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Still talking about inclusion? Carving new spaces between policy and practice

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The poles of the debate

1997

2011

We want to see more pupils with SEN (special Educational Needs) included within mainstream primary and secondary schools.' (Green Paper, *Excellence for All Children*, DfEE, 1997)

INCLUSION AS MAINSTREAM

We will remove the bias towards inclusion (Green Paper, *Support and Aspiration,* Department of Education, 2011)

INCLUSION AS BIAS

What then?

An impossible dream?

Beautiful but unachievable?

It works, but only in theory?

A school open to all is not only a right of each child, but also everybody's responsibility. An inclusive school is an act of social and human responsibility.

Content

1. Contextualising inclusion

2. Definiton and identification of key principles and challanges

3. Towards and inclusive pedagogy

4. New spaces

FROM SEGREGATION TO INCLUSION: 1960-2013

Brief historical journey: 1960-2013

Human rights, policies against segregation

Mainstreaming

Global trends

Personalisation

Economic crisis and the need to build a cohesive society

1960-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2008	2008 - …

From segregation to integration

From integration to inclusion

Education as human capital: the need to build a viable and competitive workforce

Schools and their communities: the children at the centre of their education

Austerity, development and counter-resistance

Development of Inclusion related policies

Education Act 1944

Support and Aspirations

Every Child Matters

Warnock report

1944

1978

2003

2011 ...

Historical development
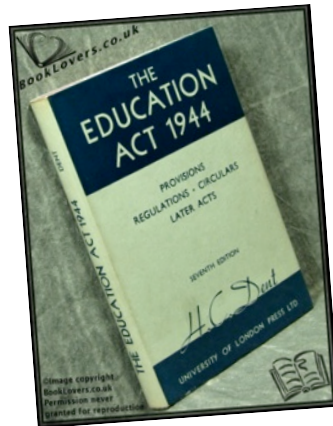
Divisive school system; 11 categories of disability

Towards integration; coinage of the term special educational needs

Focus on children's wellbeing; personalised learning; pedagogical and social inclusion; return of some form of classification of disability and SEN

Radical review:
- New classification system;
- Education, Health and Care plan
- More power to parents and less power to local authorities

Tensions within school reform policies

Case1

Inclusion

Attainment

COMPETITION

Case 2

Inclusion

Attainment
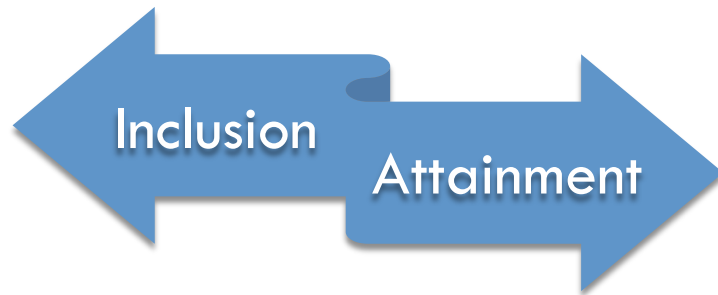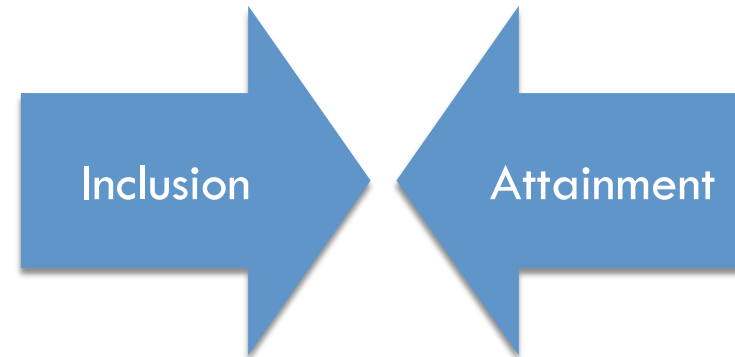
COLLABORATION

DEFININING THE TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT

How shall we define 'Inclusion'?

Education of children with disabilities in the general school system (Department of Education, 2013)

Is this definition appropriate? Justified? Inclusive?

Alternative definitions

DEFINITIONS
Being a full member of an age-appropriate class in your local school doing the same lessons as the other pupils […]. (Hall, 1996)
Inclusion can be understood as a move towards extending the scope of 'ordinary' schools so they can include a greater diversity of children (Clark, Dyson and Millward, 1995)
Inclusion describes the process by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individuals by reconsidering its curricular organisation and provision (Sebba, 1996)
Inclusive schools are problem-solving organisations with a common mission that emphasises learning for all students (Rouse and Florian, 1996a)

In Florian, L. (1997)

Key principles of inclusion

Celebrating diversity	Diversity is part of the nature of the human condition
Ensuring active participation	Inclusion is not placement in a classroom or school. Being inclusive demands a continuous effort to ensure children's active participation in their learning and social life.
Developing collaborative practices	Inclusion is not the result of a single heroic person working against all odds. It is the result of ongoing collaborative engagement of all interested parties.
Imagining a different school	An inclusive school is a school that thinks and acts differently, which learns from itself and promotes change and development

