1

Introduction

Chapter Overview

This chapter outlines the key aims and rationale of this book. Before summarising the key arguments, you are encouraged to see the book as an academic and practical text that employs case studies and activities to enable you to get to grips with structures, concepts and relationships in integrated services.

An Integrated Text

Very few books take a truly integrated approach to writing about integrated children's services. In the main they are dominated by a specific subject bias e.g. either family work, community care, child protection, disability, early years, social work, etc. I have tried to overcome this problem by drawing from research and evaluation that I have undertaken in a range of services (health, education, early years, disability, family support and youth/community education). There are five case study chapters (Chapters 3 to 7), a chapter that defines integrated working (Chapter 2) and a chapter that draws together the different conceptual issues in the book (Chapter 8). You are encouraged to start with Chapter 2 as it sets out a straightforward literature review of writing that defines integrated working and should aid you to quickly get to grips with the different meanings of specific words (e.g. co-location, strengths-based, participatory, etc).

A Text that Draws from Practical Experience

Some of the books in this field tend to draw heavily from academic material/literature reviews, in contrast the chapters involving case studies in this

book discuss the practical experience of staff, parents, children and young people before linking these experiences to academic ideas in a 'discussion' section. The book aspires to act as a sign-post to quality practice and to enable the reader to self-evaluate how they and their services measure up to a range of theoretical and practical ideas concerning integrated service delivery. The book is innovative in that it can be used in both teaching and practical contexts. For example, to enable students/practitioners and their managers/colleagues to jointly consider the key issues confronting integrated children's services. The book draws from my experience of teaching students on the BA in Childhood Practice and the MSc in Childhood Studies at the University of Edinburgh. The Childhood Practice students take their degree part-time in the evening and work during the daytime. This means that the degree programme does not separate out academic from practical work. The two concepts are always in play. This differentiates the degree programme from dated approaches that separate out placement from academic work.

The activities in each chapter encourage the reader to pose questions, gather information and develop their practice in the places in which they work/train. The book does not supply the answers to the questions posed in each chapter. You are expected to work those out with your colleagues, team members and/or managers. Though the case studies are drawn from Scotland and England, the book connects its ideas to issues in a range of countries (including Sweden, New Zealand, Ireland and Canada).

Content and Argument

Defining Integration: What are the Different Approaches? (Chapter 2) employs a range of authors to describe a variety of definitions of integrated working and suggests that there are a number of different starting points from which to attempt integrated working. It concludes that at its heart integrated working strives for some kind of jointness (Christie and Menmuir, 2005; Lloyd et al., 2001; Scott, 2006; Wilson and Pirrie, 2000). The chapter indicates that there is a continuum of integrated working including *co-operation* (at its simplest, information sharing), *collaboration* (processes of joint planning), *co-ordination* (more systematic than co-operation and involving shared goals), *merger* (the full integration/unification of services) (Cohen et al., 2004; Leathard, 2003b). The chapter stresses the need for integrated working to be based on clear professional practices, relationships, roles and responsibilities. It also makes a connection between the requirement for clarity and the need to develop 'harmonious relationships' (Bertram et al., 2002; Harker et al., 2004; Stone and Rixon, 2008). Interestingly the chapter does not connect harmony to political neutrality. It argues that discussions concerning conflict should be a central part of team meetings, forums and networks.

Some writers highlight the need for structural merger – others for conceptual unity built on strong relationships. This chapter tentatively begins the processes of analysing the meaning of these different perspectives and argues that the way integrated teams are set up effects their ability to overcome professional differences and build strong relationships (Anning et al., 2006; Glenny and Roaf, 2008; Tomlinson, 2003). The chapter critiques approaches that stereotype professionals and that lead to professional snobbery. The chapter highlights a tension between structure, concepts and relationships, indicating that some writers see relationship building as more important than structures (Anning et al., 2006; Gilbert and Bainbridge, 2003; Leathard, 2003b; Scott, 2006). Yet others argue that structures vary in their effectiveness over time and that good outcomes can be achieved from a range of models (Glenny and Roaf, 2008).

