

Further education for handicapped school leavers: report of three study days held at the King's Fund Centre, September - November 1980

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Background

In November 1979, the King's Fund Centre hosted a study day on Further Education Opportunities for Handicapped School Leavers (the report KFC 80/37 is available from the King's Fund Centre). It became clear that a number of issues needed further exploration, especially:

- the relationship between education and employment
- changing views of employment and work in view of present unemployment trends
- integration compared with the use of specialist provision
- special inputs to support integration on ordinary courses.

As a result this series of Workshops was planned. A further two are planned to take place during 1981 on further and higher education.

The Workshops

- Day 1: 3 September 1980
The Identification of Needs
- Day 2: 10 October 1980
Education Towards Work
- Day 3 3 November 1980
Extended Education and Social Skills

Setting the scene

Peter Lowe, Hereward College of Further Education

The Warnock Report provides us with a well thought-out framework, especially in Chapter 10, and includes extensive discussion of the special educational needs of young people over the age of 16, examining the provision required in schools, in further, higher and adult education and in hospitals. It deals with their preparation for and access to employment and their need for counselling, financial support appropriate aids and transport.

Points for comment:

- a) the multi-professional reassessment of individual pupils special needs during the final stage of schooling.
- b) the scale of provision of careers teachers and of careers officers.
- c) schools to give greater attention to basic skills, social competence and vocational interests, and pupils to be encouraged to remain at school beyond 16 or to have access to sixth forms or sixth form colleges.
- d) a variety of forms of special educational opportunity in further education to be available: ordinary courses, modified ordinary courses and special courses, including special regionally based courses for those with severe disabilities or difficulties.
- e) every establishment of further education to designate a member of staff to be responsible for the welfare of students with special needs and to brief other members of staff.
- f) the need for a co-ordinated regional approach to the planning of special provision in further education taking in the national colleges and supported by appropriate publicity by institutions of their policy on admissions and of their courses and special facilities.
- g) the need for at least one centre in each region to support students with impaired hearing in further and higher education and to train those who work with them.
- h) improved arrangements in universities and polytechnics (10.49).
- i) further education provision in adult training and day centres and in hospitals.
- j) the preparation for employment and training of young people with special needs to be promoted by Industrial Training Boards, the public services, the Employment Services Division and local education authorities and greater opportunities to be provided for their access to Training Services Division courses and work preparation courses at Employment Rehabilitation Centres.
- k) sheltered workshops to develop more ambitious programmes a varied programme, including education, to be provided for young handicapped people in adult training and day centres and elsewhere.
- l) young people to have more support in the form of a Named Person, improved counselling, more generous supplementary grants and discretionary awards, more systematic provision of aids and equipment and greater help with transport.

The recent White Paper on Warnock (Cmnd. 7996) stressed that developments must be "within existing resources", and there is indeed a lot that can be done within existing resources. There has also been a resultant increase in interest in the handicapped which is a big improvement and we must strive to do all we can to improve facilities for handicapped people now, despite the recession. One point which needed expressing strongly was that the government was quite wrong to say that implementation of point 9 provision of educational facilities in adult training centres) was not practical - it clearly is practical.

The implications of Warnock for these discussions were:

- 1) The need to remind ourselves about what Warnock recommended for the post - sixteen (see above), and compare this with the White Paper.

- 2) The need to take part in the consultative process when the Government amends the law governing further education.
- 3) Those of us working with the severely handicapped young people must make sure that the wider definition of 'handicap' proposed by Warnock does not lead to minority groups being overlooked - the handicapped in non-specialist institutions are often a very small part of the total work of the place - especially in further education.
- 4) We must examine ways to implement the above points, and particularly:
 - a) How can we get commitment at the top? It is important to find somebody with time to exert some influence.
 - b) How we can continue to change public attitudes? There have been big improvements but there are still some bad examples - how do we maintain the improvement?
 - c) Leaflets and other ways to provide guidance and publicity of what is on offer. The West Midlands Regional Advisory (RAC) Council for Further Education are producing a guide, which is to be followed by a handbook for parents by the careers service. The East Midlands RAC have already done one and a similar job is being done at a national level by the National Bureau for Handicapped Students. Information does need collating at a regional level to be effective.
 - d) How the curriculum for handicapped people can incorporate existing good practice: ways in-service training can be developed. City and Guilds have developed a course in teaching handicapped people which is now being used in 20 colleges.
- 5) That we clarify our thinking on what we mean by "vocational education and training" and consider how this fits in with "Significant Living Without Work or Employment". There is a myth about the importance of vocational education and training. How does one interpret what is appropriate education for work - or what is appropriate training for life? We can do no better than look back at what previous educationists and industrialists have said.
 - a) For example

"The antithesis between a technical and a liberal education is fallacious. There can be no adequate technical education which is not liberal, and no liberal education which is not technical; that is, no education which does not impart both techniques and intellectual vision. In simpler language education should turn out a pupil with something he knows well and something he can do well."

Alfred N Whitehead
 - b) "No amount of good general education can compensate for a lack of technical or vocational education; neither can any amount of good technical and vocational education compensate for a lack of general education. Whether we wish to do so or not we are forced to develop both phases of a complete education. They can be, and must be developed as integral and co-ordinated parts of a sound system of public education."

C. R. Ford

Day 1: identification of needs

Introduction:

Philippa Russell, Voluntary Council for Handicapped Children.

Key issues she defined were:

- there are too few further and higher education opportunities for handicapped students;
- there are too many handicapped school leavers who are not aware of the range of opportunities or of how to find out about them;
- it is too easily assumed that handicapped school leavers will not benefit from education after school, and that it will not be cost effective.

These issues have to be seen in a context in which:

- the nature of the handicapped school leaver is changing - there are today many more multiply handicapped people leaving school, and their expectations and those of their parents are greater than they would have been a decade ago.
- there is therefore a need for wider provision and a greater graduation of provision.
- the resources are fewer because of the economic recession.
- the competition for work is greater because of rising unemployment.
- the nature of industry and employment is changing – traditional unskilled work is declining - but the micro-chip also brings with it new opportunities.

Assessment is not just about diagnosis but about functional ability. Prescriptions must take into account needs, what facilities there are for meeting needs, and what barriers exist to the facilities being used. In particular, assessment should begin in the school and extend into adult life.

The Spastics Society Assessment Courses

Philip Dyer, Head of Employment.

"Talking is Not Enough" a tape/slide presentation was shown which illustrates the following points:

The Spastics Society assessment courses:

- are held at different venues: there is no assessment centre as such.
- have dealt with 4,000 people since 1958.
- are now dealing with 300 people a year.

The clients:

- are dealt with in groups of 12-16.
- are generally multiply handicapped - apart from cerebral palsy, they may have speech and hearing defects, perceptual problems, epilepsy etc.
- usually have some degree of intellectual handicap.
- come from all over England and Wales.
- have often not been away from home before.
- have often missed a lot of school.
- will mostly never go on to vocational training but equally there are few who are ready to finish full-time education at age 16, yet few are ready to cope with normal further education.

The course staff:

- have people working in the field (mainly Spastics Society careers officers) so there is a mixture of views from people with direct knowledge of the problems involved, and available opportunities.

What they do:

- practical and written tests.
- assessment of physical capabilities e.g. hand function.
- identify particular individual difficulties.
- identify what they can and cannot do.
- assessments of perceptual problems.
- identify social maturity and attitudes and relationships with others.

Recommendations are made and discussed with each student at the end of the course. The identification of needs does not mean prescribing recommendations.

