

Social Outcomes of Education “Inspecting School Quality”

Report on the

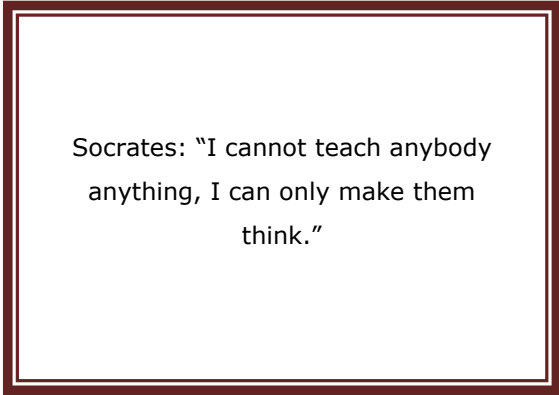
**SICI Conference & Workshop held in
Amsterdam, September 17-19 2014**

SICI

**Dutch Inspectorate of Education
University of Amsterdam**



This report focusses on the discussions that took place; for details on the contents of the presentations themselves, please refer to the presentations which were distributed during and after the conference or access the presentations through the URLs in this document.



Socrates: "I cannot teach anybody anything, I can only make them think."

Annette Roeters, Senior Chief Inspector of Education, Dutch Inspectorate of Education

Introductory thoughts

- Schools do not only have a task in transferring knowledge, but also in promoting social, and moral competences. This is a demanding task.
- Recently, inspectorates have started to attach more importance to social outcomes, rightly so in light of the increasing complexity of today's society.

The workshop on Social outcomes in June 2011 in Norway is a very significant one in the development of thoughts about (inspecting on) social outcomes.

The major conclusions of this workshop were:

- For inspections to have a positive effect on school function and the quality of education feedback needs to be given in a supportive way.
- The use of the term 'measured' can give a false sense of security, they are deceptive in that way. Besides that it cannot be used in the case of social outcomes.
- In evaluating social outcomes it is important to take into account the social context of schools.



How can we inspect social outcomes? It is a matter of evaluating 'soft elements', instead of measuring. It is SICI's goal for the coming years to figure out how to evaluate social outcomes. The SICI working group (from 2011) under supervision of dr. Anne Bert Dijkstra has made an important start with this.

Social cohesion is the glue of society, it is about the quality, quantity and responsibility of relationships. We are expecting schools to provide this glue. The question to us is: how can we support our schools to fulfill this task? Social outcome is one of the gifts of education to society.

1.2 Prof. dr. Judith Torney-Purta, University of Maryland, USA

Subject: Civic-related and Social Outcomes of Schooling: Insights from Large-Scale International Assessments

The aims of prof. Torney-Purta were to present:

- The dimensions of social and civic competences and associated personal and social resources
- The aspects of the school that have a major role in enhancing these competences
 - A discourse community
 - A participatory community
- Examples from cross-national assessments

- Going beyond country rankings to *patterns of findings*
- How school contexts can develop these competences
- Evidence that attention to the civic dimensions of schooling prepares young people with
 - civic knowledge, personal resources, and interpersonal skills that contribute to their own futures and the society's future in a complex and diverse world.

This is a multidimensional concept of personal and social resources

The results were presented in relation to four questions:

1. What resources for civic participation do adolescents in different countries possess?
2. What clusters or profiles of attitudes exist among adolescents?
3. What are the school and classroom correlates of valued outcomes across and within countries?
4. Are traditional and interactive teaching conflicting or reinforcing?

Question 1:

Relevant international research:

- IEA Civic Education Study-CIVED (started mid-1990s); for details please refer to prof. Torney-Purta's presentation, which was distributed during the conference.

Question2:

Person-Centered Analysis of CIVED Survey Data

Cluster Patterns for 5 countries sharing the Western Europe Tradition
(see figure Australia, England, Finland, Sweden, US)

- Social Justice cluster
- Conventionally Political Cluster
- Indifferent Cluster
- Disaffected Cluster
- Alienated Cluster (Anti-Social Justice)

Focus on Alienated Cluster:

This cluster consists of 14-year-olds with uniformly negative attitudes about rights for minorities and immigrants. Their motto: "I'm angry about the immigrants and minority groups in my country, and I don't trust the government. I have the right to do what I want."

Across countries:

- About 7% across countries are Alienated and hold negative inter-group attitudes
- 25% of these Alienated youth think it is "not important to obey the law"
 - 1% for Conventional; 6% for Disaffected
- Potentially for illegal protest (block traffic):
 - Alienated cluster members expect to protest

Social Justice cluster members do *not* expect to protest.