Chapter 2 introduces the concept of holistic 'strengths based' approaches that enable flexible services, consider the strengths of families/communities, mobilise support where people live, attend to issues of rights/equity and utilise informal support networks (Dolan, 2006, 2008; Gilligan, 1999, 2000).

'Strengths based' approaches are also connected to 'child centred' and 'client focused' perspectives that view children/families as the experts on their own lives (Foley, 2008; Leathard, 2003b; Rixon, 2008a). The chapter argues that we should move beyond approaches that work with children in isolation of their family and peer group and traditional deficit model approaches to children and families (Davis, 2007; Dolan and McGrath, 2006; Mayall, 2000; Tisdall et al., 2008). It calls for strong relationships to be built with both parents and children (Glenny and Roaf, 2008). In the main, the chapter considers the positive aspects of integrated working (subsequent chapters look deeper into the problems of integrated working). The chapter concludes by stating that there is no perfect way to do integrated working, that integrated working is fluid and that it requires critical engagement with parents/children concerning the pros and cons of specific approaches.

Chapter 3 – *Integrated Early Years Services: Co-location, Roles and Development* – considers issues concerning co-location, professional roles and qualifications/training in early years children's services. It employs a case study (Davis and Hughes, 2005) from a Scottish local authority to discuss innovative structural, conceptual and workforce change. It questions the notion of a holistic pedagogical approach in early years because the concept comes from countries that do not have a tradition of integrated children's services and may overlook political issues. This chapter concludes that different professionals have varied experience of working face-to-face with children and parents in integrated childcare, education, health and social care services. Quality integrated early years provision is connected to the qualification levels of staff, however the chapter critiques the assumption that teachers should be managers and concludes that

all staff (whatever their profession) need to make an equal contribution in integrated centres (Billingham and Barnes, 2009; Hawker, 2010). Structural and conceptual integration is linked to discussions concerning the development of a hybrid workforce. This chapter considers the idea that processes of integration require different professions to merge into a hybrid worker (pedagogue). It indicates that individuals in certain professional groupings (e.g. teaching and health visiting) are resistant to ideas of professional merger. Yet it also notes that many early years workers hold similar values and concepts and therefore that a professional merger in children's services may arise from a step-by-step process of relationship building during merged training routes, joint classes within qualifications, multi-professional CPD and the eventual development of a specific degree programme/qualification (e.g. similar to the BA Childhood Practice degree that has been developed in Scotland for managers/lead practitioners in early years, social work children/family centres, play and out-of-school provision).

The chapter concludes that there is conceptual resistance in Scotland to the structural merger of schooling with play, daycare, out of school and early years but that the new degree-level Childhood Practitioner (e.g. early years centre manager) may be a person who can strive to enable conceptual integration between different professionals. The standards for childhood practice are characterised as encompassing the best traditions of pedagogy that aspire to link theory, policy and practice (e.g. holistic approaches to the child's mind, emotions, creativity, history and social identity – Bruce, 2004; Cohen et al., 2004). It is suggested that the Childhood Practice standards may enable conceptual integration around more politically nuanced strengths based approaches (incorporating concepts of pedagogy, childhood theory, anti-discrimination and social justice). It is concluded that most professionals who work with children already have aspects of pedagogy in their practice, that the Childhood Practice degree could become a core aspect of the initial training of professionals who work with children in Scotland, that these processes could involve multi-disciplinary classes (or joint academic years) and that existing professionals should be required to carry out multi-disciplinary continuing professional development on key aspects of Childhood Practice. These conclusions lead to the suggestion that for such change to be effective it will need to be bottom up; prevent one professional grouping (e.g. teaching/social work) from dominating others; involve clear roles/targets; and involve a balance of staff providing daily, regular and targeted work.

