

# **Inclusivity and disengagement from education**

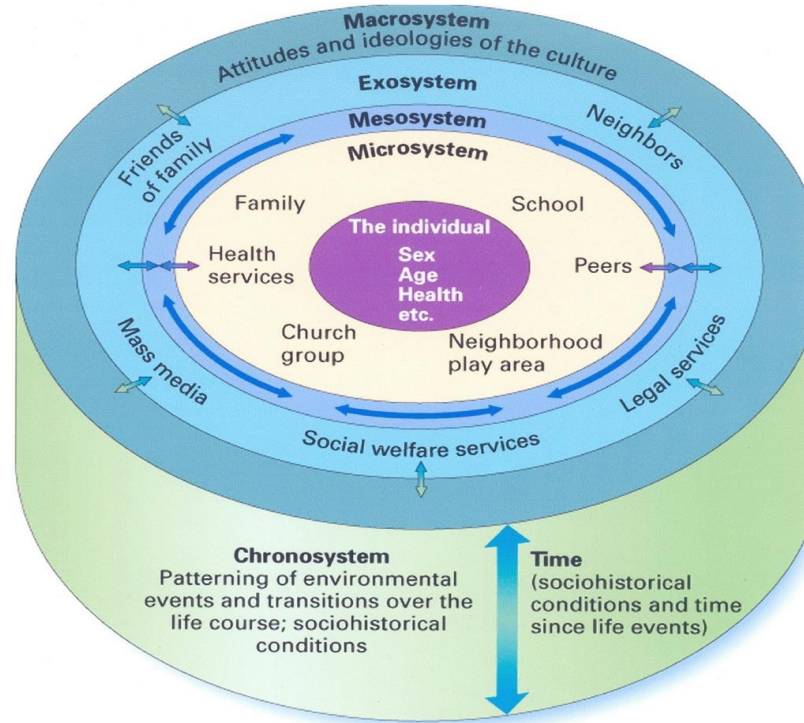
**Lynne Rogers**

- Understanding disengagement
- Manifestations
- An inclusive approach to disengagement
  - Alternative provision
  - Transitions
- Conclusions



- A continuum
- A dynamic construct
  
- Not a single event but a process
- Difficult to measure – churn
  
- Not to be equated with low ability
- Not to be equated with lack of interest

- Students put off by a curriculum perceived to be irrelevant
- High level of prescription
- Curriculum not always matched to the needs of learners
- Students taking inappropriate qualifications
- Students put off by a predominately didactic approach



- Dynamic construct
- Needs a more fluid model, rather than static representation
- Role of systems rather than sole focus on the individual is key
- A graduated response



# Manifestations

- An international phenomena
- PISA (2012) participating students in the two week period prior to the tests:
  - 18% skipped at least one class
  - 15% skipped at least an entire day
  - over 40% at least one day: Argentina, Italy, Turkey, Jordan
  - UK almost 20%
  - China (some parts) less than one in a hundred

(OECD, 2014)



- OECD countries, on average 20%
- Australia approx. 16%
- US approx. 25% - this is estimated to represent one million young people in an academic year
  
- Varies according to region
- Unemployment
  
- Concern over drop out rates for apprenticeships (approx. 30%)

- Permanent exclusions in secondary schools have increased in all academic years since 2012/13
- A similar pattern is seen in fixed-period exclusions
- Increase in the number of young people educated at home, from 34,000 in 2014/15 to 48,000 in 2016/17 - based on 177 LAs in UK (BBC, 2018)
- Managed moves
- Alternative Provision

- Off-rolling

Ofsted (2018) identified over 19,000 pupils who did not progress from Year 10 to 11 (2016-17): half had disappeared others were in a new school

The Times (2018) reported an increase in the number of pupils being off-rolled: 2015 - 9,000 vs 2017 - 13,000

- Wolf report (2010) and vocational qualifications – an attempt to lessen gaming
- Evidence suggests that schools are systematically adopting the best strategy for maximising their points
- This at the expense of what might be in the students' best interests
- E.g. ECDL issue – to be dropped from league table inclusion 2018-19; IT and Computer Science; English Language and Literature; MFL
- Of concern also is evidence that schools are 'pushing' young people out of the educational system

