

## **Book Reviews**

**Editor: Dr. Paul Downes, St. Patrick's College, Ireland**

A common theme among a number of the books reviewed in this issue is that of care and relationships as part of preparing future professionals, whether in the area of primary education, health and social care or youth work. Cefai & Cavioni's book is concerned with Social and Emotional Education (SEE) in primary schools, adopting a layered focus through a multi-component, multi-intervention, multi-population and multi-year approach that is largely psychological in focus. Brotherton & Parker's book on education in health and social care takes a more sociological, social policy and political focus, while also seeking to address the needs of practitioners. Similarly Sapin's book, engaging with relationships as part of developing creativity and reflection in youth work settings, offers perspectives that are relevant across disciplines and professional domains. Gray & Webb's ambit of concern is with social work; they draw on a diverse and eclectic range of thinkers, mainly through a sociological and political theories lens. The commonality of themes, concerns and approaches, while obviously offering distinctive angles of specific concern as well, raise the issue as to how much current and future university courses across education, health and social care, social work and youth work could increasingly offer some similar joint modules as part of a broader multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach – some disciplinary boundaries may need expansion to benefit from such crossfertilisation of ideas and approaches. It is increasingly evident in the education, health, social care, social work and youth work domains that no domain is an island.

**Paul Downes**  
**Book Reviews Editor**

## ***1. Social and Emotional Education in Primary School: Integrating Theory and Research into Practice***

**Authors:** Carmel Cefai & Valeria Cavioni  
**Publisher:** Springer Publications  
**Year of publication:** 2014  
**ISBN:** 987-1-4614-8751-7  
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Do we send our children to school just to learn how to read and write? Or to prepare them for life? Families and educators are realising ever more strongly that success in life requires more than certificates and diplomas. And as we learn or fail to learn to read and write in our early years, so also we learn or fail to learn how to regulate our emotions and relate to others from our childhood with very significant consequences for the well-being or distortion of our lives.

Increasing importance is thus being given by psychologists and educators to the promotion of what has been termed as Social Emotional Learning or Emotional Literacy, or as Cefai and Cavioni call it, Social and Emotional Education (SEE). Teachers and schools notice this need in their children and often worry about their behaviour, but most have not been trained for this new area of learning. So they often would rather refer to outside school specialists or possibly leave it to the Personal and Social Educator to address this need.

Thus Cefai and Cavioni's book is a most useful gift for educators who would like to get to grips with this new important area of education. As one of the US experts in the area, Maurice Elias, states in the Foreword: 'This extraordinarily compact and valuable book integrates the best available theory, research and practice internationally and serves as an essential resource for practitioners, researchers, and policy makers'. This publication reflects the true state of the art in socio-emotional education with a comprehensive account of the relevant literature.

The authors build their model of SEE by bringing together six different strands in the field of Children's health and well-being, namely 'social and emotional learning, positive psychology and education, mindfulness education, resilience in education, inclusive education, and caring community perspectives'. They propose four key areas of SEE built on two dimensions, namely the intrapersonal dimension of Self-awareness and Self-management, and the interpersonal dimension of Social awareness and Social management which they capture under the terms 'I am...' and 'I can', and 'I care' and 'I will'.

This model is then operationalised for action in schools through what they term a multi component, multi-year, multi intervention and multi population approach. Thus the SEE curriculum is to be 'well-planned, well-implemented, and well evaluated' and: (a) is to include both regular direct teaching of areas of SEE to pupils, as well as SEE skills infused across the curriculum, and 'caught' through building a supportive class and whole school ethos and climate, and extending this to collaboration with parents and the community; (b) is to be taught developmentally throughout the kindergarten and primary school years in a spiral curriculum

that ‘revisits each of the four areas at developmentally appropriate levels, and which are also adapted according to the individual needs of pupils’; (c) while mainly targeting the pupils, SEE entails also the training, education and well-being of both staff and parents for its success; and (d) while SEE is intended as a ‘universal’ approach for all children, it also includes ‘targeted’ interventions at individual and small group levels ‘for pupils facing difficulties in their social and emotional development’. All these elements are explained at length in the different chapters.

