

## Editorial

# A word from our Editor



## About the Editor

Professor Sonia Blandford is Founder and CEO of Achievement for All and one of the UK's leading practitioners of education. Sonia is passionate about raising the aspirations and improving the attainment of all children and young people regardless of their background or needs. This year, she was named in Debrett's list of the Top 500 Most Influential People in the UK.

# Education that truly is for every child

**M**y thanks to you all for participating in our second Achievement for All Every Child Included in Education conference. I am extremely grateful to our speakers, panellists, exhibitors and delegates for your contributions and for your commitment to inclusion, education and social mobility.

A year ago, *Born to Fail? Social Mobility, A Working-Class View* was published by John Catt, in which I defined social mobility as the opportunity to make choices. My message focused on an alternative way of thinking, changing the way people think, act and behave, understanding that there is a different way to live. At the heart of this change is mutuality, the sharing of values, investing in all children and their families to enable everyone to have the confidence, education, health and capability to make choices based on their own context, values and needs. Choices that are not determined by class, but by heritage, location and self-efficacy. Choices that are respectful of individuals. Choices that are non-judgemental, not defined by movement between classes or areas. Choices that provide opportunities for everyone to be included, to belong. Choices that prepare the way for everyone to succeed in life, in education, health, employment and housing.

Today, schools and education settings are experiencing challenges generated by a lack of investment, guidance and support. We are a country that commits more funding to higher education than any other in the developed world, yet we are in the lowest quartile for early years funding.<sup>1</sup>

Exclusions are at their highest since 2007, with 48,000 fixed term or permanent exclusions last year.<sup>2</sup> Over 50% of those excluded have a diagnosed special educational need. In the summer, only 17% of Children Looked After achieved 5 GCSEs A\* - C or 4 and above. Startling statistics that

reveal the outcome of generations of policies that have failed to 'Close the Gap'.<sup>3</sup>

Every Child Included in Education is a manifesto that is based on evidence and common sense, written in collaboration with educational leaders and practitioners, politicians, parents and carers. We are not seeking a platform – we are seeking change through action. The Every Child Included in Education campaign exists to make social mobility real for all children and their families and to improve the lives of disadvantaged, vulnerable and underachieving children and young people in England. Every Child Included in Education is seeking all stakeholders, including ministers, commissioners, senior government officials, business, public and third-sector leaders to increase collaboration, support and training for all providers and services across the country. Working collectively, Every Child Included in Education will deliver against five co-developed priorities outlined in its manifesto, including:

1. Promote kindness and wellbeing in education, business and third-sector settings, where every child and young person is included every day
2. Further investment across all phases of education, beginning with the early years
3. Greater focus on teachers as professional learners through recruitment, retention and CPD
4. Reduce children and young people being excluded in education and close the gap for SEND – too often the marginalised and forgotten group
5. Increased recognition of parents, carers and wider communities

Through Every Child Included in Education, Achievement for All is collaborating with leaders from business, education (state and independent across all phases and type, including Regional School Commissioners, Opportunity Area Boards, Teaching Schools Alliances and Research Schools, the 5% Club, The Prince's Trust Task Force 2030), public and third sectors, parents, carers, children and young people.

Collectively we can deliver social mobility (choice) for all.

### Editor

Professor Sonia Blandford

## NOTES

- 1 OECD (2018). Education policy outlook 2018: Putting student learning at the centre. Paris: OECD. [https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-policy-outlook-2018\\_9789264301528-en#page1](https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-policy-outlook-2018_9789264301528-en#page1)
- 2 Gill, K., Quilter-Pinner, H., & Swift, D. (2017). Making the Difference: Breaking the Link Between School Exclusion and Social Exclusion. London: IPPR. <https://www.ippr.org/files/2017-10/making-the-difference-report-october-2017.pdf>
- 3 Andrews, J., Robinson, D., & Hutchinson, J. (2017). Closing the Gap? Trends in Educational Attainment and Disadvantage. London: IPPR. [https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Closing-the-Gap\\_EPI-.pdf](https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Closing-the-Gap_EPI-.pdf)