Putting principles into practice: some challenges
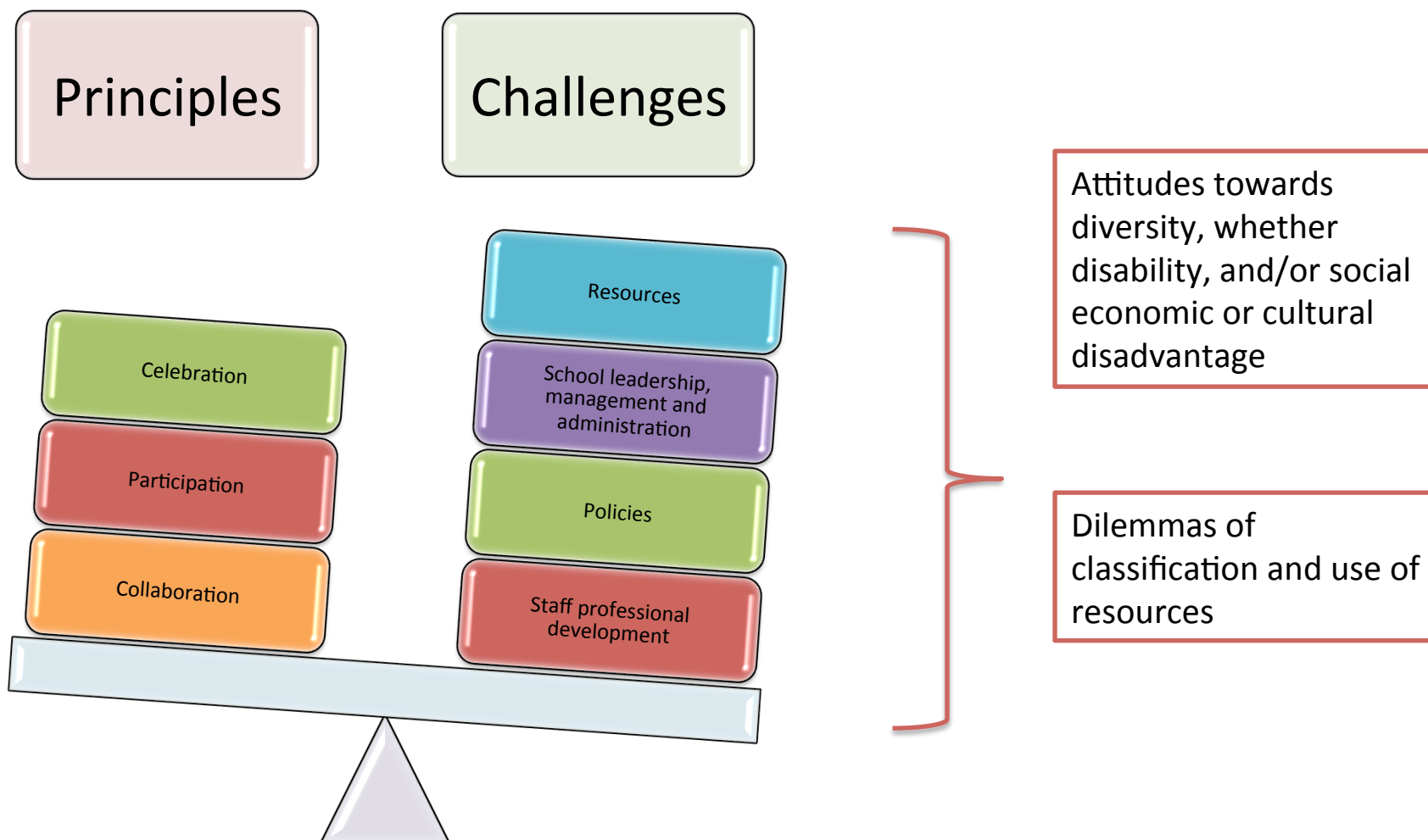
Statistical data: number of children with SEN

1.62 million children classified with SEN (19.8 %) in2011-12 (DfE, 2012)

226,000 with a statement of Special Educational Needs

1.39 millions with SEN (School Action/School Action Plus) - 94% enrolled in mainstream school
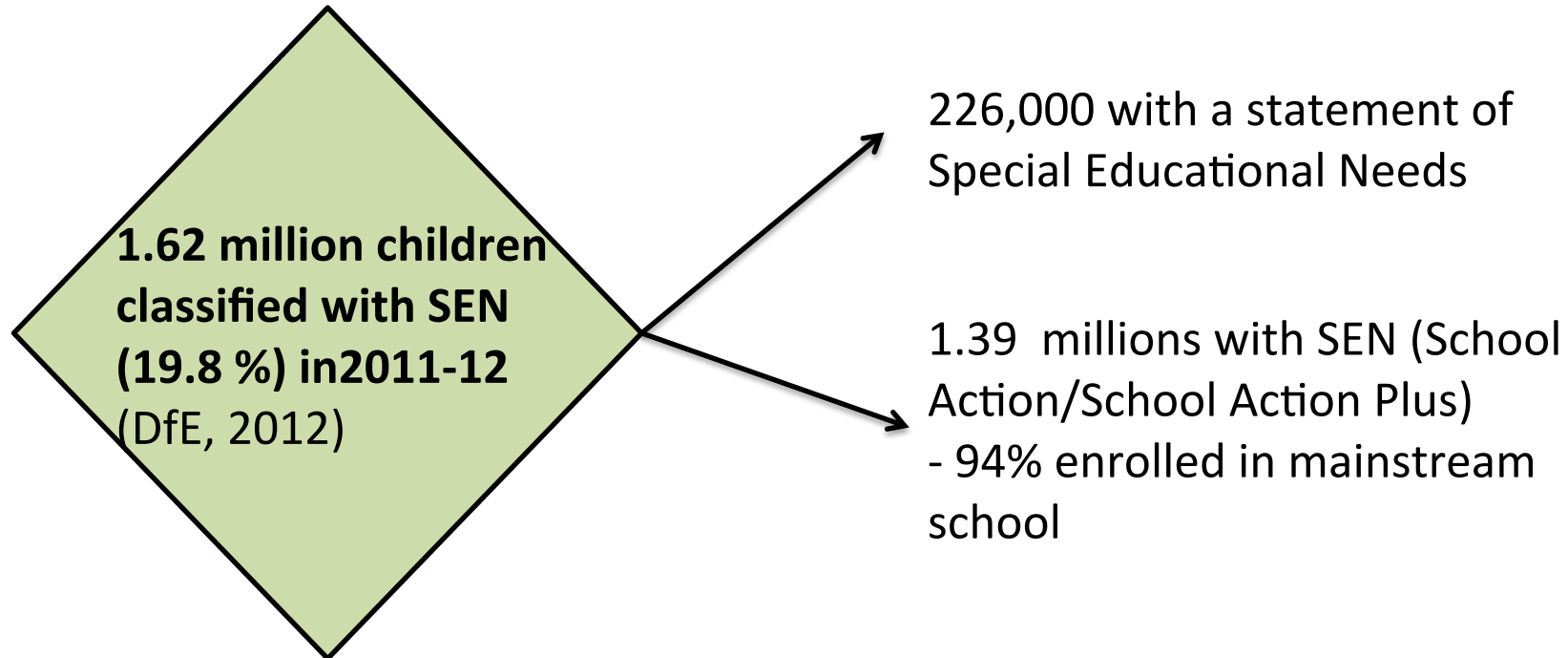
- **What does these data tell us?**
- **Are they reliable?**
- **Are they useful?**
- **What are they based on?**
- **Do they reflect reality?**

