A PORTRAYAL OF DISABILITY IN CHILDREN'S FICTION:

THE AVAILABILITY AND PROMOTION OF SUCH

RESOURCES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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Many thanks to my supervisor Briony Birdi, as well as Sheffield library service.
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"We read to know we are not alone"

C.S. Lewis
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Abstract

This research project explores the extent to which public libraries provide and promote children's fiction books which positively portray disability. The attitudes and awareness of public library staff, within the city of Sheffield, were also investigated in relation to such titles, as well as the initiatives that support them.

A mixed method approach was used. A checklist study was initially conducted to review the current stock holdings of Sheffield library service and Bertram library suppliers. In order to understand the attitudes and awareness of library staff, questionnaire responses were analysed, both from frontline staff as well as members of the children's stock selection team.

Findings indicated that Sheffield library service provided approximately half of the recommended titles that featured on the checklist. Knowledge and awareness was low amongst frontline staff in regards to initiatives and children's books promoting a positive portrayal of disability. However, the beliefs and attitudes of all staff regarding the importance of diversity and social inclusion revealed high levels of understanding, as well as strong opinions regarding the importance of inclusion and diversity.

It was concluded that public library services should support diversity and inclusion by providing and promoting children's titles that positively portray disability. Recommendations for further research, as well as possible improvements to library provision and promotion are also discussed.
Introduction

This research project has followed on from the campaign work of initiatives such as Scope's *In the Picture* (2006a) and Booktrust's *Bookmark* (2010) who address the need to include disabled characters in mainstream children's fiction books. Their campaigns highlight the importance of inclusive materials in improving children's attitudes and understanding towards disability.

There is a lack of previous research regarding the awareness and provision of children's books featuring disability within UK public library services, which indicates that this is an area that has not been addressed. This research project therefore investigated library stock as well as library staff awareness regarding such provisions.

The concentration of this project was specifically related to fiction for children of primary school age, due to the belief that books read to younger children can have a profound effect on their attitudes and values. Thus, it is believed that children are a lot more likely to understand and accept disability if they engage with such stories that include disabled people from an early age (Scope, 2006a). Investigations included picture books, first reads, and junior fiction.

The research was carried out within Sheffield City Council's public library service. The city of Sheffield is situated in South Yorkshire, and has an estimated population of approximately 550,000 (Office of National Statistics, 2008).

The prevalence of disability in UK children

One in eight people within the UK has a disability (Booktrust, 2010). The Scope charity (2006a) further states that there are approximately 770,000 disabled children within the UK; the equivalent of one in twenty, and thus a significant portion of society. The Office of National Statistics (2005) suggests that as many as one in ten children in the UK have a clinically recognisable mental disorder, and that one in five have special educational needs (Carpenter, 2005). There is therefore a need for disabled children to be fairly represented in both books and the media (Scope, 2006a).
A positive portrayal: Scope's *In the Picture* (2006) ten guiding principles

Scope's *In the Picture* created **ten guiding principles** (2006b) to help those writing and illustrating children's fiction books to recognise and provide material that handles disability in a sensitive, informed and helpful way. Such principles are based on experiences and reflections of those with disabilities.

For this research project it was important to define a "positive" portrayal of disability to enable children's book titles to be easily analysed. It was decided that Scope's guiding principles (2006b) should be followed to ensure that all books chosen for the checklist truly portrayed disability in a positive light. The ten guiding principles are as follows:

1. Books should be created with all children in mind, for all children to share and enjoy.
2. The point is not that disabled children should be the prime focus of stories or pictures: simply they should be there, a natural feature of every child's landscape.
3. Images of disability should be the norm, in the same way as images of different ethnicities are now the norm.
4. Images of disabled children should be used casually or incidentally, so that disabled children are portrayed playing and doing things alongside their non-disabled peers.
5. Disabled children should be portrayed as ordinary - and as complex - as other children, not one-dimensional.
6. Disabled children are equals and should be portrayed as equals - giving as well as receiving.
7. Disabled children should not be portrayed as objects of curiosity, sensationalised or endowed with superhuman attributes.
8. Stories should not have "happy ever after" plots that make the child's attitude the problem.
9. It is society's barriers that can keep disabled children from living full lives.
10. We should always remember that disabled children are children first and like all children have hopes and aspirations just like their peers.
Disability and social exclusion

Disabled people are still one of the most disadvantaged groups within society, with suggestions even stating that of all the disadvantaged groups, disabled people may be the most socially excluded (Howard, 1999). Social barriers are often caused by society's negative perceptions and inaccurate assumptions regarding disabled people (Linley, 2000). Therefore, public libraries must help to challenge society's misconceptions regarding disability. Providing and promoting a good selection of inclusive literature not only sends out a clear message of inclusion, but also encourages both adults and children to learn and understand more about the day-to-day lives of disabled people and to develop positive attitudes towards disability.

Aims and Objectives

Aim:

- To gain a deeper understanding in to the extent to which public libraries (specifically Sheffield) provide and promote books that positively portray disability in children's fiction.

Objectives:

- Review the current provision of children's fiction featuring disability in Sheffield library authority.
- Investigate the extent to which Sheffield public library staff are aware of initiatives such as In the Picture (Scope) and Bookmark (Booktrust).
- Examine the awareness of Sheffield public library staff regarding children's fiction stock which positively portrays disability.
- Explore if any promotional work is carried out by Sheffield public library service in relation to children's fiction featuring disability.
**Literature Review**

"When disabled children are absent from books...how does it make them feel, and what messages are being given to children as a whole?"

(Lindon, 1998: 178)

**Definition of disability**

Disability has been defined by the Department of Health (DoH) as –

"Disadvantage experienced by an individual as a result of barriers...that impact on people with impairments and/or ill health" (DoH, 2010).

Such barriers can be social, physical or attitudinal in nature and may impact on the educational, employment or independent opportunities of the person (PMSU, 2005). This definition draws on the Social Model of Disability (Oliver, 1981; 1990), which states that it is society that 'disables' individuals as a result of environmental and cultural hindrances that exist, and thus it is a social problem and not an individual's (Shakespeare, 2006). This model contrasts starkly with the biological model, which implies that disability is a medical condition, with individual's specific impairments hindering their quality of life (Woodham & Danieli, 2000). Whilst it is not unanimously accepted, the Social Model of Disability is becoming increasingly established, with the UK Government following this theoretical tool in regards to improving disability policies and practices (PMSU, 2005).

Beckett et al (2010), in agreement with Saunders (2004), strongly believes that much can be gained from following the Social Model of Disability when assessing and analysing disability in children's literature.
The absence of disability in children's fiction

Until very recently, disabled children have been "virtually invisible" from children's fiction books (Scope, 2006a). A number of initiatives have noticed this vast under-representation; most prolifically of these are *In the Picture*, by the Scope charity (2006a), and *Bookmark*, by Booktrust (2010). Such initiatives aim to make children's fiction more inclusive, and believe that our diverse society needs to be fully reflected within the books we read. Both campaigns work closely with the book industry in an attempt to encourage authors, illustrators and publishers to include more positive images of disabled children naturally within children's fiction and picture books.

Middleton (1999) believes that subtle but regular inclusion of disabled children in storybooks is important, and enables all children to become accustomed to seeing images of disability on a regular basis. Thus, such images should become the norm, and a natural feature of child's landscape (Scope, 2006b). Matthew and Clow (2007) insist on the importance of supporting inclusion and equality within children's literature, arguing that information about disability should not be offered simply by non-fiction books, and that the casual inclusion of characters with disabilities should occur within mainstream, everyday fictional books. They believe this would benefit all children, and would improve awareness and understanding of many disabilities.

As part of a recent Booktrust collaboration with the Quentin Blake Award project, entitled 'Making Exclusion a Thing of the Past' (Booktrust, 2006), children were consulted and asked to voice their views, concerns and suggestions regarding the issue. There was a unanimous agreement that there were "...simply not enough images of disability in books" (Booktrust, 2006, p6). Many felt that there had not been many positive images of disability available when they were growing up, especially in regards to 'invisible' conditions such as dyslexia, autism and AD/HD. Children also stated that their attitudes and preconceptions had changed due to the positive portrayal of disability within the books they had read during the course of the project (Booktrust, 2006). Many of the writers and illustrators involved in the project declared that they had been motivated to become more proactive in the inclusion of disabled characters within their own works.

Interestingly however, a small proportion of publishers who were contacted believed this inclusion of disabled characters would be seen as too politically correct,
with one publisher even saying that there was no market for such books (Booktrust, 2006). Until recently, books specifically about disability have often been published by small publishing houses (Favazza et al, 2000), making them hard to obtain on a large scale for places such as libraries. However, recent initiatives (Booktrust, 2010; Scope, 2006a) strongly believe that such books should not be deemed as a specialist area, and should be readily available via mainstream publishers.

The portrayal of disability in children's fiction

It is not simply about the inclusion of characters with disabilities in children's book that is considered important, but also portraying such characters and disabilities in a positive light (Blaska, 2003; Prater, 2003; Saunders, 2004). Beckett et al (2010) believes that the handling of disability by authors and illustrators is highly important in influencing the perceptions and attitudes of children.

Scope (2006b) emphasise the need to include disabled characters naturally, without making it feel contrived or tokenistic. Characters should have 'real' personalities and should not be stereotyped (Booktrust, 2009a). Both illustrations and terminology should also be considered and researched, so as not to be used incorrectly (Saunders, 2004). In support of this, Christie (1999) remarks on the use of a token wheelchair user in children's books as an attempt to accommodate disability, but highlights that only 5% of disabled people actually use a wheelchair. Booktrust (2006) identified that many disabled children expressed they would rather be inconspicuous than be deemed different or 'special', and children's book characters should reflect this desire.

Quicke (1985) provided a key study relating to the portrayal of disability in children's literature, concluding that the importance lay in criteria such as the overall optimism of the story, but he was also quick to note that books should not be unrealistically optimistic and should avoid cliché happy-ever-afters. Matthew and Clow (2007) note that disabled characters in books are rarely featured as the main protagonist. Instead, they are often depicted as needy characters, defined solely by their disability and without any clear personality of their own (Blaska & Lynch, 1994). In counteracting this portrayal some books present disabled characters as saintly or superhuman which is also unrealistic (Brittain, 2004). Johnson (2007), a professional
illustrator, emphasizes the need to recognize children's differences, and expresses the importance of depicting the child first and the disability second. Worotynec (2004) feels that some storylines and messages are so contrived that they border on being offensive.

Beckett et al (2010) are concerned that whilst examples of positive and inclusive literature do exist, there remain a large number of children's fiction books in which discriminatory language and negative stereotypes of disability are still present. Therefore, it is important to portray a true and rounded representation of children with disabilities, and to correctly describe their day-to-day lives and experiences (Biklen and Bogdan, 1977).

**Children's understanding and attitudes towards disability**

Rudman (1994) believes books are extremely useful in teaching children about the world and society and, more specifically, about people's similarities and differences. Pinsent (1997) emphasised the importance of reading well chosen books as a way of enabling children to appreciate themselves as well as others, and suggests that literature plays an important role in educating children about equality and inclusion (Pinsent, 1997). It has been suggested that young children have a tendency to merge their own feelings with that of book characters, enabling them to empathise and experience similar emotions themselves (Brittain, 2004). In support of these ideas, Innes and Diamond (1999) state that they consider the first few years of childhood to be crucial in promoting a positive understanding of disability, stating that children's attitudes develop quickly during this period.

Monson and Shurtleff (1979) found inclusive media impacted positively on the attitudes of non-disabled children, and concluded that the most powerful of media for this was books. Similarly, it has been stated that education about disabilities through books can enable children to move away from a point-and-stare culture (Rushby-Smith, 2009). Favazza et al (2000) noted that young children enjoyed reading books which appropriately included disabilities, and again believed positive attitudes could be learnt via this method. Such books are also likely to have an impact on parents and carers as well; prompting them to question their own attitudes and understanding of disabilities (Matthew and Clow, 2007).
The use of clear, positive illustrations have also been deemed highly important due to young children being extremely observant and relying heavily on their visual sense in their attempts to understand the world (Pinsent, 1990). Thus, illustrations depicting disability must be strongly present in children's picture books, in order to convey a message of inclusion to young children.

