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

25th September 2000
VOLUME II
APPENDICES

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**APPENDICES**

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<td></td>
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<td>xxxv</td>
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**Samples of 9 Stage Process of Analysis:**

**Case Study of David**

Notes on Head Teacher interview, listening to tape

Notes from coded transcript of Head Teacher

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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

Appendix 8

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

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**Summary Panels of Raw Utterances**

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Summaries of Utterances from Interview Transcripts on the theme of "David"

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Summaries of Utterances from Interview Transcripts on the theme of "Role"

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**Selected notes on Educational Psychology Service, Staff Meetings and Items from minutes, relevant to Parent Partnership Scheme**

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**Published Articles**


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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Initial project steering group meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Initial and second meeting at Parent Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with deputy head of local special school, whose MEd thesis looked at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>parental views of statementing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with Pre-school panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Draft parent interview schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Write to local and national voluntary organisations to request information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>for parents and to seek interest in named persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Meeting with PEP to discuss intended actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finalise parent interview schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start parent interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting Parent Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start work on Folder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue writing to local and national voluntary organisations to request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>information for parents and to seek interest in named persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EP staff meeting: discuss letters to parents re statementing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Meeting Parent Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Many parent interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Initial meeting with regional parent partnership officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second project steering group meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Second meeting with regional parent partnership officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue parent interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DFE Symposium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with trainee EP re parent partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone some local and national voluntary organisations who responded to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>our request for information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Meeting Parent Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Continue parent interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Investigate printing of folder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| February | 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  
Continue parent interviews  
Third project steering group meeting  
Staff training on Code of Practice for LEA support service  
Staff meeting discussion about the role of the named person  
Investigate printing of folder |
| March | LEA training on Code of Practice for teachers  
Third meeting with regional parent partnership officers  
Meeting with parents of children who are partially sighted and who have statements  
Investigate printing of folder at a different printer - first printer fails to deliver  
City Challenge awards funds to Parent Federation for a full time post for *? years for their own parent partnership project officer |
| April | Continue parent interviews  
Attend international special needs conference in Birmingham  
Attend special needs training day at Ballumbria University  
Meet potential supplier of volunteer to be named person, a representative of the local council of churches |
| May | Meeting Parent Federation  
Investigate printing of folder  
Meeting with parents of local school for children with severe learning difficulties  
Meeting with parents of children who are partially hearing and who have statements  
Start to plan training for named person  
Extra meeting with regional parent partnership officers from Newcastle to discuss potential for joint training of named persons  
Meet with two potential volunteers for named persons  
Meet with worker at LEA advocacy project  
Telephone local Scope rep, and CSV, to seek volunteers for named person course  
Meeting with Children Support East to discuss named persons |
| June | Meeting Parent Federation, in particular to discuss job specification for Parent Federation parent partnership officer  
Continue planning training for named person and carry out training, on two days, of 12 (?*) named persons  
Fourth meeting with regional parent partnership officers  
Twilight training session with teachers of local middle school on ways of working with parents  
Represent EPs at COSA monitoring group |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| July  | Several meetings Parent Federation to appoint their own parent partnership project officer  
Fourth project steering group meeting  
Study day organised by the Association of Educational Psychologists into pupil perspective of the Code of Practice  
EP staff meeting: discussion about use of named persons |
| August| Meeting with senior educational psychologist and Parent Federation worker about recent statutory panel, and other issues  
Meeting between parent partnership officers to exchange documents and decide on next project actions |
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Provision</th>
<th>Number of pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mainstream plus support:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary plus day tutorial unit</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regent Farm Unit for visual impairment</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary plus support</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowan</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northview</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The sample included the following types of assessments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amendment</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full reassessments</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5s</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>EP</th>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>D/K</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letters were OK</th>
<th>Letters could have been improved</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you feel a partner in the process?</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could this (the extent to which you were a partner) have been better?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Not satisfactory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who would you have liked to offer this support?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Another Parent</th>
<th>Voluntary group volunteer</th>
<th>Other, i.e. aunt, church member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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?

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>DK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Appendix 2
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
Appendix 3

Samples of Documentary Data from Newby Parent Partnership Scheme

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<th>Sample Description</th>
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<td>&quot;Drop-in&quot; session flyer</td>
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<td>Notes taken during a meeting with a parent group</td>
<td>xv</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notes taken during a regional PPO meeting</td>
<td>xvi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notes taken during a staff meeting</td>
<td>xvii</td>
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<tr>
<td>Form for participants to complete at the end of named person training</td>
<td>xviii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

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

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"

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

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

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, statedentd and non-
statemented, is paid for
What is the role of
governors?

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

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

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
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context
Professionals need to
explain that child is seen in
a variety of contexts

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

from a brainstorming session with A, J, I and Liz Todd
PARENT PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

Practical Guidance for Parents with Children with Special Educational Needs

Drop in to Federation to talk to Area Educational Psychologists.

Drop in or telephone 257 6060

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
17/5/95

From L. x 3 yrs. on since L. 12 yrs.

- NDCS volunteer - interested in being NDCS

- HT told to pick ich: I'm not a 4, I can't decide who to pick

- hearing loss misses own multi-prof - s.w involved, both diff

- I shouldn't have to fight for what he needs 6 yrs growing

  - when he went to sch he needed 1 hr - I fought for it as

  - Every year I worry am I going to have to fight

  - Stat proc. happens because the school not providing

  - I didn't even know there was a need at all

- A - day 14 mths N - start proc 2½ start

  - Diff - I found it very diff to cope with people coming into

  - your home they hadn't seen her in their life, they got

  - off what Fred said about her.