In the following discussion, these were the questions answered:

- The courses never start "cold". Young people are usually referred by specialist careers officers. The Spastics Society careers officer will also have visited them at school and at home. There will also be reports from school so there is a good idea of the expectations of the young person, the school and the family.
- The value of taking people away from home instead of assessing them locally lies in the aim of the course which is to look at the young person in total. The tests do not matter so much as the observation of how a person functions generally and in groups and their social skills. Some LEAs do local assessments but it cannot really be done in the young person's own school. It needs to be out of the usual environment, it needs to be with other similar people. So the observation of the residential element itself is important.
- Whilst you cannot ignore the attitudes of the sponsoring LEA and the funds available, it is the needs of the young people and the facilities available locally that are particularly borne in mind in making recommendations.
- Everyone who applies will be assessed, if they are expected to benefit from it and if the LEA pays the £60 fee. It may be that the Spastics Society careers officer can identify something else that is more relevant and will suggest it.
- There has not been much follow-up recently.
- About 30% of those attending are from ordinary schools. This group has been dropping over the last ten years.
- There is a strong counselling element as people can be very disappointed if the facilities recommended are not what they were hoping for. There is too a problem that what the Spastics Society recommends may not be what others see as necessary, making it difficult to insist on particular provision.
- Where there are good contacts locally, people are referred at the end of their penultimate year at school and these people tend to get the places when they need them.

The role of the careers service

Mike Taylor, Specialist Services Adviser, ILEA.

The role of careers officers is difficult to define as it varies between LEAs as too does the amount spent on the careers service.

A case history — 'Judith'

Mum, Dad and Judith all had different expectations of what the careers service would do. Judith wanted to be a nursery nurse, but she did not have sufficient knowledge to make a decision. Work experience was organised in a nursery and she found she could not cope because of her handicap and the nature of the job.

So the role of the careers service covers a number of things:

- While the young person is still at school, information can be co-ordinated from teaching staff, medical staff and social workers. The young person's hopes, aspirations and interests and the parents' hopes and aspirations can be discovered. Having built up a picture, the careers officer can give back information and help employers to understand the situation.
- Careers officers visit residential colleges, local FE colleges and other educational facilities and can act as interpreters of what particular courses have to offer, outline the implications of going on a particular course for the young person, and if necessary advise the college if there are no job opportunities for the skills being taught on a particular course.
- They can look at the physical provision and provision of tutor/ counsellors in a particular educational setting.
- They may also act in the role of initiator.

All this information has to be co-ordinated and most LEAs have a committee to receive recommendations for residential provision. While organisation does vary between LEAs, the main objective is always to make young people aware of the opportunities available on leaving school.

Case studies

The following real life case histories were presented to small groups for discussion, to clarify what participants felt would be appropriate action.

Case History 1 - 'Susan'

Susan is 16. She is severely partially hearing and of average intelligence. She is the eldest of 5 children and comes from a supportive middle-class background. She lives in the suburb of a large city and has attended a comprehensive school in the city with a partially hearing unit attached to it. The unit is not well-integrated into the main school and Susan has only integrated for Art, Cookery, P.E., Swimming and Sewing. As a result, she has not had the benefit of much specialist subject teaching and only did four CSE's - in cookery (grade 2), typing (grade 3), English (grade 4), and Sewing (grade 2). She has a reading age of 10. Her speech is intelligible to her friends but strangers have difficulty in understanding her, though after a while people get used to her speech.

She cannot use the telephone and although her lipreading is quite good in the protective environment of her home or the unit, she easily gets 'lost' in group discussions. She is quite well adjusted to her handicap and mixes with both deaf and hearing people. She goes to her local hearing Youth Club but only when accompanied by a hearing neighbour. Otherwise her social life is divided between her partially hearing friends at school, and the hearing friends with whom she goes swimming (she is an excellent swimmer and this has brought her into contact with hearing pupils at the comprehensive school).

She has very little idea what she wants to do — except that she doesn't want to do typing because she gets bored sitting down all the time and wants a job which brings her into contact with other people.

The group said:

- the aim should be to help her towards maturity and to have a realistic assessment of her real needs;
- the partially hearing are not well catered for after 16 – provision is at present loose and ad-hoc;
- there is a greater need for social workers for deaf people;
- FE courses tend to be work oriented;
- Queen Elizabeth College might be relevant;
- work experience with a sympathetic employer would be helpful;
- possibility of a residential college for the deaf;
- sufficient resources might not have been available in the comprehensive school which would have enabled her to have specialist subjects and perhaps be better able to fit into adult life;
- there is insufficient staffing for support and counselling of hearing-impaired students - there must be constant available help including interpreters - they must be there, it is no good at a distance. (London and the Home Counties have peripatetic staff; South Yorkshire has a hearing impaired unit for primary children and one for secondary children and it is hoped that there will be one for FE.).

Case History 2 – “David”

David is 16. He will be leaving school in July 1981. He is a weekly boarder at a residential special school about 70 miles from his home in Hertfordshire. David has spina bifida and hydrocephalus and is paralysed from just above the waist. He is able to walk short distances with calipers and elbow crutches and can manage stairs. He has a wheelchair which he uses for longer distances. The school encourages him to walk as much as possible. David is incontinent and has an indwelling catheter to manage his urine and copes with his bowels by using manual pressure. The catheter leaks occasionally so David wears pads. David is of slight build and he can get in and out of bed, in and off the lavatory, in and out of the bath and dress himself and put his calipers on independently although he is slow. He occasionally gets pressure sores particularly in the hip area from his calipers and on the buttocks. In terms of personal independence the school regard David as one of the more able of the spina bifida pupils. Academically his standard is below average, he is taking CSE English this year. His maths is poor and he has difficulties with handling money and gets nervous and rather flustered in shops. His handwriting is reasonable and he has good reports from the craft instructor. The school state he is a polite and friendly boy, anxious to please, although a bit forgetful at times.

David has talked to his headteacher about leaving school. He is rather worried about leaving as he has been there since he was four years old. He does not know much about his home town; his mother only moved there a year ago when his parents divorced. His brother and sister are still at school. He hopes he will be able to get a job making things as he is good with his hands. His headteacher has arranged for him to talk to you for help with planning his future.

The group said:

- there is a problem of personal hygiene and lack of self-care skills. Does David have a valve and who is checking it?
- his sores will need supervision;
- he is immature and needs independence training, social integration and a chance to mature;
- school needs to encourage him to mix with other outside school leavers whilst the careers officer tries to find a placement;

- possible assessments would include Banstead, the Spastics Society residential course, or a residential placement.

Case History 3 – “David”

David has Down's syndrome and a slight hearing loss. He attended residential special education and although happy and willing he lives very much in a dream state and it is not easy to rouse him. His health has been generally good but he does become easily tired, having difficulty in waking up in the morning and towards the end of the summer term showed signs of flagging. He is extremely dependent on routine which if broken causes him to be most confused. He remembers his daily task i.e. making the bed, washing up, laying the table, etc. but shows little awareness in looking after himself in what is not established in his routine. For example he never seems to notice if his shirt is hanging out nor to realise on a hot day that he will need to take his jumper off. Occasionally if outside playing and lost in a world of his own he forgets to go to the toilet.

It has been suggested that on leaving school he should progress to residential further education of a nature that will prepare him for residence within a protected village or community environment. David has attended a trial week for a course of this type but proved to be unsuccessful in gaining admission. Alternatives are being considered by both the Social Services Department and the Careers Service. There is some difficulty regarding who pays if David is accepted for a course. It is likely that if he is accepted for residential training there will be a long delay before he starts the course.

