UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF SOCIAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES

School of Education

Why is it Difficult to be Inclusive in Schools?

by

Matt Sambrook

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

September 2014

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF SOCIAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Education

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

WHY IS IT DIFFICULT TO BE INCLUSIVE IN SCHOOLS?

Matthew Stephen Sambrook

This research explores the seeming lack of coherence evident within the application of inclusion in schools. The thesis works to identify what limits school engagement with inclusion and focuses on the idea of 'being inclusive' in order to present an alternative approach to interpret and seek inclusion.

An integration of a philosophically existentialist perspective grounded in the works of Sartre (1943) and Camus (1955) and the autoethnographic method is employed to apply a method designed to bring about an alternate view of inclusion. The researcher draws on a range of experiences, set within three different school contexts, over eight years of interaction and study. The perspective of both researcher and school leader are used to view, interpret and develop these experiences and ideas.

The findings are presented in relation to four key existential themes: absurdity, authenticity, freedom and responsibility. The conclusions come in two directions; the first relates to the limitations created by the way people perceive things and how those perceptions are sustained by context and circumstance and the second highlights the limitations created by the need, both individual and collective, to seek out affirmation. It is argued that the use of the existential perspective provides a radical set of contentions that enable a genuine challenge to the social conventions that limit schools and sustain absurdity.

Table of Contents

DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Matthew Stephen Sambrook

declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

Why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself
7. None of this work has been published before

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr Kalwant Bhopal and Prof. Melanie Nind for their guidance, support and encouragement over the last 8 years, for keeping me on track and enabling me to get to the end.

I would also like to thank my fantastic family – my wife Philippa, for supporting and encouraging me to complete this thesis and my two girls Evie and Gracie, for giving me the time and space I needed in order to get it done, without once complaining.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The beginning

This work is based on my belief and conception that it is difficult to be inclusive in schools. However this is not stated on the basis that this is something that cannot be achieved or should not be sought, but from the viewpoint that being inclusive is a notoriously difficult idea for schools and the individuals within them to grasp with any certainty or in a way that is coherent or meaningful to the children within them (Dyson, 2007; Dyson, Jones and Kerr, 2009). Booth (2003) has suggested that understanding and application of inclusion in schools is limited, incoherent and often misunderstood and Dyson et al. (2009) have suggested that equity in inclusion is a significant concern. Therefore I ask the question 'why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?' to unpick this seeming lack of coherence evident within the application of inclusivity, to identify what it is that limits school engagement with inclusion and individual and collective approaches to being inclusive and in so doing provide an alternative way to both interpret and seek inclusion. However, I ask the question, why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools, not just from the perspective of researcher but also from that of a school leader, where I have direct experience of perceiving this level of confusion and incoherence on a day-to-day basis, trying to negotiate the competing agendas in school, whilst seeking to establish a viable and purposeful web of meaning (as described by Geertz, 1973 and Denzin, 1989). The result of this process has fuelled a need within me to find answers and establish a path of action that I perceive to be more authentic (based on my reading of Sartre, 1943).

In answering the research question: why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools? I set out with the following aims:

- To identify the difficulties, problems and limitations of being inclusive in schools
- To offer an alternative approach from which to conceptualise inclusion in order that inclusive action can be more coherent

In order that I can do this, I will also look to the following questions as subsidiary to the main research question:

- Can inclusion be used as a driver for change?
- How can more active engagement with theory support inclusive practice and understanding in schools?
- Can existentialism provide an alternative approach from which to engage with and conceptualise inclusion?

The problems which I discuss through this thesis and the solutions I offer are those which are inherently subjective or at least derived as the result of a specific perspective on how things are and therefore will be, to a degree, context specific. The questions are also based upon my preconceptions, assumptions and beliefs about the concept of inclusion, engagement with it and even what it means to be inclusive. However these assumptions and questions are not the result of sudden response or short term reactions but were built upon through my own experiences of teaching and leadership in schools over the last ten years and the perceptions I have relating to the coherence, or lack of coherence, of what I believe is perceived (by myself and others) in the understanding and application of the concept of inclusion in schools. Clough and Corbett (2000, p6) recognise the significance of varied and alternative views of inclusion in the understanding of inclusion itself when they note that: 'inclusion is not a single movement; it is made up of many strong currents of belief, many different local struggles and myriad forms of practice.' It has been through this perception of inclusion as diverse and multifaceted, but also as process (Barton, 2005), that is evolving and sometimes transient that this project was established. It was from this conception that I was driven to question the assumptions, values and principles of much of what Allan (2008) calls the 'inclusion project' and how it has progressed in schools.

As I believe the problems I perceive are grounded within ontological and existential contentions of how things are, namely questions relating to the nature of existence and how we choose to exist rather than the nature of

knowledge and the epistemological contentions, I chose to approach this project from a philosophical stance and set of ideas from a group of philosophers often collectively referred to as the existentialists. In order to do this authentically (a fundamental prerequisite of engaging in an existential discourse) I have sought to inhabit the existential in thought and action, seeking to move beyond the use of the existential position as purely a tool for research, but instead increasingly submerging myself in the existential mode of being. Through doing this I have questioned, not only the difficulties of inclusion but also the difficulties of existing in a way to enable an individual to be inclusive.

The existential perspective is sometimes viewed as outdated and the product of a previous generation and time where the immediacy of life, the suddenness of change and the awareness of the fragility of existence were at the forefront of everyday consciousness (Priest, 2004). However it is also a perspective that seeks to embrace direct engagement with life, whilst affirming a fundamental belief in and the necessity of the dual concepts of freedom and responsibility in order to grapple with the existential questions about understanding meaning and being itself. It is a perspective that has been under-used within educational research yet that provides an alternative interpretation and direction for inclusion. I use this perspective as one that is unashamedly about the practical engagement with the world and being in the world, one in which authentic living and actions of both groups and individuals represent the belief systems which they espouse. The aim of using this perspective is to revisit a powerful and relevant theoretical perspective, which is fundamentally about being in the world, where empowerment, responsibility and action bridge the gap between the theoretical and practical worlds of education. I seek to reawaken those perceptions towards being (exemplified through the work of the existentialists) that are predicated in the active process of seeking to be an activist for change, within the system rather than apart from it. I look to embrace both the freedom and responsibility I and others who work in schools hold and as a result reframe our understanding of our role and the actions we take and could take when seeking inclusion.

However as this group of philosophers, the existentialists, are highly diverse in their interpretations and understandings, I have been unable to take an 'existentialist' view and have needed to be more specific with the direction I have asserted within this thesis. To do this I selected two philosophers for primary focus, who I believe exemplify this existentialist view most vividly whilst also providing insightful tools for analysis of inclusion and application in the field of education. These philosophers are Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus. I have also, within their work, chosen to concentrate on the earlier works of Sartre, specifically those expounded within his most famous work – *Being and Nothingness* (1943) and with Camus and the ideas that he developed in *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1955) and *The Rebel* (1953). It is within these works that Sartre and Camus are most consistent with each other but also most relevant to the question which is the focus of this study.

Sartre's (1945, p27) existentialism is predicated upon the belief that '...every truth and every action imply both an environment and a human subjectivity'. It is concerned with the whole of human experience and emphasises the importance of our actions in defining who we are and what we seek to become (Priest, 2004). However despite the emphasis placed upon human subjectivity it is an approach which does not assert a relativist or postmodern view of life and reality, only that through viewing life through an existential lens we are 'learning all over again how to see, directing one's consciousness, making every image a privileged place' (Camus, 1955, p41). It is an approach that affirms a view that we often misrepresent, misinterpret or misunderstand what we perceive and how we choose to perceive what we perceive and as a result limit the possibilities through which we act (Camus, 1955). Through taking this approach I unpick the problems of inclusion in schools through the use of a philosophical tool set which enables greater clarity when viewing how things are typically perceived to be and a form of questioning that helps reconceptualise the alternatives. Two of the main ideas which I use as tools for this within the analysis are 'absurdity' and 'authenticity'. Both the definition and use of the concepts of absurdity and authenticity within this project are used and defined as identified within the work of Sartre (1943) and Camus

(1955) and are exemplified throughout the project, but in order to situate the discussions that follow they are briefly described below.

1.2 Authenticity and Absurdity

Authenticity is a central tenant of an existential perspective and is a tool of understanding through which perpetual self-review, reflection and action will inevitably take place. As such it is a powerful tool to evaluate and reconceptualise inclusion in schools in a way that is relevant and active. Sartre (1943, p116) identifies 'authenticity' as a form of self-recovery of being, through seeking to live in 'good faith.' Authenticity could alternatively be viewed as seeking to live coherently as a result of the understanding elicited through an existential viewpoint. Through highlighting the importance of authenticity, Sartre acknowledges that 'bad faith' – the lack of authenticity, is likely to be unavoidable, but that it is the act of seeking to be authentic that is important. Such an idea is significant in the discussion of being inclusive as it asserts the need for active recognition of difficulty and the necessity to rework and reconceptualise those difficulties in a meaningful and active way.

I have approached this research from a position striving for authenticity (Sartre, 1943), in which I seek to acknowledge the implicit perspective that is the product of conflict between belief and action. It is a perspective that impacts upon personal actions and motivations, which I conceive to be grounded in tacit views of how things are, or could be (Kahneman, 2011), that are shielded behind the more overt actions and behaviours that dominate our daily interactions (Ellis, 1991). Therefore through this study I seek to uncover some of these meanings. This viewpoint is something that both stimulates my search for answers and helps to clarify my understanding of the frustration that can result from the answers I gain. It is also a perspective that has enabled recognition of the incoherence and lack of certainty that I experience around me both generally and when seeking to understand inclusion. These difficulties I perceive are explained to some extent by Deleuze and Guattari, (1994, p202) who note that: 'we constantly lose our ideas. That is why we hang on to fixed opinions so much'. This acknowledges the internalised contentions evident in

us all and those evident within conflicting ideas of inclusion where we fail to take account of the evolving and changing processes and circumstances we are part of.

Such views on internal conflict, self-development and realisation are well developed in the works of Sartre (1943) and Camus (1953, 1955) and their discussions on being and identification of the absurd. Sartre (1943) specifically identifies how seeking authentic being requires awareness of the internal conflict and acknowledgement of the external contradictions evident in everyday life - the 'absurd'. In order to do this Sartre (1943) makes the distinction between being 'in itself' and being 'for itself'. The former is used as a description of an 'object', something defined, limited and unchanging, which he believes if applied to 'being' as a human, is an inauthentic position, which fails to acknowledge the complexity and possibility of being. The latter is a belief that being is an ever changing and re-evolving position that persists until death, which is viewed by Sartre (1943) as an authentic position from which to view 'being' as a human and an essential stance from which to engage with the world. Such a distinction emphasises the difference in perspective I have taken when using the existential rather than epistemological. This is a view that the investigation of this question begins with the acting and feeling human, where existence precedes essence (Sartre, 1943), where questions of self-reflection, meaning, purpose, responsibility and freedom establish a humanising framework that is implicitly about being inclusive rather than seeking a description of it. This perspective highlights the key element of how this study has taken an alternative direction from which to view both inclusion and our engagement with it. In this study I argue that it is through seeking authenticity within these episodic, fluent, ever changing and re-written realities (Baggini, 2011; Fieldman, 1987) and acknowledging absurdity (Camus, 1953, 1955) that it is possible to embrace the multiplicity of perspective and the possibility of internal multiplicity in order to act more inclusively. It is within Sartre's view of being that it is possible to gain clearer direction from which to answer the research questions, particularly when seeking active engagement with the ideas of inclusion and bring about greater clarity to the difficulties of being inclusive in schools.

1.3 Developing a perspective

This thesis tracks the emergence of a perspective that seeks authentic, existential inclusion, through an autoethnographic narrative across four different schools. In so doing it depicts the organic and transient nature of both engagement with and understanding of inclusion, through thick description (Geertz, 1973) and questioning of the principles and practices that underpin school processes. This emergent perspective was initiated through an awareness of a disconnect between what I wanted to achieve in school (based on my understanding of inclusion) and what I was actually doing. Sartre (1943) asserts that the emergence of an existential view of being is brought about by a sudden lucidity which helps an individual realise a shift in their perception of how things are. However for me this awareness was not something brought on or activated by a specific event or circumstance, but one that developed the more interested and engaged I became with the lived concept of inclusion in school, and the more critical I become of my own practice and that of the schools with which I worked. Therefore the narrative that is told through the chronology of this project, in addition to eliciting an answer to the question 'why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?' also tracks the emergence of an existential perspective seeking the engagement with inclusion and the development of education in school as a whole. This process of engagement and realisation grew out of something that I initially perceived to be little more than fleeting, and without the greater permanence of comprehensive understanding, something Sartre (1943) might term 'pre-reflection'. However it was this awareness - a combination of uncertainty and a conviction to action, which led to the investigation and desire for greater study and understanding of the concept of inclusion. I present this awareness as a growing consciousness of the existential ideas as exemplified within the findings chapters as they progress, moving from Chapter 5 (the first of the findings chapters) which presents an emergent perspective and ending with the Chapter 7 where there is an exposition of the use of an active and overt existential perspective and its impact on seeking inclusion.

In taking this perspective I clearly do not use the traditional positivist paradigm but one which, according to Clough (1992, p6), may 'produce particular situated understandings' where 'the validity, or authority of a given observation is determined by the nature of the critical understandings it produces. The understandings are based on 'glimpses and slices of culture in action.' From this perspective, the learning that results is also of a non-traditional form, something much more 'rhizomic' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994) in nature. This is explained by Allan (2008, p61) as learning that 'is always in a process, having to be constantly worked at ... and never complete.' One of the outcomes of the research and in answering the question, 'why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools' is not a resolution that is voiced in terms of the concrete and pragmatic but one that seeks to deconstruct the situated understandings and question them, to evaluate coherence and capacity in order that they become a basis under which further interaction can proceed (Habermas, 1986, 1987; Rorty, 1992, 1999) and hence enable active change to take place. This relates directly to the perspective that Sartre (1943) detailed in his analysis of being through the assertion that an authentic existence is being 'for itself' rather than 'in itself.'

1.4 Defining a context

At the time of writing this thesis the country is emerging from the longest recession since the 1930s, social stability is a renewed public concern and political direction can be called into question as we have a the first sustained formal coalition to hold political office since 1945. Education is also going through one of the biggest overhauls in the last thirty years, with changes to school structures (DfE, 2010), the very advent of large proportions of academies and free schools, three fundamental changes to school inspection procedures (over the 2011-12 period) and an intense focus on freedoms and accountabilities for schools (DfE, 2010). Yet it is also a time where renewed professional identity, responsibility and agency is possible for teachers and school leaders (Hargreaves, 2012; Priestley, Biesta and Robinson, 2012), although in recognition of this we are faced by a problem implicit with the realisation of greater freedom, and that is whether we want to take it (Sartre, 1943).

This thesis is written at a time when education has enjoyed more funding as a percentage of the GNP than ever before (rising from 1.73% in 1951 to 5.61% in 2006, Education expenditure, 2008). However due to sustained high levels of inequality in wages and a persistent correlation between children from low income families and educational attainment there has been an increase in the polarisation between high and low achievers, where low achievers are disproportionately represented by those from lower social groups (Sutton trust, 2012), and a decrease in social mobility for those at the bottom of the social spectrum (Centre for Social Justice, 2007, Sutton Trust, 2012). Additionally, although superficially exam results seem to have increased overall, at almost every level (National Statistics Online, 2008) recent studies have suggested that social mobility and relative improvement by individuals in the lowest social groups is not improving at the same rate and the gap between best and worst performers is in many cases increasing, particularly as children get older (Sutton Trust, 2012). The effect of this is to create a polarising effect in society as a whole due to the decrease in the breadth of social access (Sutton Trust, 2012; Cassen and Kingdon, 2007; Tunstall and Coulter, 2006). In other words, we are in a generation where if you are born in a low income family you are more likely to remain in one and attain relatively lower results than you would have in previous generations. The Centre for Social Justice (2007) state: 'it is less likely that a child of parents in a low-income bracket will rise to the top income bracket in 2006 than it was in 1970.' This suggests that many of the policies, approaches and practices up to this point have exacerbated rather than supported the wider equality drive and that there is significant need for research and action which looks to address inequalities and exclusion. In 2011, worries relating to these statistics and the 'rising inequality in this and many developed countries' (Sutton Trust, 2012, p1) culminated in the formulation of a 'social mobility strategy' (HM Government, 2011). In the recent social mobility strategy update (May, 2012) a commitment was made by the Coalition government to provide free early education for two-year-olds, increase pupil funding in schools for those from disadvantaged backgrounds (pupil premium) and provide help for young people who require support in either learning or earning (the youth contract). However the impact of this strategy is yet to be realised and the potential effectiveness does in large part

rely upon the way the new funding is applied and utilised by the various groups who receive it.

In such a context it is clear to see why the vocabulary of inclusion, exclusion, equality, inequality and fairness have become so prevalent within educational, social, political and economic discourse. It is also clear that if we fail to address the societal, cultural and community impact of inequality it will be to the detriment of the society within which we live (something made apparent in the numerous studies discussing these issues e.g. The Equalities Review, 2007; Alexander, 2008 and Sutton Trust, 2012).

1.4.1 A personal context

When writing this thesis I am at a point where I have been engaged in the study of education as a post-graduate for ten years, three years of which took me through a part-time MSc in Education, specialising in specific learning difficulties, while the last seven have been as a part-time student enrolled in an MPhil/PhD progamme of study. Over this time period I have moved from class teacher to head teacher and across four different schools and contexts. During this time I have always been a teacher – a role for which I have significant passion and commitment. However I have always considered the designation in itself to be bounded and constrained by expectation, political rhetoric and social change, in terms of what a teacher should be, rather than what the person who is the teacher could be. As a result the description of teacher always sits uneasily with me and lacks the subtlety and dynamism that the position has the capacity and possibility to become. It is a role/ job title that almost everyone knows, has experience of and has views of what teachers do or have responsibility for. However for me this is a position and profession which fails to recognise the privilege, responsibility and opportunity which we collectively hold. It is a position through which individuals and groups of individuals can actively change lives for the better as we have the unique circumstance whereby we take responsibility for the learning and development of children, young people or adults through regular and sustained interaction where we have the capacity to determine the direction of those interactions,

the environment, content and context and as such have the capacity to move beyond expectation. It is through such a set of beliefs that I engage with this project. This position is reflected in the writings of Sartre, who highlights how when people label themselves (or are labelled by others) and consequently seek to identify themselves as a 'thing' or 'object' they cease to be authentic, as they take a view of 'being in itself' and acting a role, rather than 'being for itself' and embracing the freedom to act and change or the responsibility to act and change.

During these ten years I have straddled positions and perspectives brought about by self-identification as both insider and outsider – someone who is intensely engaged with the role, perspective, agenda and cause of the school within which I work, whilst seeking to position those perspectives within the wider social, research and political perspectives. This research straddles both my professional and personal narrative and has become something that is intensely important to me and my own sense of being, however fleeting that designation is. Therefore I ask this question, 'why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?', in this way and from this perspective because what matters is not what the answer is but what can be gained by asking it.

The perspective that I have built as a researcher is one in which I seek to maintain a genuine approach to reflexivity and criticality, to ask questions as a respectful sceptic and seek to put my own work, that of the schools I have worked within and the work of those around me under this gaze. As such, I feel that the position I have is one of both privilege and difficulty. It has allowed me insight into specific practices and processes that I may not have gained otherwise but in so doing I feel that it has become something that has torn away at my implicit cognitive loyalties, pulling me between the philosophical musings in which I would happily lose myself and the pragmatic and reactionary politics of school improvement, evidencing action and identifying impact. This is perhaps why I believe that being open to the multiplicity of the internal self and the tacit dimension of self-understanding are significant factors in seeking to understand this question and in defining the research methods and forms of enquiry.

In explaining my background I must also make explicit an acknowledgement alluded to so far in this introduction, that my own journey has been a 'rhizomic' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994), in the sense that it is a process that does not seek to define or identify a conventional structure, state or hierarchy in the answer to the question, but seeks to investigate the multitude of interconnected and surprising currents and directions that underpin this question. This is evident in the delicate nature of beliefs, values assumptions, concepts and ideas that emerge, disappear and resurface in the narration of perception and interaction of individual experience over time. It is this personal journey that provides an indication of the uneasy relationship between action and belief and how that can change. Therefore this project is a narrative of experience, an investigation of internal and external change and an exemplification of the impact of existential engagement. It is one that I feel has the capacity to shed light on the specifics of inclusion and how inclusion can be engaged with more effectively.

1.4.2 The project itself

The question 'why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?' is addressed from my own personal experiences as a head teacher and how these experiences have changed over time. Different perspectives and experiences are contrasted in order to situate the different understandings of inclusion and to provide a voice for the complexity and multiplicity of the answers that emerge when asking such a question. I maintain that we are 'condemned to be free' (Sartre, 1965) and have the responsibility to act. To exemplify these ideas and make them accessible each of the findings chapter focuses on one of these issues and one specific context in turn, using data and evidence from my experiences and reflections, and interviews and experiences from others recorded at the time in order to discuss and interpret the question. However each section within this study as a whole also provides a basis from which the next will build. Chapter 2 is a section on policy, politics and practice which outlines relevant policy, political ideas and publications which help establish the context and landscape within which schools and education are set. Chapter 3

identifies some central ideas and theorists from within inclusion and social research, selected in order that key issues from the current debate on inclusion can be discussed and highlighted in relation to the question being discussed within this thesis. Chapter 4 outlines the methodology behind this project and the theory behind it, situating the existential model as a model for both critical evaluation and action. The findings of this project are presented in Chapters 5-7. Chapters 5 and 6 establish the chronology and experiences from which the existential views have manifested themselves. Both of these chapters are case studies of a different school built around a central idea or consideration from existentialist thought:

- Chapter 5 – acknowledging absurdity (school 1)
- Chapter 6 – seeking authenticity (school 2)

Chapter 7 is the final section and represents a narrative of action relating the process of thought and action, where I have actively set out to 'be inclusive' and show how my understanding of inclusion has, through this process, evolved over time in terms of what I have felt is important when being inclusive and how this was applied to the school within which I worked as headteacher. My active role in education and my belief in the need for action are a central theme as I seek to enact the values, principles and understanding established in the earlier sections whilst rationalising my changed relationship with the concepts of freedom and responsibility.

Through using such a model I develop a deep understanding and engagement with being inclusive, asserting the value of the existential over the epistemological, actively embracing the concept of inclusion as a process, which has a multiplicity of perspective and a requirement for understanding, but an understanding that is manifested through action and change. In addition, I seek to highlight the value of practitioner – researcher in the inclusion debate and the capacity of teachers and school leaders to do more and be more in order that we can enhance both the process and outcomes of the day to day educational experience, through a better understanding of being inclusive.

At the outset I understood that the change that results from this project was likely to be in two parts, the first focused on individual and collective assumptions and perceptions related to inclusion and how that informs the uptake and understanding of concept, and the second related to the research process itself. In the latter there is resonance with the aim of Douglass and Moustakas (1985, p40) to: 'awaken and inspire researchers to make contact with and respect their own questions and problems, to suggest a process that affirms imagination, intuition, self-reflection and the tacit dimension as valid ways to search for knowledge and understanding.'

1.5 Purpose, pertinence and perspective

In order to define a point of reference from which this project can develop, it is necessary for me to provide a broad working definition of inclusion. As I have approached this study from a philosophical perspective that posits itself on the notion of coherence, social change and societal transformation I am drawn to the concept of inclusion which is about more than the specifically focused recommendations of early documents such as the Warnock Report (author 1978) and is more about a framework relating to social discourse surrounding issues such as equality, fairness, aspiration and community (Levitas, Pantazis, Fahmy, Gordon, Lloyd and Patsios, 2007). Ainscow and Cesar (2006, p231) support this perspective as relevant to the inclusion discourse when they suggest that inclusion 'is increasingly seen more broadly as a reform that supports and welcomes diversity' and 'starts from the belief that education is a basic human right and the foundation of a more just society'. Therefore I use a concept of inclusion that is broadly based, likely to be relatively uncontested, but acknowledges the scope and possibility embraced by the inclusion project. This is something that is provided by Ainscow (1999, p8) who notes, that 'inclusion refers to a set of principles, values and practices which involve the social transformation of education, systems and communities.' However the question I ask within this proposal is not one based in the discussion of principles, values and practices at a purely theoretical level but one that seeks to investigate those principles, values and practices at the level at which they are enacted. I do this to investigate the extent to which there is coherence, consideration and understanding of these concepts in dialogue and through

action. Ainscow, Booth and Dyson (2006, p2) anticipate the potential problem of coherence at the level of action when they note that:

> values are both historically and culturally located, and that other people at times and in other places, articulate different values. Even those who broadly support our approach to inclusion may wish to discuss their concerns using different terms and emphasising different issues.

It is for these reasons that I regard that a study which seeks to investigate 'a local struggle' effected by 'many strong currents of belief' (Clough and Corbett, 2000, p6) in a specific context (as suggested within this study) can have many important things to say when seeking to enhance knowledge and awareness of inclusion in action particularly given the perspective I have utilised as the vehicle for this inquiry.

Chapter 2: Policy, politics and practice

2.1 Introduction

To situate the contentions and ambiguities surrounding inclusion in action generally, and in schools particularly it is important to review the political and policy agendas in relation to inclusion and their impact upon practice. In so doing I contextualise the research question 'why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?' whilst providing a perspective from which to view and interpret much of the research process, practice and subsequent dialogue that follows throughout the project. This Chapter is a precursor to Chapter 3, which seeks discussion of relevant theoretical and research perspectives, as it is less about established research perspectives or theoretical assertions or assumptions that shape inclusion and more about the policy, practice and political agenda.

Ainscow, Booth and Dyson (2006, p295- 296) outline the key contentions in school practices and approaches to inclusion and educational development when they note how the government has:

> committed themselves to the inclusive development of education at least at the level of rhetoric' in a way that 'has taken the form of a subscription to the principles of the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) and the promulgation of a range of guidance documents to schools (including the index for inclusion by Booth and Ainscow, 2002; Booth et.al. 2000) which imply not only that they should concern themselves with increasing the participation and broad educational achievements of all groups of learners who have historically been marginalised... The Government in England, as in many other countries, has been pursuing a second – and arguably more powerful – agenda. This has focused on what has come to be called 'the standards agenda', an approach to educational reforms which seek to drive up standards of attainment, including workforce skills levels and ultimately national competitiveness in a globalised economy (Wolf, 2002; Lipman, 2004).

Ainscow et al. (2006) move on to discuss how, although standards and attainment are 'entirely compatible with inclusive school and educational development' (p296), that when concentrated on narrow views of specifically

measurable and quantitative judgements of schools that the picture of what defines a school becomes distorted. This is a picture which denotes the commonly used label of 'the standards agenda'. According to Neil (2002, cited by Ainscow et al., 2006, p296) this agenda can be intimately linked with other aspects of policy: 'the marketisation of education; a directive relationship between governments and schools that potentially bypasses the participation of teachers in their own work and disengages schools from their local communities; and a regime of target setting and inspection, creating an accountability culture to force up standards'. Much of what is discussed in the following sections of this chapter addresses these concerns and identify how other distortions brought about by ideological politics, overly reductive and pragmatic solutions to complex situations and the impact of agencies such as Ofsted are necessary considerations in the discussion of inclusion in schools.

2.2 Social inclusion action plans

As a background to the education environment since 2003 and the difficulties of being inclusive more generally, an interesting parallel to consider in the wider socio-political and policy agenda is the social inclusion agenda which took a prominent role in public policy between 2003 and 2010 through the work of the social inclusion action plans (DWP, 2003-10). I use these plans within this section to provide a context and background to how inclusive ideals and approaches were distorted through the policy and political regime and the potential impact upon how inclusion is or has been interpreted for action and the legacy that such approaches and practise have sustained to this day. The recognition of this element of socio-political discourse is also important for overtly recognising that: 'inclusion in education is one aspect of inclusion in society' (Centre for studies on inclusive education (CSIE, 2013), and that schools and education systems should not be discrete from (as take place within the wider political environment), but complementary to, the wider view of society and inclusion, which according to Gallannaugh and Dyson (2003) are regularly subject to the whims of politics and the actions of policy. Alexander (2007) highlights the importance of the wider context and establishing an approach that takes both this into account and builds upon the interconnected nature of need when he notes how educational inequality and social inequality

are directly related and by reducing social inequality, educational inequality will be decreased. Such documentation and action as those presented through the social inclusion action plans are also important from an existential perspective, where action and effect are factors that define 'what is' and consequently 'what is not' (Sartre, 1943) and whether the process, approach and actions taken are believed to be valid or not, they are actions which have occurred (Sartre, 1943) and as such give an insight into the problems associated with the active process of being inclusive.

The social inclusion action plans were instigated by the government over a period of eight years (2003-2010), most of which time was a period of relative prosperity, when public service investment was at an all-time high and economic prosperity was on the increase (Office for National Statistics, 2013). Although the plans may have many theoretical inconsistencies with the notion of inclusion suggested by Ainscow (1999, p 8) and others in that: 'Inclusion refers to a set a of principles, values and practices which involve the social transformation of education, systems and communities', they give a picture of what was proposed by the government and policy groups and therefore provide a political perspective of action and approach at a time when funding constraints and economic conditions were less of a national concern, when compared with 2008-12 (Office for National Statistics, 2013). These plans provide actions and data with which to examine the difficulties, or opportunities of inclusion and the response that was made to social intervention. According to the Action Plan (2008-10, DWP, 2008, p1):

> The UK Government is committed to building an inclusive, cohesive and prosperous society with fairness and social justice at its core, in which child poverty has been eradicated, everyone who can work is expected to contribute to national prosperity and share in it and those who can't work are supported.

Although what is stated may well be the aim of the action plans, what is apparent from the documentation is the overtly political, economically driven approach that, at times, is just as much about validation as prioritisation and action (correlating with elements asserted by Ainscow et al. 2006 and O'Neill, 2002). The plans exemplify actions asserted from a psycho-medical perspective (discussed further in Chapter 3), as they are broadly based upon a

deficit understanding of inclusion and are fundamentally about 'fixing, rectifying or intervening in a presumed deficit evident or identifiable within groups or individuals in order that they can be effectively included in the "normal" population, or at least, less excluded' (Clough and Corbett, 2000, p8). The priorities identified within these plans (increasing labour market participation, tackling child poverty, improving access to services, tackling inequalities and preventing risks) are about 'increasing, tackling, improving and preventing', and in the detail of what they propose do not engage explicitly with what Clough and Nutbrown (2005) suggest are the three core capacities which are essential in the establishment of inclusion: understanding, aspiration and opportunity. Instead the plans seem to skirt around the edges, seeking to address the symptoms of the problems rather than the causes. I contend throughout this project that such an approach is a fundamental problem when seeking to be inclusive in schools or in society as a whole. I begin to exemplify this somewhat below.

According to the Action Plans (DWP, 2008, p4) employment is one of the key solutions to addressing inclusion, fairness and social justice. A clear difficulty with this statement, as with statements evident throughout these policy reports is that they are made without an adequate case for the solution they present. This is because although statistical correlations can be found between many of these factors there are no simple causational relationships. Brewer, Sibieta, and Wren-Lewis (2008) highlight this when they suggest how issues such as the nature of employment, employment opportunities, aspiration, status and pay are all factors within the employment correlations and therefore the idea of employment for employment's sake (without consideration of the job context, individual, social and economic needs) is a counterproductive act from an economic and social perspective. This demonstrates a clear example of why inclusion can be difficult to implement in practice – and gives a concrete example of how decisions can be made through what Ainscow (2005) calls 'limited thinking', or what Fullan (1991) calls 'low leverage' approaches where statistical validation, which can suggest a correlation for a pragmatic action, can be less valid when viewed at the level of the action itself. Waslander, Pater and Van der Weide (2010) support this

assertion through their findings showing the limited impact of market forces on social and educational change. Dyson, Gallannaugh ad Millward (2002, p1) recognise this 'limited' approach in government policy towards education specifically, where they note how:

> Increasingly, the development of the education system has been prioritised as a key means of solving problems of unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown, all of which are understood to be threats to individual as well as to the economic and social well being of society (Blunkett, 1999, 2000).'

They also note how such assumptions fail to take into account the complexity and interrelational nature of perceived concerns, problems and needs or the overt recognition of what the aims are of what we are actually trying to achieve in the first place. This view, questioning the basis upon which social policy decisions are made, is evident in a wide variety of writings beyond education and policy work, such as Rorty (1999), who notes how multi-factored problems are not necessarily met by single factor solutions, and if issues of context and equality of access (often a product of wealth and educational attainment, which themselves are interrelated) are not taken into account then greater polarisation can be created. According to Rorty (1999) such approaches can result in a widening gap, as systems seek to reinforce and accelerate the already ingrained inequality.

The contradiction of priorities and outcomes within the elements of the plans, as identified above is shown across the entirety of the plans. A specific example of this is shown by the fact that an increase in wage inequality occurred over the period 2003-08 despite increases in reported employment of over 3 million (DWP, 2008), which were identified as central (and correlated) priorities to increase social inclusion since the first social inclusion plan in 2003. Brewer et al. (2008) note how wage inequality is particularly damaging to societal development and they believe that an explanation for this occurrence is an increase in the gap between wages for skilled and unskilled workers, the skills biased technological change and a decline in the role of

trade unions. Therefore although low income is correlated with lower outcomes, Seddon (2012) notes how it is the relative differences that create some of the biggest effects in terms of opportunity, access and outcome and it is within these relative differences where the biggest increase was evident between 2003-2008 (Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2009). Although absolute poverty decreased between 2003 and 2008 (which is a bench mark definition and would be the expectation within an expanding economy) relative poverty, for the lowest ten per cent increased as absolute wealth increased for the highest earners (ONS, 2009). Rorty (1999, p231) notes how greater equality must be the aim when seeking to include all members of society and that if the twenty percent at the top of society get too wealthy the impact is the 'emergence of an 'overclass' and the steady 'immiseration of everybody else'. What is evident through this analysis is that the inclusion action plans provided a model and approach that was of both blunt and misdirected, often resulting in outcomes that opposed what was planned for or made assumptions that were either incorrect or damaging to their inclusive aims. Again I see this 'limited thinking' as a problem associated with seeking inclusion at all levels that highlights how both our approach to thinking about and acting on inclusion needs re-evaluation. Putnam (2000) notes how the problems associated with macro-economic intervention models highlight how we must address the real, individual and community needs and desires that we acknowledge within education and society as a whole in order to improve society. Putnam's analysis highlights the need to consider very carefully both models of action, intervention and research design, if we are to further our understanding and development of inclusion, whether in society, or schools specifically.

Fulcher (1999), in an education policy specific critique, highlights the need to interrogate and understand concepts that underpin education and to critique and theorize education policy in order to understand the effects on its implementation in practice so attempts can be made to narrow the gap between rhetoric and reality. Such a critique, much like what was discussed above highlights the necessity to re-evaluate the model through which we perceive our reality and so we are able to act more effectively within it.

> Policy is made at all levels; no one level determines another, though it may establish conditions for other levels. One reason government-level policies may fail, then, is that their social theory of how that bit of the world works — the bit they hope to influence is wrong. (Fulcher, 1999, p.15)

This idea that schools, policy and even theory employ, at times, a social model that fails to grasp the essential nature of the systems, structures and problems upon which they seek to intervene, is a core rationale for many of the ideas that follow within Chapter 3 and underpins much of the thesis itself. However to further establish that perspective there are two further sections within this chapter, the first looks at the standards agenda and the second looks at the Department for Education (DFE) and the changing political landscape in schools.

2.3 The Standards Agenda

A common concern, as highlighted in the introduction, when looking at engaging in inclusive practices within school is the perceived conflict between the inclusion and standards agendas (e.g. Rouse and Florian, 1997; Bines, 1999; Thomas and Loxley, 2001). Ainscow et al. (2006) review these ideas and investigate how perceived assertions and conflicts are engaged with and balanced within schools. They discuss whether the assumed conflict is in fact something which is necessarily limiting the development or engagement with the inclusion agenda, or whether they are two aims that can happily coexist and in some cases support our understanding of inclusion, a discussion also taken up by Neil (2002), Wolf (2002) and Lipman (2004) previously. Looking at the relationship between inclusion and the standards agenda Ainscow et al. (2006) reflect a number of fundamental difficulties of being inclusive. An example of this is how they believe it is often the values employed by the school, the leadership and the degree to which the school seeks to engage with the inclusion agenda that creates capacities, opportunities or barriers rather than the competing agendas:

> In broad terms, what we saw in participating schools was neither the crushing of inclusion by the standards agenda, nor the rejection of the standards agenda in favour of a radical, inclusive alternative. Certainly many teachers were concerned about the impacts on their work of the standards agenda and some were committed to a view of inclusion which they saw as standing in contradiction to it. However in most schools the two agendas remained intertwined (p300).

Although what is stated here seems to be logical, the conclusions highlight the contingent nature of inclusion in schools and recognise how the pragmatic actions of schools create an implicit difficulty of engaging in a deeper or more profound understanding of inclusion and the difficulties associated with such change. Although the conclusions found no real problem, commitment or contradiction to, with or between the inclusion and standards agenda this article highlights responses from school which I believe acknowledge an embedded culture of deficit thinking and a view in the subsidiary rather than fundamental value of inclusion in schools. This can be identified in the responses and even the conclusions drawn acknowledging a 'business as usual' assumption from schools and an approach which seeks a problematising and problem solving response to inclusion rather than a desire for transformational change. This approach does not perceive inclusion as a process (Booth, 2005) and the 'limited thinking' (Ainscow, 2005) that ensued as a result can be recognised by the critiques and analysis already outlined within section 2.2.

Ainscow et al. (2006, p 297) note, further to their conclusion: 'The schools were therefore typical of many English schools in simply wishing to "do their best" by all their students within the constraints of their situation'. However, what is evident here is the acceptance of a perceived set of undefined 'constraints' (which may or may not be such) and a lack of recognition as to what 'doing their best' means and whether this is a reasonable contention, as it is clear that there is a lack of defining principles underpinning the process or engagement or urgency to be inclusive within the schools identified. Fundamentally the argument which ascribes the purpose of a school to 'do their best' for pupils, is only valid in a context where we are entirely sure what that means. In the education and schools culture which teachers and school

leaders are presently engaged in, where outcomes through test results and assessment is the only consistent factor that has a judgement and purpose translatable across all schools, other factors and issues will be transient and inconsistent as highlighted by Ainscow et al. (2006), they are ultimately dependent upon the school leadership to define. Ainscow et al. (2006) reflect this assertion when they highlight how inclusive practices are occurring, but almost as a by-product of what is being carried out as opposed to the direct purpose of their achievements. This is an example of the power of the default position assumed by the circumstances schools find themselves in and an insight into some of the difficulties of being inclusive in schools. Through this analysis, what is evident is that a fundamental problem is the way inclusion is perceived and actioned as a result. Unless an approach focussing on change, transformation and engagement with clearly defined purpose and principles is used, which allows sense-making of what is trying to be achieved (as opposed to not achieved), engagement from a default position and a deficit culture is implicitly asserted.

Therefore although the standards agenda is hugely powerful in its impact on the culture and direction that schools take, due to the high stakes nature of testing and direct implications for schools (Armstrong, 2005), it is the way that schools have responded to it that has created the vacuum of belief and direction. Which as a result, often makes schools just as reliant upon the standards agenda as they are defined by it. My research is premised on the idea that those involved in schools and education often make too many assumptions about how things are and subsequently ask the wrong questions and seek to investigate them in the wrong ways. The existentialist perspective, which I utilise within this thesis, which seeks to question assumed values of meaning, purpose, certainty and coherence, has the tools and capacity to help realise the ingrained difficulties evident within schools. As a result it will help establish a direction for inclusive sense making that is about engagement, change and transformation through action, which is philosophically grounded and fundamentally about reconceptualising rather than seeking to interpret the present circumstance as an implicit proponent of it.

2.4 The Department for Education and the changing political landscape

Since 2010 and the production of the government's white paper, 'The Importance of Teaching' (DFE, 2010), there has been a clear shift in the direction and approach of school development and improvement (Hargreaves, 2012), where according to Greany (2014b, p2) the government's approach has been all about '... reducing central and local support in the hope that a self improving school system (an idea that has had significant development in the work of Hargreaves, 2012) will emerge.' Greany (2014a) highlights the four key approaches that are evident within the white paper: one, that teachers and schools are fundamentally responsible for their own school improvement; two, that teachers and schools should learn from each other and research so that effective practice spreads, three that the best schools and leaders extend their reach across other schools to improve and by implication and four, that government support and intervention is minimised. Although Greany (2014b) is encouraged by some of the possibilities that have been established from within the system by schools and their leaders since 2010, such as and the development of System Leadership, where 'outstanding' schools (as defined by Ofsted), take increasing responsibility for school improvement and school to school support, he has significant concerns in the lack of coherence, capacity, direction and sustainability of these systems. Greany (2014b) also highlights that although the intention of the white paper may have been to address these core areas, this has been skewed and the changes which are most evident are in responsibility and accountability.

Since the white paper (DfE, 2010) responsibility for change has been thrust into the hands of the schools, through a whole range of changes: the increasing advocacy of the academies programme by the DfE, the rapid development of teaching schools and the increasing roles and responsibilities they have had to take on (National College for Teaching and Leadership, NCTL, 2014) and the shrinking size and influence of local authorities in school development and improvement (National College for Leadership and Children's Services, 2011). During this same time period emphasis on accountability for

schools has shifted dramatically from processes to outcomes (Ofsted, 2014). Schools are now judged more on impact of what they do rather than how they do it. This is most evident in the changes to Ofsted since September 2012. As a result of these changes, school freedoms have rapidly increased and there are no specific models or methods advocated or expected as long as standards in terms of attainment and progress can be validated (Cladingbowl, 2014), with some exceptions e.g. phonics. Although this increased simplicity has been embraced by many educators, within this model the standards agenda can take an even greater hold. It is within a circumstance such as this that Larson (2011) argues that schools and school leaders need a greater personal awareness and must take a greater personal account of the social and moral development of the schools. She maintains that this is because within outcomes focused systems and high stakes practices, when there is no clear direction for how to engage with social justice issues that schools will either take the opportunity and freedom to embrace and develop concepts of social justice, or diverge towards pragmatic and ill-considered practices, which at times can be discriminatory or morally questionable. Such a concern relating to the contingency of process (Sartre, 1943) could be levelled at the reductionism of process and practice that has taken place in many schools, as a result of best practice models advocated and supported by 'outstanding schools', which are often more a product of experience rather than pedagogical investigation, research engagement or the desire for equity and social justice (Ofsted, 2010). They are also not necessarily convergent with specific, local or sustainable long-term needs.

Much of the support for the change in direction for the self-improving school system (advocated by Hargreaves, 2012 and the National College) has been in response to recognition, at least politically, that market mechanisms, such as parent choice, school competition, change or abolition of catchment areas, have had limited impact in education (Waslander, Pater and Van der Weide, 2010). However what is missing from this idea is any reference to or any re-evaluation of, the existential questions which underpin and relate the nature of the discussions which are taking place, when seeking to develop a renewed and more 'effective' school system, such as: what are what does effective mean? What are we trying to achieve through the school system? And what is

the function of schools in meeting societal needs? (Dyson, 2007). Waslander et al. (2010) highlight how market mechanisms when used, are dependent upon the local contexts in which they are employed, highlighting the limitation of centralised models to solve local solutions. However even when seeking to direct more localised solutions political and policy narratives can regularly be contradictory and incoherent. It is from this recognition that Greany (2014) calls for increasing coherence, but without the recognition that the intrinsic lack of coherence is generated due to the vacuum that has been established over time by an absence of a consistent and coherent view as to what the purpose and value of schools are in the first place (Dyson, 2007).

Scheffler (1992) argues that the reason why political coherence is so difficult to develop within a liberal democracy is the ongoing conflict between contemporary thought and the influence of naturalism (the view that philosophies of understanding should be grounded more in the natural world (Baggini and Stangroom, 2008)). For Matravers (2004, p14) what this means for policy is the need to '... confront the tension between moral and ethical convictions inherited from another age and the naturalistic view of persons and the world.' Such ideas highlight a renewed need for a philosophical and theoretical basis for understanding in order to move beyond our present status. However, in doing this, Matravers (2004) asserts the explicit need for a careful consideration of the idea of responsibility (in terms of the scope of how it is perceived and the implications of this) and the distinction between choice and chance and their impact on how we perceive responsibility, in order that innate contradictions and issues within politics and policy are addressed. When relating this to schools, the ideas posed by Larson (2011), about the importance of considering the moral questions of schooling appear more relevant and necessary, in order to provide a position from which we are able to recognise our responsibility, even prior to acting on it, in order to avoid a contingency of process and reduction in our view as to what defines successful outcomes.

Within the present model of schooling huge importance and value is placed upon external judgement and the views of others beyond the school and its community in validating worth and quality in schools. This is a position which Matravers (2004) highlights as a practice that rather than instilling personal responsibility, asserts a view of responsibility as other. This is the idea that change and difficulty are both the responsibility and fault of others and the system itself rather than the product of individual actions and responsibilities. Such a circumstance results in establishing a contradiction in terms of aim and outcome whereby action and responsibility are divorced from the individual. A key player in this contradiction is Ofsted, not because of what it is but how it is viewed. This is because through the judgements that are made on schools and systems and the way that those judgements are ratified and acknowledged e.g. where schools become defined as 'good', 'outstanding' or 'inadequate' they are inevitably reduced from what they were or otherwise could be to a situation where the diversity and capacity of a school is subsumed by a generic descriptor of value, which itself is questionable. The capacity and position of Ofsted to make judgements on schools and systems and the way that value is ratified by those in powerful and recognised positions such as the National College (Taylor, 2014) or Department for Education perpetuates this problem. This recognition of Ofsted has not only become the benchmark for value and quality in schools, but also defines the role schools and schools leaders can play within the self-improving school system through models such as System Leadership, identified above, and other linked initiatives such as Teaching Schools (NCTL, 2014). A potential difficulty of this is the inward facing nature of what the school system could become and the lack of schools' awareness of their position in wider society (CSIE, 2013) as they move away from a critical discourse to one of self-validation.