All this may in fact sound quite daunting to primary schools and teachers that are already inundated with constant suggestions for reform in the content of curricula and systems of teaching and evaluation. However, Cefai and Cavioni suggest that their framework allows for schools to develop their particular engagement gradually through action research and according to perceived existing needs and initiatives. These can be piloted through well-planned but less complex and sustainable aspects that can be placed within a long term ‘roadmap’ provided by the SEE model and materials. These materials include sets of indicators for formative teaching and assessment of all components, namely the ‘SEE Learning Standards’ for ensuring the progress of the pupils themselves, as well as indicators for ‘A caring classroom’ (Teachers’ and Pupils’ versions), and for ‘A caring school’ (Staff and Parents’ versions) to be used in whole school development work, as well as indicators for staff and caregiver well-being.

In addition, sample sets of SEE activities were developed by Cavioni to be used by teachers and that should be made available online by the publisher (they were not yet available when this review was written). One of the tools could be the one illustrated by the stories concluding each chapter of the book that Cefai constructed on the basis of old legends and fables from different countries. The Maltese one, ‘Marjanna, the Marquis and the Falcon’ at the end of chapter 7, illustrates the importance of resilient problem solving in the face of apparently impossible challenges.

This book should be in the hands of every primary school teacher and head of school. Effective educators will find that indeed they are already addressing the dire pupils’ need for social-emotional development in their own way – they will find the book an affirmation and support for their continuing efforts for a holistic education of their pupils. For those teachers and school that have not taken on this responsibility, this book is the best tool for accessing current expertise on the education of the ‘heart’ in the most compact way.

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## **2. Social Work Theories and Methods**

<b>Authors:</b>	<b>Mel Gray &amp; Stephen Webb</b>
<b>Publisher:</b>	<b>Sage Publications Ltd</b>
<b>Year of publication:</b>	<b>2013 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)</b>
<b>ISBN:</b>	<b>978-1-4462-0860-1</b>
	<b>978-1-4462-0859-5</b>

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I worked as a social worker for a short time with an inner-London local authority in the early 2000s. After moving on, I revisited my frontline child protection team approximately 18 months later: over half my former colleagues were no longer working there, some completely exiting social work. The local authority was not under special measures; it was deemed to be performing satisfactorily and good management systems were in place. Churning of staff is not uncommon within frontline social work teams. I suspect this is not helped if supervision arrangements do not respond adequately to the psychic needs of social workers bearing witness to trauma on a daily basis. And an inadequate staff support culture may have emerged because we cannot agree on the breadth of knowledge underpinning social work practice.

Into this fray Gray and Webb (2013) return with their second edition, putting their stamp on key theories and methods in social work. One of their aims is to demonstrate how social work practice is influenced by ‘competing social science theories and philosophical commitments’. Their 20–chapter edited book is structured in three parts: theorists, theories, and perspectives for practice. Five theorists are examined in part one: Habermas, Giddens, Bourdieu, Foucault and someone I never heard of before, Judith Butler. I liked how each chapter in this section followed a similar structure: background on theorist, key ideas, relevance for social work, and implications for social work practice. But like those end-of-year ‘greatest hits’ television programmes which omit your favourite singers or genres, where are the contemporary psychological thinkers?

Gray and Webb’s principal aim in part two is to focus on theories ‘continuing to shape sociopolitical and philosophical thought’ – a lofty ambition – and on certain social work theories. Consequently, there is a potpourri feel to the middle section of the book. The reader will find chapters on attachment theory, feminist social work, critical social work, structural social work, multiculturalism, neoliberalism and postmodernism. While each chapter contains an assortment of ideas, a detailed section overview or summary may have helped the reader to map out how the ideas discussed hang together or apart. Again I feel this section was too dominated by sociological, cultural and political theories.

Part three is an even larger vessel of spices, leaves and dried flower petals, with eight chapters. The editors focus on perspectives for practice, examining the links between social work and methodological approaches. Specific areas explored are: cognitive-behavioural approach, ecological approach, social network analysis, ethnography, ethnomethodology, discourse and reflexivity, evidence-based practice and a final chapter, ways of knowing in social work. This section – even the chapter on cognitive-behavioural therapy - has little to say about the emotional education of service users or social workers.

The book is targeted at undergraduate and postgraduate social work students, and no doubt specialists can pick holes in various disciplinary areas covered. As a lecturer training social professional students, I would be happy to recommend this book to students looking for background information and further information on certain topics. But as a lecturer I also think about how social professional students integrate, apply and generate different kinds of knowledge to become competent practitioners. Consequently, in the next edition of this book I would like to see more space given to psychodynamic and emotional labour theories. I would also like to see a final chapter where the editors show students how to synthesise ideas aired earlier in the book, supporting them to become capable social workers.

