The Learning Institute

What do we mean by inclusive education?

Overview

Research shows that working to promote inclusivity is critical to ensuring children and young people have positive experiences not just in education but generally in their lives. This CPD task seeks to support practitioners by helping them to understand some key principles of inclusive education and how these might be applied.

Target audience

Teaching Assistants

Duration

Approximately 1 hour

The Learning Institute provides opportunities for individuals and communities through high quality education, training and research programmes that challenge personal barriers and promote social inclusion. To find out more, please get in touch.

Introduction

Very often in your role you may hear the term "inclusive", but do you ever question or reflect on what this actually means?

Inclusive practice is key to creating a climate in which all young people can develop, progress and enjoy their experience. However, without careful consideration, it can be possible to create barriers to this which could have a negative impact on young people.

This CPD will help you understand the key ideas behind inclusive practice and help you to reflect on current practices.

Objectives

- To understand the what we mean by inclusive education

- To consider what strategies can support effective inclusive practice and what the barriers to this might be

- To consider the key terms of equity and equality

Resources

Pen and paper for note taking

Internet access to following:

- World of Inclusion: Inclusion working in 2015 [video] available at
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NL-Y9L3U6gY

Task 1: Considering what inclusive education means

This task will help you to consider some of the key ideas associated with inclusive education.

What is inclusive education?

Take some time to note down key words or ideas which you associate with being inclusive. Try to think about the following:

- What does the environment look like?

- What are the adults in the room doing?

- What things are being said?

- How are the children interacting/responding?

What might this look like in practice?

Watch the video clip of a primary school in Hertfordshire [duration 9:59], available at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NL-Y9L3U6gY, and consider the following key questions:

- What suggests that inclusive practice is seen as an ethos in this school?
- What strategies are used in this school to promote the inclusive ethos?

What barriers might there be to inclusion?

Having watched the clip and begun to consider strategies which can support inclusive practice, can you think of any practice which might create barriers to inclusive practice?

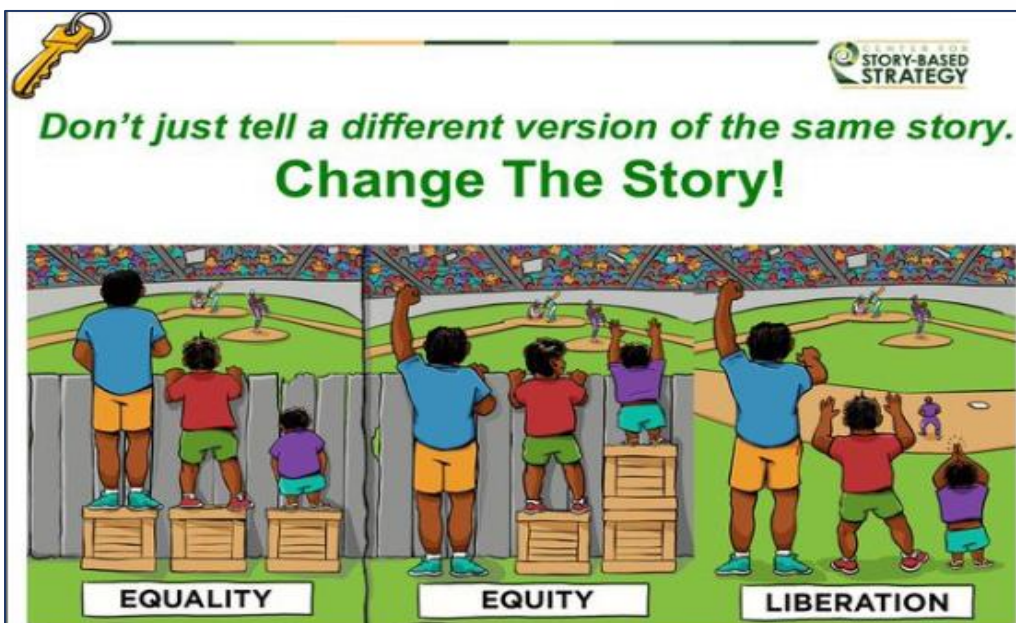Try to think about the following aspects and make some notes:

- Environment
- Resources
- Adult support
- Language used

Task 2

Some further important concepts relating to inclusive practice are equality and equity. Whilst these terms are often used interchangeably, they are in fact different concepts.
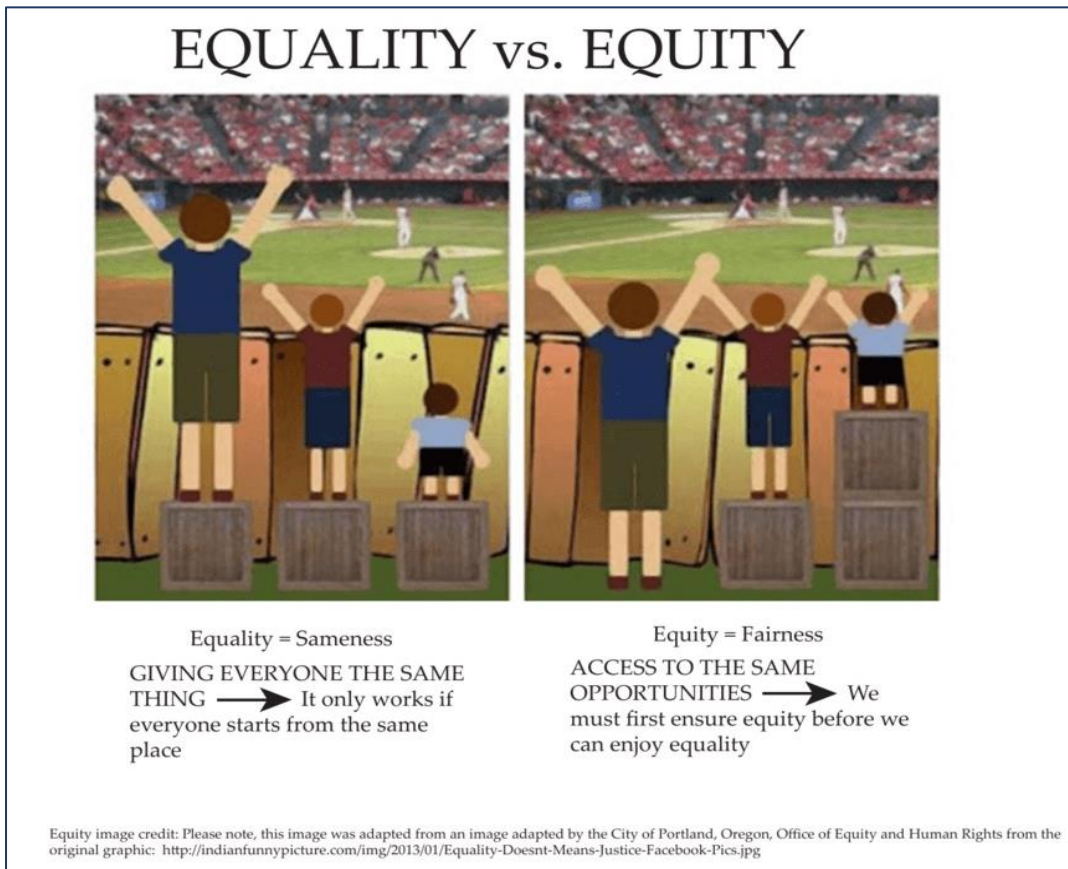
What is the difference between the terms?

Consider this image and think about how they are different. Try and draft a definition for each of these so as to highlight the key differences between them.

Source of image:
https://www.storybasedstrategy.org/tools-and-resources

Here is another image which exemplifies the same message:

EQUALITY vs. EQUITY

Equality = Sameness
GIVING EVERYONE THE SAME THING ⟶ It only works if everyone starts from the same place

Equity = Fairness
ACCESS TO THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES ⟶ We must first ensure equity before we can enjoy equality

Equity image credit: Please note, this image was adapted from an image adapted by the City of Portland, Oregon, Office of Equity and Human Rights from the original graphic: http://indianfunnypicture.com/img/2013/01/Equality-Doesnt-Means-Justice-Facebook-Pics.jpg

Examples in practice

Equity means providing specific support for individuals to fit their individual circumstances and therefore ensure they have the same chances as others.

An example of this might be as follows:

A child with autism may need a visual timetable to support them in navigating the school day.

Can you think of any other examples of equity in practice?

Task 3: Reflection on learning

Note down your responses to the following questions:

- What knowledge did I already have that has been refreshed by this CPD?
- How has this CPD developed my knowledge and understanding?
- How can I apply what I now know to my practice?

Sources

Center for Story-Based Strategy (2019) #*The4thBox: a tool for learners of all ages*. Available at: https://www.storybasedstrategy.org/tools-and-resources (Accessed: 18 June 2020)

Office of Equity and Human Rights (no date) *The problem with "equality"*. Available at: https://www.portlandoregon.gov/oehr/article/449547 (Accessed: 18 June 2020)

World of Inclusion (2015) *Inclusion working in 2015 – Primary school, Hertfordshire*. 10 April. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NL-Y9L3U6gY (Accessed: 18 June 2020)

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