Issues about procedures were raised. It was agreed the caseworker EP would not act as LEA representative due to their potential role as a witness.</p> <p>Concern was expressed about the "President's direction" declaring the Tribunal role to be that of determining the current needs of the child rather than testing the reasonableness of the original assessment.</p> <p>(see notes on MINUTES)</p>

19th June	<p>The new 1995 parents booklet on Tribunals was discussed. Concern was expressed about the different rules for presentation of evidence by parents and by the LEA. It was suggested that the likelihood of a child's needs changing between initial assessment and the hearing should always be made clear in the LEAs case. It was agreed that the team would support measures to raise the various issues in a multi LEA/DFE context, ie AMA and NCED</p> <p>Discussion about the link between SEN classification of children at stages 1 to 4, and allocated school budget, concerned with EP involvement in LMSS Enumeration exercise. EPs were seen to be in a difficult position as advocates for the child and as people for the school to discuss provision - compromise in role. However, since we do know about children's needs we were in a position to be able to verify for the education office whether a child is at, say, stage 3. "appropriate moderation of () required a degree of case knowledge which other LEA personnel may not have"</p>
3rd July	<p>The Parent Partnership project would continue next year, but with reduced EP time, one PPO working one extra day a week (as opposed to 2 and a half days a week)</p>
17th July	<p>Discussion took place about the recent Named Person training, features of volunteers trained, and strategies for their involvement in assessments.</p> <p>Issues discussed included the aims, rights and responsibilities of the named persons. Future training needs were identified such as role playing situations they might be in as named persons and more information about formal assessment procedures. Discussion centred on "how named persons were to be matched with parents, the degree of responsibility incurred by EPs in this process and its relationship to EPs professional roles.</p> <p>It was agreed that ideally EPs should be at some distance from the involvement of a named person with a particular family, but that the GEST Parent Partnership Scheme provides a legitimate role for training, support and monitoring of named persons.</p> <p>It was agreed that at the time of the final statement, there may well be a limited role for the named person. Earlier involvement could be positive.</p> <p>It was agreed that the (Parent Federation) partnership officer, soon to be appointed, could have a role as a contact point for named persons.</p> <p>Until the matter is clarified, EPs should not always change current practice in relation to the named person." (I think minutes incorrect, delete always)</p>

## Appendix 12

### Published Articles

Todd, E. S., & Higgins, S. (1998) Power in Professional and Parent Partnerships. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 192, 227-236.

Todd, L. (2000) Letting the voice of the child challenge the narrative of professional practice. *Dulwich Centre Journal*, 1 & 2, 73-79.

## *Powerlessness in Professional and Parent Partnerships*

ELIZABETH S. TODD & STEVEN HIGGINS, *Department of Education, Newcastle University*

**ABSTRACT** *Power is both implicit and explicit in relationships between parents and professional educators, even in situations where both parties have a common goal in supporting the education of a child or children. We feel that in much previous work the notion of power has either been absent or undertheorised. In this paper, we discuss some of the ways in which the structuring of home-school relations around power leads to particular difficulties and complexities. Further, we suggest some implications (and limitations) for the notion of partnership itself. We look at the notion of powerlessness as a way of understanding much of what happens between school and parents. In particular, we challenge the easy dichotomy of parents as powerless and professionals as powerful. We suggest that understanding both the prominence of the dichotomy and the effects on home-school relations can help to explain the failure of many attempts to improve parental involvement in schools. Influence of other hierarchies, such as LEAs and governmental reforms of education, has had implications for the power and powerlessness of both parents and teachers.*

### **Introduction**

This paper draws evidence from two different research projects. One was an evaluation of a school improvement project, the Educational Achievement Strategy (EAS), the other a case study of a child whose special educational needs were being assessed.

The EAS was designed to be 'an exciting and innovative project of strategic importance to the economic recovery' of an area in the North-East of England (Easen *et al.*, 1996). The specific inner-city area suffers from a variety of social and economic difficulties which are seen as contributing to and reinforcing educational underachievement. The EAS involved 21 primary and nursery schools and one secondary school. It was launched in October 1994, to run for 3 years. One of the main themes of the project was to develop parental involvement as a means to improving pupil attainment. Teachers and parents were interviewed, as part of the evaluation, for their perceptions about parent partnership.

The case study involved interviews of all those involved in the formal assessment, leading to a statement of one child's special educational needs. David is a 7-year-old boy

attending a local primary school. The interviews tried to find out how each participant had experienced the assessment process and, in particular, how they had experienced partnership and where in the assessment they had seen power to be located. Participants disagree widely about how to define David's difficulties. His head teacher and class teacher see him as a behaviour problem, probably with emotional difficulties, but his mother, Mrs. Green, sees his problems primarily as a learning difficulty, particularly problems with writing, and frustration due to being a particularly able child.

Evidence from parental involvement in such diverse educational contexts has enabled us to explore power issues in greater complexity than has previously been possible. We have written elsewhere (Todd *et al.*, 1998) about the complexity of the ideas contained in partnership as a means to school improvement. Evidence from the EAS has allowed explorations of a wide range of ways parents and schools interact in a situation in which parents 'cultural capital' (Lareau, 1997) might be considered problematic. The case study is of a different nature since the context for parent-school communication now comes under statutory guise, and the focus is on a particular child and within a 'problem' discourse. Until there is a 'problem', many parents have little direct contact with teachers. Examining how everyone perceives contact during such situations can be a barometer of the attitudes of parents and teachers to each other. Special needs assessments can therefore provide a lens through which to examine parent-school relations (Evans & Vincent, 1997).