Chapter 4 – *Integrated Children's Services and Ethnicity* – discusses the changing nature of early years services, it considers the strengths and weaknesses of early years services for black and minority ethnic families in a Scottish local authority area. It explains that an evaluation of early years services found that: only a small number of childcare providers employed staff specifically to work with

black and minority ethnic children; black and minority ethnic parents and staff felt there was a need for more immediate and accessible interpreters for daily communication; a number of parents had no experience of participation in services; a large number of service providers made no overt effort to value and recognise diversity; and some black and minority ethnic parents were not happy with their provision (Davis and Hancock, 2007). The chapter concludes that greater sharing of resources (e.g. knowledge) should occur between those centres identified as high-quality service providers and those that have difficulties including children from linguistically and culturally diverse families. The activities in this chapter encourage you to consider the diverse nature of racism by adopting a community/strengths based approach to service provisions.

The chapter defines different types of racism: *cultural* (group behaviour); *structural* (resources, rewards, roles, status and power); *individual* (stereotypical views); *interpersonal* (harassment); and *institutional* (procedures, e.g. a culturally exclusive curriculum [Figueroa, 1993]). The chapter draws a distinction between writing that gives helpful advice on how to deal with issues of racism and writing that connects issues of anti-discrimination, equity and social justice to the ability of children's services to develop collaborative, capacity building, integrative and systematic approaches to working with communities. It also raises issues concerning the cultural appropriateness of European concepts of pedagogy, arguing that the westernised play ethos approach of pedagogy may not work for children who have culturally different starting points to those providing the services (Brooker, 2002, 2005; Clark and Waller, 2007; Smith et al., 2000) and that we should never assume that one country's approach, (e.g. that of Sweden) works in another (David et al., 2010).

The case study is compared to approaches in Canada that cross the boundaries between service provider and user (Ball and Sones, 2004; Moore et al., 2005) and contrasted with approaches in England that concentrate on academic 'school ready' criteria, westernised notions of 'skills development', and 'age appropriate' behaviour (e.g. Sylva et al., 2004). The chapter argues that we need to find ways to integrate community members into services through volunteering, training and employment and that we should engage with models of community governance. Professionals are asked to demonstrate multicultural competence; for example, the ability to speak about your feelings, respond to cultural variations concerning verbal/non-verbal queues, and display personal characteristics such as warmth, respect, genuineness, the ability to be honourable and the capacity to be practical, etc. (Moore et al., 2005). Family-centred approaches are defined as those that avoid imposing Eurocentric notions of assessment, involve families from the start of the development, promote local choice/decision-making, and strengthen family/community self help (Ball and Sones, 2004; Moore et al., 2005). You are encouraged to recognise the resources that immigrants bring with them and to consider how to

utilise their values, skills and knowledge within processes of community development (Dolan, 2008). It is concluded that whatever your conceptual position, you need to develop approaches that put the participation of children, parents and community members at the centre of service development.

Chapter 5 – *Strategic Planning of Integrated Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services* – examines attempts by a local authority to develop a more strategic approach to children's and parents' involvement in integrated child and adolescent mental health services. The project involved qualitative work with children, young people and professionals. It also involved a review of previous reports – from local children's rights organisations, psychologists, universities and health services. The case study enables practitioners to consider the key issues of integrated child and adolescent mental health services. It discusses the development of a local mental health strategy, issues of prevalence, different professional approaches to assessment, participatory approaches and conceptual integration. It is argued that we need to question the way we assess children in relation to mental health because some adults fail to take account of children's own views. Practitioners need to question their personal assumptions and recognise the difference between their medical model presumptions and strengths based approaches (Davis, 2006; Davis and Watson, 2000; Davis et al., 2000). The chapter makes connections with Chapter 4, indicating that children and young people critique professionals who claim to take neutral approaches to 'treatment' and judge professionals on the basis of whether they care, are trustworthy, enable choice and take time to explain processes. The chapter indicates that a number of professionals identify with holistic approaches, promote the notion that services should be inclusive, and believe that children and young people should produce solutions for their own life issues. It concludes that different professionals need to be clearer about the different ways that they assess, characterise and treat children and young people, we need to consider the power relations within processes of consultation, participation, evaluation and review, and the development of holistic approaches must take account of local politics.