Question 3:

Relevant international research:

- IEA Civic Education Study-CIVED (started mid-1990s)
- ICCS (International Civics and Citizenship Study) (started in 2009)

Focusing on the "Discourse Community" and "Participatory Community"
in Relation to Intercultural Attitudes:

Positive Attitudes towards Ethnic Minority Rights by High/Low Open Classroom Climate in Four Countries (CIVED99) (see figure): significant differences

Question 4:

CIVED Data from the United States Replicated in 3 Post-Communist countries (e.g. Bulgaria, Estonia)

Comparison of Educational Groups: Open classroom climate for discussion versus traditional teaching

**Summary**

Interactive and lecture-based experience in civic education classroom both relate to higher scores on nearly a dozen civic/social outcomes

We have learned about enhancing the discourse and participatory communities:

- Explain and insist on ground rules of respect for diversity of opinion
- Scaffold discussions to operate with these rules
- Promote shared goals and sense of identity
 - with both school and local communities
- Recognize peripheral and direct participation
- Identify problems and promote a sense of collective efficacy in solving them
- Equip students with cognitive skills
 - listening to others and taking their perspectives

We also know about the challenges:

- Educators are often wary about establishing an open climate for classroom discussion of issues
 - Curriculum standards emphasize knowledge
 - Interactive methods are risky without scaffolding
 - Intergroup tensions, structural factors and institutional resistance have an influence
 - Alienated students can be challenging

In conclusion, there is a place in this process for school inspection:

- Begin with the premise that social and civic capacities along with citizenship competences contribute to both
 - students' development as individuals and
 - their schools, communities & societies (directly and indirectly)
- Value what students and educators say about their classroom and school contexts
- Address an appropriately broad view of emergent citizenship and civic resources
- Develop methods to assess and give feedback on the discourse and participatory communities

1.3 Prof. dr. Herman van de Werfhorst, University of Amsterdam

Subject: [The effect of school systems, regulation and assessment of schools on social quality of education](#)

Education has multiple goals and tasks which are equivalent in importance. Education policy makers, inspectorates and politicians have to navigate among these multiple objectives. In his

research, Prof.dr. Herman van de Werfhorst looks at how differences between several countries in school systems, regulation and the assessment of schools has an impact on the social outcomes of education.

Inspectorates need to navigate between multiple outcomes. It is impossible to rank schools on one aspect only – there is interaction between many aspects. Educational systems cannot equally address all goals.

Civic and citizenship outcomes means, among other things, to socialize children into the dominant norms of the society they live in. This research shows that there is a tradeoff between efficiency and equality. It also shows the school and the educational system play a role in minimizing inequality.



In civic and citizenship outcomes of education the relationships in the following matrix play a role:

	Efficiency of civic and citizenship outcomes	Equality of civic and citizenship outcomes
Centralization		
School accountability		

One of the conclusions of this matrix is that in the countries where there is a high level of centralization or centralized content there often also is a system of school accountability or external evaluation.

The central question is: are centralization and accountability of civic and citizenship education related to average student-level civic engagement and equality in civic engagement?

In the research three civic and citizenship outcomes are used to measure differences among students:

- Civic Knowledge test
- Democratic values
- Interest in political and social issues

Conclusions

- It seems that centralization and accountability are (modestly) positively related to civic outcomes. (mostly centralization, and esp. civic knowledge).
- Importantly, while centralization is often related to higher averages in civic and citizenship outcomes of students (i.e. more efficiency), centralization is also related to higher levels of inequality between families, and between schools.
- Is focused attention of central bodies more beneficial for students and schools which would have done well without this attention anyway?

Additional important points

- Centralization does not have a positive effect on equality by social background, but a positive effect on civic knowledge.
- In other words there is more inequality by parental background in systems with centralized civic education content. More specifically, the higher the political interest of the parent the higher the civic knowledge the students pick up in school. ?
- Also in the case of social outcomes, education benefits students with 'higher' social backgrounds most.
- External evaluation shows no relationship to social outcomes.

1.4 Prof. dr. Anne Bert Dijkstra, Dutch Inspectorate of Education, University of Amsterdam

Subject: [How to assess social quality of education? Models of school inspection](#)

"The Bennington Women"

- Bennington College, Vermont, USA
- Data collection 1930s - 50s - 80ies
- Stability of social orientations during life span
- After 50 years: 60% socio-cultural attitudes explained by attitudes leaving high school
- Formation of attitudes: become more stable in late adolescence

60% of political attitudes are determined when pupils leave school. So what goes on in formative school years does matter!