### Equality?

Much current discussion of partnership has assumed that some degree of equality should be involved in partnership. The roles of each parent in the partnership are often referred to using a 'different but equal' discourse (Gascoigne & Wolfendale, 1995). This has the effect of obscuring other notions that partnership, in its other uses outside education, for example, does not imply equality, merely joint endeavour. It is meaningful to talk about the senior partner in a firm of solicitors or of a doctor in general practice. It is also possible to talk about a more experienced partner in sport, at tennis or golf, for instance. The notion of equality might be a connotation or implication of the term 'partnership', but it is clearly not a requirement.

We suggest that the partnership between parents and professionals involved in the education of the parents' child or children can never be an equal one (Dale, 1996). A discourse of equality in a partnership obscures such power relations by talking as if they do not exist.

### Parent versus Professional

Parents and professionals occupy different positions in relation to children. The parent has a much greater stake in the partnership than the professional. They have a longer term commitment to the child than the professional, who in the case of a class teacher, is in *loco parentis* for less than a third of the child's waking life over the course of just 1 year. Parents have a much greater affective involvement in their love and aspirations for their children. The professional has a 'professional' role to play. It is claimed that they will usually have a greater volume of knowledge about children in similar (professional) contexts, or a knowledge that is different in kind (Mittler, 1979; Hornby, 1989). However, if you try to define the knowledge of parents and that of professionals, the list will contain very similar items, making statements about knowledge difference problem-

atic. Claims can perhaps more reliably be made about differences in the number of children parents and professionals have responsibility for rather than the nature of knowledge or skills.

However, it is the positioning of parents and professionals in the systems in which children are involved that renders their perspectives very different, and the perspectives of professionals very different from each other. The difference in this respect between parents and professionals is encapsulated by the following quote from the parent in our special needs case study:

they say we're all on the same side and it's only David's interests that we're thinking of, but the way I think of David's interests and the way school think of him, there's like, an ocean apart, isn't there? ... I want what's right for him exclusively. They want what's right for him in a context.

Furthermore, despite greater commitment claimed for parents, the social construction of the parents' role renders them with less power in their dealings with teachers (David *et al.*, 1993; Vincent, 1996):

It is partly because caregiving activities themselves are boundless and because the work of caregiving is situated in these complex personal relationships, that the dimensions of the labour of caregiving can remain unseen. (Rutman, 1996, p. 92)

The trappings of the professional are, by definition, to provide power, however philanthropically framed (Hugman, 1991).

### **Deficit and Powerlessness**

The discourse underlying most constructions of parent-school relations in the current literature is one of powerlessness of parents (MacPherson, 1993; Vincent, 1996). There are two main ways in which this powerlessness is expressed. One is seeing home-school relations primarily from the school perspective, a one-way view of parental involvement. The other goes a step further and imputes pathology, or, at the very least, some kind of deficit, on the part of the parent.

In this section, the 'one way', and 'deficit' perspectives are identified in both the EAS project and the case study, with unsatisfactory consequences for home-school relations. We do not attempt any comprehensive discussion of the various conceptions of power. Our argument focuses on developing the concept of partnership further by challenging the discourse of parent/powerless and professional/powerful. We consider, with reference to the case study, implications of the finding that professionals and parents are both powerful and powerless in different ways.

### **Educational Achievement Strategy: a school view of home-school relations**

'Deficit' was explicit in the EAS project as an adult/child cycle of educational deprivation encapsulated in the model underlying the project (Fig. 1).

It is, perhaps, not surprising, if parents are constructed with less power in home-school relations, that teachers are found to view such relationships almost entirely from their own and the schools' point of view, with little understanding that this is the case, or that there is anything problematic in such a situation. Such one-sidedness is reflected in the literature on home-school relations (France *et al.*, 1993; Sandow, 1994), with most

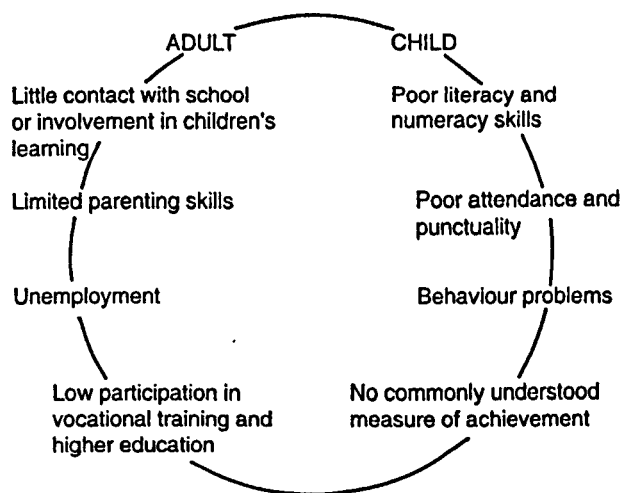


FIG. 1. The 'cycle of underachievement' model from the EAS.

devoted to looking at ways parents can assist teachers in the teachers' role as perceived by teachers themselves, as noted by Border & Merttens (1993).

