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Doubly-disadvantaged or even Hidden Away: the situation of migrant and refugee children with special educational needs and disabilities

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Abstract

This chapter is concerned with exploring the experiences of families with children who have special educational needs. It problematises the idea of educational provision by contextualising the situation parents and children are facing in UK. Teachers are not aware of the broad cultural framework within which parents of vulnerable children operate if they have migrant and refugee backgrounds. Parents and teachers do not see the educational provision in identical ways. There is a lack of understanding about school processes, and therefore mistrust on parents' part. Equally, there is misunderstanding on teachers' part. Children should remain at the centre of the debate at all times. This chapter concludes with some reflections about how the needs of children and young people with SEND may be addressed adequately and more holistically.

Key words: SEND, migrants and refugees, inclusion, UK context

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the under-researched and mostly hidden experiences of migrant and refugee families who have children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). It looks at the challenges migrant parents face when trying to make sense of the schools their children attend. Parents do not always understand the practices prevalent at the schools, nor some of the decisions the schools take. Although the research was conducted in England in 2021/22, the issues raised here also have implications for some children and their families in other parts of Europe. The first purpose of this chapter is to present research with education professionals on the challenges that the current education system in the UK creates for migrant children with SEND. While policy documents regarding migrant students refer to inclusion in general, few address the specific context of disabled children from migrant and refugee groups. Despite policy directives, what 'inclusion' looks like in practice is open to question and debate. A second purpose of this chapter is to shed light on different perspectives, considering not only the views of education professionals but also those of parents of children with SEND, who are trying to make sense of the educational and social situations in which they and their children find themselves. These comprise of remarkably diverse groups, including children with a range of needs, as well as asylum seekers and refugees in the UK from many backgrounds. What can easily pass unnoticed are the rich and diverse cultural positions held within different communities in relation to disability.

Exploring these perspectives will highlight the complexity of what inclusion entails, and provide a nuanced and deeper understanding of the various challenges facing parents, children and school professionals.

Given its colonial past, the reach and dominance of the English language, and a long history of migration, it might have been anticipated that structures and processes would have already been in place in UK schools to facilitate the acceptance and inclusion of newcomers within school environments. However, in practice this was not always the case. From difficulties schools faced in accessing suitable funding and resources for providing additional in-school programmes, to parents' total exclusion from schools' agenda and aspiration, there has often been an uneven terrain which parents had to negotiate ranging from hope to despair (Cork 2005, Mirza & Meeto, 2012). Some communities have had to rely on their own resources to provide educational and cultural support for young people. An example is community-initiated compensatory projects to help children keep up with their schoolwork through the setting up of supplementary schools, by for example, African-Caribbean communities (Mirza & Reay, 2000). These continue to cater for the educational and cultural needs of third generation of (once) migrants. However, they do not have the expertise to meet all the needs of children with SEND because parent volunteers who run these projects would need professional training and extra resources which only schools can provide.

Meanwhile, the neo-liberal marketization of education in the UK, along with an emphasis on examination performance and league tables, has resulted in a wariness on the part of school managers to bring in students from diverse migrant and refugee families. From the schools' perspective this means meeting the challenges of providing education to *all* children, while at the same time meeting performance targets set by the government (Ball et al., 1995, 2013). There can be still greater reluctance to include students with SEND (Slee, 2010). A deficit view of such students from the schools can serve to further disadvantage migrant children with SEND (Migliarini, 2018; Paniagua, 2015, 2017). Difficulties are compounded by lack of flexibility within schools due to rigid curricula, accountability technologies and standardization (Jorgensen et al., 2021).

Across Europe, language barriers have been identified as being of key importance (Al-Hassan & Gardner, 2002, Caldin, 2014). While all migrant children in the UK with limited proficiency in English are confronted by challenges (Manzoni & Rolfe, 2019), students with SEND face additional difficulties. Strand and Hessel (2018) identified linguistic proficiency as the absolute key factor in educational achievement.

While there are attempts to view challenges more holistically, a huge onus is placed on schools to help achieve wider social integration (see e.g. Casey, 2016). Although it is constructive to consider integration as going beyond schools and reaching out into the local communities, it is quite revealing to examine policy directives. HM Government (2018) is typical in presenting integration as a one directional flow process, with no acknowledgment of the capital introduced by people from different cultural backgrounds. The overriding twin foci on the English language (Blackledge & Creese, 2010) and on teaching 'Fundamental British Values' (Tomlinson, 2015, Lander, 2016, Panjwani, 2016, Habib, 2018) tends to result in a corresponding lack of acknowledgement of diversity in this amorphous conceptualisation of 'migrants'. Within an Eurocentric conception, incoming communities are viewed as a homogeneous entity, mostly as a potential problem, and also as a group with little to contribute to the school or the wider community.