Primary goals of education:

- Academic development ~ qualification (reading, writing, math, science)
- Social development

Criteria for evaluating school quality:

- Core curriculum & academic achievement
- Social outcomes of schools

Inspecting schools improves their quality. A good school helps students to improve the competences to live their life. During primary school: social outcomes are seen on the street, in sport clubs, as a citizen and a leader. These roles influence life and vary in time. So focus on academic competences only, gives an incomplete picture .

But how to understand social outcomes?

Social outcomes

- multi-faceted
 - depending on contexts, different roles
 - varies by time, place
- wide-ranging (≠ 'abstract')
- important for strong economies & personal success (≠ 'soft')

Bikes in Amsterdam are subject to different rules than in other parts of The Netherlands. Social groups set norms, individuals are members of society. Social outcomes are important goals for education; these are not "soft" goals, because they contribute to economic growth.

Social outcomes of education:

- Social returns: positive effects on wellbeing, health, educational opportunities children etc.
- Social competence: a person's ability to fulfil different social roles successfully
- Civic competence
- Social cohesion & Social capital

Civic competences: Do people trust each other? This is important for society, because it enhances social cohesion.

Communities with a high level of trust, have social capital, have shared (democratic) norms and values and also a shared identity for the future. This contributes to economy.

Social outcomes of schools:

- Social and civic competences of students
- Social quality of schools: those aspects of school quality that are primarily relevant to obtaining social and civic competences

Social quality of schools is an important aspect. Schools need to know their results. Does the content and the organization meet pupils needs? Schools need to be aware of this. Schools have to answer the question: Are we satisfied with the results?

So there are two evaluation goals:

- Results meet expectations
- School improvement

Main functions school inspection in social domain:

- Strengthening school improvement
- Accountability
- Insight in what's going on for parents, society, policy makers
- Preventing unintended effects of academic achievement centred inspections

At this moment school inspection has a one sided perspective, focused on academic achievement. Therefore the SICI working group experimented with assessments of social outcomes. It turned out to be feasible to show results in the domain of social outcomes.

1.5 Wulf Homeier, President of SICI, President State of Lower Saxony Institute for School Quality Development**Subject: presentation of the results of the SICI working group on social outcomes of education**

In March 2010 a workshop on citizenship took place. This is where the discussion on social outcome and how and if it could be included in inspections started. As a follow up to two Citizenship workshops, the 2011 workshop on social outcomes in Norway was organized. Subsequently, the working group on social outcomes was formed by the inspectorates of Norway, Scotland, Sweden and the Netherlands.

Mr. Homeier is proud that SICI is an umbrella organization that functions as a forum for inspectorates. SICI has the financial capacity to provide a scientific basis and develop and share knowledge about inspecting and evaluating. SICI encourages and supports this kind of projects, which in turn make SICI a more effective organisation.

Why and how is social outcome important? The last years we are confronted more and more with issues of:

- Increase in social migration,
- Individualization,
- Economic crisis,
- Climate change,
- Wars coming closer to the borders of Europe and other western countries.

All of which lead to uneasiness and disintegration. Schools should provide safe environments for students, with common values and social cohesion. These are no new ideas, but they are becoming more important in light of current issues.

Then, how to evaluate social outcomes? Cognitive development is easier to measure than students attitudes towards politics. Mr. Homeier refers to the Bratislava Memorandum on Inspection and Innovation from 2013 by saying: 'do not value that what can be measured, but measure what is valuable'.

There are several aspects and partners which are obliged to work together in education.

1. Governments and school administration, work within and provide a legal basis;
2. Schools and educators;
3. Educational scientists;
4. Society, parent/caregivers;
5. School inspection or external evaluation, providing feedback and offering it wise.

What can school inspections do to help schools reach current needs?

Referring to the Bratislava Memorandum again, Mr. Homeier mentions three categories of how evaluation/inspection can contribute to education (policy).

1. Enforcer, mitigator of risk, law;
2. Catalyst, partnership-builder, stimulate self-dependency, improve competences;
3. Agenda setter, support schools to preserve space for innovation.

How can we measure these social outcomes? See the book of the working group: [*Social Outcomes of Education; The assessment of social outcomes and school improvement through school inspections*](#). The way in which the four participating countries do this will also be discussed on the second day of the conference.