What has been recognised through the discussion above is a consistent concern relating to the rationale and purpose under which present educational models are established, directed and sustained. So what is the implication for this changing political landscape as far as inclusion is concerned? I believe that inclusion and the inclusion agenda has an import role to play in the changing landscape, but to do so it must make itself more actively engaged with the

changes that are occurring and highlight the value and importance of process and practice in the achievement of outcomes. Something that is missing is an approach that is more intrinsically accessible, where critical dialogue and individual empowerment are central to the discourse. We need an approach where the perpetual need to seek coherence and authenticity enable the acknowledgement of the dynamic brought about by responsibility, choice and chance, in a way that addresses the visceral response of educators in a dialogue of reformation rather than replication.

In order to discuss the issues, concerns and possibilities surrounding inclusion at this time, whilst situating and establishing relevance for the research question, 'why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?', Chapter 3 discusses approaches to inclusion and how they relate to some of the key concerns raised within this chapter. Within Chapter 3 I examine the role of communities and cultures and their impact upon both inclusion and how understanding is affected by social interaction and engagement and I look at inclusion in schools and possible theories that help us realise and acknowledge the contribution that inclusion can make to the educational discourse.

Chapter 3: Reviewing the context: key issues and ideas

This chapter explores key issues, ideas and research relating to this thesis in order to interrogate and question theoretical frameworks in relation the research question: why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools? The research highlighted in this section focuses on the academic ideas that underpin and impact on inclusion and in relation to the context and ideas outlined in Chapter 2. As a result the ideas discussed are in three main sections.

1. approaches to inclusion – which discusses ways and models through which inclusion is conceptualised
2. communities and cultures – which discusses ideas relating to inclusion, social and community interaction such as social capital, communities of practice and Bauman's ideas of human liberation.
3. inclusion in schools – which discusses how these ideas develop, effect and impact on schools.

Although many of the ideas discussed in this chapter reference schools they are not all centred exclusively around schools. This chapter therefore provides a broad background to inclusive ideas and the wider context within which the notion of inclusion resides. The ideas are written in such a way as to acknowledge the picture of the complexity surrounding inclusion and act as a contrast to the policy, politics and practice discussed in Chapter 2.

As this project is undertaken from a philosophically existentialist perspective, with a specific value set, I must acknowledge that the analysis and review that occurs within this chapter is both influenced by and makes reference to this perspective. This does not mean that other points of view are dismissed, but that discussions reflect on views ideas and perspectives from the existentialists to develop the issues outlined and to provide an introduction to a number of concepts that are discussed in more detail in the methodology.

Following the three main sections of this chapter there is a final section entitled: 'possibilities for moving forward'. This section looks to summarise the issues identified in chapter 2 and those developed through this chapter to provide a rationale for the specific direction of the question: why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools and establish its relevance in moving the discourse on inclusion forward.

3.1 Approaches to inclusion

Definitions of inclusion have changed in emphasis depending upon both the perspective of the user and the time at which that perspective has been used, with some of the perspectives being more prevalent depending upon the group, purpose or process which is engaged with or enacted through. According Ainscow and Sandill (2010, p 402) 'the confusion that exists within the field arises, at least in part, from the fact that inclusion can be defined in a variety of ways'. This assertion is supported by a variety of theorists (e.g. Clough and Corbett, 2000; Thomas and Vaughan 2004; Ainscow, Booth, and Dyson 2006). As a result, it seems that an appropriate starting point for this section is to situate and discuss the variety of approaches to inclusion. Researchers, such as Ainscow (2005, p109), have suggested that 'inclusion is the big challenge facing school systems around the world', and although thoughts on inclusion can often be limited to small and specific contexts it is increasingly seen more broadly as a reform that supports and welcomes diversity amongst all learners. Ainscow and Sandil (2010) support this in their more recent assertion that the limitation of thinking in terms of inclusion still remains and impacts on a daily basis on the lives of adults and children. To investigate why this might be the case, I review the main models through which inclusion is both viewed and enacted.

There are a range of models and approaches that have been used to both discuss and develop inclusion as identified in Clough and Corbett's (2000) historical sequence: the psychomedical model, the sociological model, curricular approaches, school improvement strategies and the disabilities

studies critique. However the most fervent and possibly most destructive division in inclusion has been between the advocates of the psychomedical model and the sociological response. According to Barton (2001) the psychomedical model and sociological response provide examples of two opposing perspectives prevalent in school today, where structural and competing practices and ideologies maintain a conflict over something that should have long since moved on in the debate on inclusion. However, the conflict and the way it is still maintained is critical to both the research question and the solution and the perspective I offer in answering it. As a result and in recognition of this important conflict, the discussion below is somewhat skewed toward these two ideas and their implications.

3.1.1 The psychomedical model

The psychomedical model is broadly based upon a deficit understanding of some children and young people (referenced and identified in section 2.2). According to Clough and Corbett (2000) it is about fixing, rectifying or intervening in a presumed deficit evident or identifiable within groups or individuals in order that they can be effectively included in the 'normal' population, or at least, less excluded. Such an approach, according to Clough and Corbett (2000, p8), 'essentially saw the individual as being somehow "in deficit" and in turn assumed a need for a special education for those individuals.' It is an approach that makes many assumptions that are contentious, not only about the functioning of society and the roles of individuals within it, but also that inclusion is about fitting the excluded back in rather than seeking to reform the system itself. This perspective necessitates the labelling and defining of individuals and medicalising issues.

Although the psychomedical model is perhaps the earliest example of engagement with inclusion and has been viewed as a flawed and problematic stance from which to view inclusion for a significant period of time(e.g. Carrier, 1986 and 1989; Booth, 1996; Mitler, 1998, Carrington, 1998), Lloyd (2008) highlights how despite this it is still highly prevalent within policy, schools and schooling systems. It is also an approach supported through structural and legislative frameworks such as the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice

(2001) – a statutory document for schools (although currently under review, 2014), which highlights the need to identify children in terms of the level and nature of their difficulties, where possible using a diagnostic label. Another example where deficit models are applied, are within the funding of the schooling system. This is most evident in the allocation of funding that is based upon specific or pre-defined groupings such as Free School Meals (FSM) or Special Educational Needs (SEN). Lloyd (2008, p223) argues that such approaches entrench anti-inclusive messages which are then validated and sustained because they are often used and asserted by policy-makers and 'unchallenged by practitioners'. If the psycho-medical model, is one, as claimed by Clough and Corbett (2000) to be both limited and outdated, why does it maintain such a presence in policy work (see section 2.2) and school practices (section 2.3)? The answer to this may be in part because of how individuals seek to make sense and manage information. According to Snowden (2005) in order to make sense of things, individuals seek out order and simplicity and avoid disorder and complexity. Therefore perhaps the simplicity and pragmatism of the perspective particularly for teachers (in light of the discussions within Chapter 2), is a reason why it has significant appeal. As well as this the positivist 'validity' created by medical diagnoses and criteria referencing, seems to create a pseudo-credibility for such processes and procedures to continue. As a result, the current picture in education shows an increase in the prevalence of labelling predicated on psycho-medical thinking and the perception of an increasingly challenging and problematised school population. A range of researchers have reported such perceptions in schools through their recognition to inclusion by teachers (Croll and Moses, 2000; Thomas and Vaughan, 2004) and disengagement with inclusion due to perceived lack of capacity or confidence in how to go about it (Mittler, 2000; Hanko, 2005; Shakespeare, 2005). Such a stance can also be identified in the declaration of Warnock (2005) (accredited with being one of the early architects of inclusion) that the idea of inclusion has been 'disastrous' (p22), noting that: 'even if inclusion is an ideal for society in general it may not always be an ideal for school' (p43). Although such pronouncements have been denounced by pro-inclusion educationalists (e.g. Barton, 2005; Norwich, 2006), there is no doubt that the simple pragmatism of the psycho-medical model as a way to interpret inclusion in schools is something that is still appealing from

some perspectives (e.g. Spurgeon, 2006; Wing, 2006) and is always likely to find political and policy support, unless a viable alternative can be presented.

3.1.2 The social model

Clough and Corbett (2000) refer to the social model as the sociological response to the problematic and negative implications of the psychomedical model. For them the sociological model broadly represents the critique of the psycho-medical legacy and draws attention to a social construction of special educational needs. The social model and the wider interpretation of what that represents, is the dominant perspective in inclusive research. According to Allan (2010, p2): 'The sociology of disability emerged in the 1980's as a direct challenge to the weighty paradigm of special education, with its fixation on individual deficits and remedies.' This perspective is exemplified by a whole range of theorists, initially led by Monogon, Ford and Whelan (1982) who highlighted the role of institutional structures and practices in producing school failure and Barton and Tomlinson (1984) critiquing the position and role of special education. Such positions have been supported and developed by other theorists such as Booth (2005) and Mittler (1998, p13) who notes how: 'the greatest barriers to inclusion were our underestimation of the potential abilities of those we label as having SEN. By extrapolation the very existence of the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) in UK schools is itself anti-inclusive.' As already identified in Chapter 2, however, the dialogue, policy and practice in schools is not always congruent with the social model or even always open to the sociological perspective identified within such arguments (Ainscow et al. 2006). As a result schools seem destined to relive and sustain this conflict even in the face of effective academic argument and exemplification. Allan (2010, p7) uses Derrida's (1992) idea of 'aporias' to highlight the difficulties of inclusion in education:

> Education is characterised by what Derrida (1992) calls aporias, which are oppositional or contradictory imperatives. Such oppositions, for example between raising achievement and promoting inclusion, or between educating individuals to be able to hold their own in a competitive world, and ensuring those individuals can collaborate, cooperate and understand their civic responsibilities, are constructed in educational policies and practices as choices to be made and are often resolved by privileging one imperative over another, in a way that obligation to the 'other' – the disabled person or the individual with

> learning difficulties – is denied. This forgetfulness of the other becomes formalised and justified through policies and practices which endorse solution, resolution and 'the desire for translation, agreement and univocity' (Derrida, 1992, p78)

This position identified by Allan (2010), through the work of Derrida is one that was exemplified within Chapter 2 and the discussion surrounding the possible conflict between the inclusion and standards agendas. As highlighted here by Allan (2010), the problem is often the way that resolution of difficulty is sought rather than the difficulty itself. It is as a result of such views, practice and conflicts that I contend that the innate conflict in the inclusion project is evident and sustains itself, particularly the 'oppositional and contradictory imperative' (Derrida, 1992) found in the positions and actions taken through the psycho-medical interventionist stance and the sociological critique. Therefore it is only through change in the action and emphasis of approach that it is possible to move forward. Barton (2001, p3) highlights the need for the social model to be both more political and used for action if the hope and desire for transformative change is to be realised:

> At both an individual and collective level a crucial task is to develop a theory of political action which also involves the generation of tactics or strategies for its implementation. This is a difficult but essential agenda.

According to Allan (2010, p3): 'This agenda has been difficult for sociology in general as well as sociology of disability and there has been much agonising about the challenge of insulating research from the value bias whilst contributing to social change through research (Gewirtz and Cribb, 2006).' Although some researchers maintain that political commitment in research is incompatible with academic rigour (Hammersley, 2008), there is a view emerging that researchers who develop ideas of social justice and equality have a responsibility to act (Barton and Clough, 1995; Oliver, 1996, Slee and Allan, 2008) and can do so with ethical reflexivity and methodological rigour (Flvyberg, 2001; Gewirtz and Cribb, 2008). Yet this view to act seems to be limited at this time and I believe that a large degree of that limitation is due to the lack of an adequate perspective to overtly recognise this responsibility. However in order that the discriminatory pragmatics of the psycho-medical

model are avoided and the difficulties of action, associated with the social model are negotiated, something needs to change. Therefore through this thesis I assert that it is our awareness of being inclusive and unpicking the difficulties and opportunities presented through an existential view of engagement rather than an epistemological view of understanding that may hold the key.

3.1.3 Alternate approaches to inclusion

Clough and Corbett (2000) highlight other approaches in addition to the psychomedical model and sociological model. I briefly review these below, whilst pre-emptively acknowledging that they are less about definitive models of inclusion and more about either approaches to being inclusive (e.g. the curriculum approaches and the school improvement strategies approach) or approaches that could be applied to inclusion, even if inclusion is not their explicit focus (e.g. the disabilities studies critique).

3.1.3.1 Curricular approaches

Curricular approaches are specifically school based approaches to being inclusive and emphasise the role of curriculum in both meeting and, for some writers (Gilbert, 2006; Leadbetter, 2008), effectively creating problems and even learning difficulties themselves (Ainscow et al., 2006). This perspective centres on the idea that children have had to adapt to meet the needs of the curriculum rather than the curriculum adapting to meet the diverse and varied needs of the individuals. Curricular approaches that modify school systems and practices and seek to prioritise the needs of the individual, including establishing and awareness of minority groups are championed by the personalisation movement. This is a movement that has been prevalent in schools since about 2006, with strong advocates such as John West Burnham (2003) supporting and developing processes, procedures and approaches for schools through work with the National College for school Leadership (NCSL). Personalisation was a cornerstone of the Labour government's drive for educational improvement during their second term (Pykett, 2009) and was taken up with fervour by many schools, strongly driven by bodies such as the

NCSL, taking a central position within many of their leadership development programmes for Headteachers and school leaders.

Pykett (2009) suggests, however, that the personalisation movement was itself the product of a whole range of contradictions, which were grounded within political and educational discourses which 'meant different things to different people at the same time' (p8) and failed to ensure any consistency and coherence in the response that resulted from schools. Consequently according to Pykett (2009) curriculum structures and ideological assertions were prioritised over individual actions and the micro-culture of teaching and learning which divorced the system from the individual rather than personalising it to their needs. Utilising curricular approaches to broach the difficulties of inclusion in school however manifests a wider issue and that is an approach that is predicated on altering something (the curriculum) that should be an outcome and not a driver. As such it is an approach that avoids grappling with the difficulties and contradictions implicit with the conflict between the psycho-medical model and sociological response. It is also an approach, not about social transformation but about change within an already contentious framework and therefore purely a pragmatic response similar to is in line with many of the approaches advocated by school effectiveness researchers (e.g. Muijs and Reynolds, 2005). This is the central limitation of this approach. Without the emphasis upon transformation inclusion loses its position as a critical discourse and decreases in relevance, as it ceases to distinguish itself from other models of school change and development. Therefore curriculum approaches, rather than helping deal with the difficulties of being inclusive set out strategies that avoid the critical issues relating to sustainable change and transformation in schools, often complicating rather than clarifying the issues that need to be addressed.

3.1.3.2 School improvement strategies

According to Clough and Corbett (2000) 'school improvement strategies' is a critique based in education and aimed specifically at the concept of Special Education. It emphasises the need to step outside of special education, review the systemic organisation of schools and seek to reform them within an

organisational framework that holds the pursuit of truly comprehensive schooling as its central aim (Florian, 1998; Clough and Nutbrown, 2005). Although this perspective focuses on transformation at one level, the focus is perhaps too narrow and is more about seeing schools in isolation as a structural problem to be fixed, rather than viewing inclusion within schools as part of the wider societal transformation. It is also an approach focused on a structural solution to education rather than an existential one and fails to address what Dyson (2009) perceives to be the too long avoided debate on defining the value of education in the first place and its role in building societal equity. Other theorists where approaches for 'school improvement strategies' are evident are in the work of Hargreaves (2012). This work is supported, promoted and validated by much of the work of the National College for teaching and leadership (previously the National college for School Leadership, NCSL), a body very influential within schools. Much of this work discusses and develops how schools and school leadership is and should be the most potent and effective way to generate school change and increase positive outcomes for children and young people (NCSL conference, 2013). To achieve this Hargreaves (2012) promotes professional action, through approaches such as Joint Professional Development (JPD), or the professional interaction of teachers supporting teachers through critical interaction and coaching. Approaches that advocate coaching and an increased professionalization of teaching have significant intrinsic appeal and hold a persuasive argument for more rigorous and reflective practice of teachers and teaching (Fullan, 2008). However what is always possible through such models, where dialogue is discretely based (such as that focused within school only contexts) and is not actively research engaged or philosophically grounded, is a cycle of self-validation and a recycling of ideas which promote inward looking practice. The work of Zimbardo (2004) highlights how groups, subgroups and discrete cultures can assert, promote and reinforce ideas which can be inappropriate or at worst dangerous. Another problem (as far as this project is concerned) is that, inclusion is not, in and of itself a central concern of this work. Hargreaves (2012) highlights the purpose of his work and the supporting work of the National College (2013) as the need to increase outcomes for children (often validated through end of key stage / school results – see standards agenda section – Chapter 2). This is an idea which, without grounding and a clearly understood basis from which to establish this

perspective (as advocated by Dyson, 2009), does little more than produce a cyclical argument which either leads to a self-validatory system (as described above) or validation on the basis of what Alexander (2007) sees as the narrow and in some cases arbitrary outcomes indicated by national testing. Therefore, again as a strategy, rather than supporting the difficulties of being inclusive seems to predicate itself more upon the transitory and often arbitrary notions of school effectiveness.

3.1.3.3 Disabilities studies critique

The disabilities studies critique is a perspective that is often taken from 'outside' education, and according to Clough and Corbett (2000) is a political response to the exclusionary effects of the psycho-medical model. It is very much part of the sociological discourse and complements and interlinks with much of what was discussed in the 'sociological response', section 3.1.2. It is an approach which although is not explicitly focused on inclusion, it is according to Clough and Corbett (2000) an approach used to interpret inclusion. Proponents of this model argue there is overt discrimination against disabled people in society and that much of the approach and view of disability is shaped by society, through the attitudes, structures and environments (e.g. Oliver, 1996; Shakespeare, 1999, 2006; Barnes and Mercer, 2002). Oliver and Barnes (1996) criticise the notion of disability as highlighting the abnormal and building a discourse of sympathy or tragedy, which they argue must be avoided at all costs. Swain and French (2008) similarly note through society's implicit corroboration of these notions and the belief in disability as defining otherness that disabled people are effectively silenced and excluded from the common discourse. The critique established through this model is essentially about the need for a change from seeing disability as a problem, to seeing it as a social construction. As with the sociological response it has powerful value as a critical discourse, in its capacity to help identify the long held discriminatory views (both implicit and explicit) within society. However due to the similarities of the stance taken with the social model (as already discussed), many of its limitations are intimately linked with the critique of the social model made above. These problems are compounded by the contradictions implicit in the critique that seeks to ensure validation through better integration, acceptance and empowerment whilst simultaneously highlighting the explicit difference of

disability. Attempts at refining or redirecting the social model and its relationship to disability have been made. A key contributor in this has been Shakespeare (2006) who criticises the social model for its overly weighted focus on the social environment which he feels fails to take into account the importance of the individual experience of disability and also presents an overly simplistic dichotomy in its relationship to the psycho-medical model, which he believes is often too crude to describe the diversity of need and circumstance within the disabled population. Swain and French (2008) have developed an 'affirmation model' which seeks to affirm and validate the experiences of disabled people in their own right while Shildrick (2002) seeks to reposition disability, away from something in and of itself to being just another condition of who we are. However although such attempts seem more nuanced and self-aware they still reside heavily within the social-epistemological realm and still suffer from the difficulties described by Oliver (1999) as the failure of the social model of disability to work in a way that can be used by academics effectively or actively enough to impact on the wider perception of disability or seek a political direction from which change and action can take place.

3.1.4 Where next?

A difficulty consistently evident throughout each of the perspectives discussed when responding to inclusion is how to engage with a concept that seeks transformation but in order to enable this must be transformative in its own conception in order to remain relevant. Theorists such as Barton (1998) highlight that inclusion is a process about building a dialogue that should be seen in the wider social context in order that it is, collaborative and transformational.

> Inclusion is a process. Inclusive education is not merely about providing access to mainstream school for pupils who have previously been excluded. It is not about closing down an unacceptable system of segregated provision and dumping those pupils in an unchanged mainstream system. Existing school systems – in terms of physical factors, curriculum aspects, teaching expectations and styles, leadership roles – will have to change. This is because inclusive education is about the participation of all children and young people and the removal of all forms of exclusionary practice (Barton, 1998, p. 85).

There have been collaborations of ideas and perspectives that focus on empowering and developing from within the system such as Collaboration for Effectiveness: Empowering schools to be inclusive (Evan, Dyson and Wedell, 1998) and the Index for inclusion (Booth et al. 1999, 2011). However, again by limiting perspectives to the confines of schools these limit the scope and potential of the perspective in the first place. Such approaches as those already discussed fail to embrace the existential essence of the inclusion project which should embrace the wider debate of educational value and equity (highlighted by Dyson, 2009) and the existential necessities of meaning, purpose, responsibility and freedom (Sartre, 1943) which are so often missing from action, policy and practice in inclusion.

Later in this chapter I discuss emerging and alternate views to inclusion which begin to address some of the problems raised in the discussion so far and provide new directions for the investigation in this study. For the sake of comparison with what has already been discussed and for reference later in this review, I will term these emergent and alternate views the practical-philosophical approaches. These are not approaches identified in the work of Clough and Corbett (2000) and perhaps do not have the conventional status of the ideas already referenced. The practical-philosophical approaches are also not single or directed perspectives but those that seek to reconceptualise the understanding of inclusion and inclusive ideals in a way that is philosophically coherent and engages with ideas of uniqueness (Biesta, 2012), action (Allan, 2011, Biesta and Robinson, 2011) and existence in a way that is meaningful and pertinent to practice and seeks to empower those who engage with them.

3.1.4.1 Further difficulties

Inclusion is a politically sensitive term and the way it is enacted can often be a response to political agenda and ideology rather than theoretically coherent action. Therefore political affiliations or ideological leanings can promote further difficulties when dealing with inclusion. Shakespeare (2006) contends that radical movements, particularly within disability rights traditions, hold

onto narrow assumptions and views established within unrevised and often left wing perspectives. However to take a traditionally right wing perspective, which often derives from deficit thinking, preferencing the pragmatics of the special school agenda and the divisive practice of selective schooling (e.g. Grammar schools), is equally unhelpful. In viewing the inclusion debate it is important to be acutely aware of the ease with which the debate can sustain itself on traditional lines and often function as little more than a commentary of shifting sands in an ideological landscape. This is seen within the traditional conflict identified between the psycho-medical model and the sociological model. In order to unpick the characteristics and assumptions implicit within these conflicting views an alternate perspective which acknowledges such concerns as a function of the realities we inhabit and uses this understanding to enhance our capacity to be inclusive rather than seeking to apologise, account or distance ourselves from it is necessary.

3.1.4.2 Existentialism and Inclusion

Within this study I take on an existential approach grounded in the ideas of Sartre (1943) and Camus (1955) which is situated at the level of action. I use it to investigate whether it may become a tool for better inclusive understanding and action. It is an approach which is opposed to the most problematic difficulties of the psycho-medical model such as labelling and defining of individuals on the basis of a characteristic, need or perception of them as described above. Such a practice is, according to Sartre (1943), the treatment of being as thing or object – limited, knowable and definable. Sartre's (1943) existentialism acknowledges the personal freedom and capacity of individuals to act and define themselves through their actions, opposing responses that seek to define individuals as part of an external process, thus limiting what they are or what they could be. This concern can be identified throughout Sartre's work, such as within Sartre's play 'No Exit' (1944) in which the character Joseph Garcin makes the famous statement 'Hell is other people' in reference to the debilitating limitation that can be created by the way others seek to define individuals and thus seek to make limitations on their being by what they believe them to be. To act towards others in this way is an example of what Sartre (1943) would define as a belief in 'essence preceding existence'

- much like seeking to describe a human as object, rather than the fundamental existential belief described by Sartre (1943) where humans are born into an inescapable circumstance, whether they realise or seek to accept this or not, where 'existence precedes essence.' This perspective asserts that each individual is fundamentally free to choose and the authenticity of their existence is based on the degree to which they accept this and the corresponding responsibilities that it assumes.

The existential model is one predicated on authentic action and as such contrasts with both the social model and the psycho-medical model. It contrasts with the sociological model, due to the nature of its design. The sociological model has difficulty acting as a vehicle for change as it has a tendency to assert complexity through understanding. This contrasts markedly with the simplicity that Snowden (2003 and 2005) suggests is needed for action which is often more evident within the psycho-medical stance. Although any critique of the psycho-medical model made through an existential perspective may have similarities with the sociological response, the existential view differentiates itself as it is less about the critique of approaches and perspectives and more about the formulation of a philosophical system through which change and action is and can be taken. The existential view offers an alternative approach, less about acknowledging the need for empowerment, rather, enabling a system through which empowerment can occur. It is also less about suggesting alternate actions and approaches that can be taken than the belief in the responsibility of individuals and groups to act in 'good faith' in order to establish change and build authenticity for both individual and collective action. Sartre's existential perspective, therefore, establishes a view that is implicitly complementary to being inclusive, through its emphasis on individual responsibility and moral action. However, where it is different from a sociological perspective is that it not only affirms the need to act in a way that takes this into account but asserts a necessity to do so as a function of the belief system it asserts.

Additionally, the existential view provides an approach which asserts genuine choice, built upon a philosophic rather than pragmatic grounding (Sartre, 1943; Camus, 1955). The work of Sartre (1943) and Camus (1955) is

underpinned by the explicit notion of revolt and overtly challenging the status quo. Therefore the existential perspective as a vehicle for analysis within this project highlights the necessity of relentlessly revised, critical and reflective dialogue to solve complex questions, where the questions challenge the assumed norms and values in order to look at fundamental questions. Existential methods and approaches in education are fundamentally about investigating the values and the purposes (Sartre, 1943) of education and seeking authentic action. This would therefore include investigating and questioning the cultures and norms (Camus, 1955) of the educators and the implicit absurdity in actions and practice in order to promote discourses and processes which seek greater coherence, purpose and possibility (Camus, 1955).

As all the perspectives surrounding inclusion highlight the need to consider the situations, communities and groups through which inclusion is enacted, enabled or evident the next section unpicks some of the central ideas surrounding communities and groups to evaluate how the understandings elicited here provide an effective context for the question within the study.

3.2 Communities and cultures – the wider social responses to inclusion

Within this section I turn to the wider social responses and contentions surrounding inclusion in society. In so doing I highlight some of the theories and ideas that have found prevalence within social research in recent years and have relevance to the ideas and discussion already developed within this study so far. Through looking at these ideas I discuss their possible impact and application when undertaking the research question in this project and establish how they link to actions and outcomes for society and communities. I situate the question 'Why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?' within the wider social context to enable parallels to be drawn with the school context.

In the previous section I identified a number of areas that posed significant problems for actions and outcomes in relation to social inclusion. These included the different perspectives utilised to understand and interpret inclusion, the perceived problems associated with inclusion and necessary actions in order to address them. This section and the discussion presented should also be seen in the context of what was discussed in Chapter 2 and the actions, interventions and approaches applied through policy directed initiatives such as the Social Inclusion Action Plans. Such approaches had a number of intrinsic flaws from the outset and as such are regarded by Senge (1989) among others as poorly directed and failing to identify the areas where high leverage for change could be exerted. This section examines alternative concepts, seeking out possibilities where the areas of high leverage actions may lie (Senge, 1989) and as a result effect change (or understand how to effect change) and support the process of inclusion more successfully. By reviewing avenues for theoretically effective inclusive practice it is possible to enable a more rigorous view as to why it is difficult to be inclusive in order to move beyond what is noted by Clough and Nutbrown (2005, p101) 'although inclusive ideologies are discussed, exclusive practices continue.'

3.2.1 Social Capital

Social capital is a term that has been used by many researchers in many different ways to describe the 'tangible substances (that) count for most of the daily lives of people' (Hanifan, 1916, p130, quoted in Putnam, 2000, p19) although the three main theorists upon which most of this work is based, whether in education or beyond, are Bordieu (1979; 1983), Coleman (1988; 1990; 1994) and more latterly Putnum (1993; 1995; 2000). The importance of reviewing social capital within this section is highlighted by McGonigal et al. (2007, p86) when they note that: 'social capital exists as a resource to action, emerging in engagement.' As such it is an important concept to consider when seeking to enact social change or more specifically seeking to be inclusive.

Bourdieu (1977), Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1996), agree that social capital is something that has an important and often significant function in the

deployment, pursuit or achievement of desired goals and ends, although they are less coherent in a consistent belief towards how this 'capital' may be accumulated, exchanged or utilised. This divergence can, perhaps be accounted for by the way in which they each utilise social capital: 'Bourdieu was interested in theorising a general economy of capitals... concerned with how the social relations of groups and classes are reproduced' (McGonigal et al., 2007, p81), Coleman used social capital to help explain different and divergent educational outcomes (Fine, 2001), whereas Putnam used social capital to discuss and explain civic engagement and behaviour in American society (Putnam, 2000). However, in much of this work, social capital rather than being a tool for change, is a concept for understanding and sense making that is often a descriptive for the behaviours and interactions that are evident rather than a model that enables change upon them. This is highlighted in the review of work from these key theorist by McGonigal et al. (2007) who outlines the main three areas of similarity in the use of the concept of social capital as: something that is located in the 'socialness' and belonging that 'exists within the relational bonds of human society' (p79), the belief that 'relational behaviours have emotional consequences' (p80) and the 'symbolism of capital as an economic metaphor' (p81). It is perhaps this last similarity that has enabled it to both gather significant interest and support by a wide range of researchers but also the thing that makes it problematic, in terms of its deployment as a tool for inclusion. The idea of capital, in itself, is linked to the notions of making, gaining or building, which is something that is intrinsically appealing both in its simplicity and applicability to a whole range of academic and policy fields - a quality highlighted by Snowden (2005) as essential for knowledge management and the application of ideas in practice. However the external simplicity and appeal of the term is somewhat negated by the descriptive rather than active qualities it assumes. This is exemplified in the analyses by Nie, Junn and Barry (1996) and Helliwell and Putnam (1999), who discuss and highlight the value of social capital in terms of its power for correlation and prediction rather than action and engagement.

Therefore when evaluating the use and value of social capital in the context of this thesis I have sought to identify whether it has the capacity to identify the interrelationship between schools and the wider social context and education

and whether it is useful to support, enactment and action in relation to inclusion. In order to do this I have chosen to focus upon the ideas of Putnam (2000), who straddles a position that seeks somewhat of a synthesis of the main theorists, integrating and engaging with a social and political response in the use and interpretation of the concept of social capital which he has built up through an extensive analysis of data, situations and contexts. He also more overtly recognises the contingency of the term and has greater pertinence to this study as a result of the specific work he has done on civic engagement, involvement and action.

Central to Putnam's (2000) use of the term social capital is an understanding of the term community:

> Community' means different things to different people ... Each of us derives some sense of belonging from among the various communities to which we might in principle belong. For most of us, our deepest sense of belonging is to our most intimate social networks especially family and friends. Beyond that perimeter lie work, church, neighbourhood, civic life and the assortment of other 'weak ties' that constitute our personal stock of social capital. (Putnam, 2000, pp.273-4)

To Putnam community essentially means those groups with which we identify ourselves and to which we derive some sense of belonging. This as a general definition holds with the majority of research into what community means (Etzioni, 1993; Bourdieu, 1983; Coleman, 1988), however as a result it highlights how the notion of community could act as either a tool for inclusion or avenue for exclusion. This is because although it is possible to use the notion of community and belonging to help identify the factors which promote cohesion and understanding at the local, national and even international level it is equally possible to acknowledge how communities can be 'intimate social networks' (Putnam, 2000, p.273) and can be implicitly exclusive and insular.

Putnam (2000) suggests that positive and socially enhancing communities exhibit two core elements to bring about genuine social capital, these are bonding and bridging capital. To Putnam, bonding capital is the strong bonds which exist between individuals and groups of individuals which make up our

most intimate social networks and upon which rests our deepest sense of belonging. Bridging social capital can be seen as the weak ties which link one group, sub-community or community to another and in so doing provide capacity for the group and generate an outward facing perspective. Putnam suggests without both forms of capital, insular, inward looking groups or isolated associations can form which often generate negative social capital. Zimbardo (2007) identified how group dynamics can manifest extreme and negative behaviours when not diluted by external influence, regulation or reflection. Such an interpretation suggests the opportunity of communities to support notions such as inclusion, but it is equally persuasive in highlighting the damage that could affect the inclusive process. Therefore it does not provide a stable or staunch advocacy for promoting communities to support inclusion.

According to Putnam it is through this network of strong and weak ties that capacity, interconnectivity and social understanding is built that is in turn correlated with greater civic engagement, community action and even parental engagement in school. Such a view is also evident in the argument of Bourdieu (1983) and Fukyama (1999) - that 'trust and reciprocity' is needed for strengthening effective social and civic life. This in turn is supported by Bryk and Schneider (2003) who see relational trust as the central issue. However what is again not clear with the concept of social capital is to what degree it is something that results in the positive associations or whether it is just a measure of these associations in the first place. This is made apparent in the difficulty there is in measuring, observing and using it as a discrete tool (Croll, 2004). Therefore, in and of itself, social capital is problematic as a direct tool for action on inclusion (or a tool for being inclusive) as it ends up being often a description of a set of capacities that enable better communities rather than something specific itself. These limitations can be recognised looking specifically at schools and the work of Schuller, Baron and Field (2000) who highlight five ways through which social capital theory could support the development of socially rich networks in schools, which is utilised by McGonigal et al. (2007) in their work on changing school contexts. The first of these ways is through the shift in the focus of analysis from the individual to the characteristics of the community within which they reside. McGonigal et al.

(2007) suggest that this enables greater recognition of the patterns, behaviours and circumstances which arise in order to develop a dialogue that is more aware. However this could be viewed alternatively as a relegation of the needs of the individual towards a more predictive and compliance orientated view of social circumstances. The second suggestion is that using social capital enables better understanding of the links between the levels of analysis and the interrelationship between the groups that reside within them in order to acknowledge the trust and reciprocity that is fundamental to the establishment of positive and effective relationships (Fukyama, 1999). However although the recognition of trust and reciprocity are important acknowledgments they are not terms exclusive to social capital and their value in terms of inclusion is likely to reside more within the way they are interpreted and used rather than just through their recognition. The third suggestion is that it could promote multi and inter-disciplinary working within school such as between departments or year groups. The fourth is through using the idea as a reassertion of a values discourse supported by the concepts of relational trust and reciprocity and the final suggestion is in social capital's value as a tool for the exploration of complex and multi-dimensional issues. These suggestions, although in five elements, seem to be essentially about the establishment of a more engaged dialogue and understanding of the interactions and interrelationship implicit within communities and the need to acknowledge the importance of reciprocity and trust. Although such views have undoubted value and possibility, they are limited in their innate contingency (Sartre, 1943) and could easily be dismissed as a view that just seeks to reaffirm an already well considered belief that trust and positive relationships are important in schools. They are also predicated on the implicit assumption that community and community associations measured through evaluating social capital are desirable and functional models through which to initiate or achieve better outcomes and do not question the basis upon which they are asserted.

Social capital theory raises awareness that effective engagement and interaction must be multi-levelled and that positive interaction is inter-relational, including the two fundamental issues of trust and reciprocity (Putnam, 2000). What therefore could be inferred through this perspective is

that a multi-levelled approach to engagement with inclusion is essential for effective action. This is because action at the wider level only promotes weak bonds and lacks effective leverage for change(an idea identified by Senge, 1989) and action only at the level of engagement although promoting strong bonds for effective engagement and action can be distorted through the lack of perspective and conception of place in the wider social story.

From an existential perspective (taking ideas from Sartre, 1946/ 1943), social capital is limited not by the realisation of power and capacity that it identifies within the social arena but through its recognition of the importance of the group over the individual, its innate contingency and in failing to identify a moral or values imperative under which action should be undertaken or initiated. As inclusion is based on a set of principles and values it must be predicated upon moral, ethical or existential drivers for action otherwise inclusion as a concept would fail in terms of its relevance and purpose in the first place, due to the innate contingency supposed by it. Consequently, by looking at inclusion through the lens of social capital one is awakened to the possibility and capacity of social collaboration to manifest change, yet limited to an economic validation for purpose and effect, not one predicated on moral, ethical or existential drivers. Therefore a difficulty of being inclusive, using this approach, from an existential perspective, is that the model of social capital promotes an inauthentic stance from which to act. This is because, for the existentialist, action should be underpinned by purpose and it should be through the realisation and recognition of individual freedom and drive for the authentic that both purpose and action should be ensured rather than utilising a stance that subsumes the individual within the patterns, predictions and correlations of group and economic validity. Without such purpose the question needs to be addressed as to how it is presumed possible to effectively initiate action and sustain intervention and action for change at the same time? Although he does not directly answer this exact question, Gladwell (2000) highlights the importance of effective and influential individuals within and across groups to share, develop and connect ideas and groups in order that they can be sustained and flourish. In so doing he reflects upon not only the capacity of groups but the potential of individuals in undertaking, developing and sustaining change.

This section has highlighted the necessity of considering the group dynamics and how ideas, actions and capacities have huge potentials within the bonding and bridging of relationships but also how that can be chance, circumstance, situation or even the active participation of the individuals within the groups themselves. Therefore ideas such as inclusion, if left to manifest themselves through the dynamics of social capital, are likely to be limited by chance and circumstance also. This is a key issue that needs to be addressed if clear direction and active development of inclusion in schools is to be established and sustained.

3.2.2 Communities of practice

Wenger's (1998) concept of 'Communities of Practice' is very much engaged with enactment and action and often the mechanics behind the process of learning and understanding what learning is within communities. It is for this reason it is likely to be a concept worth considering when discussing inclusion in communities in terms of the way it is understood and enacted. This concept, potentially, also provides a complementary idea to the existential perspective taken within this project due to its overt emphasis on action and change. Wenger (2009) suggests that human knowing is fundamentally a social act and as such benefits from the positive association and interaction between individuals in the achievement of a common purpose. Theoretically the values underpinning his work are similar to that of Bauman (discussed later), but he takes a different focus from which to build understanding and perspective from which to generate knowledge in communities. In Wenger's view, meanings arise from two complementary processes, ''participation'' and ''reification''. He notes:

> Practices evolve as shared histories of learning. History in this sense is neither merely a personal or collective experience, nor just a set of enduring artefacts and institutions but a combination of participation and reification over time (Wenger, 2009, p. 87).

According to Ainscow (2005, p113):

> In this (Wenger's) formulation, participation is seen as the shared experiences and negotiations that result from social interaction within a purposive community. Participation is thus inherently local, since shared experiences and negotiation processes will differ from one setting to the next, regardless of their interconnections... reification is the process by which communities of practice produce concrete representations of their practices, such as tools, symbols, rules and documents (and even concepts and theories).

This concept of Wenger's for engaging in social change is at the opposite end of the spectrum, when compared to the approach engaged with in the practices of the social inclusion plans (discussed in Chapter 2). This is a type of sociological (as opposed to psycho-medical) response that is about the participation of individuals and groups who interact and through action and dialogue work together to build a shared vocabulary and agreed approach to make a change at the level of the difficulty. Such an approach is theorised by pragmatist philosophers, such as Rorty (1999), who note that it is through dialogue, interchange and solidarity that social hope and change can be achieved. Wenger (1998) notes that:

> Communities of practice are not intrinsically beneficial or harmful…. Yet they are a force to be reckoned with, for better or for worse. As a locus of engagement in action, interpersonal relationships, shared knowledge, and negotiation of enterprises, such communities hold the key to real transformation – the kind that has real effect on people's lives… The influence of other forces (e.g., the control of an institution or the authority of an individual) are no less important, but… they are mediated by the communities in which their meanings are negotiated in practice (p. 85).

As this concept is about 'real transformation' it is something that seems intrinsically to support the idea and process of being inclusive identified within this project. It is about the potential power of 'local' action to effect change on people's lives and community circumstance, something which the social inclusion action plans failed to do in a coherent and pertinent way. Something which Wenger implicitly acknowledges, which must be a consideration in any action for change, is the identification of the coherent theoretical basis upon which the action and engagement take place. In other words, if inclusion is the desired outcome then the participation and reification should have as their

central dialogue the theoretical ideals of inclusion otherwise there is the potential for the direction of action to be focused upon associated but not defining principles. This may in turn limit impact or effect change in a way that exacerbates the problem or concern for which the action is directed. Wenger's focus on communities at the level of interaction shows how he is essentially identifying characteristics for the establishment of what Putnam (2000) terms bonding capital and within his definition does not necessarily identify the need for bridging capital for communities of practice to be established. As such communities of practice could quite easily be something which establishes exclusive groupings or incoherent actions with their own defined ideals.

Ainscow (2005, p114) notes, in relation to the use of 'communities of practice' that:

> I am not suggesting that communities of practice are in themselves a panacea for the development of inclusive practices. Rather, the concept helps us to attend to and make sense of the significance of social process of learning as powerful mediators of meaning.

However, although there are concerns in the use of communities of practice as approaches to engage with inclusion in action, Wenger provides an effective tool through which to understand how deep engaged learning can occur which can lead to individual, community and social change. Throughout his work, Wenger does not specify the mechanism through which engagement can or should begin or what the impetus is. These elements, are perhaps the additions that can be brought by the theoretical stance of the existential philosophers and writers who are explicit in the belief that action and the responsibility to act is not only a must but something that is implicit in being human if we are to live in a way that seeks to be authentic (Sartre, 1943, 1946).

3.2.3 Bauman and human liberation

When looking at ideas surrounding communities and inclusion, the work of Bauman has both significant relevance and influence not only in the field of inclusion but in the wider discussions of society and communities as a whole. He also develops a perspective, which like the works of Sartre (1943) and Camus (1955), utilised within this thesis, advocates challenging the status quo through action and engagement of individuals in order to seek change and make society better. Therefore when discussing the difficulties of being inclusive in schools, his work is both relevant to the context surrounding the inclusion debate and the wider existential ideas of human liberation and engagement with life.

Bauman takes a sociological perspective when examining the idea of human liberation, in so doing he argues that we need to work to 'gain control over conditions under which we struggle with the challenges of life' (Bauman, 2001, p149). He suggests that people are responsible for relating to each other in an ethical way, something which can be identified in the beliefs of many inclusion theorists. He argues that we are in a state of 'liquid modernity' (Bauman, 2000) - a place where identity is constantly fluid, resulting in unprecedented anxiety and insecurity for the individuals within it. As a result, Freud's thesis (a position he previously supported) about the social world being one where individuals trade their freedom for security, he argues, has now become inverted where we are now in a position where individuals have traded their security for freedom. Bauman (2000) maintains that individuals are, within the present day society, faced with unprecedented responsibilities for the conduct of their own lives and for their political participation. It is this concept of freedom (and specifically liberal individualism) which Bauman identifies as both important and dangerous to a current interpretation of the world. However, for Bauman (2000), (maintaining the sociological position) it is communities which allow us to support and approach goals of liberation, support us in taking responsibility and it is the wider social conventions that obstruct the possibility of human liberation. Bauman perceives the capacity of human solidarity, underpinned by a moral imperative as the key for social change.

It is through the work of Bauman that it is possible to identify clear links between the ideas already discussed and other prominent philosophical theorists such as Rorty (1999), who views individual and collective solidarity as the key driver for change, and Blackburn (2001), who examines a notion of perpetual collective struggle and challenge in the prospect of achieving something better for social change. Consistent across all these theorists is the possibility of meaningful change and more specifically, among theorists like Bauman, Putnam and Wenger, the view that collective action can be achieved through the vehicle of communities and their capacity to support individuals and groups of individuals in the achievement of a common purpose. Bauman (2000) is a strong proponent of the need for change and he bases this stance on the foundation of a moral choice and decision, with many of his ideas seeking to get to grips with how individualistic societies can find a common cause and how the public realm can be renewed and sustained. Many of the aims upon which these ideas are formulated are highly reminiscent of the writings of Sartre and the existentialist movement but are framed within a more socially pragmatic approach asking the question 'what are we going to do about it', where Bauman establishes himself in a position of opposition and mistrust. This is seen most clearly through his view that the position of 'liquidity' has been thrust upon people due to the changes of society and the meteoric rise of individualism. The existentialist position in contrast would assert that the anxiety Bauman perceives to have been thrust upon individuals due to the rise of the individual, changes in society and the problem of freedom to have always been there, it is only a lack of realisation and inauthentic living that asserted the previously assumed security. The value of the existential position in comparison to that highlighted by Bauman is the philosophical position it develops. The position established by Sartre (1943) and Camus (1955) embraces the guilt and angst that can result in a response to an existential realisation and as a result use the current position (what Bauman calls the 'liquid modernity') as the vehicle for action, rather than a limitation to action. Whereas Bauman takes a more traditionally socialist perspective suggesting a significant cause of the angst and guilt in society is as a result of liberal capitalism and it is moral action developed and maintained through the power of the collective that is essential to combat the emerging and sustaining social problems, specifically exclusion from society. When

taking an existentialist perspective, however, action starts with the individual and the notion of community in-itself is at best a diversion and at worst a barrier to transformational change. This is a distinction and key idea that will be recognised in the further development of this thesis and the analysis within the findings chapters.

3.2.4 Communities and cultures moving forward

The contrasting views discussed above, although can seem to be about linguistic or conceptual differences for the identification of the same problems and goals, with ultimately similar solutions are actually systems of thought that present both possibility and difficulty for inclusion and fundamentally different directions for action. The possibility created by the ideas of Wenger (1998), Putnam (2000) and Bauman (2000) is presented by the categorical identification of the power and capacity of collective social engagement and action to make meaningful change, which must be both locally engaged and widely associated (Putnam, 2000). So as far as inclusion is concerned these theories highlight the need to engage communities actively and meaningfully in the inclusion project if it is to succeed, but to do so in the context of the wider social and political perspectives. However an implicit difficulty that is not resolved through these models is the moral or ethical stance or set of tools upon which to build capacity and engage the passion necessary for sustaining belief, challenge or action (evident in the work of Wenger, 1998), particularly in the face of engrained and often poorly founded beliefs (highlighted by Bauman, 2000). It is alternatively however within the ideas of the existentialists that I believe such difficulties can be met. Although through engaging with existentialist assertions it is necessary to question some of the assertions made through the ideas discussed in the works of Bauman, Wenger and Putnam. Examples of these are how to make sense of the uneasy dynamic between individual and community highlighted by Bauman, how to empower and acknowledge the individual position within active engagement with inclusion, how to stimulate in others the need to engage and be active and how to enable the level of transformational sustainable change that the inclusion project necessitates. It is within a renewed existentialism and the stories that unfold through its engagement that we may find answers to these problems

and an alternative rationale and possibility for the direction of the inclusion project.