A study by Dyson (2005) found that six year olds knew very little about disabilities, and often what they did know contained inaccuracies, yet Lewis (1993; 2002) suggests that children under the age of seven are very aware of the physical characteristics of others, even if they don't fully understand them. The Scope charity (2006) has also highlighted that children as young as three begin forming prejudices against those who are visibly different from themselves, with Nowicki (2005) finding that children of all ages show preference for playing with a child without disabilities.

A recent study by Beckett et al (2009) highlighted the lack of understanding held by English primary school children in regards to disability. One of the main areas of concern was how little information the children had received about the lives of disabled people, which had led to misconceptions being formed. These included beliefs such as disabled people being unable to work, or not having partners and children (Beckett et al, 2009) which are disabling attitudes in themselves and will only serve to increase the 'us and them' divide. Beckett et al (2009) emphasise the real need to provide accurate information to school children and to promote positive and inclusive attitudes.

Beckett et al (2009) also expressed the importance of children having contact with disabled people. Their findings showed that those who had directly interacted with disabled people had much more realistic and positive attitudes towards disability and a deeper understanding of the day-to-day lives of disabled people. Likewise, Nowicki (2006) suggests that children's attitudes towards disability are closely associated with presence or absence, explaining that children's lack of contact with disability may lead to a negatively biased attitude. Studies by Cameron and Rutland (2006) support this standpoint, with findings demonstrating that extended, yet indirect, contact with disability through story books increased positivity towards disabled people, especially within the group which emphasised group inclusion of all characters. This study highlights that reduction in disability prejudice is possible through interventions as simple as reading inclusive literature to children (Domacasse,
2009) and can serve as a very useful tool when there is little opportunity for direct contact with disability.

The aging population that exists within Britain implies that a larger proportion of society will experience disability directly or indirectly within their lifetime (Christie, 1999), and therefore an understanding of disabilities and a positive attitude towards disabled people is imperative. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES, 2006) believes that challenging children's misconceptions and stereotypes of disabled people early on will lead to a more inclusive society in the future; one in which there will be equal opportunities for all.

The importance of inclusive books for children with disabilities

Rudman (1995) describes books as mirrors which enable children to see characters who look, feel and have similar experiences to their own. Therefore it is important that children with disabilities also have the opportunity to see characters similar to themselves presented in an accurate and positive light (Blaska, 2003). Leicester (2007) believes that an absence of disabled characters in literature sends out a message that disabled people are not as interesting or valued by society.

As part of the In the Picture campaign, the Head of Early Years at Scope, Tracie Linehan (2007) explains the importance of all children being able to recognise themselves within interesting and modern book characters. Clow (2008), the manager of the In the Picture campaign, believes that disabled children never seeing themselves represented in books can have strong negative effects on self esteem and the ability to develop as people. Rushby-Smith (2009) reiterates the importance of giving disabled children a presence in children's literature, expressing that by providing disabled children with role models that they can identify with, they will feel that they belong to society.

Scope (2003) consulted parents of disabled children in a small-scale research project, and whilst a huge proportion read to their children and felt their child made sense of the illustrations, the majority could not find inclusive images of disability within children's books (Matthew and Clow, 2007). The survey revealed that families were frustrated by this exclusion, and commented how powerful images of disability could be in books for children.
Other research carried out by Scope (2006c) highlights that parents often struggle to find information for their disabled children regarding their impairments. In the Scope report 'Sharing Information with Disabled Children in the Early Years' (2006c) it was found that approximately 70% of parents believed there to be a lack of resources, making it difficult to communicate and answer their children's questions about their disabilities. The report also mentions the importance of storybooks in sharing information about disability with a disabled child, as young children accept books easily and issues or concerns can be discussed in a comfortable and informal manner (Scope, 2006c).

Clow (2008) noted that reactions to inclusive books had been extremely positive with disabled children. Similarly, research by Booktrust (2009a) noted that children with hearing impairments felt good about seeing characters similar to themselves included within the illustrations and storylines of books. Further investigations by the Scope charity (2008a) found similar conclusions, with one deaf child voicing her belief that inclusive books featuring deaf children would have really helped her as a child to understand her own disability. She had been disappointed that no decent books were readily available as she was growing up (Scope, 2008a). Another disabled child commented that inclusion of disabled characters in children's books would help other children not to stare and would encourage all people to have more consideration towards disabled people (Scope, 2008a). Views aired by disabled children in the Quentin Blake Award project, 'Making Exclusion a Thing of the Past' (Booktrust, 2006), emphasised the important point of wanting disabled characters to fade in with other characters and not to be made to stand out. One particular child also highlighted the need to see success in disability, as well as humour. This project really urges the children's book world to respond to the needs of disabled children and families by providing and promoting positive, inclusive literature (Booktrust, 2006).
Promotion of children’s books featuring disability

The International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) is a non-profit organisation committed to ensuring that children all over the world have access to good quality children's books (IBBY, 2010a). IBBY run an annual project entitled 'Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities' with the aim of encouraging suitable books to be produced, distributed and promoted specifically for disabled children. The project also aims to promote inclusive children's books which depict disability within the storyline and images (IBBY, 2010b). A touring exhibition of selected titles is carried out as part of the project in order to promote the new books all around the world. It is their hope that such promotion of books featuring disability will pave the way for understanding and acceptance of diversity, and will enable young people with disabilities to rightfully feel included within society (IBBY, 2010b).

Likewise, the recent Disability Equality Duty (DED) guidelines encourage schools to promote a positive attitude towards disability by providing school books which contain positive images of disabled people (DfES, 2006).

Scope's In The Picture have held a number of events and exhibitions in previous years in order to promote the need for the literary world to recognise diversity in children's fiction (Scope, 2008b). Training sessions and workshops are provided for schools and workplaces by Scope, and many free resources are available via their website. This provides continuous promotion of the In The Picture campaign and thus promotes the importance of inclusion for disabled people.

The existence of inclusive children's book awards can be highly important in enabling inclusive materials to be promoted. The Nasen Inclusive Children's Book Awards (2010) recognises children's fiction books positively portraying disability, and whilst it is still not widely known this is partly due to the lack of books in existence that are eligible for nomination (Booktrust, 2009b). With the increase of inclusive children's titles portraying disability it is hoped that such awards can increase their profile, and can enable books and the inclusive message to be promoted and recognised (Nasen, 2010).
Public library stock procurement of children's books featuring disability

UK library publications regarding disability in fiction are extremely limited. In broader literature, the DCMS report *Libraries, Museums, Galleries and Archives for All* (2001) proposes that library stock and services should reflect our diverse society. More specifically, within *Secretary of State Report on Disability Equality* (DCMS, 2008) it is stated there is a need to include books or pictures about disabled people within library collections. However, there appears to be no clear, active responses to these reports.

CILIP's *Equal Opportunities and Diversity Statement* (2004) highlights the importance of an 'informed society' in which diversity is respected and negative attitudes and prejudices are tackled. Whilst this does not directly relate to the positive inclusion of disability in children's fiction, it does provide support for the purpose of such materials.

The American Library Association (ALA) have initiatives such as *Roads to Learning: the Public Libraries Learning Disabilities Initiative* (1995) which aims to use libraries as a means of bringing information about learning disabilities to the general public. As part of this initiative a booklist guide was developed to aid public libraries in the building of such collections. Whilst many books within the collection remain non-fiction, the initiative shows an active response and an awareness of the need to provide information about disability (ALA, 1995).

The ALA are also involved in the *Schneider Family Book Awards* (ALA, 2008), in which authors and illustrators are shown special recognition for books which have artistically portrayed disability within a children's book. Nominated books must include one of the main characters dealing with a disability, and the portrayal must be accurate and positive. Such book awards send a strong message of inclusion, and acknowledge the great importance of recognising and acknowledging disability within children's books (Petso, 1999).

Library services within the UK may provide a few token children's books featuring disability, but it is not common practice. Leicestershire's schools library service (Leicestershire County Council, 2004) have produced an annotated booklist entitled *Disability, illness and special needs* in the hopes of improving young people's understanding about a variety of illnesses and disabilities (Leicestershire County
Council, 2004). However, whilst this is a highly useful resource, the booklist must be paid for and is therefore not a freely available resource throughout the library service. Birmingham City Council public library service (2010) demonstrate good practice by providing online information and resources for children with disabilities as well as booklists of children's titles featuring various disabilities. However, the promotion, awareness and utility of such booklists are unknown.

Whilst other library service within the UK may provide inclusive literature for children, it does not appear to be heavily promoted and therefore is not easily identifiable.

Conclusion

The campaign work of initiatives such as Scope's *In the Picture* (2006) and Booktrust's *Bookmark* (2010) have accomplished a great deal in promoting the need to include disability within children's fiction books. The number of titles that positively portray disabilities is steadily growing thanks to such campaigns.

Research strongly supports the belief that the inclusion of disability within children's literature can positively affect children's understanding and attitudes towards disabled people (e.g. Pinsent, 1997; Nowicki, 2006; Cameron & Rutland, 2006). Therefore the provision of such materials by schools and libraries is crucial as a tool in teaching children of all ages about disability. Previous research also indicates the positive effect that inclusive books can have on the self esteem of disabled people; enabling them to feel a sense of inclusion within society (e.g. Blaska, 2003; Clow, 2008; Rushby-Smith, 2009).

Whilst it is likely that many children's authors, illustrators and publishers have come in to contact with the campaigns to include disability in children's fiction, there is still a lack of research in to the extent to which public libraries and library staff are aware and supportive of these initiatives. There are 4,323 public libraries, 26,000 libraries in primary schools and 5,000 libraries in secondary schools that could all benefit from inclusive children's fiction positively portraying disability (Wolstenholme, 2006). Therefore, public library authorities need to ensure that they are providing and promoting a good selection of these inclusive titles.
Methodology

A mixed method approach was used for this research project, which consisted of a quantitative checklist survey of library and suppliers stock lists and was followed by questionnaires to a variety of public library staff. This was an exploratory study, paving the way for future research to be carried out in this area.

Before deciding on the methodology it was important to take into consideration the time frame available and the geographical location that was to be used (De Vaus, 2001). As these had to both be limited it was concluded that the focus would be on Sheffield City Council library service, and that one month would be given for the collection of data. Ethical considerations were also taken in to account, including voluntary participation, informed consent, lack of harm, confidentiality and privacy (De Vaus, 2001).

Library and suppliers catalogue check

A checklist of book titles was compiled to enable the evaluation of responses from library staff to be placed in the context of the current provision available either in the library service or from the suppliers.

The checklist consisted of children's fiction books which positively portray disability. As the definition of a 'positive portrayal' can be ambiguous it was decided that books featuring on the checklist would follow the 'Ten Guiding Principles' from Scope's In the Picture (2006b), as mentioned previously.

A number of established booklists that include titles positively portraying disability are already in existence, and these were used and consulted as a starting point (see appendix A) and matched to the criteria set up for this particular research.

Due to the scale of the research it was decided that books that were non-fiction in nature, as well as teenage fiction books would not be included. Thus, the focus for the catalogue check was children's fiction books, which are classified as picture books, first reads or junior fiction. Picture books can be defined as any children's book in which the illustrations play an important role in telling the story. Thus, it can include baby and toddler books right through to 'traditional' story books aimed at 4-8 year olds (Backes, 2009). First read books, also known as 'early readers', are aimed at children
learning to read and average between 2 and 5 sentences per page. They are aimed at those around 6-8y years of age (Backes, 2009). Junior fiction books are often a little more complex both in language and plot, and are loosely aimed at 7-12 year olds.

Again, due to the small scale of this research project, it was decided that only certain disabilities would be examined in children's fiction books, and thus, the study is not a complete examination of disabilities in children's literature. The disabilities examined here include:

- *Hearing impairments*, such as deafness and/or the use of a hearing aid.
- *Visual impairments*, such as blindness, partial sight and/or the wearing of glasses.
- *Mobility difficulties*, such as the use of a wheelchair and/or walking aids.
- *Down's Syndrome*.
- *Invisible difficulties*, such as Asperger's syndrome, Autism and/or ADHD.

Book titles on the catalogue checklist included books which featured disability in the storyline and/or the illustrations. Fiction books were identified that both included disability as a strong theme within the plot, as well as books in which disability was subtly included without being focused upon in the storyline.

Initially, children's fiction books that included *Speech impediments* were also to be investigated. However there were no recommended titles that positively included this particular disability within the story line or illustrations. Whilst some titles do exist, these are predominantly aimed at teenagers and therefore were outside the realms of this research project.