Bratislava Memorandum on Inspection and Innovation (2013): 'do not value that what can be measured, but measure what is valuable'

1.6 Panel-discussion and closing session

Thesis for discussion is: "Legislation for schools to work on social competences and social quality is necessary in order to enable us to measure progress in this field"

Members of the panel:

- Judith Torney-Purta (USA)
- Annette Roeters (The Netherlands)
- Stewart Maxwell (Ireland)
- Herman van de Werfhorst (The Netherlands)
- Wulf Homeier (SICI President, Germany)

Maxwell:

Positive is:

- the focus on this topic, to take action, it gets a sense of priority and in case of an inspector visit the school can show evidence.
- students get a sense of them being part of a greater community, part of a greater world.

Van de Werfhorst:

Against:

- Measurement is an empirical question, this is not a question of legislation.
- In centralization (e.g. exams) and accountability legislation plays an important role.
- Ranking in terms of social outcomes is impossible.

He is in favour of promoting social education.

Listener 1:

- A distinction must be made between legislation and guidance. In case of guidance one relies on the teachers as role models.
-

Listener 2:

- The thesis is nonsense. Legislation has nothing to do with measurement. I am in favour of civic education. It is a task of the school. Many schools believe they have a role to play here, because they cannot go to the families for it.

Maxwell:

- Against: an argument is also that it is a matter of change in culture and an attitude in inspectors.

Roeters:

- In support of the thesis is when I worked in a school board we said we could do without legislation, but we didn't act until legislation. Since 2006 we have 'citizenship' formulated in Dutch legislation. To facilitate schools to work together the "Scholenalliantie" started. As inspectorate we are wrestling with the more general goals in law.

Homeier:

- Pro is that legislation sets a framework. In Germany discussions were held about the question 'What is the best for society?' Democracy sets a framework. As an inspector you will find resistance. A framework helps because then anybody can see to it. Legislation must not be too narrow; it must give free space (in relation to circumstances of schools and students).

Listener 3:

- In Northern Ireland (Belfast) teachers are recruiting members of the society, to work with more social cohesion. There are examples of non-teachers that contribute to social education.

Maxwell:

- We are not "recruiting", actually they are coming to us. What other partners are contributing? Schools cannot deliver all skills. They can make use of people of the communities and other partner organizations.

Torney-Purta:

- The American Scientists Organization is interested in social education in schools. In the USA there are 20.000 school boards.
- European countries have to involve as many stakeholders as possible (including parents) and also have to address bullying. "This is my business to tell e.g. parents".
- No top-down formula, but mobilize immigrant groups.
- Legislation is important to have an adjusted discourse. After collaboration, we have to move in this direction.

Listener 4:

- I do not believe legislation is helpful for measuring. For that reason we need indicators. It is very difficult to measure social competencies and school quality. Measurement of content is an aspect. I am wondering how you can use observations for measuring social competencies.

Maxwell:

- The SICI Working Group is addressing this question.
- It is important to meet stakeholders and to see the kind of differences and examples of the benefits.
- Record their experiences, read.
- Observe young people operating.

Homeier:

- There is also the question of the inspection system: how to help the school to follow the rules.
- You need instruments to find out the status and then discuss with schools what they are doing about it.

Torney-Purta:

- Researchers look at behavior and collaboration.
- They use pilot schemes, ethnography, student self-report
- Ask students and teachers
- There are lots of methods
- It is necessary to begin the process!

Listener 5:

- If there will be measurements for schools, there also must be measurements for the competencies of teachers. They have to learn how to develop those social competencies of their students (the black box).

Van de Werfhorst:

- It's a good idea asking teachers for social education.
- It's a pity for the Cool-data and for The Netherlands that this was left out.

Listener 6:

- The response rate of The Netherlands was so low that this country had to be excluded.

Roeters:

- It is not only a mission statement of teachers; schools work in teams for the goals they want to reach.

Homeier

- An inspector is not an empirical scientist. His task is not to measure, but to conclude.

Listener 7:

- What about the schools at risk? If the school is unsafe, students don't learn. So, we first need instruments to develop safe schools and then measurements for social competencies.

Dijkstra:

- This is a great challenge for schools in The Netherlands; policy makers are debating on this issue. Some schools are more open and safe than others.

Votes: mainly green.**1.7 End of the day reflections: Towards inspecting social quality of education
Prof Geert ten Dam****Closing remarks:**

- Not only important is academic knowledge, but also social competences.
- Students differ, because of their social backgrounds;
- Schooling is important; some schools do a good job but other schools are staying behind.

We cannot always detect the causes for this difference, but in any case the pedagogical climate and the educational system are factors playing a role.



2. Thursday, September 18, country-workshops

2.1 Norway

Questions and discussion

When and how is the inspectorate reacting on risks, signals, media-attention, complaints, etc.?
That depends. There are no formal criteria. Complaints are addressed to the county governors.