3.3 Inclusion in schools

In this section I focus on inclusion in schools and the classroom and how the term inclusion has influenced the development of systems, structures, curricula and pedagogies. I seek to address the conflict of understanding and action that occurs in schools in relation to how inclusion is defined and measured. I specifically examine why the deficit model is still influential, particularly in relation to what was discussed in Chapter 2 and examine which models and approaches are best placed to help us analyse inclusion in the present educational climate.

Armstrong (2005) notes how competing perspectives and positions are often apparent in the educational context and that: 'the practical implementation and even the value of an inclusive approach will inevitably be polarised contentious and chaotic' (p135). Such a perspective is supported by Allan (2008, p5), who states that 'the inclusion problem is hugely complex, contentious and potentially overwhelming'. To investigate these assertions from the perspective of this project, it is necessary to examine the different assumptions underpinned by the competing perspectives, and the degree to which they are polarised. These issues are reviewed in relation to the difficulties of whether inclusion in schools is a reachable goal.

In examining the approaches to viewing inclusion that were outlined in section 3.1 there are four that are particularly prevalent within schools today: the psycho-medical model, the sociological response, curricular approaches and school improvement strategies model, though they may present at times as hybrids or syntheses of each other. However as a result of what was discussed in section 3.1 I focus on the psycho-medical and sociological response in addition to two additional approaches, which have significant relevance in the

approach taken by this project. The first is a practical-philosophical response, underpinned by the work of Allan (1999 and 2008), which although grounded within the culture of the social model, seems to add a new dimension to seeking and understanding inclusion. The second is the response of teacher agency, which spans a whole range of potentially theoretically contrasting work from Priestly, Biesta and Robinson (2011) which is more philosophically based, to Hargreaves (2012), which is more directly related to the ideas identified within the school improvement strategies model suggested by Clough and Corbett (2000). I review some of the main competing ideas and contentions produced by these perspectives in order to identify the difficulties of defining and achieving inclusion as well as highlighting the potential value that this project may offer to understanding inclusion in schools.

3.3.1 The Psycho-medical model

The psycho-medical or deficit model, described earlier, undoubtedly benefits from a default paradigm of belief and understanding which is culturally biased to support the assertions and implications that are applied through it (discussed in chapter 2). This is because culturally the positivist paradigm is central to the way humans understand the world or are taught to understand it and is based on certainty, evidence and objectivity and has become part of how we are led to view and legitimise things in our everyday life. Although in the specific areas of science and medicine this method of discovery and investigation has clear relevance and purpose for addressing the questions being asked, socially based activities or understandings can often be overly simplified or rationalised by correlations and statistical indications (as discussed in chapter 2). This is not to say that such practices have no place in education but rather that if understanding of action or complexity is sought psycho-medical reductionism is not necessarily the best way to gain a full understanding of the key issues (discussed further in chapter 4). This positivistic prioritisation of a social condition is no more evident than in education where the highest profile public perceptions of schools are based on numbers and statistics. This is demonstrated by the importance to schools (and how they are perceived) and political leadership of performance results at the end of various educational stages in schools. These are found in SATs

(Statutory Assessment Tests, taken by all eleven year olds across the country each May), GCSEs (national tests taken by all 16 year olds) or A-levels (national tests taken by most 18 year olds wishing to move on to University). The outcomes of which can be found in league tables and other types of government statistical reports focussing on education, which seek to reduce the complexity of the educational process to simple attainment grades, often regardless of how they are achieved. Judgements on schools are also increasingly simplified (e.g. Ofsted framework, 2012, 2013), which amounts to values provided by Ofsted, within 4 key areas, based on a classification identified as a number from 1-4. All these approaches enable an educational diagnosis which seeks to ensure a simplification of issues which promote a view of certainty in the rights and wrongs of the educational process. This promotes a view of education which moves away from the existential questioning and redefinition of what we are seeking to achieve and instead seeks greater efficiency and reinforcement in the achievement of accepted norms and values. This is the essence, power and the danger of the deficit model. By establishing clarity and purpose this provides an engagement that contrasts markedly with approaches such as the sociological response which is fundamentally not about defining and categorising but rather about embracing complexity and ultimately opposing the stance taken by the deficit / psycho-medical model (Barton, 1988). Tabberer (2003) discusses how, in order to make sense and develop understanding from complexity and disorder, it is essential take account of the complexity and flow of knowledge. According to Snowden (2005, p.2): '... sense making is a means to achieve a requisite level of diversity in both the ways we interpret the world and the way we act upon it.' However it is not just the public perception of education, but the systems and structures within school which perpetuate this default, deficit position where the performance of children and teachers is measured and quantified, ranked, rated and evaluated. Over the last decade the amount of quantitative data on, in and used by schools has grown exponentially. Although this is not necessarily a bad thing (as data and information can be hugely enabling and informative) the danger that is produced by this change is how or what the data is used for. Such a concern may be the degree to which reductions and teend analyses act as a barrier to action and recognition of needs when seeking to be inclusive rather than enabling inclusion, the implications on the

systems within schools in terms of that use and the degree to which data and its evaluations dominate the discourses within and beyond the school gates due to their perceived clarity for taking action. This analysis should be seen in the contest of the discussion made in Chapter 2 surrounding the social inclusion action plans and the standards agenda.

3.3.2 The sociological response

In light of what has already been discussed and the limitations highlighted within the psychomedical model, I briefly review and collate the limitations which are implicit in the sociological model, for developing an effective response to inclusion, particularly in relation to change and action. As outlined in the first section of this chapter, according to Clough and Corbett (2000) the sociological response broadly represents the critique of the psycho-medical legacy and draws attention to a social construction of special educational needs. In many ways the broad notion behind the traditional sociological response underpins the key values upon which the curricular approaches, school improvement strategies and the disabilities studies critique models are based. Barton (1998) suggests that all these models can be broadly situated in the sociological discourse. This is the view that many of the problems and perceived difficulties are a function of the developed, reinforced or unquestioned social constructions which surround everyone (Barton, 1998). This can include the discourse, dialogue and vocabulary that is prevalent in schools (Mittler, 1998), the implications and assumptions established through curricular models (Ainscow et al., 2006) or schooling structures (Clough and Nutbrown, 2005) or even limiting assumptions made about individuals and groups which get accepted or reinforced (e.g. Oliver, 1998).

This more general response has many positives for interpreting and analysing inclusion in education, particularly in relation to the problems identified within the pycho-medical model, these include: acknowledging the complexity and inter-relation aspects of social systems and the interactions that occur within them (Huberman 1993; Little and McLaughlin 1993), identifying overtly how social systems are constructed and the implicit subjectivity of social interaction

and response (Clough and Corbett, 2000) and identifying inclusion and social change as a shared enterprise which is about building participation and combating discrimination (Booth and Ainscow, 2011). However a key concern with the approach identified in the previous section is that because it identifies complexity, values of equality and depth of understanding as key components from which to understand social themes like inclusion it can lose the capacity, as a model, to ensure sense making (Snowden, 2005) and knowledge flow (Tabberer, 2003) in a way that is useful to teachers, educators and even policy makers as it almost seeks to do too much without a clear vehicle to enable educators to take the journey. An example of the way this has sought to be addressed is through the Index for Inclusion (Booth and Ainscow, 2011, p6):

> This book contains many words. But these words have little meaning if they are not linked to reflection and action. We hope you use the materials to put inclusive values into action; increase participation of everyone in teaching, learning and relationships; link education to the development of communities and environments, locally and globally.
>
> Inclusion is a shared enterprise. We see the promotion of learning and participation and the combating of discrimination as never ending tasks. They involve us all in reflecting on and reducing the barriers we and others have created and continue to create.

From the outset, the Index for Inclusion (Booth and Ainscow, 2011) highlights the need for action and reflection within the education setting for the ideas on inclusion to be successful. It outlines an extensive approach to the coordination and integration of the core values and many of the centrally linked themes which support and underpin the sociological approach to inclusion and is fundamentally about working with schools in a participatory and systemic way for putting inclusive values into action. However, because of the extent of information and ideas, and the way it seeks to promote an interaction between dialogue and action, it is very easy to lose sight of the core aims. The discrete but interacting themes seem more about a handbook on 'how to be inclusive', which relegates the concept of inclusion to a transactional process and therefore loses much of the transformational potential of the concept of inclusion. Consequently, it is another example that fails in the 'sense making' and 'knowledge flow' of socially inclusive ideas in a

way that will challenge schools to elevate the inclusive discourse beyond the prevalent discourse in schools, which is fuelled by accountability, standards and inspection agendas (see chapter 2).

The Index for Inclusion exemplifies a clear difficulty in employing a sociological model to actively engage with inclusion generally and specifically in schools and this stems from what the sociological position is. According to the British Sociological Association (2012), sociology seeks to 'understand how society works,' and by its very nature embraces complexity and unpicks the detail of social interaction. As a result what it does not do is engage with the transformation of a system as the ideas are fundamentally maintained by and a product of the system. This effectively negates the radical possibilities brought about by engagement with the ethical, ontological and existential which seem essential if we are to engage with a renewed inclusion - a concept which is rooted in our values and how we engage with them. Booth and Ainscow (2011, p21) make this point:

> Inclusion is most importantly seen as putting inclusive values into action. It is a commitment to particular values which accounts for a wish to overcome exclusion and promote participation. If it is not related to deeply held values then the pursuit of inclusion may represent conformity to prevailing fashion or compliance with instructions from above.
>
> Values are fundamental guides and prompts to action. They spur us forward, give us a sense of direction and define a destination. We cannot know what we are doing, or have done the right thing without understanding the relationship between our actions and our values.

The danger therefore with a sociological response without a philosophical grounding is that it becomes subject to political whim, pragmatism and ideology, which would naturally manifest itself in conflict, discord and disorder in terms of sense making, knowledge flow and collaborative action, a view that can be reasonably levelled at educational policy and action in schools over time.

To move beyond this position I actively engage the philosophical perspective to seek a coherent and consistent approach to inclusion. This project goal reflects the work of Allan (2008, p 4) who uses the work of 'philosophers of difference' as she goes about 'putting them to work on inclusion'.

3.3.3 The practical-philosophical response

This section highlights the work of Allan (2008, 2011) and her practical-philosophical response to inclusion, and other educational theorists, specifically recent work by Priestly et al., (2011) and Hargreaves (2012) who look at the role, effect and capacity of teacher agency to see how alternative perspectives and approaches give rise to new possibilities but also new difficulties in seeking to be inclusive.

Allan (2008) highlights the work of St Pierre (2004) who notes the 'desperate need' of new concepts from philosophy to challenge the prevailing positivist research model prevalent in education. She then argues, using the work of Deleuze why philosophy and education make an essential partnership, but also why this has been problematic:

> Deleuze (1995) sees philosophy as an essential for education which he notes has become a business, yet philosophy's chief role in relation to pedagogy has been as a repressor, representing: 'A formidable school of intimidation which manufactures specialists in thought...an image of thought called philosophy has been formed historically and it effectively stops people from thinking' (Deleuze and Parnett, 1987, p.13). (Allan, 2008, p56)

She suggests that due to the perceived power and often unquestioned views that emerge through assumptions about what philosophy is, that the concepts and ideas are steered away from in education, rather than embraced. She goes on to argue however, that by using philosophical ideas to address the issues of education rather than the big, philosophical question of 'why do we educate?', we may be able to view inclusion in 'perhaps new and surprising ways' (Allan,

2008, p56). Allan (2008) uses Deleuze and Guattari's smooth spaces, Derrida's (im)possibilities of justice and Foucault's art of transgression to develop approaches which are not only about rethinking inclusion but also acting inclusively. In her discussion of this work Allan (2008) clearly highlights why philosophical ideas will help revive the inclusion debate and how by providing renewed perspectives and approaches to understanding inclusion it may be possible to enact the concept differently:

> I am suggesting some particular associations, most notably with a group of French philosophers known as the philosophers of difference. Deleuze and Guattari, Derrida and Foucault have been portrayed as philosophers of difference because of their concern with achieving recognition of minority social groups and because they all, in differing ways, attempt to formulate a politics of difference based on an acceptance of multiplicity (Patton, 2000). Each of these writers have in common an orientation to philosophy as a political act and a will to make use of philosophical concepts as a form, not of global revolutionary change, but of "active experimentation, since we do not know in advance which way a line is going to turn" (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 137). Their work is a philosophy of affirmation, which is a "belief of the future, in the future" (Deleuze, quoted in Rajchman, 2001, p. 76). It does not offer solutions, but rather produces new concepts, "provocation" (Bains, 2002), and new imaginings, "knocking down partitions, co-extensive with the world" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 22) (Allan, 2011, p156).

What Allan provides through her work is a way of viewing difference, differently, highlighting how concepts from the 'philosophers of difference' can enable and empower excluded groups to engage in 'active experimentation' (Allan, 2008, 2011) for challenging the social norms and views that constrain them. Examples of this are through the use of transgression (Foucault, 1994), which Allan (2011, p158) describes as: 'not antagonistic or aggressive, nor does it involve a contest in which there is a victor; rather, it allows disabled individuals to shape their own identities by subverting the norms which compel them to repeatedly perform as marginal'. She also uses ideas from Deleuze and Guattari (1994) who, 'propose the notion of a rhizome, which grows or moves in messy and unpredictable ways' and 'present new challenges and new ways of experiencing learning,' (Allan, 2011, p142-143). This last part refers specifically to the new, unusual and

unpredictable ways that learning can move. These views entail an approach, much more about social activation and empowerment from within, something which has the dynamism to act as agent for change and engagement with change, although is likely (a little like Wenger's (1998) communities of practice) to be quite unpredictable in terms of the outcomes that emerge. They also present mechanisms (through a theoretical positioning) where individuals and groups of individuals are empowered to act for change within their own circumstance and condition. Such approaches vary markedly from those based on the sociological perspective, already described, by using philosophy as a political tool to engage the disenfranchised to action. However, especially within the disabilities discussions (Allan, 2011) there is, an implied distinction between the excluded minorities and other social groupings and a positioning (whether consciously or unconsciously) within the sociological discourse of construction and understanding and many of the traditional 'inclusion project' assumptions.

Although Allan's (2008, 2011) work is highly significant, the way she uses the work of the philosophers of difference it is still fundamentally about changing and reinventing our understanding of inclusion as a tool for social interaction, change and transformation, within the traditional sociologically based inclusion discourse, and not about changing the discourse fundamentally. The problem of this approach in a knowledge management sense is that it brings upon us the previously suggested difficulty of a sociological response to inclusion outlined earlier. I agree with Allan that the capacity of philosophy to view inclusion in 'new and surprising ways', but I do not agree that this is achieved through seeking yet a more developed understanding of it and further clarification of already established barriers of difference. Instead, this is achieved through re-engaging with the way individuals all act through the process of inclusion. It is for this reason that I maintain that philosophers such as Sartre and those within the existential movement are best placed to allow us a renewed view of inclusion. These philosophers employ a philosophy, not of difference but of engagement and action. Much like the philosophers of difference, the existentialists have an active philosophy that is also political and as such would enable engagement with inclusion and society, but as a tool

for social interaction, change and transformation rather than engagement through social understanding of inclusion. Two of the centrally defining differences between the philosophers of difference and Sartre's existentialism are the beliefs that 'action is everything' (Sartre, 1946) and that everyone is 'condemned to be free' (Sartre, 1943). This is because they position everyone in a state of being 'for itself' (much like the state of liquidity identified by Bauman, 2000) whereby everyone has a choice, and the corresponding responsibility to seek authenticity, with the realisation that the direction of those choices impact on everyone. This position of freedom is one that defines a position of unprecedented responsibility, but one that is incumbent on everyone equally. It is through this response of genuine, uncompromising equality that I seek a renewed engagement with inclusion and hope to exemplify it through the project undertaken.

Chapter 4: Developing a methodology

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I situate the research question: why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools? I outline the methodology and explore how the research question was investigated. I identify the methodological approach and clarify the key issues for the study. Lastly, I outline and discuss the theoretical position in relation to the methodological approach that was used.

As a result of the engagement with the literature, and the conflicts and contentions identified there is clear evidence that the lived experience of inclusion in schools is ambiguous (Ainscow et al., 2006). This is a product of two distinct elements. The first is the significant gulf in perspective, context and approach of and towards inclusion and engagement with it, between teachers, school leaders, policy makers and academics (Glazzard, 2011). The second element is the lack of a theoretical model that has both the capacity and clarity to actively engage and progress the inclusive agenda (Biesta, 2012). Within this study I have sought to engage with both elements by presenting an answer to the question: why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?

In order to engage with these elements it is important to consider a number of things. The first element necessitates the consideration of the variability in the perceived importance or prioritisation of inclusion as a driver for change by those groups (Glazzard, 2011), the lack of active engagement between theory and practice of inclusion and a dialogue that supports this in schools (Ainscow et al., 2006) and the lack of clearly understood theoretical perspectives that are practically focused and actively engaged in by schools (Lipman, 2004). The second element is addressed through the engagement with an alternate perspective and approach, based on the ideas of the philosophical existentialists (specifically Sartre, 1943 and Camus, 1955). This approach is applied to build a theoretical model that asserts a different perspective from which to view the nature of reality and how we perceive individual interactions and social engagement (Biesta, 2012). By using this unconventional approach I

consider whether the use a philosophical existentialist perspective to provide an alternate approach to building a dialogue for inclusion enables a positive move away from the sustained debate that persists between the psycho-medical model and the sociological model for inclusion. I consider whether an existential perspective, seeking inclusive actions in schools can build and sustain a dialogue that has the capacity to straddle teaching, policy and academic theory in a collective endeavour. I explore whether an existential approach can compel or direct participation in action which seeks out inclusion and raises its status as a central, school based driver for change and whether an existential perspective can enable greater clarity in terms of how individual and collective actions are rationalised coherently.

Consequently, I have asked the question, 'why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?', not as a process through which I seek to state the problems of being inclusive in schools, but one which investigates, through a critical and self-reflexive approach, the process of seeking to be inclusive in schools from inside the system, using an unconventional perspective. From this perspective I examine whether it is possible to provide an alternative approach to the inclusive process and explore the ambiguities, with a focus on how the process of inclusion can become more central to the dialogue and less a product of contingency (Sartre, 1943).

In order to structure this study and reflect critically upon the process that I have undertaken, I use an existential perspective derived from the works of Sartre (1943) and Camus (1955). This perspective emerged as a result of the investigation itself while I was striving to address the implicit and explicit ambiguities that I found myself wrestling with through my daily practice and engagement with and in schools. It is a perspective that has a considerable potential to allow new light to be shed on the process of inclusion as well as a model through which inclusive action can be generated

Clearly, what has been outlined so far requires more clarity and detail regarding how I set about doing this and the theoretical basis for such an

approach. Therefore, in the next section I clarify the structure of the text and the methodological model that was used to build it.

4.2 Rationale behind text structure and methodological model

To investigate the question of why it is difficult to be inclusive in schools I provide a critical and self-reflective stance from which to analyse and evaluate the process of seeking inclusion. This is centred around how inclusion has been experienced by myself and educators I came into contact with over time, within different contexts, and how such experiences were rationalised and viewed. This is a personal investigation of inclusion and the inclusion processes in schools. It also explores experiences and difficulties which arise from seeking to engage with inclusion. It is only through using this model which explicitly acknowledges the position of the individual as inextricably linked to the reality they perceive that I believe that direct engagement with the process of inclusion can be achieved. This is because it is the approach through which the implicit and explicit narratives can be revealed and the overt and tacit barriers to a more direct and fuller engagement with the process of inclusion can be understood.

I undertook this approach, as it was most conversant with belief systems, views and assumptions that resulted from in-depth and self-reflectively transparent interrogation of how I perceived things to be. As such this approach is ontologically asserted upon the basis of possibilities (Camus, 1955), where the outcomes were derived in a way that: 'contributes to positive social change and moves us to action' (Bochner, 2000, p271). During the process of the investigation, data collection and self-reflection, I came to the stark realisation that, not only was it a process where I was able to document it from within, eliciting previously unrealised issues, but one where I began to change myself. Through this process I began to alter my own perspective not only towards what inclusion means but even the fundamental ontological and epistemological assumptions that I held at the outset of this project. This in

turn began to affect how I acted and responded in my own role as an educator, teacher and head teacher. As this thesis develops the process of existential realisation is explicitly evidenced, including how this realisation affected both actions of me and others and the outcomes of those I came into contact with. As this was a study over time and tracked through varying contexts I have also been able to contrast my changing views with the increase in my professional autonomy and capacity to impact on others, as my role changed, through my progression from teacher to headteacher, across three different schools. What emerged through this process was what I believe to be an existential perspective and a preoccupation with the concepts of freedom, responsibility, absurdity, authenticity and action and how they can have an impact not only on my own practice and those I work with but in the interpretation of inclusion generally, whilst offering 'ways to improve the lives of the participant and readers' (Ellis, 2004, p124). As a result the analysis and structure of this thesis has been themed around the important existential concepts mentioned above, whilst presenting a chronology of change, in order to contrast, elicit and identify how the issues of time, context and understanding build in order to impact upon the process of seeking and being inclusive.

4.3 Situating the perspective

In this section I examine the concept 'existential'. In so doing I will attempt to clarify some of the key assumptions made through the Sartrean existentialist perspective and some of the implications that result.

4.3.1 What is existentialism?

According to Sartre (1945, reproduced in Jean-Paul Sartre: Basic writings, p27): 'existentialism...is a doctrine that does render human life possible: a doctrine, also, which affirms that every truth and every action imply both an environment and a human subjectivity.' It is a theory that is concerned with the whole of human experience – thinking, feeling, acting and engaging in the world and as such is the antithesis of the ideas of detachment and objectivity,

ideas that existentialists would dismiss as impossible and inauthentic views of the world. Priest (2001, p3) notes how: '... in existentialism individuals do things and things are done to individuals...Existentialism regards science as part of the very problem of dehumanisation and alienation.' However, interestingly, it is also a perspective that asserts the concept of truth as a core value and contrasts markedly, for that reason with the phenomenological or relativist-postmodern assertions. Camus (1942, translated 1955, p41) clarifies this view in the following way, whilst asserting the importance of individual consciousness in experiencing life:

> Thinking is not unifying or making the appearance familiar under the guise of a great principle. Thinking is learning all over again how to see, directing one's consciousness, making every image a privileged place. In other words phenomenology declines to explain the world, it wants to be merely a description of actual experience. It confirms absurd though in its initial assertion that there is no truth, but merely truths. From the evening breeze to this hand on my shoulder, everything has its truth. Consciousness illuminates it by paying attention to it ... the difference is that there is no scenario but a successive and incoherent illustration. In that magic lantern all the pictures are privileged. Consciousness suspends in experience the object of its attention. Through its miracle it isolates them.

As an approach, existentialism affirms the importance of engagement with life and a view of life manifested through the process of living it. As such it not only supports the position of the researcher within and as part of the research, rather than separate from it, but asserts it as necessary for authentic investigation.

Central concepts which manifest the urgent need for authenticity within those who assert an existential view are those of contingency and contingent action. The notions of contingency and contingent action that are referred to and discussed at numerous points throughout the thesis are core principles that drive the behaviours and responses found within any existential discourse. For both Sartre (1943) and Camus (1955) but also found throughout writings that assert an existential discourse from Nietzsche to Heidegger is the view of radical contingency. This is the stark awareness that neither we nor anything

else need exist – that there is no external guarantor of meaning and to be born at this time and in this place is for an individual the prime contingency (Thompson and Rogers, 2010). Sartre (1943, p104) sums this up with the statement that: 'we appear to ourselves as having the character of an unjustifiable fact.' This radical contingency for the existentialist manifests a fundamental choice and that is either live driven by the profound freedoms and responsibilities that this position implies (which Camus (1955) asserts opens up possibilities of revolt, passion and liberty) or alternatively fail to live meaningfully at all. Nietzsche's (1892) appeal to 'live dangerously' made on this basis was an attempt at trying to assert purpose into life where there is an acute sense of how limited human life is and how inevitable death. However from a view that is a product of radical contingency it is also possible to liberate ourselves, rejecting absurd behaviours and commonly held, yet unconsidered assertions of what is and instead seek out what could be. Therefore through this interpretation it is possible to more readily recognise in ourselves and others an approach to self-limitation or contingent action in our day to day interactions, that Sartre (1943) suggests is all too easily adopted. This contingent action is action brought about by the tendency of the human condition to reject, avoid or negate radical contingency in favour of actions that assert permanence of circumstance and self-definition (Camus, 1955, Sartre, 1943). Sartre would describe this circumstance as one of 'bad-faith' where the 'in-itself' is predominant and our tendency to act in a way that fulfils our own expectations rather than move beyond them is ascendant and where personal and collective responsibility for action or lack of action is avoided. Therefore within existentialism there is an inextricable link between living meaningfully, taking responsibility and acting authentically to the extent that Sartre (1945, reproduced in Jean-Paul Sartre: Basic writings, p36) affirms that: 'Man is nothing else but what he purposes, he exists only in so far as he realises himself, he is therefore nothing else but the sum of his actions, nothing else but what his life is.' It is from a discrete reading of such ideas that Existentialism is often suggested to have a very negative perspective on life. Sartre acknowledges himself in his work Existentialism and humanism (1945), that many people believe that such views can hold only misery, a devaluation of what it means to be human and a steady and irreversible decline to nihilism and anarchy. However when viewed in a different light (a position that will be

developed through discussion of the methodological tools and analysis), much as that identified by Sartre himself, it is a view to clarity of perspective which enables the empowerment of an individual to act for greater social justice, through a belief in freedom and the corresponding responsibility that that implies. As such I believe it to be a perspective that is inextricably linked, not only with inclusive ideas and possibilities, but asserts a rationale and view from which we might reach them.

4.3.2 Existentialism and Inclusion

In order to support the idea of the link between existentialism and inclusion, it is important to understand some of the key ideas developed by Sartre (1943) and their relevance to education and inclusion. This begins with the idea that underpins his subsequent philosophy, which is that 'the existence of freedom and consciousness precedes essence' (Sartre, 1943, p363). This is fundamentally a reversal of the traditional philosophical position, it is a claim that your existence comes first and by existing and acting you determine your essence. This is a view heightened in meaning and relevance when seen as a belief that coexists with the idea of radical contingency identified in section 4.3.1. The idea of existence preceding essence is a view shared by other existential philosophers at the time, such as Merleau-Ponty (1945, translation 1962, pxvi and xix): 'the world is not what you think but what I live through' and 'philosophy is not the reflection of a pre-existing truth, but like art the act of bringing truth into being.' Such views essentially affirm the belief that the manifestation of being is a product of action and interpretation and that human nature is not fixed, as there is no intrinsic essence, but what we are is a product of how we exist and act. Biesta (2012, p589) endorses the importance of this idea to education and inclusion arguing that focusing on the idea of existence rather than essence is one of the most important ideas in educational philosophy, if we are to capture the open nature of the educational process:

> The challenge, therefore is not only to develop ways of thinking that 'access' the question of human subjectivity in existential rather than essential terms, but also to work on the development of forms of

> pedagogy that themselves can operate in the domain of the existential rather than the domain of essence.

Biesta (2012) asserts the use of the existential as a process through which a paradigm shift can occur, which moves beyond the competing agendas of the psycho-medical and sociological perspectives discussed in the literature review. As an idea 'existence precedes essence' is intrinsically emancipatory, as it asserts that our birth and the circumstances we are born into (environmentally, socially and physically) are contingent and that life is a product of the choices humans make open to change and possibility and that we are not defined by a predetermined essence but through the actions we take. As such, existentialism is a belief structure that is fundamentally about possibilities where social justice and individual empowerment can be realised. According to Biesta (2012) it is an idea fundamentally opposed to traditional predictive models of humanism that are based on limiting assessments of what humans are and what they are capable of achieving and should achieve, which can still be found in many educational environments (identified by a whole host of researchers e.g. Armstrong, 2005 and Ainscow, 2005). Biesta (2012, p 588) also suggests that focusing on existence rather than essence embraces the concept of 'uniqueness as irreplaceability':

> The idea of uniqueness as irreplaceability engages with the question of uniqueness in an entirely different way. Here the question is not about what *makes* me unique. The question rather is: 'When does it matter that I am unique, that I am I and not somebody else?' And the answer to this question—an answer that is both simple and profound (see Levinas, 1981)—is that it matters in those situations in which I am called by the other, where the other calls for me, and where it is for me to respond to this call.

Therefore this idea matters to education because it embraces possibilities and asserts the capacity of individuals to change their circumstances and the system as a whole. It may also be an idea that helps seek solutions to engage with a renewed inclusive dialogue. It is an idea that matters methodologically as it underpins an existential view of engagement rather than an epistemological one, which is one that seeks action and active engagement

with the world rather than an interpretation of it. It is a position taken up in Camus' (1955, p52) idea of 'revolt', something he claims is:

> ...one of the only coherent philosophical positions ... it is a constant confrontation between man and his own obscurity. It is an insistence upon an impossible transparency. It challenges the world anew every second.

I also believe that it is a position that enables a renewed action towards inclusive principles and opens up new possibilities for doing so. Biesta (2012, p589) suggests that 'Education needs a language that provides a viable alternative to brain language' and that the existential provides possibilities for this. He also highlights how:

> Pursuing this existential approach calls for forms of philosophising that take the first person perspective rather than the third person perspective; it calls for forms of philosophising that do not try to theorise from the outside – thus running the risk of overriding the existential first person perspective – but rather do so from the inside, so to speak, that is in a way that does not override and replace what occurs on the existential plane (Biesta, 2012, p591).

It is from this very brief introduction to existentialism, that I develop and use it as a methodological model for my analysis.

4.4 Methodological models

The position I affirm through the existential perspective is one that is both philosophical and subjective. Therefore it is necessary that any methodology that I employ should be complementary to this and will enable the existential position rather than 'override and replace what occurs' (Biesta 2012, p591). I have therefore chosen to use autoethnography as the methodological approach. Bochner (2000, p270-1) would support the coherence between my selected philosophical position and this methodology as she highlights how the tools used in autoethnography are: 'not so much academic as they are existential, reflecting the desire to group or seize the possibilities of meaning.' Ellington and Ellis (2008, p450) describe ethnography as a 'response to the alienating effects of both researchers and audiences of impersonal, passionless

practices and clothed in exclusionary scientific discourse'. Such an approach provides a clear link between the assumptions within the existential position already outlined and a rationale for using an ethnographic method.

As existentialism is a theory that is concerned with the whole of human experience – thinking, feeling, acting and engaging with the world (Priest, 2001) the only complementary method would be one that embraced this. The ideas of Bochner and Ellis (2006, p111) offer further support for the coherence between method and assumptions within this project, when they describe an ethnographer as: 'first and foremost a communicator and storyteller' that 'depicts people struggling to overcome diversity' and shows 'people in the process of figuring out what to do, how to live and the meaning of their struggles.' Within their own work, Sartre and Camus moved between text types and styles, only able to fully exemplify their ideas and their implications through a mix of philosophical, narrative and fictional writings. Priest (2001) suggests that Sartre's existentialism is best understood through his exposition of existentialism in his novel 'Nausea' (1938), whereas according to Buss (2006), Camus' ideas are brought to life in the vivid prose of 'The Outsider' (1942) and 'The Fall' (1956). Therefore the methodological approach I selected for my research question is unconventional, even in the ethnographic field (which is itself not a mainstream methodology in education). Yet it is an approach which embraces the notion that ideas, dialogue (internal and external) and varying text approaches and types can enable an understanding and exposition of what is discussed in a way that would not happen in a more structured or constrained design (Ellington and Ellis, 2008).

According to Reed-Danahay (1997, p2), who seeks to situate autoethnography in terms of other methodological approaches, the concept of autoethnography:

> … synthesises both a postmodern ethnography, in which the realist conventions and objective observer position of standard ethnography have been called into question and a postmodern autobiography, in which the notion of the coherent, individual self has been similarly called into question. The term has a double sense – referring either to

> the ethnography of one's own group or to the autobiographical writing that has ethnographic interest. Thus either the self (auto) ethnography or an autobiographical (auto) ethnography can be signalled by 'autoethnography'.

Although, as a definition this has some relevance in situating what autoethnography 'is' in relation to its historical and emergent epistemological academic position, I see autoethnography through a contrasting perspective and what Ellington and Ellis (2008, p449) see as an 'array of practices' that are 'broad and ambiguous', but also adventurous. My reasoning is that what is termed 'autoethnography' is an approach that is fundamentally situated in the existential and is about establishing the importance of what Camus (1955) saw as the 'conscious man', who through a process of self-reflection and engaged participation becomes aware of the absurdity but also possibilities manifested by the human condition. Through the structure of the narrative itself I therefore seek to exemplify how the existential ideas enable a conscious realisation and through that realisation enable me to 'unpick' the barriers and difficulties of being inclusive in schools. Therefore the stance I take is less about a sociological epistemological position and more about the ontologically existential position championed by Sartre (1943) that life should be lived through direct engagement with the world and exemplified through the individual's experiences of the world and what they do. Bochner (2000, p271) supports such a position (where it is once again possible to acknowledge the coherency between method and philosophy) highlighting how 'good personal narratives should contribute to positive social change and move us to action'.

4.4.1 Criticisms of autoethnography

Despite the rationale of coherency I have suggested, between the existential philosophy of Sartre (1943) and the autoethnographic approach established above, autoethnography is open to significant criticism due to the stance it takes. Marechal (2010) identifies two important issues in criticism of autoethnography. The first is the concern with 'validity on the grounds of being unrepresentative and lacking objectivity' (p45). I seek to address this throughout this chapter, through the establishment of the perspective itself

and identification of what I seek to gain from employing it. However perhaps the crucial point is that, although Marechal's point is asserted as a criticism, the lack of concern for objectivity and a scientific validity through the use of this method, is the result of a perspective that does not see those issues as critical or necessary to either the ontological assumptions asserted or the outcomes that are sought through its use. Ellis (2004, p124) notes:

> ... to me, validity means that our work seeks verisimilitude, it evokes in the readers a feeling that the experience described is lifelike, believable and possible. You can judge validity by whether it helps readers communicate with others different from themselves or offers ways to improve the lives of participants and readers or even your own.

Biesta (2012, p591) supports the importance of this subjective view, particularly in reference to the existential approach.

Marechal's second criticism is that autoethnography can have a 'lack of ethnographic relevance as a result of being too personal... for being biased, navel-gazing, self-absorbed, or emotionally incontinent and for hijacking traditional ethnographic purposes and scholarly contributions' (p45). According to Wall (2006, p147) critiques founded on traditionalist, positivist belief systems of what is and what is not, such as this are just asserting their own preferences where certain forms of knowledge and views of the world take precedence above others. McCorkel and Myers, (2003, p200) maintain that such views are a product of what is believed to be 'legitimate' knowledge, where positions are often safeguarded by 'slamming the door shut' on alternate views. Therefore, although there must be clarity in terms of the rationale and focus for employing such a method (Ellis, 2004), in order that the researcher has a clear aim and purpose for what they are undertaking, to judge something against positivist characteristics (e.g. bias and traditional ethnographic relevance) that lack relevance to the model employed, invalidates much of the criticism in the first place. This research model is not seeking validation through traditionally positivist forms of legitimacy, to do so would undermine the philosophical stance upon which it is predicated. It should

instead be judged on how useful it is to the issues under investigation and the degree to which it adds value to the discourse (Sparkes, 2000). It is only through judgement from this position that those additional criticisms of 'navel gazing' and 'self-absorption' can be countered. An outcome of the literature review and part of the rationale which underpins this project is that it is often the perspectives and assumptions employed that can cause barriers to understanding and effective action in the first place. Therefore I have employed both an unconventional perspective and unconventional method in order to seek the possibility of gaining an alternate insight into inclusion and being inclusive. The degree to which this is perceived to be 'navel gazing' or 'self absorption' can only be through interpretation and therefore made by the reader and their view of the relevance of what they feel is articulated. A discussion of text presentation, reader engagement and relevance is taken up in section 4.7.

4.5 Developing the autoethnographic approach

4.5.1 Assumptions

The development of the autoethnography posed by this study is one that is existentially grounded (Sartre, 1943; Camus, 1955 and Biesta, 2012), philosophical in approach (Sheffield, 2004) and socially engaged, seeking to move those within the process and those who read the work to active engagement and action (Bochner, 2000). Although the broad aim of this study - one that seeks active engagement with the world, is a perspective shared by a wide range of autoethnographers (e.g. Bochner, 2000; Ellis, 2004; Denzin, 2003) it is particularly within the existential perspective of Sartre (1943) and Camus (1955) that the autoethnography posed here is different from various other autoethnographic approaches. This is in part due to the assumptions made regarding action. A contrast to the existential perspective can be seen when looking at authors such as Denzin (2003) who are motivated by what he calls 'a radical pedagogy, a militant utopian vision,'(p270) which he grounds in an emotive political activism predicated on hope and hopefulness, supported by ideas from Glass (2001) and Freire (1999). Camus (1955), when taking an existentialist view, suggests that ideals of hope are barriers to the possibilities

that can be achieved as a 'conscious man' as it is an idea predicated on the structures and belief systems of the unconscious man, where responsibility and freedom are not realised. He suggests that they should instead be replaced by acceptance of an absurd reality, which allows greater possibilities, that can be engaged with through revolt, passion and liberty. Although on the face of it, this seems a small difference, in practice it is the difference between an aspiration for the future, defined by an unknown utopian ideal and a conscious engagement in the immediacy of life and the possibility of revolt that: 'challenges the world every second' (Camus, 1955, p52). According to Camus (1955, p53): 'That revolt gives life its value. Spread out over the length of a life, it reinforces its majesty to that life.' Such an approach is the development of a more radical version of what Allan (2011, p16) calls: 'finding a new language of civil disobedience', where day-to-day actions call into question and identify the absurdity implicit in the circumstances we find ourselves. Within the narratives exemplified within this project, through autoethnography, I show how conscious versus unconscious rationales change both actions employed, but also how the difficulties identified are perceived. This is possible as the cases I take change in both their understanding and application of what it means to be conscious, where each case is represented by a different chapter. Each case progresses towards a greater awareness of the existential and what it means to be 'conscious' (Camus, 1955).

Another assumption, which is different, from that of many other autoethnographies, is the position that making too much of who or what you are, is counter-productive in such a process. This is because in the existential mode of thought it is your actions that define you and not your status or position. This is exemplified in 'Being and Nothingness' (1943, p101) by Sartre who gives the example of a waiter who behaves inauthentically by assuming a role (that of the waiter) that others expect of him, rather than being himself and undertaking the duties of a waiter. Therefore within this study I have made the choice not to make a declaration of overt status, ideology or political identification, such as those declared by Denzin (2003) or to state 'what I am'. I have alternatively sought to affirm what I have done and let my actions define me. What is often seen to be effective and even expected within

autoethnographic practice is an overt statement about the subjectivities that the writer brings with them to the narrative which they seek to establish (Sparkes, 1996). Although I acknowledge the need to build upon a perspective of understanding, identifying characteristics which will enable the reader an insight to the manifestation and direction of the narrative, I believe that a writer must be careful in the overt statement of the status, ideology or political affiliation that this implies. Denzin (2003) develops his autoethnography through using an overtly subjective political position from which to address his concerns. He states the rationale for this as something that explains: 'my total lack of interest in any pretension of impartiality' (p257). This is a position which, although at one level engages a perspective that seeks transparency, also defines a perspective of limitation. This is because through the label (particularly when it is based on terminology that is a function of interpretation) a position is established that exists as 'being in-itself' rather than 'for-itself' (Sartre, 1943), a position I develop later in the thesis. As a result, views and perspectives are defined upon what they are trying to be or stated to be rather than the possibilities of what they could become. It is also directly contrasting to views of Camus (1955) and earlier views of Sartre (1943); these philosophers see absurdity and lack of coherence evident in the human condition as a state that must be accepted in order to develop an authentic perspective. Therefore although it is inevitable that political persuasion or affiliation will be interpreted as a result of autoethnographic work, this work is not, nor does it seek to build upon an established political or ideological position. Such an area as this, will always be difficult for the autoethnographer, as, whatever position one takes, one always treads a fine line between implicit affiliation through the acts and statements one makes and more overt political stances in the issues one selects as important. This is something which is apparent, although perhaps less confrontationally so (when compared to Denzin, 2003), in the works of many of the inclusion and disability theorists (e.g. Oliver, 1999 and Barton, 2001). Therefore, through taking a position that embraces 'being for itself' I seek to embrace the incoherence of individual perspective and action, whilst highlighting the logical value of ethical and inclusive ideas. As a result of this position, although I am employed as teacher, deputy headteacher and headteacher at different points within the narratives, it is the possibilities and actions undertaken whilst in

those roles, rather than the designation of the roles themselves that are important.

4.5.2 Philosophical method

As in this study I utilise perspectives which are philosophically grounded, the autoethnographic method which I have sought to use is also philosophically rather than sociologically grounded. I have identified above some of these differences, particularly in relation to the specific perspective of existentialism, however it is important to highlight what approaches to analysis differentiate a philosophically grounded narrative from a sociological one. One difficulty here, however, is that of existentialism itself. Although existentialism is philosophically grounded it also rejects the traditional philosophical method pioneered by the like of Descartes (1596-1650) – which established a concept of: 'the individual mind that looks at the world like a spectator at a cinema screen or as if through a lens' (Rogers and Thompson, 2010, p13). However, Sheffield (2004) argues it is from a philosophy of direct engagement with the world and a theory of understanding the world through the experiences of the individual (as that viewed within existentialism), that the philosophical method can reaffirm its significance and usefulness. Dewey (1920, p94) similarly notes that philosophy 'becomes intensely significant when connected with the drama of the struggle of social beliefs and ideals.' According to Sherman (1995, p2), what the philosophical method brings to the qualitative circumstance is 'the analysis, clarification and criticism of language, concepts and logic of the ends and means of human existence'. Therefore within this autoethnography, although I will seek to employ the narrative tools applied by Ellis (2004, p124), who notes as an ethnographer: '... our work seeks verisimilitude; it evokes in the reader a feeling that the experience described is lifelike, believable and possible', it is an analytical approach to the autoethnography which will allow me to 'contribute to positive social change and move us to action' (Bochner, 2000, p271). It is also a method that asserts an approach, suggested by Sparkes (2000), that such research should be judged on the usefulness of the writings to the debate for which they are employed. It is therefore not so much

about sociological understanding and an analysis of the circumstances in question from that perspective, but rather an analysis of how the circumstance when viewed through the tools employed and perspective used will enable a better understanding of the problem.

Giarelli and Chambliss (1988) organise their definition of philosophy around the goals of clarity (logical accuracy and focus), context (the building and understanding of the entire qualitative situation under investigation) and consciousness (a grasping of the problem and a need for problem solving action), all goals which I will seek within the ethnography that I produce. However, despite these differences the criteria for what makes a 'good ethnography' (Ellis, 2004) apply to this project, as I see the method that I have chosen to employ to be a different style of autoethnography not something other than an autoethnography.

4.5.3 Making a good ethnography

There is a general consensus by autoethnographers and qualitative researchers (e.g. Lincoln and Gubba, 1985; Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Bochner, 2000; Clough, 2000; Ellis, 2004) that much of the terminology applied to scientifically orientated, quantitative studies, such as validity, reliability, generalisation and triangulation, which affirms quality or worthiness needs to be reinterpreted or viewed in a different way when looking at such studies as those identified here. Lincoln and Guba (1985) highlight the central concept of trustworthiness as important when viewing qualitative research, which although applied mainly towards case study does link with ideas of believability and acceptability suggested by McAdams, (1993). However, as this study is about investigation and action, what is likely to be more important, is how the stories told can be '... put into intelligent use in theorising about social life' (Silverman, 1998, p11). Therefore the trustworthiness, believability and acceptability of the study (McAdams, 1993) is more likely to be found in the 'verisimilitude' described by Bruner (1985) as 'the life likeness that is conveyed when a story seems to capture well what the subjective human experience is really like' (quoted in McAdams, 2007, p118). Ellis (2004) similarly sees the importance of 'verisimilitude', but she also presents several criteria for a 'good autoethnography' specifically highlighting the ideas of

Richardson (2000, p15-16) who identifies four factors for reviewing personal narratives:

a) Aesthetic merit – does this piece succeed aesthetically? Is the text artistically shaped satisfying, complex and not boring?
b) Reflexivity – how did the author come to write this text? How has the author's subjectivity been both a producer and a product of this text?
c) Impactfulness – does this affect me emotionally and / or intellectually? Does it generate new questions or move me to action?
d) Expresses a reality – does this text embody a fleshed out text of lived experience?

Although the above ideas provide a guide to reviewing and comparing ethnographic texts, with each element to be appropriate, given the rationale and aim of the text presented, each factor is likely to be a product of personal views, experiences, assumptions and interests as much as anything else. Therefore it is likely that each review based on these criteria will be as different as each person who reads it. The value and the pertinence of such texts is, at least from a Sartrean existential perspective, to provide a response to a question which seeks a conscious and reflective engagement with life, that answers what is proposed and is ultimately worth reading. The act of writing in itself, the practice of reading, responding and acting are so intimately linked with the construction of such a text that the process of seeking to reduce it to a set of worthiness criteria opposes and only seeks to limit the process and rationale for why the process was undertaken in the first place (Sparkes, 2002). So in some ways if the narrative is a conscious, reflective and engaged account, then, from an existential perspective 'it is not so important that the narratives represent lives accurately – only that narrators believe that they are doing so' (Bochner, 2002, p86). Denzin (2000, p898) notes that: 'writing is not an innocent practice (and) in the social sciences there is only interpretation'. I do not agree with this statement in its entirety, due to it being philosophically illogical and self-referential in nature. I do, though, believe in the narrative of interpretation through which Camus, (1955, p43) notes: 'there is no longer a single idea explaining everything but an infinite number of essences giving meaning to an infinite number of objects' and that: '... the world is neither so

rational or so irrational. It is unreasonable and only that' (Camus, 1955, p47). On this basis, I believe that it is the role of such a narrative, as this, to identify the ambiguities, clarify understanding and seek to engage with social contexts through personal actions and conscious engagement of others in an active dialogue and subsequent action.