## Curriculum offer

- Increased emphasis on literacy
  - Increased emphasis on mathematics
  - Relevance
  - One size fits all
  - Rigidity
- 
- Lack of alternative pathways including second chance opportunities
  - Lack of opportunities for success

- Apprenticeships and traineeships
- Accountability measures
- Raising participation age
- Revised curricula
  - Ebacc
  - Linearity and end point assessment
  - Technical education
  - Transition offer
- Teacher training and inspection
- Work (Industry) experience and placements



# **An inclusive approach to disengagement**



# **Alternative provision**



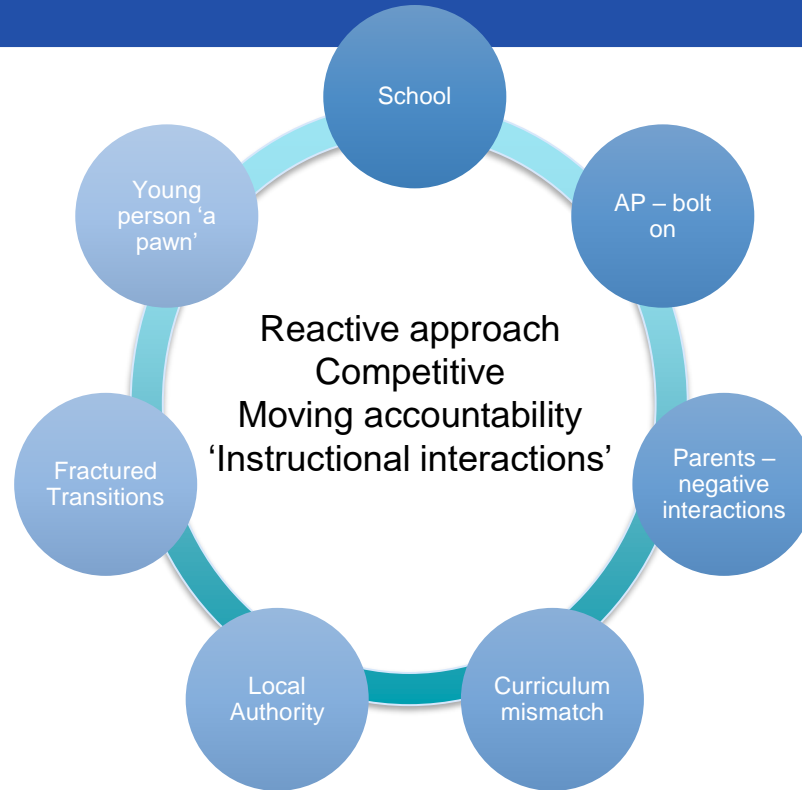
- An attempt to encourage young people to remain in school and re-engage with their learning
- Few developed countries appear to have no system of alternative provision
- Continued concern: variability of provision in relation to levels of attainment, lack of progression
- Continued top-down government interventions
- Significant changes to the state education system
- Reduction of PRUs: from 458 in 2009 to 351 in 2017
- Number of pupils with sole or main registrations in PRUs has increased slightly over the last few years

## England

- One in 200 young people educated outside of mainstream provision or in special schools during 2016-17 - this represents 48,000 students (Gill, 2017)
- 2015–16, only 1.1 per cent of the 9,333 students in AP achieved five or more A\* to C grades in their GCSE, including English and mathematics. The national average in England of 53.5 per cent (DfE, 2017)

## Canada

- Four-stage continuum of approaches to re-engage students in education



- The curriculum was practical and the written work which was required was seen as meaningful
- They were offered the opportunity to gain qualifications
- Curriculum delivery acknowledged their aspirations to adulthood and enabled them to demonstrate what they could do
- The Skill Force personnel treated them as adults
- The delivery of the programme was flexible
- There was consistent use of rewards and consequences