- Fucked off, told A wild cos they felt I had too much to say

  - with (other ch. ill) 8 yrs now

- It's not that bad. They're said. They're prof. They'd tell gotti

  (she was profoundly deaf)

- When A at Nur + not asking out they asked us to sit with

  2 a day - why bother

  - diff - ear teachers all saying diff things

  - be of believing prof + bow feeling it down

  - you feel they're going to happen

  - they're going to brought to you on a plate + it doesn't happen

  - my friend's chi has Mr. Alike u. happy about that - she shouldn't be - he could do better with more
21/5/95 Regional Par Part-Off Meeting

- still doing much spec., needs admin. wk.
  Spec. needs politically high profile - since tables showed 5%.
  - completed in time limits

DL - power flow - computer - now bought - hardware in place - had training - terrible training - lots of nogo on comp.
  Started too many new statements in short without planning.
  - moderating group to look at referrals for stat assess -
  in part 1 main decision - 15 - 3 pre sch. 3 ep's
  - 3 min / 15 - 3 sped ser.
  - Sec. 1 help for full assess
  1 back to sch for stage 3 again. Mod. group
  could come back again.

Rec. 1 help for full assess

- All recommendations from panel goes to Deputy.
  - Geoff to make final decision
  G.P. - Ed Psych. all staff discuss costs - 9 page quest.
    to be completed by sch/pat/ap. 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.
51 - lots of sch's don't know what stage 1-4 are - they
  say they've moved a child to stage 4. Despite lots of visits.
  Also confused about how when to do an annual review.
  But telling sch's to involve par. in 16% not telling them.
  - use with sch's.

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

51 - stat money already in schs.
  Sch's need to decide on priorities.

Par. say 'what's the fit in a stat'. Stat brings no extra cost.
  Protects help for the child. DfE need to reconsider.

Spec. sup ser only help learning diff. not beh.
175/95

Dear Lijn,

Since L. 12 yrs. NDCS volunteer interested in being NIB

HT told to pick 1ch: I'm not a 4", I can't decide who to pick

Hearing loss mixed in multi-prof: Sue involved, both diff

I shouldn't have to fight for what he needs (6 yrs main wear)
When he went to sch he needed 1 hr - I fought for it
Every year I worry am I going to have to fight
Stat proc happens because the school not providing
I didn't even know there was a go needs t. at u

A

- diag 14 wks N
- Stat proc 2 1/2 start
D iff t I found it very diff to cope with people coming into your home they hadn't seen her in their life, they got off what said about her.
F ooked off. Told A wild cos they felt I had too much to cop
with Cother ch. in. Ill 8 yrs now
It's not that bad. They're said. They're prof. They'd tell goth
(She was profoundly deaf)
When A at Nur & not asking out they asked us to sit with
1/2 a day - why bother
4 diff part time teachers all saying 4 diff things
Problem of behaving prof + not feeling it down
You feel they're not going to happen
They're going to bring it to you on a plate + it doesn't happen
Prof view - conflict Not for the parents
My Jardn: she has this luck v. happy about that sh shouldn't be - he could do better with more
Staff Meeting

M: We are EP: do the role as NP. Anyway... need for NP reduced (but we should do less) Only need NP at draft stage. Hard to see a process for appointing NP before. Could still be non-adversial at this stage. Mel but then par could ask why we didn't move sooner.

A: What if the NP gives wrong advice? We're rec NP? Yes a problem. NP under but trained by LEA rec. Have to say NP not for advice for supp + hearing + AC. Have to allow free.

M: We should distance ourselves from NP appoint matching as far as poss. Self post should also be NP + they can do match (but then we can't sort out problems)

M: 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 results - same at EP.

One yes: some in interview said this, maybe they will.

Many par feel overwhelmed + confused by process + unhappy with aspects of outcome but don't stand task. B: since had away or feel lucky to get what they have or lack confidence.

K: "NP" types 175 A + A. have all dominated, review tribunal when previously par found it hard but got review of

M: I feel threatened by volunteers. - so not helpful 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 may be angry. + rights not explained)

M: Many plot in red

K - New Gest. pushing par. part. to stage 3 + 4. (note NP)

It assess in a neg. process this does help.
NAMED PERSON
All information is confidential, and is to be used in matching you with a suitable family.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>ADDRESS</th>
<th>TELEPHONE CONTACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Work:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Home:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

| 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 at school or 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

I essentially wanted to know what D knew of the assessment process and how he felt about it, or what he knew of how teachers and others were trying to help him, and what he thought 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 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.
December 18

Diary

Having spoken to A, I am more content with my sample. Fell 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 criteria -
involved 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 interview A... and I'm sure about old man
head to be traced to be NP's caught my interest - gets at the issue
of what is a NP, what/why. Interviewed A... J. C since F
told me various problems in their working relationship (between
one another and between F and them) - which led me to feel the confli-
could throw interesting light on the issue of partnership. Indep-
case would be helpful - to see if similar issues arose.

Worried I have launched into the int., asking qu. without much
reading of math or theory. Know I need to interview/interrupt
lead. Am I asking the most crucial questions? Maybe I can do the
analyzing after much more reading. Frustrated that I haven't
done much reading. Find coding hard - realized I have never done
this kind of detailed, qualitative analysis so already learnt so much.

Realized how difficult it is to read a transcript + listen to tape
Need to listen to all tapes + make notes on main issues + issues
that occur to me. It's this I'm missing out on by not having
already done this - can't be very clear about new qu. I want to ask
Although I am doing this - but unsystematically. So asking about
provision before stat - the bugbear of this school.
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 effects the quality of the discourse?

Making notes from a tape

Much easier. Easier to pick out + summarize issues from what was said. I'm back there in the interview remembering the stimuli.
How I felt. How I got there. What the office was like. Can hear an utterance + summarize in my mind + see how it resonates with the issues in my mind - listening to Mr P's Head T, just before going to the S Ts, having just written 5... i questions. I am not used to seeing speech written. It looks odd and its sometimes hard to infer meaning. Much easier when spoken. We speakers write differently. I wonder how we learn this. Isn't it easy to use 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 Mr P was his hesitance with me, my consequent not taking up his hints of saying he could really give an answer than 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 questions and assume agreement.
Appendix 5

Samples of Interview Questions: case study of David

| 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 |
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. pur 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.
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 woth par - is it possible? barmers?
Are you in par with other advice gives? 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/ambiguities 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. Mau, F. stress, leav -需 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 w.k. do you 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 medi 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?
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
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 Π's problems?
What did the stat process look like to A's helper? Confidentiality. What I'm trying to do. Case - general. Feelings/perspectives

Also - her as an insider with A. +

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 think happens in statementing?

