

## Contact and Segregation in Context: What this Research Means for our Schools and Classrooms

### Classroom space: Does seating matter?

Physical proximity can be associated with attitudes.

For example, primary school children in the Netherlands tended to rate those sitting closer to them more favourably. When they placed children who did not like each other beside each other in the classroom, the children formed more positive attitudes (Van den Berg & Cillessen, 2015).

### Education and Community Cohesion

In areas with large Muslim populations, Muslims (including women), interacted with people from other religious and ethnic backgrounds in schools, colleges and workplaces (JRF, 2008).

Until 2010, it was an Ofsted requirement for schools to promote community cohesion. Has the government's new focus on 'actively promoting fundamental British values' (Nov 2014) replaced this?

### Contact and cohesion: Thinking Questions

What constitutes 'meaningful' contact?

What are your experiences of segregation/integration generally, and in your school?

How far can schools promote community cohesion?

In what ways can schools promote community cohesion?

Why are schools important places to promote community cohesion?

What could you do to improve relations in your classroom?



### Classroom space: Thinking Questions

How do you organise your teaching space and why?

How do you influence the use of your teaching space, what are your priorities?

What are the advantages/disadvantages in how you use your space?

Could you use your teaching space differently?

Is space around the school generally shared?

Could our use of seating plans and classroom space make a difference to segregation?

How do you think your pupils perceive space?

### Reflections...