



**Scotland's Commissioner
for Children & Young People**

Poverty, educational attainment and achievement in Scotland: a critical review of the literature

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Executive summary

This critical review of the links between poverty, educational attainment and achievement aims to provide a clear picture of recent policy and research relating to addressing the attainment gap and ameliorating young people's achievement. There is particular emphasis throughout on developments in policy and practice at the national and local levels in Scotland, although there will be some references to salient developments in England.

The policy context relating to bridging the attainment gap is complex, and there is a substantial amount of documentation relating to addressing social and educational inequalities. In addition, the mix of devolved and reserved policy matters; the short-term and limited nature of many of the initiatives designed to address deep-rooted social problems; and the viability and sustainability of financial investments in a climate of economic constraint make it difficult to provide a succinct overview.

The authors focus on five discrete but closely interrelated social policy strands that have come to the fore in the last decade: *The Child Poverty Act 2010*; *The Early Years Framework*; *Achieving our Potential: A Framework to Tackle Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland*; *Getting it Right for Every Child*; and *Curriculum for Excellence*.

The key themes that emerge from their review of policy and research are as follows:

- Eradicating child poverty and enabling all children to achieve their potential
- Shifting emphasis towards universal prevention and early- and targeted intervention
- Ensuring that the child is at the centre
- Adopting an asset-based approach
- Reorganising service delivery around the needs of children and families, with a greater emphasis on multi-disciplinary working and inter-agency collaboration
- Sharing information (for example, by making use of the Integrated Assessment Framework) to ensure a co-ordinated and unified approach
- Ensuring that children, young people and their families play an integral role in assessment, planning and intervention
- Improving early years' services in respect of specific support for parents; play; childcare; maternal health and family support
- Extending entitlement to pre-school education
- Supporting young people into positive and sustained destinations post-16

- Reforming the tax credits and benefits system, including the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)¹
- Supporting the role of the third sector in providing opportunities and support to disadvantaged young people

The authors provide a brief overview of societal and policy changes that have had an impact on the training and employment prospects for young people who have grown up in poverty and who have poor levels of educational attainment. They then review a major initiative designed to improve the prospects for this group (*More Choices, More Chances*). There follows a review of two other major initiatives with a community focus: *Schools of Ambition* and the *New Community Schools Programme*.

Effective strategies

The relationship between poverty, attainment and achievement is well characterised. However, there is less understanding or consensus as to ‘what works’ in terms of interventions and strategies for raising attainment among children from deprived backgrounds. This is partly a result of the way in which educational research is currently conducted in Scotland. However, it is also a product of the shift from targeted to universal provision, both of which are perceived to have a key role to play in policy development. Initiatives that began with a specific focus on the most disadvantaged children living in the poorest areas of are often ‘rolled out’ to all schools, and it is the children of the more affluent members of society that gain most.

Nevertheless, there is substantial evidence from qualitative studies conducted in the UK that effective strategies to improve outcomes for children living in poverty include:

- Rigorous monitoring and use of data
- Raising pupil aspirations using engagement/aspiration programmes
- Engaging parents (particularly hard-to-reach parents) and raising parental aspirations
- Developing social and emotional competencies
- Supporting school transitions
- Providing strong and visionary leadership

¹ See Chowdry *et al* (2007) for an evaluation of the impact of EMA pilots on participation and attainment in post-compulsory education.

Issues for further reflection

The authors suggest that what works is common knowledge, and that directing resources towards those who need them most is the most effective way of achieving genuine progress. However, the short-term nature of much investment in education is a major limiting factor. It is not possible to overcome the negative effects of inter-generational poverty within the framework of a short-to medium-term investment.

The authors critique the notion of a social investment state, and argue that this has a fundamental impact upon how childhood is regarded in contemporary society. The social investment approach raises the question of whether a child is a citizen in her own right, or merely a citizen 'in the making' and a future 'effective contributor'.

The main conclusion from this review of policy and practice is that what is required is a policy sea change rather than more specific short-term interventions. While there is evidence that these can be effective in the short-term, particularly if they are targeted at the most disadvantaged individuals and communities, there is a paucity of data that indicate their long-term effectiveness.

Nevertheless, the balance of evidence suggests that there is scope for the Commissioner and his team to

- Contribute to the wider debate on the root causes of child poverty and to addressing material and cultural disadvantage in Scotland, e.g. by convening round-table discussions with key stakeholders
- Identify and document, by consulting with children and young people, how some have succeeded in overcoming material disadvantage
- Identify the factors that promote resilience among children growing up in poverty
- Utilise data from existing high-profile longitudinal studies, such as *Growing Up in Scotland* (GUS), in order to explore avenues for further research
- Commission secondary analysis of existing longitudinal survey data

1. Introduction

In the little world in which children have their existence, whosoever brings them up, there is nothing so finely perceived and so finely felt, as injustice.

Charles Dickens, Great Expectations, 1860-1861

This critical review of the literature on the links between poverty, educational attainment and achievement aims to provide a clear picture of recent policy and research relating to addressing the *attainment gap* and to promoting young people's *achievement*.² There is particular emphasis throughout on developments in policy and practice at the national and local levels in Scotland, although there will be some references to salient developments in England.

The review was commissioned in response to the outcome of a *RIGHT blether*, the national consultation undertaken by Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People in 2010.

As we shall see below, there is a substantial body of research which indicates that poverty has a devastating impact upon the lives of young people across the UK (Cassen and Kingdom, 2007; Dyson *et al*, 2010; National Equality Panel, 2010; Kerr and West, 2010; Horgan, 2007; Hirsch, 2007; Duckworth *et al*, 2009; The Sutton Trust, 2009; Kintrea *et al*, 2011). Data from a longitudinal study of children *Growing Up in Scotland* (Barnes *et al*, 2010) indicate that nearly one quarter of three-to-four-year-old Scottish children are 'persistently poor'.³ This is defined as living in 'income poverty' in at least three of the four years from 2005-06 to 2008-09. Moreover, the indications are that children living in these circumstances are disproportionately likely to face social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD)⁴, be overweight and to have multiple other problems. All of these factors will have an impact upon their future levels of attainment and achievement. It is apparent that the link between social *disadvantage* and low attainment is evident in many countries (Kerr and West, 2010). However, it is particularly marked in the UK (OECD, 2007 and 2011), where levels of inequality are greater than in many other countries. It has been argued that deep-seated inequalities in many areas of life have a negative impact upon the lives of *all* citizens (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009).