The lack of awareness of intersectionality and the invisibility of such groups is part of a wider global phenomenon (Pisoni, 2021). In considering the challenges of including and integrating students with SEND Jorgensen et al. (2020) identified certain patterns and commonalities across *European educational systems. A recurrent theme was the emergence of a deficit approach towards migrant children and their families, among both teachers and other professionals. This implies a double deficit approach for those identified with SEND. The children and young people who are in such situations have parents who want the best for them. When they are not consulted and are left out of decision making about their children's futures, their valuable contribution is either marginalized or left unacknowledged.*

For many years, the subject of disabled children from migrant families was simply ignored across international discourse (Caldin, 2014). There have been a few attempts to address the lack of knowledge in the area, such as some recommendations for teachers facing *this dual diversity* (Al-Hassan & Gardner, 2002; Caldin, 2014). However, we now know that this is not

just about linguistic issues, but ways of understanding special educational needs and inclusion (Caldin & Cinotti, 2018). Inclusion itself does not equate to social participation (Rademaker et al., 2020). There may be contrasting views held by families and teachers, and one side may not understand the position held by the other. For many families of children with SEND from migrant and refugee backgrounds, inclusion and social engagement may not be the aspiration at all. Indeed, instances of a lack of engagement have been reported, because some parents were hoping for very different outcomes, such as a cure for their children's disabilities (Goussot, 2010),

Further understandings are needed, particularly regarding the tensions and discontinuities between aspiration. Despite a growing interest in intersectional issues in this area, stigma, exclusion and social isolation persist (Pisoni, [PfEU] 2021). Migrant children with SEND are an overlooked group in research, practice and policy, with very little known about school approaches towards supporting this group of children, and still less about the experiences of the children themselves (Jorgensen et al., 2021). Some health professionals might feel that it is the schools' responsibility to educate all children and young people, whereas some teachers may think that it is the responsibility of health professionals and educational psychologists to come up with a label which may then enable schools to access funding to help a particular child. Some parents from minority backgrounds, such as the Sudanese and Nigerian parents reported below, do not see it that way. For them, their child's overall holistic needs and well-being must override bureaucratic procedures in UK, which may look illogical and incomprehensible to parents. Some communities rely on an oral tradition, on verbal communication rather than written letters of complaint or appeals against decisions. Such families feel lost if their opinion is not sought, and their experiences of parenting and caring are not taken into account. They feel excluded and confused when their children's futures are decided totally by schools and other professionals.

The questions we asked were concerned with eliciting the experiences of SEND from participants' perspectives. What did they think the children needed? Did parents understand and agree with the labels given to children and young people? Did the schools consult parents? What tensions exist regarding perceptions of education and aspirations for children with SEND among parents and education professionals? How can practitioners and policy

makers support these young people? The intention was also to provide possible explanations for why some youngsters might get lost within the education system, their learning difficulties confused with linguistic incompetence or cultural adaptation issues.

Exploring Silences

Recording and exploring the experiences of marginalized groups raise questions of power in situations which are complex and multilayered. We wanted to give voice to those who are responsible for looking after and educating children and young people. In the case of SEND, this is significant because it entails schools 'labelling' vulnerable children and putting them in certain categories which their parents may or may not be aware of. In considering the children's educational journeys and experiences of inclusion, we felt a need to incorporate wider perspectives. The general lack of research in this area raises questions about the educational entitlement and quality of these children's experiences on the one hand, and perceptions of the school professionals on the other. Some of the most challenging insights in our research came from adults around the young people.