Lareau (1989, 1997) draws attention to Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, the cultural resources of the home:

This perspective emphasizes the importance of the structure of the school and of family life and the dispositions of individuals (what Bourdieu call "habitus") in understanding the different levels of parent participation in schooling. The standards of the school are not neutral; their requests for parent involvement may be laden with the cultural experiences of intellectual and economic elites. (Lareau, 1989, p. 8)

The EAS project took place in an area of economic deprivation where there were almost certainly many discontinuities in the cultural capital of teachers and parents.

Interviews revealed many instances in which parental involvement was conceptualised from the point of view of the teacher. For example, parental involvement was seen mostly in terms of parents helping with fund-raising, as extra helpers in Key Stage 1 classrooms, in supporting a home-reading programme and in helping to support the teacher when there were discipline problems. At the extreme, teachers questioned the value of involving parents at all. For example, in one school a Year 6 teacher held the following view:

Parental involvement is impossible, children need to get on with it, children don't need parents there. Parents come up especially when there are questions about the next school.

Aspects of power were also implicit in statements from teachers about how they perceived the relationship. In particular, that the relationship is one-way (teacher to parent) and teachers acknowledge what they wish to get from the partnership. This comment from a teacher was particularly pertinent:

Most parents feel confident about fund-raising ... less confident about giving to the curriculum, we need to find out what they want [in terms of courses] ...

so they have an idea how we work. They can be so useful if trained, can allow teachers to give others quality learning.

Teachers, of course, have a complex job. The additional responsibility of developing partnership with parents with a class of over 30 children is unrealistic and leads to coping strategies which reinforce the divide. Even if there is some idea that parents might contribute their own ideas, teachers are not sure how to achieve this:

My priorities are my class. The role is one of co-ordination, it's not me. We want the fund-raising to come from them not me.

We were told the ideas [for parent courses] must come from the parents themselves ... You need to get the parents together who want to get together and then find out what they want to do. But it's difficult to get them together for no reason in order to find out what courses they might want. They need to know there's a reason to come in.

It's very difficult in this area, parents don't feel comfortable about school. Parents want to meet during school time, but the three of us all have classes.

Interesting insights into views of parents by EAS schools were found in the use of space within schools by parents. There have always been anecdotal tales about teachers' views on parents using the staff room. In this project there were considerable differences of opinion about effective ways to use the parents' room. It was either not used at all or was used considerably, but in ways that had, at best, only a tenuous relationship to the issue of parental support for children's learning—for example, as a TV room or by an old people's group. In one school, a teacher commented that they used to have a parents' room but it was 'used wrongly' (the parents smoked in it), and no one wanted to go in it. This respondent went on to comment:

We don't want to get back to that. What we want is a happy medium so that it's not just a room that they go in, it's got to have a purpose, it must be structured.

A common theme amongst both parents and teachers was the difficulty of crossing the threshold. Teachers obviously find it difficult to initiate contact with parents. As one parent said:

It's always the same faces on the trips, they know you so they ask you.

One head teacher commented

It's alright once you can get them [parents] coming in. Once you get them through the door.

This was in contrast to a discussion which was almost incidental to one of the interviews in which three of the parents had been involved in working with a number of agencies to plan and raise funds for the redevelopment of the school grounds. In this project, many of the ideas and much of the initiative had seemed to come from the parents themselves working directly with the children and liaising with staff. They had been involved in making presentations to businesses, radio and TV interviews and writing a final report. This project seemed to have involved them in a genuine partnership with pupils, teachers, local businesses and voluntary organisations. The enthusiasm with which the parents related their experience was in contrast with the positive but tentative experiences of supporting children's learning. Indeed, it could be argued that their tentativeness in this area supported the teachers' hegemony and that their behaviour was implicit collusion with the teacher's use of power. For the teachers, it was 'safe' to allow



parents control of an area outside school, but not to influence any of the main concerns of teaching.

As the project progressed, some EAS personnel expressed frustration, and the parent project worker left the project, due to schools' lack of understanding of the problems caused by seeing parental support for children's learning solely from their own perspective. Indeed, research had earlier been commissioned into community views on barriers to educational attainment for children living in the local area. There was little evidence that this report, based on the views of 160 parents, had informed EAS practice in schools. Such a one-sided view was seen to prevent any effective parental support for children's learning. Teachers need to make meaningful links with children's experiences at home so this experience can be used in developing pupils' knowledge and understanding in the context of school learning.

The issue for achievement is that there may be no real continuity between children's familiarity with reading, writing or number in these everyday, functional contexts and the way in which they are introduced to these learning as an "educational task". The challenge is to develop ways in which both teachers and parents can see that they have complimentary but contributive roles in the process of building this "learning community". (Easen *et al.*, 1996, p. 10)

It would not be true to say that EAS parents were devoid of power in their school involvement, but it could be said that their power received no recognition due to their lack of appropriate cultural capital. Parents were indeed interested in education, views had been expressed to researchers about their aspirations, they had even said something about the kind of involvement wanted (for some, a room to meet where they were also able to smoke), but this was rendered invisible and unacceptable since it was culturally inconsistent with teachers' understandings of parent involvement and constructions of the parents as powerless. However, teachers' comments about parental involvement show different perspectives on power, for example in the recognition that parents should have a voice of some kind, even if it was only in the choice of courses.