Readers may wonder why we are still discussing the impact of persistent poverty on the lives of children and young people in Charles Dickens' bicentenary year. At best, the fact that this is still a topic of discussion and debate indicates the intractable nature of the problem. At worst, it betokens a collective reluctance to address the fundamental issues, despite the raft of recent policy that has been devised to address social and educational inequality. The workhouses may have disappeared, but Dickens 'would see the same gulf between the rich, at ease

² See Appendix A for a critical glossary of terms used in the review.

³ The other measures of child poverty that are used in the Child Poverty Act 2010 are relative poverty; absolute poverty; and material deprivation.

⁴ This is the term in common use in Scotland, and the term preferred by the Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Association (SEBDA). Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) is the term preferred by the Department for Education in England.

enjoying their money and power, and the poor, relying on out-of-date food thrown out by supermarkets and food parcels from charities, and fearing for their jobs'.⁵ The policies reviewed below are a testament to great expectations. However, the extent of the literature surveyed illustrates just how far these are from being fulfilled.

2. What the research tells us

The background to the review is that data from a number of recent high-profile longitudinal cohort studies conducted across the UK provide robust evidence that the negative effects of growing up in poverty can be discerned across the life-course: from conception and *early years* through transition into adulthood and beyond (Croxford, 1999).⁶ There are also a number of relevant large-scale studies that have been conducted in Scotland in respect of youth transitions, namely: *The Scottish Young People Survey* (SYPS) and its successor *The Scottish School Leavers' Surveys* (SSLS) (Croxford, 2006; Croxford *et al*, 2006; Raffe *et al*, 2006). In addition, there are three major studies that have a bearing on the issues discussed below, given the links between poor health and attainment and achievement. These are *The West of Scotland Twenty-07 Study*, *The West of Scotland 11-16 Study* and *The West of Scotland Sixteen Plus Study*. These studies consider the socio-demographic patterning of health and health behaviour among young people in the west of Scotland. However, a more detailed consideration is beyond the scope of this review, which focuses mainly on education and social policy.

The studies referred to above serve to underline the links between health, education and social policy. In response to this, the Scottish Government has adopted a strategic, long-term approach to working with a range of partners (i.e. local government, the NHS, the third sector and other community planning partners) to produce a portfolio of policies designed to reduce inequalities of health and wealth. The partnership approach is also evident in recent collaborations between researchers in the fields of education and public health, for example in the context of the longitudinal cohort study *Growing Up in Scotland* (Barnes *et al*, 2010). This is a major initiative that focuses on the early years of children's lives and on 'the extent to which families are aware of particular services relating to them and to what extent they use these services in sectors such as health, education and childcare.'⁷

The relationships between inequalities of wealth and health have been extensively documented. Drawing upon extensive empirical evidence from various parts of the world, Friedli (2009: iii) has argued that 'mental health is ... the key to understanding the impact of inequalities on health and other

⁵ Claire Tomalin, A letter to Charles Dickens on his 200th birthday, *The Guardian*, 7th February 2012. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2012/feb/07/letter-charles-dickens-200th-birthday>

⁶ The Millennium Cohort Study; The Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children; The Longitudinal Study of Young People in England; The British Cohort Study; The Youth Cohort Study of England and Wales.

⁷ <http://www.growingupinScotland.org.uk/>

outcomes'. However, it is striking that the *Mental Health Strategy for Scotland 2011-2015* (Scottish Government, 2011a) does not address issues such as the distribution of economic and social resources, status competition and status insecurity. Rather, the focus in the consultation document is on improvement and innovation in the field of service delivery.

The evidence on the adverse effects of poverty on educational attainment and achievement is unequivocal. Data from the *1970 Birth Cohort Survey* indicate that gaps in attainment on developmental tasks are detectable as early as 22 months for children from poorer households (Feinstein, 2003). Drawing on data from the British Cohort Study, Goodman and Gregg (2010) demonstrate that these gaps widen significantly by the time children enter nursery or primary school, and that they persist throughout the life-course. As young people from disadvantaged backgrounds move into adulthood, they are more likely to leave school at 16, to become NEET (not in education, employment or training) and are less than half as likely to go on to higher education than their wealthier peers (The Sutton Trust, 2008). In 2009, 22 per cent of school leavers from the most deprived areas of Scotland moved into unemployment compared to only 6 per cent from the least deprived areas. Research conducted at the Social and Public Health Sciences Unit (SPHSU) at the University of Glasgow has demonstrated the negative impact of unemployment upon mental and physical health.⁸ However, as we saw above in relation to the *Mental Health Strategy for Scotland 2011-2015* (Scottish Government, 2011a), there appears to be a deep-seated resistance to addressing the social determinants of mental (and physical) illness. The policy evidence reviewed below, and the raft of initiatives that have focused on change at the level of the school, suggest a similar reluctance to address the underlying social causes of poor educational attainment and achievement.

3. An agenda for change

Help us to have the same chances, no matter how much money our families have.

This was the challenge presented to the Commissioner by the 74,059 children who took part in the national consultation *a RIGHT blether*. It is understandable that children and young people who are growing up in a consumer culture saturated by materialism view poverty in terms of a lack of financial resources. However, the moral panic engendered by the rapid growth in 'child-rearing consumption' and the ramifications of the 'commodity arms race' for parents with low incomes, (Pugh, 2009: xi and xii) should not distract us from the fact that what the respondents to *a RIGHT blether were asking for were not (merely) greater access to goods and services, but greater equality*.

The term poverty is derived from the Latin *pauper* and refers to a lack of material possessions, particularly money. As we saw above, the term 'income poverty' is sometimes used in the research literature (Barnes *et al*, 2010). It is recognised

⁸ For further details see <http://www.sphsu.mrc.ac.uk/>

that parents who are income-poor may be able to shield their children from the most negative impact of poverty, but this can adversely affect other family members, and thus perpetuate the cycle of disadvantage. Pugh (2009:5) suggests that 'perhaps rising consumption, by its sheer domination of childhood today, establishes a new cultural environment, with new expectations about what parents should provide, what children should have, and what having, or not having, signifies.' Moreover, these expectations are inflected by social class, and are played out in the twin arenas of *symbolic deprivation* and *symbolic indulgence* (Pugh, 2009: 10).