4.6 Structuring the autoethnography

In order that the existential position is maintained as central to the discourse, I have organised the structure of the autoethnography around some of the central principles of Sartre's existentialism. This is done as a response to the research process that was undertaken. Much like the process of existentialist thought, the journey I undertook through researching, collating the research and seeking to represent my thoughts and findings required constant revision, reflection and re-evaluation. Through this process what began to emerge was a correlation between the views and actions in what I perceived and recorded at specific points within the research process and key contentions exemplified within the existentialist dialogue. Such a correlation however only became clearly evident as I recognised the distinct shifts of emphasis between what I was recording and identifying when in one circumstance compared with another. Due to this process what is drawn upon within each chapter is different. This is because what I perceived to be necessary to record and document at different stages changed as my response to the question I investigated and the circumstance I inhabited altered.

As a result what is recorded, presented and asserted within this organically manifested approach does not only represent the findings over time and within different circumstances but also exemplifies the journey through which the realisation and engagement with existentialism emerged, how this altered my own thoughts and perceptions of inclusion and why ultimately I believe it is difficult to be inclusive in schools. It is within the narrative approach taken, represented by the structure of existentialist themes, which makes it possible to consciously grasp the problems that were explicit, implicit and unrecognised at the time and exemplify the need for problem solving action (Giarelli and Chambliss, 1988).

4.6.1 Overview

This study covers a time period of almost nine years and the actions, reflections, interpretations, supporting documentation and interviews that took place over that time. Each chapter establishes a chronology for exploring the research question, 'why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?' The study comprises a narrative that spans three different schools, contrasting in type and size. Each school provides a context from which I have sought engagement with the question 'why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?' For each of the school contexts I interlink the narrative with an existential principle, which together form the central themes of the study. Each theme was decided upon after extensive reflection, review and analysis of the data, once all the data had been collected. Therefore the analysis of the writings and the formation of the themes through which the various chapters are presented was done as a distinct and separate process from the collection of the data itself. As a result it is possible, at times, to see a significant difference between the perceptions and beliefs evident in the data extracts provided within the chapters (particularly early on) and the analysis of those extracts and how I came to interpret what had taken place. However as the autoethnographic narrative of the project progresses through the chapters it is possible to see an increasing convergence between the ideas that are presented through the analysis of extracts and my emergent consciousness of such ideas within the extracts themselves. As such each chapter develops a chronology of realisation and understanding towards an existentially grounded view of being inclusive. This study culminates in a final context (chapter 7) where my emergent understanding is overtly existential and the actions and responses I take reflect this. Below is an outline of the themes and the theoretical issues that are central to them. Although there are some broad details of the schools in this overview, more specific detail is provided at the beginning of each chapter.

4.6.2 Theme 1: Absurdity: seeking coherence

This chapter is the first of the findings chapters and is based on data collected when my research question was not fully formed. The writings here reflect upon and analyse a long and detailed narrative case study that I created during 2008 whilst in the role of Access Learning Director, at Badgewood Community Sports College. The case study was used as a focus for this chapter, as it

enabled me to contrast and interrogate how my own thinking, reasoning and action changed from this circumstance to subsequent ones described in Chapters 6 and 7. The case study was originally planned as the initial case study in what was to be a wider set of case studies that I wrote to help me make sense of my role, the actions I took and the impact I was having within this role. However having written it, I began to change my ideas and focus in relation to my research, changing my research question and approach. The working title at the time of writing the case study was: 'can we define inclusion and use it to implement change?' Therefore the discussions and ideas from the case study reference this question. Whilst writing the case study I had not selected an existential model for analysis and was going through a process where I was searching for answers to help address concerns I had relating to inclusion. This is apparent in the way the excerpts from it are written and the ideas and discussion they present.

In reviewing this case study as part of the analysis process I was struck by how my preoccupation with coherence and consistency referenced throughout the case study was in fact a prime example of absurd behaviour brought about by my own need at the time to identify a logical position from which to interpret the incoherency and contradiction I was confronted by. Therefore this chapter is a critique of past action and behaviour and the presentation of how absurdity can be a difficulty of being inclusive and how that absurdity manifests itself.

The concept of Absurdity, although important to the works of Sartre is even more central to the philosophy of Camus (1955). However, both philosophers broadly hold the position that to embrace the possibilities available to us we must accept the unreasonable world in which we exist and as a result, the gap between the human longing to make sense of it and our experience of it.

At this point in my teaching I had actively sought out a role where I felt I could make more of a difference than in the role I had previously undertaken. I moved from a large Junior School to a Community Secondary School in a city on the South coast of England catering for approximately 1000 children and 150 staff, which was considered to be 'in challenging circumstances'. This label of 'challenging circumstances' was designated on the basis of the

catchment that fed the school having high deprivation indices, high levels of children on free school meals (FSM), designated with special educational needs (SEN) and data from national testing and analyses which made the school a cause for concern by Ofsted and the DFE. I had taken my job at the school after it had gone through a large restructuring, my title at the time was 'Access Learning Director'. Although it was a significant leadership role in the school as a whole, it was predominantly focused on setting up and developing my own department within the school for children who were of secondary school age but, for a whole host of reasons were unable to access the secondary curriculum or often school in general.

There is significant emphasis in the case study, upon which the majority of chapter 5 is focused, with the need to define inclusion and develop a coherent pathway for an active inclusive process to take place. In opposition to Camus's (1955) view of acceptance, many of the writings are fuelled by a frustration of incoherence and an angst towards what I felt were the limitations of my circumstance where I felt I was only able to find pragmatic and limited solutions, to what I felt were much more holistic issues of inclusion. The writings in the case study are characterised by a view and a promotion of the value of hope, something highlighted as vital by Friere, (1999) and Denzin (2003). However, such a value, particularly in the larger sense of the word, in the opinion of Camus (1955) is absurd itself. This is because he feels that such a view fails to embrace the lived reality of existence in the aspiration for something which is ultimately doomed (an idea that is taken up in chapter 5). Camus, instead, advocates an acceptance of existential inevitability, which he believes opens up the possibilities of revolt, passion and liberty. Similar positions, at least in terms of their psychological assertions, can be found in both the 'mindfulness' literature and psychological models such as Relational Frame Theory (RFT), (Hayes, Barnes-Holmes and Roche, 2001). They highlight the need for acceptance of an individual's circumstance, but a commitment to actions which enable possibilities for development. This chapter therefore uses the concept of absurdity to show how both individuals and groups can engage with life in an absurd way and that that some of the ambiguities and difficulties of inclusion can be overcome through the recognition of this.

4.6.3. Theme 2: Authenticity: coherence and solidarity

This chapter is based upon writings, reflections and interviews taken after having moved from my previous role (described in chapter 5) to a new circumstance where I was deputy head teacher, with significant whole school responsibilities. The context is that of a large junior school in a small city in the south of England catering for approximately 380 children and 48 staff. The move, although a promotion, was in large part due to the consistent and regular feelings of unease with the circumstance I was in and how I felt about my capacity to act in a way that was consistent with the belief systems I held. Therefore in undertaking the move I came to my new circumstance with the renewed vigour and freshness that often results from significant change. The writings and what was recorded during this new circumstance, although related to what was discussed in the previous circumstance, were a product of new contentions in my perceptions towards inclusion. These were specifically about how I could make sense of inclusion and the difficulties of being inclusive in this context and what I thought would be useful in that process. In reviewing the many writings, reflections and interviews I recorded it seemed that I felt much more confident in my own views of inclusion and what that meant to me during this period of time. There also seemed to be a sharp shift away from the emphasis upon the absurd contentions evident in my previous writings and recordings and the emergence of repeating ideas that focused on what it meant to act in a coherent and purposeful way. The more I reviewed these writings as part of the analysis the more I was struck by the correlation between what I was identifying within them and the contention of authenticity discussed within Sartre's existential discourses.

Although at the time of these writings, I cannot admit to being actively existentially conscious there seems to be a correlation between some of my views and some existentially grounded perceptions, at least thematically, They often look at, to what extent responsibility and 'good faith' are a product of the actions taken in school, inclusive or otherwise and to what extent I saw those as being down to responses by individuals within a system or responses to individuals of the system. The dataset used for this chapter is wide and varied with evidence from a range of sources and situations provided throughout the chapter:

- Personal reflections and perceptions about the school, taken over a six week period (September 2010 – March 2011)
- An unfinished case study looking at issues of inclusion in the school (March 2011)
- An interview with the school's Parent Support Advisor (PSA) about perceptions of inclusion (March, 2011)
- Seven short interviews with staff at the school, about perceptions towards inclusion (March, 2011)
- A case study report I wrote for the school about improving staff development (written between February and May 2011)
- A short conference paper written about my thinking related to inclusion at the time (presented to peers and academics at the university) (July, 2010)

It was also during this period that I refocused the study, changing the research question to 'why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?' This was done in response to the realisation that what inclusion was, or is, is so interconnected with the active engagement with it that what inclusion was became for me a much less important investigation than understanding the barriers to being inclusive. At a time when I was reading the works of Sartre and Camus, who both assert the necessity of authentic action in order to realise the possibilities that life provides, a seemingly simple but necessary question seemed to be (in light of the view towards authenticity), that if we value the ideas of inclusion, why don't we do more about it.

The question of authenticity is central to the existential view of life. Heidegger (1927), a philosopher who had significant influence on Sartrean thinking claimed that to exist authentically is to choose the possibilities of your existence. Such a view is about seeking to act in a way that is as consistent as possible with your own beliefs and views. This is as opposed to taking on a persona that is not your own, or acting in a way that is actively contradictory to the beliefs you assert. Sartre (1943) sees this process of being authentic as one where you take an active responsibility for yourself, by consciously selecting the possibilities that life provides. According to Sartre, to do so is to live in

'good faith' and to seek to deny this or be something other than authentic is seen as living in 'bad faith'.

There is significant consideration in these writings about the role of the individual as part of a community and the contention between the power and effect of individual versus group. This included both the relative authority and change making capacity that I believed both I and others had in order that I or others could really seek authenticity. There is also regular reference to the idea of contingency and contingent action as this chapter begins to evaluate the degree to which understanding of responsibility and accountability for being inclusive is necessarily predicated upon the authenticity of the actions that set out to achieve a desire outcome. I use these writings and data to view how such contentions can enable the consideration of authenticity as a key tool for understanding the implementation and process of inclusion in schools, in a specific case and in a wider sense and how lack of authenticity presents a significant difficulty for being inclusive.

4.6.4 Theme 3: Freedom and responsibility: seeking engagement

This final theme which is the focus of chapter 7 is used to exemplify and consider the actions and approaches that can be taken in response to inclusion when a consciously engaged existential perspective is adopted. It is in some ways a culmination of what has been learned in the previous chapters, in terms of realisations and understandings but is firmly focused on how active engagement through an acceptance of freedom and responsibility can be a tool for active engagement of inclusion in schools. This chapter is different in scope and focus from the previous chapters in that it pulls together the ideas that are discussed in chapters 5 and 6 and the problems that have been identified; I then exemplify how active engagement with an existential perspective can bring to the fore what and how we understand the most problematic characteristics of being inclusive through a realisation of alternative possibilities. This process was established on the basis of an active change in my own behaviours that occurred due to historical and more immediate experiences documented in chapters 5 and 6. Unlike the chronology and content of what is discussed in chapters 5 and 6, the content of what is

evaluated here is that which was manifested when I asserted an explicitly existential perspective and attempted to use it to both effect change and address the difficulties that I perceived as evident in being inclusive. Therefore this chapter acts as both recount and evaluation of the active responses made to address the question why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools from this chosen perspective whilst highlighting the dangers inherent in the findings and the possibilities that such a perspective may open up.

Freedom and responsibility are the two central ideas upon which Sartre (1943) believes that an individual can live authentically. Sartre believes that everyone is free to choose, this is explained by Thompson and Rogers (2010) in their interpretation of Satrean existential freedom:

> ...I can choose between possibilities that life throws up for me, but I do not have the freedom to choose absolutely anything, because those possibilities are always shaped by my circumstances. I am who I am because of what I have been and because of the choices I have made in the past.

Sartre's (1943) existentialism can be viewed as having an egalitarian grounding, something which he asserts through his principle of 'throwness'. This is the idea that we are thrown (and not just at birth, but all the time) into our world (and therefore cannot choose the circumstances of our lives) and it is from this situation that we must try to make sense of life, engage in the possibilities on offer to us and seek authenticity. However he argues that we can only do this through an acceptance of both our freedom and our corresponding responsibilities. Within this chapter I document how I actively engaged with the existential ideas which define this project. This chapter is based upon writings, reflections and interviews taken at a time when I had taken on my first headship of a school placed in 'Special Measures' and the process that I undertook, to develop active engagement with the school and community. The context is that of a large junior school in a city on the south coast of England catering for approximately 330 children and 44 staff. The school was in a situation where radical change was essential in order to avoid

school closure and the immediate and longer term failure of a large group of children and their families.

In order to clarify Sartre's (1943) idea of freedom and responsibility he differentiates between two ways of existing in the world the 'in-itself' and the 'for-itself'. The 'in-itself' describes something that is a thing or object, something that has a fixed self – something that is exactly what it is at that moment and nothing else, something where its essence precedes its existence. It would be described as something which has no consciousness in-itself but is brought into existence by other's consciousness of it. To exist 'for-itself' conversely, is to relate to the world as a human being, to be conscious and engaged and as such ever changing where you are defined by your actions and how you exist, but as a result cannot know the totality of what you are (your essence), which will only be apparent at your death, the point at which you are a product of what you were not what you are or will be. This is the idea of existence preceding essence described earlier. According to Sartre (1943) the temptation for everyone is to view yourself as a thing, to act a role which seeks to limit how we exist by not consciously grasping the freedom that we all have. It is upon the basis of these ideas of freedom and responsibility that the actions and interactions that I undertook as headteacher and approaches I developed were asserted.

The circumstances described within this chapter take the form of a case study of existentialist philosophy in action whereby I seek to narrate, discuss and interrogate the experience of applying principles of existentialism in action to view how they changed the school, its circumstance and how we were able to engage with the ideas of inclusion. In doing this I take the position of acceptance, acknowledging the evident contradiction and absurdity of the position the school was in when I become head, whilst seeking authentic action and change. To share this process as transparently as possible I look at the decisions made, documentation used, training, discussions and feedback from staff as well as formal publications in both the press and from Ofsted (which help chart the perceived progress of the school). In doing this it is possible to triangulate the views, assertions and reflections made from a philosophical perspective from those who worked at the school and the wider perception of

the school by the public. The process opens up both the innate absurdity of some of the practices in schools and the many possibilities that are often neglected and unrealised. Taking a conscious, existential perspective I assert the belief that I must act in a way that seeks to realise the possibilities available to me and the school and must do so in a way that seeks authenticity. Therefore this includes acting in a way that realises or seeks to realise inclusive processes and principles. The data sources I use to support, exemplify and reference within this chapter are the elements that document the chronology I seek to narrate and are as follows:

- Personal reflections on key events over a sustained period of time(October 2011 – March 2013);
- Interviews (which are a set of short structured interviews, using predetermined questions) on perceptions towards inclusion with a range of staff (September 2012);
- Teaching and Learning policy 2012;
- Interview with the school inclusion leader (March 2013);
- Interviews with a range of staff on what they perceive as limitations to change in the school (October 2013);
- The text for a poster presentation on my thesis ideas prior to the writing of the findings chapters (November 2013);
- Copy of letter to the local authority about a possible schools amalgamation (Autumn, 2013).

Sartre (1943), asserts that we are 'condemned to be free', or in other words we are free whether we like it or not and it is incumbent upon us to and take the risk of absurdity and lack of meaning. Otherwise we are placed in a position of 'social, psychological and scientific determinism, where you see your authenticity vanish into conformity' (Thompson and Rogers, 2010, p94). Sartre describes this approach as being inauthentic. This concept of inauthentic living, is similar to a concept (often unrealised, although not necessarily) described earlier in terms of predictive models of humanism (Biesta, 2012), but is self-imposed. It is an idea that is important in this study and that forms a key part of any discussion made surrounding the realisation of freedom and action taken.

Chapter 7 describes a circumstance through which I believe I was brought into a conscious engagement of the existential position as a result of the urgency of the circumstance and the overt need to act. This in turn ignited a realisation of freedom and the feeling of corresponding anguish brought about by the responsibility entailed. This view and the implications are explained by Sartre (1943, p72-73) in the following:

> Anguish as the manifestation of freedom in the face of self means that man is always separated by a nothingness from his essence... Essence is everything in the human being which we can indicate by words – that is. Due to the totality of this fact it is the totality of characteristics which explain this act. But the act is always beyond that essence... Essence is all that human reality apprehends in itself as having been. It is here that anguish appears as an apprehension of the self inasmuch as it exists in the perpetual mode of detachment from what is.

The anguish identified here is suggested by Sartre as the feeling that emerges as a result of the realisation of our ontological position, the freedom that entails and the weight of the responsibility that corresponds to it. However it is this anguish that is of fundamental importance to action as it is the thing that compels a realisation as to the importance of acting and the actions that an individual takes. It is through this process specifically, but one established in light of the context of the previous chapters that I develop my findings and conclusions as to why it is difficult to be inclusive in schools presented in chapter 8.

4.7 Ethics

According to Tolich (2010) ethics within autoethnography can be a potentially difficult field to navigate due to the inextricable link with the lives of others and what Wall (2008) suggests is the power within any identified relationship that is emphatically with the autobiographer. A similar assertion is made by Bond and Mifsud (2006) who suggest that the complexity of ethics in autoethnography are such that their potential difficulties cannot always be anticipated. In undertaking this study I recognise these difficulties, although

assert that the complexity of difficulty is not something that is unique to autoethnographies, but something that becomes more apparent than in other approaches due to lack of clarity and certainty that is embraced within the relationships and perspectives of the autoethnographer. Bruner (1993, p38-39) asserts a truism embraced by autoethnographers that: 'the life that is told or recounted can never be the life that is lived.' Such a statement is one consistently made in the writings of the existentialists such as Sartre (1938), who highlights how this conundrum, so evident within narrative recounts, is also evident when applying the same critical gaze to positivistic studies and writings or other accounts which seek to objectify their position in order to assert the clarity and certainty that is perceived to be missing. The main difference between the autoethnographic position as I present it here and other forms of research is in the overt realisation and the corresponding responsibility to act ethically that the position asserts coupled with the awareness of the limitations with which there is certainty in doing so. To help deal with these difficulties Sikes (2010) has suggested that in order to act ethically an autoethnographer must understand the power of the narrative, remember the significance of language and do all we can, when writing, to act with integrity and awareness. Such assertions are made by others such as Ellis (2007) who notes how the autoethnographer must write in ethical ways and take responsibility for actions and consequences. While Adams (2008) highlights the necessity to acknowledge personal limitation and maintain personal transparency in relation to interpretations that are made of others or circumstances in order to decrease the power held when writing. Wall (2008) also highlights the consistent need to maintain a concern for ethics as an autoethnographer or when undertaking any other writings where you are representing those who are unable to represent themselves in writing. Through this study I acknowledge the suggestions and necessities highlighted by Ellis, Sikes, Adams and Wall, through exemplifying how I have dealt with some of these ethical concerns in the sections below, through the consideration of the specific issues of consent, consultation and vulnerability. I also acknowledge them through the approach and process of writing undertaken through the findings chapters themselves.

4.7.1 Consent, consultation and vulnerability

4.7.1.1 Consent

With many autoethnographies the consent issue is one of significant concern as consent is often sought retrospectively. Tolich, (2010, p1599) notes how any research is potentially compromised when researchers address ethical issues retrospectively rather than by anticipating these issues. My initial approach in this study was however to undertake the gathering of data in a more traditional way; I therefore sought to acknowledge the overt participant involvement from the start. Consequently, as part of my ethics submission, participant information forms, consent forms and ethical clearance was sought straight away (see ethics forms, participant information and consent forms, Appendix A). Therefore any formal participant involvement was made clear from the outset. This is important ethically, but is also important structurally as authenticity and transparency were vital to what I was undertaking. However to assert that consent is so easily dealt with in autoethnographic research is to misunderstand the depth of such studies and the implications that can be made. Therefore I have taken consideration of the issue of consent in more depth. Tolich (2004), has suggested that it is essential to discuss vulnerability when dealing with consent and consent related issues, particularly when children are involved or addressing issues which are of personal and social meaning, as in this study.

In undertaking an autoethnography assumptions and tacit implications are always prevalent (Sparkes, 2002) and even when all formal participants (those who were referenced or directly involved in any way) have provided consent, discussions made may unwittingly imply or reference the involvement of others (informal participants), however small that reference is, and this may be recognised by them in reading that text (Jago, 2002; Rambo, 2007). This is recognised by Chang (2008, p69) noting how: ‘your story is never made in a vacuum and others are always visible an invisible participants in it’. In order to recognise this I have undertaken a process of ethical risk management (Tolich, 2010), where I have sought to limit the vulnerabilities of others and any future vulnerabilities that could be caused by such work (Morse, 2002) through critical consideration and honesty (Sikes, 2010). In doing this I acknowledge my own personal bonds to individuals and circumstances and take responsibility for the actions and consequences that result (Ellis, 2007). Specific actions which I have taken are: focusing of the study and analysis

made around staff and the adults in the school rather than the children. By doing this I was able to develop and sustain more detailed and long term involvement through such approaches as making a presentation to all staff at each school (whether involved or not) about the thesis and what its aims and processes were prior to commencement and offering to answer questions or discuss the project in further detail with anyone who wanted to. Despite this, complications with my study such as the length of time the data was collected and the range of contexts and change of circumstances that occurred over the course of the study meant that my ability to sustain a dialogue long term, with all who may recognise the circumstance (e.g. informal participants as opposed to formal) was virtually impossible. For this reason I sought to limit the degree to which I referenced specific individuals in a way that is identifiable and I have anonymised both schools and individuals throughout the process. I have also sought to make the study one that is philosophically and analytically focused and as such have sought the consideration of theoretical ideas in context rather than seeking judgements on the context. The judgements I have made are on my own actions and interpretations of contexts, from the situations I found myself in, and inclusion in general. As a result they are subjective and biased, therefore although hopefully should resonate (an aim highlighted by Ellis, 2004), are not bounded by notions of realist, but existential truth. Bochner (2002, p86) notes that in autoethnography the value of the truth elicited is not about objective realism and as such 'is not so important that the narratives represent lives accurately – only that narrators believe that they are doing so.'

However in acknowledging a study grounded in existential truth, I must also acknowledge the difficulty I have as a consequence in relation to the certainty of consent. This is because, even though I have acknowledged the perspective in which I write (a necessity of ethical consideration highlighted by Sikes, 2010), this perspective may not be shared or even recognised by the reader, which could result in a more positivist interpretation, bounded by notions of realist truth (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994), inadvertently skewing the interpretation of the text for which consent was given. In addition to this although the narrative I present has been done, seeking transparent and ethical authenticity, once the narrative is made the reader's interpretation

opens it up to alternative interpretation (Sikes, 2010). If this occurs both the potential and problem of an autoethnography is realised. For those who, upon reading, believe that they are in some way referenced or implicated within the text, this may present a concern on behalf of the reader (whether founded or not) but it also recognises the possibility of engagement created through narrative research that is a goal through such a text. In response to this circumstance I seek to act responsibly (Ellis, 2007) and I make any judgement of what I include on the basis that all people mentioned in the text will read it one day (Ellis, 1995). In so doing I strive for authenticity and hope and believe that, if they read it, they will do so with a sympathetic eye. I believe that this is an appropriate position to establish as enables an acknowledgement of Delamont's (2007) criticism of autoethnography, that whatever pseudonyms or disguising strategies that are employed, if the account is really about the author, everyone who appears in the account is identified if not explicitly identified. However this criticism itself is perhaps a simplification of the circumstance, in relation anonymity in autoethnography. A fuller response and one acknowledged in this study is that suggested by Tolich (2004). In the discussion of confidentiality Tolich (2004) distinguishes between external and internal confidentiality. Tolich, much like Delamont's assertion, accepts that pseudonyms and attempts at disguise can only really work where the reader has no knowledge of the people or place. However Tolich still sees the use of pseudonyms and disguise as useful in this circumstance, acting as a form of external confidentiality, despite the limit to internal confidentiality. However, if the process of openness and consultation is carried out with appropriate rigour, with the autoethnographer removing elements that participants are unhappy with, even with a lack of internal confidentiality it does not mean that this is not ethical practice.

Through the consideration of the issues relating to consent I have sought to anticipate problems, gain informed consent, sustain engagement and involvement in the project where possible, provide information and gain informed consent. Through this process I take responsibility for representing those who may not be able to represent themselves (Wall, 2008) and as such do not publish anything that I would not show the persons mentioned in the text or the leaders of the schools upon which they are based (as advocated by Medford, 2006).

4.7.1.2 Consultation

Through consultation I have sought to ensure that the process that I have undertaken has been both transparent and responsible (Ellis, 2007). This has been carried out through an ongoing process of regular discussion of what I was doing and what I wanted to find out with the schools in which I worked and provided copies of any interviews, discussion and writings to participants if they were in any way referenced or involved in them. Such processes enabled a sustained dialogue about what was going on, respected participants' autonomy and the voluntary nature of participation (Ellis, 2007) and sought to acknowledge the responsibility of my role as the writer to take into account the perceptions of others when writing and enable me to be more authentic in the writings that I was producing as a result (Ellis and Bochner, 2000). At each stage of the process, I also used this approach to make sure participants still wanted to be part of the project.

Looking more closely at this process a limitation of participant validation, highlighted by Sikes (2010) is the difficulty when participants are not necessarily interested in re-reading or further discussion of the text. According to Sikes (2010) this can happen because of a lack of interest or a level of trust which implies an expectation that the autoethnographer will write in an ethical way without the need for validation. Although I have only found this in a limited circumstance I have sought to maintain the line of communication (despite a lack of response, beyond acknowlegdement), in the event that this position changes. I have also felt as a result that this position rather than relieving me of the responsibility to act as ethically as possible has asserted a need on my part to engage a positon that is even more responsible in order to negate this limitation and seek the authentic.

When making judgements that have involved the potential for informal participation, where consultation was not possible or as above where response was limited, I have used what Sparkes (2002) calls intellectual integrity to make important judgement calls. Through this process I have acknowledged there are shared ethical difficulties and concerns across each case, due to the variation and nature of how each case was both constructed and engaged with,

each case having its own specific ethical considerations and vulnerabilities. Therefore the details of each case were developed, answered and intertwined with the case itself, but have taken into account the discussion and principles that have been outlined through this section. I have done this to enable the participation in an authentic framework, which is existentially grounded (Sartre, 1943) and acknowledges the interrelated nature of the ethical and existential perspective.

To contextualise the ethical perspective highlighted here and consider the role of this text in the context of the project outlined, I ask myself the question suggested by Clandinin and Connelly (2000): do I own the story just because I tell it? My response to such a question is taken once more from the existential perspective, and as such is an emphatic no. This is because in isolation and without interpretation and reader ownership this project fails in its central purpose, this is summed up by Rowlands (2013, p167):

> In order to fix something's meaning, in order that it is one thing rather than another – it needs to be interpreted and this means that in itself it is not about anything. It's 'aboutness' comes into picture only with consciousness that interprets it. All objects of consciousness, all things of which we are aware, require interpretation if they are to mean anything. Therefore they are not intrinsically about anything.

Within the following narrative I present a process of 'figuring out what to do, how to live,' (Bochner and Ellis, 2006, p111) seeking resonance and meaning from the struggles that are presented and engage with a perspective that enables an alternative take on 'why it is difficult to be inclusive in schools?'

Chapter 5: Absurdity –seeking coherence

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on an analysis of why it is difficult to be inclusive in schools through the use of the existential concept of absurdity found in the works of Sartre and Camus, but particularly the notion expounded by Camus (1955) in his book 'The Myth of Sisyphus'. What is evident from the working title I was using at the time ('can we define inclusion and use it to implement change?'), in retrospect, (although perhaps not realised or stated at the time) is the implicit focus I gave to two other ideas these are a desire for clarity and coherence and a belief in the importance of individual and collective agency. However what is discussed also brings into focus how contradictory or absurd views can easily emerge when we seek to rationalise our actions, something which I will explain as the chapter progresses.

The writings and actions they describe that are the focus for analysis in this chapter are taken form a case study I wrote in 2008 whilst in the role of Access Learning Director at Badgewood Community Sports College, further details of which are found in Chapter 4, section 4.6.2. The use of the concept of absurdity to help in the analysis of these writings has particular salience, as it is an idea concerned with contradictory reality evident in the assumption of a logical world. Camus (1955, p8) highlights this with the simple statement: 'It is always easy to be logical. It is almost impossible to be logical to the bitter end.' Absurdity highlights the impossibility of maintaining a logical stance in relation to our interaction with the world, and describes that circumstance created when we seek to interpret the world on the basis of logical assumptions alone, where we can find that we are confronted by contradiction and incoherency, Camus (1955, p28) develops the idea of absurdity in the following statement:

> ...the feeling of absurdity does not spring from the mere scrutiny of a fact or impression but it bursts from the comparison between a fare fact

> and a certain reality. The absurd is essentially a divorce. It lies in neither of the elements compared; it is born of their confrontation.

Using this idea as the vehicle to view the identified themes in this chapter, a key aim is the recognition of confrontation evident in the elements compared. The selected themes from this chapter are taken from ideas that are evident within the texts and pertinent to the discussion at hand. In doing this I do not seek to provide an objectively logical rationale for the selection, but a selection that enables better access to the text, where the themes of this chapter are selected to enrich and focus the discussion surrounding the ideas of absurdity (Camus, 1955) in order that the question: *why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?* can be more fully investigated.

The three themes selected are:

1. The problem of difference
2. Communities, groups and group dynamics
3. Coherence and predictability

5.2 Case conceptualisation and context

Rather than re-write the school context, I have taken the following section from the case study itself, which outlines a brief context of the school as I defined it at the time (case study, 2008):

> Badgewood Community Sports College is an urban state secondary school with a population of 1000 pupils between the ages of eleven and sixteen. Its intake is almost exclusively from social housing as it is set at the convergence between three large council estates, within one of the most densely populated areas in the country. It has been designated by the government as a school in 'challenging circumstances' and as such is well within the bottom ten percent of most deprived wards in the country, where the percentage of Free School Meals is thirty percent (on uptake) and the percentage of special needs on intake is just over fifty percent. The area surrounding the school has significant levels of crime

> and high levels of drugs abuse and misuse. Recent data (e.g. that found at National statistics online and through school and LA sources) have suggested that the area has very low levels of education compared to the national average and that one in three of the adults in the community are illiterate, innumerate or both. The school has very low levels of ethnic minority groups, at just under two percent, the rest being designated as white, British, working class.
>
> The main focus of the study at this school will centre around the Access groups. The children who are in these groups have been identified as ones who are significantly below their peers (minimum of three years), to the extent where they will have no way of accessing the secondary school curriculum with their presenting levels of attainment. The children within this group tend to have a range of difficulties, with individuals regularly labelled with multiple problems, which can be complex in nature, although tend to fit within the general headings of specific learning difficulties (SPLD), social, emotional behavioural difficulties (SEBD), social communication difficulties (SCD) and mild learning difficulties (MLD).

What is apparent within this extract is the implicit assertion of the conventional mode of thought (which is interventionist, predictive and often about collective assertion) which resided in the school and which I believe presides, to a greater or lesser extent in most schools, (which is generally based on the positivist paradigm and the psycho-medical model). It is a view that is easy to fall into or get swept away with and is something that, although I was more aware of at this time, I still fell foul of regularly, as I sought to interpret the circumstance which I found myself in. Examples of this can be seen in the following extracts, in the discussion surrounding Charlie, a child with complex needs who was part of the Access groups (case study, 2008):

> Charlie joined Badgewood from another school at the age of thirteen, bringing with him a history of exclusions, extensive involvement from social services and diagnoses of attention, deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) including a whole host of undisclosed social and emotional issues. However in coming to the school, like so many others, he did so with no sign of his previous schooling records.

This approach is also seen a little later in the text:

> Many of the behaviours exhibited by Charlie suggested high levels of disaffection (such as the notions of disaffection outlined in Gutteridge, 2002) and were linked to behaviours which are according to Newburn et al. (2005) associated with low achievement in the population as a whole. This was perhaps made even more difficult by the regular changes in teacher, classmates and environment and consequently a lack of consistency which is often seen as an essential tool to use within schools, particularly those with challenging behaviour **(**Gottfredson Gottfredson and Hybl, 1993 showed how when organisational consistency was applied with structure and coherence it impacted significantly upon student conduct**).**

This predictive and limiting view is most evident in the writings when the prevalent positivist mode of thought and the need to act came together, an example of this can be seen in the following extract (case study, 2008):

> Kaplan, Gheen and Midgley (2002) note how providing children with goals where they could attain personal mastery are related to lower incidence of disruptive behaviour as opposed to performance related goals which produced higher incidences of disruptive behaviour. With both these issues mentioned here, there were considerable implications here for the requirement to treat Charlie's needs as very personalised to him when setting goals for attainment and behaviour and a significant need to look at the issue of learning as the central issue to help him progress.

And again later:

> He like the others who exhibited these characteristics were very physical beings – quick to touch, hold, grab and do, much more comfortable to discuss things or even listen when they were out in the open or in the process of doing things. Many of their descriptions were accompanied by large physical actions to accentuate, exemplify or support what was being said and even the regular banter, which was a central form of interaction, was not only punctuated by the a whole host of swear words but often extravagant gestures, a key function of the unspoken interaction that went on. In some ways this culture of the non-verbal was a key feature of who Charlie, in particular was. Therefore when discussing such an aspect of Charlie's persona it is perhaps useful to draw upon ideas such as Relational Frame Theory (RFT) (Hayes, Barnes-

> Holmes and Roche, 2001) which suggests that language itself can be a barrier to a 'flexible psychology' as language and the attributed thought is a function of prior learning and historical experience which in turn can lead to thought processes which are indirectly formulated as a result of functional change rather than the process of thinking.

In taking such a position of definition, clarification and identification I moved my interpretation of my circumstance from being a descriptive of the circumstance, school and children to a neat model through which children were classified and set. Whilst I adopted this position, although, perhaps inauthentically, I did so as part of a sincere belief that to do so would be better for the children. I undertook this role despite not only reading and researching ideas of inclusion, but striving to find a way of acting that would be more inclusive. The position I present in these writings, in retrospect, is a contradiction and symptomatic of an absurd way of being. However it also highlights how my action and belief were rationalised even when incoherent, and also my how actions asserted belief systems that can be contrary to the ones I believe I held (this is a clear example of what Sartre (1943) would call 'Bad faith', an idea discussed further in chapter 6). The absurdity manifested in the confrontation between seeking to legitimise this position and striving to move away from it, is evident throughout the case study, examples of can be seen in following extract:

> As previously noted the values, structure and ethos behind Access was very much about set up to be a child centred, supportive and personalised approach to learning, which seeks to be inclusive. However often the reasoning behind a child's inclusion within Access, the systems, structures and context proceeding that inclusion can be seen within an almost polar opposite light. Therefore we must ask whether it is possible for an inclusive structure to be established amidst the chaos and exclusion which so often brings it about in the first place?

And again later:

> It was after meeting Charlie in conjunction with the range of information that I had collected previously (including witness statements, behaviour

> reports, work samples etc) that I felt convinced that Charlie's needs had fallen well short of being met (in a form alluded to by Castle and Parsons, 1997) not only at our school but seemingly for a considerable period of time previously and what was starkly evident was that the perceptions that he had generated were riddled with negativity towards school as a system and his role within it and the formalised notions, including the language which supported that. Therefore it was with an integration meeting attended by Charlie and his grandfather that we were able to begin his introduction into Access.

Looking back at this circumstance, where I establish a confrontation between seeking to legitimise my position and striving to move away from it is central to the conclusions which I form at the end of the case study. The conclusions of this case study assert a perspective where the absurd is beginning to be realised and as such, when viewed in light of the wider set of writings provided in this study as a whole, is less of a conclusion than a starting point from which to re-evaluate the thinking and assumptions that were made:

> This case highlights some of the contentions when trying to understand inclusion and see whether it is possible to define inclusion more holistically and use it to implement change. As outlined already despite a whole host of difficulties that were often prevalent within Access the expectation was that we could set up provision for the children in our care which would seek to include them. However as already highlighted within this case the desire and expectation to be inclusive does not necessarily correlate with the context and capacity to be inclusive and generate inclusion in action. Although at the same time it does not necessarily mean that it will generate no success at all.

What I can now see more clearly (by engaging in this process of re-evaluation, looking back at the text) which I did not perceive at the time, is the way I sought to, all at the same time, assert, justify and apologise for the practice and actions that I often undertook or described. There is no better example of this than in an extract early on in the case study that seeks to clarify the practice within the school:

> It should be noted from the outset of this case study that many of the assertions made here can be seen to be very much at odds with the traditional notions of inclusion such as those suggested by McBrien and Brandt (1997) and even those evident within the Index for Inclusion (Ainscow, Booth and Dyson, 2004) and consequently contrary to what would be perceived by many as inclusive practice. However for reasons that will be developed in more detail later (relating to the extent and extreme of the difficulties displayed by the children within Access) the interpretation of inclusion taken by the school from the outset was very much more in line with that suggested by Alliance for Inclusive Education (2007) in that: 'Inclusion is integration on our own terms. You can do integration to us, but there can be no inclusion without us all playing a full part in the process'

Through re-evaluation it is possible to identify the absurdity here (as well as that evident throughout the text), that is brought to life by the confrontation of actions and ideas, where exclusive practice is regularly justified on the basis of what I believed to be inclusive practice within a constrained circumstances. However my textual interpretation at the time was that of a case study that was concerned by the search for coherence as I actively sought out an inclusive approach to my day-to-day interactions. Looking back I am struck by the contradictions I find myself both engaging with and justifying, this extract again relates to 'Charlie':

> The fundamental focus within Access was to define provision that was personalised (along the lines of the definition by Gilbert, 2006) and set at the level of the child, something presently seen by many as fundamental to the future progress and direction within schools (e.g. Leadbeater, 2008) in an attempt to redress (Castle and Parsons, 1997) the previous provision failures, including the implicit negative responses so often given by those who should have been supporting him. Such a process in Access was made considerably easier, at least in terms of accountability, by the fact that Charlie was already so far out of the system that the norms and requirements that traditionally define at least part of the accountability structure in schools, which can seem so at odds with the inclusion agenda (Armstrong, 2005) were not really a priority in the consideration of his provision. Examples of these are the constraints that can be caused by the rigidity and requirements within the national curriculum, the very specific subject based targets and expectation which support that provision and the expectation of uniform progression throughout the various stages of the year which are often so closely monitored and moderated. In addition to this the support and value placed by the school (particularly the head) on the work Access was doing had the undoubted capacity in generating

> confidence in the process and direction that was being taken. The Head's response to the provision being made by Access was shown by a statement she made to me not long after I got the job: 'If you can give me good reason for what you are doing and if you think that it will impact positively upon the life chances of your pupils the school and I will back you to the hilt.'

What also seems to be prevalent in this text is how the dual concepts of certainty (the need/desire for) and agency (particularly related to a personal need to act) emerge as consistent contradictions and important vehicles for this narrative and the actions described. This happens to the degree that they often override ethical beliefs or concepts such as inclusion, which I often seem to rationalise in retrospect e.g.:

> It is necessary at this point to take a moment to define the principles behind the programme of teaching and provision within Access so as to factor this into the account and its relationship to inclusion. Due to decreased numbers of children in class, higher levels of staff to pupils (although fewer different staff in any one timetable) and a freedom to concentrate wholly upon the needs of the children in terms of learning and social emotional development rather than worry about assessment milestones (as these children were so far off average attainment levels) and accountability criteria (as the external expectation for many of these children was very low anyway) the aim was to generate a better understanding of what the issues were with each of the children, how to help them and where to go next. By having these advantages in Access it was felt by myself and the team I worked with that we had a greater capacity to increase the quality of teaching (as it was better informed), provide effective feedback to pupils and as a consequence teachers (through running forms of assessment that focused on formative assessment, that was highly context supported), challenge the learners and provide contexts within which learning was more engaging, relevant and effective (all of which have been highlighted as effective strategies for engaging learning, by Hattie's exhaustive review, published in 2009).

But then in contrast to this, just a little later in the case study I am struck by the difficulties and potential problems of my circumstance:

> However in writing this and reflecting on the process within Access I must accept an uneasiness that is still prevalent within thoughts on the subject specifically in relation to inclusion. This is because although I

> can justify the process and its impact in terms of decreased behavioural incidents, children who are observably calmer and keener to learn, not to mention increased levels of attainment (the children in the first Access cohort averaged one level of progress over the course of the year, a third more than the average level of progress nationally) it is hard to get away from the notion that their inclusion within Access, is an exclusion from the norms of the school (and subsequent community) within which they reside. Is it the establishment of a school within a school and a more personalised provision or is it merely a pragmatic and short-term solution to dealing with those in a community who just don't fit? If the answer is the second of these suggestions then the implications of such a model for society at large is somewhat worrying.

Looking back now, perhaps one of the greatest difficulties with this narrative is the retrospective validation that is applied to the circumstances and incidents that I come across and sought to act on. As a result I validated actions through an attributable theory, rather than using the theory to guide a set of relevant and authentic actions. I liken this form of reasoning to a scatter-gun view of theories, often citing a new theory for a new circumstance without situating myself from any specific perspective, but embracing a multiplicity of contradictory stances. Camus (1955, p28) highlights that: '...a demonstration of the absurd is achieved by comparing the consequences of such a reasoning with the logical reality one wants to set up.' Although according to both Camus and Sartre we must embrace the absurd in order that we realise the possibilities available to us, they both highlight the need to do so with authenticity in order to develop a conscious engagement with life. The position which I highlight here is absurd but also inauthentic, as it is unrealised and often predicated on justification grounded in a relativist, ends justifies the means discourse, something which Blackburn (2001), highlights as a particularly dangerous ethical and philosophical stance, a further example of which is given in the following extract from the case study:

> We felt that the role of the Access and its teachers was to develop each individual child to the best of their ability and in so doing enable a smooth transition back to the school as a whole, in a position where they have the capacity and opportunity to achieve some form of success. To do this a key role that we took was to seek to model effective social interaction amongst the pupils. This was based in part on the notions of Vygotsky (1978) when he suggested that biological and cultural

> development do not occur in isolation and that social interaction has the capacity to influence cognitive development but also in response to the rifts and dysfunctional behaviour that was beginning to emerge (as previously mentioned). With a belief in this notion coupled with the overt negativity the children often presented in relation to the traditional notion of school and the buildings themselves we felt that we had an important role in mediating effective social interaction and establishing a climate within which social empathy and a positive social identity could be attained.

This approach can also be seen in the next extract below as I seek to validate the view and approach surrounding the 'self' as well as highlighting a host of corresponding but not necessarily complementary psychologically based theorists:

> Within Access what was felt to be of paramount importance was an almost Rogerian notion of unconditional regard that was set aside for the children and the need for constant renewed vigour and enthusiasm on behalf of the children and for the task in hand. However, it must be acknowledged in what was often a very intense environment, engaging with regularly volatile children, this was more difficult at some times than others. What had been apparent in my dealings with Charlie's teachers prior to Access was that once his reputation had been formed all the teaching that was directed towards him consequently was done so with a concrete picture of this perceived 'impossible child.' By underpinning the work we did with the children through principles of those established within notions such as person-centred counselling (Rogers, 1951) it was possible to see how the ideas of empathy and emotional literacy are highly significant for individual development and self-awareness. Utilising such theories it is then possible to suggest that through seeking to develop empathy and emotional awareness a teacher may be able to interact more effectively with their pupils and their pupils may be able to interact more effectively with each other, which not only seems a logical statement but also one supported by the ideas of key educational theorists such as Erikson (1965), Vygotsky, (1973) and Bruner (1986). Such an approach can be validated through the significant decreases in behavioural incidents, less truancy from specific subjects and increased attendance as a whole, the ethos and positive relationships which we had begun to establish (to which our head commented specifically regarding the relationships 'you're certainly doing something right!') and the readiness of the children to engage in work in the first place.

Although this narrative was not written from a position from which I consciously sought to undertake the stance I have presented above, what I am

highlighting through reviewing it with the use of the absurd as an idea, is the difficulty of consistently logical action in an unreasonable world (Camus, 1955), something which is of paramount importance when considering why it is difficult to be inclusive in schools. However what is also evident in the section above is that my default position was, rather than recognise and acknowledge the evident absurdity, to seek to rationalise it in an attempt to find a coherent narrative (something which Sartre, (1943, p784) describes as 'a direct project to metamorphose its own For-itself into a In-itself-for-itself). Although I do not assert that my actions and experiences are necessarily representative of others in schools, I do present this very open self-analysis in a way that seeks to ask whether the reader can recognise personal experiences of the absurd in their own actions and experiences. Within the following sections I develop this further looking at specific aspects pertinent to schooling and my experience of it seeking out why in certain issues it means that it is difficult to be inclusive in schools.