The use [and abuse] of categories

Categories serve to identify:

1. patterns of exceptional child functioning relevant to education,

2. underlying disorders, disabilities or impairments relevant to child functioning in education,

3. kinds of exceptional placement and general provision (by location, kinds of resources allocated), and

4. kinds of curriculum design and content, and teaching strategy. [Norwich, B., 2007]

More to the point …

'they reflect administrative, placement and resource allocation decision-making and not necessarily categories of learner characteristics that have pedagogic relevance' (Norwich & Lewis, 2005:4)
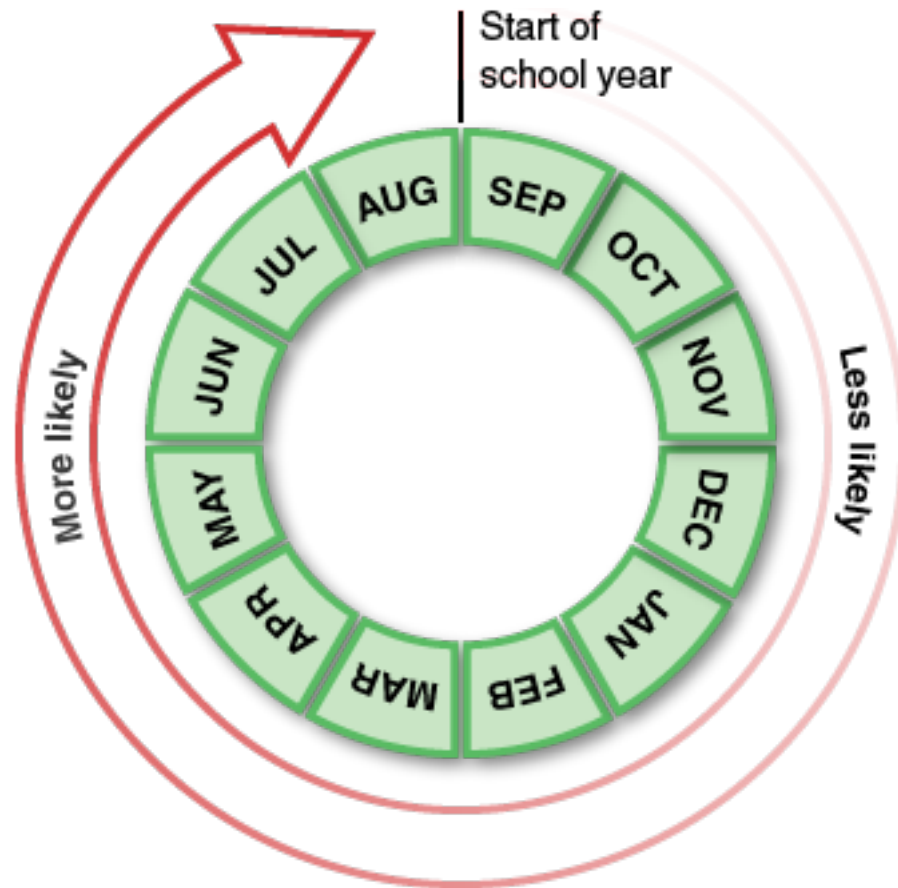
Useful?

Necessary?

Problematic?

