

What and how do we monitor?

Understanding equity issues at local level

If we truly want to make the education system more equitable, we have to understand education *in context*.

The Centre seeks to understand how policies designed to enhance equity actually play out on the ground.

It explores how:

- complex webs of local factors – including housing, employment, transport, immigration, and access to services – impact on education and vice versa
- the experiences and challenges found in one setting can help us to understand equity issues arising across the country.

The Centre has an ongoing programme of in-depth case study work in towns and inner cities.

In each area, equity issues are explored by focusing on:

- access to education
- participation in education
- educational outcomes

To gain wide ranging insights, the Centre works closely with:

- local authorities
- Connexions and Sure Start
- voluntary and community services
- teachers, head teachers and further education principals
- students and parents.



Our work to date has revealed inequities in:

- access – where choice and competition have had negative impacts
- funding – where some children are seen to 'matter' more than others
- post-16 provision – where students are forced into inappropriate programmes
- exclusion processes – where children and young people become trapped outside the system.

Our work also points to new directions for reform:

- from competition to networks of local providers
- from narrow standards to a broader view of education
- from 'Education, Education, Education' to strategies that look beyond the school gates
- from central control to local leadership
- from 'targetology' to the principle of equity.

We believe:

- Central government has a **responsibility to foster new directions**
- There are **considerable opportunities at local level** to take the initiative

The Centre can help you to take a lead in your area.

Our Development and Research process has been designed specifically to help you to develop effective responses to local challenges.