What is your role in statementing? - What is A. & D? - 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 - What kind of power do you have
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
What did you need to have? 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Page</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David's Mother</td>
<td>xxxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Psychologist</td>
<td>xxiii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapist</td>
<td>xxxv</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interview with a parent

Date of interview: 20th August 1996
Interviewer: Liz Todd

So the statement is through. I'll talk up. Is that any better? That's right?

Sorry. Right, the statement is through, and I have started to receive three hours a week support. He has been referred to a community worker, 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.

OK. So, what was the outcome for him?

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 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.

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

When you say compromise, what do you mean?

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.

So it has come out more towards more towards your $?

It has, but not necessarily the provision, do you know what I mean?

Oh, right. In what way does the statement $?

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

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

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. '

What do you feel about that?

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?
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.

Right, well I think for a long time it 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 what did you feel about that?

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

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

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. I'll 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.

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

That's right.

Before

Yes.

the behaviour

That's right, yes.

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

It was sent, yes.

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?

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

And what did you feel about the other reports? The tone of the reports in
Interview with: Clinical Psychologist

Date of interview: 19th February 1996
Interviewer: Liz Todd

Interviewer:

Just introduce yourself again please?

Yes. I am a Clinical Psychologist.

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

Sometimes I feel my role is accidental and I'm not sure that it 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 WISC, 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.

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

Yes, and worriedly 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 get 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.

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

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 different problems and I'm pretty sure that problems which have difficulties in learning problems and 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 there, 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?

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
views involved. I mean, I think that's fair enough. But sometimes I see
statements, names and names 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, ...........

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 in 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 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.
Interview with E, Occupational Therapist
*Date of interview - 21st August 1996
*Interviewer - Liz Todd

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

Yes.

Danny was referred to me - shall I use names?

Yes, that's fine.

Clinical Medical Officer, Dr.

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

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

Yes, please do.

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 E 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: E Clinic on 13th June, so he did have quite a wait.

When was he referred?

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.
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?

Yes, how you ....... it

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.

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

Yes, just to double check.

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

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.

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

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 did know, but I can't remember.

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 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.

So, like?
Appendix 7

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

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 xlv
1/5/96

Interview Summary Form

Interview Name: Mrs. Head
Responsibilities: Primary

School Date: 5/15/96
Interviewer: L.T.

1. What were the main issues or themes that struck you in this interview?
   - Mrs. B. is very happy with her present role. She doesn't want the label "Head Teacher".
   - She is responsible for her own behavior, not just for the behavior of others.
   - Mrs. B. is not very happy with her current role, but she is not sure what she would like to do instead.
   - Her role in the school is not very well-defined.
   - Mrs. B. mentions the need for a clearer, more structured role.

2. Summarize the information you got (or did not get) on the target questions?
   - Mrs. B. is satisfied with her current role.
   - She doesn't want the label "Head Teacher".
   - She is responsible for her own behavior, not just for the behavior of others.
   - Her role in the school is not very well-defined.
   - Mrs. B. mentions the need for a clearer, more structured role.

3. Anything else that struck you as interesting or important?
   - Mrs. B. is happy with her current role.
   - She doesn't want the label "Head Teacher".
   - She is responsible for her own behavior, not just for the behavior of others.
   - Her role in the school is not very well-defined.
   - Mrs. B. mentions the need for a clearer, more structured role.

4. What other information is required or follow-up questions are necessary?
   - Mrs. B. is satisfied with her current role.
   - She doesn't want the label "Head Teacher".
   - She is responsible for her own behavior, not just for the behavior of others.
   - Her role in the school is not very well-defined.
   - Mrs. B. mentions the need for a clearer, more structured role.

Comment:
- Mrs. B. is happy with her current role.
- She doesn't want the label "Head Teacher".
- She is responsible for her own behavior, not just for the behavior of others.
- Her role in the school is not very well-defined.
- Mrs. B. mentions the need for a clearer, more structured role.
Mrs. K.

Link with G's labels

Describes what she was told and what she found.
- Naughty & problem

1. Does running out of condiments cause in large groups before & 2. for full description
- Prune's view is different

2. More of Mrs. R's views, labels

1. Bottom D's need vs school need

4. Mrs. R wanted stat of tablets & tests, and to make delay happen: handling

5. Wanted to give her explanation & Mrs. B but didn't - is it due to family

8. Is D Naught/normal/boy for his problem?

11. D needs more help - 6th/7th help

11. Mrs. R's views of D have changed - She knows understands him


13. Rationale for D's problems

Child Raising

12/4. Mrs. R's view of causality

- Home

Problems Re Defining for D's problems

Mrs. R:

What the assessment about

1. Top proposes has parent parent - she doesn't want labels

4. This is the only way we could go

4. Mid: Def. stat & detailed description of D's harrowing belief

4. Mid: Alt way to deal with D - more resources, people, relationship

5. Top: Doesn't matter what stat content is - it's the intent that matters

8. Top: Newark is clean; praising paperwork

- Not hearing gathered enough evidence

8/6: Stat both objective + negotiating

9. No more negotiating in this case though


Good in stat - bringing people together, perspective report; she's very worry of labelling.

Statementing is

- Good re stat: amount of time needed

9: Help at right time

9: What prob also is equitable allocation of resources, in long & short time.

9: Would be a part in another SR.

Only wanted extra help from SR.

Getting resources by exclusion
Where is Power

P3 top use exclusion to make team act
P6 Harvian Panel has power—they agreed we can have the assas
P10 D. manipulation of F's. It is D lazy, distracted, angry
Silent power over Dr. A. frightened of him. I think
P13 getting resource by exclusion
P10 T
P18 power with researcher—knowledge
He wanted to know what Mrs B wants and
for the whole thing are improving

Feelings

P10 I was scared
P4 top assess process has upset Mrs B
she doesn't want to
P5 I felt we were much alone to depend on
lonely our own resources
P10 her first term here home alone.