WHICH 'REALITY' DO CLASSIFICATIONS REFLECT?
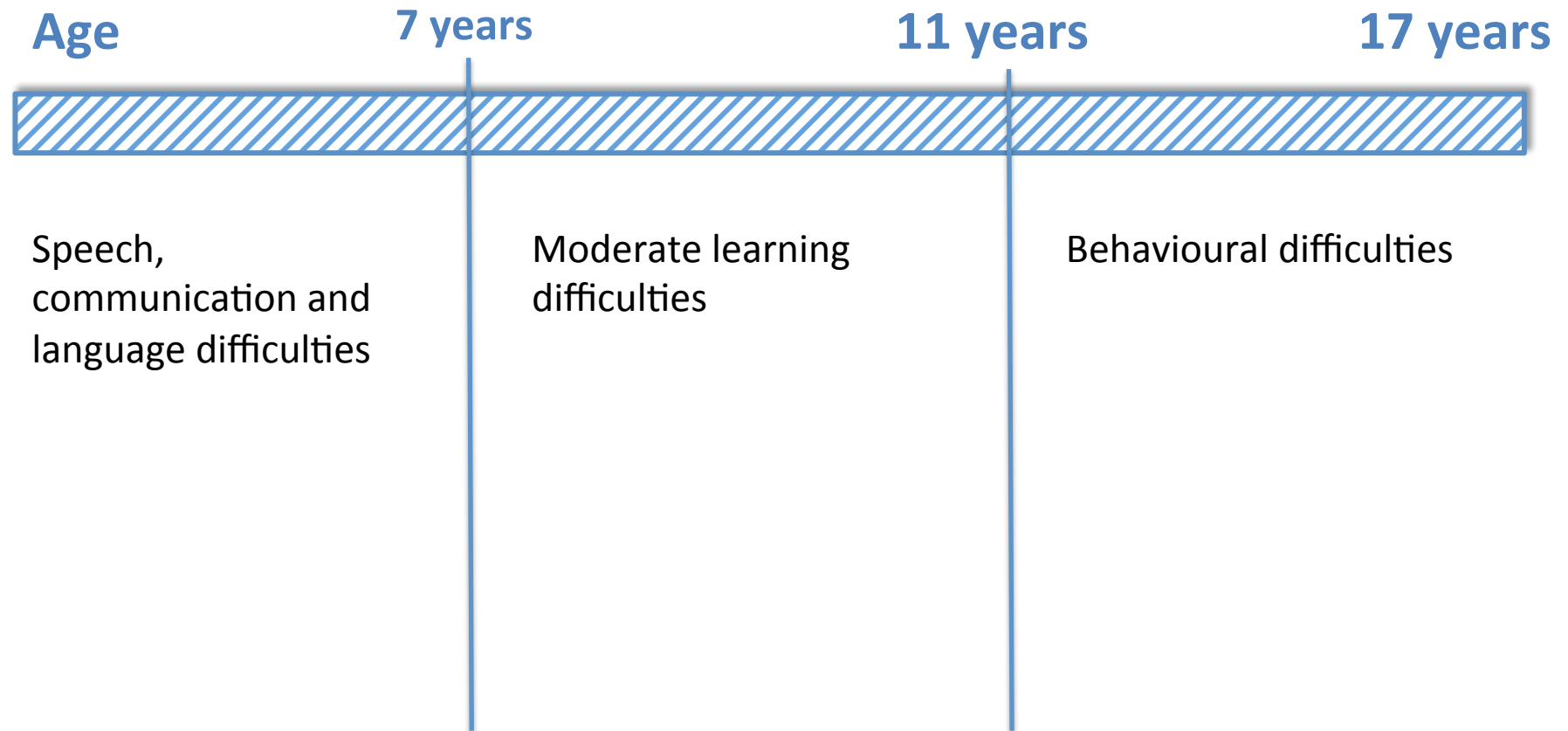
Assessment and identification of SEN

(1) A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

(2) A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she.

    (a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or

    (b) has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

(4) A child or young person does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been spoken at home.

The impact of children's age

Start of school year

More likely

Less likely

AUG · SEP · OCT · NOV · DEC · JAN · FEB · MAR · APR · MAY · JUN · JUL

STOP and Think

- Who has a difficulty here?
- What would the consequences be of identifying early a child as having SEN?

http://www.education.gov.uk/lamb/module4/M04U02.html

Variation in the identification of SEN: school phases

Age	7 years	11 years	17 years

Speech, communication and language difficulties

Moderate learning difficulties

Behavioural difficulties

http://www.education.gov.uk/lamb/module4/M04U02.html

CARVING NEW SPACES FOR INCLUSION: FROM ASSESSING NEEDS TO BROADENING CAPABILITIES

Education should be …

' … the site for the unthinkable, the site for the impossible' [Bernstein, 2000:30)

The nature of inclusive pedagogy

1. A shift in focus from one that is concerned with only those individuals who have been identified as having 'additional needs', to learning for all—the idea of everybody (not most and some);

2. Rejection of deterministic beliefs about ability (and the associated idea that the presence of some will hold back the progress of others); and

3. Ways of working with and through other adults that respect the dignity of learners as full members of the community of the classroom.

Florian, L. and Black-Hawkins, K. (2011)

'Lives, freedoms and capabilities': lessons for disability and education

IF …

'In assessing our lives, we have reasons to be interested not only in the kind of lives we manage to lead, but also in the freedom that we actually have to choose between different styles and ways of living' (Sen, 2009: 227).

THEN EDUCATION MATTERS BECAUSE ….

It is instrumental to provide the person with the knowledge, skills and understanding to make

'intelligent choice[s] between different types of lives that a person can lead' (Sen, 2003 cited in Walker, 2010:155)

Some tenets of the capability approach

- Equality and justice should be considered at the level of capabilities (Sen, 1979, 1992, 2009)

- A capability is 'what people are effectively able to do and to be' (Robeyns, 2005)

- It focuses on the freedom people have to choose opportunities (capabilities) and functionings (realised opportunities) that they have reason to value

- It rejects an evaluation of wellbeing based on purely subjective accounts of happiness (such as utilities), or income or consumption

- It broadens the informational basis necessary to make judgments on equality and justice

- It posits questions about justice as 'realization-focused comparisons' (Sen, 2009)

- It locates positive freedoms at the centre of the evaluative process

- It takes into consideration freedom as both an end of and a means to development as both the *opportunity* and *process aspects of freedom (Sen, 2009:228)*

Capability approach, disability & justice

'Any substantive theory of ethics and political philosophy, particularly any theory of justice, has to choose an **informational focus**, that is, it has to decide which features of the world we need to concentrate on in judging a society and in assessing justice and injustice' (Sen, 2009: 231)

'It is particularly important, …, to have a view as to how an **individual's overall advantage** is to be assessed' (Sen, 2009: 231)