### **A Case Study in Special Needs: a multiplicity of power relations**

In the special needs case study, roles, aims and power vary to such an extent as to render facile any easy mutuality in relationships between participants in the assessment process, particularly those of the parent and the educational professionals. Analysis of interviews in this research for participants' perceptions of influence and responsibility show that power is not unitary: it is not the case that parents, or even David, are in any simple way 'the powerless'. All participants experienced power and powerlessness in different ways.

Mrs. Green perceived her role primarily as advocate for David, and relatively powerless. She sought, if there was a label for David, for it to be the 'right one' and for him not to be seen as a behaviour problem. For Mrs. Green, the school held the most power since school staff had set the assessment process in motion. They held the ultimate veto, the power to exclude David from school. David had already been excluded once and had been told that the next incident would mean permanent exclusion. Mrs. Green felt a lack of status in meetings and relied heavily on her friend and named person, Diane, to increase her power. However, this situation was not in any simple way one of powerlessness:

I don't think I was powerless in the situation, and I mean, I think, but there

were times when I felt totally powerless, and there was, I think, I had to put an awful lot of effort in not to become powerless.

One of the activities that gave her more power was in gathering information outside the school, initially from the clinical psychologist and then from the educational psychologist. The major aspect of their involvement which empowered her was not, as might be assumed in the objective discourse of the assessment, test results demonstrating high ability, but in the fact that they like David:

For a start she liked him, that was the first thing ...

Mrs. Green was herself an educational professional but did not feel this gave her much power since she felt so powerless. However, she went to great lengths to maintain a relationship with the school, to be even handed, and to negotiate the label she insisted upon. The fact that the label she insisted on was the one which prevailed, and appeared in David's statement, may be in some part due to power accorded her due to her perceived cultural capital.

The statementing panel was seen by the head teacher as holding the most power since 'they' decide whether or not to award the statement. She felt her power (of exclusion) was inappropriate, but she felt driven to consider the few options open to her. Giving reasons why the LEA could not provide extra resources in school prior to a formal assessment on David she said:

Because basically the case didn't either seem serious enough, or there wasn't enough money. At one stage I was on the point of considering exclusion, to actually make them act, but fortunately it didn't come to that.

The class teacher felt very remote from the statementing process, powerless within it, and felt the awarding of resources was hit and miss, depending on available provision when a case is considered. He saw the LEA as having most power, again due to their ability to decide whether or not to give any help. Like the head teacher, he too felt frustrated, powerless, due to the time it had taken to secure any help for David.

The special needs teacher felt she had a pivotal role in the assessment process, due to her long experience as a teacher and due to the high regard with which she knew her advice was held by the statementing panel. She also felt in a relatively powerful position due to her location outside the classroom:

Everyone has their own perspective, don't they, on a child with a difficulty, and if you're the class teacher and you've got this all day, every day, and, you know, it just becomes a huge obstacle in the way, and if you're coming at it, sort of, sideways ... You have a better chance, maybe to see what's behind it, and maybe to have some ideas, you know of how to help.

The LEA's psychology service was seen by the special needs teacher as having most power. She cited their power to decide whether a statutory assessment went ahead and their use of their non-subjective assessment.

The educational psychologist (EP) saw her role in terms of facilitating intervention which would work positively for the child, as 'clearing up contaminating things', i.e. set views, defensiveness and blame, in order to make a 'fertile ground for change'. She felt power resided with whoever had pushed hardest for an assessment to go ahead, in this case the school. She could see that people might think the EP had the most power, since they were often seen as the gatekeeper of resources, but new procedures following the Education Act 1993 meant EPs no longer decided even whether to start an assessment.

However, the fact that no decision to assess could be made without an EP's report meant, she reflected, that EP must have some power.

The acting principal EP did not feel she had power. She thought the regulations and the assessment process itself took priority. All she did was apply the regulations to consider, with her panel (which included head teachers and a medical officer), whether there was a case for resource provision.

I just don't see the whole thing as a system of power. You know, it, all right, the statement panel makes the decision, but I actually think the statement has very little power ... Because although we make the decisions, there are a limited range of options anyway that you can offer. If a case has been made, we haven't got the power just to say, well, we don't feel like allocating any more money this month because the budget's gone through the roof, because the regulations say that, if these needs are identified, then something's got to be done about them.

An analysis of the perceptions of power of the participants in David's special needs statementing process challenges any easy dichotomy of parents as powerless and professionals as powerful. The head teacher felt forced to threaten exclusion due to the lack of support she feels from the local education authority. She felt powerless and alone. However, Mrs. Green perceived the head's actions as denoting the most power in the system, since she could exclude her child. The Head's and the class teacher's insistence on a behavioural label and refusal to accept a learning difficulty or to relate his difficulties to his 'ability', can be seen as an attempt to maintain their professional identity (Armstrong *et al.*, 1993, p. 400). Teachers can maintain their sense of themselves as skilled professionals if they are able to have challenging pupils legitimately identified as the responsibility of others and if they can 'redefine their role in terms of the skills associated with teaching "normal" children' (*op. cit.*). Legitimate rejection of the child can happen if David 'has behavioural difficulties', but is far harder to sustain if he 'is a bright child with learning difficulties'. Similarly, there was talk by interviewees of the blame Mrs. Green must feel if her son is classed as emotionally disturbed. However, a gifted child with writing difficulties is quite clearly the school's responsibility. Concern to maintain one's own personal or professional sense of one-self, self-esteem, and to avoid blame can account for many of one's 'powerful' actions: in essence, to avoid feeling ineffective or powerless.