What's your role

P3 and Stat. pending so could allocates
P6 We need help
P10 She's handled it all better than
her predecessors
P5 did Her role difficult
P3 and carrier of bad news
good news when possible
little role in assess process
she has overseeing role
P6 to negotiate the flexibility of I's so D has
so he can cope with
P9 top role to see D as part of a school
P10 role to find out which makes him more angry
P12 needs role also be impact of Don to role
P10 tension between D + I's. Who is in charge
P14 worried I won't get on with past yr it

Contradiction manager

Schi's dilemma on how
to get resources.

We need help
P2 top use exclusion to make team act
P2 bottom—D needs
VS school needs
P10 top needs help
P10 Sch vs child needs

Needs role

VS for role

Reads role

P9 P10
Case Summary/Interview Main

- Provision compromise - beh vs ed statement
  - M Beh/Ed
  - Labelling
  - St. Outcome
  - Unsure re proc
  - M Beh/Ed, which can furb
    - M Beh/Ed, Which on tab
  - Beh/Ed, IMG of strategy
  - Md
  - Sch advice, parent rep - negative
  - Ed rep - par opinion: produce

- I can now start to see categories

Label

Issues
- M Ed vs Beh

Giftedness not being sorted out
- M Sch as treat hat bought - role of this in case
- M Beh vs Ed statement
- M Ed background - would teach tim at home

- M expected to reason Q1
- M school has met power Q3, but D not visibly conscious CENTRAL
- M chip with early D/Whole as sees.

- M - wants dichotomy, move a conversation, confidential, diff voice

- J "Little power" - M view not listened to

- Sch - psychiatric problems A feels powerless, can't fake it from
  - M limitations & sch's part 129 - can exclude

- M is D's advocate

- Sch is a process of neg. - This somewhere since power is an issue
  - Parent - contradiction manager - not so much in
  - M other 99 - makes the [powerless] - no importance - sch works hard on
  - responsibility

Label

Why does gifted + beh cause t. problems?

- Sch - psych issues - lack of hooks, diagnosis taught
  - M use of objective tests
  - M doesn't like Feb. charts 17
  - Doesn't want D to be aware of stat incl. P18

- D control - not aware
  - M wants to choose rule...
Power gives power

Partnership

A lack of all measures

Powerlessness

A vs B & D DC's and... 17

Approach 2

Plot 1st... 0

Power

of participant

Powerlessness

A lack of 2nd... 25-17 50

Part = comfort, goal

State-setting

Negotiation process

Result... 19

Power

of participant

Powerlessness

A lack of... 25-17 50

Part = comfort, goal

State-setting

Negotiation process

Result... 19

Power

of participant

Powerlessness

A lack of... 25-17 50

Part = comfort, goal

State-setting

Negotiation process

Result... 19

Power

of participant

Powerlessness

A lack of... 25-17 50

Part = comfort, goal

State-setting

Negotiation process

Result... 19

Power

of participant

Powerlessness

A lack of... 25-17 50

Part = comfort, goal

State-setting

Negotiation process

Result... 19

Power

of participant

Powerlessness

A lack of... 25-17 50

Part = comfort, goal

State-setting

Negotiation process

Result... 19

Power

of participant

Powerlessness

A lack of... 25-17 50

Part = comfort, goal

State-setting

Negotiation process

Result... 19

Power

of participant

Powerlessness

A lack of... 25-17 50

Part = comfort, goal

State-setting

Negotiation process

Result... 19

Power

of participant

Powerlessness

A lack of... 25-17 50

Part = comfort, goal

State-setting

Negotiation process

Result... 19

Power
Power
A felt powerless. P26

P26 analysis - all hands to reorganize, no new - since he hasn't gotten the
Dyspraxia label could help fight exclusion - have D looked at it,
but the orig. look at differently. P37

Label
CT - dyspraxia label 26
A would become gifted 26
but problems in all labels p37 - effects expectations p38 - power

Protecting D from each label 26 - not to say beh not a prob.
Importance of the HELP he's getting rather than label 26
Tells D little p38 24
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 p35. will see clin.
OT-OK about this. P35

Stat process v traumatic p39
Parent vs. role for A. - worried re. she said, doesn't want to be identified as a... P39
Exclusion p 30 + 35  

Happened day extra support tests  

30 - Nightmare  
Blowup worry her  
He was devastated - felt no self control power/ bitz last few wks  
Perm. excl. next time - nightmare placement homed ch.  
A - and how he felt didn't condone  
- angry at D putting her through this  
- not angry with Sjb  
Sch could have handled & diff  @ p 35  

Made A + D look at beh side of D  

Negotiations - v. dangerous moment - challenged Ed  
(Not -beh) statement  
now referred again to Fin & (outside system) - Ji. not  

What significant that happens once  

Nightmare  

(A - puzzled - why is D like this - maturity / self-esteem)  

Need to analyse this further
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Variable print quality
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<th>IERSHIP</th>
<th>ROLE</th>
<th>ASSESSMENT</th>
<th>CONTRADICTION</th>
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<th>CLIENT</th>
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<td>VOL. ORIG. P17 - ABOUT INFLUENCE</td>
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<td>NOW, DEMANDS FOR HELP, BEFORE SIGNOFF</td>
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<td>THE CHILD - AND IT</td>
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<td>LONG-TERM INTERESTS</td>
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*Note: The table contains handwritten notes and seems to discuss various aspects of a case study, possibly related to a child welfare or social work context. The entries are fragmented and may require additional context for full understanding.*
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hates writing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>does no writing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minimal writing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refuses to do anything, avoids</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improved (writing and behaviour)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>control</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>class idiot/ clown/ villain</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anger</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aggressive to children</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>running away</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>must win</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feels frustration</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strong personality, will</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intelligent</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knows a lot</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clever words/ on to what you’re saying</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manipulative</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mismatch output/ ability</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reads well</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>retentive</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thoughtful</td>
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<td>gentle</td>
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<td>amusing</td>
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<td>conscious of comparisons</td>
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<td>ok to be out of step with everybody</td>
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<td>dad - sad, anger</td>
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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

Educational Psychologist

p3 unnecessarily legalistic...
small outcomes... defeccts
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

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
statementd 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.