The group said:

- the only courses available seem to be at independent colleges;
- adult training centres are full and have waiting lists; they are also felt to be stressful and people attending them often develop behaviour problems. Moreover, some parents will not accept adult training centres because they consider their child is ‘too good’. There is often no other provision available on a local basis;
- sheltered employment? Remploy cannot take many mentally handicapped youngsters at present;
- he would appear to be destined for an adult training centre and there is a need for improved residential and day further education facilities appropriate for such severely handicapped people to be provided by local authorities. Continuing adult education within the ATC is also important.

What actually happened:

Social Services agreed to pay for a course that will prepare David for life in a residential community such as CARE or Home Farm Trust. In the meantime he will probably attend a day centre.

Case History 3 – “Rosina”

Rosina is blind, epileptic and suffers from left Hemiparesis and eczema. She is an attractive young lady who has no difficulty relating to her peers and is well accepted by them. Her epilepsy causes her to switch off during lessons making her progress erratic, Her Hemiparesis causes her to be clumsy and slow. Rosina's mother admits that she is over-protective towards Rosina and that if she is to obtain independence she will need to move away from home after school. Her father recently had a heart-attack, is diabetic and is unlikely to provide Rosina with any stimulus within the home, She will not be able to function

in braille and does not seem bright in school terms but there has been some difficulty in assessing her true ability. She has been assessed for a course of further education by one of the RNIB colleges but there is some doubt as to whether they will be able to take her because of her paralysis and epilepsy.

In view of the doubt expressed by the RNIB college other alternatives have been explored. Those that appear suitable are unable to offer her a place for another year at least.

Rosina's mother has expressed a desire that Rosina attends a course of training offered by one of the alternatives feeling that she is not independent enough to cope with the RNIB course even if she is accepted.

The group said:

- very little provision is made for people who are blind and otherwise handicapped;
- many centres will not accept blind students;
- multiply handicapped students are shunted from one specialist body to another each insisting that the other handicaps are more severe;
- there is a shortage of, but need for specialist facilities for deaf/blind epileptic/physically handicapped combinations;
- pressure should be put on RNIB to take Rosina;
- the ERC specialist colleges should also be tried - there should be liaison with the DRO.

What actually happened:

The course that mother wanted Rosina to go on could not accept her this year, so she is having further assessment by RNIB college this September, and if accepted will continue there. If not accepted, which seems highly likely, the local authority have agreed that she can go back to school for a year. In the meantime application to an alternative that mother is interested in will be made. The alternative is attractive to the family because of religious beliefs and they feel more care will be offered.

Case History 5 – “John”

John is ESN (IQ approximately 70) and suffers from epilepsy although this is well controlled, not having had a fit for at least three years. He is extremely neat and tidy and excellent socially. He attended a normal school and then moved to a special residential school for ESN children. At the end of his schooling, John moved to residential further education where he undertook a course on building and forestry skills. His parents are widely travelled and spend a large amount of their time outside the UK. Both his older brother and sister attended university and are training in the professions. He enjoyed his residential further education course and moved from there to work for a National Trust scheme which lasted for one year. The intention was that if this was successful he would remain with the National Trust at the end of the year. Unfortunately, John was not able to agree with the methods used by instructors at the National Trust, feeling he could find quicker ways of doing things than the way he was shown. He has now been asked to leave the Trust and is looking for employment. His parents have retired and are unsure which part of the country they will be living in, contemplating a move within the next few months. Alternatives discussed at this stage include forestry, farm work, hotel work, all of which have a residential element which appeals to John and his parents. His parents also feel that they do not have enough evidence about John's ability in order to make a satisfactory decision.

The group said

- he obviously has some personality problems, possibly due to his home situation;
- employers need briefing on possible behaviour problems before the job is offered to prevent problems later;
- his argument with the National Trust instructor showed that he had some initiative - he also survived there for a year. He should be given another chance of work in the areas indicated, with some support.

What actually happened

Parents moved away and have done nothing in terms of employment for John and are paying for assessment of his abilities, academic and work skills. Forgotten work idea at this stage. Assessment includes trying out different jobs.

Case History 6 – “Robert”

Robert, who is partially sighted, attends a comprehensive school which has a high percentage of pupils taking 'O' and 'A' level GCEs. He is likely to be taking four or five 'O' levels this year but because of his sight the effort required to study is far greater than that required by the sighted. Homework can take him treble the time it takes his peers. Although he has magnifying aids, these tend to give him headaches after prolonged use. If he does not obtain his 'O' levels this year he is faced with the choice of repeating them next year or leaving school. His parents, who are extremely supportive, are worried that with the present employment situation he will be unable to find work. They are also worried that his sight has prevented him from reaching his true academic ceiling.

The group said:

- refers to RNIB;
- should be given information about aids to help him overcome his problem.

What actually happened

Robert has gone to a college of further education. There is a lot of discussion about his entering a college for the visually handicapped. Robert was worried about going in to a visually handicapped set-up. He is staying in normal education at the moment but accepts that he may not get as far as he would if he went to a college with specialist facilities.

Case History 7 – “Joanne”

Joanne is partially sighted (macular degeneration). There will be long-term deterioration in her sight. She is an attractive well groomed young lady who is pleasant, chatty, converses easily and presents as a normal healthy teenager. Her mother is separated from her father and is at present living with another man who Joanne does not get on with at all well. She attends a residential school for the blind, having been unable to cope in her previous day school which was for the partially sighted.

She is very slow with braille and is unable to read small print suffering headaches if she tries, but will take a mixture of CSEs and 'O' levels before leaving school and at present is interested in typing and telephony. In view of her sight deterioration it has been agreed that she should be taught to live in the long term as a blind person.

Possibilities discussed include full-time attendance at a local day college; to remain at special school and go to college three days a week; or attend a residential college for commercial training. In many ways Joanne would prefer to be away from home but does not feel that she wants a long-term full-time residential education. Local day colleges have been contacted and visited by Joanne but she feels that she will not gain the support she is likely to need. The idea of remaining at school and attending a college a few days a week does not seem to be administratively possible. A further alternative of a short course of typing and telephony training organised by the RNIB has been discussed but Joanne, although mature, is below their normal age of entry. It is very unlikely that Joanne will be able to go straight to work after leaving college.

The group said:

- administrative problems at school and college may arise from lecturer not liking to take 'problem pupils' - particularly the blind.

What actually happened

Basically, because Joanne is highly motivated she was accepted for a short course of typing/telephony organised by RNIB. Now, having completed the course, she is employed by one of the big banks.