5.3 The problem of difference

The existential position on difference can most clearly be seen within the writings of Sartre, explained and expounded more implicitly than explicitly, in part because for Sartre (1943) difference is a natural function of the human condition. For Sartre (1943) the limitation of the human condition (which can in turn be applied to difference) is the lack of imagination (and possibilities) through which it is perceived. He neatly sums this up by stating that man (sic) is the being 'who is what he is not and who is not what he is' (Sartre, 1946, p140). In other words man (sic) continually makes and remakes himself to the degree that our present being is made meaningful in light of the future to which we project ourselves rather on the basis of what we are. For Sartre (1943) it is through this stance of the for-itself that we are presented with both freedom and responsibility, however the absurdity of our position is that we constantly seek to perceive ourselves as objects (the in-itself) limiting both our possibilities and freedoms in the process. For Camus (1955, p49) this is a natural response when we are presented with two opposing certainties which we cannot reconcile: '...appetite for the absolute and for unity, and the

impossibility of reducing this world to a rational and reasonable principle.' This leaves us with two choices – to embrace the ambiguity of uncertainty where absurdity is an accepted and ever present reality but possibilities are created, or preside within the limitation of certainty where absurdity is denied (although present) and we seek an irrational coherence. This is the problem of difference – the more we define, the greater the clarity and the more discernible (and perhaps important) the difference, or the less we define, the greater the ambiguity but the less perceptible (or relevant) the difference. In the extract from the case study below, I discuss the concept of difference as I saw it whilst in this role:

> When dealing with the concept of inclusion and seeking some sort of definition for it, it is undoubtedly important to consider the notion of difference. Without exception the children within Access were there because they were perceptively and significantly different from most of those in the main schooling system. They were different in a way that was challenging to the notions of control, provision and expectation and for these reasons they were given a form of provision which was different. Such an approach although undoubtedly pragmatic and at least superficially seems to make some sort of sense, is as far as inclusion goes, in terms of the big picture lacking coherency. This is because despite the provisions within Access, what has essentially been done through its establishment is an exclusion on the basis of the children's lack of conformity or the school/staff's inability to deal with their needs. Through removing children because they are different and setting up provision to suit them the issue of inclusion has been avoided so the systems and structures for the majority can be maintained. However as made apparent in this incidence where Charlie was seen as different, difference cannot always be avoided through removal, only modified for degrees of difference. However it must also be acknowledged that in a system where lack of capacity in terms of provision, facilities or staffing occurs it is often an approach which is taken. This position was very much the one held up by one of the vice principals at the school, during one of the many discussions we had over the issue whilst building up the unit's provision. He felt that the provision we were offering or seeking to offer was one which enabled better and more focused opportunities for the children by more specialist staff whilst decreasing the disruption (effecting teaching and learning) and increasing the potential to learn in the classes which they had been part of whilst in the main body of the school. On later discussion when asked about what he felt the main barriers to a more holistic inclusion were he declined to answer directly but highlighted how the stresses and strains caused by children with more extreme emotional and behavioural difficulties meant that there would be the necessity for an alternate provision even within a restructured model of

> school (something we were in the process of undertaking) which had the capacity to deal with the needs that the main school couldn't.

Much of what is discussed here, in relation to difference, exemplifies the absurdity of the position we present, enable, reinforce and even seek to justify when it comes to working in schools. That position is that difference should be identified, defined and dealt with. Such an approach can seem very appealing. The limitation however is created by the assumptions it asserts and by the tendency to respond to the most obvious symptom, which in this case was the generic descriptor of 'behaviour'. In many ways, many of the issues surrounding inclusion seem to relate to how we deal with difference and how we can seek, collectively to accept difference rather than using it as the defining principle under which we segregate ourselves. This brings us the absurd contention – when we seek to define or establish who we are (the in-itself) or who others are in any discrete way, we are always having to contend, to some degree, with what we are not or what our limitations are. In this way we negate many of the possibilities of what could be (the for-itself), for either ourselves or those we interact with. However, if we acknowledge, as is the existential contention, that difference is a function of who we all are, we are left with a choice, to continue to seek to perceive what it is (and negate the possibilities available to us, only seeking what is or has been), or imagine what we can do with our individual and collective difference and in so doing seek out transformational action. What is identified here is the difference in perspective that can be found between those seeking to describe the circumstance we find ourselves in and the differences that we perceive (often apparent within the sociological model) and the existential model, which is led by authentic action and an attempt to realise our freedoms. According to Sartre (1943) what distinguishes imagination and perception is the attitude towards the 'object' (the in-itself). The excerpt from the case study below shows how the dialogue and identification of difference within a school environment can establish views which ingrain negative perceptions and accentuate the feelings of otherness when the in-itself is dominant:

> It should be noted at this point that many of the Access children were treated differently in the school as a whole. Although originally, in the

> early days they were treated poorly by many of their peers, due to the perception from others that they were withdrawn because there was something wrong with them (e.g. taunting for being stupid, babies etc). Soon after a stark realisation by most in the main part of the school that these children didn't always have the same boundaries as regular children (e.g. you couldn't always predict what their reaction could be to such responses – which was regularly extreme with little concern for the consequences) they were given a certain distance. This distance was something which was in part the product of fear, but also in some cases a respect on the basis that these children were the ones who would do things others wouldn't. It was also clearly something which a proportion of the group took considerable pride in. I discussed with John (another member of Access, in Charlie's class), after seeing how children, both older and bigger than these children were just move out of the way when they came along, what he thought about the reaction they got. He replied - : 'It's great – I'm only thirteen but even the year 11s won't mess with us! We're good like that.'
>
> Clearly such a response shows how the segregation (be it only partial and hopefully temporary) of students can create a situation where the negative aspects of a collective identity can be heightened to a point where the respect and individual recognition that is so often craved can be achieved for all the wrong reasons and therefore at least externally affirm many of the behaviours which the segregation seeks to change. This can be seen as a negative social capital (Putnam, 2000) where the strong internal bonding capital and the almost non-existent bridging capital with the wider school community created an insular and inwardly focused network which was likely to be difficult to change.

Something alluded to within this extract, (which will be developed in later chapters), when I state that: '... these children were the ones who would do things others wouldn't' is an awareness (implicit or otherwise) that through exclusion, individuals and groups can often feel removed from the norms, expectations and conventions of society (and that found in communities). For Sartre (1943) the conscious awareness of societal limitations enable greater freedom to act in an authentic way. However when disengagement results from the actions of others this can (according to Camus, 1953) lead to actions and behaviours which distort 'normal' and received moral or ethical principles and can lead to radical forms of behaviour (an idea supported by the work of Zimbardo, 2007). Something which could, if occurring to any significant degree, fracture any attempts by school of being inclusive.

When seeking to be inclusive in schools the absurdities implicit in being different and defining difference have the impact of hijacking the principles we seek to assert in being inclusive. However, within this narrative (which is the subject of this chapter) the problem of difference and the absurd is also evident through the discussion surrounding communities and the identification of Access as a community in its own right. It is something, ironically, that was actively asserted as an approach to counter the exclusivity of the circumstance which we found ourselves in, but perhaps was an act that only ingrained the circumstance further. The contradictions and absurdities found when seeking to describe and discuss communities are the focus of the next section.

5.4 Communities, groups and group dynamics

Within the case study I identify the formation of an 'Access community' and the importance of the wider community within which we/they reside as a way in which the children and the Access group were able to establish both bridging and bonding capital (Putnam, 2000) and a more inclusive access to the world around them. It is also something that I believed at the time was responsible for the sudden progress and development of one particular Access pupil – Charlie:

> Within almost all schools at the present time there is considerable emphasis upon engagement with the environment where the school is based, collaborating with services and groups within the immediate community (Dyson and Robson, 1999) and initiating learning that is both relevant and based within context (the Rose Interim Report looking at the primary curriculum (2008), the emphases in the revised secondary curriculum by QCA, (2007) and the recent community cohesion aspect with the Ofsted Annual Report 2008). This emphasis was certainly a key to engagement within Access, whether through accessing local leisure centres and outdoor education facilities, links with colleges, particularly vocational learning centres (e.g. motor vehicle, hair and beauty, leisure and tourism) and engagement with a whole host of support agencies through our monthly multi-agency meetings. Such an approach enabled us to address the call of 'what is the point?' while supporting learning by providing a context, engaging in pupil led projects, in an attempt to raise interest and motivation as well as targeting discrete skills and identifying specific learning experiences. Such approaches allowed a joined-up approach to support for individuals with complex needs where the multi-aspect nature of their needs could be more readily addressed

> whilst generating more ideas to appropriate solutions to support by accessing multi-perspective awareness about where to go and what to do.
>
> In terms of inclusion, an approach which establishes a wider notion of provision (that moves beyond single institutions) with a shared understanding of goals and outcomes shows the establishment of a structure which looks beyond micro notions of inclusion by seeking to extend social networks and relationships (Fukuyama, 1995). Such approaches theoretically have the capacity to generate social capital, cohesion and understanding that more inwardly focused solutions lack (Fukuyama, 1995; Wenger, 1999, Putnam, 2000). However it was a specific community link, which led onto extended project work and engagement that really enabled us to turn the corner with Charlie.

However, in reviewing my thinking at the time, I now question my assumption and assertions surrounding community. For Sartre (1943, p537), the idea of community is something that is predicated upon alienation. He discusses how our only genuine sense of community comes in the form of an 'Us-object' when we perceive ourselves along with others forming the object of the gaze of an other. In other words communities are 'in-itself' constructs, which require both the view of the self as object, within an object, as viewed by someone not part of that object: '... the Us-object precipitates us into the world; we experience it in shame as a community alienation.' However, as viewing ourselves as object lacks the authenticity of the 'for-itself' position we are also presented with an absurdity in the form of the question: 'How is it possible to experience oneself as an object in a community of objects' (Sartre, 1943, p537). Sartre, therefore proposes that the perception of the self as part of a community is a contradiction, as to perceive ourselves as such, in the first place, we must be apart from it. To take such a position is really to view the concept of community as purely a description of a circumstance, but one where active engagement and involvement is not a reality but an attempt to view ourselves as the 'in-itself' and negate the freedoms available to us as individuals, thus restrain rather than enhance our existence. For Camus (1953), there is an absurd appeal in the idea of community, where our desire to belong and transcend our own individual circumstance often takes precedence over authentic being. As such group, community and collective identification within these groups has been an historically powerful, yet inauthentic agent for change.

Therefore instead of interpreting the circumstance described in the extract above as the function and result of community engagement, I could alternatively interpret it as a circumstance that provided reawakened possibilities for the individuals involved, where a realisation of alternatives was brought to consciousness for some of those individuals (as it was in no way a collective panacea), and that in turn reawakened the sense of freedoms implicit in all of us to be part of the world and act within it. As such it would not be an example of community engagement but purely engagement. To view the circumstance in this sense is to refocus the discussion upon the actions of individuals within a group (rather than as a group) and what they derive from such circumstances, rather than retreat to the conventional interpretations surrounding communities and group dynamics. This is not to say that there is not huge value in the wealth of riches that is provided within communities (particularly when using the term in its broadest sense), when it comes to enabling individual flourishing (Seligman, 2011), but to presuppose that community is the lever through which this is enacted (or should be enacted) as the communitarian discourse (e.g. Etzioni, 1996), would have us believe, or that it is the route through to being inclusive misunderstands the circumstance and the implicit contradiction of such an assertion that is found in the formation of the 'Us-object' (Sartre, 1943). A Sartrean existentialist interpretation recognises the interrelational nature of co-existence and asserts the responsibility of self and others realised in the freedoms we possess, but does not describe this in terms of community but in the active idea of solidarity (Sartre, 1943, p198): '... the For-itself feels a profound solidarity of being with it,' something asserted by other philosophers, most notably Rorty (1999).

The following extract, taken from a fuller discussion within the case study discusses a farm project that was undertaken as an approach to enhance engagement and increase inclusion, I now believe (and would reinterpret as such) that it exemplifies a circumstance where individual development was created from a solidarity of purpose, and the reawakening of renewed possibilities, rather than some of the more dubious interpretations I placed on

it at the time when asserting the importance of community. It presents a circumstance that I now believe was created more as a result of being away from the school community (and the possibilities that provided) than as a product of engagement within the wider community and specific environment of the farm:

> Over the next eight weeks there was undoubtedly a change in mood and even approach to the Access children who attended the farm work project, each to greater or lesser extents. However it was Charlie where the most notable impact was made and it can be first evidenced in his level of attendance. After the first two weeks of the farm project Charlie asked to be put back onto a fulltime timetable, something which had not previously been possible due to his own voluntary withdrawal and behaviour patterns. By the end of the eight week period Charlie's overt disruptive and behavioural episodes had dropped to almost zero, and although he still maintained a certain degree of low level disruption, this was something easily containable. With this renewed vigour for learning, concentration and engagement, something which went well beyond the confines of the farm yard came the opportunity to target the learning needs he so clearly had and in so doing take advantage of the capacity that the Access groups provided for personalised provision and individual interaction.
>
> Clearly it is somewhat of a naive assumption to suggest that it was the farm project alone which was responsible for the incredible turnaround that was evident in the way Charlie presented himself, however there is undoubtedly an argument for its role and what was done and achieved in that alternative environment to suggest it as a 'tipping point' (Gladwell, 2000). This is a situation where the accumulation in other factors may have been enough support to establish a position where a specific event or activity (viewed within the context and light of previous changes) enabled a shift of more sustainable change. In order to support this as a notion it is perhaps necessary to look more carefully at the interactions that were available to Charlie at the farm which may not have been available elsewhere.

The interpretation that is made in the case study is one that I now find hard to engage with at any other level than as an example of how we seek to rationalise our actions through building what we believe to be a coherent descriptive of our circumstance, where the individual narrative and freedom to act is subsumed within the vaguer and more amorphous concept of community. The seeming convergence of the many varied theories and ideas that I present, rather than exemplifying a natural coherence, is really masking the absurd dialogue. As I review this text the absurdity I recognise in this

extract is found in the confrontation between my need to rationalise what was being experienced and Charlie's desire to just experience it. Perhaps this is another example as to why schools find it difficult to be inclusive – maybe we are so busy rationalising what we are doing and seeking to interpret things that fulfil our expectations, that we find it hard to act in a way (or experience the circumstance from a perspective) that releases us from those confines. If this is the case our actions will only trace a predictable discourse, where real change will not happen until we perceive those limitations.

5.5 Coherence and predictability

> If I remain in that prearranged position which consists in drawing all the conclusions (and nothing else) involved in a newly discovered notion, I am faced with a second paradox. In order to remain faithful to that method, I have nothing to do with the problem of metaphysical liberty. Knowing whether or not a man is free doesn't interest me. I can experience only my own freedom. As to it, I can have no general notions, but merely a few clear insights. ...the only conception of freedom I can have is that of a prisoner or the individual in the midst of the State. The only one I know is the freedom of thought and action. Now if the absurd cancels my chances of eternal freedom, it restores and magnifies on the other hand my freedom of action. That privation of hope and future means an increase in man's availability (Camus, 1955, p54-55).

Camus (1955, p54-56) believed that the world in which we live is 'unreasonable'. He identified how people constantly assert meaning and direction in what they do, seeking general notions of coherence and believing that in some way life is 'directed' and that we can count on certain things, but also asserting the right to liberty. Camus identified the contradictory and absurd nature of such an assertion - such a position is to act in a way that hopes but fails to take the possibility to act (as it implicitly negates the responsibility we hold to act). This desire for 'general notions' of truth and coherence, which Camus identifies as part of the human condition, can be found throughout the writings within the case study but most specifically in the conclusions where I seek to evaluate a range of issues through which we can engage with inclusion in action, an extract from which is given below:

> This therefore brings us to a concept that is inextricably linked to provision, that of coherency. In the early parts of the case study I have tried to identify the difficulties that Charlie was subject to in addition to the difficulties and problems that he brought with him. On entry to the school it seems that Charlie was a pupil for whom there was very little flexibility and an over whelming expectation of compliance. This approach when seen in light of inclusion seems to lack coherency in that provision that was originally made for him failed to take his needs into account, did not seek to elicit trust or understanding (Van Vugt, 2009) and fell well short of the approaches of personalised learning, partnership and capacity building championed by government policy makers (Leadbeater, 2008). However the expectation for him was to conform in a situation where there was no opportunity for success or self-enhancement (Van Vugt, 2009). This if not an insight into inclusion itself certainly gives us somewhat of an understanding of how exclusion can easily occur for children whose needs fall outside of the norms. Therefore on entry to Access rather than entering an inclusive environment what seems more likely is that he was presented with a situation where there were perhaps less barriers to inclusion and less exclusion, even given the irony that in order to do this it was necessary to withdraw him from the main population of the school.

> Using Snowden's (2003) Cynefin model which tells us we must understand the nature of different knowledge used in an organisation, provision in terms of Access sits very specifically within the physical ontology of order. It is here where by acting upon tangible, easily changeable, physical organisational tools it made it possible to act upon both the visible issues which were creating problems such as the activities, the context of learning and the learning expectations and outcomes. However at the same time this may have inadvertently allowed issues of hidden order to be addressed or a greater capacity to do so. Examples of these might be trust, belonging and understanding which are central in generating individual engagement and action (Van Vugt, 2009). Yet although what was presented within Access has aspects which can add individual value within an exclusive structure it is perhaps the context of the provision, learning and interaction that we must look towards if we want to understand inclusion in a way that engages with its values rather than looking at something which is little more than a structural shell for pragmatic action.

In addition to this being another example of post-hoc validation, what is presented here is a narrative where sense making and coherence are the aim rather than an analysis of inclusion. This can be acknowledged by the use and type of theoretical models discussed (Snowden, 2003 and Van Vugt, 2009) and

the way a false convergence is assumed. Within this narrative, therefore, the absurd is made evident by my engagement in a predictive discourse, which fails to question the prevailing social assumptions, or seek to appraise the degree of inclusion or exclusion found within an authentic dialogue. This provides another example as to why it is difficult to be inclusive in schools – which is the difficulty of being authentic in terms of the actions you make and the degree to which they coexist with the viewpoints that you state to hold. It can become too easy (as exemplified in my own position) to fool yourself that what you are doing makes sense or you are doing either 'the right thing' or the 'best you can'. The complexity and variety of what can occur and be interpreted through the day to day actions and interactions of individuals working in schools provides a context whereby interaction can regularly dominate and override action that seeks to oppose the absurdity evident within our circumstance. The result of which is to confuse and cloud any clarity that may have been sought or assert sense or an apparent rationale where there is none.

My journey described through the writings of the case study, is one that I still consider was written with a high degree of sincerity, but despite this, it is a circumstance which would likely have been described by Sartre as being in 'bad-faith'. This is because it describes a situation whereby often the success of both what I did and that found in those around me as a product of action. dominated more by what wasn't and what couldn't be than what was and what could be. The existential position would assert this to be the product of contingent action which is action that lacks the awareness and authenticity to focus on possibilities available to individuals only found in moving against the tide of coherence and predictability that we tacitly desire (Camus, 1955), where an alternate understanding is possible (Sartre, 1943).

5.6 Why is recognition of the absurd important?

Throughout this chapter I have highlighted what I view to be the absurd, where confrontation is evident between what is the case and what is asserted to be so. The absurd (according to Camus, 1955) comes into full evidence when we realise the nature of the human condition – and that is our tendency to deny a radical contingency and act in a way that seeks to fulfil our expectations, rather than move beyond them. The limitation of such a position is that we often fail to realise this through the actions we take and the way we interpret what has occurred. Such a position has been exemplified through my own writings, which at times show a limitation in what I perceived inclusion to be, what my role was or could be when acting to seek inclusion and the unrealised possibilities residing in those I worked with and taught.

The absurd is an important concept for identifying why it is difficult to be inclusive in schools for three main reasons. Firstly, it is a tool through which individuals and groups are able to reinterpret their circumstance and acknowledge the contradictions they assert to be true. Secondly, it is a tool through which individuals can view their tendency towards limitation, for both who we are and those with who we interact. Finally it is an idea that helps realise the inauthentic self and prompts us to seek the greater authenticity found in the movement from a perception of being in-itself to one of being for-itself.

The next chapter builds upon this chronology and takes the concept of authenticity (found in Sartre, 1943) and applies it to a new context in order to further develop the question: why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?'

Chapter 6: Authenticity – coherence and solidarity

6.1 Introduction

As in the previous chapter, in this chapter I use a central existential concept to interrogate the question, why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools. The concept that will be used this time, is that of authenticity, which although has already been discussed, has not until this point been the central issue for analysis. It is an idea not only central to the writings and thinking of Sartre (1943, 1946) and to some degree Camus (1953, 1955) but also those influential thinkers who came before them such as Nietzsche (1882, 1886), Heidegger (1927) and Kierkegaard (1843). The reason this idea is so important existentially and has been so influential as an ethical standpoint, is highlighted by Sartre (1946, in his speech: Existentialism is a humanism), where he states: 'Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself.' For the existentialist, if an individual's existence is predicated upon the basis of nothing more than the actions and choices he makes, the drive towards authenticity is fundamental to existence itself and the only rational course of action open to an individual. In viewing inclusion from an existential position, I assert the importance of authenticity to inclusion and the values that underpin it. As such it is necessary to identify and interrogate actions sought and taken to actively seek inclusion. It therefore acts as a tool to understand and address the concerns and questions identified in the methodology, specifically: the variability of the perceived importance of inclusion as a driver for change (Glazzard, 2011) and the reasons behind the seeming lack of active engagement between theory and practice of inclusion and a dialogue that supports this in schools (Ainscow et al., 2006). I present this chapter and the writings and evidence that are found in it as the final historical circumstance upon which this autoethnographic chronology is based. As in the previous chapter, the position from which the experiences, actions, discussions and behaviours that I discuss and evidence within this circumstance, were not at the time they were recorded, the result of an existential rationale. Therefore the existential ideas that are used to review what is discussed or resultant from the data are the product of review and reflection after the situation.

The circumstance discussed in this chapter is the last example in this project, where what I present and discuss exemplifies experiences through which I maintained only an emergent response and view of the existential concepts and ideas. However it is also a circumstance through which the experiences and understandings gained, firmly situate and inform the actions and discourse upon which the discussions in Chapter 7 are based. The data discussed here are taken from another new circumstance, that began when I moved to a new school and took up the role of deputy headteacher of a large Junior school (further details follow below, 6.2). At this point I had been undertaking this research project for some time, but was still using the working title: Can we define inclusion and can we use it to implement change? As a result, although my focus was on inclusion, I was still trying to understand what that meant and actively seeking change through what I hoped would be an inclusive or coherent process. Therefore although this chapter is not about actions I took as a result of an existential position (as this is exemplified within Chapter 7), it is one where the actions I took were guided by a desire for coherence, in a way that linked to the notions of existential authenticity. It is a circumstance through which theoretical influences, personal ideals and existential perspectives are contrasted, including the limitations of those experiences. It also provides an opportunity to show how existential tools can act as a decisive perspective for analysis when looking at approaches to inclusion and notions of coherence.

According to Heidegger (1927), to exist authentically is to '...choose the possibilities of my own existence', but doing so in a way that acknowledges we are 'thrown' into the world and naturally engaged with it, where we must take account of how we deal with problems and the implication of those actions, on ourselves, others and the circumstances which we inhabit (Sartre, 1943). As a concept, authenticity is, for me, innately appealing (highlighted in ideas of consistency and coherence I sought and discussed in the previous chapter), and one upon which a consciousness of inclusion, if not an inclusive stance, is intrinsically evident. As such it is an idea that implicitly threads its way through much of the personal data in this chapter. However our capacity to realise an

authentic position, such as that defined by Heidegger (1927) undoubtedly has significant barriers, examples of these are 'the absurd' (Camus, 1955), exemplified in the Chapter 5, our tendency towards 'bad-faith' (Sartre, 1943), something that is discussed in this chapter and what Heidegger (1927) himself describes as following 'das man' – to do what is generally thought of as the correct thing, to accept the norms of society in an unquestioning way. Within this chapter I trace how my urge to be consistent is contrasted by what I saw in the actions and thoughts of others and my own intermittent regression into 'bad faith' (Sartre, 1943), despite my desire to do otherwise. A key contention within the chapter is therefore, inevitably, the difficulty of being authentic and the implications of this for being inclusive.

The problem of seeking to be authentic is described by Sartre (1943, p90):

> ...there is in fact an 'evanescence' of bad faith, which is evident, vacillates continually between good faith and cynicism: Even though the existence of bad faith is very precarious, and though it belongs to the kind of psychic structures which we might call 'metastable', it presents nonetheless an autonomous and durable form. It can even be the normal aspect of life for a very great number of people. Thus the subject deceives himself about the meaning of the conduct, he apprehends it in its concrete existence but not in truth, simply because he cannot derive it from an original situation.

This quote from Sartre (1943) highlights the complex nature of the position we face when both seeking to be authentic in ourselves (acting in good faith) and seeking authenticity in others, and how through words, thoughts and actions our position (either individually or collectively) towards generic principles and generalisable truths is always going to be uncertain. Therefore as in previous chapters, when seeking to derive truths from existential ideas it is important to accept the contradictory and unreasonable nature of engagement with life (Camus, 1955), but also the possibilities that are revealed in doing so (Sartre, 1943).

In the previous chapter I broke the analysis down into themes that were taken from ideas that I believed to be evident within the texts and pertinent to the discussion. I do this again, with a similar rationale, but use terms that are also highly relevant to existential discussions surrounding authenticity and what this means. The themes I have chosen are:

1. Self-affirmation
2. Responsibility
3. Solidarity

6.2 Case conceptualisation and context

Unlike the previous school, the circumstance at this new school was what I would consider to be much more traditional and my role within it much more conventional. However, to describe the circumstance of the school, rather than replicate something I have previously written, I have taken an extract from a case study I wrote where I was seeking to gain better understanding of inclusion:

> St Martin's is a large Junior school with a population of approximately 400 pupils between the ages of seven and eleven. It is the largest school on a site it shares with its feeder infant school and a special school for children with severe and profound learning difficulties. It is sited on the outskirts of a medium sized town with a catchment that is mixed, taking children from both the private and social housing surrounding the school. However it has lower than average indices of deprivation and need (as defined by Ofsted) with the percentage on Free School Meals at just five percent (on uptake) and the percentage of children with special educational needs at thirteen percent both of which are well below the national average.
>
> The area in which the school is based (according to national statistics online) has low levels of crime, moderate to high levels of education and employment with the percentage of children from ethnic minority backgrounds low at six percent, the rest being either white middle or working class. As the school has a history of high performance and good standing in the community it is often in the position where many

> of the year groups are oversubscribed, with class sizes between 30 and 34 across the school. It is relatively unusual for a primary school in that 25 percent of the intake come from well outside the catchment (a distance of three miles or more) and as a (voluntary controlled) church school sits within three Parish areas.

As this school was one of tradition, expectation and high achievement, the challenges associated with it were different from the circumstances described in Chapter 5). My initial perception undertaking this role, was that change was viewed by the staff very sceptically and as a result the dangers of what Heidegger (1927) describes as following 'das man' were both significant and ingrained and, despite having been at the school for a significant period of time (having started in April 2007), when writing my reflections, those initial perceptions are still evident (Reflections, September 2010):

> It was clear yet again that our vocabularies relating to many of these issues often maintained divergent positioning in terms of beliefs, values and understandings – particularly in relation to the bigger picture. Staff seem anxious, happy, excited, resigned (already!) and in some cases hugely motivated. Still been ironing out the last minute timetable changes – agreements over how, when and what is the best ways to utilise some of the skills of our TAs – there is already talk in the staff room anticipating the misdeeds or misbehaviours of some of the more well known characters in the school – something which I always find uncomfortable – as it is clear despite the talk and approaches that we are trying to foster that perceptions and beliefs are such a difficult thing to shift, I'm looking forward to tomorrow – it will be good to get the children back in the building.

Looking back on my time at this school, change and the need for change was always a contention for me (and an issue intrinsically linked with self – affirmation and authenticity, as I discuss later in the chapter). This is because, although change is always a difficult thing to manage in any system, urgency and positive support of change seem to come more easily when the circumstance necessitates it or there is clear evidence that something is not working or is actively problematic. Therefore although it would seem intuitive to think that implementing change in a stable circumstance would be quite straightforward, having experienced both stable and unstable, I do not consider it to be the case. The key difference in stable circumstances is that

the difficulties of change are perhaps less apparent and the limitations for change less overt. Also because the need for change was less overt (although I contend, still just as necessary, particularly from an inclusive perspective), it became easier to rationalise the status quo. This is a perception I felt in full force when trying to undertake change in my role as deputy head in this circumstance. Such a point is made by Sartre (1943) who discusses how freedom is most readily realised in the face of adversity (where he asserts freedom to be the freedom to choose our possibilities). The implication from this is that the inauthentic is likely to be found where we find ourselves most comfortable. This is important when broadening the ideas surrounding inclusion, as inclusion is likely to be limited just as much by the disengaged system as the pragmatic and reactive system (as described by the circumstance in chapter 5).

When seeking authenticity, the biggest danger, according to Sartre (1943) is 'bad faith', which he suggests happens as a result of attempting to escape our own anxiety about the ambiguity of our lives and instil certainty into it. Sartre (1943, p89) notes:

> ...the one who practices bad faith is hiding a displeasing truth or presenting a truth as a pleasing untruth. Bad faith then has in appearance the structure of falsehood. Only what changes everything is the fact that in bad faith it is from myself that I am hiding the truth.

Such 'bad faith' as described by Sartre was evident in my new school, not only in individual responses to themselves, but perhaps more damagingly, from an inclusive perspective, in individual interpretations of others and the passive acceptance of those perspectives. I describe such a circumstance in the following extract (reflections, September 2010):

> Whilst going through this information along with the assessment data on each child (which includes teacher assessments, class test data, QCA data and CAT test data) it became apparent that in a number of cases the whole child review could often be significantly elevated in the

> literacy / numeracy line when the child was high in areas such as wide friendships and good self image and interestingly when pleasing adults was particularly high it often correlated with lower performance in much of the other areas.
>
> I suppose it has got me thinking very much about a notion of tracking perceptions and beliefs relating to children and what it is that manifests those perceptions particularly when data suggests the perception is misinformed? Is it the perception that is misinformed in these cases or is the data itself problematic? This is something I will need to look into more thoroughly. It certainly makes me think of the notion of accommodation (as outlined in the work by Giles and Coupland, 1991) – in that beliefs could be accommodated due to underlying assumptions of assertions made based on the situation, circumstance or beliefs about that child generally or even social assumptions made on the basis of background and behaviour.

The difficulty of 'bad faith' (Sartre, 1943) is that it is not simply an example of a hidden falsehood, but the product of a circumstance through which ideas which are not challenged substantiate themselves upon the basis of an accepted view of how things are. Sartre (1943, p89) highlights this point: '... the duality of the deceiver and the deceived does not exist here. Bad faith on the contrary implies in essence the unity of a single consciousness.' As I struggled with these contradictions and contentions this inertia towards change and lack of action due to passive acceptance of how things are, became a common theme of the reflections and of my frustrations evident in them e.g.:

> I have just sat through what is cumulatively the 12th hour (my frustration is probably evident in the fact that I have counted them!) this term where we have discussed management items that have little or no bearing on the children, the development of teaching and learning or the progress of the school e.g. being shown where all the policies are stored on the intranet – through a click by click presentation (despite the fact that we already know), being shown the staff calendar and new projectors (again), discussing issues with no direction or outcome despite the fact that all but the head were trying to get one – being brushed off with the response 'I don't want to rush into decisions – I just wanted to let you know what I was thinking – we will discuss it again at a later date.' I suppose this wouldn't be so frustrating if there was not hundreds of things that did need discussing like teaching and learning, support and strategies to target struggling learners, strategies to deal with disruption that focuses and values, formative assessment strategies and approaches that could increase class participation etc... (Monday 20th September, 2010)

To exemplify this point further, but specifically in relation to inclusion, there are examples within a number of the short interviews that were conducted with teaching staff at the school. These interviews were short discussions based on a pre-defined set of questions, which were given to the interviewees prior to discussion, for them to think about. The interviews were designed to get broad responses from a range of teachers on what they thought about the idea and impact of inclusion in schools. Within these interviews there is evidence of a level of disengagement and apathy in relation to inclusion and the inclusion agenda as a whole. An example of this is given below in an extract of the interview with Andy (March, 2011):

> Me: Do you feel that the inclusion agenda supports the progress and development of schools?
>
> Andy: I'm not really sure that inclusion is always the answer. Children with behaviour difficulties can be extremely detrimental to learning, likewise with physical disabilities. Inclusion is not always the best option for all parties.
>
> Me: Do you feel that it is an important agenda for you day-to-day?
>
> Andy: I think that it is something most people are aware of – but like me I'm not sure that it is one that is fully considered beyond the immediate – I don't think many schools really plan enough to support it – and this usually means that they can't or don't want to.

In this interview Andy questioned the appropriateness of inclusion as an idea, and for schools specifically He highlighted a view whereby inclusion is a thing that makes changes which are detrimental to the conditions in school, accepting, in his view that schools often do not want to make the changes to make inclusion work.

Nicky, who was a senior teacher in the school, highlighted the presumption that inclusion is a good thing, but acknowledged her lack of explicit engagement with it as an idea:

> Me: Do you feel that the inclusion agenda supports the progress and development of schools?
>
> Nicky: I'm a bit ignorant of the agenda for inclusion – however I believe that we live in a community and we need to reflect and support children in that community in school. This means supporting all and not excluding – as far as possible if needs need supporting.
>
> Me: Do you feel that it is an important agenda for you day-to-day?
>
> Nicky: I suppose so – I think that the class should be representative of the community in which we live so that the wider learning that goes on in class is representative of what needs to go on in the community
>
> Me: How does it affect you on a day to day basis?
>
> Nicky: There are children in my class who are not accessing the curriculum or making progress at the rate they should. This is in large part because I cannot provide them the support they need to engage their learning fully. Also – I'm not always sure that the programmes and support on offer at the school are always the right ones.
>
> (Nicky, interview number 5, March 2011)

As discussed in the introduction, authenticity in relation to inclusion is likely to be a product of active engagement with inclusion and the ideas that underpin it. As such, an inauthentic approach to inclusion is likely to result from superficial engagement, which is unlikely to elicit anything as fundamental as transformational change. The next extract is from an interview taken from Sue, a teacher who had been teaching at the school for over 25 years. This extract highlights a response grounded in the pragmatics and logistics of the day to day management of inclusion (Sue, interview number 6, March 2011):

> Me: What do you feel are the implications of inclusion in schools now and for schools in the future?
>
> Sue: Finance, a change in the way they are organised, different management? Maybe the size of classes? Classrooms will become more representative of the population as a whole – which may benefit the SMSC development of all children – but there will need to be more emphasis on the detailed day to day management of what we do. There are a lot of logistical things that would need to be thought about – but I'm sure it's possible.

> Me: Do you feel that the inclusion agenda supports the progress and development of schools?
>
> Sue: It must be part of the future development of schools – but as I have said there will need to be changes in staffing, buildings and facilities – not to mention the way people would respond to it. Whether it supports progress and development of schools remains to be seen!
>
> Me: How does it affect you on a day-to-day basis?
>
> Sue: Inclusion in our school at present does not affect me any more than it ever did. Are we in fact fully inclusive? We have a special school next door. How many of those pupils could be included here? How many of those pupils may in future be included in mainstream schooling. If we are fully inclusive can we withdraw children for part or all of the lesson?

Again, in the last paragraph it is possible to identify an apathetic attitude to the idea of inclusion, when she states: 'Inclusion in our school at present does not affect me any more than it ever did.' This is also a troublesome view of inclusion for another reason and that is in how it asserts inclusion as something that impacts on individuals as opposed to something individuals seek to engage with. It highlights a passive approach to inclusion rather than an active one and asserts inclusion in the 'in-itself' rather than the 'for-itself'. This is something, therefore which Sartre (1943) would assert as inauthentic.

These three interviews, although not providing different perspectives, do suggest a lack of active engagement, involvement and consideration with and of inclusion perceived importance. Andy's interview seems to project the implicit belief that the problems lie with the children, Nicky highlights a response of contingency, identifying problems but believing them to be part of the process, and Sue suggests that the issues of inclusion are things to be considered but are often issues for others. Although these views are only a small selection of some that emerged through the research process, they highlight, not only some of the difficulties of developing a coherent view of being inclusive but also the lack of desire to act in a way that engages with inclusion.

To delve more deeply into these issues it is necessary to clearly distinguish between how the 'absurd' (discussed in the previous chapter) and notion of 'authenticity' can act as both separate but complementary tools to help evaluate the specific circumstances discussed and the implications for being inclusive. A key division between Sartre (1943) and Camus (1955) was in their views on the importance of authenticity. For Camus (1955, p52), recognition of the absurd and an 'insistence upon an impossible transparency', gained through revolt, was the only way to challenge the world and gain a more active engagement with life. Sartre (1943) in contrast, while recognising the importance of the absurd in identifying the contradictions that are so evident in our engagement with life, felt that it was only through seeking authenticity that the freedom realised through 'being for-itself' could be acted upon in a way that was sustainable and coherent. Absurdity is an emergent response that comes from the recognition of contradictory actions or circumstances which are accepted, rationalised or ignored as the result of a lack of active engagement with life (Camus, 1955), which although powerful in enabling review and reinterpretation of our actions, is innately individualistic and distant when it comes to the application of it as the tool for seeking or enabling inclusion. This is demonstrated by Camus (1955, p52) in his own words when he defines the position as one that is about: '... a constant confrontation between man and his own obscurity'. As such it is a tool which both enables and asserts individual action and activism, but also is difficult to integrate with ideas of collective action or solidarity towards a common goal, which is so necessary in the inclusive process. Authenticity (Sartre, 1943) alternatively, is the active process through which an individual strives for the 'impossible transparency' of Camus (1955), whilst recognising that we are accountable to ourselves for being so, evidenced through our interaction with others. It is the lack of self-accountability according to Sartre (1943) that leads to 'bad faith'. In both sets of ideas change is achieved by the individual, regardless of their situation, seeking to transcend their own circumstance. It is, however, in the idea of authenticity through which Sartre asserts the need to recognise the impact of our actions (specifically those of bad faith) upon those around us (and take responsibility for doing so), and it is through this collective engagement or solidarity towards this purpose that change can be realised. It is this process of authenticity that seems to have significant opportunities for active engagement with the process of inclusion, or at least a way to make

inclusion more accessible and simpler to understand through a dialogue of existential authenticity. Engagement with inclusion, manifested through the lens of authenticity enables a view of inclusion, not as a thing but as a modulating journey, that could also be absurd or responded to in bad faith (as touched on above) but clarified through an insistence towards authenticity where it is a process that is incumbent upon everyone to do their part, regardless of their circumstance. However, to do so it is also likely that the limitations or considerations of authenticity may also apply. I use the themes previously highlighted as a framework from which to unpick this more fully below.

6.3 Self-Affirmation

One of the most stark contentions in existentialist thought, which can be found in the works of Nietzsche (1883; 1886), Kierkegaard (1843), Sartre (1943) and Camus (1953; 1955) is the challenge of human self-affirmation in a world where values and direction are not certain. Sartre (1943) questions this position directly, by asking about the relationship between self-affirmation and being and questioning whether self-affirmation necessitates a direct relationship to a thing or way of being or whether there are in fact many possibilities or ways of thinking about affirmation of who we are:

> Everything happens as if, in order to free the affirmation of the self from the heart of being, there is necessary decompression of being. Let us not, however, think that being is merely one undifferentiated self-affirmation, the undifferentiation of the in-itself is beyond an infinity of self-affirmation, in as much as there is an infinity of modes of self-affirming
>
> (Sartre, 1943, p27)

The danger, therefore of self-affirmation, is the reduction of what it can become and the basis upon which that can happen. Therefore, for inclusion, the challenge of self-affirmation is an important issue and limitation to its development as it is a process through which deviation, misdirection or bad

faith can easily emerge when seeking to be authentically inclusive. The urge toward affirmation and self-affirmation can be found across the data, both in my own responses and in those interviewed. These responses are those that seek to make sense of our places within the circumstance we inhabit, by seeking to affirm what we are and do. Although this is perhaps a natural response, it also encompasses difficulty, when viewing that response or circumstance through an existential lens. The journey that I undertook during my time at St Martin's was not one of dramatic change or struggle, as it had felt at points during my time at Badgewood (chapter 5), it was instead one, that seems to have been more about the cultural confrontation I found myself engaged with through my urge to do something meaningful and respond to the absurdities I began to realise through seeking to do that something. This is highlighted in my initial reflective writings in this circumstance (Reflections, September 2010):

> Where are we now? Where are we going? Do we agree? These are all the thoughts that go through your head before the start of a new school year and being faced with two days of Teacher training before the children are back in. The training over the next two days will cover Child Protection, Teaching and learning (priorities, learning to learn and assessment), behaviour management and development, performance management, training and school improvement. It seems a huge amount to cram into the time available but inevitably many of these areas are interlinking and supportive and lay a key role in us engaging with a collective view and approach in the up and coming year.

Here what is evident is a desire on my part for collective direction of approach and action, but also an implicit appeal to legitimacy and affirmation of what I hope to achieve. This desire for self-affirmation can also be found later, when I describe the circumstance through which I am offered new and different things to do, both as an extension to my role in school and apart from it (Reflections, March 2011):

> In November the special school on our site failed its OFSTED and had to begin to deal with all the issues that surround that (inc. overt levels of scrutiny and monitoring – not to mention the introspection that inevitably occurs). At the time the issue which had been identified as the most necessary and pronounced area for development is that of

> Teaching and learning (significantly emphasising the learning aspect). After feedback from the monitoring report and the identified lack of progress the Head of the school approached my Head to ask if I would be interested in working with the school to help look at teaching and learning. The idea of a new, novel and intriguing opportunity meant that as of this week I have started to spend some time in the school to get an impression of what is happening and whether I feel that I can help.

Rather than an insistence upon authenticity, these extracts are written as a result of my seeking self-affirmation, where I hoped to realise a coherence in my beliefs and actions and identify value in what I was doing affirmed by 'successful' action, confirmed by others. Although on first review this seems a natural position to seek or assert, it is implicitly one of limitation as it is a perspective of being in-itself and as such asserts (or seeks to establish) consensus with how things are, or what has been done, whether appropriate or not. It can as a result lead to affirmation of the status quo, or at times the assertion of conventional dogma rather than a challenge to it. It is, therefore, an example of how easily bad faith can infiltrate our own actions. The other difficulties of self-affirmation can be broadly exemplified across three areas. These are change, risk and challenge (perceived or otherwise) and flexibility. These three areas and why they create problems for being inclusive are discussed below.

6.3.1 Change

The importance of change is implicit in the existential mode of thought, whether this be through the circumstance we inhabit or the actions we take. Examples include Camus (1955, p52) who viewed the aim of his philosophical position of revolt as one which 'challenges the world anew every second' and Heidegger (1927) who believes that each individual must constantly 'choose the possibilities of my own existence'. In a narrative sense the difference in existential engagement with life, according to Golomb (1995) is the view that I am constantly in the process of creating my own narrative rather than engaging in a pre-exisiting one and as a result can choose the possibilities available to me. In this view, my impact on how things are is always at the forefront of what I do. Therefore to engage with an existential perspective is to

insist upon the change being sought, rather than merely suggest what should be done. This is why the idea of acceptance of bad faith and the absurd is viewed as an unacceptable position – as if we can do something about it – why aren't we? Taking this perspective is an overtly critical stance and aligns itself nicely with the perspective of actively seeking inclusion, as well as allowing us to question why we don't do more to be inclusive.

During my time at St Martin's I undertook a range of projects that were about seeking solutions and developing change, examples of this are the case study report I produced, about developing more effective professional development for staff (May 2011) and my work with the co-sited special school, supporting their movement out of special measures (March-April 2011). In each example action and dialogue was interweaved into what has been written, however the model of change in both cases was contingent upon what I suggested should be taken up, rather than any insistence on the actions actually being carried out. This lacks authenticity as although it implies action it did not demand it or facilitate necessarily that possibility in others.

For Sartre (1943) the reason we do not act for change in a way that is both transcendent and transformational is a product of our default setting to deny our freedom and disengage from our personal responsibility (which he describes as 'man's useless passion') and it is bad faith that stops a more authentic realisation. For Sartre (1943) the ideas of change and personal self-affirmation are contradictory, as seeking to establish your selfhood is another way of being 'in-itself', which is akin to defining yourself as thing and accepting how things are rather than embracing the possibilities how things could be. As such, the act of seeking self-affirmation is an example of bad faith. Translating this idea to inclusion, I would suggest that - contentions surrounding selfhood and the requirement to recognise individual, collective or community needed in order to promote inclusion - is a distraction from being inclusive and is actually something that ingrains rather than transcends the issues of individual difference. Therefore to seek to affirm your selfhood is to create a 'self-for others' (Sartre, 1943, p379) and through doing this assume a 'being as object' (Sartre, 1943, p379) for an indefinable other.

Sartre's solution to this difficulty is, rather than seek affirmation of ourselves, we should seek authenticity by actively engaging in life and acting in a way that seeks affirmation by our actions (asserted through the way our actions seek to change the inequalities and contentions evident in the day-to-day). Again to translate this idea to inclusion, to affirm inclusive beliefs and behaviours we cannot focus on the contentions that ingrain group otherness, but instead need to focus on what we are doing to realise an authentic engagement with what it means to be inclusive. Inclusive engagement is not about descriptive analysis of what is or could be (which is so often realised in the social model) or reactive responses to what isn't (often found in the symptom based response of the psycho-medical model) but action to realise a change and facilitation of that action in others. This change asserted by Sartre is a change in how we view the corresponding elements of responsibility and freedom. He believed that we are free to act (and to believe otherwise is nothing more than inauthenticity or bad faith), and as a result of that freedom we must take on the responsibility that this implies. Therefore if we identify something as contradictory, unfair, discriminatory or absurd we have a responsibility to act with conviction in order to be authentic. In doing so we can aim towards a mode of being where we transcend the self, where at every moment, in every choice, a human can become something more than what he or she was a moment before (Sartre, 1943). So what limits our authenticity and capacity to act in school? In an interview Ben (interview 2, March 2011) highlights how actions are limited by school leadership:

> Me: What do you feel are the implications of inclusion in schools now and for schools in the future?
>
> Ben: The need to adopt teaching methods that support a wide range of learners – having the personnel to support pupils or meet their needs through withdrawal – flexibility – space to accommodate individuals and groups of learners
>
> Me: Do you feel that the inclusion agenda supports the progress and development of schools?
>
> Ben: Depends to what extent it is taken up – I certainly feel that it is an honourable notion or ideal

> Me: Do you feel that it is an important agenda for you day-to-day?
>
> Ben: Yes in some ways – but I don't always feel that classroom teachers have the ability to make the changes or develop in the ways they would like without senior management support

Ben asserted that individual actions are limited by those within the system who have more power or control. This was also something I also believed to be the case in my role as deputy head. The following extract from my reflections at the time (Reflections, March 2011) highlight my belief that there was only so much you could do without those actions being supported by the headteacher:

> I have been actively trialling out all the teaching methods I have been pushing now for eighteen months, with huge amounts of success in terms of engagement, participation, output across the class as opposed to just output in individuals and establishment of listening and dialogue around the class. However getting everyone to use them regularly as opposed to something special has been quite difficult. My head talks about allowing 'having considerable personal autonomy in class room practice' – which although – notionally I don't have a problem with - in terms of impacting on teaching conceptions, developing new approaches, monitoring teaching and establishing consistency across the school it is becoming very difficult. I didn't think I would be one for imposing approaches on staff and proscribing the strategies they should use to the extent I am looking to do – but I have got to the point where in order that the strategies are worked with and trialled rigorously over time I don't really see what else we can do – I suppose it is a matter of watching this space to see if this is a possibility. The strategies are not anything that is so alien from what is already being done (very much along the Wiliam and Black formative assessment approach, but with a tweak to look at how to use it to establish dialogue) – just more drive, focus and rigour within them.