'Whether the disability arises from physical problems, or from mental handicaps, or from socially-imposed restrictions, the person with disability has an immediate reason for social attention in a capability oriented theory of justice, which she or he may not have in other approaches, including in utilitarianism, the Rawlsian theory of justice, and the opulence-based welfare economics' (Sen, 2009, 23–24 cited in Biggeri et al, 2011: 1).
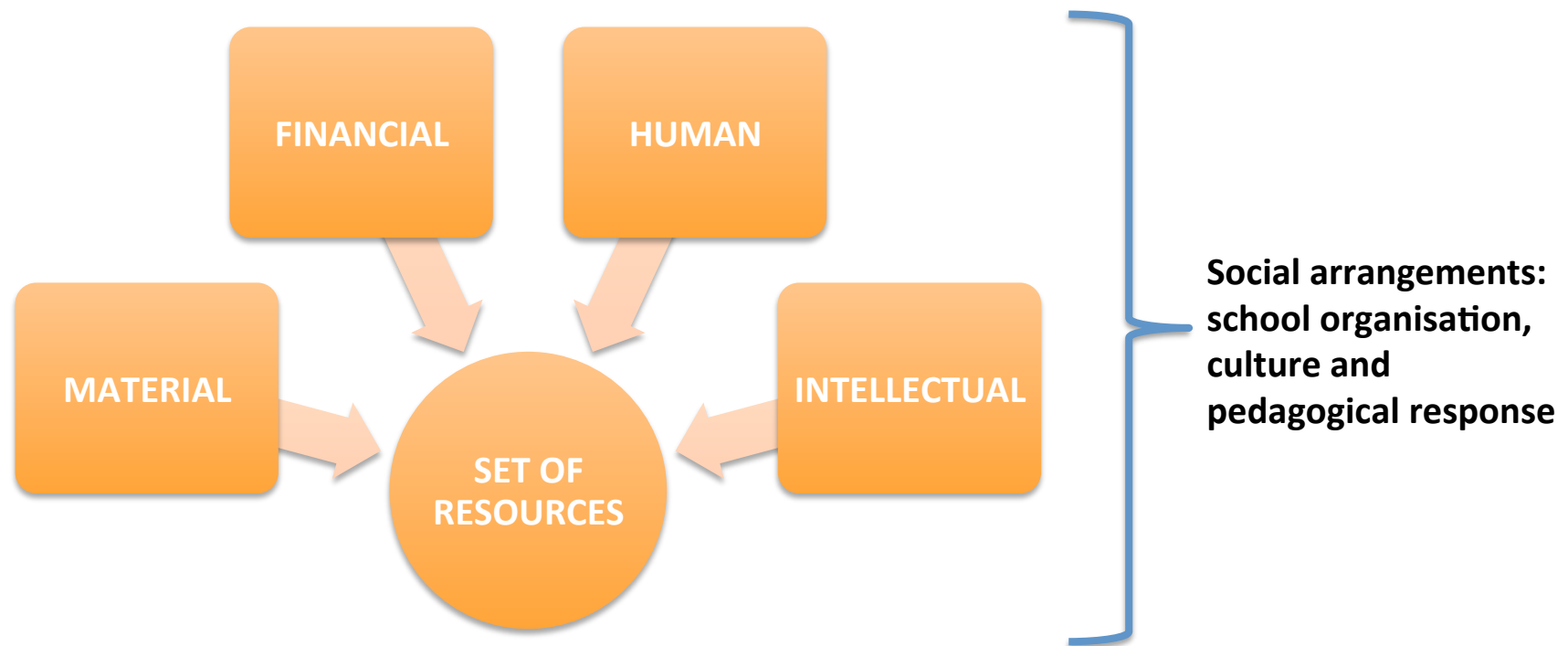
Disability and SEN on a continuum of disadvantage
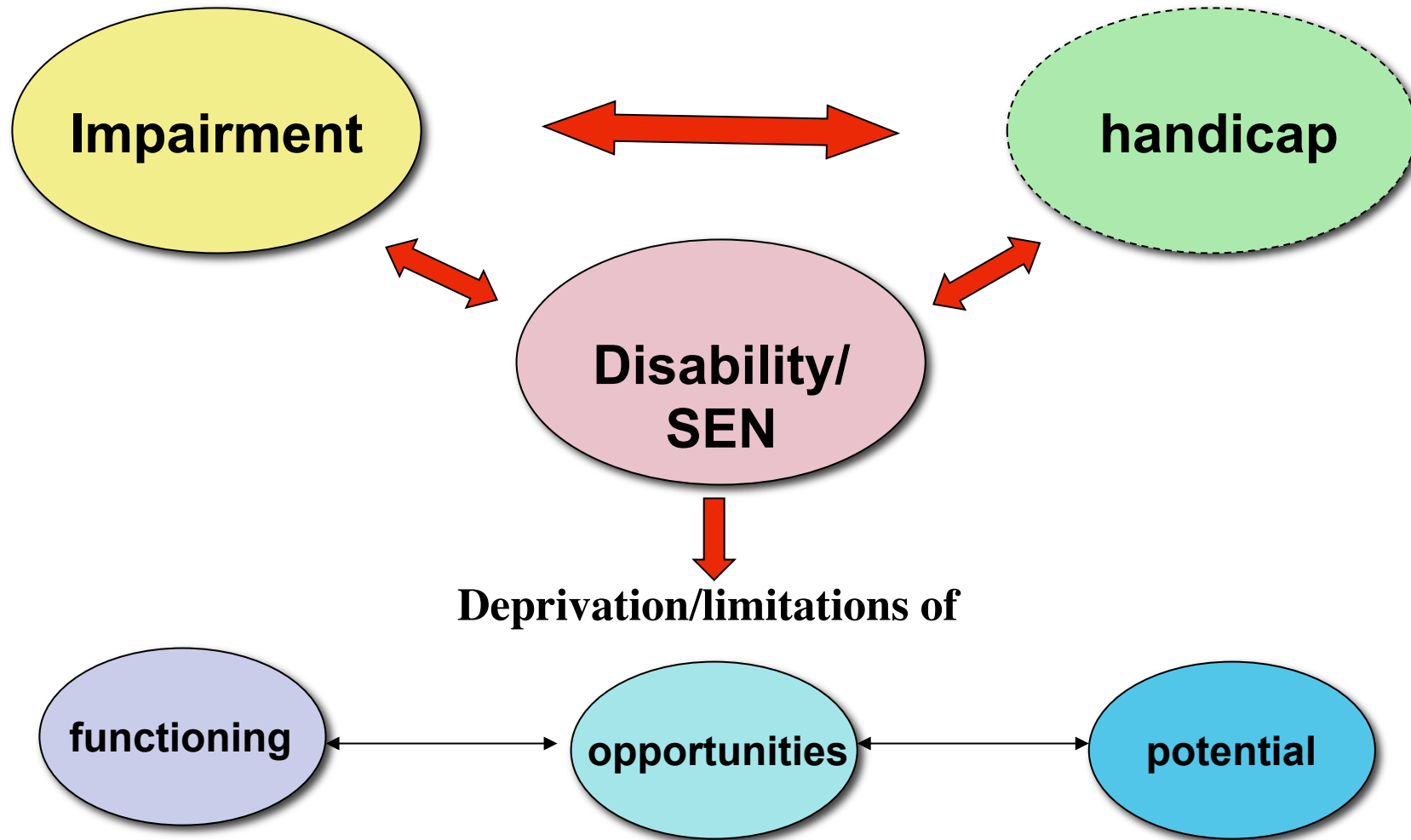
Justice and the distribution of provision: a capability based argument

