CONNECTING CLASSROOMS

Access and Engagement: Celebrating Diversity and Difference

www.britishcouncil.org/connectingclassrooms

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Access…the heart of the matter!
Just getting in is not enough; it is how you are treated, how you are made to feel, what facilities you are offered without having to ask….
Access is about people.
It involves emotion and feelings.

“A process of leaving footprints on our hearts. And we are never, ever the same.”
Access is about commitment and passion – a process of pro-active accommodation

“Not like a tired, old marriage but a passionate affair of the heart”

The Hundred-Foot Journey
Access is about connections between people... the ‘feel good’ factor

WOW! We did it!

My voice was heard!

That was fun!

My opinion counts..

I am a part..

The difference between ‘US’ and ‘I’

I make a difference to the ‘We’
But eventually it is a *heady* business!

Where there is a **WILL** there is a way

The Will to include

The Will to adapt

The Will to change

The Will to challenge the ‘System’

The Will to influence others

The Will to acknowledge one’s need for further skills

The Will to think outside one’s comfort zone: THE BOX
For access and engagement to be more than rhetoric it has to be a combination of head, heart, mind and body all together!
Skills for Greater Engagement

• LEARNING TO LEARN
• FOCUS ON STRATEGIES, TACTICS, METHODS, TLM
• COLLABORATION
• SHARING
• KNOWING WHEN TO ASK FOR HELP & FROM WHO
• INNOVATE, TAKE RISKS AND LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE
Enhancing Engagement
Appropriate and Accessible Technology, TLM
Adapted furniture, Added Infrastructure but …
these are only the means to an end

THUS CLARITY OF OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES IS NECESSARY
Modified curricula may not be enough; Think creatively about change: a different and creative curriculum.

The challenge is to take informed decisions within the constraints of the educational context and with prior knowledge of the context.
The greatest challenge is not what we explicitly acknowledge but the enemy within

Prejudice

Ability? I don’t want to see beyond the disability! Besides, I have NO TIME!
The barriers

Poor expectations

INTERESTING but so different!
But she may be bullied and teased at school,
she needs to be safe and cared for……at home till we have trained staff!
The barriers

Pre-conceived notions

Hmmm… it’s all very well for the Head to say I should have a child who cannot speak in my classroom …
The greatest barrier of all

Resistance to Change and deeply Entrenched Perceptions of Position & Entitlement

Be grateful your child is Here… don’t ask for extra privileges
“Jodi tor dak shune keyu na ashey tobey ekla cholo re… if no one joins you, walk the walk alone…. Rabindranath Tagore

Create facilitating learning environments for students with SEN….by taking small pro-active steps with courage and persistence

“If you ever think you are too small to be effective, think of the times when you have tried to sleep with a mosquito hovering around you....”
IICP’s role in inclusive education

Teaching and learning material
Roshni National Resource Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication

I want to buy some chocolate.

IICP’s role
Training in all aspects of neurological disability; training in empowerment and leadership by trainers with disability who use AAC

IICP’s role
ACE SERVICES:
Assessment and Counseling in Education for students in mainstream schools

“A most useful service”
– I.T. Myers, Principal, Frank Anthony Private School
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Thank You! Do keep in Touch