The check list concentrated on books that were written and published within the UK, but did include titles from the USA that were widely available within Britain. To ensure that all book titles were easily attainable the online booksellers, Amazon (2010), was used to check the availability and pricing of titles. If titles were found to be out of print, or carried a high price (£20 plus) then they were removed from the checklist. To ensure that the checklist was as exhaustive as possible Amazon's (2010) online browsing system was used to check if any other children's titles featuring disability were in existence that had been missed by the other booklists, or had been published recently.
There were a number of titles that had been mentioned by many of the pre-existing booklists as positively portraying disability, and therefore it was decided that if 3 or more of the booklists included a particular title it would be deemed 'highly recommended'. These particular titles are discussed within the results section in relation to library and suppliers stock.

It is important to note that Sheffield's public library service and school’s library service are a combined service and use the same library catalogue system (Sheffield City Council, 2010a). Therefore, whilst the Sheffield school’s library service was not being directly researched, it was noted if this service held titles featured on the research checklist.

The final checklist consisted of 122 book titles in all (see appendix B). The Sheffield library service catalogue was checked for all titles on the checklist, using their library management system 'SirsiDynix Symphony'. Access was also granted to enable the checking of titles on Bertram library supplier's stock catalogue. Bertram are Sheffield library services chief book suppliers. Each book on the checklist was searched for both by title and by author in an attempt to eradicate any errors in cataloguing.

**Questionnaire design**

Dillman (2000) suggests it is useful to distinguish between the different types of questions before constructing a questionnaire. The questions used within this questionnaire concentrated on the knowledge of public library staff, with the aim of understanding staff's awareness of initiatives, book stock and promotional work. Beliefs were also explored within the questionnaire, with the aim of seeking to discover what respondents believe to be true or false (De Vaus, 2001). Similarly, attitudes were investigated with the intention of discovering what respondents believed to be desirable (De Vaus, 2001).

Attribute questions were included in order to obtain information about age, position within the library service and involvement in children's stock selection. The inclusion of this information can enable examination of whether the sample was representative of UK public library staff.

The questions used within the survey combined qualitative and quantitative methods, as suggested by Flick (2009), who expressed:
"The different methodological perspectives complement each other in the study of an issue, and this is conceived as the complementary compensation of the weakness and blind spots of each single method…” (P.26)

The use of questionnaires was decided upon as it was important that participants had time to consider their responses to questions (Denscombe, 2007), especially in regards to the listing of children's book titles. There was also a concern that by using interview or focus group techniques participants may feel ashamed or embarrassed about their limited knowledge regarding initiatives and book stock, and thus responses may not have been as honest or reliable.

Forced response questions, or closed questions, were used to encourage participants in to selecting one answer. In knowledge-based questions the option to answer 'unsure' was given, although this was avoided in belief-based questions in the hopes of encouraging participants to commit to a response. To avoid the problems of 'acquiescence'; the tendency to agree with a given statement, as well as 'social desirability'; the tendency to respond with the respectable rather than honest answer (De Vaus, 2001), participants were asked to explain their responses in an open-text space provided. This provided rich qualitative data alongside the quantitative responses.

Each questionnaire included an information sheet (see appendix C) as well as a consent form (see appendix D) in order to inform all participants of the purpose of the research as well as confirming anonymity and confidentiality of responses. Consent had to be provided by each participant to enable the data to be used.

A section was included at the end of all questionnaires, explaining more about Scope's *In the Picture* (2006a) campaign and Booktrust's *Bookmark* (2010) initiative (see appendix G). Examples of illustrations positively portraying disability, taken from Scope's *In the Picture* (2006a) campaign, were also included to enable participants to learn more about inclusive illustrations and to further understand the objectives of this research project (see appendix G).

Frontline staff were the principal group chosen to complete the questionnaire due to their interaction with the public and their role in advising parents and children. Members of the children's stock selection team were chosen to complete an extended
version of the questionnaire due to their specialist knowledge of children's literature, as well their involvement in stock policy and selection. Obtaining views from different perspectives within the same organisation can also prove useful for validation purposes (De Vaus, 2001).

**Pilot study**

The questionnaire was pilot tested (as recommended by Bryman, 2001) on 12 students on the MA librarianship course as well as 4 members of the general public not associated with libraries. This enabled the wording of questions to be objectively explored to ensure that the language used was not leading, ambiguous or biased (De Vaus, 2001). Minor alterations to the wording of questions were made as a result of feedback, thus improving the validity of the questionnaire.

**Questionnaire distribution**

Questionnaires designed for frontline staff (see appendix E) were distributed via email to all of the public libraries within the city of Sheffield. This included all of the branch libraries, of which there are currently 28, as well as the main central library. Visits to 5 branch libraries were also carried out, enabling questionnaires to be distributed to frontline staff members in person. Return visits were made one week later to collect completed questionnaires.

The extended version of the questionnaire (see appendix F), designed for members of the children's stock selection team, were distributed to all 5 current members of the team via email or internal post, depending on their preference.
Analysis

Forced response questions within the questionnaire were analysed using basic descriptive statistics. 'Open coding' was used to analyse qualitative text responses within the questionnaires. Responses were broken down, examined, compared and understood by attaching and developing themes and categories for the data (Flick, 2009; Bryman, 2001).

Ethical considerations

All responses and comments made by participants remained anonymous, and were only viewed by the researcher. Participants were coded, and real names were not used in analysis. Questionnaires were kept in a secure location and will be destroyed once the research has been submitted.
Results

The findings from the catalogue check will be discussed initially, followed by the findings from the questionnaire responses.

Catalogue check

Titles held by both Sheffield library service as well as Bertram library suppliers were investigated against the checklist of inclusive titles designed for this research. The checklist included 122 children's fiction titles in total, which were all deemed to positively portray one of the five disabilities investigated (see appendix B).

The five disabilities explored within the literature were 'Hearing impairments', 'Visual impairments', 'Mobility difficulties', 'Downs Syndrome' and 'Invisible disabilities' and will be discussed individually and in this order.

Hearing impairments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Picture books</th>
<th>Titles on checklist</th>
<th>Titles held by Sheffield library service</th>
<th>Copies held by Sheffield library service</th>
<th>Titles held by Bertram</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of First Read books</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Junior fiction books</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% checklist titles held: - 44.8% - 48.3%

It can be seen that in regards to children's fiction books featuring hearing impairments, Sheffield library service and Bertram library suppliers hold roughly 50% of the titles featured on the checklist.

The checklist itself is quite limited due to the lack of titles in existence that positively portray hearing impairments in plot or illustrations. This is highlighted by the fact that only one 'First Read' book was found for the checklist. Whilst the
checklist was not exhaustive, it does point out the lack of such fiction books that have been published. Therefore, it cannot be expected that Sheffield library service or Bertram library suppliers have an extensive collection of such materials at this moment in time.

It is important to mention that if and when Sheffield library service did hold titles featured on the checklist, they appeared to often provide a large number of copies of the title, making it widely available throughout Sheffield.

Whilst not directly investigated, it is worth noting that Sheffield school's library service did hold certain titles from the checklist and in some cases provided material that Sheffield's public library service did not have. The reason that this is of importance is that both services are run in parallel by the same young people's library service team (Sheffield City Council, 2010a). In relation to children's fiction featuring hearing impairments, Sheffield's school's library service hold 10 of the 29 titles featured on checklist, which equates to 34.5%.

Bertram library suppliers hold 7 children's titles from the checklist that Sheffield Library service did not possess.

It must also be noted that many of the titles that Sheffield library service currently hold are no longer available from Bertram, either because they are out of print or because Bertram no longer stock the title. This equated to 10 titles, which is concerning as it indicates that if and when Sheffield library service need to replace copies of such titles it would not be possible via Bertram library suppliers.

Particular titles that come highly recommended from other booklists include 'Moonbird' by Joyne Dunbar, which Sheffield library service hold 29 copies of, and 'My First Animal Signs' by Anthony Lewis, which Sheffield also hold 29 copies of. This suggests that Sheffield library service, as well as Bertram library suppliers, do have some awareness of the mainstream, inclusive titles.
Visual impairments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Titles on checklist</th>
<th>Titles held by Sheffield library service</th>
<th>Copies held by Sheffield library service</th>
<th>Titles held by Bertram</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Picture books</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of First Read books</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Junior fiction books</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>115</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% checklist titles held</td>
<td>-</td>
<td><strong>57.1%</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td><strong>61.9%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In relation to children's fiction books featuring visual impairments, Sheffield library service do provide a number of the titles featured on the booklist, with over half (57.1%) of the recommended titles being held by the service. Again, it can be seen that the checklist itself did not contain a multitude of titles due to the limitations of what exists which positively portrays visual impairments. 'First Read' books are again extremely few.

In this instance, Sheffield school's library service holds 6 of the 21 titles on the checklist, and at 28.6% this equates to over one quarter of the recommended books being available in Sheffield schools.

There are a number of titles from the checklist which Bertram library suppliers do stock, but which Sheffield library service do not hold. This equates to 5 titles.

As with the previous findings, it is important to again note that many of the titles already held by Sheffield library service are no longer available via Bertram library suppliers. This equates to 7 titles, including those held by Sheffield schools library service.

The titles that come highly recommended from other booklists in this section include 'Lucy's Picture' by Nicola Moon, which Sheffield library service hold 10 copies of, and 'Dan and Diesel' by Charlotte Hudson, with 39 copies of this title being held by Sheffield. These findings are again encouraging.
**Mobility Difficulties**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Picture books</th>
<th>Titles on checklist</th>
<th>Titles held by Sheffield library service</th>
<th>Copies held by Sheffield library service</th>
<th>Titles held by Bertram library suppliers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of First Read books</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Junior fiction books</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>373</strong></td>
<td><strong>38</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% checklist titles held</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be observed from the table that children's fiction featuring storylines or illustrations relating to mobility difficulties are much more abundant. In this instance, Sheffield library service again holds approximately half (52%) of the recommended titles from the checklist.

Bertram library suppliers hold 11 titles from the checklist that are not held by Sheffield library service, including one of the highly recommended titles.

Sheffield library service hold 7 titles that Bertram library suppliers no longer stock, including those held by Sheffield school's library service.

Sheffield school's library service hold 24 of the 50 titles from the checklist, equating to just under half at 48%.

There are many children's titles featuring mobility difficulties that come highly recommended by other booklists. These include:

- 'The Animal Boogie' by Stella Blackstone ~ 59 copies held by Sheffield.
- 'Susan Laughs' by Jeanne Willis ~ 18 copies held by Sheffield.
- 'Seal Surfer' by Michael Foreman ~12 copies held by Sheffield.
- 'Boots for a Bridesmaid' by Verna Wilkins ~ 9 copies held by Sheffield.
- 'Best Friends' by Mark Chambers ~ 5 copies held by Sheffield.
- 'It's raining! It's pouring! We're exploring!' by Polly Peters ~ 0 copies held by Sheffield.

This again highlights that a good selection of the mainstream titles featuring disabilities are provided by Sheffield library service.
**Down's Syndrome**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Titles on checklist</th>
<th>Titles held by Sheffield library service</th>
<th>Copies held by Sheffield library service</th>
<th>Titles held by Bertram</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Picture books</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of First Read books</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Junior fiction books</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% checklist titles held</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Very few titles appear to exist within children's fiction which features a positive portrayal of Down's syndrome. It is encouraging to see that the titles that are in existence are all held by Bertram suppliers, with a large proportion of such titles also being held by Sheffield library service.

Sheffield library service do not hold 3 of the titles that Bertram provide, although 1 of these titles is held by Sheffield schools library service.

7 of the titles within this section are part of the same series, highlighting the lack of fiction titles featuring Down's syndrome for children.

There were no children's titles featuring Down's syndrome that came highly recommended by other booklists.
Invisible disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Titles on checklist</th>
<th>Titles held by Sheffield library service</th>
<th>Copies held by Sheffield library service</th>
<th>Titles held by Bertram</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Picture books</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of First Read books</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Junior fiction books</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>147</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% checklist titles held</td>
<td>-</td>
<td><strong>61.5%</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td><strong>92.3%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Invisible disabilities in this instance include titles featuring Asperger's syndrome, autism and/or ADHD. There was again found to be a lack of recommended titles for the checklist. Sheffield library service and Bertram library both held a good selection of the recommended titles at 61.5% and 92.3% respectively. It can also be noted that the titles that Sheffield do hold they acquire a large number of.