General points from the workshop

- There is a need for a multi-disciplinary approach to the assessment of handicapped adolescents - there would appear to be a lack of communication between agencies in many cases. It should be possible to bring all parties involved together to make a decision on each case. Case conferences are time consuming and people who have to travel a great distance may not always attend; but you could screen out the really difficult cases for full case conferences.
- There is a problem of professional specialisation; physiotherapy etc. should be secondary and not interfere with educational developments. There is also a need to concentrate on activities of daily living e.g. responsibility for drugs, coping with sores, personal hygiene, etc.
- There is also undue emphasis on physical handicaps and on the more able - those who are mentally handicapped or less able also need attention. Sheltered work is often provided for the severely mentally or physically handicapped - the less severely handicapped may fall between two stools.
- Maladjustment. Nobody seems to accept maladjusted young people - neither are they always happy at being with mentally or physically handicapped people.
- Expectations for the mentally handicapped. There is danger of exploitation and boredom in process work or repetitive tasks (e.g. at adult training centres or sheltered workshops). Yet the National Development Group has clearly identified the inability of ATCs acting as social education centres and taking a global view of disabled young people's needs.
- It is fundamental that we should start with the individual's needs and aspirations; recommendations for training should take into account likely openings for the student on completion of the training. The biggest responsibility we have is to prepare people for independent lives, maybe without work.
- Views of young people on their own needs. Identification process does not always take sufficient account of the handicapped person's own perceptions and aspirations for the future. Yet young people may not be fully aware of their capabilities and assessments may be made too late and by the wrong people. More counselling facilities are needed.
- Problem with physically handicapped youngsters in residential schools when they are suddenly leaving school and parents do not want them at home or the child goes home but the parents do not know how to cope. Especially critical now that a lot of support from social services has been withdrawn.
- Children can often benefit from courses away from home and school to identify problems and find solutions for coping with everyday life. Physically handicapped may not be ready for further education at the normal age and the sort of work preparation course mentioned at Trowbridge could be the answer for many young people in these case studies.
- Should work preparation be at colleges or at employment rehabilitation centres? For the mentally handicapped, the advantage of college is integration and if needed, a special curriculum, Moreover, you don't get the combination of social education, basic education and vocational orientation at ERCs.
- Integration. Handicapped people are not always fully catered for in ordinary schools and colleges. Integration MUST include back-up.
- Children may slip through the net more if they attended local comprehensive schools.
- A recent NFER Report has noted that whilst disabled pupils attending integrated provision had greater social integration, their peers at special schools appeared to gain from work preparation and greater help with the acquisition of self-care skills. This discrepancy indicates the need for on-going assessment and review before school leaving, whatever the type of school placement adopted.

- Lack of continuity between school and FE. Need for greater awareness of needs and opportunities among teachers - and for more in-service training. Teachers are expected to shoulder increasing responsibilities of all kinds so this may be a little unreasonable. Whilst there are programmes for preparing school leavers over considerable periods in some schools, this is by no means universal.
- Handicapped people are much more likely to be people with extra individual needs. The more able are often aware of losing time because they cannot be taught up to the same standard as in comprehensive schools. Their educational potential is often not identified early enough. Teachers often do not have time and their expectations are too limited. Schools often appear to get students to just 'walk, talk, and then kick them out' (view of handicapped 16 year old).
- Need to raise the awareness of the handicapped pupil in school; e.g. link courses from third year onwards and integrated programmes of careers education and personal counselling.
- Accommodation. There are some supported lodgings, but there are administrative problems and it is lodgings that are needed.
- Budgets. Funding is difficult. Local education and social service departments may both contribute; parents may be asked to contribute. The hope is that if a child can achieve anything, it should be paid for; 'achieve' could mean hostel rather than hospital, it need not mean work. Yet 'employability' is often used as a criterion for funding - whether we like it or not.
- Fundamental problem of resources. There is scope for a more efficient use and co-ordination of available resources and for demonstrating the cost effectiveness of innovation.

Day 2: Education towards work

Introduction

Phillipa Russell, Voluntary Council for Handicapped Children.

Key issues which she identified as affecting the transition to work, were:

- the lack of knowledge about available facilities;
- rising unemployment - it is harder for everyone to get work;
- more multiply handicapped school leavers;
- assessments are often one-off exercises, out of context - their value is therefore limited;
- support services are variable or non-existent yet these are critical in maximising usage of facilities;
- access (lifts, taxis, etc) often constitute a barrier;
- social and survival skills - handicapped school leavers often do not perform so well educationally because of living skills.

Two residential colleges

St. Loye's College, FE Unit - Mr P Johnston

St. Loye's prepares people for full-time paid open employment. It has two main sections:

- The vocational training section which runs 18 courses for 150 people from all over the country, aged 18 to 60 with all handicaps except blindness. It is sponsored by TSD.
- The FE Unit which caters for 60 young people, again catering for all physical handicaps except blindness. People are prepared for transfer to the vocational training section or direct entry to employment at lower levels, e.g. as machine operators.

It costs £1513 a term for a four term course. All trainees are LEA funded under discretionary awards - each case has to be argued – which frequently involves a hard fought struggle. It is not an appropriate route to employment for ESN or maladjusted people even if they are also disabled.

They have found that handicapped school leavers frequently have a lack of basic employment awareness, and under-developed handskills. They spend 24 hours at St. Loye's before starting a course and all start with the belief that it is possible for them to obtain work.

Curriculum:

- Normally four terms, sometimes three or five. The first is a foundation term. The fourth is pre-training for a vocational training section. One quarter of the students do not go on to vocational training. The Work-Preparation Unit has been running for two years and has achieved a 70% placement record in open employment.
- Each day, 40% of time is spent on practical assessment and training, 40% on intensive remedial tuition and 20% general and social studies. However, nothing is open ended. Everything is geared to coping with life as an employed person.

Problems:

- A large proportion (25% this term) suffer from spina bifida. This presents acute difficulties when their problems need solving in one year e.g. competence in routine self-care - which schools seem not to spend much time dealing with.
- There is also a great deal to cover in learning skills and basic education which many schools again seem not to have dealt with e.g. concentrate, organisation of self and of one's learning materials presenting oneself, learning to copy, use simple tools like a ruler, following spoken and written instructions.
- These problems are usually remediable but it means that the first term is basically a reorientation process - it would be helpful if educationalists set themselves more limited but more reasonable objectives e.g. one girl had a home tutor for three years for French, but she still cannot dress herself.
- Fuller use needs to be made of existing provision e.g. St. Loye's has had hundreds of thousands of pounds spent on it, its provision is now second to none but they still have to fight to fill places. A redefinition of priority is called for and identified need should mean action started.

Derwen Training College for the Disabled - J G Kendall Medical Director

This is a residential college for 145 students of mixed disabilities physical and mental, with the exception of the blind, admitting boys and girls of school-leaving age and above, from all over the country. The College has functioned as a mixed disability unit for 15 years, although established 50 years ago to deal with the physically handicapped.

Students are of varying ability but with the majority in the middle and lower educational range (i.e. 1 Q 70-75). All students are admitted for one term's assessment in the first place; assessment is comprehensive and includes educational levels, the degree of social competence and vocational potential and interests.

Nursing and Care staff are available at all times.

There are fourteen vocational courses, covering a wide range. The period of further education and vocational training is one to three years but this is dependent upon the potential of the individual student and upon progress being maintained.

The ultimate goal is work placement, the student having acquired independence with the ability to hold down a job in open industry. Some students, however, cannot achieve this standard, but continuing education, the acquiring of relative independence and work experience will be greatly beneficial to those who must accept a limited way of life by virtue of their disability.

With the job market contracting, the necessity for further education and vocational training is even more essential now than ever before if disabled young people are to be given the opportunity of a full life without loss of dignity, whether they are employable in open industry or whether they need sheltered employment.

A Further Education College

Bridgend College of Technology, Industrial Unit - Mr G Browne

Bridgend College Industrial Training Unit is an old paint factory, away from the main College site. It is not a sheltered workshop, it is not custodial, it does produce work that is sold.

The Unit is geared to the adult world of work and responsibility and students are encouraged to respond to a real working situation to the limits of their individual abilities; the main aim is to prepare school leavers for wage earning. There is a wide variety of tasks to improve manual skills and to develop confidence.

The courses are for young people of lower levels of academic ability who are having difficulty in obtaining or settling normal employment. It is not a course of formal education but learning by doing. Teachers also attend to help with basic reading and number skills. There is a social worker with special responsibility for the Unit who can be contacted if any student has personal or home problems.

