

The i's have it

Professor Barry Carpenter OBE looks at 'The 5 'i's' in Special Needs: from Issue to Impact through Inquiry'

WHEN Ofsted call they are looking for 3 'i's' - 'issue', 'intervention' and 'impact': What was the issue in learning for the child? What intervention was selected to respond to that issue? And how effective was the intervention in meeting individual needs, and enabling the child to make progress?

This is all fairly logical, except when the child has special educational needs, and a process as straightforward as this does not resolve what may be a complex learning need, or a significant barrier to learning.

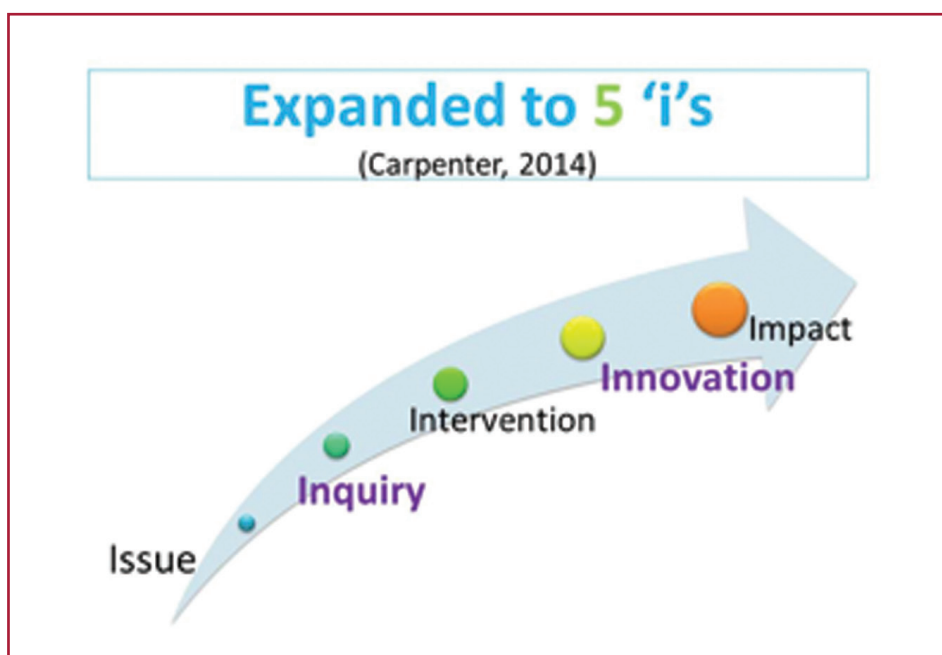
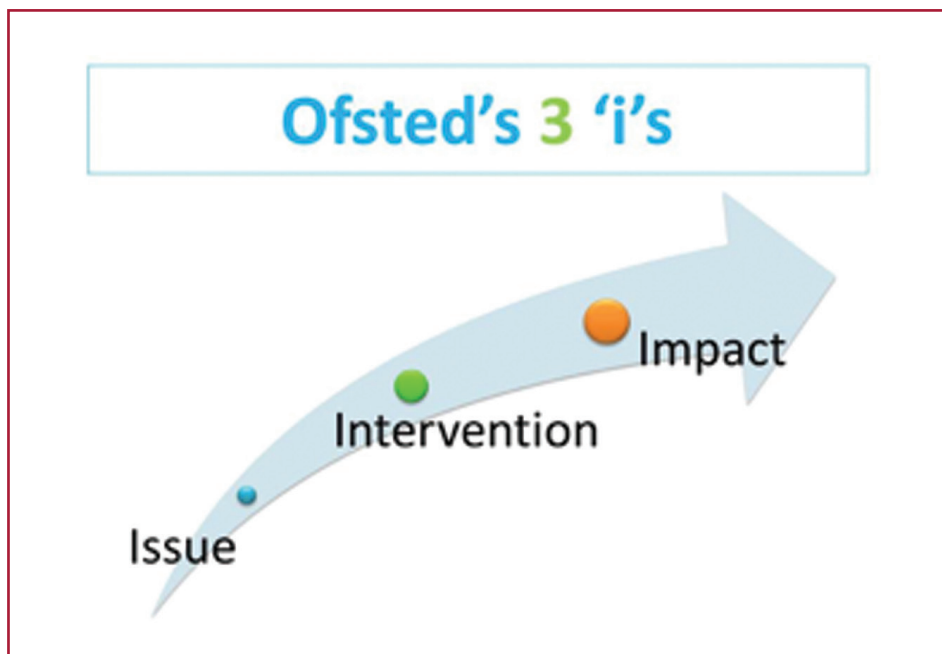
This is when the 5 'i's' kick in! The process then demands a couple of additional steps.

The issue may not always be obvious, obscured by complexities in the child's learning profile. In order to unpack the issue, the teacher may need to engage with the process of inquiry – investigating, exploring, discovering what it is that is challenging the child, and preventing them from becoming an effective learner.

Having gained additional information through the inquiry process, this leads to a more accurately designed intervention. The child needs to be an active participant in their learning, not a peripheral onlooker, watching the learning of other children. The intervention needs to mould around the child enabling them to experience success and achievement.

This may not be refined in the first application of the intervention, and so the teacher may need to innovate, and create a more personalised learning pathway. Perhaps this will be through the addition of some technological aid like an App on an iPad, or a further deconstruction of the task, so that the simpler steps make the attainment more possible.

Ultimately through a sensitive, iterative process of personalisation, with a fundamental focus on high-quality teaching and effective learning there will be impact, a clear and meaningful



outcome for the child with SEND, which enables the teacher to record progress.

As Marcel Proust says: "The only real voyage of discovery consists not in finding new landscapes, but in having new eyes."

Further reading

Carpenter, B., Egerton, J., Cockbill, B., Bloom, T., Fotheringham, J. and

Rawson, H. (2015) Engaging Learners with Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities: A resource book for teachers and teaching assistants. Abingdon: Routledge.

Jones, P., Whitehurst, T. and Egerton, J. (eds) (2012) Creating Meaningful Inquiry in Inclusive Classrooms: Practitioners' stories of research. Abingdon: Routledge.