There are 3 titles that Sheffield libraries do not possess that Bertram do provide, however 1 of these titles is again held by Sheffield schools library service.

Sheffield's schools hold 6 of the 13 titles from the checklist altogether, which equates to just under half at 46.2%.

There is one title that comes highly recommended from other booklists in this section; 'Looking after Louis' by Lesley Ely. It is encouraging to note that Sheffield library service possess 43 copies if this title.
Summary and discussion of findings from the catalogue check

Both Sheffield library service and Bertram library suppliers provide a good selection of titles positively portraying disability.

In total Sheffield library service held 65 of the 122 titles featured on the checklist, equating to 53%; just over half. Bertram library suppliers held 86 of the 122 checklist titles, equating to 70.5%.

These findings are encouraging and suggest that Bertram library suppliers are able to provide a good selection of children's fiction titles positively portraying disability to public library services. Sheffield library service also stocked good provisions of titles that were deemed 'highly recommended', which were titles that featured on 3 or more of the booklists used for the checklist.

However, it is important that Sheffield library service are aware of the titles held by Bertram library suppliers that they have not procured. Stock selection policy should ensure that all such books that are available from their library supplier are provided.

Another concern, as noted earlier, is that a number of the titles that were once supplied to Sheffield library service from Bertram library suppliers are no longer available. Several of these titles are said to be 'out of print' on Bertram's online catalogue (Bertram, 2010), however all of the titles placed on the checklist are 'readily available' according to Amazon.co.uk (Amazon, 2010). This suggests that new editions may have been published that Bertram are not supplying. What this also indicates is that Sheffield library service may stop providing certain titles from the checklist when replacement copies are needed due to them being unavailable from Bertram. This would be disappointing.
Questionnaire findings

The findings from the questionnaires, completed by Sheffield library staff, will now be analysed and discussed. Responses by frontline staff will be investigated initially, followed by responses from the children's stock selection team.

Frontline staff

Response rate

The questionnaire designed for frontline staff was distributed via email to all of the Sheffield City Council libraries, and visits to 5 branch libraries were also carried out. 20 responses in all were received, which was deemed adequate for a small, exploratory research project. These participants were coded 'Ppt1' through to 'Ppt20' respectively.

Age of frontline participants

The graph indicates that a satisfactory mix of ages participated in the frontline staff questionnaire, with each age group being represented.
It can be seen from the above graph that a large majority (70%) of participants classified themselves as a frontline member of library staff. A quarter of staff (25%) also had responsibilities for children's services within their service point; a role that Sheffield library service term 'children's champion'. Only one member of the management team participated; a Service Development Librarian, whose role still includes some frontline library work periodically.
Involvement in children's stock selection

Only 3 of the 20 participants indicated that they were involved in children's stock selection, equating to 15%. Unsurprisingly, all 3 had described themselves as 'children's champions' in the previous response. Their involvement was described in differing ways, as follows:

"Identifying stock gaps and suggesting titles in the past...visiting publishers for bulk buys." (Ppt3)

"Suggesting new stock." (Ppt12)

"I can make suggestions to the book buying team...but I don't get a say of what the overall buying or selection is like." (Ppt18)
Participant's awareness of initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants' awareness of initiatives that promote the positive portrayal of disability in children's fiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Have you heard of initiatives such as SCOPE's 'In the picture' or BOOKTRUST's 'Bookmark'?"

It can clearly be seen from the graph that there is a lack of awareness regarding initiatives such as Scope's 'In the Picture' (2006a) or Booktrust's 'Bookmark' (2010) amongst Sheffield frontline library staff, with only 3 of the 20 participants specifying any familiarity, equating to 15% of participants. Of those that specified an awareness of such initiatives, only 1 participant gave a detailed response as to their understanding of what they believed the initiatives to be about:

"...Portraying children with disabilities in books in a positive way – a cerebral palsy charity" (Ppt3)

Another participant had heard of such initiatives, but was unable to provide any detail:

"I have only heard them referred to in conversation" (Ppt15)
Response to listing children's fiction books positively portray disability

The graph highlights the large proportion of frontline staff who could not think of a single children's fiction book that positively portrayed disability, either in plot or illustrations. This equated to 15 of the 20 participants (75%).

When attempting to list books that they were aware of one participant stated that they:

"...couldn't think of a single one." (Ppt11)

Other participants had similar difficulties naming titles:

"Although I have been introduced to titles that portray disability positively... I cannot remember them because I do not have a role in children's stock selection." (Ppt15)

"I can't think of any fiction books – I can think of lots of non fiction dealing with lots of issues but not any fiction titles." (Ppt17)
Participant 16 provided some good examples of books positively portraying disability, although as they themselves pointed out they are titles that are classed as 'Young Adult', and are therefore outside of the criteria for this research project:

"The only titles that I am aware of are in the Young Adult section of the library: 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time', by Mark Haddon, and the 'Batgirl' series of graphic novels, which feature the character Oracle, a superhero now confined to a wheelchair who uses her research skills (she is an ex-librarian) to support other crime fighters." (Ppt16)

Participant 5 acknowledges Michael Rosen's 'Sad book', recognising that it deals with depression, but this is actually a non-fiction book and therefore, despite being a title positively portraying a mental illness, it is again outside of the criteria for this research project.

Participant 3 listed 3 titles that they believed positively portray disability:

- 'Don't call me special' by Pat Thomas
- 'Tom's special talent' by Kate Gaynor
- 'My friend has Down's syndrome' by Jennifer Moore-Mallinos

(Ppt3)

'Don't call me special' by Pat Thomas, is a good example of a title positively portraying disability. It is primarily aimed at young school children to enable them to address any questions or concerns regarding disabilities (Fresch, 2005) and includes colourful illustrations of disabled characters. It was not included on the checklist for this research as it is sometimes classed as a non-fiction title.

'Tom's special talent' by Kate Gaynor is another good example of a title positively portraying disability. This story follows a young boy with dyslexia, and contains positive messages about inclusion and diversity. This book did not feature on the checklist due to dyslexia not being a disability examined within this research project.

Whilst the book 'My friend has Down's syndrome' by Jennifer Moore-Mallinos, does portray disability, it is often classified as a non-fiction title. It is also important
to note that some of the customer reviews on Amazon.co.uk argue that the portrayal of disability within the storyline is not altogether 'positive' (Amazon, 2009).

Participant 6 listed 3 titles that they believed positively portray disability:

- 'I'm Special' by Jen Green
- 'Susan Laughs' by Jeanne Willis
- 'Looking After Louis' by Lesley Ely

(Ppt6)

The story 'I'm Special' by Jen Green is written for young children and sensitively explores common disabilities. It is a good example of a children's title positively portraying disability, but unfortunately it is not easily available due to its publication date being 1999 (Amazon, 2010).

'Susan Laughs' by Jeanne Willis is a positive story about a young girl in a wheelchair, whilst 'Looking After Louis' by Lesley Ely is another popular story about a boy with autism, which won the Nasen TES Special Educational Needs Children's Book Award 2006 (Nasen, 2010). Both books featured on the checklist for this research project, and are great examples of children's fiction positively portraying disability.

Participant 18 noted 'I am the Music Man' referring to the picture book by Debra Potter that features a boy in a wheelchair. This title is also listed on the checklist.

Participant 14 listed 4 titles that they believed positively portray disability:

- 'Saffy's Angel' by Hilary McKay
- 'Tracy Beaker' by Jacqueline Wilson
- 'The Secret Garden' by F.H. Burnett.
- 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time' by Mark Haddon.

(Ppt14)
'Saffy's Angel' by Hilary McKay positively includes a character in a wheelchair, and features on the checklist for this research project.

In the television adaptation of 'Tracy Beaker' by Jacqueline Wilson, there is a character that has cerebral palsy. However, this character does not in fact feature within the book.

'The Secret Garden' by F.H. Burnett includes a sickly character that must stay in bed. It has been argued that the portrayal of this character's disability is in no way positive. The boy is bitter and spoilt, and at the end of the story he miraculously 'recovers' from his disability, at which point his father finally accepts and loves him (Reay, 2007). For this reason, it was not included on the checklist.

As mentioned earlier, whilst 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time' by Mark Haddon is a good example of a positive inclusion of disability, it is a title for 'Young Adults' and therefore is outside of the criteria for this research project.

Participant 9 highlighted 'The London Eye Mystery' by Siobhan Dowd as a title that portrays disability positively. This is a book that features on the checklist as the story includes an important character that has Asperger's Syndrome.

This participant also mentions the 'Harry Potter' Series by JK Rowling as an example of children's fiction positively portraying disability. However, the characters within Harry Potter that have disabilities are not necessarily 'positive' portrayals. The dementors are blind and deathly, and if any child is impaired they are 'cured' by potions and magic. However, in one of the books there is a character called 'Mad-Eye Moody' who has lost several body parts and walks with a limp, yet even he remains a mysterious character despite turning out to be a good character ultimately. Papamichael (2003) highlights that there are many representatives of many different races and creeds within J.K Rowling's books, but there are no disabled students of any kind in 'Harry Potter'. Due to the ambiguity regarding disability in the Harry Potter series it was not included on the checklist for this research project.
Response to belief of good selection provided

Over half of the frontline staff (60%) were 'unsure' whether Sheffield library service provided a good selection of titles positively portraying disability. Comments by participants suggest this is due to a lack of awareness or contact with such titles and therefore feeling unconfident or reluctant to commit to a viewpoint:

"I'm not aware of any books portraying disability positively or negatively... this is due to my lack of knowledge about children's fiction stock rather than what Sheffield Public Library Service has..." (Ppt4)

"I'm not sure what books we actually have portraying disability." (Ppt13)

"Maybe I'm just not aware of it... but it doesn't jump off the shelf at me." (Ppt6)
One participant specified that whilst they had seen books portraying disability in Sheffield libraries, they were unsure about the portrayal of disability within such titles, and were therefore unsure whether they were quality materials:

"I work on a Saturday relief basis, so I do go to lots of Sheffield branch libraries and have seen some books about disability, but I did not read them and therefore have no idea if the portrayal was positive." (Ppt15)

Another participant, who stated their belief in the need for inclusion for all, confesses that this questionnaire has highlighted the gap in their knowledge in regards to inclusive children's literature:

"I have always been conscious of the need for portraying difference. To this end I have been particularly aware of literature depicting different gender, age, nationality and language. It is only with this questionnaire that I have thought seriously about disability in children's fiction. This makes me feel very guilty, for I strongly believe in inclusion for all and a balance in literature to reflect difference in our society." (Ppt9)

Others suggested that their lack of involvement in children's fiction stock was the reason for their uncertainty regarding the selections of such titles available:

"I do not have much contact with the children's fiction section – I don't feel qualified to comment either way." (Ppt16)

Only 1 participant believed Sheffield library service provides a good selection of children's fiction positively portraying disability, stating:

"We have a broad range of picture books to middle fiction." (Ppt2)

However, no further discussion was given to support this statement, and no titles were listed by this participant in the previous section.
One participant also expressed their belief that a good selection of such books were provided 'to a certain extent', suggesting that Sheffield library service would buy more titles featuring disability if more of such books were in existence:

"I think that Sheffield would buy books, but I am not sure that sufficient are published so they are difficult to notice." (Ppt14)

6 of the 20 participants, equating to 30%, believed that Sheffield library service did not provide a good selection of children's materials positively portraying disability. Many identify that the children's books that are available are often non-fiction titles, with others indicating that such books may also be a little outdated:

"I can only think of one picture book that portrays disability in a positive light...the others are just non-fiction information books that do not get looked at by your average reader." (Ppt5)

"There does not appear to be any." (Ppt11)

"Perhaps there are not many available? That's not much of an excuse though, it's sad there's not more!" (Ppt18)

"Not much other than non-fiction type explanations." (Ppt3)

"There do not appear to be many titles to choose from. The ones in libraries are relatively old and hardly updated." (Ppt19)

This final statement suggests that the gesture is there to provide such inclusive literature, but that the materials may not always be the best quality.
Awareness of promotional work carried out

**Participants' awareness of any promotional work of children’s fiction positively portraying disability**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Are you aware of any promotional work that has been carried out to encourage such books to be utilised?"

Responses were almost unanimous, with 19 of the 20 respondents (95%) stating that they were unaware of any promotional work being carried out to encourage children's books positively portraying disability to be utilised.