The chapter defines different assessment/treatment approaches to children and young people in child and adolescent mental health services. *Individualised approaches* highlight the individual child's pathology and judge children against normative criteria related to developmental age and stage. *Ecological models* (based on the work of Bronfenbrenner, 1989) consider the social context outside of the individual child (friends, school, neighbours, local services, national culture, government and the media). *Multi-agency approaches* aim to ensure that no one professional defines children's 'problems' or the solutions to their life issues, and politically nuanced *holistic models* (e.g. from the field of family therapy) challenge hierarchical approaches that assume that the medical professional knows best (assuming instead that service users are the expert on their own lives).

The chapter demonstrates the interconnectedness of the body to social places and the importance of understanding the role of social relations in different social locations (Dyck, 1999; Stables and Smith, 1999; Valentine, 1999). It highlights the importance of social as well as organisational aspects of mental health services. It concludes that integrated services have to confront conceptual differences and professional vested interests if parents, teachers, counsellors, psychologists and medical professionals are to move away from processes of labelling children and young people.

Chapter 6 – *Participation, Disabled Young People and Integrated Children's Services* – discusses the involvement of disabled young people in service development. It considers a case study of a 'Communications 2004' participation project that employed four disabled young people to ask children and young people what they wanted to change about local services and how they would like to engage with their local council (Davis and Hogan, 2004). The project found that children and young people wanted: disability awareness events; improved public transport; better transition to work; and greater inclusion in education, leisure, play and sport (Davis et al., 2006). It is argued that such projects are only worthwhile if they lead to real changes in the life conditions of disabled people (Davis, 2000; Davis and Hogan, 2004). The chapter demonstrates that the impact of the communications project was in the main positive but that it did not enable disabled children and young people to develop the type of sustained involvement discussed in relation to self-governance in Chapter 2. The project was partially successful in its specific aim: to build relationships between service providers and disabled young people. However, the project did not always enable the young people to reach the most senior of officials and so alter existing power relations, to effect speedy change. The chapter concludes that children and young people are aware of their lack of power, are frustrated by the limitations of participatory processes and that they wish to see a change in the power relations between adults and themselves.

The chapter highlights the difficulties of achieving participation in relation to disabled children and compares these difficulties to discussions concerning young carers that set parents' rights against children's rights. The chapter demonstrates a contradiction between rights based discourses and the notion that families and communities should be put at the centre of strengths based approaches. It indicates that the literature on young carers critiques individualised children's rights approaches because such approaches fail to acknowledge families as social rather than individual entities (Newman, 2002).

The chapter concludes that individual rights are useful when they enable legal recourse, but that they are closely related to deficit 'needs' based ideas concerning service provision. The chapter connects this idea to writers cited in Chapter 2 who argue that professionals should: develop flexible approaches

(hold notions of minimum intervention), operate the concept of rights in a holistic way, attend to issues of social justice, and utilise informal support networks (Dolan, 2006, 2008). This perspective is also connected with the Canadian approaches discussed in Chapter 4 that argue for rights based, anti-discriminator, social justice perspectives that value all the actors who can support a child (e.g. peer group, family, community and professionals). As such, the chapter contrasts rights based discourses with strengths based approaches that require service providers to consider how provision can best address social issues (e.g. poverty, appropriate housing, access to transport), build relationships (e.g. overcome interpersonal discrimination) and develop sustained participation.