Students are registered unemployed and still have to sign on each week. At the end of their time at the Unit it is possible to transfer to an MSC Scheme at the College. Some attend the unit on an MSC Work Introduction Course.

Some mentally handicapped students have managed a transfer to full-time employment through the Pathway Scheme.

A voluntary scheme

The Pathway Scheme - Mr G. Browne

A scheme run by the Society for Mentally Handicapped Children and Adults (MENCAP). The scheme sponsors a mentally handicapped worker in a job by reimbursing the wages to the employer for three months. A "foster worker" from the firm provides extra support and instruction and is offered a weekly gratuity.

Referrals to the Pathway Officer are made by the Careers service, DRO, heads of special schools, ATC managers, CFEs, social workers, consultants in subnormality hospitals, psychologists and psychiatrists, MENCAP members and individual parents of mentally handicapped people.

It is a personalised service and the Pathway Officer assesses the individual's employment readiness, needs and wishes, and recommends an individual programme.

Ages vary from 16 to 50 and IQs from 45 to 68. Few are able to read and write and may suffer from additional handicaps such as physical disabilities, epilepsy, spasticity, hydrocephalus, speech defects, deafness, dumbness, cerebral palsy.

There is a follow up service for the individual, the parents, employer and foster worker. Individuals are frequently taken on permanently by the employer (so far 135) who often does not claim the reimbursement of wages.

As a result of the scheme's success in South Wales, the scheme is now operating in MENCAP's South East, and Yorkshire and Humberside Regions, and more are planned.

Provision for specific handicaps

City Lit Centre for the Deaf - Ann Hewitt

The City Lit Centre for the Deaf in London provides a comprehensive service for the hearing-impaired from the age of 16 years. There is a special further education section.

Hearing-impaired young people are frequently emotionally and socially immature and may not be fully prepared to face the adult world by the age of 16. They benefit from a further period of full-time education away from the protective atmosphere of special school and unit.

In addition to the handicap of deafness the pre-lingually deaf have to struggle all their lives with a major communication difficulty, and frequently with academic attainment below their intellectual capacity. Many deaf school leavers have a reading age no greater than nine.

Because of communication difficulties the hearing-impaired are the most difficult to include in programmes for the school-leaver unless they are specially catered for. Many are now integrated into FE but the provision is not uniform throughout this country. It is essential that all integrated students and their tutors receive the help of a specialist tutor. Tutors in FE colleges cannot be expected to cope with the handicap without considerable back-up support in their work. Some students require an interpreter for lectures which is costly and rarely provided.

Not all deaf people are suitable for integrated courses. A very limited number of centres such as the City Lit, and some residential schools, offer special courses for the deaf. A few TOPs courses are available but these are mainly limited to practical skills. To obtain a professional qualification the deaf are obliged to study alongside hearing people usually without specialist tutorial support. This places them at a grave disadvantage and results in many people not achieving their potential.

The number of deaf people in a given area will not be great. For suitable opportunities to be available it is necessary to draw from a fairly wide catchment area, which may cross Borough boundaries. The ability of students to attend courses relies upon discretionary travel grants and there is evidence that these will be less easy to obtain in the immediate future. If grants are not obtainable the range of opportunities for an individual will diminish rather than improve.

Those young profoundly deaf people who are unable to find employment are not usually happy if they are placed in local day centres where they are the only deaf person. Lack of communication leads to isolation. Their social and emotional needs can only be met by allowing fluidity of movement so that they can associate with others similarly handicapped. This presents considerable administrative difficulties which so far have not been overcome.

The Royal National Institute for the Blind - Mr M Butler, Employment Officer

Two previous speakers have referred to "catering for all groups but the blind" which reflects a feeling that most people have that the blind are different, but that they are catered for already. Many blind people do have other handicaps.

The RNIB has the only two schools for the academically able blind, and these are for the blind with other handicaps. Most schools for the blind are run by LEAs or by independent trusts (but there are still only 20 around the country). There is a problem of fragmentation of provision.

The Vernon Report of eight years ago stressed the importance of careers guidance for the visually handicapped students starting earlier.

RNIB has a network of educational advisers who work with parents and schools. Priority areas such as getting around are being increasingly recognised and most schools for the blind now have a member of staff teaching mobility, i.e. coping with traffic, public transport, street signs, finding post offices, etc.

Assessment and training are still the great needs - two vocational assessment centres exist, in Birmingham and Reigate.

Some points from the workshop

St. Loye's are selecting with view to employment - TSD will not train unless there are jobs in the home area - but St. Loye's haven't had the problem - most students do go home. Parents of the handicapped are made responsible in a way that parents of the non-handicapped are not. The "homebase" does restrict training and if equal rights for disabled people are to be achieved, the "homebase" needs to be got rid of.

The discretionary awards system is a subtle form of discrimination and we could easily see a decline in support for disabled students in further education to the level of 20 or 30 years ago. Local Education Authorities can do what they like under the 1944 education act. St. Loye's are monitored and recognised by the Department of Education and Science. What more is wanted? Are the universities more stringently assessed? A Cohesive, coherent national policy on finance was needed, that included a national interpretation of supplementary benefit rules.

Handicapped children in ordinary schools are often not noticed and not referred to special facilities by the careers service - though this clearly does vary from area to area.

Role of the home. Parents will die one day - independence has got to be prepared for. Education and support of parents is vital.

Mannerisms need to be considered (e.g. rocking) - people may not realise they have a mannerism - yet it is part of social competence.

Training for FE lecturers in working with handicapped students is needed.

Day 3: extended education and social skills

Introduction

Phillipa Russell, Voluntary Council for Handicapped Children

Many professionals do not know what handicapped school leavers need, many handicapped school leavers do not know what is available, she said. Yet the increasing number of multiply handicapped young people includes many who do not slot in easily. There is no special legislative framework but much ad hoc provision, and we need more flexibility, a resolution of the growing crisis about financial sponsorship and grants and a recognition that needs must be reassessed - a one-off assessment does not meet a continuing need.

What are we educating for? Jean McGinty, HMI

Anyone engaged in education for the 14 to 18 age group is involved in helping young people make the transition from childhood to adulthood. Young people and their parents have come to recognise the value of extended education beyond the statutory school leaving age.

Any form of extended education should:

- encourage social maturity;
- build on and develop basic education;
- motivate those who can work to acquire the relevant skills;
- prepare those who can not work to develop meaningful ways of spending their time;
- develop a positive approach to the use of leisure time.

Since these points should apply to all courses, how can curriculum be devised for this group?

Curriculum should be seen as a plan for reaching pre-determined goals. Students are not always consulted about their goals. Neither are employers. Teachers are not always good at consultation. It helps if there can be feedback from and to each place i.e. Work FE School.

Colleges are a microcosm of the world - they are places where mistakes can be made and lessons learnt.

- Students need to be given a chance to learn by experience, including making mistakes. One approach is based on "experiential learning" as outlined in the Further Education Curriculum Review and Development Unit "Experience, Reflection, Learning."
- It is not enough just to accept earlier assessments, new assessments are needed with further education seen as a new starting point.
- Some students often have not had experience of groups, so this needs providing.
- If there have been failures in their basic education, it is pointless repeating the methods of the past. Further education can represent a new approach.
- It is also a good setting in which to try work experience and work skills.

Work is personally important for all of us. It enables us to measure our competence against others. It makes leisure more meaningful. Lack of work can be a disintegrating factor. If we are preparing people for non-work, whatever takes its place needs to contain the satisfying elements of work.