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

Mother

int 1 p5 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

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

Summary Frame:

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

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

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
...it's 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, ridding on the back of the 1988 Education Act which said, schools are businesses, select your customers, chuck out the rejects... 

...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 order to make the case about the child, it's usually the parent who knows the child best... professionals... tend to be... giving the out in the corner of a staffroom saying, well, I think perhaps we'll just send him off to special school, shall we...

...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...

...this sort of stuff, once you get above that level of any money at all... I think the consideration more is... to do with the procedure, and I always say yes... But I am often not very sure how much use it actually is, or how much it is working...

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...

Interview 2 p1... Sometimes I do an assessment of a child... not just looking at their emotional state, ...getting very little... sometimes (p2)... maybe people are feeling was it probably very subjective... maybe there is something that they are describing... maybe the child is describing...

...the key people are obviously the educational psychologists, the school itself, the parents, perhaps the child, if he or she has any involvement... 

...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 this process is arrived at...

...ideally... an objective assessment, but I was reading a school report on a child this morning, and my feeling was this seems to be... some teachers finding 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...

...Maybe (objectivity) is... some idea of why the child may be behaving the way they do, at ten, and that's asking for them to be something that they're not... 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... I don't think you can protect the needs of the child unless the assessment is objective... Because you'll... I don't think you can protect the needs of the child unless the assessment is objective... Because you'll...

Named Person

p18 I think she got that all 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 that through the behaviour of the child. 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, he's got some life time difficulties rather than saying, well, this is his intelligence level and this is what he needs, and this is what he's not getting...

p19 In my view, I think the behavioural statement is kind of, boiling 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, the behaviour is because of that difficulties...

p22... 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... 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... 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...
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

p6 I must say, very often on what you write down, on that flip chart, 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 it

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 everyone's been 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 being 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...

...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 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's 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, it was the panel, I thought that they'd have a look at the children and then they slot the child into the system, whereby the child can manage to make 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's 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 would be better to 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 The EPRs 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 them with especially 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 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

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.

p5 ...at the moment, really, he needs someone to help him with his academic work.

p6 ...It's taken a while, 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, in 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 so 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...

p13 (stage3/4) 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.

Right.

p4 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

Interview 1

p9 ...we will have been involved with for quite a while ... and from what I will be asked to submit some evidence. 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.

...we will have been involved with for quite a number of times...

...the academic problem comes more to the fore, because you've got more

...the academic problem comes more to the fore, because you've got more...

Interview 2

p10 ...we will have been involved with for quite a number of times...

...the academic problem comes more to the fore, because you've got more...

Occupational Therapist

Interview 1

p10 ...we will have been involved with for quite a while ... and from what I will be asked to submit some evidence. 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.

...we will have been involved with for quite a number of times...

...the academic problem comes more to the fore, because you've got more...

Interview 2

p10 ...we will have been involved with for quite a while ... and from what I will be asked to submit some evidence. 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.

...we will have been involved with for quite a number of times...

...the academic problem comes more to the fore, because you've got more...
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.
p25...feels that other children are treating him badly

**Clinical Psychologist**

very bright (int 1 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

**Mother**

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

**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 co-ordination, 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

**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.

**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**

---

**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

**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 co-ordination, 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

---

**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... Anon 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 first of all, we'd say, let's try and do something about that and see whether

helping with that part of 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 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-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 has been given a lot of a body blow by dad leaving. Emotionally I felt he

presented an impression of a 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. Mr Bell said that he was reluctant to be taken of David's abilities as well as his defects, and I think

he would benefit from a full statement 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 perfect 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 has always been, from 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

possibilities. 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

dress is very much at an Oedipal level...

p15 He liked the lessons, but he didn't like being singled out. p17 before she did anything, she said to David, look 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's 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's 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 Dave'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... 

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's 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.

p6 he just likes winning, he just likes controlling. That's oversimplifying it, and that isn't all of it.

... He's 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 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 still, he still feels 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's been looked 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

... a clown, a clown, a clown, a clown, a clown.

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

peer pressure, and the two carer

respects equal... 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 boy, displayed signs of separation anxiety.

affirmation, he can, later on, he can think about it. He certainly does feel hard

... 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 aptitude

for playtimes. But I think these flare ups this term that have happened... I

think it was to do with missing playtimes.

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 a more of a coordination, physical problem with his writing."  
No, he's got a very good general knowledge. He's always able to think about things and consider them, and you give 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 all of the time...he finds it difficult because he's got a very good memory. You know, he's fine with practical activities, but obviously, it comes to writing, it which he used to find a great problem. It was very difficult for him to do anything. Now that has improved, because he's been having support. He comes 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, you. You know, he likes to be first at everything.

p4 So when 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.

p5 I think he's quite manipulative, you know.

p6 ... the disappearance of his father, yes. And I think, probably his mum has treated 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...Gross motor skills, I thought that his basic skills were OK.

p3...I believe 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 ...so that the other child is his 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 gnu wise or posture wise, and control wise.....

p5 ...David, he Bs hands 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.

p6... But I did recognise that there seemed to be two different things going on, and one hypothesis, that I think 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.

p7 ... I wanted to know a little bit more about her perception of his problems, and the frustration that he experienced. ... I think, that she mentioned that she had experienced some frustration in getting proper understanding for his needs with school

p8 ... 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.

p9 ...I think what I saw was pretty much how he is...And I remember that she (David's medical officer) had said, that he 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.

p10 ... And as soon as people start to mention behaviour, then that'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

"DAVID"

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 objects, damaging things, 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.

p3...that 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.

p4... It's always been both (learning and behaviour). It's not necessarily learning difficulties, it's motor skills, it's an aspect of...He's very good orally...p6... He'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.

p5 I'm sometimes in his classroom, but you know, he's usually quite good verbally.

p6...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.

p7... (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 child, that he finds quite hard, but if he can get rid of this anger and frustration, could certainly be helped.

p8... Counselling, I don't know what it is...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.

p9...That doesn't help either, and no magic wand from the education department is going to resolve all these problems... The other thing is that all the time 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.

p19... But I think that the teachers felt that he had some specific problems, as his mother thinks, actually, but because they felt that his, he had learning difficulties.

p20 A lot less than a moderate sort of level, but nevertheless established learning difficulties.

p21 If 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 she agreed with the mother, which has caused problems, but he isn't going to be able to resolve that difficulty.

p22... That's just, I have a feeling that now she is absolutely completely focussing on his motor learning difficulties.

p23 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... He resolved learning difficulties by running difficulties by running, difficulty is running, difficulty is running... 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.

p24... There is a problem... And with his mum being supportive and so knowledgeable, I felt that, again, there was no need to get outside agencies involved.

p25... I think what I saw was pretty much how he is... And I remember that she (David's medical officer) had said, that he 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.

p26... 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.