Only 1 participant (Ppt2) stated that they had some awareness of such promotional work, mentioning the initiative 'Books on Prescription' as an example.

The 'Books on Prescription' initiative encourages doctors to direct patients with mental health concerns towards their local public library, where specialist books can be borrowed by the patient to help equip them to manage their condition (Hicks, 2006). This scheme also provides books for children and families which deal with a number of common themes that children may experience such as confidence, bereavement and behavioural issues. Whilst such an initiative is supportive of those with emotional concerns, it is not linked to children's fiction books featuring disabilities, and therefore any promotional work for 'Books on Prescription' is not directly supporting such children's books to be utilised.
Belief regarding affect on children's attitudes and understanding

All participants were in agreement in their belief that children's fiction books positively portraying disability can have an effect on children's attitudes and understanding towards disabilities.

A number of key themes arose in the responses from participants, including the importance of such books in improving children's awareness of different disabilities, and the use of discussions whilst reading books:

"It would make children more aware from a younger age...allow opportunity for discussion and makes children realise that just because disabled children look different it doesn't mean they can't do what 'normal' children do." (Ppt6)

"Books could act as a discussion tool for several children to talk openly about disabilities, perhaps even in an organised learning setting. Misunderstandings and discrimination occur when topics are avoided or just not discussed." (Ppt15)
"I feel that if children were made aware from an early age of the differences and the attitudes towards disabilities they may become more tolerant and understanding. TV and media have already started to address this issue." (Ppt17)

This final statement highlights the important influences of TV and the media and their attempts to be inclusive of disabilities. This will be examined further in the Conclusions section of this research.

A number of responses also mentioned books being a useful tool in encouraging familiarity with disabilities through more exposure via storylines and illustrations:

"Children (and people in general) are less likely to have a negative response or attitude to something they are familiar with, so seeing disability in books can help familiarise them with disability and therefore positively affect their attitudes and understanding." (Ppt4)

"Mere exposure effect increases preference for familiar images. Familiarity and education help reduce stigma and negative stereotypes in the beliefs people hold for a range of subjects. I am sure disability is no exception." (Ppt8)

"They take away the mystery of the differences that children are always curious about. This makes them more understanding and accepting of people who are not necessarily like themselves" (Ppt5)

The negative stigma often attached to disabilities was highlighted by a number of participants, who acknowledged that fiction books featuring disability in a positive light may improve children's perceptions and attitudes. The importance of respect for people with disabilities was also mentioned:

"If children can understand and empathise with their own (or other peoples) disabilities they are in a better position to have a positive attitude." (Ppt19)

"Helps them to respect people with disabilities." (Ppt12)
"It helps the children to view them positively" (Ppt1)

Whilst this final statement has been made with good intention, it does highlight the common "us and them" mentality that a lot of people tend to use when talking about disabled people.

"Children are affected by what they read and if a disability is portrayed positively it will hopefully remain in the child's mind when they come across someone with the same 'problems'." (Ppt14)

Again, this statement highlights the difficulties faced when attempting to use appropriate language to discuss disability. Here the expression 'problems' is used to describe disabilities, even though the participant's ideas and opinions are very supportive of disabled people.

Other participants suggest that children's titles positively portraying disability may encourage inclusion, and can help in promoting disabled people as an important part of the community:

"This would provide integration for disabled children and 'normalise' their presence to other readers." (Ppt3)

"It must be good for all people, children included, to see positively how people with disabilities are part of community life." (Ppt18)

A couple of participants concentrate on the need for inclusion in general and the importance of promoting a positive attitude towards diversity in children:

"Definitely. Children are very receptive to messages given out through fiction books – both through the text and the illustrations..." (Ppt9)

"Yes, children's books are an integral part of shaping young people's ideas, values and beliefs." (Ppt11)
Belief regarding public libraries role

19 out of the 20 participants (95%) were in agreement in their belief that it is the public library's role to support the development of children's understanding towards diversity and social inclusion.

The participant who answered no to this question stated:

"We have the books to support children's understanding towards diversity, but in with all the fiction" (Ppt2)

This possibly suggests that the participant believes that public libraries do provide children's books that encourage awareness and understanding of diversity. However, it implies that this is not set apart in any way from other children's fiction, and is incorporated in to general fiction books themselves. The statement may also be suggesting that whilst libraries can provide the books, it is not the responsibility of the library staff to encourage and support children's reading and understanding of them.
There is no mention in this participant's response as to what they believe the public library's role should and should not be.

Of the participants that stated that they did believe the library should play a role in supporting children's understanding of diversity, a number mentioned it to be the responsibility and duty of public libraries to promote social inclusion:

"We are in the business of providing information to the public...it should be our duty to make sure what we provide has a positive impact on our borrowers to help shape them in to better, more rounded individuals...understanding diversity and social inclusion should be one of our key goals." (Ppt5)

"I believe the public library has a duty to offer a range of materials that reflect the world we live in... including diversity and social inclusion materials." (Ppt4)

"An ideal society would be one where everyone respected and accepted difference, and there was inclusion for all. As a large, influential public institution, libraries have a responsibility to support the development of children's understanding towards diversity and social inclusion." (Ppt9)

A number of participants highlighted the importance of the library service working alongside other children's services such as schools, as well as working with families, to help support children's understanding in this area:

"To a certain extent I would agree that the library has a responsibility to stock books, hold events and display positive images of diversity and social inclusion. However, the school (infant, primary and secondary) needs to take a strong lead on these issues for there to be a greater impact." (Ppt11)

"... this can only happen with the support of parents and teachers too." (Ppt1)

"Schools try to develop children's sense of acceptance towards diversity. Libraries can help extend this in to their extracurricular lives. Public libraries are well placed
as well to promote social inclusion and increase children's understanding of it, partly because services are free to the end user." (Ppt15)

"I feel that although it is important it is not solely the responsibility of public libraries – parents, teachers, TV media all have a part to play." (Ppt17)

"Yes, in conjunction with other agencies – e.g. family, school, church, etc." (Ppt19)

Other participants mention the importance of stock provision in supporting children's understanding of inclusion, with one participant even mentioning the introduction of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans) literature in to Sheffield's children's libraries as a show of good practice:

"Library stock should aim to serve its community, thus the diversity of our society should find itself written about in books on our (library) shelves... an understanding in children of diversity will last a lifetime." (Ppt8)

"We have recently bought a number of picture books dealing with gay and lesbian topics. Similarly we ought to have some that deal with all types of disability and hope that their positive attitude will be passed to the readers." (Ppt14)

"To some extent, perhaps we need better materials to be able to do this –without them it is hard to see how frontline staff can do what would be a really positive thing."

(Ppt18)

One participant highlights the many roles that public libraries attempt to fill, which is a reminder of how the library service is attempting to be many things to many people:

"Libraries have a role to support everybody's understanding on a wide range of topics, not just children's and not just around diversity and inclusion...although this is a key part of the work of libraries." (Ppt16)
Children's stock selection team

The questionnaire designed for the children's stock selection team was distributed to all current members of the team, which equates to 5 staff members. This questionnaire was an extended version of the frontline staff questionnaire, which featured further questions specifically regarding stock and policy of children's library materials (see appendix F). The team had very recently been changed and therefore some members were still unfamiliar with this new role.

2 responses were received. These participants were coded 'Stock1' and 'Stock2' respectively.

Role in children's stock selection

Both participants were clear and unanimous in their children's stock selection role, describing their responsibilities as follows:

- Purchase new and replacement stock in all formats.
- Stock visits to libraries.
- Compilations of book lists.
- Work with external partners
- Input in to stock policy

(Stock1 and Stock2)
Participant's awareness of initiatives

In answer to the question asking participants about their awareness of initiatives such as Scope's 'In the Picture' (2006a) or Booktrust's 'Bookmark' (2010) both responded that they had heard of at least one of the initiatives, with accurate responses as to their understanding of what they believed the initiatives to be about:

"I'm not familiar with 'Bookmark', but 'In the Picture' is information, advice and promotion of children's books (and disability awareness)." (Stock1)

"Information and advice relating to disability and children's fiction." (Stock2)

Response to listing children's fiction books positively portray disability

Both children's stock selection team participants were able to name a number of titles that they believed positively portrayed disability. The first participant (Stock1) listed 5 titles:

- 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time' by Mark Haddon
- 'The Secret Garden' by F H Burnett
- 'Our Stripy Baby' by Gillian Shields
- 'The Boy in the Bubble' by Ian Strachan
- 'Susan Laughs' by Jeanne Willis

(Stock1)

'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time' by Mark Haddon, was discussed earlier as a great example of literature portraying disability positively, although it is classed as a 'Young Adult' title.

'The Secret Garden' by F H Burnett was also discussed in the previous section and it was highlighted that whilst it does feature disability, the portrayal cannot be deemed as positive.
'Our Stripy Baby' by Gillian Shields is a picture book that gently introduces diversity and inclusion. Whilst it is a very positive book, it is not specifically about disability and for this reason was not included on the research checklist.

The story of 'The Boy in the Bubble' by Ian Strachan follows a young boy who has no immune system and therefore spends much of his time within an oxygen tank. It is a good example of a positive portrayal of disability within children's fiction, although it is aimed as teenagers and would be classed as a 'Young Adult' title.

'Susan Laughs' by Jeanne Willis, again mentioned earlier, positively portrays a girl in a wheelchair and is a great example to use in this instance.

The second participant from the children's stock selection team (Stock2) listed 6 titles that they believed positively portrayed disability:

- 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time' by Mark Haddon
- 'Leo the late bloomer' by Robert Kraus
- 'Hank Zipzer books' by Henry Winkler and Lin Oliver
- 'Class 3 all at sea' by Julia Jarman
- 'My Brother Sammy' by Becky Edwards and David Armitage
- 'Looking After Louis' by Lesley Ely and Polly Dunbar

The 'Young Adult' title 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time' by Mark Haddon has been mentioned and discussed previously.

The 'Hank Zipzer' books, by Henry Winkler and Lin Oliver, are a set of very positively portrayed stories about the adventures of a young boy with dyslexia. Unfortunately, dyslexia is not investigated within this research project, but it is an area of great importance and should be investigated at a later date.

'Leo the late bloomer' by Robert Kraus tells the story of Leo, who is slightly behind his friends in reading and writing, but in time he 'blooms'. Whilst this conveys a good message it is not specifically about disability.

In 'Class 3 all at sea' by Julia Jarman, one child wears leg braces, and is very much included in the storyline. 'My Brother Sammy' by Becky Edwards and David Armitage is a sensitive story featuring a boy with autism, and 'Looking After Louis' by Lesley Ely and Polly Dunbar is a title that has been mentioned and discussed previously, and also looks at autism. All 3 of these titles feature on the checklist used in this research.
Response to belief of good selection provided

Both participants (Stock1 and Stock2) answered that they believed 'to a certain extent' that Sheffield Public Library Services provides a good selection of children's fiction positively portraying disability. It was further mentioned by both participants that Sheffield library service relies on their supplier to provide them with up to date materials, and both highlighted the need to sometimes search wider for materials that aren't available directly from their supplier. Their reasoning for this was as follows:

"Sometimes they may not be totally inclusive" (Stock1)

"Sometimes we find there have been titles that we have missed in the past" (Stock2)

Awareness of promotional work carried out

Both participants (Stock1 and Stock2) were in agreement that promotional work is carried out by Sheffield library service to encourage children's books featuring disability to be utilised. However, both also expressed that this work was carried out 'indirectly'. The ways in which they state such books are promoted are as follows:

"E.g. Books on prescription (Mental health, self esteem, etc)" (Stock1)

"Stock lists with providers and partners." (Stock1 and Stock 2)

"...also with the Early Years Librarian, working with the deaf, and baby signing sessions." (Stock1 and Stock2)

The 'Books on prescription' initiative was aforementioned by one of the frontline participants in regards to promotional work. As discussed previously the initiative primarily supports, and provides books for, those with mental health complaints, as well as children and families who are dealing with common difficulties, such as bereavement and behavioural issues. Therefore such an initiative is not directly linked to the promotion and utility of children's fiction books featuring disabilities.
The baby signing sessions, mentioned by both participants (Stock1 and Stock2), highlights a really positive and inclusive method of enabling young children to understand about hearing impairments and deafness, with all children learning signing together. These sessions may also encourage the promotion and utility of children's fiction positively portraying disability.