The need for social and life skills is very obvious. Previously they may have been restricted to a limited range of social contacts.

Education is concerned with preparing young people to deal more effectively with the changing demands made on them at each phase in their lives.

Two schemes

Greenwich Youth Aid - Sue Welling, Youth Worker

Started as a pilot scheme supported by a local Elfrida Rathbone committee to identify what was happening to school leavers. Over three years it grew and is now an ILEA detached youth project.

It deals with people from four schools including ESN mild, delicate children, partially sighted and partially hearing, and individual referrals. Each case is dealt with individually as it arises.

The work is in two areas - school based and post-school and represents a bridge between school and work. Involvement will be for as long as it is needed, negotiated with the young person, and usually lasts until age 21

Every child is in contact in the school setting in the last year at school. They are offered work experience placements (which may be outside the Borough). Each placement lasts from one week to one month and each pupil would expect two or three placements in the last year of school, one of which would be in their chosen career.

One benefit of this particular involvement is that it frees teachers to get on with other aspects of work preparation like factory visits and job interview practice. It also avoids having several people from different schools approaching an employer - they act as a monitoring and liaison system.

Other advantages of their involvement are the benefit to the young people of doing something with someone other than their own teachers, and the chance to do things a teacher would not have time for e.g. being taken round the London tube system on their own.

Parents have to give their permission for work experience and full co-operation from them is needed but they are not directly involved in any way.

Work and leisure support flow from individual careers teaching. Lately there has been more stress on provision for leisure because of the shrinking job market for the less able handicapped.

If there is a need for home support it is offered, but it does not often happen as that is the role of statutory-social services. Where it is offered it is as a befriender, helping with things that might be expected of an involved parent, like opening bank accounts. Support may be given in job interviews and they may even plead the case with an employer - though they prefer not to.

About 50 have been placed in open employment so far.

There is close liaison with the specialist careers officer (at least fortnightly) and will even take young person to the careers office if they will not go by themselves.

St John's Day Centre, Islington - Mandy Stephens, Islington Social Services Department

This Centre is run by Islington Social Services Department and has now been established for three years.

It is for physically handicapped adults and has social rehabilitation as a goal. There are twenty five places, age 16 to 60 (or 70) with half for the under 25 age group - who make up a group with a slightly different ethos.

As it is run on a community basis the users have a part in the daily running e.g. keeping the books, preparing meals.

Everyone comes in with an individual programme covering:

- emotional adjustment to disability (there is a group therapy meeting each week as well as individual counselling with centre or social services staff);
- social development - using other things than those provided by the centre (e.g. evening activities such as outside leisure classes - so there is more emphasis on users going out rather than bringing ILEA teachers in, except for literacy and numeracy and cookery);
- practical daily living;
- educational needs.

Any case conference would involve the users - people are encouraged to make their own choices. Referrals are only taken from Islington and in fact there are more referrals than they can take so they have to select. That is important as everyone does not want to change and develop.

There is a connection with the local physically handicapped school and young people go to the centre on day-release in their last term. That is useful because the change from school to an adult day centre is so enormous - it is a more open structure, with more choice, more responsibility.

As the school leavers are often multiply handicapped they are dealing with all handicaps - and they offer an alternative to those who will not fit into work or further education easily.

They are looking at long-term alternatives to work and have two particular projects:

- An advice and rights centre. Manpower Services Commission has provided a grant to run it for one year. It employs disabled workers full time.
- An internal shop which generates quite a lot of work.

Two colleges

Dene College, Continued Education Centre - John Hall, Principal

This is a Spastic Society residential college dealing with the profoundly physically and intellectually handicapped, who have a real need for significant living without work. They start by looking at first principles:

- what is significant about living?
- how does that affect workers?

Dene College is not work oriented but its aim is to help students to see themselves as young adults. So what is adulthood? They found they could not compile a checklist but instead evolved a list of the transitions involved. The differences between childhood and adulthood were divided roughly into five groups:

- 1) Resources: concomitant dependence or independence (e.g. pocket money earnings).
- 2) Decision making and associated information: Dependence of independent role.
- 3) Sexuality: but maturity in young adult bodies without the opportunities to develop attitudes that exist in the outside world.
- 4) Emotionality: affective education is not dealt with enough in education.
- 5) Attitudes to parents: majority on leaving college go home. They may only have been a home for holidays previously. Parents may have been used to putting in intensive effort at that time and may not know how to bring effort down to a manageable level with the young person being there all the time.

The course:

A two-year course to maintain momentum.

As soon as the student arrives - you have got to start to think about them leaving. They work through four educational divisions:

- 1) Living skills: includes self-care (e.g. planning meals, shopping, cooking, clearing up, dietary planning etc.); group discussions - students are allocated to a discussion group for the whole two years to provide a firm basis to work through, for example the sex education programme.
- 2) Basic education: build on cognitive learning skills, e.g. literacy, numeracy and particular communications.
- 3) Rural science: immediate contact with the environment is through rural science because it is a rural college. Often their first direct responsibility for other living things.
- 4) Art and Craft: provides a way to express their own view of the world other than through words.

Decision making is focussed on by:

- Wednesday afternoon option scheme (Judo, Keep Fit, Riding etc.) - they choose an option for the term and must stick to it. One option is an option not to opt;
- clubs - voluntary membership. The Clubs decide who can join;
- students union - just being reorganised on basis of each tutorial group sending representatives to a council which will have support of a member of staff who gets teaching remission for it.
- Bungalow in the local community for four second year students – they live there for the whole year and it also provides a model of how the profoundly handicapped could live in the community (it has been found that the only resource needed is a person to be there when the students are there.)

Care structure:

This is not seen as separate from the teaching - care staff work with the teaching staff - but there is a dichotomy between physical care and affective care.

Work with the students can be:

- for the student;
- with the student initiated by staff;
- initiated by the student;
- required by the institution

It is moving away from the first and last, and trying to become the third, failing that the second.

At the end of the course:

Severely handicapped people do not need the model of a typical worker - tasks do nothing to indicate real work for them. The values to be encouraged are those of the person rather than the worker. So, what is the role of the careers officer?

Brixton College of Further Education - John Sturgeon, Principal

Brixton CFE is an ordinary LEA college. The role of further education should be to help local people to have a full and happy life. The handicapped are those who because of any disadvantage are not able to fulfil their potential.

There are a number of things making it more difficult to provide adequately for handicapped students compared with six years ago.

- upper levels are being used because numerous ground floor classrooms are being used for other things;
- the threshold of employability is rising;
- class sizes are being increased which makes low level work more difficult to do - yet there is a seven stage ladder of low level work between adult literacy and '0' level work;
- there is an increase in illiteracy and innumeracy among school leavers.

What we need:

- All teacher training should include teaching handicapped students.
- All colleges should have someone (at least at the level of senior lecturer) to organise courses and integrate students in courses.
- All colleges should have at least one ground floor room available for teaching handicapped people.
- The DES should insist on a different staff/student ratio for handicapped students.
- Must be more links between DES and DHSS
- Need closer links between colleges and the media - the media can reach handicapped people.

A commercial scheme

Papworth Industries - B.J. Townshend - Commercial Director

This group employs 850 people mostly disabled, at Papworth and Enham, and have a turnover of £6 million. They are the end users of the educational system.