Implicit in this extract is the view that a limitation can be caused by contingent action in leadership as well as leadership which results in misdirection. This is to say that effective action and change needs direction, purpose and a rationale, but also that freedom without responsibility (identified here in terms of purpose and rigour) can result in helplessness or resignation. The concept of authenticity implies an intrinsic rationale that is both purposeful for the individual and for the formation of a shared dialogue (something also viewed to be missing in this extract). However to suggest that the limitation of action

and authenticity in schools is limited entirely by those who lead them, would not be genuine either. Looking at the interview I undertook with the school parent support advisor, Norma (May 2011), who's role it was to work with vulnerable families at the school in any way that would enable better attendance and engagement of the children (this could include brokering services, supporting parenting, home visits etc), she suggested that there is a very inconsistent approach and often an attitude that results in contingent action amongst teachers when seeking to include or address the needs of children:

> Me: What should /could a teacher do?
>
> Norma: Teachers need to talk to other teachers more about the children – particularly if anything comes about that they notice which is perhaps different – I'm not talking child protection stuff, I'm talking about fitting in stuff – social stuff – I know teachers notice that stuff, as I talk to them about it – it is about building up a proper informed background. That doesn't happen enough. If I just take my own children – some teachers at primary – even here don't know enough to make the difference or notice that thing that would help and it gets worse at secondary. I know that there is a lot of pressure on teachers but some just don't know the children well enough – as people and that is about communication.
>
> Me: Is it the system or the people that makes this hard?
>
> Norma: It is always going to be a bit of both – but of course there is always the personalities ... isn't there!
>
> Me: Do you think there is a cultural issue to including children fully?
>
> Norma: It depends – I've seen good examples teacher by teacher, although I don't think there is enough discussion about the whole child. That's not just here ... the other schools I have and work in are the same and they are all supposed to be good and better schools. Schools have got a lot of data – they know a lot about levels and performance – But I don't really think that that is holistic – it's pretty blunt really. Even where schools say they care about the whole child and have set up for it – it often comes down to the individual teacher – and that is different within the same school as much often as from one school to another...
>
> Me: Any other barriers?
>
> Norma: It's all about communication – for me. You see all these cases where the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing – it's frustrating...
>
> Me: Why do you think that is?

> Norma: People don't always do what they say – act in agreed ways or pass information on. It always seems a little bit about blame – who is responsible instead of how can we deal with the problem. People need to talk more – I'm not sure that everyone involved in schools really understands.

Here, what is evident is the idea that although change and action are regularly contested issues, lack of coherent action for change is a limitation, but so is contingent action as a response to change, and this can occur at every level. This was perceived by Norma when she suggested that teachers could make more of what they do, suggesting that problems and limitations are down to attitudes and approaches of individual teachers as well as systems, structures or leadership. It is our desire for self-affirmation rather than self-challenge that means we fail to realise both the personal and collective responsibility that this implies and is therefore something that we must overcome before we can begin to talk about genuine transformational change.

6.3.2 Risk and challenge

Working at St Martin's, a central contention I had, already highlighted in the section 6.2, was my perceived need for change versus the view that that I kept coming across, which was that change wasn't necessary or was too risky, held by a proportion of the staff. There was also the contention about what we wanted to achieve and how we wanted to do it, given the expectations and pressures on all schools from external agencies and judgements such as Ofsted. During my time at St Martin's this manifested itself, in my mind, in a way that failed to commit to any specific perspective, in order to negate the risk of doing something; we ended up taking the risk of doing nothing that would have fundamental or transformational impact. Although superficially this seems less risky, it is innately more so, as it implies a position of bad faith and contingent actions(Sartre, 1943) that asserts little control or responsibility within that circumstance. The position we found ourselves in, in not challenging our views and values enough and not making active choices, was to limit ourselves and what we could do and fail to adopt any kind of authenticity in our position. This situation is alluded to by Norma (May, 2011) in her view of things:

> Yes – there is a lot of tick boxing that goes on and a lot of this stuff isn't an Ofsted priority – so it's not one of the big things on the school development plan. I do think that this standards stuff has gone too far – league tables – ticking the box. Sometimes I think that schools are more about ticking the boxes than seeing or meeting the needs of the individual child.

> We need to keep that focus on the child. In one of the schools I work at I heard the head say that he didn't want to be outstanding as it is too much pressure and the only way is down. Does that mean schools don't want to be as good as they can be or they don't want to do the things which will tick the outstanding box? Are good schools the ones who focus more on the child – that is certainly what happens in one school my colleague works at that is outstanding. The Head there won't talk to the PSA because she says that because they are an outstanding school they have not got those sorts of problems and don't need that sort of help. This is in a school where the PSA is funded through the hub – so is free for that school. Every school has got those problems – yes some more than others but it is like when schools say they don't have bullying at their school. All schools have bullying at some point – it is more what they do about it that tells me whether they are any good. It just seems strange to me.

In this extract Norma described an example of an absurd condition that a school had got into – losing sight of the reason they were there and developing circumstances where they were seeking to affirm what they were rather than seeking to find out what we could be. She also suggested that schools that are 'successful' or are achieving within the system as it is, are more inclined to affirm that system and their role within it. The implicit assumption that risk or responsibility can be avoided through affirmation of your own perceived successful position is an absurd circumstance that we found ourselves in at St Martin's, resulting from a lack of challenge and active questioning of what we were doing, resulting in bad faith. What made me engage with, and begin to acknowledge, my own bad faith that was resultant from this situation, and became a catalyst for greater action, was working with the children in a different circumstance, which in this case was the Year 6 residential (Reflections, September 2010):

> A huge success! What a great trip! The young man in question who many, including myself thought might be a last minute no show came – and was a real credit to the school and himself. This seems a strange thing to say but to get him on the trip in the first place was not only a situational and circumstantial problem but one that had to be fought for as the head felt his behaviour and history of exclusion and lack of compliance was a risk too far – and ultimately if I wanted to take him I had to take responsibility for him! Perhaps this is one of those situations where belief in the possibility and appropriateness of the decision paid off. What was genuinely superb was to see the children out of the usual confines of the school and see how their responses, body language and interactions altered – not to say that this was always good as in some cases the freedom did promote negative behaviour – but this was in only a very small minority.
>
> Such experiences always get me reflecting upon how circumstance, situation and expectation can regularly change outcomes of things due to the decisions made (often on preconceived assumptions). If we had made the assumption that Kyle wouldn't be able to behave / cope both he and everyone else would have missed out on an experience that challenged assumptions. On his behalf of what school is and is like and for others what he is or is like but also how interactions can manifest themselves. It also brings to mind how behaviours and assumptions are generated contextually but often treated as norms or identities – reaffirming once more the necessity to challenge such things.

This is an example of how residential trips and other out of the ordinary occurrences, as well as often having a significant effect upon the children who are involved in them, can have an equally profound effect upon those who run them. Using the existential perspective, they can reawaken forgotten possibilities and shake loose some of those heavily guarded and pre-held perceptions. This perspective also highlights how unchallenged, routinised, recurring and replicated behaviour, which is endemic in schools from my experience, is far from being safe or affirming but some of the most risky and dangerous behaviour. This is because it fails to acknowledge the difficulties and problems of the circumstance individuals find themselves in. Schools such as St Martin's, due to the lack of overt need to act, are schools which may be the ones which are most problematic to the wider inclusion process as they are the ones least likely to engage in transformational change. After coming back from the residential trip described above I actively sought to challenge conventional practice and behaviour in school – in an effort, once more to

approach a coherent perspective and build meaning in what I was doing (Reflections, September 2010):

> I have certainly had some interesting discussions with Year leaders regarding the approaches that we are looking to use (although in many cases it is mostly a matter of revitalising) as they have had to review and reconsider simple issues like – why do we make children put their hands up? Are we asking questions that are open and get children to respond in a considered and thoughtful manner? Are we including everyone in the learning? Are there groups who are not involved? How can we include those who seek to opt out in classroom discussions? Should we have greater dialogue in classes? If so how do we support them? Can we afford to give children the choice as to whether they participate? Is choice sometimes a bad thing? When is choice a good thing?

Such questions as these were the beginning of a much more engaged and critical position that I subsequently took. As suggested earlier and referenced in the last section, although individuals are quick to identify difficulty and limitation in their circumstances and the behaviour of others (starkly evident in the interviews undertaken in March 2011), they are less active in engaging in a perspective where our own accountability is the first challenge we need to address and also in understanding that risk is a natural part of the freedom that were are 'condemned' (Sartre, 1943) to have. Therefore, instead of inclusion being a laudable yet intrinsically problematic process (implied by the interviews undertaken in March 2011), using the existential perspective, we negate the assumed or additional risk associated with change (due to its inevitable necessity, realised or not) and through seeking to be inclusive provide a purpose and rationale for it.

6.3.3 Flexibility

Within the existential view of being, Sartre (1943) has considerable concern with the extent to which individuals sustain an active realisation of their freedom (if and when that freedom is realised), due to the fatigue inevitably caused by the constant need to act and the responsibility that must be accepted for the actions taken. Camus (1955, p52) suggests something similar

when he describes conscious being in the world as '... a constant confrontation ... [that] challenges the world anew every second.' For Sartre (1943), in giving into this fatigue (ceasing to challenge the conventional and absurd) we regress into bad-faith and an inauthentic way of being. One of the key issues highlighted by Sartre in his discussion of 'fatigue' is how we may overcome it and continue to be authentic. He proposes being more flexible in how we see things and consequently the possibilities that present themselves:

> We are going to reply to this question by first presenting a theoretical description which will enable us to grasp the principle of our thesis. We shall see subsequently whether the concrete reality is not shown to be more complex and whether without contradicting the results of our theoretical inquiry it will not lead us to enrich them and make them more flexible. (Sartre, 1943, p585).

This point is not only salient for the analysis of the data to come, but also in highlighting the value of the existential model for understanding inclusion. This is because it recognises how the fatigue we experience through confrontation with our circumstance, acknowledged through the process of seeking to be inclusive, is best met through a flexible dynamic, rather than one that asserts a singular direction or dialogue.

The theme of flexibility is explicitly evident through the data when discussing effective inclusive action, but this is most evident in discussion of action in relation to what and how things are taught. Norma (May, 2011, quoted in section 6.3.2) highlighted how she felt that some actions in schools were less about the children and more about the system she emphasised the need for greater flexibility in the system (May, 2011):

> Me: From what you have seen is the curriculum a barrier to inclusion and meeting the needs of individual children?
>
> Norma: I think it is more whether they are flexible and consider some of the current things that are important in the world. I'd like to see more geography and science in the primary schools – it does seem to be mostly maths and English. There is a lot of focus on the three Rs. I can

> see why but for some of the children we work with – and the families, it just puts them off.

Norma argued that what people believe they have to do limits actions and approaches that could make things better for the children. Ben (interview 2, March 2011), supported the idea of a need for flexibility in order that inclusive ideas can be embraced:

> Me: What do you feel are the implications of inclusion in schools now and for schools in the future?
>
> Ben: The need to adopt teaching methods that support a wide range of learners – having the personnel to support pupils or meet their needs through withdrawal – flexibility – space to accommodate individuals and groups of learners

Some of what is discussed here is an issue of capacity of schools to be able to do more, but it is also a view alluding to the need to change how and what we do in order to consider individual needs better. This is something Ben suggested later in the interview in the idea that schools are limited by their leadership, although perhaps in doing negates his own personal responsibility. This idea of responsibility is discussed below.

6.4 Responsibility

As this chronology developed a key change in my own position, as I moved from one school to the next, was the increased level of overt responsibility I assumed through the roles that I took on. By taking on these new roles, I felt that I was able to assert greater influence over my circumstance and engage in values and approaches that I believed were missing more readily. Ben (interview 2, March 2011) suggested that the level of your hierarchical responsibility within a system either enables or limits the amount of change or influence you are able to make and consequently the degree of responsibility you can assert in how inclusive schools can be. However this does not provide the entire picture as it relegates or in some instances negates the power and

influence of individuals within the system that is necessary for true transformational change. The existential idea of responsibility as outlined by Sartre (1943) is not just about individual responsibility and possibility of action, but also about how individual action impacts on the actions and behaviours of others. Therefore regardless of an individual's level of hierarchical responsibility within a school system, the responsibility for action does not change, as within the existential mode the responsibility for action is asserted at every level and in any circumstance. As such a circumstance does not determine the choices an individual makes it just provides the range of possibilities (this is the notion of thrownness referred to in previous chapters). Therefore Sartre asserts that the inauthentic actions of others in no way relieves the individual from the responsibility of authenticity or in any way mitigates bad faith on the part of the individual. For Sartre, to legitimise the inauthentic in response to the behaviour of others is not only bad faith but asserts a form of contingency that limits both our own possibilities and those of the circumstance in which we find ourselves. Within this section I look at the existential idea of responsibility (in relation to authenticity) and discuss whether limitations to authenticity and inclusive values are influenced by our assumptions in relation to beliefs about responsibility and the corresponding conditions of 'fatigue' and 'bad faith'.

6.41 Responsibility and thrownness

Whilst in this role of deputy head I found myself in a strange position. I had significant responsibility from which to exert influence and change and was passionate about doing so and particularly finding more inclusive approaches from which to develop the school, but I did not have the ultimate say when it came to the key decisions that could fundamentally change structures and systems. Therefore in many ways my possibilities were limited by my circumstance, but within this limitation I was still able to make choices that could have significant impact upon the children and the staff. Through my increasing realisation of this, I approached my circumstance looking at ways to change things rather than identifying where I couldn't. I found myself invigorated by such approaches where they helped realise both my responsibility and a greater level of authenticity that I wanted to assume. This

can be identified in a case study I wrote looking at change and the impact of continuing professional development for teachers in the school (May 2011):

> The first question I will seek to answer within this project is that which is regularly posed by staff (whether explicitly or more covertly) when undertaking a change in structure or approach – that of 'why change?' ... I began with a set of questions from which I hoped it would be possible to establish a position whereby the staff, collectively were as keen for change as I was. This assumption for this was made as a result of previous experience of whole school change which had been limited in its engagement, knowledge of the staff which had been generated over the previous two years and influence from theorists I had been reading such as Rorty, (1980) and Rogers (1951). My feelings on reading these works were that change is a process that is only effective if the changers want to engage in it (Rogers, 1951) and that genuine change is a product of solidarity of purpose (1980). Such approaches are also supported by Fullan (2001; 2008).
>
> Therefore based on the notion that to undertake genuine change we all needed to be the change makers and take responsibility for that change,

This extract and approach (exemplified further in the case study, May 2011) shows a change in action from the overtly individualistic (e.g. what can I do to make a difference) to actions that take account of how my own actions impacted on the actions and behaviours of others and how they could do this most positively. It particularly highlights the idea of solidarity championed by Rorty (1980), where individual action, centred around a common purpose, is a model through which effective change can happen (something supported by Sartre, 1943, reviewed in more detail in the next section). A significant degree of this was realised through a combination of empowerment and dialogue which set about to question the actions and responses that were at one point assumed (or what Heideggar, 1927, referred to as following 'das man'). A further example of this can be seen in the following statement, taken from my earlier reflections at the time (Reflections, October 2010):

> Had an interesting conversation with two of my year leaders today – I have over the last three years been desperately trying to wean the teachers off the excessive amount of withdrawal groups that go on and

> the compulsion many of them have to withdraw the less able with TA and focus on the rest. The issues relating to these ideas are well documented but have always been part of a response to learning needs that has historically been seen as pragmatic here. However for the first time I was told by two of my year leaders 'with all this dispositions work – we are really beginning to see why you are not very keen on the withdrawals that go on – we're really beginning to question the impact of quite a few of them!'

The 'dispositions work' referred to in this extract was an approach I had developed using the work of Claxton (2002) to ensure that teaching and learning was not just focused around explicit outcomes but the capacities developed through teaching and the approaches used, this included resilience, reflexivity, curiosity, sociability etc. The development of this approach and dialogue that I used was a method through which I felt I could achieve more for the children and the school through richer and inclusive change. It was not however, just limited to work with staff but something that I extended to some practise and processes I undertook with parents. An example of this was in the multi-agency Common Assessment Form (CAF) – a form and approach, for which an interview was conducted with a specific family to gain a better understanding, unpick issues and identify agreed ways forward. This was work that I took a lead on for the schools in the area. The following extract (unfinished case study, March 2011) describes the first of these I undertook:

> From the outset the process was undoubtedly one where there was a clear expectation of transparency and openness and assumed a high willingness of the Miss Smith (or any individual undertaking it) to present a frank and holistic picture of her predicament. As the lead professional in the process my perceptions through it fluctuated between concern, for Alfie, her and the situation (lesser and more extreme levels), amazement in that given the extent of the information she provided that she must either have levels of trust which were extraordinarily high or she was so desperate for help that she was willing to present a picture of almost complete vulnerability and overwhelming responsibility as it was clearly a process through which she placed a huge amount of hope. During this process, Alfie was involved in order to get more detail of how some of these areas and issues that affected him, although given his needs and extensive nature of the process undertaken he was not present for the whole thing. At the end of the process which took just over two hours an action plan was set, agreed and signed highlighting agencies which may be supportive (for which referrals would need to be completed) and actions

> the school and Miss Smith herself could take. Miss Smith remarked on leaving that she felt that we 'had really listened to her' and that she felt 'more positive – I hope you understand more now.'

Although the assessment element of the form/process, highlighted in this extract seems to hark back to psycho-medical approaches previously dismissed, the overwhelming value of this process was the dialogue established and the capacity of the process, through support to empower vulnerable families to realise possibilities open to them and be empowered to act to solve their problems. Looking back upon processes and outcomes in the school at this time, it felt to me at least, like we were engaging in something that was intrinsically exciting, fundamentally more authentic and centred around the needs of the school children and families. It was during this specific period at the school where the school received many accolades about the quality of teaching, the high levels of attainment and progress of the children and external assessment suggesting that we were an outstanding school. However as with many new processes and approaches taken on by schools, we failed to assert the responsibility necessary to sustain the behaviours, direction and rigour that had led to the positive developments in the first place. Whether this was a product of fatigue, complacency or lack of recognition, an unrecognised entropy manifested itself within the system. These limitations can be found in specific instances such as the particular case referenced in the 'CAF extract' where the capacity of the school or agencies to maintain a dialogue that could lead to sustainable change, which in this particular case faltered significantly six months down the line. Such a limitation can also however be highlighted (and from my experience substantiated) in other actions described here – such as the sustainability of a dialogical approach to continuing professional development and the maintenance of critical pedagogies of learning. This came about as the result of a switch in focus, where our efforts suddenly became centred more around sustaining and improving data and overt results in the school rather than the processes which enabled us to establish that position in the first place. This was a contention I left the school with in 2011 when I took up my first headship – I left the school in a position where we had our best ever recorded results but in my mind had begun to divorce ourselves from the principles of dialogue, inclusion and

engagement and as a result systemic self-reflection, in a meaningful sense, was already in rapid decline.

This section highlights how purposeful action-based dialogues can help in the realisation of inclusive practices, as well as active and responsive behaviours, which in so doing help the realisation of responsibility and possibility regardless of circumstance. However, although such approaches highlight avenues for increasingly inclusive practices, which began to emerge in my own school at the time, they are predicated upon both a willingness of individuals to engage in such approaches and the understanding that a sustained dialogue requires a sustained commitment to the principles that underpin the desired actions – both of which can be limited by fatigue.

6.4.2 Responsibility and fatigue

The idea of fatigue, described by Sartre (1943, p584-588) as a feeling which we can give into as a recognition of limitation or mental fatigue resultant from the difficulties implicit in living in the world, is one which seems all too familiar in the contention it asserts, but also the choice it provides. From my experience at this school the 'lived experience' in schools of fatigue can be seen in a number of ways such as: through accepting that this is just how things are and asserting the presumed consequence that it doesn't matter what we do – we can't effect change in a meaningful way, the unquestioned acceptance of truisms/dogmas or the belief that something is a good idea but to actually exist in a way that seeks coherence with that view is too much effort. My recognition of these conceptions are found in the case study I wrote on change and continuing professional development (May, 2011), an extract from this is as follows:

> Taking the assumptions of common understanding and maintained value, it was soon made very clear to me that value as I saw it was perceived by some of my colleagues as a highly flexible commodity which fluctuated depending on the proximity of the actions to the event and the relationship of the action to the value itself and that issues such as coherency were not necessarily maintained at the macro and micro

> level. Examples of these issues could be anything as simple as valuing their need to get a cup of tea above turning up on time for duties, clubs and events to committing to professional development activities with a defined purpose then seeking to avoid that commitment of their part in that process, but doing so in a way that was covert and not upfront. Yet at the same time expecting full levels of commitment from pupils when put in similar situations. For me such issues although in many cases minor lacked a coherency in approach. Therefore notions such as the famous Ghandi quote of 'we must become the change we want to be' seemed in the early stages starkly lacking. Such issues were ones which it was necessary for me to address early on with styles of leadership which Goleman (2000) describes as coercive and authoritative. Although I was acutely aware at the time that if I was to use such approaches as dominant methods for generating a cohesive and collective vision it was unlikely to work.

This extract also highlights my frustration in the lack of commitment I felt was given to a process we had agreed to. These views generally, exemplify many of the contradictions through which fatigue can arise, that is found across the data e.g. the interview with Sue (interview number 6, March 2011) or the reflections on working with a special school, undertaking Ofsted training (March-April 2011).

For Sartre (1943, p592), to give in to fatigue, 'is to transcend the path by causing it to constitute in itself the meaning of - a path too difficult to traverse'. As such the limitation of fatigue is to limit our own possibilities of what we can achieve, something that is intrinsically linked with the process of seeking and being inclusive. As I have argued that the process of inclusion is inextricably linked to struggle and change and to give up on these or believe it to be a process too difficult would cause failure to the inclusive project. The limitation of fatigue is found in two corresponding ideas – the freedom to choose and the responsibility to do so authentically (Sartre, 1943). However the text examples provided above also show a limitation to sustaining action and the responsibility to act was in my circumstance often due to a lack of unity based on agreed meaning that was important enough to overcome the fatigue or assert with clarity or urgency the freedom and responsibility we each held. Such collective and sustained action could have only been through

genuine solidarity of purpose. The next section addresses both the opportunities and contradictions of solidarity and inclusion.

6.5 Solidarity

The concept of inclusion and my concern with what it is was a barrier in my own personal journey to being inclusive, whilst in this circumstance and role. This can be identified by my discussions in the conference paper I wrote in July 2010. During this time I was caught up with the need to, if not define inclusion in a meaningful and usable way, to simplify my own understanding of it in a way that could release, what I believed, was the capacity of the term to initiate positive change through the active use of it. This is shown in the extract from it below (July 2010):

> ...whilst working within this situation what I found and what turned out to be some of the most constraining yet enlightening findings of the whole process in terms of positioning my perspectives on inclusion were the lack of consistency in beliefs and value systems that I found when regarding terms like inclusion and what they mean theoretically and practically (within school, between school and community, beyond school, between teachers, between teachers and parent and between parents not to mention the pupils themselves), a lack of a coherent school culture (set amongst values that were actioned upon and truly believed in), let alone community culture where implicit and explicit demands of what it means to be inclusive were possible or even desired. A lack of capacity in resourcing both physical and human to meet the complexity of demands and even a shared belief in how and what way these demands could begin to be met.
>
> However despite all this I feel that through living within these contradictions and researching about them that it is still the understanding of this lived experience that will bring us closer to understanding inclusion and generating a meaningful inclusion at the level of interaction.

As my views relating to inclusion have matured and altered many times since having written this, I now accept that my attempt to establish a reductionist view of inclusion is a limitation in itself. However it also seems that limitation in the inclusive process is almost in-built by the lack of a collective understanding of how and what it is and how it can be sought – even after discussion and development of those ideas (which was something we had

attempted to do as a staff). These differences can be identified in the interviews (March, 2011) where their views as to what inclusion means and the perceived implication of inclusion can be easily contrasted. Examples of this can be found in the responses given by Andy, Ben, Fina, Gareth and Nicky.

These views and perceptions relating to inclusion, in light of the discussion that has taken place before, exemplify the endemic problem limiting the inclusion project, and that is the nebulous and indistinct quality of how inclusion is perceived and acted upon. It seems in many ways that passive discussion surrounding inclusion in many schools (St Martin's being a clear example) rather than asserting its importance, seeks to relegate inclusion to a concept grounded in the basis of ideological concern rather than functional change. However it is here, that that the existential perspective has an answer to this problem that does not assert a reduction of what inclusion is (a perspective that seems emergent through the social model of inclusion or an interventionist approach to normalise the problems associated with inclusion such as in the psycho-medical model). This answer is an assertion of solidarity through lived and authentic action that accepts the necessity of constant struggle and confrontation as a way that '... gives life its value. Spread out over the length of a life, it reinforces the majesty of that life' (Camus, 1955, p53). It asserts the need to live these ideas and values as the only authentic way to challenge the way things are and take the inclusion project onto the next level.

The final findings chapter which follows is different in both scope and focus to this and preceding chapters. It is a chapter through which I seek to document the active engagement of an existential philosophy, how that affected my new role as a headteacher, how it impacted upon my engagement with school and the process of inclusion and the staff around me.

Chapter 7: Freedom and responsibility: seeking engagement

7.1 Introduction

Within each of the previous chapters, I have made significant reference and exemplification of the central ideas evident within the existential perspective (e.g. absurdity, authenticity and to some extent responsibility) and how I have used them to reinterpret both my own understanding of circumstances that I have experienced and those which are frequently prevalent within the perceptions of those within school and asserted by the prevailing culture of schools. The actions taken and discussed within this chapter are predicated upon two complementary and fundamental assertions found within the breadth of existential ideas, but most notably defined in the work of Sartre (1943), those of freedom and responsibility I clarify their key elements below so that their importance can be appreciated in terms of what is discussed within this chapter. According to Sartre (1943, p60):

> Human freedom precedes essence in man and makes it possible; the essence of the human being is suspended in his freedom. What we call freedom is impossible to distinguish from the being of "human reality." Man does not exist first in order to be free subsequently; there is no difference between the being of man and his being free.

This idea, which is a cornerstone to Sartre's thesis (1943), is the idea of 'existence preceding essence', whereby existential realisation is most overtly made through the belief that we define who we are through our actions; as a result who or what we are is not a static thing but a constantly evolving or changing process that continues until the point of death. As I have argued, this position and subsequent realisation is limited, not by the circumstance itself but how we choose to interpret our circumstance - by the way we engage with the world and the absurdity (Camus, 1955) and 'bad faith' (Sartre, 1943) we navigate through. Taking on a belief in the existential view of freedom (which asserts the 'thrownness' of our individual circumstances as a prerequisite for the position it establishes) and through the narrative of actions and

engagement that ensues, I seek to hold both myself and to some degree, those I encounter, to account for their responses to their circumstances and actions taken. In presenting this process in the most transparent and authentic way possible - I also acknowledge the limitations of both my presentation and the actions I present. However, freedom in Sartre's (1943) thesis is not an isolated characteristic but one brought to stark lucidity by the corresponding characteristic of responsibility - if we are in fact free, we are also directly responsible for what we do.

> This inapprehensible fact of my condition, this impalpable difference which distinguishes this drama of realisation from drama pure and simple is what causes the for-itself, while choosing the meaning of its situation and while constituting itself as the foundation of itself in the situation, not to choose its position. This part of my condition is what causes me to apprehend myself simultaneously as totally responsible for my being – inasmuch as I am its foundation – and yet as totally unjustifiable. (Sartre, 1943, p130)

In taking on this position of freedom and responsibility as a process through which genuine change and action is possible I am responding to Camus's (1955, p1) 'one true serious philosophical problem' and asserting the view that life is worth living and as such it is incumbent upon me to seek to act in a way that strives to live it in a way that opposes the absurd (Camus, 1955) and seeks to realise the authentic (Sartre, 1943). In doing this I seek to increase my awareness and active engagement in life (Sartre, 1943; Camus, 1955) and counter some of the absurdity I perceive in my own actions and those around me and how that relates to inclusion. Camus (1955, p61) states: 'Being aware of one's life, one's revolt, one's freedom and to the maximum, is living, and to the maximum.' This chapter documents how I sought to take this position and increase my awareness and active engagement in life and how this impacted upon my interactions in school and more specifically with my engagement and the engagement of the school as a whole with inclusion.

As in previous chapters I have divided the text into sections based upon core themes; here the themes are those key existential concepts that have

structured the thesis so far in order that the writings can be correlated with the discussion and analysis in previous chapters. These are: absurdity, authenticity, responsibility and freedom and how they manifest themselves when the position of overt realisation of freedom and responsibility are asserted.

7.2 Case conceptualisation and background

A key limitation to change and inclusion in the circumstance I have described in the thesis was the perception of the necessity for change to happen. Therefore when seeking a new job, it was these documented experiences that in large part influenced what I sought. I was therefore immediately drawn to schools where the ideals of inclusion were both a more immediate concern and in some cases an immediate and pressing problem. I therefore applied to a school in an urban environment where social deprivation was high, educational attainment was relatively low and unsettled staffing and leadership of the school had put them in a precarious position. I was subsequently appointed to the role of headteacher and within weeks of taking on the post received an Ofsted visit placing the school into 'Special Measures'. To describe this time more fully, my response to it and a brief background to how I saw the school, I have taken an extract from my reflective writings (October 2011):

> What the inspection process very much brings into light is the linearity and uni-dimensional nature of schooling in the present time. This is certainly not to say that I disagreed with a large majority of what the inspection found – as almost exclusively the issues that they identified I had already identified myself and produced a strategic plan to move the school onwards. However what was apparent was that many of the good things that actually went on in the school were not acknowledged and we were told once the judgement was likely to be given that if the school is in special measures (which was given on the basis of lack of progress and attainment over the previous 5 years) that nothing could therefore be outstanding and many of the things which may have otherwise been given a good or at least a satisfactory judgement were also inadequate because if standards were not good enough by implication 'pretty much' neither was anything else because standards defined outcomes for children.
>
> This was certainly an interesting judgement given the context. The school in which I work has some statistics which on the face of it make tough reading. The school has been designated 'a school in challenging circumstances – having high levels of adult illiteracy, innumeracy,

> domestic violence, drug abuse, mental health issues, social deprivation, special (and specific) needs and unemployment. But despite this the school is to visit quite calm when looking at some comparable schools – having reasonable behaviour, reasonably positive attitudes and relatively low exclusion rates. Clearly neither of these descriptions really gives a picture of the school in a meaningful sense – but it does allow an empathy and understanding to develop for a staff and community who feel that they have been kicked in the teeth and that all the hard work which they do has meant nothing.

Looking back on this description of the school now and knowing some of the significant and troubling issues that we have had to work through to get to where we are, my perception of what the school was like then was perhaps a little distorted as it was made on the basis that because it wasn't complete chaos it wasn't really that bad. However, much like I have highlighted in previous chapters, this is an example of how my response was affected by my perceptions of how things are, or perhaps how things should be. I took on the role at this school driven by a desire to take on a challenge and make a significant change, yet in so doing was already formulating or recreating in my mind a narrative of change predicated on cultural views of how things are, already making judgements on how things should be (given the circumstances of the school) and then acknowledging this by my surprise in the fact that some things were not actually as bad as I might have thought. This is not to dismiss in its entirety the view, which I continue to hold, about the dangers and challenges posed by the excessive linearity of a results driven system and the external validation that follows it, through processes like Ofsted. However the contingent response of making excuses for lower attainment because of circumstance - just because the circumstances in this school and community were challenging – devalues the capacities and possibilities of what the children could achieve. This was a view that I was guilty of taking in the early days. However through my early recognition of this, my views soon began to change. I undertook to create an existentially grounded inclusivity focused around what we could do and what we could change to decrease limitation and absurdity, rather than undertaking to describe, validate or excuse the present circumstance. I develop this theme further in the following sections.

7.3 Absurdity

The absurd (according to Camus, 1955) comes into full evidence when we realise the nature of the human condition – and that it is our tendency to act in a way that seeks to fulfil our expectations, rather than move beyond them. The limitation of such a position is that we often fail to realise this through the actions we take and the way we interpret what has occurred. In Chapter 5 I highlighted three areas in which absurdity was evident: when looking at difference (and our perception of it), the power of groups and communities to reinforce or substantiate static and absurd positions of how things are, and our tendency to seek out coherence by playing out a narrative which seeks to fulfil our expectation. All of these elements (to some degree) can already be found in the short example of my early response, outlined above, despite my awareness of these problems. Therefore it is within the attempt to escape the almost inescapable absurdity that I examine the process of acting for change; I explore how lucidity, simplicity, possibility and limitation of self and others are elements that need to be considered in order to confront the absurdity that makes it difficult to be inclusive.

7.3.1 Change

From my experience, when a school is placed in Special Measures – change or the assumed need for change is both the critical focus and the critical concern, I describe my perceptions of this in the following extract (Reflections, January 2012):

> Making the breakthrough... at what point do things start to move from inadequate to something more palatable? Since the schools designation of special measures in September 2011 – things have changed. I have the unenviable distinction of having taken over a school where almost everything was designated as inadequate but with the community perception prior to the judgement being that the school was really good and everything was going very well. Consequently, trust, belief and values have been brought into very acute question and have very obviously been shown to be non-permanent and questionable in both their construction and maintenance. What this has done has destroyed people's assumption of what is – constructed a belief of what was (non-specific, rose-tinted and yearned for) and thrown a blanket of uncertainty over what could be.

> The one driving and galvanising force is that of the children and the diverse yet collective belief that we are here for the children and that we want (however cracked the perception of that can be ay times) what is best for them.

I begin to describe here the overt realisation that started to be felt by everyone directly involved in the school, once the initial shock of being branded a failing school had been dealt with. An emergent belief started to establish itself - that the future was uncertain but that things (nevertheless) would need to change and that we would be responsible for that change. As a result of this shift in the perception of reality, the simplicity of the circumstance and the reason we were there – for the needs of the children - suddenly became more apparent. In some ways, whether this circumstance was desired or not, everyone (albeit temporarily) got to glimpse an existential reality, as change became an accepted necessity of our reality (as opposed to the circumstance described in chapter 6, where significant change was not believed to be a necessary condition for progress). However, although we understood why we were there, there was less consensus about what we were going to do about it. Through this circumstance we were forced to ask the question: change for what? In a circumstance where everything was identified to be failing we were compelled to act, to do something about it. However it was the direction and function of that action that suddenly became a very heavy and difficult responsibility. Although in many ways this position and circumstance is what I sought in undertaking this role, it is also one that enables both the activation of change and the consideration of what really matters (Fullan, 1991) – particularly when seen in relation to my search for an inclusive model of schooling, it did bring with it considerable problems, concerns and dangers.

The first of these problems was our collective realisation that there was not a shared consensus or rationale as to why we were there! The shock and suddenness of the circumstance, almost more than anything else, tore away both the traditional direction and function of the school and brought to a halt the momentum which drove the school forward – which had been broadly based around accepted norms, values and traditions. It was a shocking, yet profound absurdity – the idea that beyond the superficial view that schools are

about increasing standards and increasing capacity in children, when we started to dig a little deeper (standards for what? capacity for what?) our collective response was somewhat less profound than we had hoped. It is an example of an existential conundrum - where with a realisation of freedom our possibilities for action suddenly seemed less certain. Although there are undoubtedly a range of responses to this position which simplify this question, such as pragmatic, utilitarian, economic or just simply denial and a renewed assertion of a standards agenda, I felt in my own mind that in order to establish a position whereby I could maintain some form of authenticity to the views, principles and values I had established I wanted to do something that would begin to address the social transformation of education, systems and communities (Anscow, 1999). However although the circumstance undoubtedly provided an empowering incentive to grasp at these ideas and move forward with this powerful lever for change (Fullan, 2008), the shock created by the previously unrealised need to change for the staff, direct and wider community brought with it a whole range of side effects which were both challenging and limiting in terms of the change process and engagement with inclusion.

An example of this was the limitation created by the forced suddenness of the circumstance. For me, coming into the situation with my eyes at least partly open, about what the situation was likely to hold whilst asserting a belief system that was existentially grounded (built up through a realisation of the chronology of my experience) I believed change to be a positive thing and I was genuinely ready for change and the uncertainty it presented. However for most of the staff, whose lack of engagement with change was one of the central things that led to the circumstance we found ourselves in, change was often difficult, shocking and unwanted. Reflections, 24th January 2012:

> It is the uncertainty, the shifting stability of where we are and the unremitting demand of what should be (defined externally) that has led to stress, illness, changing roles, positions and for some a renewed vigour. I myself – am yet to define what it means to me – having arrived as an interloper into a very close knit community I have begun to feel, within the instability that I describe both and simultaneously what is helping glue things together and pull things apart – and yes things, beliefs, peoples and cultural norms are falling down the cracks!

Not only that, when in such a circumstance one is flooded with judges, critics and advisors with conflicting views beliefs and theories about what to do, how to do it and what to do next; focus and perspective deviates and the simplicity of any earlier realisation becomes easily muddied. Therefore, for me, at a time when the outcomes and education of the children should have been the most pressing concern, the actions of external bodies who sought to use this circumstance to both validate their own worth and insist that the school should constantly have to validate theirs, was often frustrating and tiresome. As highlighted by Sartre (1943) and Camus (1955), affirmation of the self is challenged by uncertainty (clearly presented by this situation) and as a result distraction is caused through the process of self-affirmation rather than engaging in the task at hand and acting in the for-itself. This is a clear example of why inclusion can be difficult. This is because in order to realise a circumstance whereby the ideas of inclusion assume a central role in the education narrative there must be fundamental change. However being ready for and embracing change is difficult (as has been asserted throughout this thesis), particularly in environments where routines, regularity and consistency are highly valued and relentlessly asserted. As within this circumstance the realisation of the need for change frequently led to introspection and self-validation rather than direct and decisive action.

Within the culture of school it is the power and influence of external perception and judgement that substantiates and builds dependency and decreases freedom and responsibility. This was shown time and time again by the undulating trend of progression established through our school improvement journey. By the time the Ofsted report, putting the school into 'Special Measures' was produced and published, things in the school were already progressing. However those tentative steps forward were brought to a shuddering halt through having to share the report, the ensuing parent and community meetings, and the belated disabling interference of what we were trying to achieve by the local newspaper's front page headline and internal double page spread (2 weeks later) headed: 'school slammed by Ofsted'. All of these things, once again amounted to intense introspection and

disengagement from a proportion of the staff, who felt impotent in light of the responses and judgements being heaped upon them – even though those judgements were out of date and not representative of the circumstance anymore. The most frustrating and upsetting part of this blame culture that emerged at this time was the impact upon the children – both in terms of how the focus of those who should be working for them was continually diverted away from our aims of best addressing their needs and how they must have felt being told that the school they attended was rubbish! To seek genuine direction towards inclusive provision in such chaos became very challenging. However even when these setbacks were overcome and things started to get better again, the urge toward self-affirmation by some was often inescapable, as highlighted by my reflections at the time (Reflections, 28th February, 2012):

> Moving forward – the belief is back. It doesn't matter how painstakingly you share beliefs, data, outcomes and processes, help people understand their own situation and help them develop the power to make decisions for themselves – our recent Ofsted monitoring visit seems to have had the power that no self-evaluation could have ever had – validating that yes we are moving forward and things are getting better. I personally found the process to be not as self-affirming as I hoped. It seemed to be one of these situations where everyone attached to the school (however vaguely) took the opportunity to pat themselves on the back, in the knowledge that things are getting a little better. As I am aware that we are still in a position where things still need to get significantly better – I have found it all a little trite and would rather be getting on than attending the fifth meeting this week full of people wanting to glibly interrogate the findings – yet without the use of functional evaluation and impact. Let's just get on with it!
>
> At least it is within the responses of the children that it is possible to get some form of genuine and palpable feeling of positive and meaningful progress and it is within their, surprisingly insightful and astute response that you gain some respite from the self-validators, naysayers, critics and drudgery that can come with moving the school, as seen by onlookers, as deeply in the mire.

This extract highlights not only the absurd nature of how we respond to change but also how seeking to assert decisive action and direction in a process of change can be destabilised in many ways and that values such as inclusion can be easily lost as the in-itself predominates. However, although action in and of itself can be a good thing, absurd or irrational action which

lacks responsibility for those implications can also be a danger when change in and of itself is the main objective. This idea will be further developed in section 7.4.

7.3.1.1 Lucidity, simplicity and possibility

I found it centrally important at this time to hold on to the inclusive values that I held dear and increasingly to act in a way that sought opportunity from possibility. However it became increasingly apparent that my own conviction and personal direction was not enough of a sound basis from which collective direction and lucid engagement could be established. Therefore, as the result of not only weekly interrogation of our values and actions but also of the pedagogy we were using (undertaken through staff meetings – which became the driving force through which I was establishing actions and change), I sought out a theoretical model from which we could further build, substantiate and direct our dialogue. However in describing this circumstance I am again acknowledging the absurd. This is because in order that these possibilities were available to me, I must acknowledge once more that the implicit reality within the school was that there was no secure rationale for what we were trying to achieve (at least not in a deep or engaged way). We were also in a situation where there was no overt theoretical rationale underpinning our actions at the time (which were mainly the pragmatics of a values based position) or any of the advice that came to the school (which tended to be received wisdom based around what others have done). To acknowledge this in a single school, could be regarded as exceptional, however it ceases to seem quite as exceptional when this position was undoubtedly attributable to the other three schools discussed in this study and countless schools that I have worked with in subsequent school improvement work I have undertaken. To recognise this situation is to acknowledge the difficulties of inclusion that will always be evident when we see them in the light of a system that frequently lacks the consideration or reasonableness to engage with those ideas. It also highlights a system that limits the engagement with other ideas to any degree of depth and the implicit danger of the actions, behaviours and approaches that could become established in such an environment which lack a viable foundation of any sort.

In looking to employ a theoretical model, I ended up looking at ideas that were not explicitly shaped by or taken from the inclusion field, although in doing so I was still seeking out something that would enable inclusive development. To establish an aim (that of inclusive school development) and seek to achieve it indirectly, seems at first sight somewhat obtuse or alternatively another example of absurdity. However, because of the baggage and assumptions that were so often implicit in the use of the term and the varied interpretation of what the ideas of inclusion implied to the staff, I felt that the term inclusion was itself becoming its own limitation. The uncertainty, breadth and flexibility with which the idea of inclusion can be interpreted was identified within Chapter 6 and despite regular and extensive discussion surrounding the ideas of inclusion, as part of the development programme employed by the school, this was just as evident in this school. Such a view can be corroborated when looking at extracts from the interviews I conducted in September 2012 which covered the same set of questions I had asked within the interviews at St Martin's, with the same contradicting and varied responses. I provide some examples of this below: (taken from interviews on inclusion, undertaken September, 2012).

> *Interview 1:*
>
> *Hayley is a part-time teacher at the school, who shares a class with another teacher in Year 4. She has been teaching 5 years in total and takes responsibility for leading science at the school. This is the second school she has worked at and she has been here for a year.*
>
> Me: Do you feel that it is an important agenda for you day to day?
>
> Hayley: Yes – in principle, but in some ways it is not necessarily what I think about – unless there is a specific issue or incident – so I suppose it's not planned
>
> Interview 2:
>
> *Holly is a Year 6 teacher and a member of the senior leadership team. She has been teaching 4 years in total and takes responsibility for leading maths at the school. She has only taught at this school.*
>
> Me: Do you feel that the inclusion agenda supports the progress and development of schools?
>
> Holly: I'm not really sure what this is! I don't think that I can really comment.

Interview 3:

Ian has just become Assistant Head at the school and also teaches in and leads Year 6. He has been a teacher at the school for 14 years and has only ever taught at this school.

Ian: I think that inclusion can have a detrimental effect on a class as a whole, if not managed properly with correct support. Social behaviour and children with 'issues' appears on the rise – this can sometimes make day to day class management difficult ... which distracts you from meeting the needs of the majority of the class.

Me: Do you feel that the inclusion agenda supports the progress and development of schools?

Ian: I think it is about 'Every child matters' – which to me means looking to affect and promote positive growth in all children and taking more care to understand the needs of each child. However outside agencies and specialists do not appear funded enough to support teachers in this agenda.

Interview 4:

Jenny is the inclusion leader for the school (which includes the SENCO role). She teaches in class 2 days a week and the rest of the time is out of class supporting and developing provision in the school and attending meetings etc as necessary. She also line manages the teaching assistants in the school. Jenny has taught at the school for 6 years, having been a teaching assistant before training. This is the only school she has ever worked at.

Me: Do you feel that the inclusion agenda supports the progress and development of schools?

Jenny: Yes, recognising inclusion in schools and education promotes a greater understanding of inclusion in society and the wider culture.

Me: Do you feel that it is an important agenda for you day to day?

Jenny: Yes – I think that it is probably the most important agenda in schools – but it is also one that others choose either not to consider or don't really understand it well enough

What comes across from the comments in these interview extracts on inclusion is the perceived variance in how or what inclusion is understood to be, the threat of what it could mean (rather than the opportunity), and fluctuation between a more socially orientated interpretation of inclusion and the implicit use of a deficit (or psycho-medical) rationale in the discussion of its implications. Although there was some positive interpretation of inclusion and the importance and possibility of what it could be, most evident in the

responses of Jenny (Interview 4, September 2012), who was the inclusion leader in the school, these were in the minority. Therefore in order to engage in a dialogue that could support the possibilities of inclusion I chose a model that was positively directed and predicated in active change: the 'Flourish' model (Seligman, 2011). I chose this, not because it was from a theoretical position which overtly engaged with the inclusion agenda, although it is premised upon principles of equity, equality and social transformation, but because of its existentially grounded rationale, in the sense that it is a model about acting and engaging in the world. It was also beneficial for a number of other reasons: its simplicity to understand and use, its relevance to the learner centred dialogue that we had begun to establish and its capacity to frame much of what we were doing and what we wanted to achieve from a perspective where individuals can effect change through recognition of their own responsibilities and the relational effect of those actions.