**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

**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

**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

**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

**Class Teacher**

p7  I think she's (mum) changed her mind slightly now p8 people have seen that there have been two sides to 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.

**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.

**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. p10 ... 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. It's high 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 and the behaviour and the handwriting.
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 going to do. So that didn't really help. But now that he is more able, I think he would be 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 play... No confrontation, just information, 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 tip toe around a lot of things and just play it down..., gently persuasive about, if you just do this, and you 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 physio) 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... about two years ago... somebody else had written in, this child needs OT for 30 minutes once a week, and the week, and the class teacher, the head teacher, the head teacher, the head teacher, the head teacher, the head teacher... (the EP) better trained to do it, and confident, and knew about school and existed and was OK, and that was good enough for the child, could have been much more discussing it on a wider issue.
p9 ... I view it as a very educational thing, but I don't recognise that up here somewhere, education and health don't really talk to each other very much, and wouldn't it be great... funded by education... and then we could all be hands on...
p10 ... 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... 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 supposing 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 that... p3/p4 I've started to do a 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 not even written... I haven't done anything... I said, well, that's what I'm writing, I'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 him. He said, well, you don't have to, he said, just stop helping me, get off, make my day.
p4 (no possibility of interlink, resources from LEA)
p5 (mum wants) that all of his behaviour difficulties come from the fact that he is frustrated and angry about... 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 "wont" 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 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 one's whole response to... if you want 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 play... No confrontation, just information, 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.
Senior Clinical Medical Officer

They should be, one is as important as the other. Teaching staff what they needed to do, but also she was, as a mother she was 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.

Acting Principal Educational Psychologist

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

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 “voice”, 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 discussion and fact, 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 of the child, always... (do you feel a partner?) Very much so...

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, it think people just pay lip service to it. I really do.

But it’s a kind of, just talk about partnership with parents... 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... This is the information, he’s done this 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.

I think it doesn’t exist, to be honest. 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, it think people just pay lip service to it. I really do.

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

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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 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 int 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

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.

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

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

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.

Name Person
p2 Supportive, yet not totally involved..........a back seat and just listened..p3 a different perspective on DavidP8... 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.

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.
Acting principal educational 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 ... After a number of times had settled down with David, I felt 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 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 term 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, it's just me, I'm taking 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? p18 ... 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.

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 ... After a number of times had settled down with David, I felt 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 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 term 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, it's just me, I'm taking 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? p18 ... 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.

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. 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 ... In my case, for an hour, for the reason you mentioned, 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 OT's 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 sense now that I have an educational role... a sort of supporting person... used 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 at the OT 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 looking around things a little bit, thinking, there's a lot going on here, and at some point, I've got 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 ... a very much seen as an occupational therapist, and no matter how pleasant I try and be and helpful, and I try and be, ultimately there seems to be this barrier that well, you still have to fit in, well you still have to fit in, but complete faith in what I'm doing, and when I see something, something 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. 

Class Teacher

Interview 1 p4 ... I think perhaps I don't get too involved with 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... for something more to happen. I've just been told that 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 it, too somebody he sees in certain situations, but 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... p49 ... 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 experience... one of the stresses that you have is that you have very little time to be an E.P. 

Named Person

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 at the OT 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 looking around things a little bit, thinking, there's a lot going on here, and at some point, I've got 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 ... a very much seen as an occupational therapist, and no matter how pleasant I try and be and helpful, and I try and be, ultimately there seems to be this barrier that well, you still have to fit in, well you still have to fit in, but complete faith in what I'm doing, and when I see something, something 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.

“ROLE”
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 together, and I think I've really been the one that has talked to (David's mother) on occasions. I've had the role, the chance, of telling her about serious incidents, and that usually has to be by letter because she's working...

I feel that my role has not been 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 statement process)...

I mean, (the SENCO) has put all the other parts together, sort of, in discussion with the (class teacher). Just sort of overseeing what went out. I was the one before the statement wrote to (the SENCO) 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 can't pull you (p5) 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... 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...

... 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 even 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 not 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 when I've 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 prior 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, p9 I think they find it difficult to accept the fact that he's as clever as I'm sure that he is.

p10 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 bit critically, but quite prepared to go along with it a bit more help, but 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 battling 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 when they went in Stage 2. So 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 (the EP) them in this process as well. This, that 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 am 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 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 spoken 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, after hours...

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 as well, and everything else intially for about five 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 as well, and everything else initially for about five 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 then when I did that, I said to her that I'd 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 concerted.

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. p22 I do 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...

p6 So we, (David's mother) phoned me and said would I come with her to a meeting when he was to be retuned...

p24 So we, (David's mother) phoned me and said would I come with her to a meeting when he was to be retuned...

p24 So, we (David's mother) phoned me and said would I come with her to a meeting when he was to be retuned... So my suggestion was to pacify people, in some ways, 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.

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. p3 about becoming involved together, and expertise, it's a matter of mutual respect... It's as long as people polarise, I feel I have a partnership role... 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 p5 start... 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 do we do that is more open for debate... an academic debate, not an emotional debate.

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 do 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.

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 partnership.

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 p23 the way I think of David's interests and the way school think of him there's like an ocean apart p30

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 ploy... 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 if (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 don't go against something you suggest, maybe. That's why it has to be a mutual plan.
p3 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.

**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 to do so even if 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 of power is perhaps not ...