The interviews on which this research is based took place between 2021 and 2022 in the South and South-West of England. In total 13 interviews were carried out with a range of people from different backgrounds. The three schools were all state funded mainstream schools. None were 'special schools' which cater only for children with SEND. All the children were placed in mainstream classes, though some were taken out of class sometimes for intensive one-to-one support. The participants were three teachers, two teaching assistants, three SENCOs (Special Educational Needs Coordinators), one RSW (Refugee Support Worker), one health professional and three parents. Some interviews were held in person, some were telephone conversations, and also, due to the constraints resulting from Covid 19, some of these interviews were virtual lasting between 30 and 60 minutes. Further background information was acquired through a focus group meeting with seven parents where SEND issues were discussed. This was part of a voluntary open discussion with parents. The teachers were recruited through professional contacts with three schools. They introduced the researchers to teaching assistants/learning support assistants whom they worked with on a regular basis. Contact with SENCOs was a continuation of the researchers' ongoing research interest in schools and through previous contact with two head teachers. In one case the parent saw one of the researchers in the school and initiated a conversation

leading later to a detailed interview. The health professional was introduced to one of the researchers by a parent. These individuals did not wish to be identified. According to that preference and following ethical guidelines, their words were simply assigned to 'fieldnotes'. As our participants expressed concerns about being named, we used pseudonyms or identified them in terms of their background or role. The evidence collected here is intended to raise questions about the ways in which we approach migrant education, problematising the field, as distinct from developing an authoritative argument to guide policy and practice.

Exploring layers of complexity: understanding what happens to children

We found that some children with SEND are sent to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) based in hospital settings, where family doctors might refer them for assessment, sometimes on the recommendation of school teachers. In our research two teenagers were referred to CAMHS, one with the diagnosis of ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder) and another with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder). Schools do not have access to translators or bilingual teachers/support teachers to communicate effectively with parents from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and to provide further details about a condition or diagnosis. From the teachers' perspectives these parents are not fully engaged in their SEND children's education. If they were seriously interested, they would have actively sought teachers' help and advice. From the parents' perspectives, the teachers did not really try to find out how the parents and the child's siblings were coping with these children's needs at home. Most parents whose children were diagnosed and who received a 'label' were puzzled by the way their children with SEND were being dealt with by the schools. Quite often parents were excluded from queries, interventions and conversations that professionals had with their children. One Somali support teacher for instance, noted that Somali parents struggle to engage with the English education system- they do not know what services are on offer, or how to access them. Unaccompanied minors who arrive as asylum seekers in the UK have to learn to depend on themselves. There is scant research-based information available about these young people and how they negotiate their way in the education system. Even less is known about children and young people with SEND within this vulnerable group.

In relation to children with SEND, each parent saw their unique situation differently, and responded accordingly. A father who came from Nigeria told us that he did not know ‘what kind of problem this autism is. My daughter never had that disease before we arrived in England, but the school is punishing her. They are sending her away (to another school) Why?’ Many parents are not aware of appeal procedures whereby decisions taken by the school might be challenged by parents. The father in this instance felt humiliated and wondered if he should ‘leave the south (of England). There may be better teachers somewhere else?’ He had a degree from Nigeria. He was articulate with a very good command of the English language. As a concerned father he felt ‘upset, angry’. A mother from Sudan thought she would have to arrange a cure for her daughter (with ADHD) all by herself. She was worried that her daughter did not sit still and did not listen to her, quite unlike her younger sister. She would ask ‘maulvi’ (religious leader) to say a special ‘duaa’ (prayer) and then ‘everything would be alright’. In another family a child accessing speech and language therapy made her parents ‘afraid’ in case the social services might take her away from the family home. The mother did not know that the speech and language therapist would never do that. No one had explained what kind of educational help children with SEND were entitled to, and how the school was organizing assistance and learning support. When a teenager in a British Indian family experienced a psychotic episode before his exams, the parents contacted ‘the man in Dehli’ on phone ‘to exorcise the demon’. This was happening in the second generation of migrants in an educated Hindu family, where one of the parents was a graduate.

In some families different perceptions were held about those who are stigmatized for being disabled from birth and those who had the misfortune of becoming disabled during their lives. There are also hints of association of disability with some older indigenous belief system or religion, where curses were considered to be very real and dangerous. The idea of the evil eye persists in some families, where someone with ‘bad intentions’ or an envious temperament is thought to have the ability to make a child ill. It is almost as though the evil eye has cast a spell on a child or their family.

It was found that in most cases the schools saw all migrant children with SEND in similar ways, irrespective of where their families originated. This lack of differentiation has

implications for the ways in which children are educated. One Refugee Support Worker in South West England was quick to emphasise the differences across the groups she was meeting, whereby those from Afghanistan would have little in common with new comers from Syria for example-except religion perhaps. Their home languages, customs and traditions are different in ways the schools were not aware of. These undifferentiated attitudes by schools become particularly difficult for children with SEND to handle. On the other hand, some children who have not learnt English sufficiently well, and who do not have special needs are misplaced in the category of SEND. This is inappropriate and unhelpful, but neither the child, nor their parents are informed about what is happening . The parents are not told whether the schools have arranged provision on the basis of pedagogical or organizational reasons. Our research shows the multilayered complexity education professionals, children and their parents are facing. Some of the strands which emerged from the data are set out below.