Through taking this approach we asserted the freedom implicit in all of us to refocus our conception of success and begin to work together to build capacity and generate possibilities where the aim was individual and collective flourishing – an idea more grounded in the existential for-itself (Sartre, 1943) than in-itself interpretations often found within the social and psycho-medical models. This was then coupled with the dispositional work I had begun to develop in my previous school so that we had a framework through which we could also interrogate and challenge our curriculum.

The content of the teaching and learning policy was quite simplistic and idealised, but it was accessible and when actively threaded through everything we did, it became the basis of a much more engaged and nuanced dialogue about what we were trying to achieve and how to achieve what we sought. It also engendered an aspirational quality into what we were all trying to achieve for the children in our circumstance at this time as we asserted in the opening statement: 'we believe that every child is extraordinary and that education has the capacity and possibility to change lives for the better'. It asserted a view in the possibility of positive and inclusive change in our circumstance. I established and built upon a simple position in the overt assertion of

opportunities and possibilities through action in our specific circumstance. It is an assertion of principles for action without the reliance upon contextual generalisation of what is and what should be. As such a dialogue was manifested about what we wanted to achieve and what we could do, rather than an obsession with the limitations and problems of our circumstance and how such problems manifest themselves generally. This can be seen in the tone and responses in the interview with Jenny taken in March 2013, who was the school inclusion leader, an example is given below:

> Me: What do you think needs to change?
>
> Jenny: There needs to be a much more structured set of support strategies for: School provision, outreach support, outside agency support and family support to run concurrently with all provision. The problem here is – I suppose – who will do it – because it doesn't seem anyone's role – but it is everyone's. I think what we are doing here – doing things – talking to people and being active to try and get this done is really important and I think that it is working – although it is a bit slow sometimes, or feels slow sometimes.
>
> Not all elements are considered – and they need to be considered – like: environment, school setting, education, home situation. There are too many blind judgements – judgements made without really knowing the situation or talking to the right people – I think this is dangerous and inappropriate. If you know the family, you really get to know the child. Also follow up is essential – all should be involved in the communication and what is happening.

This realisation of the absurd and how it is manifested, most notably through individual and collective responses to generalised practices and approaches, also acts to highlight individual and collective awareness of the possibilities available to us when we assert a freedom of action and a rejection of contingency and being in-itself (Sartre, 1943). It is the manifestation of an existential process. Camus (1955, p55) describes this in the following: 'Now if the absurd cancels my chance of eternal freedom it restores and magnifies on the other hand my freedom of action.'

7.3.1.2 Limitation of self and others

I do not suggest that recognition of the absurd and a clearer view to action is 'the' solution to the development of inclusion in school. Instead I present it as an approach to help deal with limitations and act more authentically, as described by the circumstances and events in this chapter, as recognition of how circumstances described in previous chapters could have been approached differently and as an approach that will support action more generally, now and in the future. I fully accept that, as with all approaches, this brings with it its own limitations and possible absurdities – particularly if used to generalise a practice beyond the appreciation of the principles of action. However as acknowledged through chapter 4, the process I undertook here is not a process through which I seek to generalise, but a process through which understanding for effective action was employed. Therefore this is presented as a manifestation of how the use of an existentially engaged lens enabled an alternative perspective, possibilities and rationale for what we were seeking to achieve. Although this approach is predicated upon the process of seeking authenticity, true or complete authenticity will only ever remain an aspiration (Sartre, 1943). Therefore despite the more nuanced awareness of these problems, (and an attempt to address them head on) absurdity was something I continued to recognise within the interactions in this school (probably at times even more overtly, due to my acute awareness of their likely presence). An example of this is evident in the extract below taken from my personal reflections (November, 2012):

> First day back from half term break and already I'm looking for developments and improvements at every turn. I sometimes question whether what I want to change is always necessary? Or ultimately purposeful? The issue which I regularly get hung up on is that of coherency – that some approaches are not or do not seem as coherent as they might. Examples are as follows:
>
> - Keeping whole classes in for the misbehaviour of a minority albeit a large minority (is this not just alienating many of the good ones and not even targeting the issues / misbehaviours of the children most at fault?)
> - Lecturing children (excessively) – not quite sure what it achieves except for building up a tolerance for being told off.
> - Overly praising children with regular misbehaviour while not giving enough day to day praise for the children who always behave well.

- Lack of coherence between adult actions and expectations of pupils – turning up on time / use of language / body language / modelling and leading by example.

This extract provides an example of both the critical awareness I had at the time, but also my frustration with the lack of critical engagement shared by those I worked with. Sartre (1943) highlights how our default setting is to deny our freedom and responsibility to effect change and how the limitation of the human condition is the lack of imagination and possibilities through which it is perceived. Fully embracing these ideas was the start of the process. However as I sought to continue my active engagement with the idea of realising my freedom, or as Camus (1955) suggested the need to maintain a constant confrontation with life, I began to perceive more absurdity in the day-to-day interactions that surrounded me and became increasingly intolerant of the contingency that seemed to seep through the pores of system that I was ensconced within. This manifested itself by simply challenging and questioning the commonly held beliefs that seemed to have little credibility or value at every opportunity and stopping everything that could be validated only upon the basis that: *that is what we have always done! Or such and such a school did this and it seemed to work for them*. The effect of this was to cut through the mass of things that seemed to predominate in so many spheres of school life (a little like uncluttering a cupboard or spring cleaning!), and began to help me see things more lucidly and appreciate, more overtly the views and suggestions of the children – which were now becoming central to the way we were changing the school, both in class and beyond class. This approach was something I then began to translate to other circumstances – with interesting outcomes. An exemplification of this is evident in an extract from my reflections:

Tuesday 17th April 2012

As Primary Heads representative for the city I attended the SEN panel which was also populated by three educational officers, the senior inspector for SEN in the city, the principal educational psychologist, the secondary Heads rep and the SEN financial administrator. This comprised of 4 hours of reviewing paperwork for statements, proposed statements, support packages for children and issues related to children

with complex needs and discussing the cases with representatives from the schools presenting the cases.

What became clear early on was that there was a very clear lack of context related to the cases, a lack of expectation about approach and procedure, no necessary requirement for specific multi-agency working or alternate solution finding, an over-reliance on any diagnosis or medical related issue / symptom and a genuine lack of connectedness to learning as a discourse!

There was a curious system used – high incidence and low incidence for statementing / supporting – high incidence means there are lots of children with that issue as the primary concern and low incidence meaning there are not lots of children with that issue as the primary concern. High incidence meant no money, low incidence meant money. This did not take account of the fact that children present in a multitude of ways and that the label of EBD, Autism etc could in no way describe the child – so 4 hours of pigeon holing and box ticking – with money awarded to the best written paperwork and the school who could prove that 'little Jonny's primary 'symptom' or 'diagnosis' was more bizarre / weird or wonderful than the next!

No comparisons of provision were made, no heed paid to the inclusive principles or not implied by the school – in fact the schools that alienated and did not seek inclusion of the children in their care were more often than not the ones who were financially rewarded for it.

By half way through the event I had had enough and felt that these feelings needed to be made clear – in part were met by an agreed resignation and a shrug of the shoulders that suggested 'yes, but what can we do about it?' and the other part saying 'time is tight and finances are scarce – we need to get on.' Is this feeling of impotence really a reflection of the attitudes of the people who can genuinely do something about it??

Wednesday 18th April

I have been invited to be part of a review group to look how changes can be made to SEN and the SEN panel process – I have said yes – we will see what comes of it!

This is a description of my first experience of being a headteacher representative on the city panel which made the decisions for how children who were defined as having 'special needs' were supported, how provision was developed and how funding was allocated. It immediately became apparent during the process that it was divorced from life in schools and took little meaningful account of the child, their needs, circumstances or how that had manifested itself in the context of the schooling they had received. The meeting made many unlikely assumptions about schools: that they all ran

same systems and provision, had the same approaches and understandings and treated everyone in the same way. As a result the panel worked on the premise that schools were essentially effective and efficient establishments that always did their best, it was just some children couldn't be taught in them! From the outset of the meeting these assumptions were implicitly accepted by all who were there, there was no challenge to the absurd statements being made. However I was even more alarmed by the importance given to labels and diagnoses and that fundamentally if a child had had a diagnosis such as autism, ADHD etc – it was that that defined them and as a result it was legitimate to discuss them and their needs on the basis of that difficulty as these issues were perceived to have the same presentation, it was just the degree of severity that needed to be taken into account. These meetings demonstrated the overt emergence of the psycho-medical model and all the difficulties, limitations and prejudices that this implied. My own response in this circumstance, although prefaced by confusion and some level of disbelief was to realise and actively identify during the meeting the absurdity with which this process was being undertaken and the collective inertia that I perceived resulting from lack of professional challenge or dialogue, in preference to a vaguely pragmatic economically grounded exercise. Although this was met with some shock by those around me at the time the response that I allude to in the short sentence written on Wednesday 18th April, fuelled my view regarding the contingency of action and the denial of freedom to act even when there is the possibility to do so. This is because in challenging the prevalent model (in my very first experience of it) I was asked to be part of a group with the responsibility for changing it. This in turn stimulated my enthusiasm for continuing to act in this way.

I caveat the example given above in the acknowledgement that it is not an example that necessarily represents all such processes. Although I argue that many of the decision making processes that are or can be made surrounding the provision for children experiencing difficulty in school become processes regulated through statutory frameworks as opposed to inclusive aims and objectives.

The urge, stimulated but experiences such as those described above, to question, challenge and suggest alternatives to the systems and structures within which our school and other schools found themselves, was a position which I consistently undertook at meetings, events and reviews. To my continued surprise the result of this was similar to the response described above. During a nine month period between April 2012 and January 2013 (which included the time during which the school moved out of Special Measures to good – November 2012) I took on a range of invited roles:

- Chair of the schools cluster in my area (a group of ten schools),
- Heads representative and governor for the city's alternative provision service (which represented all those children who for one reason or another could not be educated in their schools, but were not at the time eligible or appropriate for special schools – which included those permanently excluded from schools),
- A member of the teaching schools, school improvement group (which worked across the city),
- A member of the regional Ofsted review group (as a result of an invitation on the basis of a recommendation from the HMI who conducted the inspection that took the school out of Special Measures)
- The Vice Chair of the Primary Heads forum (which represented all 65 primary schools in the city).

This list of roles, rather than the result of any fundamental achievement or quality on my part is, I believe, representative of the contingent nature of the leadership within and across education in the city at the time. It is also an example of how consistent and regular action for change stimulated momentum in my capacity and increased the opportunity to act for greater possibilities both in and beyond my own circumstance. This is in itself an absurd circumstance that brings into question significant concerns as well as significant possibilities. However to discuss these further and continue this narrative I use the lens of authenticity.

7.4 Authenticity

To exist authentically is to '...choose the possibilities of my own existence' (Heidegger, 1927) and to do so in a way that acknowledges the implicit responsibility I take for myself and others in choosing those possibilities (Sartre, 1943). Although in some ways I felt I was undertaking such a position, authenticity is always countered by 'bad faith' (Sartre, 1943) which is the product of a circumstance through which ideas which are not challenged and subsequently substantiate themselves upon the basis of an accepted view of how things are. Such a conception of 'bad faith' is perhaps what is described by the episode of the SEN panel above, where individuals were undertaking a process but not seeking to question the authenticity of what they were doing. By challenging the absurdities that were evident I found that the perception of others within the wider educational establishment of the school and my position within it moved rapidly from one of perceived failure to one where we were embraced as a positive and important part of the establishment. I described these experiences in my reflections in February 2013:

> Since the school has officially moved from 'Special Measures' to the recent judgement of Good (with outstanding elements) the external perception of not only the school but the staff and their capacities have all begun to be viewed differently. We now seem to be one of the 'go to schools' – where as six months ago we would be the school that would be given the sympathetic looks and 'how's everything going' chats. As much as I found those condescending and inappropriate, in that when you are in the midst of doing, changing and deeply involved in the day to day self pity and sympathy is the last thing on your mind, the recent circumstance seems equally irrational. Just within this half term alone (six and a half weeks) we have been visited by 10 different schools within and beyond the authority asking us how we do 'it'. The 'it' that the schools are seemingly asking us for is not just one thing but is about a number of things: how have we moved the school from special measures to good in such a short period of time? What strategies do we use to increase the quality of teaching and learning? How have we raised the school's results by 30% in a year? Etc. All of these questions seem to me – what I would call silver bullet questions – in that they are asking me for a road map of actions that they can follow (and where possible they would also like the resources, policies and proformas) in order that they can have the same impact/effect/approach. I am always more than happy to share these things, in that, if they help and are useful, I'm happy to spare them the time that it takes to write / prepare / develop them. However I am always at pains to point out that I have no silver bullet for them and that the process for me was very much about

> understanding the circumstance (internal as well as external to the school) and working within it to produce the best and most positive outcomes in the widest sense.

The situation I describe here is one referred to by Sartre (1943, p784) as 'man's useless passion'. I had begun to suspect that what I had done, rather than change the way I and others around me fundamentally interacted, was merely replace one set of norms with another. Through embracing challenge and accountability the effect was to decrease my own in the eyes of others. To accept such a transformation would be to accept limitation rather than perceive any degree of success, as it asserts a position where responsibility is subjugated to something bestowed by others on the basis of their perceptions of how things are. I believe this to be a fundamentally dangerous position as actions all at once become part of a relativist dialogue and become positive or negative things based on the politics and ideologies of the moment. This highlights a difficulty of becoming or seeking to become inclusive and that is the sustainability of change and purpose in order that it can become transformative. The simplicity of the existentialist belief in active engagement with life which I sought to enact is again shown to conflict with feelings of 'fatigue' and a desire for self-affirmation, as described in chapter 6. As these limitations became overtly apparent to me I tried to assert my authenticity once more (Reflections, February 2013):

> I have taken on the roles of chair of heads cluster, Governor (City Heads representative) for Alternative Provision (AP) in the city, member of the school improvement team, that works through the teaching school alliance – which seeks to improve quality of teaching in and across schools in the city . I have taken on these roles in the attempt to ask the awkward questions, make changes and try to build a wider coherency of approach in my actions and those within the city in terms of provision, approach and rationale behind the decisions which frustrate me at schools level and hence seek to do something about it. What has become abundantly clear as I sit on committees and attend meetings is that there is not a coherent vision across the groups and most of the actions within each separate committee / group tends to be about pragmatism – e.g. what can we do quickly that will have the best and quickest effect on outcomes (although 'outcomes' in this sense is based along the shorter and more narrow view of results, particularly at the end of key stages). It is also become apparent that if you volunteer to do things, you get the job and seemingly thus far, a lot of what I do goes relatively unquestioned! I have recently tried to set up a heads self

> reflective model for school improvement (it is like an active self evaluation document and requires opening yourself up to scrutiny by your peers – which is not something that is readily done by Heads - I started out by letting others undertake the process at my school – in an attempt to lead by example). Let's see how it goes!

As I wrote this I was led very much by the idea of authentic action for change, however something I assumed but that remained implicit, is the importance of process in inclusive development and the unequivocal understanding that inclusive outcomes are a product of inclusive processes and therefore I was adamant that any improvements or results that we achieved must be sustainable and be a product of their flourishing rather than cramming, hot-housing or brow beating.

7.4.1 Contingency

For Sartre (1943), in order that and individual can act in a way that realises both our freedom and responsibility authentically the individual must acknowledge being for itself – a situation where an individual can never realise the certainty of what being is but instead embrace the possibility of what could be. As highlighted in chapter 4 and central to understanding being for itself and the existential position is the acceptance of a radical contingency whereby 'we appear to ourselves as having the character of an unjustifiable fact' (Sartre, 1943, p104). Through this recognition the existentialist asserts the capacity (and freedom) of individuals to take action but also responsibility for changing the circumstances within which they live. Not to assert this situation is to assert being in-itself, the static assertion that being is what it is and no more. If we adopt a position of being in-itself, action and change by its very nature would assert a functional contingency at the level of engagement as it negates the possibility of what could be and our responsibility and capacity to change. However if, as I assert here that we acknowledge being for itself, we identify a position whereby 'the for-itself is sustained by a perpetual contingency (of the radical form, rather than the functional) for which it assumes the responsibility and which it assimilates without ever being able to suppress it' (Sartre, 1943, p132). The effect of embracing the existential position of radical contingency

is to assert our own responsibility to both ourselves and others and the notion that our circumstances both specific and wider are a product of the choices that we make both individually and collectively. This therefore makes the need to act in a way that challenges the absurd and seek positive change a necessity of meaningful being. This is the view, much like that of Camus (1955, p52), that we must 'challenge the world a new every second' in order that we seek authenticity, rebuff the absurd and seek out coherence through our actions. However to reject such a position would instead manifest a functional contingency at the level of engagement, whereby helplessness and circumstance start to become determinant factors.

7.4.1.1 Contingency – level 1

Once I found myself in a position of greater authority and acknowledgement the notion of functional contingency was increasingly at the forefront of my mind. I recognised that understanding and identification of functional contingency as a factor would not only enable the recognition of the limitation of inclusion and educational development as a whole, but also as something that enabled recognition of the impending danger of inaction or contingent action. I recognised this on two levels.

The first level was the contingency of inaction (or action that seeks to maintain the status quo), whereby the failure to act in a way that seeks to challenge and recognise the evident absurdity of our circumstance results in a position or circumstance where an individual believes that they are predominantly without genuine agency and subject to whim, ideology and political agenda. This type of contingency was recognised overtly within Chapter 6. Although it is predicated upon a view of being in-itself (and orientated around self-affirmation), the effect is likely to amount in a form of social entropy (Bailey, 1990) whereby the static systems of the past tend to disorder as they become out of touch with and lose relevance in relation to the changes that manifest themselves. To assert this system in schools would be to either tend to irrelevance (whereby the school and what it stood for would fail to add value to anything but itself as the institution) or to compliance (seeking others to

conform to what was perceived to be 'normal' as maintained in that system). Through the process of inclusion what is sought is transformational change (Ainscow, 1999) – something surely impossible within a static ideology. My response to static ideology was to confront it (after Camus, 1953; 1955). I found it most apparent through the diverse and inconsistent ways in which the schools in my area worked and the negative influences or inconsistencies I perceived in the interaction between those schools. Seeking to address this was made easier by my position as cluster chair. At the time of doing this competition rather than collaboration seemed a consistent and limiting presence. I firmly believed if, as a collective set of schools we worked together, we could achieve something much more coherent, effective, inclusive and sustainable than we could apart. This was one of the reasons I began to openly share everything that our school did with others (in forums, meetings, events and the many bodies and groups I was now part of) – seeking to share practice, gain feedback and start a dialogue. However it felt that this did not go far enough, so as chair of the cluster of schools I led the development of a partnership arrangement whereby we could seek to address issues centred around the children in our collective care rather than the discrete and individual needs of a single school. Below is an extract from the introduction to the partnership document that I wrote, that was ratified by all the cluster schools in the area. It was the result of a significant amount of meetings, community work, work with governors, parents and children that linked together the ten schools in the area (comprising one secondary school, with a sixth form, three junior schools, three infant schools and three primary schools):

> **Mission Statement for the development of cluster working 2012-13**
>
> This plan is written in the belief that in order to provide the best possible outcomes for children within the Boswell Park cluster schools. It is necessary to establish a commitment to a shared vision of a cohesive, sustainable education provision over the full 0-19 age range. As such it is based on an understanding by the schools involved that they are not discrete and fully autonomous bodies but part of a wider collaboration with an obligation that goes beyond the walls of their buildings. As such they are establishments that although must be fully accountable for their role in the educational journey of the children and families at the time they pass through their schools, they must also take

> some responsibility in what goes both before and after – as it is only through an acknowledgement of the wider educational journey of these families that we can both maximise the provision they receive whilst at our schools but also support their preparation prior to coming to us and their successes when they leave.
>
> Therefore we seek to establish a collaboration which is forged on the basis of geographical association as it is the defining feature which links the schools and the families we share and will enable a shared identity in the work we undertake. However it is built for the purpose of maximising the educational resources available to the Boswell Park schools community in order that we ensure both the collective and individual flourishing of those within it.

This extract highlights a commitment in principle that by working together schools can seek to start taking responsibility for their circumstances and look to engage with possibilities rather than being satisfied with the limited and discrete nature of what single schools can achieve on their own. However it was apparent from the early stages, after ratification of the original document and the discussions that surrounded it that a number of the schools involved did not want to embrace the implications of what they had signed up to and did not feel that they should have any accountability to each other (even informally) as a result of this process, or be formally obligated to each other for fulfilling any parts of the agreement. Therefore by engaging with an approach that increased our collective possibilities, both inclusive and otherwise we were also left with the unavoidable implications of undertaking such a position. By increasing the collective awareness of what went on at each other's schools, we had increased our recognition of the implicit accountability we had always held to each other and the wider community which we served. By opening ourselves up to greater external scrutiny (whether perceived as supportive or otherwise), we had established a tool for greater existential realisation, something which made many of the schools very uncomfortable indeed. This process decreased our own capacity for self-delusion or 'bad faith' by making us really scrutinise what we were doing and achieving whist being very aware of what others were doing and achieving. In terms of authenticity, this position – if fully engaged with, promoted a condition whereby our bad faith could be more apparent, engagement more coherent and a collective endeavour a possibility. However through disengagement, the opposite was likely to occur, where self-affirmation and relativist assertions of value could

predominate as protectionist instincts come to the fore as a defence against a renewed uncertainty and a worry about how the judgements of others could assert a renewed and less favourable judgement of how things are. Although this dichotomy seems, in some ways, too black and white, it broadly encapsulates not only the tacit affirmation of being for-itself or being in-itself, as held by the schools but also reflects the model through which schools are judged. School responses therefore too often reflect bodies such as Ofsted and the constant presence of the standards agenda – which are often confrontational rather than collaborative, simplistic rather than complex and summative rather than formative. As a result, much like the mechanisms that judged our schools the opportunity to do something that sought to realise possibilities was distorted by the assertion of the in-itself and a limiting view of how things are. One by one each of the schools in the partnership began opting out of various activities, events and meetings or at times just drifting away or ignoring the processes and previous agreements that had been painstakingly arrived at.

At this point I was hugely frustrated by what was happening to the cluster partnership however it made my desire to do something both authentic and transformational even more fervent. Concurrent to the partnership agreement I had been having discussions with both our feeder infants schools and the local authority about how we could solve a number of increasingly problematic issues in the transition between the two schools, which were fundamentally centred around the support, provision and development of the most vulnerable children and families that we ultimately both shared. Staff in my school wanted a more open, transparent and collective approach to supporting and developing these children and families, whereas staff in the infants schools felt that this was the discrete responsibility of the individual schools whilst in their care. With the slow breakdown of the partnership arrangement in the background, relationships here were also declining and solutions to deal with these issues such as more detailed information and data sharing, federation of the two schools (which involved sharing a single governing body) or even amalgamation were faltering on the basis that our main feeder infant school felt that any such direction would change the character of the school and what

it had become over the last fifteen years. In an attempt to find a solution I (and representatives from my governing body) entered discussions with our main infant feeder school and the local authority to seek to arrange a formalised mechanism through which we could work closer together to stop the replication and conflict that was sometimes caused by the different approaches, views and rationales upon which we both functioned (where previous informal collaboration had had little impact upon addressing this) and as a result seek to set up something which could act as a hub for the direct community, where the needs of children and families were central. Unfortunately the meetings failed to change the perspective of either schools, but we did gain significant support for our position from the local authority. An extract from my reflections in February 2013 below outlines my actions after a breakdown of the meetings between the two schools:

> I have agreed through the governors and the local authority the submission of a recent letter I wrote to seek to get the schools on my site amalgamated. The rationale behind this is broadly outlined within the letter. It is another example of me trying to be authentic in the face of the absurd – let's see where it leads!
>
> I feel increasingly that actions in schools are taken at the whims of Heads or other groups on the basis of a vague ideology (that in some ways is pre-reflective). The more I think about this, the more it seems that it is the leadership of the schools and beyond (policy etc) that is the barrier to progress socially and towards inclusive ideals – the children are extraordinary and the teachers just get swamped and often feel helpless. Do heads and senior educational professionals realise both the power and the problems they are accountable and responsible for?

This extract highlights why I felt the necessity to act, and how the actions, for me at the time were driven for a desire for authenticity. A copy of the main text from the letter (February, 2012) that I submitted to the Local Authority was also sent to the infant school in addition to a rationale as to why we had sent the letter.

I sent the letter with the ardent belief that change was necessary and children and their families were being placed second to the reputation of the school and therefore the opportunities of what could be was not even being considered.

Sartre (1943) sums this up when he talks about how the limitation to the human condition is the result of the lack of imagination through which it is perceived. Looking back on this episode, which I see as an attempt at authentic action, it was perhaps too confrontational or too blunt, particularly as it resulted in an escalation of the situation whereby the school and a group of other schools, (three of which were in my cluster) have splintered off to form a self-sponsored academy group which as one of its key rationales was to maintain the character and tradition of their schools (as asserted within their community consultation documents). However, I also believe that transformation and genuine change is predicated upon taking risks and chances, particularly in the face of the alternative being the maintenance of a position substantiated by contingency and bad faith.

7.4.1.2 Contingency – level 2

The second level of contingency is that of contingent action. This is represented by actions that occur as a response to whim, ideology or political agenda, that seek to react but do not take into account the further reaching implications of those actions. An example of this is where short term goals or results in national tests manifest themselves as the most important benchmarks rather than the rationales that take into account the existential questions of why are we doing what we are doing, what is most important to teach in school and what is the role of school. This second level of contingent action is probably the thing which worries me the most in terms of the abilities of schools to be inclusive. This is because action, particularly when applied in the right places and ways can have a tremendous effect upon changing things – however depending upon the rationale for its application that change can either be a positive process in the development of schools and ideas such as inclusion or detrimental and debilitating due to its application and implementation. Such a contingency is recognised by Wenger (1999) when reviewing the change and effect that can be brought about through communities of practice (discussed in chapter 3, section 3.2.2) and identified as an issue for consideration for teacher agency (Priestly et al., 2011). A number of the government initiatives such as free schools, academies, teaching schools and system leadership as a whole fall into this category as

they enable increased freedoms, but use accountability measures based on outcomes (often judged by results) in an environment where we do not even agree what those outcomes should be. This interpretation of accountability is far removed from existential notions of responsibility. An extract from my reflections discussing some of these issues as a result of a meeting I attended in March 2013 surrounding system leadership is given below:

> I have just attended a system leadership forum run by the National College for system leaders and prospective system leaders within the city. These are the group of senior teachers, Headteachers and Executive Headteachers who work across the city in the capacity of Specialist Leader in Education (SLE), Local leader in Education (LLE) and National Leader in Education (NLE) to develop and support the schools / groups of schools who are perceived to be underperforming, failing or in need of development. This was a forum was designed to bring this group of people together across primary and secondary schools to look at developing a model for how system leadership could develop in the 'new world' of the current educational landscape. It was facilitated by two 'Associates' from the National College, one a serving Headteacher and the other previously a Headteacher. The two questions that we were asked to consider to begin with were:
>
> - Who decides that you are needed?
> - Can you offer yourself or can you be chosen?
>
> Although it was supposed to be a forum for development we were very much directed to develop pragmatic and process orientated ideas for a model of school development that seemed based upon perceived 'good / outstanding' schools (as defined by Ofsted) going in and working with less effective schools – with a do what works and do it rapidly mentality.
>
> I suggested in the meeting that surely the whole point in 'system leaders' was less about pragmatic intervention in individual schools and more about creating a self sustaining and transparent system to understand schools in terms of what they are doing and how they are developing so that collective responsibility can be an assumed by school leaders to support and develop each other for a better and brighter future. I was somewhat dismissed by the facilitators as taking a philosophical view of a situation that required direct and concerted action. I agreed that action was important, but that some action was likely to be counter-productive in the achievement of the long term goals of sustainable good and outstanding schools for all.
>
> Not to be put off I suggested that rather than the questions which they had suggested – perhaps we needed – as system leaders, to consider how we could define an active system supported by those elements of

> responsibility and accountability that provided a compelling reason for collective sharing, collaboration and transparency and a model through which this could be enabled. As only through a self sustaining system that was open and accessible could we build a dialogue and establish a coherent vision that goes beyond single schools and maintain a progression forward.

As I stated later within the reflection, the model and the process advocated by the facilitators of the system leadership event was a clear example of contingency: 'one filled with opportunity yet one that is at the same time haphazardly applied and subject to chance as it is fundamentally directed by meeting external validations of success or failure').

A further danger of this form of contingency is that its impact can be escalated by the first form of contingency, where the whims of those willing to take action, particularly action targeted to get 'quick wins' and short term gains can become the direction of change and momentum for those where action for fundamental change is opposed and functional action is purely a result of contingency and pragmatism. An example where this circumstance can be identified most starkly is in schools which are part of academy groups and chains that seek to replicate actions across all the schools on the basis of what is perceived to create successful of effective outcomes, without the rationale or theory to support it. This is not to suggest that academies are by nature contingent or dangerous manifestations within the educational establishment, any more so than any other school or set of schools, only that it is likely that the rationale that underpins any establishment is likely to define their level of contingency and that due to lack of safeguarding for these contentions (or increase in 'freedoms') in terms of what that is or how it manifests itself, means that it is likely to be more apparent in them than in local authority schools. However as a counter to that, those freedoms if engaged in as part of a wider existential debate also create the possibilities whereby authentic, inclusive and child centred practice could also perhaps most flourish.

As part of the process of seeking authenticity, when looking back at my own actions as described in section 7.4.1.1, I see that they could be viewed as an example of what I suggest to be problematic in this second form of contingency. There are, though, a range of distinguishing factors that separate them from this second form of contingency, and they are established within the aspiration towards authenticity and an existential perspective. These include: commitment to critical self-reflection, the inclusive notions and beliefs sought out in undertaking the actions, the recognition of the responsibility that that entails – both directly and through implication and the realisation of the uncertainty and need for revision in any set of actions and beliefs. As such these differences become tools in enabling us, not only to deal with the limiting effects of contingency generally but also helping us deal with the limiting effects of being inclusive in schools.

7.5 Self-reflexivity

Much of the discourse within this project has been the product of intensive self-reflection and analysis, not only of my changing actions and responses as they evolve from experience and change in perspective but also as a presentation of that reflection and process in order that it may attain a level of accountability and challenge to what is asserted through that presentation. Within this discourse of self-reflexivity I am drawn to a set of questions that may help to assert my authenticity in the eyes of external validators which often reside at the back of my mind when undertaking the process of writing, these are:

- By enacting this process am I being authentic?
- Am I acting against the absurd of delving deeper into absurdity?
- Am I seeking inclusion through being for-itself or asserting my own brand of how I see things to be and what I think inclusion is?
- By engaging in this rationale am I asserting a rationale and values set that only really resides in the relativistic?

However in seeking to answer these questions explicitly I am drawn away from the perspective that I established in the first place and the being for-itself, and instead I am inadvertently residing in the in-itself through the process of clarification and the assertion of certainty. This is because in acting the way I have and adhering to the perspective I have selected, the only certainty I can realise is the uncertainty of both my position and the actions I take and have taken to be both inclusive and more authentic in my role. Therefore the answers to these questions, which I am drawn to, need to be made by others as to linger upon these contentions is a regression to substantiation through self-affirmation which only seeks to misdirect me from the position I have sought to establish from this process and the possibilities highlighted by the actions I have taken and the presentation of those actions. It is not a process of self-affirmation that is important here but an interrogation of the process of considered action and the possibilities of its realisation both in myself an in others.

Through this process I have identified that a key idea in the inclusion literature is that of transformation (Ainscow, 1999), but what has been an overt realisation through the engagement in an existential perspective is that it is the transformation of what we do (both individually and collectively) through how we perceive things and a transformation of our expectations of what can be achieved that can and will enable more holistic transformation. For the reasons identified above, although I consider that this process has been transformational in my own development, the wider impact and application of these ideas is perhaps for others to decide on after reading what is presented here. However the approach and impact that I have sought is something increasingly identifiable in some of the discussions I have had with staff, who have worked with me over time and the achievements of the school itself, which in my view represents an evolution in response and approach. Examples of this can be seen in the previously quoted interview extract from the interview with Jenny (section7.3.1.1) and the extracts below, which are taken from the interviews conducted with teachers at the school, considering the limitations of change and how the school could improve, (conducted in October 2013):

Interview 3

Karen is Year 3 leader and a member of the senior leadership team. She has been teaching 18 years in total, but 8 at this school (she has taught at two other schools prior to this one). She takes responsibility for leading SMSC (Social, moral, spiritual and cultural education) at the school.

Me: How effective do you think the school is at educating the children in our care, on a scale of 1-10 (1, being low and 10 being high)? Can you explain this?

Karen: 10 – we do so much and we are really focused on the children – of course there are always other things we could do – but as we find them we will do them – I think what we do is really good.

Me: What do you feel needs to change so we can do better?

Karen: Better transition with the feeder schools – I know we work hard on this but there is more that we can do.

Play supervisors – more training so that they can handle children like Sean – so issues are noticed before they become more serious

Interview 4

Nick has is Assistant Head at the school, teaches across the school and takes the lead for assessment. He has been a teacher at the school for 13 years and has only ever taught at this school.

Me: How effective do you think the school is at educating the children in our care, on a scale of 1-10 (1, being low and 10 being high)? Can you explain this?

Nick: 7 – I think we are doing the right things and we really look to change things for the better - but as we know there are still things that need to be done.

Me: What do you feel needs to change so we can do better?

Nick: Less time wasting by some of the teachers! I know that some of them say that the pace can feel relentless – but that's how we got where we are and we need to keep pushing not giving up now we have achieved something.

Keeping – sustaining those higher expectations – we have proved that the children can do much better than most of us originally thought – but there is still more to do and they can still do better

Interview 5

Rachel is a teacher in Year 5. She has been teaching for 12 years in total and takes joint responsibility for leading English at the school. This is the only school she has worked at.

Me: How effective do you think the school is at educating the children in our care, on a scale of 1-10 (1, being low and 10 being high)? Can you explain this?

Rachel: 7 – I think we are really good for giving children those academic skills and getting them to learn but we need to spend more time on art, music and PSHE – really nurturing the whole child.

These examples show considered responses that seek positive change. The interviews do not provide a collective and consistent response to the questions asked, but better than that they consider what needs changing in a way that matters to the children and they begin to exemplify (most notably in interviews 3 and 4) a belief in the relentlessness of action and the need to keep going until change happens. This is the beginning of a dialogue grounded in the existential, where considered and critical responses are being made but from a perspective where recognition of the absurdities and inauthenticities of how things are or have been is used to stimulate a debate where change is or can be made. It is the dialogue of change and challenge that is important and the realisation that we have the freedom and responsibility to maintain it. Consequently, it is the acceptance of what is that I believe to be dangerous to inclusive and educational reform – whether that comes from others or from me. I highlight some conclusions in relation to this in the extract below, (which is taken from the text of a poster presentation I gave to some PGCE students at the University, with a range of other postgraduate students, as part of a larger conference entitled 'Voices in Education' (November, 2013), through which I sought to present some ideas relating to my findings in this project at the time, prior to formally writing them up). These conclusions present an evolution in my ideas from earlier reflections and show how the realisation of an existential mode of thought is by necessity, evolutionary:

Responses, actions and the engagement with actions as a teacher, are intimately connected to awareness and conscious engagement with what

you believe the key issues and limitations to those actions are, and the extent to which you feel responsible to them.

Deficit thinking is intimately linked to the functioning of schools and their roles in society. Awareness of this enables us to guard against the overt and simplistic psycho-medical response.

Absurdity is evident in the lived reality of existence and this is starkly evident in the context and interactions within education. In order to open up the possibilities of revolt, passion and liberty we must accept the existential position we find ourselves in (Camus, 1955). In so doing we can concentrate upon what we can do, and do this as authentically as possible, rather than fixate upon our own contradiction and limitations.

Inclusion is not something 'other' to take account of. It is a process through which we can rationalise our behaviour and question our actions in a drive towards authenticity.

Freedom and responsibility are interconnected. The most compelling agent to your own behaviour is the realisation of this interconnectivity. As such this removes much of the preoccupation with externalised judgements and standards, which can monopolise large parts of what schools can become. This therefore places the responsibilities of what schools are and what they will become squarely in the hands of the individuals who inhabit them.

7.5.1 The problem of trust

In review of the statements above and in light of other issues raised within this chapter so far, there is an interesting conundrum that raises its head, and that is the problem of trust. This is a crucial consideration that underpins the successful implementation of an existential perspective, creates the conditions for either interconnected or divergent working in schools and directs the focus of dialogue within and between those schools.

The problem emerges from the consideration that the existential seems to be fundamentally 'anti-trust' as it resides within the perpetual questioning of what is in order to develop a dialogue of action towards what could be. However this would only be true if the position were established whereby those questions were only directed externally and in so doing sought to privilege one's own position. But I have suggested that the uncertainty is universal and does not privilege anyone; it requires one to open up to extensive transparency and scrutiny (which due to the personal nature of self would often assert a far

greater degree of scrutiny) in order to seek out an authentic stance. Therefore, rather than being 'anti-trust', the existential position asserts a trust in others (not through acceptance of unexplained notions or dogmas) based in a belief in human capacity. In asserting an existential position individuals establish a belief in the possibilities of human realisation and action to establish and sustain a dialogue of change and uncertainty to achieve more and make more of each of us. Through taking the existential perspective I am taking a route towards possibility and a concept that complements the ideas on inclusion of Allan (2008) who uses the philosophy of Foucault (1994) among others to establish the concept of transgression, which she states 'allows disabled individuals to shape their own identities by subverting the norms which compel them to repeatedly perform as marginal' (p158). However the existential position goes beyond this by also asserting the circumstance through which revolt (Camus, 1953) replaces transgression. It is for this reason that I argue that to assert an existential perspective, as described within this project, is to realise an inclusive and transformative perspective. It is also, however a fundamental reason why it is difficult to be inclusive in schools.

In consideration of the problem of trust I am brought back once more to the problem of self-affirmation. As highlighted by Sartre (1943), we are constantly drawn towards self-affirmation when we assert who we are on the basis on what is or has been. A clear exemplification of this as a headteacher is that one's reputation and identity as a headteacher is as a product of one's school and one's achievements (and in many eyes what the Ofsted report says!). Therefore self-validation, comparison and justification are virtually in-built into the system and it is likely that the longer one stays at any one circumstance (or the longer one undertakes any single role) the greater this tendency towards self-affirmation. This is because our possibilities and our past actions become more difficult to distinguish, as change requires more self-initiation as the confrontation between the individual and their circumstance (highly evident when you first arrive) diminishes as a result of increased familiarity between the two (this contention is exemplified throughout chapter 6) and realisation and the need for change is less recognised. If the problem of self-affirmation and the difficulty of being inclusive in schools is interconnected with the

problem with what schools are then the problem is likely to reside in the contradictory and dichotomous processes and structures that make them this way. Examples of these issues are: the dependent yet self-autonomous nature of schools, how they are viewed and judged, their access and interaction to new ideas, the way staff are trained for and at schools, and the static nature of staffing within them (particularly at senior management level). Therefore to generate existential trust it is important to build a system whereby transparency is central, access to new and developing ideas is part of the fabric of what we do (within a culture of rigorous dialogue and criticality), personal accountability and responsibility is high and individual circumstances undergo regular and meaningful change.

Within the final Chapter I discuss how freedom and responsibility provide some answers to these problems and make some suggestions for the future possibilities and considerations in light of this thesis.

Chapter 8: Conclusions – freedom and responsibility

> *Life is nothing until lived; but it is yours to make sense of, and the value of it is nothing else but the sense that you choose (Sartre, 1945)*

Satre offers here one of the most powerful ideas in existential thought – the idea that choosing and committing to a course of action is what gives life meaning. To take such a perspective automatically implies a change in emphasis or concern from external accountability, authority and social convention to emphasis upon living authentically towards a purposeful set of values and the importance of personal responsibility. Using an existential perspective allows a natural engagement with inclusive ideas and values (Biesta, 2012) as a purposeful route to engagement with life. However when engaged within schools and the social conventions which both limit and sustain them, the freedom to choose or reject authority and social convention can seem to be more of an illusion and a dialogue of idealism than the radical contention it suggests it could be. Yet it is precisely for that reason that we must look towards the existential position where it is the being for-itself that predominates rather than the being in-itself. To confront the predicable patterns evident in education and society (e.g. the correlation between: social deprivation and educational underachievement; school performance and social intake; parental wealth and attendance at the top universities; gender and subject performance or career choice; attainment at age four and outcomes at sixteen) it is important to look beyond intervention and question the systems within which we reside. In so doing we must brace ourselves for some uncomfortable truths and seek to act in a way that opens up possibilities rather than limits them.

Within this thesis the research question 'why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools' has been addressed through a lived and philosophical engagement with inclusion across multiple circumstances. This has been done in order that the ideas and responses accumulated can move beyond the simple

interrogation of process and action and instead move towards realisation of what it means when being inclusive. The effect of this approach has been to initiate a circumstance where perspective (both personal and philosophical) and action have intersected in such a way that the processes I have undertaken and my perceptions of being have been altered. To reflect on these issues I return to some of the ideas and theorists discussed in the chapter 3 and address them in relation to the discussion that has previously taken place.

8.1 Understanding inclusion

Within chapter 3 I highlighted a contention that the innate problem of the inclusion project is evident and sustains itself through the polarising effect and conflict between the psycho-medical model and sociological response. Having reviewed the dynamics of my own circumstance through this project and identified this ongoing conflict at first hand this view has been compounded for me. Lloyd (2008), who argues that this is sustained in policy and by practitioners due to a lack of challenge, highlights a symptom (which is reflected in this study) but does not delve into why it is sustained and has been an historic and recognised concern by a whole range of other theorists (e.g. Fulcher, 1999; Armstrong, Armstrong and Barton, 2000; Dyson, 2001; Benjamin, 2002). Through this project I offer a perspective for consideration that asserts clarity for understanding rather than of understanding, which is not limited by the need for reduction (due to complexity) or symptomatic response but manifests itself through engagement with individual and collective possibilities. As already highlighted there are similarities between this idea and conceptions and ideas raised by Allan (2008, 2011). However, the difference lies in my more radical rejection of the prevalent norms (due to the existential prerequisites) rather than just a subversion of them. Therefore it is less about the system, as ultimately every system, however considered and effective at a point in time has its limitations (due to the inevitable change surrounding it). What needs to be considered in the use of any approach or system are the limits to it and what stops it from evolving and becoming more. To do this it is necessary to fundamentally change the discourse (Biesta, 2012). What is also apparent is that systems and circumstances are ultimately both limited and progressed by those within them and whether those individuals

recognise their responsibilities to themselves and others in order to realise the freedoms open to them. Therefore the realisation of inclusion within this project is as a fundamental and interrelated part of schools that cannot be distinguished, separate, additional or other and as such requires a perspective that embraces that. Such an approach directly confronts psycho-medical solutions and asks for clarity, direction and action in the face of the social model, in order to build genuine empowerment. Approaches that have been active in schools and have sought to empower them from within such as those developed by Evan, Dyson and Wedell (1998) and Booth et al. (1999; 2011) are limited however by their emphasis on inclusion as a process in-itself, rather than for-itself. Therefore the necessary shift that is manifested by an existential perspective is a movement from seeking inclusion to being inclusive.

The term inclusion is politically sensitive and as such comes with significant baggage of what it means and how it is interpreted. To reclaim the concept of inclusivity it must be lived and asserted through the engagement and enactment. Clough and Nutbrown (2005) highlight this need in stating that '... although inclusive ideologies are discussed, exclusive practices continue'. Taking on Sartre's (1945, p36) notion that an individual is: '... nothing else but the sum of his actions' allows the assertion from Clough and Nutbrown (2005) to be extended into the rationalisation that unless action results from discussions, then the discussions become contingent and potentially superfluous. This is not only something asserted through the perspective I have championed but also an approach through which the actions manifested as a response to answer the question 'why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?' has been engaged with. Therefore, using the existential perspective, such ideas are naturally realised in the assertion of authenticity. Such a position is both its strength and difficulty, as in the study and dialogue surrounding inclusion, it must be coupled with action that seeks to realise it or at least seek to address the limitations recognised. Therefore the position implies commitment to an idea (but also the possibility of fatigue in its enactment) as we recognise through its use that it is part of all our responsibilities to question whether we do enough to actively engage in the process.

8.2 Communities and cultures

Prevalent within the inclusive discourse at present is the discussion and recognition of the power of communities and groups working together. I have discussed these ideas in relation to communities of practice (Wenger, 1998), social capital (Bordieu, 1983; Coleman, 1994; Putnam,2000) and Bauman's (2001) idea of human liberation and identified the ideas of Wenger (1999) and Bauman (2001) as most relevant to this question.

However as discussed in Chapter 5, within the existential perspective the idea of community is a conception predicated upon alienation (Sartre, 1943). As although the concept of community provides a mechanism through which things can happen as highlighted by Wenger (1998), it has the potential to remove the for-itself from the individual and as such removes the existential safeguard of authenticity. This is something also implicitly recognised by Wenger (1998, p85) in stating that communities of practice are not 'intrinsically beneficial or harmful'. Through the use of the existential perspective it is possible to acknowledge the contingency evident in applying a model (such as communities of practice) without a perspective which can negate the absurdities or bad faith that can be easily realised in all of us. Therefore although dialogue and solidarity can help to bring about social change (Bauman, 2000; Rorty, 1999) it is important that our desire to belong does not transcend our own individual circumstance or take precedence over authentic being (Camus, 1955). For Bauman (2000) communities enable us to negate the degree of overt freedom that can be realised, so we can take responsibility for ourselves and our circumstances without becoming overwhelmed and therefore achieve human liberation through the capacity of human solidarity, underpinned by a moral imperative for social change. This is anathema to the existential mode as such an interpretation is an example of bad faith as the authentic mode through which meaningful social change is predicated is removed within that process of thought, decreasing our possibilities and limiting our capacity for change. It is through the recognition of such problems that the existential perspective adds value beyond that of

instruments such as those identified by Wenger (1998) and concepts developed by Bauman. Through the use of the existential model I am able to reject those social conventions which are innately limiting in preference of something else that meets the need recognised by Ainscow (2005, p114) as a 'concept that helps us attend to and make sense of the significance of social processes of learning as powerful mediators of meaning'.

