Abstract

This paper uses Bronfenbrenner’s updated ecological theory to map some key principles linking inclusive and cognitive education. It then presents a three-tiered model for the inclusive teaching of thinking within that ecological theoretical framework, with an example of how one school community has considered that three-tiered model in terms of the needs of all of its learners for cognitive education.

Keywords
Bronfenbrenner, three-tier model, ecological theory, cognitive education

Introduction

An overall theoretical/conceptual framework which would be of value to all involved in teaching thinking in an inclusive way, as it takes into account the centrality and agency of the child, along with differing levels of support, is Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems model, which he has updated, and which has been applied to children with special educational needs (Sontag, 1996). The discussion will follow the main components of this updated model. Links will be made to teaching and learning, and the teaching of thinking in particular.

The pupil/person at the centre of the learning

Bronfenbrenner places the child, with what he calls their ‘developmentally instigative person characteristics’, along with meaning making by the child, right at the centre of his model. The needs of the learner, what is in the