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### **3. *Your Foundation in Health and Social Care***

<b>Authors:</b>	<b>Graham Brotherton &amp; Steven Parker</b>
<b>Publisher:</b>	<b>Sage Publications Ltd.</b>
<b>Year of publication:</b>	<b>2013 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)</b>
<b>ISBN:</b>	<b>978-1-4462-0884-7</b> <b>978-1-4462-0885-4 (pkb)</b>

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Education in health and social care builds the knowledge base for careers in statutory, voluntary and private organisations providing healthcare, social work and social care services worldwide. Given the varied nature of the career and discipline mix, producing a comprehensive foundational book which provides sufficient detail, but which is simultaneously engaging is a challenging task. This second edition of *Your Foundation in Health and Social Care* is comprehensive in providing a flexible set of materials that nurtures independent learning for students embarking on study for the first time in these sectors. Each chapter begins with a summary of contents, learning objectives, case studies and targeted activities which nurture professional identity, critical thinking skills and reflective practice. The jargon-free language is accompanied by effective visual representations which greatly enhances the user-friendliness of the book. The recommendations for further readings and links to web-based resources, accompanied by excellent social media guidelines ensure that knowledge is current and up-to-date, though it is predominantly in the context of health and social care in the United Kingdom (UK).

Section 1, 'Approaches' begins with Chapter 1 outlining learning approaches and presents a realistic explanation of the Visual/Auditory/Read//Kinaesthetic (VARK) (Fleming, 1987) model of learning styles and the skills of effective time management, critical reading and note-taking, essay and report writing, reflective

practice, referencing to avoid plagiarism. Wider applicability could be achieved for an international audience from a discussion of multiple intelligences, socio-emotional intelligence, enquiry-based learning and education theory. This would support social care pedagogy in the Irish context and socio-pedagogic and education work in Northern Europe in particular. Chapter 2 on reflective learning is an excellent chapter. Discussions of skill typologies and the models of reflective practice of Kolb (1984), Jasper (2003), Gibbs (1988), John (2006), Boud (1985), Schon (1983), Freire (1972) and Fook (2012) are student-centred and engaging. Chapter 3 on research is brief and effective. Overall, Section 1 is a great student resource, not only for students in the UK.

Section 2 'Key Issues' begins with Chapter 4 presenting the social context. It analyses Thomas's (1993) seven dimensions of care, medicalisation, health inequalities, women, health, gender and 'emotional work'. Hochschild's (1983) work on the 'caring relationships' and Goffman's (1963) 'stigma' are also introduced. In this chapter discussions on social inclusion and diversity would enhance equality debates and critical and comparative ideology. Chapter 5, on professional identity explores gender, social and historical constraints in emerging professional identity and advocates self-interrogation. McGillivray's model (chapter 5 with Brotherton, p. 132) emphasises the "fluid interplay and interface of spheres of influence" in professional identity and it certainly gives an insight into the complexity and liquidity of the professional journey.

Chapter 6 on values is very readable. Seedhouse's Ethical Grid (2009), Bank's (2011) 'situated ethics of social justice' in social care and Beauchamp and Childress's (2009) guidelines for professional ethics in health, are ethical models that are critical concepts in the integration of knowledge, policy, values and practice. The SEAwall of disabling barriers (Swain et al., 1998) and the rights based social model of disability are discussed to great effect. The chapter concludes with an analysis of person-centred care and the practice model for working with values. This model gives guidelines on ethical decision-making based on awareness of values, ethical conflicts that may arise, the ethics of care, power, empowerment and rights, being reflective, cultural awareness, taking risks and having moral courage and being morally active. This chapter concludes with a quotation from (Lawrence 1940, p. 27) to act without an understanding or regard for values and ethics' is to be "drained of morality, volition, of responsibility, like dead leaves in the wind" (p. 186). This chapter definitely builds rich and vibrant arguments for ethical practice in health and social care and does not leave any leaf unturned for the dedicated reader.

Chapter 7 on the political and organisation context briefly introduces the UK government system, history, legal and organisational structures, welfare pluralism, neo-liberalism, National Health Service reform and the social care reform of personalisation, managerialism and surveillance. Greater analysis of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the reconstruction of the National Health Service would be of benefit here. Reference to health care in France and Germany is brief and more extensive European and international comparisons would enhance cross-cultural understanding of health care provision. Chapter 8, 9, and 10 on psychology, interpersonal communications, and the future of health and social care services, provide 'hooks for learning', but further research is required in the respective disciplines for a fuller understanding the challenges that may arise in health, social care and social work arenas.