Being *disabled* by systems designed for mainstream groups

The shift over the past two decades away from multiculturalism to monoculturalism has further disadvantaged migrants and refugees coming into host education systems. Central to the multiculturalism of the 70s and early 80s in the UK, was the conviction that minority groups bring their own capital into the educational environment, and that it was enriching for groups to exchange knowledge and learn together. The rejection of such a position means that inclusivity and integration entail a one-way flow, whereby incomers are expected to seamlessly ‘blend into’ and adapt to the host society, which remains essentially unchanged by any new influx. As a result, difficulties emerge not just as a consequence of linguistic challenges but through cultural dissonance. This is not limited to recent migrants. The data we collected is informative and insightful, particularly in relation to the ways in which the educational and health needs of recently arrived unaccompanied minors (under 16 years of age), differ from those who have come with their parents. These are again different for migrant families whose children with SEND were born in the UK, such as the family we met from India. Each family faces different challenges and barriers depending on their previous and current experiences.

Home and School

Our conversations with those working with SEND and migrant youngsters suggested, also, a breakdown of communication between families and schools. Many families, like the one described above where a language and speech therapist was involved, do not have access to bilingual interpreters who can act as a 'bridge' between home and school. This leads not only to a lack of engagement between families and schools but also to suspicion and mistrust. Parents often do not know the logic which guides the professionals' decisions. In such cases parents are dependent on their children for translation, which might or might not take place. Quite simply, parents were not aware of the wider Special Educational Needs system. They did not know what was happening in schools in terms of provision. No one had tried to explain the processes and different options open to them or their children. Most parents are not acquainted with people who know how the education system works and who would be prepared to talk to their child's school on their behalf. They might find that they are at the receiving end of decision making about their own children. This can be particularly disempowering for distressed parents who feel ignored and think they have been deliberately kept in the dark.

It could be argued that linguistic difficulties are a major issue for some families. Often those who are not familiar with the main language of a country risk exclusion and disengagement from school and society (McEachron & Bhatti, 2015). However, in the case of the family from Nigeria this was not the main issue. It was a different way of coping, of understanding or naming a disability. This also shows that some parents of children with SEND just cannot obtain reassurance from professionals nor access support. They are left to their own devices and have to look elsewhere.

Policy implementation

It quickly became evident that policy directives can play out in various ways, depending on the identities of those who arrive. Stated simply, a refugee or a migrant from another country might be treated differently when compared to that of another. Families who are visible minorities from British ex-colonies might have experienced discrimination and racism themselves. They are likely to think that it would be the same for their children, and this is

bound to make them cautious and extra careful. Different sets of parents have different expectations from the education system. These are understandably exacerbated for parents whose children have with SEND. What seems striking is the every candid admission by some education professionals that a single approach has been adopted for groups that come from a range of diverse cultural settings, containing individuals with variable degrees of cultural and linguistic capital and very different educational experiences. Lacking nuances or sophistication, this one size fit all' approach may not reflect what is actually happening to individuals at the receiving end, and how they experience their lived realities. On the other hand, it may also reflect a wider issue, the challenge of constructing a flexible framework in the context of new waves of migrants. Indeed, since these interviews were carried out, there have been large numbers arriving in the UK from Albania and Ukraine. The needs of children from these communities will again be uniquely related to their prior experiences, current needs and expectations. On the whole, at present there is a lot of sympathy for Ukrainians in the UK, so it is likely that children from that community will be treated sympathetically, including children with SEND. This may lead schools to look more deeply at their policies and practices concerning ALL (including non-Ukrainian) children.

The challenges are further complicated by geographical, social and economic factors. The fact that some might be urban migrants, and others might have come from once close-knit rural communities is not considered when individuals and families are resettled in the UK. Children tend to enrol in their local schools, so depending on where families are resettled, and on local expertise and resources available for dealing with needs of new migrants, the experience of children with SEND from those communities are bound to be affected. In the government's drive towards 'integration', potential community support networks which might have encouraged some continuity in cultural and linguistic experiences are ignored. Some families from similar backgrounds will be dispersed, thus weakening possible support structures. Again, this takes a heavy toll on children with SEND and their families. This may also place extra demands on schools, which might have been reduced if families could support each other.