They now deal with all sorts of physical disability. They are totally work oriented. They provide training to section 1 disabled with Training Services Division and employment for

section 2 disabled in conjunction with the Sheltered Employment Branch of Employment Services Division. They also have a 60 place work centre for people below the threshold of work and in this unit industrial work is carried out. The age range is 16-50 but people above the age are taken on in special cases. Within the industrial complex they provide job opportunities for the fit relatives of disabled people working at Papworth.

The Governors of Papworth Village Settlement are responsible for the social viability of the community. The admission policy does enable a limited number of disabled people suffering from mental handicaps to be helped.

The finances of the Charity are very complex. The housing side is a registered Housing Association and therefore entitled to Capital Grants and revenue assistance from the Housing Corporation. Financial support for training comes from either TSD or ESD depending on the category of disabled people. Part 3 accommodation is supported by local authorities and the Industries are run along commercial lines in order to make, where possible, surpluses for use within the Charity.

New Developments

- A clerical workshop (with MSC) for 13 or 14, providing a computer bureau.
- A horticultural unit
- A handicapped school leaver project with 15 places at Enham - opening next year (1981).

The media

Learning at a distance - Rosemary Lee, Education Officer, BBC

There are more programmes which offer information about disablement, or for disabled people than programmes dealing with social skills specifically for the disabled. Yorkshire TV's The Special Child and BBC Continuing Education TV's The Handicapped Family are examples of programmes about disablement; Radio 4's In Touch and Do Sugar? and ATV's Link are examples of informative magazine programmes for disabled listeners and viewers.

One example of a series which does deal with social skills is Let's Go the BBC continuing Education TV's series for young mentally handicapped adults. Let's Go has a new series beginning in January 1981. It tries to motivate its audience to practice skills related to independent living by showing other mentally handicapped people coping in the community, and managing social behaviour like meeting and greeting others.

It would be unrealistic to expect an increasing number of social skills series for disabled people, especially on television. Apart from the constraints of airspace, the need for such specifically targetted series is questionable, except perhaps for special groups like the mentally handicapped. Otherwise much of the existing general social skills provision should be suitable, or adaptable.

Resources for social and life skills work:

- There is currently a wide range of materials (broadcast and non-broadcast) in this area. They can supply useful information, demonstrate the importance of skills, and suggest a variety of strategies. However, they cannot give feedback on skills practice or allow for individual situations. You have to adapt them for your specific needs, whether working with the handicapped or the non-handicapped. For example, BBC's Speak for Yourself, while primarily intended for those for whom English is a second

language in fact deals substantially with coping skills and could be relevant to a wide audience. It would need follow-up specific to each group.

Extended education through distance learning

This does not just mean the Open University. All kinds of subjects can be learned at a variety of levels, from basic education to 'O' and 'A' level courses, through a variety of media (including broadcasts and correspondence materials). Distance learning has some disadvantages but it is flexible and might provide a part-solution to problems of access and mobility.

The Manpower Services Commission - Mike Bax, Special Programmes Division, Vince Donlan, Employment Services Division

There is an undertaking for all unemployed young people, unemployed more than six weeks to be provided with the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) for up to one year. Handicapped young people do not have to satisfy the six week rule nor does the one year limit apply to them - they can have up to two or even three years if it is needed.

There are 300,000 people on Youth Opportunities Programme this year and there will be more still (400,000 - 450,000) next year.

The divisions of Manpower Services Commission (Employment Services Division, Special Programme Division and Training Services Division) are all involved in providing Youth Opportunities Programme but Special Programme Division funds it all and is responsible for its co-ordination.

All three divisions have responsibilities for handicapped people

Employment Services Division:

- run the employment rehabilitation centres which provide work preparation and work assessment courses for handicapped young people;

Training Services Division:

- fund Finchdale, St. Loye's, Portland and Queen Elizabeth's Colleges.
- They also fund schemes of Industrial Training throughout with employers.
- Part-time courses
- Correspondence courses
- Self employment courses
- Course for the visually handicapped
- Courses for the deaf.

Special Programmes Division:

- have a general policy of encouraging providers to include handicapped young people rather than running separate courses for them.

Problems discussed:

- Work Experience on Employers Premises (WEEP) should not be being abused and used as a source of cheap labour. Schemes do have to be approved by the relevant trades unions. Manpower Services Commission does seek to check that recruitment is also going on in firms offering to sponsor schemes. Reaching 19 without any experience of paid work is not a feature of the national scene . If it seems that there is abuse then the problem should be raised with the Area Office.

- Work Introduction Courses (WIC) - why should they be only 13 weeks when many special school leavers need longer? A recent review indicated that many Educationally Sub-normal (mild) young people were being helped by these 13 week courses. There is a problem in running longer courses because Local Education Authorities do have a statutory responsibility for education for the under 19 year olds. Manpower Services Commission policy, is, however, likely to change and allow longer Work Introduction Courses to be run which provide up to 65 days of education plus periods of linked work experience.

The employment Services Division provision is that there are young persons Work Preparation Courses in twenty centres with most recruits coming from special schools. They can last up to 26 weeks though the majority can manage with 13 weeks. 1000 young people p.a. are dealt with Hester Adrien Research Centre and Bolton College are doing an evaluation of 20 Work Introduction Courses in January 1981.

Hester Adrien Research Centre did an evaluation of all the Work Preparation courses and felt that there was little case for extending them further.

Youth Opportunities Programme is not likely to be extended beyond age of 19, but there is all of Training Opportunities Scheme available after that.

Financial Aspects - Peter Clyne

He felt that DES and DHSS are not co-ordinating sufficiently to enable Local Education Authorities and social services departments to have a coherent policy on finance.

Mandatory grants are available for courses designated by DES and these are normally only for higher education. Very few handicapped school leavers are affected though some are not low achieving, may just need special support.

Discretionary grants pose a problem. The basic grant is nearly always not enough. Some Local Education Authorities have instigated special awards and extra sums for identified incidentals like travel, or they may guarantee travel costs.

Some do not distinguish between education and training - others consider training to be the responsibility of the social services department.

A few offer grants to private colleges (like Dene College) but most do not allow for the fact that special school leavers often can not finish a two-year course by the age of 19. Yet if you removed that age barrier, it would not cost much (e.g. in ILEA there would be 6 students aged 20-21).

There are still some LEAs who will not accept that there are some special school leavers they can not provide for in their own area. But NO authority can provide everything. Without exception, there is little contact between special schools and the FE colleges out of their immediate area that leavers might go to.

General points from the workshop

- There is a need for a multi-disciplinary approach to course content.
- There is a need for a DES circular spelling out to colleges the need for them to have an advisory panel in course planning.
- The Warnock White Paper did not have time to deal with all the further education items, as they need seeing in the context of normal further education rather than the context of special schools. The DES has taken this on board, but it has been held back because that way it will be better dealt with than through a quicker and unsatisfactory response. But it is not something that had to wait for a policy document. The Southern Regional Advisory Council has brought together a group to produce guidelines, not just for further education but also for MSC area health authorities, social service departments, etc.
- There are different regulations governing school buildings and college buildings. Sometimes a college can operate in a building that a school would not be allowed to operate in. The LEA is responsible for buildings with all new buildings, the architects in the DES Building Branch ask whether access for the handicapped has been taken into account but it is the LEA which decides and it is the fire service which decides whether particular facilities e.g. lifts, can be used for people.
- Some colleges get help from voluntary organizations or students or do it themselves.

Universities are separate and better at it. Some interesting things have been done using MSC money; e.g. Access to Liverpool University under a STEP project.

Policy and issues

"It should be possible to establish a pattern of further education provision for the handicapped which does not expect them to go through ordeals that the non-handicapped do not have to go through."