We do lots of fun activities. It makes everyone happy and they're really fun to do. We do bonding activities, partner stuff and loads of climbing and outdoor activities. The activities help to build up your confidence and help you to make new friends. They put you into groups with people that you don't really know and over time you get to know them. When we did high ropes that was fun. I felt quite nervous. There were people in front of me and behind me so I kept going. (Year 9 student) (Hallam *et al.*, 2014)

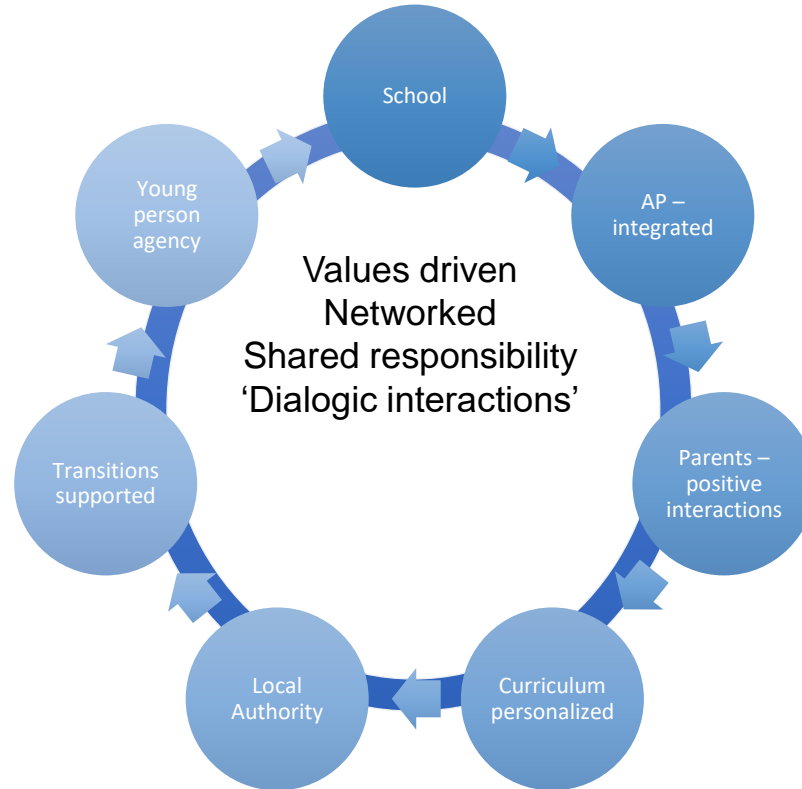
The main thing we use AP [alternative provision] for is to engage them in mainstream ... . We will do short courses where they achieve a qualification in a short period of time. They suddenly realise they can achieve something in six weeks and that has a huge knock-on effect in mainstream. In the food and nutrition course, we take them off timetable, we deliver the course in our Apple Mac room. The course is a mix of life skills plus and it's really effective. (Assistant head teacher)

One school providing in-house AP also acted as an AP provider to other schools.

*We're in a different position because we are a vocational provider as well as a mainstream school and we understand these types of young people that are coming in. The young people don't see our alternative provision as a bolt-on, they see themselves as still part of the community and don't see it as 'you just want to get rid of me'.  
(Head teacher)*

Additional support provided to young people to support their transition from the PRU included support for interviews, general help with transition and staff going into college with them for the first few days. Where appropriate they also made links with the counsellor at the FE college. This additional support for transition was seen to be having a positive impact on the retention of young people.







# Transitions

- Transition – a dynamic process
- Particular vulnerability of some young people
- A range of stakeholders
- The ‘churn’ of post 16 - finding employment, going back to study, dropping out
- Transitions into work – young people at a disadvantage
- Not a linear process

A critical time for young people

- Formation of identity
- Erikson fifth stage: identity vs role confusion, sense of self and place in society
- Developmental tasks – importance of finding a suitable education and occupation

The active pursuit and engagement in career goals during adolescence is beneficial.