Misunderstanding and mis-placement

One SENCo in Devon reported that children were all too easily misplaced in SEND groups on the grounds of linguistic *difficulties* that were never fully explored. She had taken over the role from her predecessor, she reported, to discover that a girl placed in the SEND group was simply following instructions from her parents to let her older brother speak for both of them. She remained silent when he was not around, and this was taken as a failure of comprehension. A Somali support teacher suggested that not only were children who speak English as an additional language at risk of being misdiagnosed with SEND, but that this was the norm. He called into question the validity of teachers' diagnoses, and challenged their assessment tools. This raises a very important issue which must affect many children and their families.

There was a further example of children who had never been on a plane, reading about a family visiting London from Pakistan. They had not realized that the family would have needed a suitcase. Born in UK, these children did not have Special Educational Needs, they were just struggling with reading and comprehension based on knowledge outside their own experience. Worryingly, the gap between them and other children has widened during the Covid 19 period. Children such as these from other backgrounds were also living in overcrowded accommodation where they had to do homework in noisy spaces shared with other family members. Though schools provided children with Chromebooks for home learning during lockdown, often parents were illiterate (in English and sometimes also in their first language, and also, in terms of digital literacy). Parents could not use technology to help their children. Many could not afford an internet connection (due to poverty) and were unable to retrieve passwords. As an aside the teaching support assistant pointed out that Somali written language was introduced in 1972, so a significant number of people lacked the facility to read and write in their first language. There are numerous examples of other communities in similar situations in the UK and elsewhere in Europe.

Different backgrounds and understandings

Some parents have migrated from countries where 'spare the rod and spoil the child' was the predominant way of disciplining children. In some rural communities this was common practice. Now upon migrating to UK if the parents do not know enough English, they wonder, but never ask the teachers *why* they are not sorting out the problem. In some families

the fact that a child is not able to read even though he/she attends an English school is an anathema. An Afghani mother who was discussing her son's school wondered why her ten year old could not read English. 'If he cannot read, he should be *made* to read. What is the teacher doing all day long? She should smack him one and sort it out'. She had never heard of dyslexia and could not believe that 'such a thing' existed. The school did not explain anything to her either, thus leaving the ten year old to manage as best as he could in these circumstances.

Education systems are based around the notion that concepts have to be internalized and expressed in the language of the host nation. Given lack of resources few compromises are available to enable students to work across linguistic boundaries. This leads to a further aspect around disempowerment. The teaching support assistant reported that with the intensive focus on the English language, many of the Somali children were forgetting their home language, fracturing home relationships with older family members and leading to inter-generational discontinuity and conflict. He was trying to address this through teaching Somali alongside English, but this is dependent on the presence and commitment of individuals such as himself. Other schools may not have such supportive teacher assistants to help children.

The preference for school to focus on education was reiterated in the focus group meeting with parents. Some of those involved suggested that it was not desirable for schools to learn more about their children's cultural worlds, because the schools would 'judge' their families and communities. A discussion ensued about the potential advantages of teachers having a holistic understanding of children's backgrounds. There was some disagreement on the matter, with one parent posing a pertinent question: how much knowledge do schools have about the family lives of their white English students? What right do schools have to know more about migrant children's families? This seeming defensiveness may spring from insecurity and a desire to protect their SEND children from what parents may see as unnecessary intrusion. Another conversation with a SENCo in a primary school, who works with Arab, Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian children, identified a common parental compartmentalization between home and school. This was mostly true except in the case of a particular well-liked teacher for whom parents made an exception. This level of parental trust is hard won. This particular SENCo was trusted by some mothers who called her 'sister'.

Disabled through stigmatisation-tales of invisibility

SEND categories are not always recognised nor understood by families. This was the case in the Nigerian and Somali parents' experiences as described above for example. In particular, there were differences in the ways they perceived mental health, with many parents believing that children with mental health difficulties are 'sick', and struggling to recognize that a child can have mental health challenges but still be cognitively able. From a traditional Somali and Indian or Bangladeshi perspective for instance, mental ill health implies significant mental illness (e.g. being 'sectioned', 'crazy' 'locked away in a mental hospital'). Such views are by no means rare. We have gathered accounts from our respective past research of children from many Asian, African and Latin American families who have remained invisible to the authorities, hidden away at home by families on account of stigma, never entering the radar of those who can teach and liaise with these groups. These parents are isolated as are their children.