How do you guarantee that the inspections in the different counties work in the same way? The directorate organizes 'coordination meetings'. There is an instruction handbook for inspectors. Each county had a mix of legal and educational competences.

Can you see any progress in the social competences of social climate in schools?

The inspectorate does not do monitoring on this subject. Because all the inspections are thematic it is difficult to monitor developments. Other departments of the ministry do the monitoring of pupils outcomes via pupil and parent questionnaires.

Is it possible to investigate the social climate of a school without doing class observations?

The interviews with pupils, teachers and parents are a good way of gathering data about the climate. In Germany the observations are crucial in the inspections. Teachers know that the inspector will do observations but they do not know in which class. In Scotland observations are also crucial. These are active observations, with conversations with students. It is about the judgment of the learning, not the teaching.

Is the way Norway inspects social outcomes not too limited if you consider the law with attention for attitudes, skills like creativity, etc.?

In a way it is. The activities of the councils get much attention in this thematic inspection. The questionnaires and interviews offer more information.

Headlines

Schools do a lot to realize a good psycho-educational environment for pupils, but there is still more to do. There are a lot of activities but it is difficult to see what the effects are.

The way we do our inspections on this theme is still in the beginning and needs to be more profound. We are still struggling with criteria and norms.

It is important to talk with the pupils themselves and the parents.

Inspections do need legislation as a basis for their work, especially on a subject as complex and normative as social outcomes.



2.2 Scotland

Headlines

In all three sessions, questions were asked about the transformation of the Scottish inspectorate from scrutiny only (before 2011) to scrutiny + support as of 2011. Most questions addressed the issue if it is possible for inspectorates to combine these two roles. Is there not a risk of the inspectorate becoming too much of a political actor?

The presenter answered that although it is true that both scrutiny and support are the task of the same inspectorate, they operate separately. The 'Area Lead Officer' coordinates visits to schools and sees to it that inspectors and advisors are not interfering with each other. And by the way, during inspection visits, inspectors can also give useful tips and advice.

Participants did not persist in their critical questions and the presenter did not go into the possibly undesirable side-effects of this way of working. However, he did explain that that education Scotland has important powers to impose sanctions, which in the end might lead to closing schools. The past years however, this has not occurred.

Some questions addressed the issue of how to measure social outcomes. Education Scotland does not use indicators for social outcomes. All schools however, do have an important task in educating students to become responsible citizens. During inspection, inspection teams with a broad composition not only visit schools but also consult other organizations and institutions in the area surrounding the school to find out to which extent schools reach this goal. For this purpose, inspection teams use information from questionnaires, interviews and classroom observation.

2.3 Sweden

Headlines

The role of the questionnaires was a major theme in the discussion. Each year 100,000 questionnaires are sent to teachers, pupils and parents. The results of these are analysed and used during the inspectorates' school visits. However, the questionnaires are not used for self-evaluation. Completing the questionnaires takes about 40 minutes.

Class observations are not obligatory during the regular inspectorates' visits, neither are they used for the assessment of the schools. In thematic inspections however, they are an important instrument. For example, an inspector can observe a teacher for a week during his or her work.

Other points of interest

- According to the workshop-presenter: "We are inspectors because we want to improve the schools".
- There may be variations in salaries etcetera, because the schools are funded by the municipalities.
- Despite funding from the municipalities the schools have to adhere to government laws and policies.
- Inspectors conform to laws and regulations and only report to the schools.
- Sanctions etcetera are delegated to the municipalities.

2.4 The Netherlands

In the three sessions of this workshop, there was no discussion. However, there were a number of questions which were repeatedly asked. The most important ones were the following:

- How reliable are the questionnaires on social outcomes that are used in the Netherlands?
- If 99% of the schools are judged to perform at a satisfactory level in the area of social outcomes, is the assessment sufficiently critical?
- How can complex processes be judged during a short visit or by means of a questionnaire?
- Are parents involved in the assessment of the performance of schools in the field of social outcomes?

- If a school has a low score on social outcomes, can the inspectorate qualify the school as a weak school?

Headlines

Participants showed active interest in the thesis of the workshop presenters that once the inspectorate started to pay attention to the issue of social outcomes, research and support agencies also became involved. As a result, schools are more consciously active in this area. The overriding question during all three of the sessions was: can social outcomes be measured at all, and if the answer to that question is positive, is it possible to draw conclusions from such measurement?