Challenges of decision-making during adolescence and the need for 'time'

- Careers advice has been described as ‘complex and incoherent, with confusing incentives for young people and employers’ (HL, 2016: 4).
- Vocational qualifications, work-based learning and apprenticeships are less well understood by young people, their parents/carers and teachers
- Education, advice and guidance is patchy and subject to a ‘postcode lottery’ whereby some young people receive better guidance than others (Hooley *et al.*, 2014).
- The outcome of which is that too many young people embark on post-16 courses that do not suit their needs or aptitudes.

*Enhancing confidence and understanding about  
employability*

*Many students don't know what they wish to do and this impacts on their engagement/behaviour/attendance. When they can see what they want to do – they have this focus and know what they want to do and what they need to do. For young people who are disengaged from education, or beginning down this path it is so important for them to understand why they need their maths, or English in relation to what they want to do.*

Four sector employers involved - more coming on board  
Each employer works with 10 students  
Year 10: 6 to 8 sessions (days or half days) at the employer  
Year 11: business mentors from the same sector matched to interests of young people

Students apply and are selected for the programme  
The school runs preparation sessions before the visits  
The students miss lessons to go off-site + member of staff  
*Goal to for every Year 10 student to have a place*



Year 10

Speed dating

Small groups, one-to-one

Working on solving real problems

Mock interviews and CVs

Year 11 – business mentor

*Like the idea of being able to talk to someone who is so high up in the ranks of the airport who has probably worked 20-30 years trying to get that position and to have one-to-one conversations with you, you feel like really important.*

*In school it's all academic and you do the same thing all the time. Like I went into a hotel and it was completely different. You don't need to be academic or clever to be able to do something that you want to do. You need to be a people person, be able to express yourself in different ways and relate to others. You can go all the way from working in the kitchen to be a manager of a hotel – completely two different things but all in the same place.*

*I went to British Gypsum and there are more things to British Gypsum than people know about. When I went we went round the plant, and it's so large. There are so many jobs that might kick you off to a better future.*

*I had no idea about what I wanted to do and one day we went up the ATC and I decided that was what I wanted to do. I've researched about it. I want to achieve more [at school] to get the best start so that I can become one.*

- Being flexible

*The fact that the school is investing in employability is a good thing. The staff come to all the visits so it's their time as well. I've never known a school to be so helpful. (Employer)*

- Community collaboration
- Embedded approach to employability
- Proactive approach of the school
- SMT backing
- Sustainability - relationships

*Direct Entry 14-16 year olds in Further  
Education*

*Then they came in for several taster days, some with just me, like being around, being in a college environment, college expectations. Then they did some mini-tasters in the different vocational areas, to see if they would like them. Then they did longer tasters. By mini-tasters I mean an afternoon, longer tasters, kind of two days in the vocational area. Just to make sure.*

*In order for them to have a smooth transition to the College, we do quite a robust interview process. They are interviewed by the senior curriculum manager and the tutors. They come as an open day. They have a tour around. They meet other students. The parents come in as well or carers and social workers.*



*Lots of business events. E.g. 12 businesses in one day at the Academy in all the classrooms. The learners go round and talk to businesses and gain a purpose – ‘I want to do this’ – this so the learners can understand the link between business and their learning. They do this at least eight times a year. That is including visits. E.g. we always take all learners – two coach loads full – to the Skill Show – this is a national event rather than a local event. This is important, it is about setting aspirations. E.g. if you want to be a motor mechanic lets go since F1 are there: aim high.*

## Providing a safety net

*For the early few weeks in the wider college they kept coming back to the academy as if for reassurance, getting problems sorted, know where to get help. Then they go off again and they are quite happy and throughout the year we see them less and less because that is as it should be. But because they've been with us for two years they know where to get help.*





# Conclusion

- Holistic view of education
  - Academic, vocational, social and emotional and lifelong learning
  - Involvement of the whole community
  - Institutional collaboration at the local level for cost-effectiveness and equity
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- Focus on system supports and responses to enable young people to flourish
  - in contrast to a singular within-person view of resilience

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