In educational discourse, the general indicator for poverty is whether or not a child is eligible for free school meals (FSM). This may be a relatively crude measure (with differences between eligibility and take-up), but it is the main source of data held by schools on the income of a child's home background.

However, the policy and research reviewed below suggests the use of the broader term *deprivation*. This is a multi-dimensional concept that encompasses not only poverty in terms of lack of material or financial resources, but also the intergenerational effects of poverty (Blanden and Gibbons, 2006) and poor educational attainment; poor housing; poor physical and mental health; unemployment; lack of aspiration; and manifold forms of emotional and spiritual deprivation.

The statistical evidence suggests that in Scotland, as in the rest of the UK, children's educational attainment is still strongly linked to parental occupation, income and qualifications (Iannelli and Paterson, 2007). Moreover, as Perry and Francis (2010) point out, 'social class intersects with gender and ethnicity in complex ways to reproduce educational inequality' (p.18). However, this is not an issue to which we can do justice within the scope of this review.

Poverty is a term that appears to have fallen out of favour in social and education policy circles and in some of the academic literature that address the 'social class gap for educational achievement' (Perry and Francis, 2010). As we shall see below, the emphasis in the raft of recent policy (and indeed in some of the academic literature) has been on *fixing the child, fixing the family, fixing the school* and *fixing the community* rather than on addressing more fundamental issues relating to *social justice*: namely, systemic issues relating to fairness and equality, especially in terms of state distribution of resources, opportunities, and benefits. This is in spite of the revision of the (then) Scottish Executive's Social Inclusion Strategy to embrace the concept of social justice.

It seems likely that sustained criticism of what has become known as the *deficit model* has led to the introduction of what is referred to in policy circles as an *asset-based approach*. This approach values the capacity, skills, knowledge, connections and potential in communities and individuals, and has become established practice in research, policy and practice in the area of health improvement (Glasgow Centre for Population Health, 2011). However, it is not clear that taking a glass-half-full instead of a glass-half-empty approach marks a radical attempt to address the issue, especially if it is used as a substitute for substantial economic investment in poor communities or political change at the

macro level. As Bauman (2007: 14) has observed, 'although the risks and contradictions of life go on being as socially produced as ever, the duty and necessity of coping with them has been delegated to our individual selves' (cited in Friedli, 2009).

The fact remains that inequalities in educational outcomes for young people who experience persistent poverty remain an intractable problem, and one that is inextricably linked to an inequitable distribution of resources. Moreover, the evidence suggests that family background and income poverty in individual households are only part of the problem.

Over the last two decades there has been a substantial body of research conducted at the Centre for Educational Sociology (CES) at the University of Edinburgh on social inequalities, including the complex interactions between family background and the impact of neighbourhood effects on educational attainment and achievement (Raffe *et al*, 2006; Croxford *et al*, 2006; Croxford, 2006; Iannelli and Paterson, 2005; Raffe, 2003). (See also The Sutton Trust, 2009). Drawing on data from the *1932 Scottish Mental Survey*, Paterson *et al* (2011) explored the issue of social mobility and the complex inter-relationship between social class, gender and secondary education in Scotland in the 1950s. Research of this quality is dependent upon the existence of robust longitudinal data sets. As Lawn and Deary (2008) have pointed out, the progressive undermining of the educational research infrastructure in Scotland over the last few decades may impact significantly on the feasibility of current and future work in this area.

In sum, the children and young people who participated in *A RIGHT Bletter* appear to have succeeded in putting social justice firmly back in the frame. This shifts the emphasis from common *discursive strategies* and the empty rhetoric of 'youth in crisis', 'raising aspirations' or mending 'broken communities'. More importantly, it may clear the way for a more honest assessment of the extent to which schools can 'narrow the gap' in terms of educational attainment and achievement.

4. The policy response in Scotland

The policy context relating to bridging the attainment gap is complex, and providing a succinct account of the main trends is a formidable task. Part of the explanation for this is the change in the complexion of government in post-devolution Scotland and in the rest of the UK during the same period. In addition, there is the mix of devolved and reserved policy matters; the short-term and limited nature of many of the initiatives designed to address deep-rooted social problems; the viability and sustainability of financial investments in a climate of economic constraint; and, last but not least, the sheer volume of policy in this area. Indeed, it is the very complexity of the policy environment and the degree of articulation between initiatives at national and local levels that take place within different timeframes that pose the greatest challenge to researchers, policy-makers and others who seek to identify 'what works' in terms of addressing the attainment gap. Although the focus in this review is on policy and practice in Scotland, it is worth observing that UK-wide policies also impact upon

this area. However, a consideration of the latter falls beyond the scope of this brief review.

Stronach and Morris (1994) have described the combination of 'shortening cycles of reform, multiple innovation, frequent policy switches, shifting meanings within reforms and untested success claims' as 'policy hysteria'. Moreover, they suggest that 'much of what has passed for evaluation has been "conformative" in nature rather than independent and critical.' It is certainly the case that changes in the way statistical data are gathered make it difficult to monitor the effect of particular initiatives over time. (See Pirrie *et al*, 2006 for the impact of such changes in respect of the mainstreaming of pupils with additional support needs.) We should also point out that a consideration of the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the various initiatives reviewed, even if it were possible, falls well beyond the scope of this brief report.

We shall focus on five discrete but closely interrelated social policy strands that comprise legislation, strategies and frameworks. These are set out briefly below. However, there are other features of the policy landscape in Scotland that have a bearing on the issues addressed here. For example, the *Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Acts* 2004 (Scottish Executive, 2004a) and 2009 (Scottish Government, 2009a), which replaced the category of special educational need based on a deficit in the individual child with the term additional support needs. Riddell (2007) has suggested that this change in terminology gives prominence to broader social problems that require inter-agency responses as the main cause of learning and behavioural difficulties, and poor attainment. As we shall see below, the change in nomenclature from 'special' to 'additional' exposes some of the tensions between targeted and universal approaches to service delivery.

The Early Years Framework (EYF) (Scottish Government, 2008a) The focus here is also on prevention and early intervention. There is an explicit commitment to 'breaking cycles of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes in and through early years' and the development of universal services and community engagement. Local government and the NHS are considered to be key partners in providing high-quality and innovative services for children, and the third sector is also accorded a key role. All local authorities in Scotland have developed their services through *Single Outcome Agreements* with the Scottish Government. *The Literacy Action Plan* is a specific initiative to drive up standards of literacy. *The Early Years Early Action Fund* made funding available to national voluntary sector organisations as a means of supporting the ambitions of *The Early Years Framework*. Funding was provided to the third sector to collaborate with Inspiring Scotland⁹ to improve early years services in the areas of parenting, play, childcare, child and maternal health.