3. Thursday, September 18, school visits

An important part of the conference was dedicated to visiting schools and observing and discussing a citizenship and social development program in action.

The Peaceable School program

At the closing session of Wednesday a short video clip meant as 'appetizer information' was shown of The Peaceable School program (De Vreedzame School). This program has a history of almost ten years and knows a participation of about 500 schools in The Netherlands, mainly in primary education.

The video clip showed a typical way of handling potential conflict in schools and teaching a democratic way of solving tense situations. To prevent quarrels about the rules for playing with marbles child mediators had formed a 'Marble Committee' and eloquently explained its workings on the video.

Thursday morning the project leader and developer of TPS, Mr. Leo Pauw, held a keynote presentation showing the development, activities, goals and successes of TPS. He mentioned the activities of the Program in secondary and vocational education. He explained also the strongly growing branch of the program into The Peaceable Neighborhood, stimulated by events and requests made from schools to widen the range of action from pupils and teachers, the school building and playground to parents and neighbors and areas surrounding the school.



The six Amsterdam elementary schools that volunteered to receive a conference delegation and organize lessons, presentations and question and answer sessions are all catering to student populations with very diverse backgrounds. The schools are situated in highly culturally mixed neighborhoods. These schools have been participating in The Peaceable School program from one to ten years.

The school visits

Thursday afternoon delegations of conference participants were received in the schools and presented with a short introductory welcome by the head of school, teachers or pupils. In all schools class visits were held in lessons of the Peaceable School program. Ages of students vary between 4-5 years to 11-12 years.

Across schools the range of TPS procedures and communication became clear; many games, directed toward taking turns and also for exercising choice ('who's next?'), like 'throwing the world-ball' to fellow pupils, the red-yellow-blue caps-game to come to recognize and come to grips with emotions, the judgment of communications ('raise-upper' and put-downer' remarks) and how to react constructively.

Role playing takes an important place in TPS, exercising perspective-taking and positive communications, which are so central to positive development of social skills. Other outlines of the program became visible, both the small group and classroom committees, the training and support

by student mediators or the Pupil Council, all platforms to exercise democratic ways of communicating and build experience in problem solving.

The conversations with the children about the lesson activities and learning results were enlightening, demonstrating the efficacy of TPS skills in solving real life anger or bullying situations. Visitors saw the 'cool down spots' being used both as an example of how lessons are given and for real cooling down for pupils really getting angry during some class activities. These observations also demonstrated how teachers apply the non-judgmental, positive approaches to neutralizing conflict while showing tolerance and teaching social skills at the same time.

In several schools conference participants discussed motives and experiences with pupils of the higher grades who had been active as mediators. Focus is on the way they have mastered the attitudes and skills to be able to successfully intervene in conflict situations with fellow students and their feelings about this. Frequently conference visitors comment upon the self-assuredness and clarity of the children talking about emotions and social interaction and the way they are empowered to act in real life situations. They sense the personality and attitudes these children have developed in feeling socially competent after being involved in these exercises and witnessing their positive effects.

Application and implementation

In the discussions with teachers the delegation members found out the greatly different backgrounds of schools before stepping into the TPS-program. Teacher teams frequently discussed their original reticence in starting with the program as they found it unnecessary for their own school. Other teacher teams described the smooth transition from earlier citizenship or social building programs bridging the adoption and introduction of The Peaceable School. Still a third background emerged, this one of a head mistress being 'at the end of her resources' to counter the negative social developments in the school before applying for the program.

A common motive emerged in regard to the 'whole school community'-approach the TPS takes. This is not a cognitive teaching method but a school community and social development program involving commitment and learning of all teachers and all pupils and the parents, too.

Visitors' observations

In the different delegations' reports a number of statements regarding the outcomes and characteristics of the schools participating in TPS are made:

- In general the occurrence of conflicts had decreased and there are changes toward a more positive social interaction in lessons and within the school as a whole;
- Children use learned TPS skills in situations outside of the school (not always successfully);
- Pupil mediators sensitize parents not to ride a bike on the school grounds (more effectively than when teachers would do the same ?);
- TPS can be an effective approach of school development involving parents from mixed cultural backgrounds and a way to discuss values and stimulates participation in wider society, both for pupils and their parents;
- TPS introduces and builds a common language for positive and constructive social interaction, spoken by all those who are involved with the school;
- The pedagogical climate of the school is enhanced;
- There is more sensitivity recognition for the place of 'minorities' ;
- Pupils are allowed to 'learn to choose';
- Teachers feel they have become more effective in establishing order and trust to have positive outcomes of situations and thus behave with more patience toward pupils;
- The way teacher and pupils interact show positive changes, allowing for (some) students to take more responsibility and teachers in some situations to take a step back;
- However, the final responsibility for the wellbeing and learning of the pupils stays with the teachers;
- The program is never to be expected 'the final solution'. Student mediation sometimes does not work. Changing contexts for TPS activities sometimes makes social learning ineffective. School directors and teachers should always be aware of this and act accordingly in adapting their teaching;

- The learning takes place on all levels of the school community, e.g. heads and teachers report they are more understanding of social contexts and more effective in communication with parents.