Peter Clyne

Some of the key issues identified during these conferences are summarised below as highlighting ways in which handicapped people are discouraged from seeking further education.

Continuing education at 16+

Handicapped students should not be expected to leave full-time education at 16. Because of falling roles, it may be tempting to keep people on in special schools. But can you pick out who needs special further education at 16 - you may need maturation time? 16-19 provision ought to be available to handicapped students on at least as generous terms as for the non-handicapped.

Delays in placement damage morale and capability of the student. There is an important need for continuity at 16+.

There should be a right to further education and continuing adult education for all handicapped people.

Support services

Integration into ordinary further education often means extra support services. These are rarely available.

Support, advice and counselling are also important for handicapped students in further and higher education,

Moreover, it is of the highest priority that all Colleges should have a senior member of staff with responsibility for the needs of handicapped students.

Finance

There is a need for further education for handicapped people to be seen as national provision and a national pattern of financial support agreed and understood, especially with regard to mandatory grants.

It must be recognised that handicapped school leavers need more time to complete normal FE courses before ceasing to have free tuition.

There should be no division between the way LEAs treat maintained and privately funded specialist colleges for handicapped students as long as they satisfy the DES about the quality of provision.

Access and transport

Problems of finance, transport and access are important in preventing use being made of further education facilities yet the problem has been made worse by the withdrawal of

invacars for new applicants. The mobility problem is now much worse than it was yet it is crucial for young people trying to establish their personal independence. Access to buildings and appropriately placed parking, are still major difficulties.

Colleges have too few ground floor facilities available for use by handicapped students.

Information and resources

There is still little co-ordination of information; it is fragmented and inaccessible. The Regional Advisory Councils for FE should have a key role in co-ordinating local information but there is also a need for such co-ordination at a national level. There is also need for an improvement in inter-professional co-operation.

Teacher training

There should be more training for teachers working with handicapped students and this should be a part of all initial teacher training.

Using existing resources

As well as worrying about new facilities e.g. day centres, we should ensure that we have more effective use of existing provision.

There is a need for schools to accept their role in basic skills and preparation for independence.

Education and unemployment

The stigma of unemployment is just as great for the handicapped as for the non-handicapped.

In view of the current economic situation, we need to look at options for significant living without work and at strategies for ongoing review and assessment in day centres. There is a danger of 'dumping'. Getting a job is not the only possible outcome from education even in cost benefit terms.

A national policy

There is a need for a national policy on FE including a right of choice, for handicapped people.

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Mrs Klinger - ILEA

Mrs M Clarke - ILEA

Director & Chairman – National Bureau for Handicapped Students

Mr M Taylor - ILEA

Ms D Flint – Royal Society for Mentally Handicapped Children and Adults

Mr P Clyne - ILEA

Mrs W Tumin

Mr B Patton - RNIB

Mr P Dyer – Spastics Society

Appendix 1 – Initials used

- RAC: Regional Advisory Council (for Further Education)
- FE: Further Education
- CFE: College of Further Education
- DES: Department of Education and Science
- FEU: Further Education Curriculum Review and Development Unit
- LEA: Local Education Authority
- ILEA: Inner London Education Authority
- MSC: Manpower Services Commission
- TSD: Training Services Division
- SPD: Special Programmes Division
- ESD: Employment Services Division
- TOPS: Training Opportunities Scheme
- YOP: Youth Opportunities Programme
- WIC: Work Introduction Course
- WEEPs: Work Experience on Employers Premises
- ERC: Employment Rehabilitation Centre
- DRO: Disablement Resettlement Officer
- ATC: Adult Training Centre
- DHSS: Department of Health and Social Security
- OU: Open University
- ESN(M): Educationally sub-normal – mild
- ESN(S): Educationally sub-normal – severe
- IQ: Intelligence Quotient
- RNIB: Royal National Institute for the Blind
- MENCAP: Royal Society for Mentally Handicapped Children and Adults

Appendix 2 – organisations mentioned

Banstead, Banstead Place, Park Road, Banstead, Surrey SM7 3EE
Tel: BURGH HEATH 56222-51756

Bridgend College of Technology, Industrial Unit, York Road, Industrial Estate, Bridgend, Mid-Glamorgan, Tel: (0656) 59784

Brixton College, 56 Brixton Hill, London SW2 19S. Tel: (01) 737-1166

Cottage & Rural Enterprises Ltd. (CARE), 9a Weir Road, Kibworth, Leicester LE8 0IQ Tel: 053-753-3225

City and Guilds of London Institute, 76 Portland Place, London W1N 4AA
Tel: (01) 580-3050

City Lit. Centre for the Deaf (and Speech Therapy Unit), Keeley House, Keeley Street, London WC2 Tel: (01) 242-9872

Dene College, Shipbourne Road, Tonbridge, Kent N11 9NT
Tel: (Tonbridge) 355101

Derwen Training College for the Disabled, Oswestry, SY11 3JA
Tel: (0691) 61234

East Midlands Regional Advisory Council for Further Education, Robins Wood House, Robins Wood Road, Aspley, Nottinghamshire NG8 3NH
Tel: (0602) 293291

Greenwich Youth Aid, Plumcroft School, Genesta Road, Plumstead, London SE18
Tel: (001) 854-3794

Hereward College, Bramston Crescent, Tile House Lane, Coventry CV4 9SW
Tel: (0203) 461231

Hester Adrian Research Centre, University of Manchester, M13 9PL

Home Farm Trust, 57 Queen Square, Bristol BS1 4LF
Tel: 0272 292060 or 0272 294359

Mencap, 117 Golden Lane, London EC1Y ORT. Tel: (01) 253-9433
National Bureau for Handicapped Students, 40 Brunswick Square, London WC1N 1AZ

Papworth Industries, Papworth Everard, Cambridge CB3 8RG
Tel: (0480) 830345

Remploy, 415 Edgware Road, London NW2 6LR Tel: (01) 452 8020

Royal National Institute for the Blind, 224 Great Portland Street, London WIN 6AA Tel: (01) 388-1266.

St John's Day Centre, 133 St Johns Way, London N19 Tel: (01) 253 3537.

St. Loye's College, Exeter. Tel: (Exeter) 55428

Southern Regional Advisory Council for FE, 26 Bath Road, Reading RG1 6NT
Tel: (0734) 52120

The Spastics Society, 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1P 5HQ
Tel: (01) 287-9571

Voluntary Council for Handicapped Children, National Children's Bureau,
8 Wakley Street, Islington, London EC1V 7QE
Tel: (01) 278-9441

West Midlands Regional Advisory Council for Further Education, Norfolk House
Smallbrook Queensway, Birmingham B5 4NB
Tel: (021) 643-8924

Appendix 3 - Publications

Experience, Reflection, Learning. FEU. April 1978, free, DES, Elizabeth House, York Road, London SE1 7PH. Tel: (01) 928 9222

Focus on Physical Handicap: Provision for Young People with Special Needs in Further Education. John Panckhurst, NFER publishing company, 1980, £5.75p

Special Educational Needs Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Handicapped Children and Young People (Warnock Report) (Cmnd 7212) HMSO 1978. £5.65p

Special Needs in Education (White paper on the Warnock Report) (Cmnd 7996) HMSO 1980. £1.75p

Report on the Education of the Visually Handicapped. (Vernon Report), HMSO 1972. £1.00p

Second Chances for Adults Andrew Pates and Martin Good, Published annually. 1982 edition to be published September 1981 by the Great Ouse Press in association with Macmillan £4.50p. Lists all post-school educational opportunities including the various distance learning schemes available.