Belief regarding affect on children's attitudes and understanding

Both children's stock team participants (Stock1 and Stock2) believed that positive portrayals of disability in children's fiction books could have an effect on children's attitudes and understanding towards disabilities, expressing:

"...it promotes their own awareness and other peoples...as seen as part of the 'norm'. Helps build acceptance and also self esteem. Address issues at their own pace."

(Stock1)

"They see illustrations and read about issues that help give them an awareness."

(Stock2)

The first participant (Stock1) highlights that books enable young children to read and understand the messages regarding disability 'at their own pace', identifying the importance of books over other media. This participant also highlights the fact that 'others', possibly parents and teachers, can also improve their awareness via reading inclusive literature with children.

The second participant (Stock2) points out that both the storyline as well as illustrations can be important in improving awareness and understanding of disabilities.
Belief regarding public libraries role

Both participants (Stock1 and Stock2) responded that they did believe it to be the public library's role to support the development of children's understanding towards diversity and social inclusion.

"All inclusive service. We should be independent and non-judgemental in our professional approach to provision and information for children and young people."

(Stock1)

"We are an inclusive service – we should be non-judgmental in our approach to provision of information."

(Stock2)

It can be seen that similar responses are given, highlighting the importance of the library service being inclusive and non-judgemental and thus, indirectly expressing the need to provide materials for and about disabled people.

Stock purchasing policy and children's fiction featuring disability

At the time of this research being undertaken it was stated by both children's stock selection team participants (Stock1 and Stock2) that the current stock purchasing policy was under revision. Therefore they were both "unsure" whether mainstream children's fiction books positively portraying disability would be mentioned in the policy.

It may be possible that highlighting the lack of children's books featuring disability will encourage the stock team to include such books in their future policy.
Stock procurement methods

Both stock selection team participants (Stock1 and Stock2) agreed that the methods used for stock procurement were as follows:

- Approvals online
- Visits to suppliers' showrooms
- Specialist bookshops.

Whilst it is hoped that mainstream children's fiction books positively portraying disability should become increasingly available from mainstream suppliers, it is important that specialist bookshops feature in stock procurement policies to ensure that specialist materials are provided if and when needed.
Summary and discussion of findings from questionnaires

Knowledge and awareness

Awareness of initiatives such as Scope's 'In the Picture' (2006a) and Booktrust's 'Bookmark' (2010) was low amongst frontline staff, with only 3 of the 20 participants expressing any awareness, and only 1 participant providing a detailed response as to their understanding of such initiatives. Both of the participants from the children's stock selection team declared that they were familiar with the initiatives and could provide accurate responses about their purpose.

These findings suggest that information and knowledge about the need to include disability in children's fiction is present to some degree within Sheffield public library services. However, it appears that information about these important initiatives is not being filtered down to frontline staff, which is concerning as it entails that little or no awareness is possessed by the staff directly working with the public.

In attempting to list children's fiction books positively portraying disability, 15 of the 20 frontline staff participants could not list a single title. Those that attempted to list titles provided some good examples, but none of the participants could list more than 4. Another important point to note here is that some examples provided were titles in which the portrayal of disability could not necessarily be deemed as positive, such as 'The Secret Garden' by F.H. Burnett. This highlights that whilst some staff have an awareness of titles that include disability, there may be less awareness of the importance of the portrayal of disabilities within such books.

Both members of the children's stock selection team were able to provide the names of a number of titles featuring disability, listing 5 and 6 titles respectively. This again highlights that awareness of such materials is more apparent at management level and that knowledge regarding such fiction is somehow not communicated through to frontline staff. In this instance, it would have been useful to have discovered where and how the children's stock selection team had gained their knowledge of titles featuring disability, and whether any specific training had been undertaken. If training had been provided, it would be useful to note why this was also not provided for frontline staff, or at least 'Children's Champions'. It is highly likely, however, that such knowledge stems from working closely with children's stock.
It can be observed that over half of frontline staff participants stated that they were 'unsure' whether Sheffield library service provides a good selection of titles positively portraying disability. This is unsurprising if taken in the context of the responses to the previous question regarding the listing of such titles, and again draws attention to the lack of awareness of books portraying disability by frontline staff. Interestingly, about a quarter of frontline staff participants expressed their belief that Sheffield library service did not provide a good selection of titles positively portraying disability. This belief is likely to stem from their lack of exposure to, or awareness of, titles featuring disability rather than their certainty that Sheffield library service do not stock such books.

A large proportion of children's fiction titles positively portraying disability purposefully include disabilities in a subtle and casual manner so as not to make disability the focus. Therefore frontline staff are likely to have difficulties noticing such titles that feature disability subtly. This highlights how useful a booklist could be in aiding library staff in identifying titles that positively portray disability.

The children's stock selection team both believed Sheffield library service provides a good selection of fiction featuring disability 'to a certain extent'. This is encouraging as it highlights an awareness of the stock within this area of inclusive literature and also an acknowledgement that often titles are not available via the mainstream suppliers method. Sheffield library service do not have an exhaustive collection of children's titles featuring disability, but this is partly due to the lack of mainstream books in existence and also the availability of such titles from suppliers.

Almost all frontline staff expressed that they were unaware of any promotional work carried out to encourage children's books positively portraying disability to be utilised. Such findings are to be expected following previous responses from frontline staff, for if there was more promotional work in existence within the library service, staff are more likely to be aware of the initiatives and books featuring disability.

Both children's stock selection team members mention the 'indirect' promotional work, such as providing baby signing sessions. This does provide a very good example of an inclusive service run by the library service, and such sessions could also encourage the use of inclusive books. 'Books on prescription' was also mentioned by a member of the stock selection team. Unfortunately none of the frontline staff mentioned the baby signing session, and only one mentioned 'books on
prescription'. This either indicates a lack of awareness of such schemes being carried out within their library service, which would be disappointing, or participants did not think such schemes were directly relevant to the promotion of children's fiction positively portraying disability.

**Beliefs**

Responses relating to the beliefs of participants revealed high levels of understanding, as well as strong opinions as to the importance of inclusion and diversity.

There was a unanimous response from all frontline staff and stock team participants that children's titles positively featuring disability can have an effect on children's attitudes and understanding towards disabilities. Comments provided were positive and thoughtful, providing practical ideas and comments, such as the importance of encouraging discussion of themes and encouraging respect as well as a familiarity of various disabilities.

Interestingly, the children's stock selection team focussed on the particular importance of books in developing children's attitudes, emphasising the fact that books can be read and discussed at the child's own pace, as well as enabling inclusive images and storylines to be absorbed by the child.

These responses are highly encouraging and highlight that whilst knowledge of books featuring disability may be low amongst participants, the importance and need for such resources is understood and supported amongst library staff.

Similarly, almost all responses were in agreement that it is the role of the public library to support the development of children's understanding towards diversity and social inclusion. Again, responses were practical and proactive, with mentions of the need for collaborative work as well as the need to improve stock provisions in order to utilise and promote such resources. Working with children's services and families to promote a positive attitude towards diversity is highly important, and can provide children with a clear and consistent message about the importance of inclusion.
The many roles in which the public library service is attempting to fill was mentioned, which is a significant point to make. The abundance of important initiatives and schemes being run by, or in collaboration with, public library services can make it difficult for library staff to maintain an awareness and knowledge of all projects. The lack of knowledge and promotion regarding books featuring disability is therefore unsurprising. However, such books are key in encouraging a positive attitude towards disability to be developed in children. Therefore the provision of a booklist guide containing children's title positively portraying disability could enable library staff to promote books embracing diversity and inclusion in a straightforward and manageable way.
Conclusions

This research project aimed to gain a deeper understanding in to the extent to which public libraries provide and promote books that positively portray disability in children's fiction. Current provision of titles held by Sheffield public library service was reviewed, as was the titles held by their main stock suppliers; Bertram library services. This project also examined the extent to which Sheffield public library staff were aware of initiatives such as Scope's 'In the Picture' (2006a) and Booktrust's 'Bookmark' (2010) campaign, who promote the importance of including disability within children's books. Additionally, staff awareness of children's fiction stock positively portraying disability was investigated, as well as any promotional work carried out in relation to such titles.

Stock provision

The review of current stock provision highlighted that whilst Sheffield library service do provide approximately half of the books featured on the catalogue checklist, there were some concerning issues. One issue related to titles from the checklist, that Bertram suppliers previously supplied and no longer do. This indicates that Sheffield library service would not be able to easily replace such titles if and when needed. It is highly important that Sheffield library service do not let their selection of inclusive titles diminish over time due to lack of availability from suppliers. Therefore library services such as Sheffield must include stock policies to ensure that a good proportion of titles featuring disability are continuously supplied. If titles are not available from main suppliers they should be procured elsewhere to ensure a good selection is maintained.

Likewise, Sheffield library service must ensure that titles which are readily available from their main suppliers are procured. There were over 20 titles that Bertram library suppliers held that Sheffield library service did not possess.

As mentioned by participants within the stock selection team, the children's stock purchasing policy is currently under revision. This provides the perfect opportunity to ensure that inclusive literature is included in the new policy, with children's fiction titles featuring disability being specifically mentioned. One
participant highlighted the introduction of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans) literature in to Sheffield's children's libraries, as a show of inclusive practice. Titles portraying disability should similarly be included so that it can be seen that the library service is supporting diversity and inclusion within children's library stock.

Disability is still hugely under-represented within children's fiction books (Scope, 2006a). For this research project there was not a single fiction title that could be found that positively included speech impediments. Whist some titles are in existence these are predominantly aimed at teenagers and are often not readily available via mainstream providers. Speech impediments are possibly more difficult to represent within illustrations, however they could be subtly included within the storyline, via a character with a stutter or lisp who is still positively represented, with no specific attention drawn to their speech impediment. More stories which do include a speech impediment within the plot could also prove useful in enabling children to understand such disabilities better.

This research project also highlighted the lack of children's fiction titles featuring a positive portrayal of Down's syndrome, as well as invisible disabilities, such as Asperger's syndrome, autism and ADHD. It is encouraging, however, to note that titles that were found to be in existence were often held by Bertram suppliers, with a large proportion of such titles also being held by Sheffield library service.

The need for more children's fiction titles featuring disability relies on authors, illustrators and publishers understanding the importance of diversity and inclusion within books. However, if public libraries utilise and promote such titles it may highlight that there is a need and a large potential market for such resources.
Staff awareness and knowledge

Findings revealed low awareness by frontline staff, but higher awareness by stock selection team members, regarding initiatives and book titles that promote the positive inclusion of disability. This indicates that certain information regarding inclusive literature may not be communicated through to frontline staff.

It may therefore be of use for library services such as Sheffield to provide training, or simply resources available via Scope's *In The Picture* campaign (2008c), to improve frontline staff's knowledge of initiatives and book titles featuring disabilities so that they can in turn guide library users by recommending such titles.

Furthermore, a booklist guide containing all children's titles available within the library service that positively portray disability could be highly beneficial. This would follow in the footsteps of the good practice shown by the ALA, and their *Roads to Learning: the Public Libraries Learning Disabilities Initiative* (1995) initiative, which guided American libraries to books about disability.

As part of this research project a comprehensive booklist has been designed specifically for Sheffield library service (see appendix H), which will be passed to the children's stock selection team. It is hoped that this guide will be utilised by library staff to promote books positively portraying disability. For maximum impact, it would be hoped that every library within the city possessed a copy, as well as the resource being available via the library website, in the same way as LGBT book guide and 'Books for a healthy mind' are (Sheffield City Council, 2010b). The booklist guide would also be practical in enabling titles to be identified that need replacing if and when needed.

Promotion of inclusive literature

Findings revealed a lack of promotional work in existence that supports the awareness and utility of books positively portraying disability. Promoting such materials is highly important, and enables staff as well as the general public to gain a deeper understanding in to the importance of inclusive literature and the positive affects it can have on all children's attitudes.

As highlighted by Cameron and Rutland (2006), indirect contact with disability through storybooks can be highly influential in developing children's positive attitudes.
towards disabled people, especially when there is an emphasis on the group inclusion of characters. If interventions as simple as reading inclusive literature to children can be so influential, it would be highly beneficial if public library services could provide specialist story times, or occasionally incorporate storybooks featuring disability in to existing story times. This would familiarise children with disabilities, and enable discussions to take place; developing children's knowledge and understanding. Such sessions would be particularly useful for children who have little direct contact with disability.