Supervision of social outcomes

Finally in several schools conference participants discussed with teachers and heads the way inspectors could supervise and follow the social development of schools and the effects of programs like The Peaceable School. In general it is difficult to measure the individual effects, transferability and sustainability of the program. However, based on the talks with pupils, teachers and head teachers visitors are generally favorably impressed with the positive outcomes that have been accomplished and have communicated this to the schools.

Following the visits the schools were presented with a framed charter commemorating these visits. The next day all schools received a cake proportional to the number of teachers as another way of expressing our appreciation for their invitation and openness.



4. Friday, September 19, keynotes and closing session

4.1 Melanie Ehren, Institute of Education, London

Subject: Effective inspections for social quality

Social competence is not (yet) part of inspection frameworks. Social competences are less easily measurable. Because it is a more general pedagogic aspect of the school, regulation by legislation is difficult. We need to build more knowledge about how to measure social competence.

Clearer standards are needed. Feedback on this point can improve. We can use good practices and examples of schools who are doing well in this domain.

There are no consequences (yet) for schools which are not doing well in this domain. Parents are (sometimes even more) interested in social quality and outcomes (than in cognitive outcomes).

Discussion

Stop assessing social competences as output, and measure them instead as a process. We can observe processes of change and improvement and we can believe they would lead to good results, but we cannot be sure the social output will increase.

We try to find standards or indicators for social behavior of children in order to make risk analyses.

The individual context of children is important: background and expectations matter.

Assessing social competences is also assessing how skills survive outside the classroom. So parents, neighbors of the school, the playground have to be also participants in the assessment.

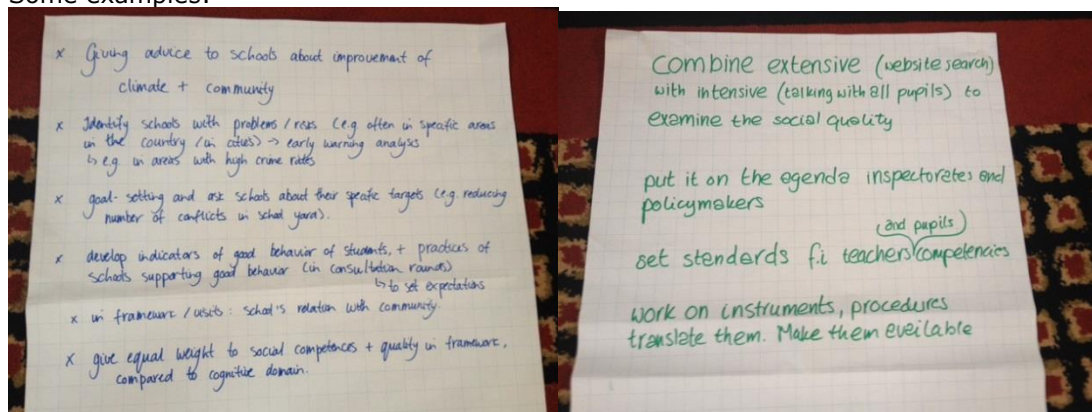
In Scotland the out of school context (community) is also observed.

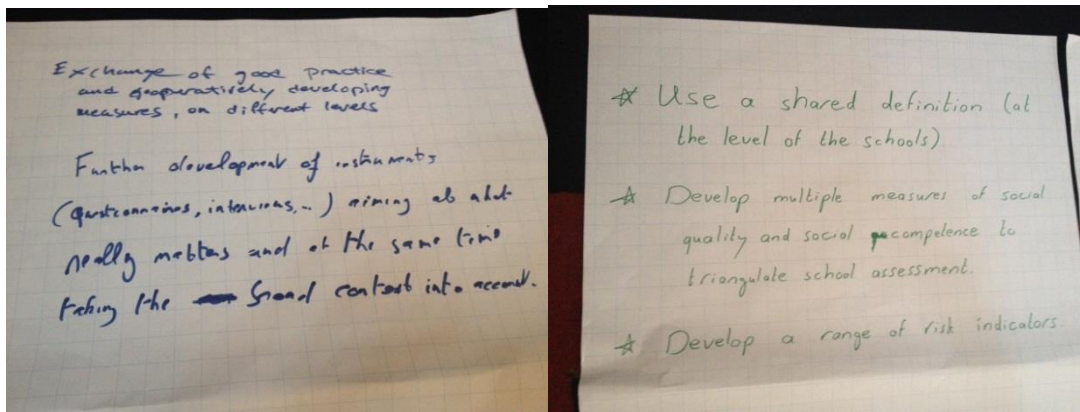
We have to research factors that are important in different countries in order to develop instruments. We have to construct standards and start to use them. Longitudinal development (what happens when students are 20 years old?) and benchmarking are important in finding standards.