This book aimed to support students taking Foundation Degrees in health and social care and related higher education courses at the National Vocational Qualification levels 3 and 4 in the UK. The chapters on study, reflection, research, professionalization, values and ethics in practice, psychology and interpersonal communications have universal applicability to all students regardless of discipline or location. Introductory critical social policy analysis and sociological dimensions, though predominantly UK focused, also provide useful insights for international comparative work. The early foundations for critical thinking on health and social care in contemporary societies have also been set down in this book.

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#### ***4. Essential Skills for Youth Work Practice***

<b>Author:</b>	<b>Kate Sapin</b>
<b>Publisher:</b>	<b>Sage Publications</b>
<b>Year of publication:</b>	<b>2013 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)</b>
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The book is aimed at students of youth work and to all interested in getting further insight into the profession of youth work. It summarizes work of nearly 30 years at the University of Manchester, and provides a comprehensive overview of how youth work can be taught and creativity and reflection developed within youth work settings. A central premise of the book is the importance of taking a dialogic approach with learners. “*The “praxis” that is bringing together learners and practitioners to reflect on ideas and experience*”. Threaded throughout the book is an analysis of how different concept and ideas can be turned into skills and related to the real practice of youth work. The book includes a range of practical ideas for developing a creative work place, for individuals with various cultural, social, or political background, mainly based in England. These are drawn from successful interventions at youth work places, and are illustrated by boxes, or practice examples with quotations from participants. The book is well constructed and the chapter overview and summary skills at the end of each chapter, guides the reader through the central arguments and explanations which are made. There is a helpful Glossary for unfamiliar terms and for those who wish to explore more deeply the practical approaches to youth work, the Further Reading at the end of each chapter, provides a range of appropriate books and websites.

The book follows a staged approach following the actual process of youth work practice, which is a very innovative way of presenting the youth work from the beginning to the end. The book is divided into 3 parts: Part A, sets up the scene for building professional relationships. The initial chapter addresses central questions of what is youth work practice, youth workers’ roles, responsibilities and behavior, to whom they

refer to as well as the values and ethical issues related to youth work practice. The next chapters address the key themes of “locating” the youth work, suggesting “SWOT” analysis (p. 38) as a useful framework for getting to know the strengths and weaknesses of an organization (chapter 2), skills for teaching out young people (chapter 3), and establish voluntary relationships (chapter 4).

Part B, provides skills for getting young people work together and maintain cohesion, irrespective of their individual differences. This part, I think represents the core ideas of youth work, which are actually related to the concepts of Social and Emotional Learning, although Sapin does not adopt such a perspective. It mainly provides suggestions to handle and unify diversity in youth work, addressing key practical issues. Chapter 5 discusses ways of establishing viable group work, by identifying the special interests and needs of participants, without however ignoring realistic barriers to participation. Chapters 6 and 7, further work on the concept of ‘working together’, by delineating ways that youth work can be enjoyable for young people (chapter 6), and at the same time deal with matters of societal oppression in a planned and proactive approach (chapter 7). Chapter 8 analytically presents skills for dealing with disagreements. Working with conflict, dealing with violent disagreements, shared decision making, communication enhancement, shared decision making, and mainly reflecting on challenging situations, are skills which although Sapin locates into youth work context, I could easily suggest their implementation to school contexts as well. Sapin does not disregard young people’s weaknesses or dilemmas while youth work, and devotes chapter 9 on enhancing young people’s participation in work groups. Sapin claims that youth work actually attempts to focus on developing opportunities for young people, to explore their potential and reflect on their choices and consequences. While the focus is on individual’s needs, youth work certainly emphasized on community-based values and skills. As such, I could suggest youth work paradigm as a working framework for educational or other institutions with similar goals.

Part C, examines ways to develop and expand youth practice as a profession. The chapters explore the essential skills for designing a project (chapter 10) and managing a project (chapter 11). Chapter 12 (new to the current edition) addresses practical issues related to the fieldwork practice mainly for new-to-the-field youth workers, as well as pedagogical issues through reflection on practice. The final chapter in the book examines the essential skills youth workers have to be equipped with, in order to provide an effective supervision.

Sapin highlights a range of practical strategies for youth work practitioners. At the same time, she provides the incentives for reflection and therefore amelioration of the interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships. I would like to read this valuable information though, supported by theoretical frameworks, enriched with research findings in UK or other contexts. To summarize, I would recommend this book for practitioners across a range of experience with an interest in developing dialogic education. It is an engaging and clearly structured and written text, which comprehensively outlines youth work practice in UK.

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