**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) know 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.

**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 to the term act, but fortunately I didn't come to that ...
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 nothing similar in P.E. or anything, and ... 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.

**Senior Clinical Medical Officer**
p8 ... (on the statement panel) everybody, every professional's comments are taken very seriously and respected very highly. I didn't realise that ...

**“POWER”**
Clinical Psychologist

Interview 1  

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, him and his teacher.  

...and the support teacher says she’s seen 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... 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 as, 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.  

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.

Class Teacher

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 their 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 think.  

...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 prescribe for those little pink pills, I think, remember what they’re called. He said, but I’m only wanting you to give it 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 sconing everything that’s administered by anybody else.

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 their 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.  

...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.  

P14 When 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 doing our best. And it’s completely, that is, completely, and absolutely, 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 once, over 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.

Named Person

P5 I think she feels a stigma... because she’s single parent who has a child who is having difficulty with his education  

P6 ... we’ve just worked as a night...  

P7 He made a comment... that no seven year old child or no six year old 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 we 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 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.
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 the 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 worked 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 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 behaviour 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 his behaviour’s affecting his work. … By this point in time he was having school, absolutely hated 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 worried about this 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 was losing weight, he had no energy and if I take him out of 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 aren’t as bright as him and he’s angry about that… eventually she said this isn’t an emotional problem or primarily a behaviour problem... I feel it’s educational and (the EP) it’s educational and (the EP)… I can’t really remember how it 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 say 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 latrality. His special educational teacher, the previous one had said there may be a slight fine motor problem. I mean there was a bit of confusion about whether that was causing his major problems and whether that was what was causing his major problems and he saw him the next day. I was quite 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 spasticity that up straight away with the tests 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 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 knew what they mean by that, he can physically form the letters if he really tries, if the pressure is really on. And yes his attitude towards it was all 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

p20 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 behaviour 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 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 was this 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 mums, 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 back 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 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, 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 trapped 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, 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
p10 well, it (the statement) was sort of a compromise really.
p12 ... class sizes the way they are at the minute, I'm expecting a lot of a class teacher... you can't cope 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, we've been talking about, now is there some truth in the thing... But she's (the SENCO) always spoken nicely about him.

...he's just been seeing the SENCO, with her concerns about, um, well, she's really impressed with... she's really impressed with... she (the SENCO) says, yes it's just... he's 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.

...we're not happy about that happening in 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
p15 (the 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 statement meeting. 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 then when I said, well, really, it isn't, it's not setting up a 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 the problem... that he's got attitudes that he 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 doing to get him back to school, 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, you have to hand over. As long as you feel that what is happening is in his best interests, and with him... 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, especially with somebody like David, that there is more. But, there is, I think he's got attitudes that need to be changed and he, and we, and the school, and he, and us, and the school, and he, and us, and the school, and she (the SENCO) says, yes it's just... he's not being bloody minded. And I thought, oh God, here we go again...

p24 Well, I don't really know what Joanne would do. And I don't really know what the educational psychologist would do... I didn't like the bit clinical... medical, ill, something like that. mentally ill.
p24 do you feel a partnership? 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 powers...

p29 ...if (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, there is still a power imbalance. As the end of the day, the schools can 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.

...I feel 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... I think that's a barrier. And the power imbalance... And time. And then personalities, sometimes... Attitudes.

p31 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.

p32 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... I don't know what it is...

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 do that, as well. The 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. 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 away with it, this 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?... there was... but, the black and white, you know, she's not really left with any other choice.

...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'm trying to think himself back into school as a whole. Which is fair enough, it's her job.

p33 I don't know why there was no doctor...

p34 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 don't really know what Joan would do. And I don't really know what the educational psychologist would do... I didn't like the bit clinical... medical, ill, something like that. mentally ill.

p35 do you feel a partnership? 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...

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David's Mother on Assessment

Interview 2
p10 I think the assessment process has really to be brought about more of a feeling of partnership because there has been other people involved... 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
p19 Definitely, yes and that is not as a mother that's as a, you know inside information. And I think that's a road, well that's that but itself sort of something that would escalate the problem and become, he would become a behavioural problem.

Interview 3
p8 Labeling, 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, inexpertly handled as well.

p25...we'd understand it all, but
p26 I thought I needed it, for a start, to stop him getting another name, because you say no labeling, 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 if he is. I'm not sure but if I choose a label, I'd choose dyspraxic...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...

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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.

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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 there's more to it than that...

p16 Definitely, yes and that is not as a mother that's as a, you know inside information. And I think that's a road, well that's that but itself sort of something that would escalate the problem and become, he would become a behavioural problem.

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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...
**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 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 especially 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 ... Unnating 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 had 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 it 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.

p16 ... 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 there's no one who has the most power. They are the people who actually 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 to not become powerless. You know, you're in the wrong. If you know what I mean, to start with. 

p9 (to not become powerless) ... Gathered information ... Well, from the (clinical psychologist), initially ... Well, for a start she liked him, that was the first thing. ... 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, 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

p11 ... 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 kids you know, there's complicated factors involved here. ... Oh yes, I mean, because the 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.

p12 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.

p15 I don'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 quite, 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 behaviour team in for him, and changing the statement ... pushing towards behaviour and that 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 

**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. Davie 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.

p9 I had to put an awful lot of effort in not to become powerless.

p12 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 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 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 the needs were. I didn't know 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 we were... 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 do, 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, after, when they've [children] missed their playtime, they feel sad... When they're doing it, 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... Well, my old teacher used to make a big fuss of it.

p7 ... Well, then she told him to tell her what happened, and he did, then she brought Timothy in and he told her a totally different story that Bobby had been calling him names and stuff, so Thomas just explained, 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 dragging you about and dragging you to the head teacher and stuff like that...

p8 ... Yes. And afterwards, they turned to, 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 taught. It'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 lot 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, [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 tells 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 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.