Reflections

As a general point, we need to recognise the ways in which our education systems can be *disabling* for those entering from other cultures. The objective should not be to transform outsiders into *normate* (Garland-Thomson, 1997) entities, there are dangers of treating individuals as *objects* in need of integration. We would argue for a move away from a one-way flow, through which *our* knowledge is transmitted to newcomers in order that *they* will become more like *us*. A more democratic fluid view of education is required, utilising notions of discursive learning bricolage (Hooley & Levinson, 2013). Schools should not see the arrival of migrant and refugee students as a problem, but as an opportunity to enrich their own environments and to build acceptance and understanding within their communities. There need to be opportunities for education professionals and parents to talk about education and welfare of children with SEND in safe spaces where neither should feel judged, and where the child remains at the centre for all discussions. The lack of support groups for parents-only, as well as one for professionals was missing. They both need to grow in confidence, so that children who are at the heart of the encounter between parents and education professionals can receive timely help and assistance. It may be that cuts in education tend to disproportionately disadvantage children with SEND. This is not a fair outcome for the most vulnerable children in society.

It seems important too, to stop homogenising migrants and refugees (Pinson et al. 2010). The people involved in the UK come from many different places, and even those from the same countries may have very diverse beliefs and outlooks. They have the same right to individuality as those from mainstream and majority groups. Teachers need opportunities for learning from different communities they work with. Usually, it is the lack of time and resources which cause a gulf between home and school. This homogenisation is not necessarily linked to ideology. It may result from difficulties in adapting a system to incorporate new migrants. In such circumstances, incoming groups tend to be viewed as a problem. There has been a decline of multicultural education in UK. There used to be resource centres in cities where migrant communities settled, which teachers had access to until mid-1980s. These have disappeared leaving a space that has been filled with deficit-based thinking, where differences are not celebrated but are seen as deviant. Our data shows that schools are caught up in concerns which tend to be about immediate short-term problem solving, rather than taking a longer and deeper view of how policies will work out with the passage of time, and how that might impact young people and their families. Also, there appears to be insufficient dialogue between parents and different professionals, and also among different professionals themselves, who may be involved and working with the same family, for example school teachers, SENCos and CAMHS. This does not help the children.

There is a danger of viewing *difference* in terms of *deficit* or *disability*. With regard to children with SEND from migrant and refugee families, there is an urgent need to establish strategies that enable us to avoid misdiagnosis, by which labels are handed out far too quickly. There is a need here to look beyond language to cultural difference. As noted by Kramsch (1998:10), even safter leaving a community, its members are liable to retain wherever they are, *a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating and acting*. If teachers are expected to be alert to errors or mismatches that arise in new settings, there is a need for training in the field of sociolinguistics and pragmatics. How many teacher training establishments focus on discussing these pertinent issues? It is also a concern that all newly trained teachers are not routinely receiving training in SEND issues. Yet, they are expected to deal adequately and competently with *all* children in their classrooms because they are expected to follow the policies of ‘inclusion’.

Most migrant and refugee parents, whatever their background, want their children to thrive and succeed in life. They look towards schools as places of promise and hope. On this note,

there needs to be far better liaison with families and communities, more respect, more engagement, and understanding of children's cultural heritage and cultural settings (Osler & Solhaug 2018). Proper consideration needs to be given to how we recognise and respond to dissonance and conflict in terms of world views. Acceptance of linguistic diversity is important, as is a critical understanding about what it means to be 'British'. It becomes a little intrusive to talk of challenging cultural values, but we would be failing children with SEND from migrant and refugee families if we did not address family and community expectations and attitudes towards disability and disadvantage for the young people concerned. Many parents of children with SEND need support, compassion and understanding. In some families the dominant mode of thinking and being is 'community based' or 'family based', rather than a focus only on the individual. This may run counter to schools' perceptions. We need to decide how to respond when the values of incoming communities towards disability- or other identity markers, such as gender- are at odds with those of the surrounding society. While it might seem presumptuous to speak in terms of *educating* incomers, this does not mean that we should not seek to create safe spaces in which these different views can be explored for the benefit of children and future generations. We owe that to all children, whether they are future citizens in our countries or with families that are just passing through.

Ethical Consideration

All participants who took part in the research gave their informed consent. We have followed all ethical guidelines correctly and have respected the wishes of participants not to be named nor identified.

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