- Ways in which provision is determined and distributed do not take into account the broadening of capabilities

- Provision is based on the fulfillment of externally determined 'desirable outcomes' and problematic identification processes

- The distribution of resources making up the provision is determined by different theories of justice which while necessary are not in themselves sufficient to develop functionings and capabilities

- Therefore the present system is only partially just and thus the capability approach is necessary, albeit not sufficient, to broaden our evaluative framework

Provision: converting resources into capabilities

FINANCIAL

HUMAN

MATERIAL

INTELLECTUAL

SET OF RESOURCES

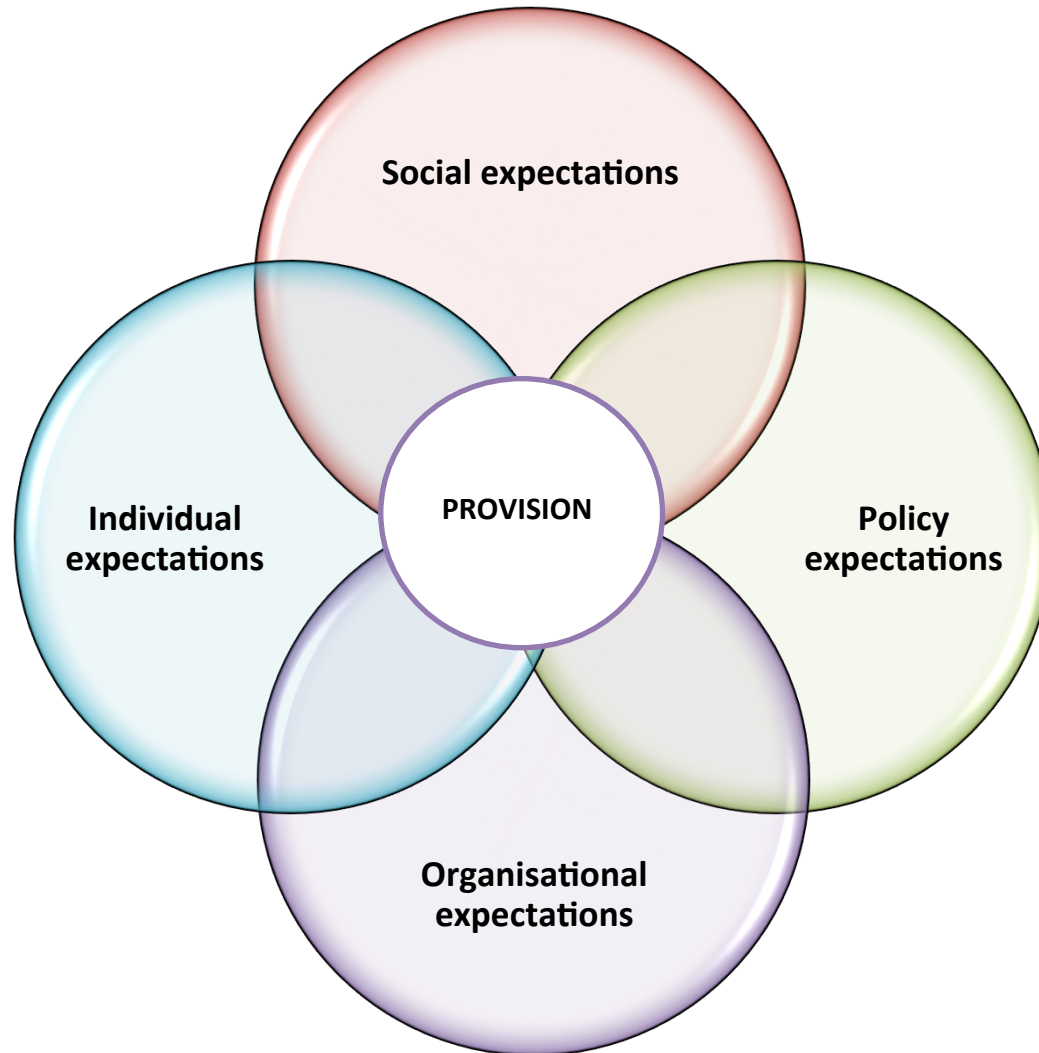**Social arrangements: school organisation, culture and pedagogical response**

Provision is a collective term used to refer to the material, financial, human, and intellectual resources, which enable the child to have access to education, participate in it, and gain from it the necessary and sufficient means to flourish as an active adult member of society.