Achieving our Potential. A Framework to Tackle Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2008b) sets out a joint approach founded upon partnership between national and local government. The

⁹ <http://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/>

framework specifies a set of priorities for action and investment in order to reduce income inequalities; introduce longer-term measures to tackle poverty; support those experiencing poverty or at risk of falling into poverty; and make the tax credits and benefits system work better for Scotland.

The Fairer Scotland Fund, which is worth £435 million over three years, was created for **community planning partnerships** to target investment at the root causes of poverty in Scotland. Allied to this is the investment of £87 million in a network of six Scottish Urban Regeneration Companies from 2008-2011.

The Child Poverty Act 2010 sets out UK-wide targets relating to the eradication of child poverty (HM Government 2010). It comprises a 'Scottish strategy' in order to ensure that poverty-reduction targets are met and that **socioeconomic status** does not automatically confer *disadvantage*. The key planks of a Scottish strategy are a **child-centred** and asset-based approach, and a focus on **early intervention** and prevention (Scottish Government, 2011b). Moreover, it draws upon the following approaches: *Achieving our Potential: a framework to tackle poverty*; *Equally Well: report to the Ministerial Taskforce on health inequalities*; *Income Inequality in Scotland*; *the Economic Recovery Plan*; and *The Early Years Framework*.

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) (Scottish Executive, 2006a; Scottish Government 2010a) was developed to reflect the principles of The Children's Charter and reflects the principles of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Its aims are, inter alia, to promote children's health and **wellbeing**; to keep them safe; to put the child at the centre (by involving children and families in assessment, planning and intervention); to take a **whole-child** approach; to facilitate **partnership** working (by, for example, identifying a *lead professional* to coordinate and monitor multi-agency activity); to promote **resilience** (see Challen *et al*, 2009 for an evaluation of the UK Resilience Programme; see Friedli, 2009 for an in-depth consideration of the concept of resilience). The GIRFEC framework is informed by the principles of early intervention, and aims to provide support for parents; and to develop the workforce across health, education, and social care.

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)(Scottish Executive, 2004b) aims to have a transformative influence on education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum for children and young people aged between 3 and 18. It has been hailed as 'the biggest educational reform for a generation' and is aimed at developing what are referred to as the 'four capacities': *successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors*. The way in which this term is used is perhaps rather misleading, as it bears little resemblance to more accepted definitions of the term **capacity**, and the related concepts of **aptitude, capability** and **potential**. In short, *Curriculum for Excellence* aims to produce fully-fledged individuals in the service of the **knowledge economy**. The emphasis on individual potential is also evident in another initiative founded upon a partnership approach, namely, *Valuing Young People: principles and connections to support young people achieve their potential* (Scottish Government, 2009b). This reiterates the collective priority that *all* young people achieve the four capacities, tempered with the recognition that

some will require early intervention and sustained support through key life transitions in order to reach that goal. The principles draw upon those established in GIRFEC, and there is explicit acknowledgement of the need to 'recognise and promote young people's positive contribution to their communities' and to 'involve young people at an early stage, along with the voluntary sector and other relevant partners, in developing services and opportunities'.

There are a number of initiatives based on partnership models and designed to support the principles that underpin *Curriculum for Excellence*. These are *Valuing Young People* (Scottish Government, 2009b) and *16+ Learning Choices* (16+ LC) the Scottish Government's model to support young people into positive and sustainable destinations post-16. See also *Learning Choices Policy and Practice Framework* (Scottish Government, 2010b). 16+ LC has been a *universal* offer to all young people who reach their school leaving date from December 2010. The aim is to ensure an offer of an appropriate post-16 learning opportunity for every young person who wants it before they make the transition within the senior phase of CfE (broadly age 15-18). Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs) were launched in 2004 to provide financial support to young people from low-income families in order that they might continue to be engaged in learning post-16.

5. Key themes

The key themes running through the major initiatives designed to address inequalities in respect of educational attainment and achievement are as follows:

- Eradicating child poverty and enabling all children to achieve their potential
- Shifting emphasis towards universal prevention and early- and targeted intervention
- Ensuring that the child is at the centre
- Adopting an asset-based approach
- Reorganising service delivery around the needs of children and families, with a greater emphasis on multi-disciplinary working and inter-agency collaboration
- Sharing information (for example, by making use of the *Integrated Assessment Framework*) to ensure a co-ordinated and unified approach
- Ensuring that children, young people and their families play an integral role in assessment, planning and intervention
- Improving early years services in respect of specific support for parents; play; childcare; maternal health and family support
- Extending entitlement to pre-school education
- Supporting young people into positive and sustained destinations post-16
- Reforming the tax credits and benefits system, including the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)
- Supporting the role of the third sector in providing opportunities and support to disadvantaged young people

Parekh *et al* (2010) identify a number of gaps and weaknesses in the Scottish Government's anti-poverty programme, while acknowledging that some of these are to do with matters over which the government has little direct control. For the purposes of this review, the most significant weakness identified is 'the [lack of] attention paid by education and training institutions to outcomes for those from poor and disadvantaged backgrounds, and for those with low levels of attainment'. The key variables in respect of this are:

- Educational attainment at age 11
- Pupils aged 16 not getting 5 awards at SCQF level 3 in S4
- Grades for the lowest attaining pupils
- Lack of access to job-related training among those with few/no qualifications

We shall now consider a major initiative that targeted young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), before reviewing other school and community-focused initiatives.

6. Addressing NEET

6.1 Societal and policy changes

The early 1980s, the period during which the youth cohort studies referred to above were initiated, were characterised by a marked fall in the demand for minimum-age school leavers with low levels of qualifications (Croxford *et al*, 2006). The policy response was to introduce a series of youth training schemes in order to address the problem of youth unemployment and recognise a wider range of achievement. The Youth Training Scheme (YTS) was introduced in 1983, and was the first of a series of national programmes designed to provide 16-18 year olds with integrated programmes of work experience and training. The Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) was introduced in the late 1980s. New types of vocational qualifications were also introduced at this time, marking the beginning of sustained efforts to ensure that vocational education and training was accorded parity of esteem. However, these efforts have met with limited success.