### **Power, Powerlessness and Blame**

When power is included in theorising about home-school relations, the major focus has been on a single hierarchy, with the teacher, as the professional, taking the dominant position. The perceptions on the power of the professionals and of David's mother in the SEN case study, can be understood by the operation of a complex system of hierarchies which has the possibility of altering the balance in favour of those usually seen as being in a less powerful position. The different hierarchies which may operate in this way include the state, in the form of the marketisation of education, rendering schools more accountable to parents and in altering the process of statementing. An example on the one side is the head teacher's concerns about the views of other parents about David's behaviour, and the effect on school; on the other side, the acting-principal EP saw the process itself as powerful. It may be that teachers strive to reduce what they feel as their powerlessness as a consequence of recent legislative changes. Such marketisation can also

explain conflicting strands in the EAS study such as the teacher versus parent. The example of one teacher complaining of parents smoking in the parents' room and another teacher looking for ideas to come from the parents is a clear contradiction. In the SEN case study, the positive comments of the psychologists about David helped Mrs. Green to feel less powerless. The cultural capital of the parents is also likely to help to determine whether they are able to rise above their usually less powerful position. All the various positions remain complex, and are unlikely to lead to any easily predictable change. Indeed, marketisation may even render some groups of parents, such as those lacking cultural capital, more powerless (Reay & Ball, 1997). However, such complex hierarchies can help to explain shifts in power and feelings of powerlessness in those usually considered powerful.

### Conclusion

Power positions may have served professionals well in the past and may even have served their clients. The multiple hierarchies of the 1990s have the effect of challenging traditional power positions, which is painful for all concerned. Schools can be seen as 'arenas in which the tension and conflicts of social division are of central importance' (Wilson & Wyn, 1993, p. 6) where embattled teachers must defend their professionalism and sometimes do so by erecting barriers between themselves and parents (Hannon, 1995). Others have reviewed the changing nature of home-school relations (for example, Bastiani, 1987; MacPherson, 1993), the mismatch of rhetoric, ideology and practice (for example, Vincent & Tomlinson, 1997) and put forward arguments that partnership is a tool to maintain professional control in the face of powerlessness and frustration (Cowburn, 1986; Vincent & Tomlinson, 1997). However, there is now mounting evidence that 'clients' are not being served. Defensive power seeking, to reduce blame, to reduce powerlessness and maintain one's sense of self, may account for both the dominance of the deficit view of home-school relations, and the failure of parental involvement to have a major impact on schools.

A history of research (for example, Woodhead, 1976; Topping & Wolfendale, 1985; Pugh, 1994) has suggested that unilateral attempts at parent training can either alienate parents who feel patronised or permanently damage their confidence. David *et al.*, (1993) warn specifically of

direct links with nineteenth century philanthropy, when middle class women went in to working class homes to show the right way of being and doing. (p. 150).

A long overdue shift in the culture of blame, either of teachers or of parents, and a recognition of the complexities in any human situation, could go a long way to make home-school relations less defensive and more effective. Professionals also need the opportunity to develop a less fixed view of themselves and their role to allow a flexible mutuality between parents and teachers. Partnership without flexibility will simply reflect the hierarchical power structures that currently prevail and prevent the development of more equitable home-school relationships.

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# Letting the voice of the child challenge the narrative of professional practice

by

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Let me introduce you to David, who was seven years old and attended a mainstream primary school when I was involved with his situation. He had literacy difficulties and the school found his behaviour difficult to handle. The school had asked for him to be assessed by the local education authority. They wanted some help from the authorities outside the school in order to cope with David, and they had been told that this was the only way to do it. It involved what is termed in the UK the statementing process: when several people assess David and write reports on him. It is a statutory process, and required reports from David's school, the educational psychologist, the senior clinical medical officer, and his mother. I carried out some research in order to find out what was really going on in this formal assessment – I wanted to find out how all those involved saw David, what they felt about the assessment, where they saw power residing, and how involved they felt in the process. I interviewed all those

who were required to write a report on David, and I also interviewed David himself, and other people who were involved in the assessment. David had been referred to others: the clinical psychologist (due to concerns over his anger and behaviour) and the occupational therapist (due to concerns about his writing difficulties). His mother bought along a friend to take the role of designated 'named person' (parent supporter) in meetings.

A major feature of David's assessment was that the participants seemed to hold widely differing views of David's situation. As an example of this, David's head teacher and class teacher saw him as a behaviour problem, probably with emotional difficulties, but his mother saw his problem primarily as a learning difficulty, particularly in relation to writing, and the frustration he felt about this.

As I carried out the research, I became aware of the absence in research, which was essentially on perspectives, of the perspectives of two

crucial players: David; and me, the researcher. I addressed my own perspectives in a number of ways, to be reported elsewhere, for example, by having someone interview me about my own reasons for doing the research. But David's absence was of greater concern. Why, in a process which was about some fairly crucial aspects of a child's life, did the child appear to be absent? Of course, in many ways the child was not absent. David, and his situation at school was the reason for the assessment, and all assessment events either involved professionals working with him, writing about him or talking about him. David was the focus: the research questions asked participants about David and he was interviewed on two occasions for research. However, he had no agency in the assessment, no part to play in consciously shaping the decision-making process.

Other research tells a similar story (Armstrong & Galloway 1992; Armstrong, Galloway et al. 1993; Armstrong 1995). Armstrong et al.