The role of the media was mentioned a number of times by participants in relation to their progress in the inclusion and portrayal of disabled characters. TV programmes such as *Balamory* (2009), *The Story of Tracy Beaker* (2009) and *Eastenders* (2010) have all positively included disabled characters in to their programmes storylines, sending out a strong message of inclusion to all of society. The book world and libraries must follow suit so as to enable the powerful role of books to help in developing children's positive attitudes towards disability.

As well as public library services providing a good selection of titles, and possible story times, it is also important for schools to provide fiction positively featuring disability within their school libraries. This need was mentioned by a number of participants, who highlighted that other children's services should provide materials in order to present a consistent, positive message regarding the inclusion of disabled people. Books can be used as resources to enable the teaching and understanding of disabilities to be implemented, with the hopes of enabling familiarity, respect and a positive attitude towards disability to be developed. Therefore, Sheffield City Council children's library service (2010a) should ensure that good selections of inclusive books are readily available within schools as well as public libraries.

It would be beneficial to investigate the knowledge, awareness and attitudes of school librarians, or literacy coordinators within schools, regarding initiatives and book titles that portray disability inclusively. This would provide an insight in to the extent to which the campaign work of initiatives like Scope's *In The Picture* (2006a) and Booktrust's *Bookmark* (2010) have reached schools and school librarians, and the extent to which inclusive literature is promoted by schools, and used by children.
Signing sessions for children were also mentioned within the responses by library staff, which highlights an inclusive method of enabling young children to understand about hearing impairments and deafness whilst at the same time encouraging the promotion and utility of children's fiction positively portraying disability. A number of public library authorities already incorporate sign language into story times and rhyme times (E.g. Cambridge County Council, 2005; Herefordshire Council, 2007; Rochdale Borough Council, 2009) and it would be great to see this show of inclusive practice incorporated and promoted in to more children's library services run by public libraries.

As mentioned within the literature review, the *Nasen Inclusive Children's Book Awards* (2010) recognise and promote children's fiction books positively portraying disability. Similar book awards exist within the USA, entitled the *Schneider Family Book Awards*, which are organised and run by the American Library Association (ALA, 2008) and show special recognition to authors and illustrators who artistically portray disability within a children's books. By organising such awards, the ALA are sending out a positive message of support for inclusive and diverse literature.

It is hoped that CILIP (CILIP, 2010) and individual library authorities within the UK will follow the example of the ALA by becoming more involved in promoting and supporting awards such as the *Nasen Inclusive Children's Book Awards* (2010). This would support inclusion and enable the awareness and utility of inclusive titles to grow. If such awards were more prominent within the UK it may also serve to highlight the lack of books still in existence and the need for more authors and illustrators to include disabled characters within books.
Final remarks

The overall response rate for questionnaires within this research project was low. Therefore whilst the findings offer some useful insights into the awareness and beliefs of library staff, such responses cannot be deemed as representative of all library staff within the UK. In order to gain a deeper understanding of both library stock provision, as well as library staff knowledge of children's fiction featuring disability throughout the UK, a much larger research project would have to be instigated.

In addition, it would have been useful to gain more insight into the awareness and attitudes of the general public regarding children's fiction books positively portraying disability. Feedback from parents and carers, and specifically parents of disabled children, could have provided rich data regarding the need and benefits of such books within their local library. However, this was again too large an area for the scope of this research project.

Initiatives such as Scope's 'In the Picture' (2006a) or Booktrust's 'Bookmark' (2010) are still relatively recent campaigns. With the direct interest and increase in children's books positively portraying disability it is hoped that with time, and more exposure to titles and campaigns, public libraries and public library staff will be more aware of such titles and will promote their importance to the public.
Recommendations

Summary of recommendations for public library services

- **Stock policy:** UK public library authorities should ensure that children's fiction titles which positively portray disability are mentioned within their stock selection policy. Such collections should include titles for all ages, including picture books, first reads, junior fiction and teenage 'Young Adult' fiction. Collections should also provide titles relating to a number of common disabilities.

- **Procurement:** Whilst mainstream suppliers should provide titles positively portraying disabilities, public library authorities should procure titles from other sources if they are not available, or longer available, via their main stock supplier.

- **School's library services:** As well as public library services procuring good selections of children's titles positively portraying disability, it is also highly important that schools can offer a decent number of titles for pupils. Local authorities should ensure that this is possible.

- **Awareness:** Frontline staff within public libraries, especially those who have responsibilities for children's services, should be provided with information regarding initiatives such as Scope's *In the Picture* (2006a) and Booktrust's *Bookmark* (2010) campaign to enable them to promote inclusion and guide library users towards inclusive titles.

- **Booklists:** All public libraries services should attempt to provide a booklist of children's titles positively portraying disabilities. This would enable frontline staff as well as library users to locate such titles. This resource should also be available via the library service's website.
- **Story times:** Library services could incorporate children's stories and books featuring disability into regular story time sessions. Thus, young children can be introduced to disability in a subtle and gradual way, with opportunity for discussion.

- **Signing sessions:** Where possible, signing sessions could be provided by public library services, or incorporated into regular story time sessions. This would enable all children, including children with hearing impairments, to understand more about hearing impairments and could also encourage the promotion and utility of children's fiction positively portraying disability.

- **Book awards:** CILIP, as well as individual public library authorities, should support and promote book awards that recognise disability within children's titles, such as the *Nasen Inclusive Children's Book Awards* (2010).

**Summary of recommendations for further research**

- A large-scale study investigating the procurement of children's fiction titles positively portraying disability could be carried out within a number of library authorities across the UK. Extensive checklists would enable different authorities to be compared and would highlight authorities that demonstrate good practice in their stock selection of such titles.

- Knowledge, awareness and attitudes of public library staff, regarding initiatives and book titles promoting disability, could be investigated within a number of UK library authorities. The extent to which inclusive literature is promoted by different authorities could also be promoted; highlighting good practice.

- It may be useful to investigate the knowledge, awareness and attitudes of school librarians, or literacy coordinators, regarding initiatives and book titles promoting disability. It would also be interesting to study the extent to which inclusive literature is promoted by schools, and used by children.
- It would be beneficial to gain insight into the awareness and attitudes of parents and carers, specifically those with disabled children, in relation to books that positively include disability. Beliefs of the need and benefits of such books within public libraries could also be ascertained.

- Investigations into the attitudes of adults with disabilities could be useful in order to gain a deeper understanding into the importance of inclusive books about disability, and the importance of how disability is portrayed. Discussion boards on sites such as BBC's 'Ouch!' (2010), in which disabled people discuss life and experiences, could be a useful starting point.

- Examinations into 'Young Adult' fiction titles that positively portray disability would be beneficial to investigate, as well as their availability and promotion within public library services.

- Further investigations could explore the inclusion of a wider range of disabilities within children's fiction and the availability of such titles within library service catalogues. Disabilities such as cerebral palsy and epilepsy could be investigated, as well as common learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia. It could also of interest to explore the inclusion and portrayal of mental health concerns in children's fiction, such as schizophrenia and bipolar.
References


BBC (2010) 'Ouch!' *It's a disability thing* [online] London: BBC 


Birmingham City Council (2010) *Children and Young People with Special Needs* [online] Birmingham: Birmingham City Council 


http://www2.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/db/pressrel.nsf/cac74a2aba838b5d80256b56004e53ab/f72225a6ae0c087980256f930058f66f?OpenDocument [Accessed 26 August 2010]


http://books.google.co.uk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=P82T3mRwZ10C&oi=fnd&pg=PT2&dq=An+Inclusive+Future+%3F+Disability,+social+change+and+opportunities+for+greater+inclusion+by+2010&ots=ABNVOVEpUn&sig=MOX_KIjw7WlCrDMuYlvpvOs4#v=onepage&q&f=false [Accessed 24 August 2010]


CILIP (2010) *Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals* [online] London: CILIP.  


Eastenders [Television] (1985-present London, BBC.


**Children's Book References**


Gaynor, Kate (2009) *Tom's special talent*. Dublin: Special Stories Publishing


Peters, Polly (2007) *It's raining! It's pouring! We're exploring!* Swindon: Child's Play Ltd


Appendices

Appendix A: Booklist sources for catalogue checklist

Amazon.co.uk
www.amazon.co.uk

Birmingham Libraries A Book Might Help

Booktrust: Bookmark

Letterbox Library - Disabilities Pack
http://www.letterboxlibrary.com/acatalog/DISABILITY.html

http://www.bishopg.ac.uk/docs/Research/DRR%20June%202009.pdf

Scope: In the Picture
http://www.childreninthepicture.org.uk/bookexamples.htm

The Wordpool guide to children's books with a Disabled Main Character
http://www.wordpool.co.uk/ccb/disability/main.htm
Appendix B: Checklist of children's fiction positively featuring disability

**BOOK TITLES IN ALL: 122**

### Hearing impairments

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<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Disability portrayed</th>
<th>Book type</th>
<th>Copies held by Sheffield Libraries</th>
<th>Copies held by Bertram</th>
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<td>Berrington, Lesley. Middleton, Karen (Illustrator)</td>
<td>A Day at the Park (Hattie and Friends series)</td>
<td>Hearing aid</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bruna, Dick</td>
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<td>Hearing aid</td>
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<td>Dale, Jenny</td>
<td>Spike the Special Puppy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daniels, Lucy</td>
<td>Doggy Dare</td>
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<td>Junior</td>
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<td>Fuller, Rachel (Illustrator)</td>
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<td>Kubler, Annie (Illustrator)</td>
<td>I'm A Little Teapot</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>Kubler, Annie (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Peek-A-Boo! Nursery Games</td>
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<td>Lavan, Laila,</td>
<td>Lucy Loud and Clear</td>
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<td>Return Decender</td>
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<td>Morpurgo, Michael</td>
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<td>Thompson, Carol</td>
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Books in total: **29**
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<td>Birkett, Georgie (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Cook it! (Helping Hands Series)</td>
<td>Visual impairment (Guide dog)</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
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<td>Cousins, Lucy</td>
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<td>Doherty, Berlie</td>
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<td>Blind</td>
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<td>Backhouse, Colin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ryan, Margaret</td>
<td>Robbie and the Alien</td>
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<td>Strom, Maria Diaz</td>
<td>Rainbow Joe and Me</td>
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<td>Wilde, Nicholas</td>
<td>Into the Dark</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Junior</td>
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<td>Junior</td>
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## Mobility Difficulties