In the following decades, policy-makers and employers emphasised the need for young people to be equipped with the knowledge and skills that would enable them to participate in the knowledge-based economy. During this time there has been a rapid expansion in the higher education sector. In 2008-09, the Age Participation Index (API), that is the number of 17-year-olds predicted to enter higher education before their 21st birthday, stood at 45 per cent, compared to 19 per cent in 1983-1984 (Mosca and Wright, 2010, p. 3). There have also been significant changes in the labour market, namely an increase in the proportion of white-collar jobs and a reduction in the number of manual jobs in the service sector and in the manufacturing industries. As we saw above, this has had a disproportionate impact upon young people from less advantaged backgrounds, with school leavers from the most deprived areas of Scotland much more likely to move into unemployment than those from the least deprived areas. In the

higher education sector, the recent introduction of tuition fees in England has further skewed the distribution of those entering tertiary education in favour of the more affluent. The economic downturn has led to substantial rises in graduate unemployment or under-employment. This has in turn further depressed the already limited opportunities for school-leavers with low levels of qualifications. A recent study by Mosca and Wright (2010) indicates that around 20 per cent of graduates were still employed in non-graduate jobs three and a half years after completing their degrees.

We now review specific initiatives and related strategies designed to address the challenges faced by young people from poor backgrounds in a challenging economic climate.

6.2 Strategies to reduce NEET

More Choices, More Chances: a strategy to reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training in Scotland (MCMC) (Scottish Executive, 2006b) sets out an action plan to achieve this. It was published alongside *Workforce Plus*, the Government's Employability Framework for Scotland.

The overarching aims of the MCMC strategy are to

- Stem the flow into NEET – prevention rather than cure
- Target resources into the 'NEET hotspots' (Glasgow, West Dunbartonshire, North Ayrshire, East Ayrshire, Clackmannanshire, Inverclyde, and Dundee)
- Focus on sub-groups particularly at risk of being NEET: care-leavers, young offenders, young parents, young people with low levels of attainment, persistent truants, young people with disabilities, young people misusing drugs and/or alcohol
- Make NEET reduction one of the key indicators for measuring the success of the education system pre and post-16

Apart from the money spent on schools and further education colleges, there has also been significant investment in Careers Scotland¹⁰, the enterprise networks and the Community Regeneration Fund¹¹, which aims to get people of all ages back into work. The aim of *Determined to Succeed*, the strategy for enterprise in education, was also to deliver the benefits to all young people, even those who were most disengaged from the education system.

The document *More Choices, More Chances* is an example of a discursive strategy *par excellence*. It does not alter the fact that young people living in poverty and attending a school in an area of multiple deprivation, with

¹⁰ In 2008 Skills Development Scotland replaced its predecessor organizations Careers Scotland, Learndirect Scotland and the Enterprise Agency. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10173613>

¹¹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2004/12/09095440/Q/ViewArchived/On>

parents who have a similarly negative experience of education and low levels of qualification, have few choices and few chances (Macleod *et al*, 2012). Indeed the rhetoric of choice and opportunity enshrines the market values that might be considered to be the root of the problem.

The main planks of the post-16 strategies as under the rubric MCMC are:

- Dovetailing of services to help those aged 16+ who are already NEET to engage with education, employment and training or that they are supported in order that they do not fall (back) into NEET
- *More Choices, More Chances*, with guaranteed options to make a clear commitment to young people about the routes to education, employment or training that are on offer
- *Supported transitions and sustained opportunities*: expanding choice and building the quality of education and learning options for young people in order to improve their long-term employability by focusing on sustainable outcomes and progression
- *Engaging employers*: working with public and private sector employers to improve employment and work-based training opportunities for young people

7. Focusing on schools and communities

7.1 Schools of Ambition

Schools of Ambition (SEED, 2004c; Scottish Government 2009c; 2010c) marked a major investment in improving the life chances of all young people (Menter *et al*, 2010). The key planks of this pre-16 initiative can be summarised as follows:

- *Transforming the learning environment* by bringing about a step change in ambition and achievement to transform educational outcomes for all children. This was supported by a new excellence standard for school and local authority inspections and wide-ranging action to improve the quality of school leadership
- *Recognising wider achievement* by giving credit to different skills, abilities and achievements
- *Providing support for learners* by introducing a new framework to ensure that all children who require additional support receive it, from the school and children's services
- *Developing employability* in order better to prepare all young people for the world of work and to improve their chances of entry to employment
- *Focusing on outcomes* by making it clear that schools and local authorities are responsible for considering outcomes for all children, and that there is appropriate monitoring as part of performance management arrangements for schools and local authorities
- *Promoting school development by increasing the autonomy of teachers and school leaders*

The centrality of the partnership approach and the promotion of third-sector involvement outlined above are also evident in an earlier initiative. *Working and learning together to build stronger communities* (Scottish Executive, 2004d) aimed to embed the principles of community learning and development more firmly within key priorities such as the improvement of public services; community regeneration, social inclusion, *life-long learning*, youth work strategy (see also Scottish Executive, 2007) and active citizenship. Three national priorities were developed in relation to community learning and development:

- *Achievement through learning for adults* through community-based lifelong learning opportunities incorporating the key skills of literacy, numeracy, communication, working with others, problem-solving and information communications technology (ICT)
- *Achievement through learning for young people* to facilitate their personal, social and educational development and to enable them to gain a voice, influence and a place in society
- *Achievement through building community capacity* to enable people to develop the confidence, understanding and skills required to influence decision-making and service delivery.

7.2 New Community Schools

The New Community Schools Programme (NCS) (Scottish Executive, 1998) (Sammons *et al*, 2003) was a community-based initiative to *modernise schools, raise attainment, improve health and promote social inclusion*. It was one element of the Scottish Executive's Social Inclusion Strategy, and was based on the principles of prevention, co-ordination and innovation. The Social Inclusion Strategy included a wide range of approaches, a number of which were evaluated under the rubric of discrete initiatives, such as family centres; pre-school and early intervention programmes; study support (an initiative that predated the introduction of NCS, see Lowden *et al*, 2005; alternatives of exclusion; youth sport; and NCS (Sammons *et al*, 2003; McCulloch *et al*, 2004). Funding was also made available to address the issue of exclusion through the *Alternatives to Exclusion Grant Scheme* introduced in 1997 (£3 million over the period 1997-2000) (HMIE, 2000). In addition, the *Early Intervention Programme* (EIP), which was launched in 1997, marked a significant investment (£60 million over five years) in improving standards of literacy and numeracy in the early years of primary school (Fraser *et al*, 2001).