(1995) found that even when a child remembered being asked for their views about their own education, they did not say anything: 'They asked me but I didn't say owt because I didn't know what to say'. Armstrong comments that not knowing what to say is not the same as not having anything to say. Children were interviewed by Derrick Armstrong, David Galloway and Sally Tomlinson as part of a study of 47 children described as having behavioural and emotional difficulties who were subject to a statutory assessment of their special educational needs. They found that:

- children had a general perception of powerlessness in relation to their ability to influence decision-making in statementing;
- many were unaware how decisions had been reached;
- many had views of the reasons for assessment that had little to do with their own needs and more to do with the needs of their teachers and parents; and
- many had a view of the provision based on negative images of themselves (i.e. not wanting to cause further problems for their mother).

(Armstrong 1995)

Very few children, in both residential and mainstream, had been consulted about their views, and most had major misunderstanding about their own needs, their placement, and the role of professionals. The misunderstandings were likely to have a major negative impact on their

understanding of themselves as learners. Dyson, Lin & Millward (1998) also recognised a recurrent theme in the literature of the voices of service-users being overwhelmed by the voices of service-providers. The 'child' also seemed to be absent from the UK government-funded research looking at parent partnership schemes since children's views were not sought on ways to involve parents in the statutory assessment of their special educational needs (Wolfendale & Cook 1997).

However, professionals working in the area of special educational needs often state their main client to be the child (i.e. educational psychologists: Lucas 1989, p.272), and assert the importance of ascertaining the child's views (Gersch & Nolan 1994). In recent years there has also been a move in UK legislation (1989 Children Act), in quasi-legislation (1989 UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, UK Code of Practice on Special Educational Needs in 1994 [DFEE 1997; DFEE 1998]), and in research (Rudduck, Chaplain & Wallace 1996; Blatchford 1996; Allen 1999) to focus on the importance of the child's perspective.

Why, if professionals see the child as their prime focus, and if there is more of a discourse today of bringing the child's voice to the fore, is there still such evidence of a failure to include children in decision-making? The reason David seemed to be the concealed person in the assessment, at the centre of concerns and yet hidden, had to do with professional systems operating in complex ways within the institutions in which professionals function. In this paper I look at these

systems in terms of the narratives of professional practice.

## *What is the narrative of professional practice?*

The narrative of professional practice is, in this paper, defined as the story about the professional role, one located in the complex history of each particular profession and person, which defines how the person in that role constructs their own role.

In David's assessment, ten different professionals were all involved in working with him in some way. Several professionals were required by statute to write a particular report, termed 'educational advice', to contribute to the local education authority's task of assessing his special educational needs, and finding whether there was a case to make extra provision in school for him. This included school staff (the head teacher, the special educational needs co-ordinator, and the class teacher), the educational psychologist, the senior clinical medical officer and the parents. David had been referred to others: the clinical psychologist (due to concerns over his anger and behaviour) and the occupational therapist (due to concerns about his writing difficulties). His mother bought along a friend to take the role of designated 'named person' (parent supporter) in meetings. All involved in David's situation had a different narrative about their role. These narratives were arrived at by looking at what each participant involved in David's assessment said about David and about the process of assessment.

## Imposed narratives

Everyone involved in David's situation seemed to have quite different role expectations, or narratives, that appeared to be imposed upon them by the cultural history of the different professions, and by the complex processes operating in institutions such as schools.

Professionals, particularly those external to the school such as educational psychologists, clinical psychologists, and senior clinical medical officers, have the role of applying their rational objectivity, in the form of tests and other tools, to define and label the child. The narratives are suggested to include being decisive, acting as the expert, and working in a rational, objective framework to define, label and reduce the child to certain terms and descriptors (Allen, Brown et al. 1995).

The construction of the child which occurs through such a model leads professionals to locate the problem within the child. The child is assessed and the answer becomes the provenance of the professional.

Another narrative operates in the assessment of a child's special educational needs, one of bureaucracy and control (Fulcher 1989). Recent procedures in the UK aiming to improve outcomes for children and increase parental involvement have essentially introduced bureaucratic processes, detailing who should write reports, and how long each stage in the assessment should take. This has led to an emphasis on managerial solutions aimed to speed up procedures rather than human solutions to increase advocacy.

These narratives, of some fairly fixed role expectations, were confirmed both by research and by the responses of participants in David's assessment. Research indicates that teachers initiate assessments with a fairly clear idea of the outcome they expect (Armstrong 1995, p.31) and participants of assessments have expected roles in case conferences (Marks 1993; Marks 1995). Professionals are expected to be the ones assessing and labelling: parents are expected to add descriptive accounts and accept the label.

The responses of David's mother in her interview indicated that she recognised such discourses. For example, she was expected to write a subjective report, different from that of the psychologist. She was expected to partner the school, and to go along with their notions of David's problems:

*As a parent, you do your utmost to work alongside and with the school. But what I found was that I was doing that too much. I had to step back from that and partner myself alongside David. I had to realign myself with David. I was too much partnering the school, if you like, supporting the school ... which is what you think a good parent ought to do.'*

(David's Mother, Interview 3, p.28)

*The way I think of David's interests, and the way the school thinks of him – they're an ocean apart.*

(David's Mother, Interview 3, p.30)

David's mother felt unable to cross, un-aided, into certain aspects of the professional role. So, while she could label David as having a problem,

she needed the other professionals to support her view and to define the learning problem in more detail. She chose to co-opt with professionals outside the school professional viewpoint, to adopt their reports for herself, to strengthen her own position. In particular she looked towards the two psychologists, the senior clinical medical officer and the special educational needs co-ordinator (who, despite being a member of school staff, also held a professional viewpoint outside that of the school).