Conclusion: social output as well as process is important.

4.2 Reflections on school visits

Some examples:





Headlines:

- Share good practices
- Establish common standards and definitions
- Put social outcome on the agenda of policymakers and inspectorates



4.3 Prof. dr. Micha de Winter, University of Utrecht

Subject: Improving schools for social outcome: what inspectors should focus on. Reflections from the example of 'peaceable schools in peaceful neighborhoods'

Relation school and environment

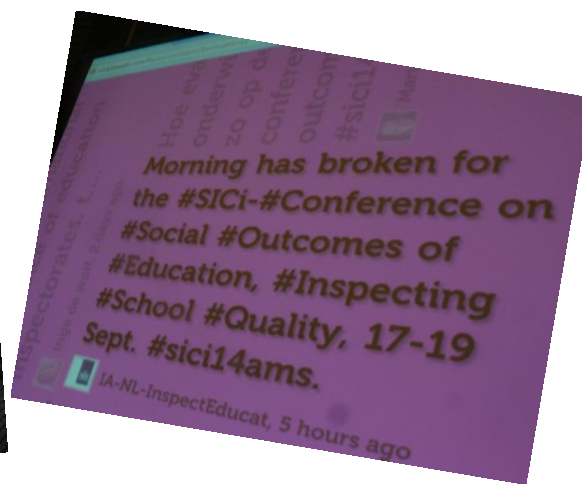
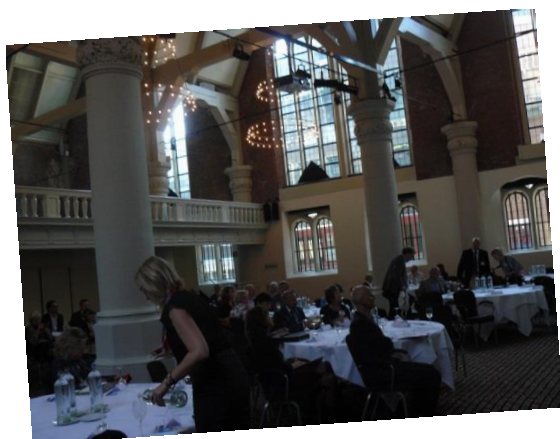
What children learn at school about social behavior does not automatically make them use these competences outside school. It seems that social behavior, learned at school is forgotten when students are for instance on the street or in the playground. They do not automatically apply these skills. That is why it is important that children also face these skills outside school. Therefore we extended in the city of Utrecht the concept of 'peaceable schools in peaceful neighborhoods'. Outside school children come into contact with for instance shopkeepers, social- or street workers and police. Therefore these people have had training in how schools teaches children social behavior. As a result, the children notice that the skills taught at school are also needed in the social environment when they come into contact with, for instance, a shopkeeper.

Studies of the social development of a child show that not only the parents and the school will have an impact in this but also the potential for interactions and the density of the social network are of influence. The less interactions there are through the parents or the environment the more chances of child abuse. Social development is not a school program but a program of participation.

It takes a village to raise a child.

The school offers plenty of connections. Give children opportunities for social connections. Give children opportunities and chances to have a voice for involvement and participation, recognize positive behavior Behavioral education is: ignoring bad behavior instead of punishment, be consistent in rewarding good behavior.

Raising children means struggle. Parents, school and neighborhood should share the responsibility to raise children. Learning how to solve conflicts is crucial for democratic education. We need to think about the future of our society, how tolerant and democratic we are. School has a strong function on this issue.



Many thanks to our reporters:

Peter Baak
Hans Dekkers
Anja Knuver
Mineke Laman
Gerry Leenen
Maud Leistra
Bert Molema
Monique Okkerse
Mark Oortwijn
Klari-Janne Polder
Els Schram
Joop Teunissen
Tessa Verbeek