The NCS Programme focused on linking education, health and social services, and had five key goals:

- Modernisation of schools and promotion of social exclusion
- Increasing the attainment of young people facing 'the destructive cycle of underachievement' (by focusing on behaviour and welfare)
- Early intervention to address barriers to learning and maximise potential (by offering out-of-hours provision and support programmes for pupils with particular difficulties)

- Meeting the needs of every child by ensuring that services are channelled through NCS
- Raising parents' expectations and increasing their participation in their children's education

The 37 NCS projects in the Phase 1 pilot programme (1999-2002) involved over 170 schools or institutions in 30 education authorities, with a focus on areas of greatest disadvantage. The SEED commissioned a national evaluation of the Phase 1 pilot in April 2000. More projects were introduced in Phases 2 and 3 in 2000 and 2001 respectively, and the programme was 'rolled out' across all schools in Scotland in 2002 (Sammons *et al*, 2003).

Across the case studies, young people reported positive effects of specific NCS activities on their lives and attitudes. Professionals and families interviewed also endorsed the beneficial effect of NCS programmes for the pupils involved, particularly in terms of tackling disaffection. Breakfast clubs were perceived as a particular success in terms of increasing engagement and promoting health at the primary school level. The Year 3 survey showed that half of all the Phase 1 primary schools and over a third of the secondary schools that responded had introduced a breakfast club, and of these almost all attributed this to their involvement in NCS. In respect of attainment, analysis of school-based SEED 5-14 attainment data from 1998-99 to 2000-01 showed that schools in the pilot had the lowest percentage of children attaining the minimum expected level (or above) in the 5-14 assessment programme at the start of the initiative for both primary and secondary sectors. Schools in the NCS pilot showed fairly steady improvement over a three-year period. By 2000-01 (Year 2 of the Pilot) more pupils reached the minimum expected attainment level for their age (in both primary and secondary). However, these trends were also found in schools across Scotland for all phases of NCS involvement (Sammons *et al*, 2003).

These findings mirror those from the national evaluation of the Early Intervention Programme (EIP), in which it was observed that 'longer-term success is not assured from promising beginnings' and that 'pupils at risk ... need focused support well beyond the early primary stages' (Fraser *et al*, 2001, p. 102).

8. Why 'what works?' doesn't always work

The relationship between poverty, attainment and achievement is well characterised. However, there is less understanding or consensus as to 'what works' in terms of interventions and strategies for raising attainment among children from deprived backgrounds. The reasons for this are complex, and there is only scope to address two of them here. The disappointing contribution of educational research to generating an understanding of 'what works' is partly an artefact of the 'policy hysteria' referred to above. However, it is also a function of the climate in which educational research is currently conducted, one in which market forces predominate and competition has succeeded co-operation on a large scale. As Lawn and Deary (2008) point out, 'funding is limited and studies are often quick and micro in scope' (p.1). In contrast, the model of research that predominated in Scotland from the 1920s to the 1940s was 'based on partnership

between teachers, professors and directors of education: it was “smart” about its organisation, making the most out of limited resources’ (p.1). The way in which researchers were able to draw upon the rich data from the *1932 Scottish Mental Survey* in order to enhance our understanding of social mobility in a different era is one example of what can be achieved under different conditions.

The second point is rather more fundamental. The persistent emphasis on ‘what works’, and the alacrity with which educational researchers have embraced this agenda (see Sharples *et al*, 2011) has led to a narrow focus on what can be measured. This approach cannot take account of fundamental questions of meaning and value, including the meaning of childhood (Williams, 2004). Moreover, there is the tendency to focus on short-term gains, partly because of the dearth of funding to monitor developments over time.

Kerr and West (2011) identify a number of different approaches to addressing the attainment gap:

- General or universal interventions targeting all schools
- Interventions that target schools in disadvantaged areas
- Interventions that target specific groups (such as those with additional support needs, young parents, care leavers, NEET) (see Demie and Lewis, 2010; Evans, 2010; Strand, 2008 for examples of evaluations of interventions targeted at specific groups)
- Structural interventions that target how school systems are organised (i.e. a *school effectiveness* approach)
- ‘Beyond school’ interventions that target neighbourhood and family background factors

It is clear from the above that what appear to be distinct categories sometimes merge. For example, both the EIP and the NCS Programme began as interventions that targeted schools in disadvantaged areas before a ‘roll-out’ towards universal provision. The findings from the national evaluation of the EIP showed that in respect of attainment gains in literacy, the effectiveness of the programme was seen to be much greater for the highest and middle achievers than it was for the most disadvantaged and the slowest learners (Fraser *et al*, 2001). Although the EIP was deemed a success in many respects, and it certainly raised awareness of the effectiveness of adopting a broad range of strategies to develop literacy, it did not achieve its primary aim of addressing the attainment gap.

This flagship programme had another fundamental weakness, namely that it is not possible to extrapolate on the basis of gains achieved between P1 and P3. It is by no means clear that the gains in attainment that were evident at the end of P3 would be sustained until the end of primary school or beyond. This underlines the importance of ‘harnessing the energies and interests of a wide range of educational researchers’ and ‘linking together people in expert and skilled large scale projects’ (Lawn and Deary, 2008, p. 4). These need to be conducted over the long term, and not just within a particular parliamentary cycle.

9. What works?

There is, however, a degree of consensus based on cumulative evidence presented in Goodman and Gregg (2010) that there are three main ways in which specific interventions can reduce educational inequalities, at least in the short term:

- Improve the home learning environment in poorer families
- Help parents from poorer families to believe that their own actions and efforts can lead to higher educational outcomes
- Raise families' aspirations and desire for education, from primary school onwards.

Many of these are subsumed under the *full-service* model of educational provision described above; and supporting parents and increasing their involvement in their children's education was one plank of the EIP.

One of the main lessons from the EIP is that the greatest gains were made in local authorities that chose to target the available resources towards particular schools, and even towards particular children in these schools. The emphasis in social and education policy on enabling *all* children to achieve their potential detracts attention from the fact that there are deep-rooted structural reasons why some children are more equal than others and the attainment gap persists.