Desirable outcomes: what provision should achieve

- life and physical health;
- emotions:
- love and care;
- social relations and participation;
- control over one's environment: agency, autonomy and respect, shelter and environment;
- education and knowledge;
- practical reasons 1: paid work and other projects;
- practical reasons 2: mobility;
- personal expression and recreational activities: "sense, imagination and thought", spiritual/religion, sport and recreational activities. (Biggeri et al, 2011)

Factors impacting on the distribution and use of provision

Present educational provision process

NEEDS

Identification

+

Provision

=

Desired outcomes

- Medical based identification
- Educational based identification
- Based on what a person **cannot** do

Provision is used to 'fill the gap' between the limitations of the individual and the desired outcomes. Provision is **compensatory**

- No agreement on what a desirable outcome could be
- Usually chosen by others
- Externally evaluated

Present provision process: a capability critique

Basic capabilities & functionings

Conversion factors

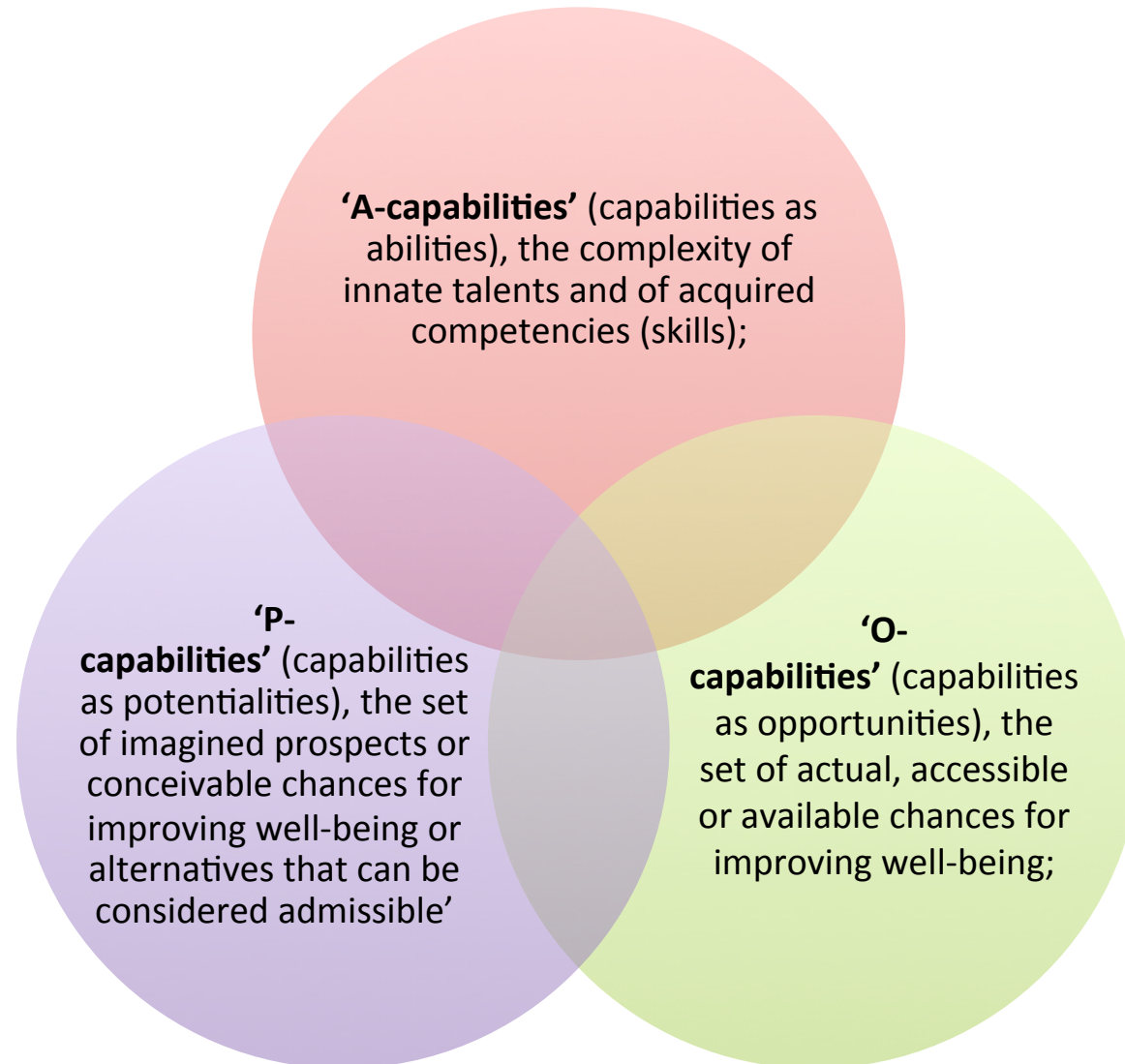Identification + Provision = Desired outcomes as broadened capabilities
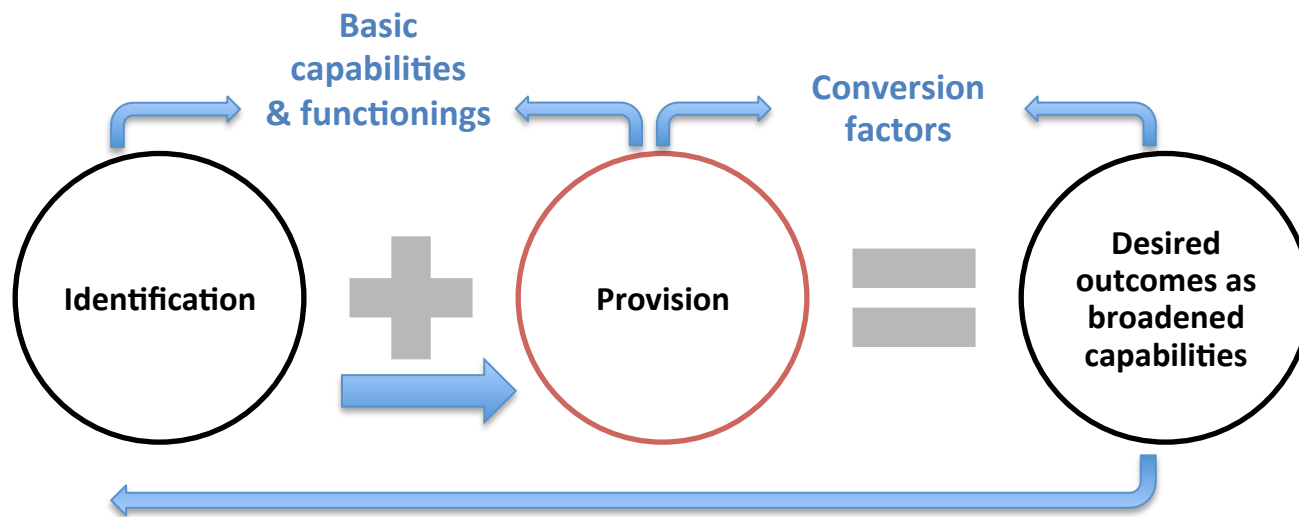
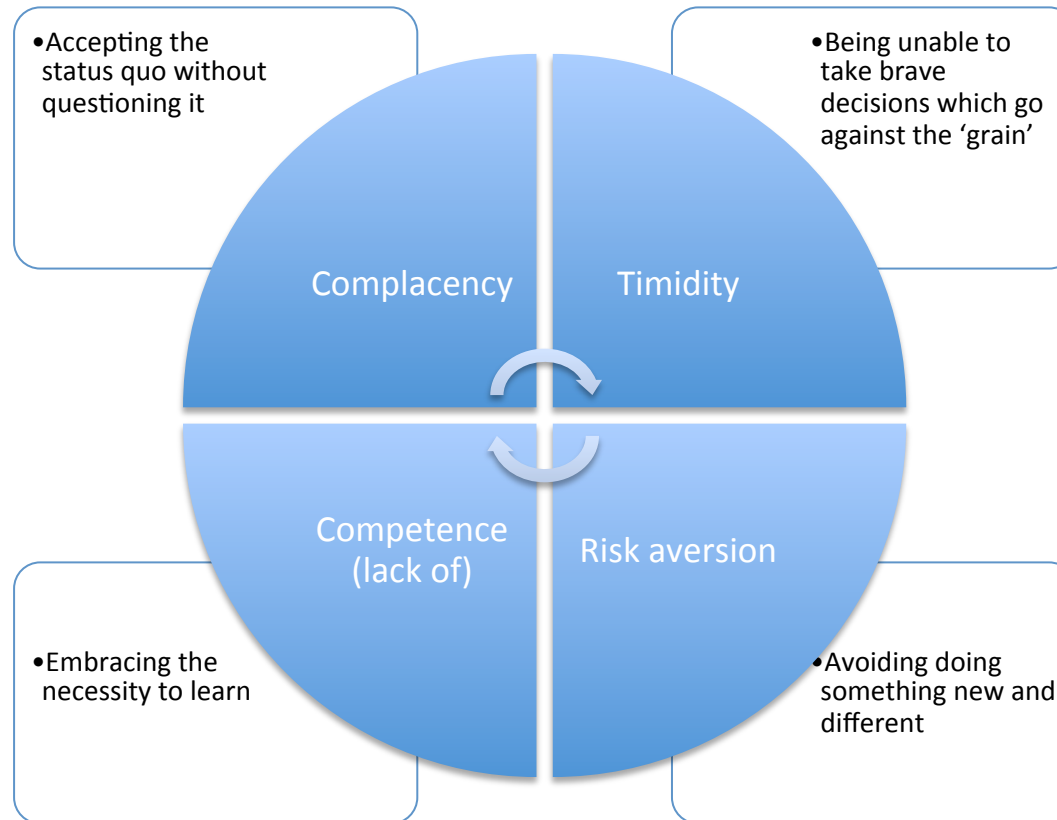Beyond the dichotomy medical vs social model (Terzi, 2008), ICF model

