



"a voice for people with learning difficulties"



FIGHT THE RIGHT FIGHT!

Disabled people and our allies have come to protest at today's conference 'A New Future for Special Schooling'.

We are doing this to show that we, as members of democratically elected and run organisations of disabled people disagree fundamentally with the aims of the conference and with the Medical Model of Disability which underpins it.

People who support the ideology and practices of segregation have had their day. Special Schools have been tried for over 100 years and have failed. They have led to a divided society in which disabled people are invisible, poor, badly educated, under or unemployed, forced to live in restricted environments, isolated and with our own voice ignored. Non-disabled people are left ignorant and afraid of physical, intellectual and emotional impairments and the people who have them. Both groups are denied the chance to learn the skills needed in order for us to live together.

Segregation is never the choice of the people who are being segregated. It is always imposed by powerful others. It is noticeable for example that there are no organisations of disabled people represented at the conference as speakers or delegates whereas Junior Doctors are being offered subsidised places.

Disabled people have fought against segregation for many years. We have always wanted to be treated with respect, to have control over our own lives, to live within and contribute to our families and communities, and to have the

resources we need to be made available to us where we choose to be, rather than having to be corralled into special places in order to have our needs met.

The fight for inclusive education is crucial because school is where we all learn the values which shape our adult lives. We want all young people to learn the values of inclusion, not exclusion or enforced separation. We have seen it work in many schools and are more determined than ever that these models should be the blueprint for the future - a new 'inclusive' education system.

We believe the continued promotion and resourcing of special schools is a distraction and source of confusion in the struggle of disabled people for equality. It slows down the progress being made in the mainstream and perpetuates the problems of transition.

We ask all the delegates here today to realign themselves with the disabled people's movement, and to work alongside us as allies to create a better future for all young people.

Organisations of disabled people which support the Social Model of Disability and see inclusive education as a human rights issue include: The UK Disabled People's Council, People First, National Centre for Independent Living, Disability Equality in Education, the 2020 Campaign and The Alliance for Inclusive Education. Together we represent over 350,000 disabled people.

NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US!



This statement is also supported by ally organisations which include Parents for Inclusion and the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education