Sharpley *et al* (2011) conclude from the findings of a synthesis of qualitative research conducted mainly in the UK that the following are 'promising' strategies to improve outcomes for children in poverty:

- Rigorous monitoring and use of data
- Raising pupil aspirations using engagement/aspiration programmes
- Engaging parents (particularly hard-to-reach parents) and raising parental aspirations
- Developing social and emotional competencies
- Supporting school transitions
- Providing strong and visionary leadership

They also conclude that the quality of teaching has a great impact on educational achievement, and that particular teaching approaches (e.g. co-operative learning, phonics instruction, meta-cognitive strategies) 'deliver the greatest improvements in learning outcomes for children from deprived backgrounds' (p. 37).

We know what *can* work, and that directing resources towards those who need them most is the most effective way of achieving genuine progress. However, the short-term nature of much investment in education is a major limiting factor. It is not possible to overcome the negative effects of inter-generational poverty within the framework of a short- to medium-term investment.

10. Concluding remarks

The inclusion of *Curriculum for Excellence* amongst the key government policies designed to address inequalities in education may strike some readers as unusual. After all, CfE does not directly address the attainment gap, nor does it explicitly deal with poverty. We have accorded it a degree of prominence in this review for two reasons. Firstly, because it demonstrates some of the fault-lines that run through education discourse in a policy environment saturated with notions of economic competitiveness, innovation and *marketisation*. The negative effects of the latter may be more marked in the English educational system, but they are also apparent in Scotland. All of these factors have a disproportionately negative impact on the most disadvantaged members of society, those who are considered least likely to be able to contribute to the knowledge economy.

It appears that current policy is framed within a *social investment state* (Dobrowolsky, 2002), the key characteristic of which is that education is mainly regarded in terms of a route out of exclusion and into employability. This raises fundamental questions about what it means to be a child in such a society, and indeed to the conceptualisation of childhood. For evidence of the extent to which education policy in Scotland is in the thrall of the knowledge economy one need only consider the many references the vision of a 'globally competitive economy', 'determination to reach the highest standards of achievement' and 'openness to new thinking and ideas' that pervade the documentation relating to *Curriculum for Excellence*.

Secondly, these ambitions in the area of increasing economic competitiveness raise the question of the extent to which a child, irrespective of social origin, is a citizen in her own right, or merely a citizen 'in the making' and a future 'effective contributor'. This is a theme that has provoked discussion and debate amongst those concerned with education for *citizenship* for more than a decade (see Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2000).

The third and final point flows from the first two, and concerns the limitations of a rights-based approach to addressing inequalities. This will be of particular interest to Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People, whose primary responsibility is 'to promote and safeguard the rights of children and young people'. The question arises as to what extent *rights*-talk that is so pervasive in policy and legislation can provide us 'with the conceptual resources to keep fully amongst us ... people who are severely and ineradicably afflicted' (Gaita, 2000, p. 19). These include individuals with severe and complex needs that are compounded by the effects of inter-generational deprivation.

The main conclusion from this review is that what is required is a policy sea change rather than more specific interventions. While there is evidence that these can be effective in the short-term, particularly if they are targeted at the most disadvantaged individuals and communities, there is a paucity of data that indicate their long-term effectiveness. In sum, it appears that 'it is the distribution of economic and social resources that explains health and other outcomes in the vast majority of studies' (Friedli, 2009: iii).

11. What next?

This is a review of moving parts. Some of these require a greater degree of maintenance or lubrication than has been possible here. First of all, there are *parents* and *children* living in poverty. Second, there is *consumption* and *inequality*. These two elements have a mediating effect on children's *desire* and upon their *care*, with reference to family life and the broader social sphere. Third, there is the *private* and the *social*. These elements are marked by the enduring belief in policy circles that, despite all the evidence that 'the risks and contradictions of life [are] socially produced', it is individuals who are asked to 'take responsibility' for their health, education and wellbeing. The evidence reviewed suggests that the continuous re-alignment of services in health, education and social care is premised upon ill-defined notions of 'person-centredness' and 'values-based approaches' to universal provision in these areas. Fourth, there is *targeted* and *universal* provision, which as we saw above co-exist in a state of perpetual tension. Finally, there is *economic competitiveness* and *social cohesion*, moving parts that are paralleled by relentless mechanisms for achieving educational excellence *and* addressing the 'long-tail of underachievement' in Scottish education. (If there were ever a case for the tail wagging the dog, then this might be it.)

We have attempted to provide a vantage point from which to observe the movement of these parts. We have also attempted to demonstrate that they have had a profound impact on the structure of our personal and social worlds.

We suggest that the Commissioner and his team continue to:

- Contribute to the wider debate on the root causes of child poverty and to addressing material and cultural disadvantage in Scotland, e.g. by convening round-table discussions with key stakeholders
- Identify and document, by consulting with children and young people, how some have succeeded in overcoming material disadvantage
- Identify the factors that promote resilience amongst children growing up in poverty
- Utilise data from existing high-profile longitudinal studies, such as *Growing Up in Scotland* (GUS), in order to explore avenues for further research
- Commission secondary analysis of existing longitudinal survey data where necessary

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Appendix A: critical glossary of terms¹²

*Achievement
Success, particularly where it represents a great personal accomplishment. Often wrongly conflated with <i>attainment</i> , which refers to <i>level</i> of achievement and often also unhelpfully narrowed to success in terms of <i>academic</i> assessment. Currently, many educational systems are trying to broaden out the sense of achievement to take account of other areas of success in learners' lives.
*Aptitude
An individual's <i>potential</i> to acquire skills or knowledge. Although a prediction, it must be based on current perceived ability and so is prone to numerous conceptual problems, and to bias and inaccuracy.
**Asset-based approach
The asset approach, it is said, values the capacity, skills, knowledge, connections and potential in a community. It doesn't only see the problems that need fixing and the gaps that need filling. In an asset approach, therefore, the glass is half full rather than half empty.
*Capability
Like <i>aptitude</i> , this refers to an individual's perceived <i>potential</i> in some area of academic, social, or physical activity. Because its application is necessarily based on a judgement, there are numerous dangers of <i>bias</i> and error.
*Capacity
The power to learn, to improve, or to achieve in some relevant area or sphere of human activity. Again, an individual's perceived capacity is based on a judgement and so susceptible to all related problems.
* Child-centred
In education, giving priority to the interests and needs of children, so distinguished from content-led or teacher-centred approaches
*Citizenship
The rights, responsibilities, functions, privileges and duties of being a member of society. Concern in recent years at a perceived decline in its proper exercise has led to political expectations of schools to 'teach' citizenship and promote related characteristics and behaviours in their pupils. It is subject to a number of contested debates such as the extent to which a child is a citizen or merely a citizen 'in the making', about the balance between citizenship rights and citizenship responsibilities, and about teaching citizenship as a subject discipline or as a practice.
Community planning partnership
Brings together key public, private, community and voluntary representatives together in order to deliver better, joined-up public services.