Limitations of utilitarianism and resource based principle (Rawls, 1971; Dworkin,) Biggeri, et al's (2010) mosaic approach

Person centred approaches focusing on determining capabilities and functionings Bellanca et al's (2011) dis-capability

Children's evolving capabilities

'A-capabilities' (capabilities as abilities), the complexity of innate talents and of acquired competencies (skills);

'P-capabilities' (capabilities as potentialities), the set of imagined prospects or conceivable chances for improving well-being or alternatives that can be considered admissible'

'O-capabilities' (capabilities as opportunities), the set of actual, accessible or available chances for improving well-being;

Building an inclusive school: The four horsemen of the apocalypse metaphor

- Accepting the status quo without questioning it

Complacency

- Being unable to take brave decisions which go against the 'grain'

Timidity

- Embracing the necessity to learn

Competence (lack of)

- Avoiding doing something new and different

Risk aversion

Petford, N. (2013)

Final remarks

1. If the end is to be inclusive, then we need to learn to accept that **we must become inclusive** first of all

2. Becoming inclusive is a process where we learn to accept others different from us, and where through this ongoing learning process we can improve our pedagogical response through effective management and organisational structures

3. The inevitable challenges in the implementation of inclusive practices should be seen as primary responsibilities of a professional workforce

4. Continuing professional development is therefore essential not only to 'upskill' teachers and managers, but also to enable their active and responsible participation

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