8.3 Curriculum and pedagogy

According to Armstrong (2005) and Allan (2008) through the engagement and study of inclusion it can be perceived as contentious complex and potentially overwhelming. However, through taking the existential perspective I have sought an alternative direction. In answering the question why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools, rather than to broach the implied question, of 'what is being inclusive?' I have sought to unpick the limitations of inclusivity by confronting or negotiating them through action. It may seem that to do this without answering the question, what is being inclusive, would fail to provide a comparative from which to assert a perspective whereby the limitation of inclusion can be referenced. However that response is grounded upon a view of being in-itself and I assert a perspective of being for-itself (Sartre, 1943). This is a fundamental difference between the social model and that of the existential. Within this mode of thought being is not a thing, it just is and as such being is predicated upon existence (and what is engaged with through existence) and not something which has essence within itself. To apply this mode of thought to inclusion means that inclusion is realised through the process of engagement and as such 'inclusivity' is perceived retrospectively and sought through engagement of the possibilities available. In this way only through relentless action applied through challenging the absurd and seeking authentic engagement which reinvents our understanding of inclusion can we enable an active and relevant discourse to being inclusive.

What I have presented in the thesis cannot be applied as a model of curriculum or pedagogical engagement but as an approach from which more effective pedagogies can manifest. The ideas presented within this thesis are not

solutions but possibilities from which to unpick the absurdities that are readily evident within school and need to be recognised by schools through the process of seeking authenticity. Therefore this project is an example of building a philosophical position which is predicated on the need to critically consider our actions, their implications and impact and as such counters the concern of Deleuze and Parnett (1987, p13) for prior philosophies in education which have 'effectively stopped people from thinking.'

8.4 The practical philosophical response and teacher agency

Within chapter 3 I highlighted the importance on the ideas within inclusion that engaged with action and change such as those from Allan (2008; 2011), Priestly et al. (2011), and Biesta (2012), where recognition of uncertainty and multiplicity were evident and a renewed basis from which inclusion could be realised was sought. These ideas have undoubtedly had considerable influence on my own thinking as I have developed and sought to apply the existential ideas that have been discussed throughout the thesis. However there are some specific areas where applying Sartre's ideas specifically add to the prevailing discourse in this area. The first is, as discussed above due to not only a shift in perspective but a fundamental assertion of change in the concept of being in the world and how that presents itself. A key issue which limits the model of agency described by Priestly et al. (2011), and ideas of 'transgression' (Foucault, 1994) used by Allan (2011) is that of contingency of action, as discussed in chapter 7 (Sartre, 1943). Sartre's concern with contingency, also evident within Camus's (1955) need for relentless confrontation is based in the belief that action or agency can manifest itself through bad faith, implicitly acknowledged by Priestly et al. (2011), in their review of the teacher agency and curriculum change project. Through this concern I must acknowledge that engagement which seeks authenticity must recognise contingency of action and seek to present any action more transparently through the acknowledgement of the individual and collective responsibility we all hold, where action seeking authentic change is a necessity rather than a choice. To do otherwise is to assert action that is contingent and disable its agents from

becoming something that could create real transformation within the educational process. In order to engage with the responsibility it must be asserted, not just on behalf of schools and those within them but also from educationalists, theorists and academics whose capacity for critical engagement and awareness if, a fundamental part of the interchange, would help to release schools from their insular, pragmatic and uncritical engagement whist helping them realise their responsibilities. Without solidarity (Rorty, 1999) towards a collective engagement and interchange of actions and ideas the capacity of those within education to shape the discussion around the components such as equality, equity and inclusion will be corrupted by the political ideologies of education, often underpinned by a positivist discourse.

This project has not been about identifying or generalising what to do and how to do it in order to be inclusive. Instead it is directed as a response to St Pierre (2004) and Allan (2008) who highlighted the desperate need for new concepts from philosophy from which to challenge the prevailing positivist research model prevalent in education. I have not found or offered a discrete or finite set of solutions but instead presented a system predicated on possibilities (Sartre, 1943) which accepts multiplicity (Patton, 2000). This produces new concepts (Bains, 2002) and new imaginings (Allan, 2008), 'knocking down partitions co-extensive with the world' (Deleuze, 1994, p22). I offer this thesis for others to begin their own process of existential realisation, in order that recognition of the absurd becomes more evident, bad faith is more easily avoided and freedom and responsibility are more ardently embraced. I do this in overt recognition of some of the elements I have highlighted that make inclusion difficult in schools, but also to present some specific possibilities upon which discussion and interrogation may continue.

8.5 Why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools?

To seek to conclude with a few pithy sentences or points is inevitably a reduction of the process of realisation asserted through the approach I have adopted (where both the chronology and engagement in action have been central) and as such risks asserting what is and a being in-itself rather than

being for itself. Therefore anything I suggest at the end of this thesis must be seen in light of the prior discussions, exemplifications and the chronology manifested from this project. What I present is in no way a finite summation of what the difficulties of being inclusive in school are, it is instead a process of reflection, realisation and action which acknowledges at its heart, that the greatest limitation to authentic change (and inclusive development) is our own capacity to imagine alternatives and possibilities (Sartre, 1943) from which we can act due to our own desire for affirmation of both self and circumstance, which by necessity asserts a dialogue of what is rather than what could be. However it is upon our actions that change happens; however difficult, change must be central to the process of seeking inclusion. Using some of the difficulties of inclusion emergent through this text and the tools of absurdity, authenticity, freedom and responsibility it is possible to identify actions for change. As a beginning of this process I have made some suggestions of how we might think or act otherwise in a way that may provide a tangible way to reflect or consider changes in schools that could occur with respect to existentialist thought.

8.5.1 Actions for change – the start of a discussion

What is suggested here are ideas for debate, structures which will support teachers and school leaders in their confrontation of the absurd and possibilities for an alternative dynamic in education. These actions and processes are suggested to stimulate a response, whether that be consideration, rejection or an urge toward action. However they are not provided as the actions whereby we may be more inclusive but rather a limited set of examples which may provide possibilities and a stimulus for a far more numerous and interesting set of answers that could be realised through the process of individual and collective empowerment initiated by more of us utilising a mode of existential thought that seeks inclusion.

8.5.1.1 Absurdity and authenticity

Absurdity has been used as a tool throughout the project to highlight and identify problematic ideas, approaches and circumstances that in many cases have resulted from lack of genuine criticality, acceptance of how things are and contingent action. As highlighted the avoidance of absurdity is a virtual impossibility however by increasing both individual and collective engagement it may be possible to increase our awareness of it and in so doing increase our authenticity. Therefore, I would suggest that in order that we heighten our recognition of our circumstance it is necessary to increase our personal engagement with change, increase our responsibility for what we are trying to achieve and compel a greater degree of action in all of us that takes this into account. Such actions to support these goals in schools could be:

- Licensing teachers, to ensure that, on-going development and accountability is in-built within the system. Such an approach could require the fulfilment, development and evidencing of a range of agreed professional competencies, such as undertaking a certain level of self-directed professional development, engagement or involvement in research projects or action research, mentoring and coaching of others or evidencing personal capacity or awareness through what they have done in their role. By doing this it would increase the expectation of personal engagement, action and reflection in terms of what it means to be a teacher, sustain an ongoing professional discourse and process for training and ensure that the roles and responsibilities of teaching are under constant review and revision by those who fulfil them, as a result of the new actions and possibilities that shape them.
- Development of an independent (non-governmental) professional body, which is responsible for educational policy and development, shaped by all sectors of education, which could sustain a greater consistency in educational direction, more removed from specific and shifting political agenda. Such a professional body would increase the natural interchange between the schools and academia and present a central structure for educational discourse that could result in action that was both credible and relevant. To do this they would need to be responsible for a sustained,

rigorously reviewed and debated rationale for education, the curriculum, assessment, teacher licensing and training.

- Change employment structures for headteachers, whereby headteachers in any local authority area are directly employed by the local authority (or equivalent group). By doing this headteachers would maintain their accountability to their school and the governing body, but enable schools to renew their leadership and direction at more regular intervals, decrease protectionism (often employed by individual schools) and increase purposeful interaction, interconnection and sharing between schools. Through changing the fundamental assumptions of school leadership in a way that asserts the necessity of collective (rather than individual) responsibility it may be possible to alter the way schools collaborate and interact, decreasing replication and building a dialogue that really matters.
- Change the governance structures in schools through greater professionalization, so that every school governing body has the awareness and capacity to hold the school to account for its actions. In order that a challenging dialogue is maintained within schools, rigorous questioning and challenge that seeks out unrealised possibilities must be the core role of school governance.

What is suggested here is only the tip of the iceberg in so far as actions for change go, but provide examples of the application of a form and approach of thinking which seeks actions and changes by targeting and questioning elements of school structures which maintain the edge of absurdity, promote affirmation and decrease possibility.

8.5.5.2 Freedom and responsibility

Since 2010 and the governmental white paper (DFE, 2010) there have been a lot of emphasis on school change, freedom, responsibility and innovation. However this has been limited by the absurd way it has manifested itself and the assumptions that have underpinned it, which have generated contingency and divergence in terms of what schools are trying to achieve and what is

important within them As has been clear throughout this project I am a strong advocate for change, freedom, responsibility and innovation however it is the term responsibility that has been the greatest limitation post 2010, as it has been applied to reinforce the already problematic standards agenda without recognition of the implications of what this creates in schools.

- If we are to rethink school structures and processes surely we must reconsider the traditional (and predominantly unquestioned) school designations of primary, secondary and special and the age groups which they represent. Rather than a movement away from special schools and anti-inclusive models of schooling, both academies and free school initiatives have led to a reinvigoration of this status and a renewal of old contentions. Many of the absurdities that have been encountered within this project stem from the idea that things are done on the basis of what they are believed to be – those foundations need to be re-evaluated as there are many approaches, assumptions and systems which seem to lack purpose and seem somewhat arbitrary or at best pragmatic and are a far cry from the authenticity sought through this project.
- Inspection – as inspection is still considered a very important part of the public accountability of schools, but is always one of the things which worries schools the most. I suggest that the number of inspections are increased to the point where all schools are inspected annually, but in a way that is rigorous but supportive in the development and success of the schools. By increasing the regularity of inspection for all schools there becomes a greater acceptance of the process and a greater willingness to work with it. The work done by the inspections will be more relevant and less out of date, therefore schools will not be so content to seek to reinforce what they were but instead seek to reinvigorate themselves and strive for what they could be. I also suggest that the inspectorate is independent of government in order to find a way to remove inspection from the politicisation of what it has become. It will also enable a more rigorous dialogue between inspectorate and government, when one is no longer the employee of the other.

- With the advent of greater internal and external scrutiny surrounding the actions and processes of schools, schools and education will be in a better position to discuss the testing and qualifications system and actually come up with something that is fit for purpose, relevant for future employers and is fit for education in the 21st century.

8.6 Possibilities

In direct answer to the question, why is it difficult to be inclusive in schools? the difficulties of inclusion in school, I have found, come in two directions, one as a result of the model through which we interpret how things are and the other as a result of our need for affirmation, both from ourselves and from others as to whether what we are doing is valid in some sense. The first difficulty is problematic in the sense that whether utilising a psycho-medical model or social model action and change is a product of generalisation on what is believed to be and is a response of the model rather than an integral part of it, as is alternatively presented within the existential perspective. The result is that change and action are naturally contingent (and separate) as they fail to take into account the diversity of possibility and the organic manifestation of the social circumstance we find ourselves in. The second difficulty holds this first difficulty in place – as the need for affirmation sustains our static perceptions of how things are (including our perceptions of how others are) and limits the possibilities of what could be. Therefore when reflecting upon the difficulties of being inclusive within our current climate, when we reduce the dialogue of this thesis down to its basics, we are ultimately left with the understanding that both the difficulties and possibilities of being inclusive begin with the individual. Therefore in order to move forward in a way that is existentially meaningful, what is required is the reappraisal of what we (both individually and collectively) believe being to be and more specifically being in and being part of school. In doing this there are some specific and significant shifts we must make to how we engage with inclusion in schools. The first of these is a movement in belief away from the need for certainty, we often find ourselves regressing to. We must become comfortable with change, but change that is progressed purposefully through a constant cycle of reflection, challenge, action and revision that we can all

adopt. In doing this we can, not only recognise our absurdities but also reappraise and refocus our actions in response to them. The second shift we must make is in the adoption of an optimism for the future based on possibility and purpose. It is only through believing that transformational change is both possible and necessary and that each and every one of us has a role to play in that change that authentic change may occur. Through such a reappraisal we may perceive meaningful change and action that is complementary and essential where renewed possibilities emerge and being inclusive becomes a more active, important and possible process.

List of References

Ainscow, M. (1999). *Understanding the development of inclusive schools.* London: Falmer.

Ainscow, M. (2005). Developing inclusive education systems: what are the levers for change? *Journal of Educational Change,* 6: 109–124.

Ainscow, M., Booth, T. and Dyson, A. (2006). *Improving schools, developing inclusion.* London: Routledge.

Ainscow, M., T. Booth, and A. Dyson. (2006). Inclusion and the standards agenda: negotiating policy pressures in England. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, Vol. 10, No. 4–5, July–September 2006, pp. 295–308.*

Ainscow, M. And Cesar, M. (2006). Inclusive education ten years after Salamanca: Setting the agenda. *European Journal of Psychology of Education.* Vol. 21, no. 3, 231-238.

Ainscow, M., Dyson, A., Goldrick, S., & Kerr, K. (2009). Using research to further inclusion and equity within the context of New labour education reforms. In *Radical reforms: Perspectives on an era of educational change*, ed. Chapman, Christopher & Gunter, Helen M, 169-181. London: Routledge.

Ainscow, M. and Sandill, A. (2010). Developing inclusive education systems: the role of organisational cultures and leadership, *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 14:4,

401-416

Allan, J. (2008). *Rethinking Inclusive Education: The philosophers of difference in practice.* Springer: Dordrecht, The Netherlands.

List of References

Allan, J. (2011) Complicating not explicating: Taking up philosophy in learning disability research, *Learning Disability Quarterly, 34 (2), pp. 153-161.*

Allan, J. (2011) Complicating not explicating: Taking up philosophy in learning disability research, *Learning Disability Quarterly, 34 (2), pp. 153-161.*

Allen-Collinson, J. (2012) Autoethnography: situating personal sporting narratives in socio-cultural contexts. In *Qualitative Research on Sport and Physical Culture. Research in the Sociology of Sport by K. Young and M. Atkinson (eds).* Emerald Press, Bingley, UK.

Armstrong, F., Armstrong, D. & Barton, L. (Eds) (2000) *Inclusive education.* London, David

Fulton.

Armstrong, D. (2005). Reinventing 'inclusion': New Labour and the cultural politics of special education. *Oxford Review of Education.* 31 (1), 135 – 151.

Baggini, J. (2011). *The ego trick: In search of the self.* London: Granta Books

Baggini, J. (2007). *Welcome to everytown. A journey into the English mind*. London: Granta Books.

Baggini, J, and Stangroom, J. (2003). What Philosophers Think, p 1-10. In *what philosophers think,* by Baggini, J. and Stangroom, J. (Eds.). Continuum: New York.

Bailey, K.D. (1990). *Social entropy theory.* Albany, New York: State University of New York Press

Ball, S. (1994). *Education reform: A critical and post-structural approach.* Buckingham/Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Barton, L. (1988). *The politics of special educational needs.* Lewes: Falmer Press.

Barton, L. (1997). Inclusive education: romantic, subversive or realistic? *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 1, no. 3: 231-242.

Barton, L. (2001). Disability, struggle and the politics of hope. In *Disability, politics and the struggle for change,* ed. L. Barton. London: David Fulton Publishers.

Barnes, C. and Mercer, G. (2002). *Disability (Key concepts).* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Bauman, Z. (2001). *Seeking safety in an insecure world*. Cambridge: Polity Press

Bauman, Z. (2000). *Liquid modernity*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers

Beer, M., Eisenstat, R. and Spector, B. (1990). *The critical path to corporate renewal.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

List of References

Benjamin, S. (2002) *The micropolitics of inclusive education* (Buckingham, Open University Press).

Berne, E. (1964). *Games people play: The Basic Handbook of Transactional Analysis.* New York: Ballantine Books

Biatchford, P. (1996). Pupils' views on school work and school from 7 to 16 years. *Research Papers in Education* Volume 11, Issue 3 October, pages 263 - 288

Biesta, G. 2008. Pedagogy with empty hands: Levinas, education and the question of being human. In *Levinas and education: At the intersection of faith and reason*, ed. D. Egéa-Kuehne. London/New York: Routledge.

Biesta, G. (2012). Philosophy of education for the public good: five challenges and an agenda. *Educational Philosophy and Theory,Vol. 44, No. 6. 581-593*

Bines, H. (1999) Inclusive standards? Current developments in policy for special educational needs in England and Wales, *Oxford Review of Education,* 26(1), 21–31.

Bochner, Arthur. P., & Ellis, Carolyn. S. (2006). Communication as autoethnography. In G. J. Shepherd, J. S. John & T. Striphas (Eds.), *Communication as: Perspectives on theory* (pp. 110–122). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Bochner, A. P. (2000). Criteria against ourselves. *Qualitative Inquiry 6(2)*, 266-272.

Bochner, A. P. (2001). Narrative's virtues. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *7*(2), 131-157.

Booth, T. (1996) Stories of exclusion: natural and unnatural selection. In E. Blyth and J. Milner (eds),

Exclusion from School: Inter-professional Issues for Policy and Practice (London: Routledge).

Booth, T. (2003). Views form the institution: overcoming barriers to inclusive education? In T. Booth, K. Nes and M. Strmstad (Eds). *Developing inclusive education.* London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Booth, T. And Ainscow, M. (2011). *Index for Inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools.* Bristol: Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE).

Bourdieu, P. (1977). Cultural reproduction and social reproduction in J. Karabel and A.H. Halsey (eds) *Power and ideology in education.* New York: Oxford University Press

Bourdieu, P. (1979). (translated by Richard Nice). *Distinction.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul

Bourdieu, P. (1983). Forms of capital in J. C. Richards (ed.) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, New York: Greenwood Press.

Blackburn, S. (2001). *Being Good. A short introduction to ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

List of References

Bruner , J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of Meaning.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard.

Bryk. A. And Schneider, B. (2003). Trust in schools: a core resource for improvement. *Educational Leadership, 60 (6), 40-45*

Buss, R. (2006) *Introduction to 'The Fall' (translation, 2006).* Penguin books: London

Camus, A. (1942). The Outsider. Translated by Joseph Laredo, 1982. Penguin Books: London.

Camus, A. (1955). *The Myth of Sisyphus.* Translated by Justin O'Brien. London: Penguin books. (Le Mythe de Sisyphe, Originally published 1942)

Camus, A. (1956). The Fall. Translated by Robin Buss, 2006. Penguin Books: London.

Carrier, J. (1986) *Learning Disability ± Social Class and the Construction of Inequality in American Education* (Connecticut: Greenwood).

Carrier, J. (1989) Sociological perspectives on special education. *New Education*, **11**, 21-31.

Carrington, S. (1996) Think! Do! The impact of teachers' instructional beliefs on their classroom

behaviour. Paper presented at the Australian Resource Educators' Association 1996 Conference ± Selected Papers, Melbourne.

Carrington, S. 1999. Inclusion needs a different school culture. *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 3, no. 3: 257–68.

Cassen, R and Kingdon, G. (2007). *Tackling Low Educational Achievement.* York. Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Castle, F. and Parsons, C. (1997). Disruptive behaviours and exclusions from schools: Redefining and Responding to the problem. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*. Vol. 2, Issue 3 Winter , pages 4 – 11.

Chang, Heewon. (2008). *Autoethnography as method*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Cladingbowl, M. (2014) Why do Ofsted observe individual lessons and how do they evaluate teaching in schools? Ofsted: *http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/why-do-ofsted-inspectors-observe-individual-lessons-and-how-do-they-evaluate-teaching-schools*

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1994). Personal experience methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 413-427). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

List of References

Clandinin, D. J., and Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Claxton, G. (2002). *Building Learning Power. Helping Young People Become Better Learners*. TLO: Bristol

Claxton, G. (2007). Expanding Young People's Capacity to Learn. *British Journal of Educational Studies.* number: 10.Vol. 55, No.2, June, pp 1–20.

Clough, P. (2000). Comments on setting criteria for experimental writing. *Qualitative Inquiry 6(2)*, 278-291.

Clough, P. and Barton, L. (1995): Introduction: self and the research act, In: P. Clough and L. Barton (eds) *Making Difficulties: Research and the Construction of SEN*, London: Paul Chapman.

Clough, P. and Corbett, J. (2000) *Theories of Inclusive Education.* London: Sage.

Clough P. And Corbett, J. (2000). *Theories of inclusive education: A student's guide.* Paul Chapman Publishing: London.

Clough, P., & Nutbrown, C. (2005). Inclusion and Development in the Early Years: Making Inclusion Conventional? Foreword in *Child Care in Practice* Vol. 11, No.2, April 2005, pp. 99-102

Coffey, P. (1999). *The ethnographic self*. London: Sage.

Coleman, J.S. (1988). Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital. *American Journal of Sociology* (94:Supplement: Organizations and Institutions: Sociological and Economic Approaches to the Analysis of Social Structure) pp S95-S120

Coleman, J. (1990). *Equality and achievement in education.* Westview Press: Boulder.

Coleman, J. (1994). *Foundations of social theory.* Harvard University Press: Cambridge.

Croll, P. (2004). Families, social capital and educational outcomes. *British Journal of Educational Studies, 52 (4), 390-416*

Croll, P. and Moses, D. (2000). Ideologies and utopias: education professionals' views of inclusion. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 15, no. 1: 1-12.

Dagley, V. (2004). Pupils' perceptions of the efficacy of target setting and how it can be made more effective. *Pastoral Care in Education.* Volume 22 Issue 2, Pages 14 – 18.

Davey, L. (1991). The application of case study evaluations. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 2(9).

DCSF, (2007). The Children's Plan. Building Brighter Futures. *www.dcsf.gov.uk.*

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1994). What is Philosophy? (H. Tomlinson and B. Habberjam, trans). New York: Columbia University Press.

Department for Children, schools and families (DCSF) (2007). The children's plan: building brighterfutures.*http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=CM%207280*

Denzin, N. K. (1989). Interpretive interactionism. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Entering the field of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 1-17). Thousand Oaks, CA:Sage.

Denzin, N. K. (1999). Interpretive ethnography for the next century. *Journal of. Contemporary Ethnography,* 28(5), 510-519.

Denzin, N. (2000). Aesthetics and Qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry 6(2)*, 256-265.

Denzin, N.K. (2003) Performing [Auto] Ethnography Politically. *The Review of Education, Pedagogy and Cultural Studies, 25:257–278.*

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln. Y.S (2005). (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research,* (2nd ed., pp. 923–948). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Derrida, J. 1993. *Aporias.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Dessent, T. (1987) *Making the ordinary school special* (Hove, Falmer).

Dewey, J (1916). *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to Philosophy of Education*. New York. Macmillan.

Dewey, J. (1920). *Reconstruction in philosophy*: *The middle works of John Dewey* (Vol. 12). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

DfES (2003). *Key Stage 3, National Strategy Intervention Toolkit.* DfES Publications.

DfE, 2010. *The Importance of Teaching – the Schools White Paper.* https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/CM%207980

Douglass, B. G., & Moustakas, C. (1985). Heuristic inquiry: The internal search to know. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, *25*(3), 39-55.

Dyson, A and Robson, E. (1999). *School, family, community: Mapping school inclusion in the UK.* Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Dyson, A. (2001) Special needs in the twenty-first century: where we've been and where we're going, *British Journal of Special Education,* 28(1), 24–28.

Dyson, A. (2007). Education and disadvantage: the role of community-oriented schools. *Oxford Review of Education.* Volume 33, Issue 3 297 – 314.

List of References

Dyson, A., Jones, L. and Kerr, K. (2009). Inclusion and social disadvantage in the English education system: the role of area-based initiatives. Paper presented in the international research forum, 'A Comparative Analysis of Equity in Inclusive Education', Stanford University, Palo Alto, California, U.S.A., 2-4 February 2009. *http://www.education.manchester.ac.uk/research/centres/cee/publications/fileuploadmax10mb,150311,en.doc (downloaded 11th December 2013)*

Ellis, C. (1991). Sociological introspection and emotional experience. *Symbolic Interaction*, *14*(1), 23-50.

Ellis, C. (2004). *The Ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography.* Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press.

Ellis, C. (2007). Telling secrets revealing lives. Relational ethics in research with intimate others. *Qualitative inquiry 13(1), 3-29.*

Ellingson, L. L., and Ellis, C. (2008). Autoethnography as constructionist project. In J. A. Holstein & J. F. Gubrium (Eds.), *Handbook of constructionist research* (pp. 445-466). New York: Guilford Press.

Elmore, R. F. (2004). *School reform from the inside out.* Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Erikson, E. (1965). *Childhood and society.* London: Penguin.

Evans, J., Dyson, A. And Wedell, (1998) *Collaborating for effectiveness: empowering schools to be inclusive.* Maidenhead: Open University Press

Fine, B. (2001). *Social capital versus social theory: political economy and social sciences at the turn of the millennium.* London: Routledge

Flvyberg, B. 2001. *Making social science matter: why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again.* Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Foucault, Michel. 1969. *The archaeology of knowledge*. Translation. A. M. Sheridan Smith (2002). London and New York: Routledge.

Frank, A. W. (2000). The standpoint of storyteller. *Qualitative Health Research*, *10*(3), 354-365.

French, S. 1993. Disability, impairment or something in between. In *Disabling barriers, enabling environments,* eds. J. Swain, S. French, C. Barnes and C. Thomas. London: Sage.

Frankel, V. (2004). *Man's Search for Meaning*. London. Rider Books.

Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of freedom: ethics, democracy, and civic courage*. Translated by Patrick Clarke, Foreword by Donaldo Macedo, Introduction by Stanley Aronowitz. Boulder: Roman & Littlefield.

Freire, P. (1999). *Pedagogy of hope*. New York: Continuum. (Originally published
1992)

French, S. 1994. (Ed). *On equal terms: working with disabled people.* Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann

Fukuyama, F. (1999). *Social capital and civil society.* The institute of public policy: George Mason University

Fulcher, G. (1999) *Disabling policies? A comparative approach to education policy and disability.* Sheffield, Philip Armstrong.

Fullan, M. (2008). *The Six Secrets of Change. What the best leaders do to help their organisations survive and thrive.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a Culture of Change*. Jossey-Bass. San Francisco.

Garner, P. (1991) Comparative perspectives on the views of disruptive students in three special schools in three countries. *Maladjustment and Therapeutic Education,* 9, 3, 152-158.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*. New York: Basic Books.

Gewirtz, S. and Cribb, A. 2006. What to do about values in social research: The case for ethical reflexivity in the sociology of education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 27, no. 2: 141-155.

Gewirtz, S. and Cribb, A. 2008. Differing to agree: A reply to Hammersley and Abraham. *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 29, no. 5: 559-562.

Giarelli, J., & Chambliss, J. J. (1988). Philosophy of education as qualitative inquiry. In R. Sherman & R. Webb (Eds.), *Qualitative research in education: Focus and methods* (pp. 30-43). Philadelphia: Falmer Press.

Gilbert, C. (2006). *2020 Vision, a vision for teaching and learning in 2020*. www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications. Nottingham, DfES.

Gladwell, M (2000). *The Tipping Point. How little things can make a big difference.* Abucus: London.

Glaser, B. (1992). Basics of grounded theory analysis. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press

Glass, R. D. (2001). On Paulo Freire's Philosophy of Praxis and the Foundations of Liberation Education. *Educational Reseacher*, 30: 15–25.

Goleman, D. (2000). Leadership that gets results. *Harvard Business Review*. P78-90.

Golomb, Jacob (1995). *In Search of Authenticity: Existentialism form Kierkegaard to Camus (Problems of Modern European Thought).* Routledge: Oxford.

Gottfredson, D. Gottfredson, G. and Hybl, L.(1993). Managing Adolescent Behavior A Multiyear, Multischool Study. *American Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 179-215.

Greany, T. (2014). Self-improving school system: Are we nearly there yet? Moving forwards. *http://www.greateducationdebate.org.uk/articles.self-improving-school-system-are-we-nearly-there-yet-moving-forwards.html?author=toby-greany*

List of References

Greany, T. (2014a). The self-improving school system: competing policies undermine the coalition's admirable aims. *http://ioelondonblog.wordpress.com/page/2/*

Greany, T. (2014b). Self-improving school system: will it be survival of the fittest or team effort? *http://ioelondonblog.wordpress.com/*

Gu, Q. And Day, C. (2007). Teachers Resilience: A Necessary Condition for Effectiveness. *Teaching and Teacher Education.* Volume 23, Issue 8 November 2007, Pages 1302-1316

Gutteridge, D.(2002). Identifying disaffection, *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*,10:2,161 — 167.

Habermas, J. (1986). *Autonomy and Solidarity: Interviews*, edited by Peter Dews. London: Verso.

Habermas, J. (1987). *The Theory of Communicative Action, Volume II, Lifeworld and System: A critique of Functionalist Reason*, trans. by Thomas McCarthy. Boston: Beacon Press.

Hammersley, M. (2008). Reflexivity for what? A resonse to Gewirtz and Cribb on the role of values in the sociology of education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 29, no. 5: 649-558.

Hanko, G. 2005. Towards an inclusive school culture: the 'affective curriculum'. In *Curriculum and pedagogy in inclusive education: Values into practice,* eds. M. Nind, J. Rix, K. Sheehy and K. Simmons. London/New York: RoutledgeFalmer/The Open University.

Hanifan,L.J (1916), quoted in Putnam, (2000). *Bowling Alone*. New York. Simon and Schuster Paperbacks.

Hargreaves, A. And Fink, D. (2006). *Distributed Leadership.* Jossey-Bass. San Francisco.

Hargreaves, H. (2012). A self-improving school system: towards maturity. National College for School Leadership. *www.nationalcollege.org.uk/*

Hart, S. (1996) *Beyond special needs: Enhancing children's learning through innovative thinking.* London, Paul Chapman

Hattie, J. (2009). Visible Learning. A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement. Routlegde: London.

Hawkes, N. (2009). *http://www.values-education.com/*

Hayes, S.C., Barnes-Holmes, D. And Roche, B. (2001). *Relational Frame Theory: A Post-Skinnerian Account of Human Language and Cognition*. Kluwer Academic: New York.

Heideggar (1927) *Being and Time.* Translation by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, 1962. London: SCM Press.

Heidegger, M. (1993) [1947] Letter on Humanism, in:D. F. Krel (ed.), *Martin Heidegger:The basic writings* (San Francisco, CA, Harper), pp. 213–265.

Hegelund, A. (2005). Objectivity and Subjectivity in Ethnographic Method. *Qualitative Health Research.* Vol. 15, no. 5, 647 – 668.

List of References

Helliwell, J.F. and Putnam, R.D. (1999). Education and Social Capital. National Bureau of Economic Research. *www.nber.org/papers/w7121*

Hilary, P. Stephenson, K. and Radice, M. (2001). Four Teachers Talking: Social Inclusion, Professional Development and uncontested meaning. *Journal of In-service Education.* Vol. 27, no. 3 pp377 – 404.

HM Government (2011). Opening Doors,Breaking Barriers: A Strategy for Social Mobility.
http://www.dpm.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files_dpm/resources/HMG_SocialMobility_acc.pdf

HM Government (2012). Opening Doors,Breaking Barriers: A Strategy for Social Mobility. Update on progress since April 2011.
http://www.dpm.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files_dpm/resources/HMG_SocialMobility_acc.pdf

Home Office (2006). *National Statistics Online*. www.statistics.gov.uk.

Huberman, M. 1993. The model of the independent artisan in teachers' professional relationships. In *Teachers' work: Individuals, colleagues and contexts,* ed. J.W. Little and M.W. McLaughlin, 11–50. New York, NY: Teachers College Press

Kaplan, A., Gheen, M. and Midgley, C. (2002). Classroom goal structure and student disruptive behaviour. *British Journal of Educational Psychology* Vol. 72, Number 2, June , pp. 191-211(21).

Kelley, H. H. (1973). The Processes of Causal Attribution. *American Psychologist.* February, 107-128.

Kierkegaard, S. (1843). *Fear and Trembling.* Translation by Howard V. Hong, 1983. Princeton University Press: New Jersey.

Knotter, J. (1996). *Leading Change.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Larson, C.L. (2011). Responsibility and Accountability in Educational Leadership: Keeping Democracy and Social Justice Central to Reform. *Scholar-Practitioner Quarterly, Volume 4, Number 4*

Laslett, R. (1995) Beliefs and practice in the early schools for maladjusted children. *Therapeutic Care and Education, 4,* 1, 5-9.

Leadbeater, C. (2008). *21 Ideas for 21st Century Learning*. www.innovation-unit.co.uk. The Innovation Unit.

Levinas, E. (1981) *Otherwise Than Being or Beyond Essence* (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff).

Levitas, R., Pantazis, C., Fahmy, E., Gordon, D., Lloyd, E and Patsios, D. (2007). *The Multidimensional Analysis of Social Exclusion.* London. Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Lincoln, Y. S and Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Linde, C. (1993). *Life Stories: The creation of coherence.* New York: Oxford University Press.

List of References

Lister, R. (1998). From Equality to Social Inclusion. New Labour and the Welfare State. *Critical Social Policy*. 18, pp215 – 226.

Lloyd, Christine (2008): Removing barriers to achievement: A strategy for inclusion or exclusion?, International Journal of Inclusive Education, 12:2, 221-236

Lister, R. (1998). From Equality to Social Inclusion. New Labour and the Welfare State. *Critical Social Policy*. 18, pp215 – 226.

Little, J.W., and M.W. McLaughlin, eds. (1993). *Teacher's work: Individuals, colleagues and contexts.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Maréchal, G. (2010). Autoethnography. In A. J. Mills, G. Durepos & E. Wiebe (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of case study research* (Vol. 2, pp. 43–45). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Mason, J. (2006). Mixing Methods in a Qualitatively Driven Way. *Qualitative Research. SAGE* Publications, London. Vol. 6(1) 9-25.

Matravers, M. (2004). Some Guesses as to the future of political philosophy. *In What Philosophy is* (2004) by Carel, H. and Gamez, D. (Eds). Continuum: New York.

Matravers, M. (2004). *Responsibility within Justice.* Polity Press

Maykut, P. and Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning Qualitative Research. A philosophic and Practical Guide.* London. The Falmer Press.

Mcadams, D.P. (1993*). The stories we live by: personal myths and the making of self*. New York: The Guildford Press.

Mcadams, D. P. (2006). The Problem of Narrative Coherence. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*. 19: 109-125.

McGonigal, J., Doherty, R., Allan, J., Mills, S., Catts, R., Redford, M., McDonald, A. Mott, J. and Buckley, C. (2007). Social Capital, Social Inclusion and Changing School Contexts: A Scottish Perspective. British Journal of Educational Studies, 55:1, 77-94.

Medford, K. (2006). Caught with Fake ID: ethical questions about slippage in autoethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry, 12(5), 853-864.*

Mishler, E.G. (1986). *Research Interviewing: Context and Narrative,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Mittler, P. (2000). Working Towards Inclusive Education. London: Fulton.

Mongon, J., Ford, D. and Whelan, M. 1982. *Special education and social control: Invisible disasters.* Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Morse, J. M., Barrett, M., Mayan, M., Olson, K., & Spiers, J. (2002). Verification strategies for establishing reliability and validity in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 1(2), Article 2*.

Muijs, D., and Reynolds, D. (2001). *Effective Teaching, Evidence and Practice*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

Muncey, T. (2005). Doing autoethnography. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *4*(3), Article 5.

Neuman, W. L. (1994). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Newburn, T., Shiner, M., Groben, S. and Young, T. (2005). *Dealing with Disaffection*. London: Willan Publishing.

Nietzche, F. (1987). *On the Genealogy of Morals*, translated and edited by Douglas Smith, (1996) Oxford: Oxford World's Classics.

Nietzsche, F. (1886) *The Joyful Science.* Translated, by Walter Kaufmann, 1974. Vintage Books.

Nietzsche, F. (1883). *Thus Spoke Zarathustra.* translated by Thomas Common, 1997. Wordsworth Classics.

Nietzsche, F. (1882). *Beyond Good and Evil.* Translated by Marion Faber, 1998. Oxford: Oxford World's *Classics.*

Office for National Statistics (ONS), (2009) Social Trends 40: 2010 edition Chapter 5: Income and *wealth. http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/search/index.html?newquery=wage+inequality*

Office for national statistics (2013). http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/index.html.

Oliver, M. 1996. *Understanding disability: From theory to practice.* Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Oliver, M. (1999). Final accounts and the parasite people. In *Disability discourse,* eds. M. Corker and S. French. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Oliver, M. and Barnes, C. (1996). *Disabled people and social policy: From exclusion to inclusion*. London: Longman.

Ofsted (2008). The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. *http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Annual-Report-2007-08.*

Ofsted (2007). Pupil Referral Units, Establishing Successful Practice in Pupil Referral Units and Local Authorities. *http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research..*

Ofsted (2010). Developing Leadership: National Support Schools. *http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/developing-leadership-national-support-schools*

Ofsted (2014). Framework for School inspection. *http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-school-inspection*

Paterson, K. and Hughes, B. (1999). Disability studies and phenomenology: the carnal politics of everyday life. *Disability and Society* 14, no. 5: 597-611.

Perkins, D. (1995) *Outsmarting IQ: the Emerging Science of Learnable Intelligence.* New York, Free Press.

Petersen, C., Maier, S. and Seligmen, M. (1995). *Learned Helplessness – A theory for the age of personal control.* Oxford University Press.

Polanyi, M. (1967). *The Tacit Dimension.* Chicago Il: The University of Chicago.

Priestley, M., Biesta, G. And Robinson, S. (2012). Teachers as agents of change: An exploration of the concept of teacher agency. Working paper no. 1, Teacher Agency and Curriculum Change. *http://www.stir.ac.uk/education/theorylab/*

Putnam, R. (1993). The Prosperous Community: Social Capital and Public Life. The American Prospect, no. 13

Putnam, R. (1995). Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital. *Journal of Public Democracy, 6 (1), 65-78*

Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling Alone*: *The Collapse and Revival of American Community.* New York. Simon and Schuster Paperbacks.

Pykett, J. (2009). Personalisation and de-schooling: uncommon trajectories in contemporary education policy *Critical Social Policy 29 (3): 374-397*

Rambo, C. (2007). Handing IRB an unloaded gun. Qualitative Inquiry 13:353-67

Rawls, J. (1971). *A Theory of Justice.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Reed-Danahay, D. E. (1997). Introduction. In D. Reed-Danahay (Ed.), *Auto/Ethnography: Rewriting the Self and the Social.* (pp. 1–17). Oxford: Berg.

Reid, G. (2003). *Dyslexia: A Practitioners Handbook, 3rd Edition*. Chichester: Wiley.

Richardson, L. (1997). *Fields of play: Constructing an academic life*. New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press.

Richardson, L. (2000). Evaluating ethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry, 6(2)*, 253-255.

Richardson, L. (2000). New writing practices in qualitative research. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, *17*, 5-20.

Richardson, L. (2007). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln. (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research,* (2nd ed., pp. 923–948). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Rigby, C. S, E.L. Deci, E.L., Patrick, B.C. and Ryan, R.M. (1992). Beyond the Intrinsic-Extrinsic Dichotomy:Self-Determination in Motivation and Learning. *Motivation and Emotion, Vol. 16, No. 3.*

Rogers, C. (1951) *On Client-Centred Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications and Theory*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Rorty, R (1980). Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature. Oxford: Blackwell.

Rorty, R. (1992). The Linguistic Turn: Essays in Philosophical Method. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Rorty, R. (1999). *Philosophy and Social Hope*. London. Penguin Books.

Rose, J. (2008). The Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum: Interim Report. DCSF: London.

Rouse, M. & Florian, L. (1997) Inclusive education in the market-place, *International Journal of Inclusive Education,* 1(4), 323–336.

Rowlands, M. (2013). *Thoughts from the Road on Meaning and Mortality*. London: Granta Books

Sartre, J.P. (1938). Nausea, [version published in English, 1963 by Robert Baldick]. Penguin Books: London

Sartre, J.P. (1943), [version published in English, 1968]. *Being and Nothingness*. Washington Square Press.

Sartre, J.P (1944). No Exit and three other plays [translation (1989)]. Vintage International.

Sartre, J.P (1946). Existentialism and Humanism, in Jean Paul Sartre: Basic Writings by S. Priest (ed). 2001. New York: Routledge.

Scheffler, S. (1992). Responsibility, Reactive Attitudes and Liberalism in Philosophy and Politics. In *Philosophy and Public Affairs 21, (1992), 299-323*.

Schuller, T., Baron, S. And Field, J. (2000). Social capital: a review and critique in S. Baron, J. Field and T. Schuller (eds) Social capital: critical perspectives. London: Routledge

Seddon, C. (2012). Measuring National Well-being – *Personal Finance, Office for national statisticshttp://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171766_278355.pdf.*

Seligman, M. (2011). *Flourish: a new understanding of happiness, wellbeing and how to achieve them.* Nicolas Brealey Publishing: London

Senge, P.M. (1989). The Fifth Discipline: *The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation*. London: Century.

Sheffield, E. (2004). Beyond abstraction: philosophy as a practical qualitative research method. Qualitative report, vol. 9, no. 4. Dec. 2004, 760 – 769.

Sherman, R. R. (1995). *Differing conceptions of philosophy*. Unpublished lecture hand-out for EDF 654 class, University of Florida.

Shildrick, M. 2002. *Embodying the monster: Encounters with the vulnerable self*. London: Sage.

Shope, J.H. (2006). You can't cross a river without getting wet. A feminist standpoint on the dilemmas of cross cultural research. *Qualitative inquiry 12(1), 163-184.*

Sikes, P. (2010). The ethics of life histories and narratives in educational research*. In exploring learning and identity and power through life histories and narrative research* by A. Bathmaker and P. Harnett (Eds) (2010). Routledge

Slee, R. and Allan, J. (2001).Excluding the included: a reconsideration of inclusive education. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*. 11: 2, 173 – 192.

Snowden, D. (2003). Complex acts of knowing: paradox and descriptive self awareness. *Special Edition Journal of Knowledge Management.* Volume 6, No. 2

Sparkes, A. C. (1996). The fatal flaw: A narrative of the fragile body-self. *Qualitative Inquiry, 2*, 463-294.

Sparkes, A. C. (2000). Autoethnography and narratives of self: Reflections on criteria in action. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 17,* 21-41.

Sparkes, A. C. (2002b). Autoethnography: Self-indulgence or something more? In A. Bochner & C. Ellis (Eds.), *Ethnographically speaking: Autoethnography, literature, and aesthetics*. New York: AltaMira.

Spurgeon, N. 2006. Diversity and choice for children with complex learning needs. In *Included or excluded? The challenge of the mainstream for some children,* ed. R. Cigman. London: Routledge.

Steiner, C. (1971). The Stroke Economy. *Transactional Analysis Journal . No.3*

Sutton Trust (2012). Social Mobility Report. Social Mobility Summit. http://www.suttontrust.com/research/social-mobility-report/

Sutton Trust (2012). Latest international social mobility comparisons. (Ermisch, J.) *http://www.suttontrust.com/research/latest-international-social-mobility-comparisons/*

Swain, J. and French, S. 2008. *Disability on equal terms.* London: Sage.

Taylor, C. (2014). Charlie Taylor speech to the North of England Education Conference. National College for Teaching and Leadership. *https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/charlie-taylor-speech-to-the-north-of-england-education-conference*

Tabberer, R. (2003). *Knowledge and Innovation – 'five easy pieces'*. TTA.

The New Secondary School National Curriculum (2007). QCA. http://www.qca.org.uk/

Thomas, G. & Loxley, A. (2001) *Deconstructing special education and constructing inclusion* (Buckingham, Open University Press).

Thomas, G., and M. Vaughan. 2004. *Inclusive education: Readings and reflections.* Maidenhead: Open University Press

Tomlinson, S. 1981. *Educational subnormality: A study in decision-making.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Thompson, M. and Rogers, N. (2010). *Understand Existentialism*. London: Hodder Education.

Tolich, M. (2010). A Critique of Current Practice: Ten Foundational Guidelines for Autoethnographers. Qualitative Health Research**,**

Torrance, H. 2008. Building confidence in qualitative research: engaging the demands of policy. *Qualitative Inquiry* 14, no. 4: 507-527.

Trahar, S. (2009). Beyond the story itself: narrative enquiry and autoethnography in intercultural research in higher education. *Qualitative social research 10, 1(30)*

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind and Society. The development of higher mental processes.* Cambridge MA Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. (1973). *Thought and Language.* Cambridge. M.A: MIT Press.

Wall, S. (2006). An Autoethnography on Learning about Autoethnography. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 5 (2).

Wall, S. (2008). Easier said than done: writing and autoethnography. International Journal of qualitative methods, 7(1). *http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0*

Warnock, M. 2005. *Special educational needs: a new look.* Impact No 11. London: The Philosophy Society of Great Britain.

Waslander, S., Pater,C. and Van der Weide, M. (2010). Markets in Education: An analytical review of empirical research on market mechanisms in education. Education Working Paper No. 52. *OECD, Education Working Paper 15.*

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity.* Cambridge University Press. Cambridge

Wenger, E. (2009). http://www.ewenger.com.

West-Burnham, J. (2003) (Ed). Education, Leadership and the Community: Strategies for School Improvement. Glasgow: Pearson Education.

West-Burnham, J. (2008). *Leadership for personalising learning.* Nottingham: NCSL.

Wing, L. (2006). Children with autistic spectrum disorders. In *Included or excluded? The challenge of the mainstream for some children,* ed. R. Cigman. London: Routledge.

Wise, S. and Upton, G. (1998) The Perceptions of Pupils with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties of their Mainstream Schooling. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties,3:3,3 — 12*

Yin, R.K. (2003). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. London: Sage.

Zimbardo, G. (2007). *The Lucifer Effect: How Good People Turn Evil.* New York: Random House