¹² All terms marked with an asterisk are from A Brief Critical Dictionary of Education by Donald Gillies. <http://dictionaryofeducation.co.uk/default.aspx>

** Bob Hudson, An asset-based approach to community building.

*** Pugh, A. (2009) *Longing and Belonging: parents, children, and consumer culture*. London: University of California Press.

**** <http://www.timebanking.org/about/what-is-a-timebank/>

*Deficit model
In education, any conceptualisation of a problem which describes it in terms of a deficiency or failure on behalf of a person or group as opposed to an institutional or systemic failure. For example, a deficit model would view disabled access as resting in the inability of the target group to enter a building as opposed to the failure of the building or those managing it to provide suitable entry for all. It is most common in discourse about pupil needs, learning, and behaviour.
*Deprivation
The damaging lack of material benefits, typically characterised by poverty, poor housing, bad health, and low wages or unemployment. The term is also used more broadly for any lack, such as emotional deprivation (see <i>disadvantage; socioeconomic</i>).
*Disadvantage
In educational terms this normally means an unfavourable circumstance that limits educational opportunities or reduces the chances of progress.
Discursive strategy
The intentional or unintentional use of language to highlight or legitimate a particular point of view.
*Early intervention
A term which also occurs in medical discourse, referring to a process of assessment and support afforded to (disadvantaged) young children to aid cognitive, social, and emotional development so that their progression is more in line with their peers.
*Early years
A period of childhood, which depending on the context and understanding used, may range from pre-birth to around the age of 8.
*Equality
The state of being the same in some sense, such as in quantity, quality, value, or status. In education, it often refers to the sense of fair treatment, or that each learner receives an equal amount or quality of teaching or other input. The school system, however much it endeavours to provide equality, is surrounded by inequality as learners bring unequal experiences and abilities to school, and have unequal contextual experiences in social, emotional, cultural, and economic terms during their school years, thus contributing to unequal educational outcomes.
*Full-service model
A system of <i>community school</i> provision where a number of agencies are sited on the one campus and endeavour to work together in an integrated way – such as a secondary school with various health, social work, and employment bodies.
Integrated Assessment Framework (IAF)
The IAF is a standardised model of assessment, planning and recording in which appropriate services combine together to form an integrated team, as this is considered the most effective way of meeting the needs of individual children.

*Knowledge economy
A term, related to the concept of the information age, referring to the idea of ‘workers’ producing or articulating ideas, knowledge, and information, in contrast with an industrial economy where workers work manually to produce physical objects.
*Lifelong learning
The process by which people beyond the age of compulsory education continue to engage in learning in a variety of settings and formats.
*Marketisation
The belief in, or process of, making public sector agencies and provision function like a free market. In education, for example, this may involve creating ‘consumer’ choice, through having schools compete (for pupils) against each other like private companies, the theory being that this improves <i>efficiency</i> and <i>accountability</i> .
*Partnership
A popular concept in modern governance, stressing co-operation between interested parties and agencies involved in educational provision.
*Potential
Ability which has not yet emerged or been demonstrated, but is assumed to be within an individual’s capability. It is a term used widely in education but is extremely difficult to ascertain or identify in any demonstrable way as it is inevitably based on perceptions that may be misplaced or erroneous.
*Resilience
The ability to recover readily from, or adjust easily to, adversity, misfortune, or setbacks of any kind; buoyancy. It is viewed as being a key factor in success in education, particularly for children living in poverty. The importance given to it has been criticised, however, on the grounds that it seems to place the onus on the individual to adapt or cope, rather than focusing on action to address the underlying disadvantage.
*Rights
Benefits or other advantages to which an individual or group is entitled. There is a distinction between natural or human rights, to which all people are entitled, and civil rights to which people are entitled as citizens (of a particular state).
*School effectiveness
The term for an area of educational research that aims to study and identify aspects of schooling that make a difference, looking at such issues as <i>ethos</i> , management style, <i>leadership</i> , and school policies. One result has been the itemising of the characteristics of an effective school and this has itself been the subject of some dispute by those who feel issues to do with a school’s <i>socioeconomic</i> context, the nature of its intake, and <i>school composition</i> are given insufficient attention in such an approach.
Social investment state
The key characteristic of the social investment state is the investment in the child as worker-citizen-of-the-future in the interests of global competitiveness. This is achieved through anti-poverty and education initiatives in which the notion of partnership of the state with parents, business and the voluntary sector is central.

<i>*Socioeconomic status</i>
Position of an individual or group in terms of their social and economic standing. It is a key factor in educational outcomes: the higher the status the better chance of good outcomes; the lower the status the greater chance of poorer outcomes.
<i>*Social justice</i>
Fairness or equality especially in terms of state distribution of resources, opportunities, and benefits.
<i>***Symbolic deprivation</i>
How affluent parents resolve the contradictions between their normative beliefs (moral restraint, 'not keeping up with the Joneses') and their practices, between their ideals and their material plenty
<i>***Symbolic indulgence</i>
How low-income parents make sure, often at considerable sacrifice, to buy particular goods or experiences for their children, those items or events sure to have the most significant symbolic value for their children's social world.
<i>****Timebanking</i>
Timebanking is a means of exchange used to organise people and organisations around a purpose, where time is the principal currency. For every hour participants 'deposit' in a timebank, perhaps by giving practical help and support to others, they are able to 'withdraw' equivalent support in time when they themselves are in need.
<i>*Wellbeing</i>
The state of being happy, healthy, and contented. It has recently become a key student outcome in many education systems and can be linked loosely to Aristotle's concept of <i>eudaimonia</i> . Some critics have questioned if it is used with sufficient regard to social, cultural, or ethnic diversity. It certainly seems unlikely that one definition can be found to cover the range of possible human values it might represent.
<i>*Whole child</i>
A term used for the educational concern with the personal, emotional and social wellbeing of children and young people as opposed to merely academic concerns.



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