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<tr>
<td>Bertagna, Julie</td>
<td>Bungee Hero</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Junior</td>
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<td>Booktrust: Bookmark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bevan, Clare</td>
<td>Mightier Than The Sword</td>
<td>Spina Bifida</td>
<td>Junior</td>
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<td>No more</td>
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<td>Clean it! (Helping Hands Series)</td>
<td>Walking aid (leg splint)</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>Yes (***</td>
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<td>Grow it! (Helping Hands Series)</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
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<td>Yes (***</td>
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<td>Bodsworth, Nan</td>
<td>A Nice Walk in the Jungle</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
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<td>Chambers, Mark (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Best Friends</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Bring In the Spring</td>
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<td>Cowen-Fletcher, Jane</td>
<td>Mama Zooms</td>
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<td>SCH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Letterbox Library / Bishop Grosseteste University guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crous, Charline, Everton, Lauren. Castles, Heather (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Tartan Meets the Queen</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalton, Annie</td>
<td>(Ferris Fleet) The Wheelchair Wizard</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Birmingham Libraries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dowley, Ruth</td>
<td>Top Biker</td>
<td>Spina Bifida</td>
<td>SCH</td>
<td>No more</td>
<td>Birmingham Libraries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duckworth, Gill</td>
<td>Anna's New Friend</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Booktrust: Bookmark</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreman, Michael</td>
<td>Seal Surfer</td>
<td>Walking aids</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>SCH</td>
<td>Booktrust: Bookmark / Birmingham Libraries / Wordpool guide / Bishop Grosseteste University guide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French, Vivian</td>
<td>Tilly McGillies Fantastical Chair</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No more</td>
<td>Birmingham Libraries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodhart, Pippa.</td>
<td>Happy Butterfly</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Birmingham Libraries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodhart, Pippa.</td>
<td>What's in Store?</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Yes (**)</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodhart, Pippa.</td>
<td>Pest Friends</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>SCH</td>
<td>Booktrust: Bookmark</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodhart, Pippa.</td>
<td>What's in Store?</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Yes (**)</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griffiths, Neil. Blake,</td>
<td>Ringo the Flamingo</td>
<td>Walking difficulties</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Wordpool guide / Bishop Grosseteste College guide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John, Louise.</td>
<td>My chair</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes (**)</td>
<td>Letterbox Library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keating, Hilary.</td>
<td>Yum!</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kubler, Annie (Illustrator)</td>
<td>This Little Piggy</td>
<td>Support chair</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kubler, Annie (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Here we go round the Mulberry Bush</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>SCH</td>
<td>Booktrust: Bookmark</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laird, Elizabeth</td>
<td>Jungle School</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SCH</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture / Bishop Grosseteste University guide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>medium</td>
<td>Publication</td>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davison, Roz (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Daisy the Doctor</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>11 / SCH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Grosseteste University guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litchfield, Jo Brook</td>
<td>Saffy's Angel</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>12 / SCH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Booktrust: Bookmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKay, Hilary</td>
<td>Caddy Ever After</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>19 / SCH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Booktrust: Bookmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mooney, Irene. Roscoe, Stacey (Illustrator)</td>
<td>The Sleepover</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture / Bishop Grosseteste University guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munro, Moira</td>
<td>Hamish: The Bear Who Found His Child</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Booktrust: Bookmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munro, Moira</td>
<td>Hamish and the missing teddy</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>SCH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Booktrust: Bookmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naidoo, Beverley</td>
<td>Letang's New Friend</td>
<td>Walking aids</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>SCH</td>
<td>No more</td>
<td>Birmingham Libraries / Bishop Grosseteste University guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peters, Polly Stockham, Jess (Illustrator)</td>
<td>It's Raining! It's pouring! We're exploring!</td>
<td>Walking aids and wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Nasen Inclusive Children's Book awards/ Scope: In the Picture / Bishop Grosseteste University guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peters, Polly Stockham, Jess (Illustrator)</td>
<td>The Ding Dong Bag</td>
<td>Arm Splint</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Yes (*)</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potter, Debra</td>
<td>I am the Music Man</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>6 / SCH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Booktrust: Bookmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powell, Jillian. Shearing, Leonie (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Ron's Race</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>First Read</td>
<td>21 / SCH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainsbury, Julie</td>
<td>Crab-boy Cranc</td>
<td>Limp</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Booktrust: Bookmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ray, Jane</td>
<td>The Apple-Pip Princess</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>11 / SCH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rešček, Sanja (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Touch and Tickle (Baby Gym Series)</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rešček, Sanja</td>
<td>Bounce and Jiggle</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Bookmark: Booktrust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrator</td>
<td>Series</td>
<td>User Group</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Scope</td>
<td>University Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
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<td>------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockham, Jess (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Nursery (First Time Series)</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes (***</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockham, Jess (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Sleepover (First Time Series)</td>
<td>Walking aids</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes (**)</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosen, Bill</td>
<td>Catch Me A Godzilla</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>First Read</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No more</td>
<td>Birmingham Libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waddell, Martin</td>
<td>My Great Grandpa</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>1 / SCH</td>
<td>No more</td>
<td>Birmingham Libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilkins, Verna Allette. McLeod, George (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Are we there yet?</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>SCH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Amazon / Bishop Grosseteste University guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willis, Jeanne Ross, Tony (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Susan Laughs</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>18 / SCH</td>
<td>Yes (**)</td>
<td>Birmingham Libraries / Booktrust: Bookmark/ Bishop Grosseteste University guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, Jacqueline</td>
<td>Worry Website</td>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>45 / SCH / CTB</td>
<td>Yes (***</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Books in total: **50**
Titles held by Sheffield Library service: **26**
Titles held by Sheffield Schools Library Service: **24**
Titles held by Bertram Library Suppliers: **38**
### Down's Syndrome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Disability portrayed</th>
<th>Book type</th>
<th>Copies held by Sheffield Libraries</th>
<th>Copies held by Bertram</th>
<th>Book information source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anderson, Rachel</td>
<td>Big Ben</td>
<td>Down's Syndrome</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>SCH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Letterbox Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smiley, Sophie Foreman, Michael (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Bobby, Charlton and the Mountain (Bobby and Charlton Stories)</td>
<td>Down's Syndrome</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Booktrust: Bookmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smiley, Sophie Foreman, Michael (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Football Fever (Bobby and Charlton Stories)</td>
<td>Down's Syndrome</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes (*)</td>
<td>Amazon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smiley, Sophie Foreman, Michael (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Man of the Match (Bobby and Charlton Stories)</td>
<td>Down's Syndrome</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smiley, Sophie Foreman, Michael (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Pirates Ahoy (Bobby and Charlton Stories)</td>
<td>Down's Syndrome</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Yes (*)</td>
<td>Amazon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smiley, Sophie Foreman, Michael (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Pup on the Pitch (Bobby and Charlton Stories)</td>
<td>Down's Syndrome</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Yes (***)</td>
<td>Letterbox Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smiley, Sophie Foreman, Michael (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Snow Goalie (Bobby and Charlton Stories)</td>
<td>Down's Syndrome</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes (**)</td>
<td>Amazon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smiley, Sophie Foreman, Michael (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Team Trouble (Bobby and Charlton Stories)</td>
<td>Down's Syndrome</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockham, Jess (Illustrator)</td>
<td>Making Friends (Just Like Us Series)</td>
<td>Down's Syndrome</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes (*)</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Books in total: 9
Titles held by Sheffield Library service: 6
Titles held by Sheffield Schools Library Service: 1
Titles held by Bertram Library Suppliers: 9
### Invisible difficulties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Disability portrayed</th>
<th>Book type</th>
<th>Copies held by Sheffield Libraries</th>
<th>Copies held by Bertram</th>
<th>Book information source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dowd, Siobhan</td>
<td>The London Eye Mystery</td>
<td>Asperger's</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>54 / SCH</td>
<td>Yes (*)</td>
<td>Amazon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwards, Becky</td>
<td>My brother Sammy</td>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>2 / SCH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Amazon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder, Jennifer</td>
<td>Autistic Planet</td>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Bishop Grosseteste University guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ely, Lesley</td>
<td>Looking after Louis</td>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture / Wordpool guide / Bishop Grosseteste University guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoopman, Kathy</td>
<td>Blue Bottle Mystery</td>
<td>Asperger's</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>6 / SCH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Wordpool guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoopman, Kathy</td>
<td>Lisa and the Lacemaker</td>
<td>Asperger's</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>1 / SCH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Wordpool guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoopman, Kathy</td>
<td>Of Mice and Aliens</td>
<td>Asperger's</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Amazon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finlay, Lizzie</td>
<td>Dandylion</td>
<td>Non-specific</td>
<td>Picture book</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Booktrust: Bookmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogaz, Nancy</td>
<td>Wishing on the Midnight Star</td>
<td>Asperger's</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Amazon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, Jacqueline</td>
<td>Sleepovers</td>
<td>Learning disability</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>39 / SCH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Scope: In the Picture</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Books in total: **13**

Titles held by Sheffield Library service: **8**
Titles held by Sheffield Schools Library Service: **6**
Titles held by Bertram Library Suppliers: **12**

### Index

- Titles in **bold** = 'Highly Recommended' titles
- 'No more' = Out of print
- 'SCH' = School Library stock
- 'CTB' = Children's Talking Book
- (*) / (**) / (***) = Bertram star rating system
Appendix C: Information Sheet

Title of Research Project: "A portrayal of disability in children's fiction: The availability and promotion of such resources in public libraries."

Name of Researcher: Alice Wyatt

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

(Contact: lip09aw@shef.ac.uk)

Project's purpose

The purpose of my research is to gain a deeper understanding of the extent to which public libraries provide books that positively portray disability in children's fiction. I am also investigating the extent to which these books are utilised and promoted by public library staff.

Method

Questionnaires will be used. A checklist will also be used to review the current provision of children's fiction positively portraying disability in the Sheffield Library service.

Confidentiality

All the information collected during the questionnaires will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications.

Do I have to take part?

It is your choice whether or not you take part. If you choose to participate please sign the consent form below. You may still withdraw at any time without it affecting your statutory rights. You do not have to give a reason.

Thank you for your time.
Appendix D: Participant Consent Form

Title of Research Project: "A portrayal of disability in children's fiction: The availability and promotion of such resources in public libraries."

Name of Researcher: Alice Wyatt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Identification Number for this project:</th>
<th>Please tick box</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions.</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I agree to take part in the above research project.</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name of Participant __________________________ Date ____________ Signature ______________

Lead Researcher __________________________ Date ____________ Signature ______________

Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, the letter/pre-written script/information sheet and any other written information provided to the participants. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the project's main record (e.g. a site file), which must be kept in a secure location.
Appendix E: Questionnaire for frontline staff

Please tick the boxes.

1. Age:
   18-25  26-35  36-45  46-55  56+  Rather not say

2. Position within the library service:
   Frontline staff  Frontline staff & children's champion  Community Development Librarian
   Service Development Librarian  Young People's Library Officer
   Rather not say

3. Involvement in children's stock selection:
   Yes  No  Rather not say
   If yes, please give details of your involvement:
   
   
   
   

4. Have you heard of initiatives such as SCOPE’s 'In the picture' or BOOKTRUST's 'Bookmark'? 

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please write a little about what you believe them to be about:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Please refer to 'PART A' at the end of this questionnaire if you would like to know more about these initiatives

5. Please list any children's fiction books that you are aware of that positively portray disability, either in plot or illustrations.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
6. Do you believe that Sheffield Public Library Services provide a good selection of children's fiction positively portraying disability?

Yes ☐ To a certain extent ☐
No ☐ Unsure ☐

Please explain your answer:

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

7. Are you aware of any promotional work that has been carried out to encourage such books to be utilised?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

If yes, please specify:

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

8. Do you believe that children's fiction books positively portraying disability can have an effect on children's attitudes and understanding towards disabilities?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please explain your answer:

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
9. Do you believe it is the public library’s role to support the development of children's understanding towards diversity and social inclusion?

Yes □ No □

Please explain your answer:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

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Thank you for your time.

Please look at 'PART B' if you wish to see examples of images.
Appendix F: Additional questions for the children's stock team questionnaire.

3. Describe your role in children's stock selection:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

10. Are mainstream children's fiction books positively portraying disability mentioned in your stock purchasing policy?  

Yes ☐  No ☐  Unsure ☐  Rather not say ☐  

If so, please provide details:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

11. Which stock procurement method(s) do you use for children's fiction?  

Please tick all that apply.

Supplier selection ☐  Approvals Online / CD-ROM ☐  Specialist bookshops ☐

Approvals sent to library ☐  Selection by young people ☐

Visits to suppliers' showrooms ☐  Other (please give details) ☐
PART A:

*In the Picture* by the SCOPE charity and *Bookmark* by Booktrust are recent initiatives that address the need to include disabled children in mainstream children's books. Their campaigns attempt to encourage authors and illustrators to embrace diversity by positively and accurately portraying disability. They emphasise the importance of disabled characters not being overly excluded or hindered due to their disability within storylines or images.

PART B:

*Some examples of illustrations that positively portray disability.*

This illustration shows a typical nursery or reception class scene. The child in the wheelchair is playing along happily with the other children.

© Cathy Hughes

This illustration is by Jane Ray and is from the book 'Big Ben'. The main character is Matthew, whose big brother Ben has Down's syndrome. About 600 babies are born with Down's syndrome every year in the UK.

© Jane Ray
In this illustration the happy baby has a cochlear implant clearly in view. About 200 children a year receive implants in the UK.

© 2005 Child’s Play International

This illustration by Quentin Blake shows a happy and independent young girl who happens to be wearing leg splints.

© Quentin Blake

This image is from a series by Helen Shoesmith. Here, two children are playing with yo-yos, and one is wearing an eye patch. About 2% of all children have an eye condition called amblyopia, also known as "lazy eye". © Helen Shoesmith
**Appendix H: Booklist guide designed for Sheffield library service**

*Booklist of children's fiction books positively featuring disability*

Hearing impairments

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Disability portrayed</th>
<th>Book type</th>
<th>Copies held by Sheffield Libraries</th>
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### Visual impairments

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**Down's Syndrome**
Invisible disabilities

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