*When you're on your own as a parent, it's very hard to argue. It's very hard to say no my child isn't naughty, he has a problem. It's a very dangerous, sticky wicket and you can feel very isolated. It was only when other professionals were involved who could look at it objectively (that anything changed). I could say he had a fine motor problem and it was causing his behaviour problems, or some of them, until I was blue in the face, but until the doctor had tested him and said yes it is an actual physical problem, I was powerless. It's the actual help with Mrs Bradley first thing in the morning that I think has made the difference. I think the other things (the actual formal assessment) have helped to change attitudes ...*

(David's Mother, Interview 2, p.13)

The implications of the professional narrative for the child is a person objectified, presented in parts, silenced and disempowered. Professionals are only able to see certain aspects of a child if they employ certain reductionist tools.





favoured going along with the parent perspective. David's voice is therefore a represented voice, and the actions of his mother well understood.

### *The importance of recognising power*

What all narratives discussed obscure, both 'thick' and 'thin' narratives, is the major role of the professional as exerting power within the system. David was hidden because he lacked the power to take part in the assessment process as an event rather than as an information-gathering exercise (Armstrong 1995). He lacked any active role that gave him agency in the process: he was a passive recipient of statementing. Giving David a voice was not a key feature of any of the narratives of professionals working with him.

Research into decision-making in educational psychologist's interviews suggests interviews are not simple information-gathering processes, and the role of the educational psychologist is not a straightforward gathering of such information from passive parents and teachers. Rather:

*The interview is inadequately conceptualised as an information gathering process. The particular way in which information is constructed by participants arises out of a context of social interaction which includes the interview itself and perceptions about its purpose and the roles of those taking part. The interviewer, as participant, is not neutral, either in the way information is received*

*or transmitted. Professional objectivity may mean no more than an awareness of a wider context within which decision-making is set. In the interview, participants negotiate outcomes on the basis of shared meanings developed within the interview. Although this negotiation does not imply any necessary agreement over substantive issues it may nonetheless have implications for the way these outcomes are arrived at and perceived. Finally, the relative power of the parties involved in an interview and the perception that those parties have of the inequality or equality of power is important in influencing the outcome of decision-making. (Armstrong, Galloway & Tomlinson, 1991 p.86)*

This view is confirmed by Marks, Burman, Burman & Parker (1995) who analysed ten case conferences – educational reviews. They found that voices carried unequal weight, the ways a child was described in the meeting functioned to present a particular view of the child, and meetings relied upon ritualised practices to manage the dilemmas presented by the child's situation and the school's response to the child.

How can power be addressed in a way that gives children agency in decision-making? In the final part of this paper I look at what we can hear from the narrative of the child, and at ways we can challenge professional narratives in order to hear the voice of the child.

### *The narrative of the child*

The narrative of the child is, like that of the professional, complex and contradictory. It is spontaneous, individual, challenging, personal, involves feelings, is sensible, rational, and immediate. Other research has also demonstrated that the narrative of the child challenges professional dualisms, such as able-bodied vs disabled. Allen (1999) found that children who were included into mainstream schools and interviewed about their experiences, varied in the extent to which they adopted the persona of disabled or different.

When David was asked about what had happened to him he was able to give a very clear picture of his sense of powerlessness. He articulated his views of how teachers reacted to his behaviour and how he felt they should have reacted. He also had a positive view of the extra help he was getting for his writing. It is really important to give his voice a place in this paper. David had a very distinctive, articulate voice, but he did not speak with the same narrative as the professionals:

David's awareness of himself and his actions:

*I wasn't behaving well. I was kicking and fighting with people and punching people ... I'm an excellent reader, but writing is hard for me to do. Maths [is what I'm good at] ... I feel quite good [about getting this help] ... Yes [I'm quite good at listening], quite good. ... Yes, [I'm] a wee bit happier [about things] now.*

David was left with misleading impressions of the assessment process:

*What's an assessment? ... [I think it's about] trying to find out what kind of help I need ... I don't remember anything [the assessor did] ... I think I quite liked it ... Yes, she [the assessor] told me that I was ... a hundred in brains ... I'm better than nearly everybody she's met.*

David had some idea of a sense of power:

*Eventually ... it (the behaviour problem) just seemed to come to a halt sometime this term ... I don't think I should have been excluded for the things that I've done.*

David had some good ideas of how teachers should respond to behaviour problems:

*They [teachers] boss them [children] around a bit and tell them what to do and stuff ... Well, my old teacher used to go, do this, do that [hand movements indicating teacher prodding him]. [When kids lose their temper] I think they should just try to make them calm down ... [but instead] they make a big fuss of it. They could do things better. If they'd just tried to calm me down instead of dragging me about, dragging me to the head teacher and stuff like that ... Afterwards, when they've [children] missed their playtime, they feel sad ... When they're doing it, they probably feel mad ... Sometimes they [children] stop themselves, but once they've started to do it, their brain gets locked into*

*doing it and it's like they have to do it ... It's really hard to stop.*

David was very positive about the extra help he was getting for writing:

*... Well there was a person called Mrs Sadler and there was me. We did some work in the mornings together ... It's because I've missed quite a bit of work at school ... Quite a bit of writing ... I didn't enjoy writing when I was naughty but I do enjoy it now. ... It's a good thing. By the way, I have extra help as well ... Sort of like practising skills with my fingers ... Holding a pencil is quite hard for me to do. So writing is hard for me to do ... I'll have this extra help for quite a long time. Not when I'm an adult though, not forever. I'd would like it to stop sometime.*

When children are asked questions by a professional involved in the assessment process, they are often not able to give such answers as David gave as part of the research, precisely because the questions are part of the assessment. The child's narrative in such situations is minimal. Given that behaviour is communication, in David's situation at school, his main narrative was one of challenge together with verbal silence. Excluding David from the statementing process seems entirely consistent with a view to protect him, but does not engage with what might need to happen in assessment in order to give him a voice in the assessment event.

Children do not have the power to create the opportunities to make their voice heard in order to address their needs. How can educational

psychologists and other professionals enable this to come about? A distinction can be made between technical solutions, such as ones involving extra tools or resources, and political ones that involve changes in power-sharing within systems. Technical solutions are ones which try to add to the procedures of professionals, such as adding a form to be completed by a child on their own views. But without actually addressing power issues between children and professionals, 'technical' solutions are insufficient. Some technical solutions, however, especially some designed to consult with children, are likely to entail a change in power if they are implemented with serious intent.

### *Opportunities for consulting with children*

By analysing the ways in which educational psychologists work with children, many opportunities for consulting with children are revealed. There are a range of considerations to take into account in relation to our consultations with children, including:

- How we introduce ourselves.
- How we give the child a choice over whether or not to see us.
- How we involve the child in our decisions about the direction of our work with them.
- How we include the child's voice in our work.
- How we communicate to the child our views.
- How we explain professional actions.

- How we use different mediums, such as conversation, video, letters and other therapeutic documents, in our consultations.

### *Complexities and implications of consulting with children*

Throughout the process of any professional work with a child there will be many different points at which the child could and should be consulted. Do we tell them about the techniques we are going to use before using them? How much choice do they have to be there – or do we justify lack of choice through our belief in the effectiveness in our approaches – i.e. this WILL be good for them, their life will be better ... How do we include the child's view of themselves in a way that fully involves them, that communicates what the child wants to say in a process she understands? What do we do when the child says 'no' to the involvement of their perspective in our report? What do we do if the parent wishes the child to know as little as possible about what we are doing, in order to avoid any labelling the child may experience?

At the end of the assessment process, most of us have to write reports on children, usually for other professionals, often for the parents. If we wrote the report knowing that the child would read it, perhaps this would be the most valid form of report. Maybe the things we would be able to put in such a report are the only valid things to write. Maybe the ways we would need to interact with and change the systems we are part of in order to be able to present such child-centred

reports would mean more child-friendly systems.

Some opportunities raise major questions about the extent to which it is possible to consult the child. There will be situations where the school sees itself as the educational psychologist's main client. For instance, the school might see the educational psychologist role as to help remove a problematic child to a different provision. Would the educational psychologist's consultation with a child involve openness about how the school views their role: 'I'm here to get you to change schools'? What other options would be available to a psychologist in these situations?

Many professionals have devised creative ways for consulting with children. Irvine Gersch (1994) has provided educational psychologists with important tools to use to ascertain the child's perspective, and he has reminded us of a professional rationale for doing so. At Newcastle University, UK, educational psychologists in training have been using research as a vehicle, both as a therapeutic and educational intervention, and to allow children's perspectives to question assumptions of educational institutions. Carol Watterson (1999) worked with a small group of children attending a special school (for physical and medical difficulties) on a project to put together a video of children's perceptions of being integrated into a high school. The process allowed their voices to be heard in a way that had not been possible before, and suggested major questions about the experience of integration. Others have explored different forms of verbal and written questions to enable children's

views to be included in assessment processes. Therapeutic letters have been devised in creative ways, and reports have been written for the children themselves.

As professionals, we can divert our narrative from that of being the expert in 'label definition' toward developing expertise in unfreezing the image and enabling other voices to be heard. We can channel skills into technical and political solutions for doing this, into ways to consult, and into ways to challenge other professional narratives. We can start to uncover the personal, subjective, and affective. In the process, we may find ourselves challenging our own 'Professional Thought Disorder' (PTD):

*a compulsion to analyse and categorise the experience of others, disordered cognition – rigidly held beliefs, delusions of grandeur, negative transference and projection in which sufferers cannot distinguish their own wishes and impulses from those of the people they wish to be helping. (Defined by Allen 1999, p.119, quoting Lowson 1994.)*

The system, in England and Wales, of assessing a child, of formally defining and providing for a child's special educational needs, is likely to be given a major challenge if consulting with children is fully embraced. Children's solutions are likely to be more varied than those offered by professionals, and greater demands are likely to be placed on time and resources. It is also likely to impact on other areas of schooling and

to challenge power relations in a wider sense. But whatever happens to the systems that children are a part of, consultation with children is likely to place them as authors of their own solutions. And that has to be a good thing!

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### Note

1. The excerpts from interviews that appear in this paper have been edited for ease of reading. Care has been taken to try to ensure that the meanings have not changed.

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