... 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 [now 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
p8 ...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 tests 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.
...[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

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 very 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, if 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 like to continue it 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].
p10 ...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.
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

2. What are your views of the problems in confidentiality in this kind of research, case study research?

3. Do you have any other comments?

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**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>5th September</td>
<td>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</td>
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| 19th September| New standard letters which are needed under the new education act, 1993, were considered and a few amendments agreed.  
"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".  
"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?  
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" |
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<td>3rd October</td>
<td>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. PEP &quot;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 &quot;formally requested&quot; an assessment, presumably not giving those rights to parents who have agreed to an assessment in the normal development of casework. It was agreed PEP would pursue this issue via the DFE and IPSEA. It was also agreed that ( ) practice would &quot;deem&quot; 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. 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)</td>
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<td>17th October</td>
<td>PPOs outlines the work carried out so far with the parent partnership scheme: &quot;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.</td>
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<td>October 31st</td>
<td>A training for teachers day PiParent Federation Director for 22nd Nov on the Code of Practice would have &quot;Working with Parents&quot; as one of its themes, the others being, &quot;Collection and feedback of early responses to the Code of Practice documentation&quot;, and &quot;Setting Targets&quot;</td>
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<td>November 28th</td>
<td>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 interventionalist, 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.</td>
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<td>January 16th</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>30th January</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>13th February</td>
<td>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 &quot;reason to proceed&quot; in statutory assessments, so the casework EP no longer need to do this. Discussed Code of Practice Training Days for teachers, SENCOs, in March. This day would have as one of its aims to &quot;explore issues surrounding parental participation in the COSA system. What expectations should parents be given? How can documentation best be presented to them?&quot; 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.</td>
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<td>27th February</td>
<td>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: &quot;At this stage it seems unlikely to be appropriate to recruit and train large numbers of &quot;independent&quot; Named Persons. Experience so far with the new assessment system has indicated no requests for &quot;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.&quot; (ISSUES: NAMED PERSONS ARE NO MORE INDEPENDENT THAN LEA OFFICERS? RETICENCE TO PROMOTE NON LEA NAMED PERSONS?)</td>
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<td>27th March</td>
<td>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. 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. 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.</td>
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<td>24th April</td>
<td>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.</td>
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Appendix 11
<p>| 1st May | 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. Outline plans for the named persons training days would be distributed to EPs. Difficulties in finding a reliable graphic artist and printer for the folder were noted. 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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<td>15th May</td>
<td>PPOs described the format and content of the plParent Federation Directord training for the Named Person. &quot;There ill be activities relevant to attitudes towards the role, &quot;professional&quot; and &quot;objective&quot; 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. The contrast between potential roles as &quot;befriender&quot; or &quot;advocate&quot; will be central, with the aim of helping individuals towards understanding the distinction. The role of promoting &quot;partnership&quot; will be underlined.&quot; 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. &quot;The team agreed that the approach seemed very positive.&quot; It was agreed that the issue of personal liability insurance be checked with the LEA solicitor. &quot;It was agreed that copies of reports should not be sent to named persons unless parents requested it. Communication should be through the parents.&quot; Contact with Family Link was discussed and their leaflets distributed. 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. The PEP greed to consider ways the COSA form for schools and the school advice form could be re-drafted to minimise duplication.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5th June</td>
<td>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. Concern was expressed about the &quot;President's direction&quot; declaring the Tribunal role to be that of determining the current needs of the child rather than testing the reasonableness of the original assessment. (see notes on MINUTES)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>19th June</td>
<td>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. 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. &quot;appropriate moderation of () required a degree of case knowledge which other LEA personnel may not have&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd July</td>
<td>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)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17th July</td>
<td>Discussion took place about the recent Named Person training, features of volunteers trained, and strategies for their involvement in assessments. 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 &quot;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. 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. 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. It was agreed that the (Parent Federation) partnership officer, soon to be appointed, could have a role as a contact point for named persons. Until the matter is clarified, EPs should not always change current practice in relation to the named person.&quot; (I think minutes incorrect, delete always)</td>
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Appendix 12

Published Articles


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 (Eisen 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 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 in 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 depriviation 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
devoted to looking at ways parents can assist teachers in the teachers' role as perceived by teachers themselves, as noted by Border & Merritens (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, its 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". (Esen 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 stating 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; Fugh, 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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REFERENCES


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, 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.

(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.¹

(David’s Mother, Interview 3, p.23)

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.
Other research has shown that parents lack the power needed to state their own views, and are likely therefore to be disempowered by professionals attempting to bring them into partnership (Armstrong 1995). In other words, partnership might simply make it more likely that parents go along with the professional’s view of the situation. If this is true for parents, then it is likely to be even more the case with children.

Professional narratives: thin and thick descriptions

Whilst the narratives above were in clear evidence in David’s situation, there were many other narratives, all operating within the system in a very complex way. In this way, one could make a distinction between ‘thin’ and ‘thick’ descriptions of the narratives of professionals. Thin descriptions could be seen as professional narratives such as objectivity, rationality, reductionist, scientific, non-affirming of the affective, expert, non-problematic, bureaucratic and control. However, research into the narratives of professionals working to contribute to David’s situation revealed a broader picture than this, which is what I describe as thick (or at least, thicker) description. The main narratives are presented in the following table. This shows the role as perceived by each of the participants in David’s situation. This has been devised from interviews with each person as David’s assessment was being carried out. As you can see from the diagram, the narrative varied from advocate (mother), to assessing and providing an opinion (clinical psychologist, occupational therapist and senior clinical medical officer), and primarily supporting David’s mother with David himself a secondary concern (the named person).

David’s mother tried to hide the assessment from her son in order to protect him. She believed that this would reduce the effect that the assessment would have on his view of himself. She believed that there was no need for him to be aware of the label that had been given to him, that of being a special needs child who requires a statement.

'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.

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?

(David’s mother, interview 3)

Although David was silenced in the assessment, in his situation a case can be made that he was not completely disempowered. His mother transgressed her role to such an extent that she was able to maintain her refusal to accept the label of ‘behaviour problems’, and insist on a recognition of his writing difficulties. And, amazingly, she ‘won’! The outcome of the assessment was support in school from a teacher to help David with writing difficulties, rather than transfer to a unit for children with behavioural problems. Once David’s mother had been able to maintain her refrain for a recognition of David’s learning difficulties, the acting principal educational psychologist...
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 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’s 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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