Chapter 7 – *Analysing Participation in Local Authorities: A Politically Nuanced Holistic Approach* – analyses the findings of two evaluations of a children's rights organisation, Investing in Children (IiC). Investing in Children runs a membership scheme for children's services who work in participatory ways, carries out specific projects/events, enables participatory processes, and develops participation strategies with children/young people and local authorities. The chapter indicates that IiC was strongly focused on children and young people's agendas. It enabled local authority, private and voluntary agencies to consider children and young people's life issues; and involved diverse children in inclusive projects while supporting children and young people's learning regarding disability/diversity issues. The chapter highlights the limitations of participatory processes arguing that children and young people are highly critical of the capacity of local services to respond to their life issues. It summarises the different criteria that people employ to define the benefits of participation, e.g. consumerist (produces services that are better value for money), pedagogical/developmental (teaches people), inclusive (connects different people), epistemological (enables us to produce better knowledge), political (it is democratic) and/or protective (listening makes children more likely to be safe). It also indicates that children and young people's criteria for successful participation is not always the same as professional perspectives and that both process and outcomes are important to children and young people that are involved in local authority decision-making.

This chapter demonstrates that participatory processes in integrated children's services can include a diverse range of children and young people while enabling children and young people to transform their life experiences and change local services. However, it also suggests that the diverse nature of children's services means that sustained strategic approaches are required that: consistently promote processes of dialogue; enable collective consideration of the effectiveness of integrated provision; and support integrated planning (to enable coherent, sustainable and structured approaches to participation). The chapter concludes that there is a need to balance out informal and formal approaches to participation,

celebrate existing local knowledge-sharing networks/learning architecture, broaden the range of organisations/professionals involved in local collaboration; move beyond local vested interests; examine management hierarchies/rigid rules; and investigate the utility of decentralised structures. A central aspect of this conclusion is the belief that we can develop more culturally attuned services if we are more flexible and responsive to the needs of a wider range of children, parents and young people.

Chapter 8 – *Conceptual Integration in Children's Services* – synthesises the various ideas that have emerged from the case studies. It indicates that this book has attempted to compare different case studies to better understand the concepts, structures and relationships that support integrated children's services. It summarises the key conceptual issues that should underpin a strengths based approach to integrated children's services. In so doing it highlights a tension between 'child protection' (focusing on investigative approaches) and politically nuanced holistic provision. It suggests that the change in philosophy, culture and practice envisaged by integrated children's services policy has not been achieved because of the complex nature of children's services (Smith, 2007; Smith and Davis, 2010). It argues that many attempts to impose national frameworks overlook the politics of systems within local authorities and the need to instigate bottom-up service change (Smith, 2007; Smith and Davis, 2010).

The chapter briefly considers the holistic concept of pedagogy as a source of conceptual integration, however it argues that pedagogical approaches (particularly espoused in early years) tend to be applied ethnocentrically, are more a way of being (almost a belief system) than an actual concept, and are not well placed to consider and challenge the political context of deficit approaches. The chapter also considers the concept of social justice and community practice, arguing that there is a need to balance out concepts of individual and collective rights, that power should not be used as a gift and that individualised approaches to families are problematic (e.g. parenting programmes). The chapter concludes that whilst ecological models have their strengths (e.g. they encourage us to approach the child and family in a systemic way), they need to be connected with more fluid, politically complex, anti-hierarchical and participatory approaches (Davis, 2007; Dolan, 2008). Similarly, the concept of social capital is critiqued for creating 'social victims' and rarely engaging with contemporary ideas. The chapter examines post-structural and post-modern approaches that challenge traditional authority, promote the idea that identity is complex, fluid and ever changing, and emphasise the need for spaces of dialogue in contemporary integrated children's services. The chapter concludes that children, young people, communities and professionals have much to gain if we define integrated services as socially dynamic spaces within which practitioners are encouraged to constantly question their thoughts, practices and relationships.

The activities in the final chapter ask you to consider how your own ideas about children and families relate to both professional and personal concepts concerning play, socialisation, agency, inclusion, family support and the politics of welfare. The activities aim to demonstrate that theories shift over time, encourage you to develop complex approaches, concepts and relationships, and inspire you to consider how your conceptual starting points connect to ideas of social justice.

The chapters in this book encourage you to reduce the social space between yourself, children, families and communities, to consider your vested interests and embrace the complex identities of children, parents and other professionals. I hope you enjoy reading them as much as I enjoyed writing them and that you can see how privileged I have been to be able to work over many years with such capable children, young people, parents, communities and professionals.